



NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2014

San Francisco Opera's 2014 - 15 Season and Lecture Dates

by Steve Zilles

On January 13th, San Francisco Opera announced its new season. It has a combination of well-loved works, as well as premieres and works not often seen. The season begins with *Norma*, sung by Sandra Radvanovsky, one of the world's leading singers of the lyric stage. *Norma* is Bellini's bel canto masterpiece. It is followed by the company premiere of composer Carlisle Floyd's American music drama *Susannah* with Patricia Racette. The San José Opera Guild will have lectures on both of these works, the former on August 26 by Simon Williams and the latter on September 2 by Derek Katz.

The Fall season continues with a revival of Verdi's *Masked Ball* with tenor Ramon Vargas as the love-troubled King Gustav III. A company premiere of George Frideric Handel's brilliantly entertaining comedy *Partenope* in an Olivier Award-winning new production is the next work. Countertenor David Daniels will star opposite soprano Danielle de Niese. These operas will also be featured in San José Opera Guild lectures, *Masked Ball* on September 30 by Jonathan Khuner and *Partenope* on October 7 by Bruce Lamott.

The final three operas of the Fall season feature two well-loved Puccini operas: *Tosca* and *La Bohème*. *La Bohème* will have a new production inspired by the artistic brilliance and romance of France's Belle Époque period with Michael Fabiano as Rodolfo. *Tosca* will revive the beauti-

ful Thierry Bosquet production and will feature Lianna Haroutounian making her San Francisco Opera debut in the title role. The third opera is Rossini's delightfully funny *La Cenerentola* (Cinderella) using Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's charming production. French mezzo-soprano Karine Deshayes makes her San Francisco Opera debut in the title role. *La Cenerentola* will be the topic of the last Fall SF Opera lecture by Mary Ann Smart on October 28.

The Spring season of 2015 has three gems. After a wait of 47 years, Hector Berlioz' *Les Troyens* will once again be seen in San Francisco. This five and one-half hour epic opera depicts the tragic fall of Troy, the passionate love of two leaders and the pull of destiny. Susan Graham and Bryan Hymel star. Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* will feature the wonderful young bass-baritone Philippe Sly (current Adler fellow) and soprano Lisette Oropressa. The third opera will be the World Premiere of *La Ciociara* (Two Women) by Marco Tutino based on the novel by Alberto Moravia. It is the same story that was the basis for the 1960 movie by Italian film producer Carlo Ponti starring Sophia Loren (for which she won an Academy Award). San José Opera Guild's Spring lectures will feature two lectures: *Les Troyens* by Timothy Flynn and *Two Women* by Laura Bassini. Do not forget San Francisco Opera's 2014 Spring Season which includes Jerome Kern's *Showboat*, Verdi's *La Traviata* and Pucci-

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Opera Traveler

Fresh opera offerings proliferate from unique initiatives like Prototype's Opera/Theatre/Now festival.

by Mort Levine

Keeping up with today's crop of contemporary opera offerings makes one think of the challenges faced by Italian opera lovers back in the 19th century. If one out of 100 ultimately won a place in the popular repertory of main stream companies, so be it. The ambition, talent and fortitude of opera composers and librettists in 21st century America is indeed equally admirable. So too is the courage and imagination of presenters and opera artistic directors who seek out and place their bets on untried works.

This mid-January has just witnessed the second annual Prototype Opera/Theatre/Now festival in assorted venues in New York which typifies what is going forth on the front lines of new operatic works. The festival includes five new opera works, including one which had its premiere here last year at the Stanford campus' Bing Concert Hall (reviewed at that time in this newsletter). Called *Visitations*, two one act works of composer Jonathan Berger and librettist Dan O'Brien, explore the auditory hallucinations of a shell-shocked war photo-journalist (*The War Reporter*) and the schizophrenic musings of a patient in a mental institution (*Theotokia*).

Among the four other unique works are:

Angel's Bone, a supernatural tale of angels and middle-class greed by composer Du Yun and librettist Royce Vavrick. The venue for this work

2014 - 2015 Season

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ni's *Madama Butterfly*. There will be a lecture on *Showboat* at the Saratoga Foothill Club at 10:00 AM on Tuesday, May 27 by Olivier Prezant who is Music Director and Conductor of the Santa Fe Community Orchestra and a regular lecturer for Sante Fe Opera.

was appropriately Trinity Church on Wall Street in lower Manhattan.

Have a Good Day! is by a Lithuanian team, composer Lena Lapelyte and librettist Vaiva Granyte. This minimalist work is for 10 singing cashiers and supermarket sounds with piano. It is set in a shopping center.

Paul's Case sets to operatic music a short story by Willa Cather. Composer Gregory Spears collaborated on the libretto with Kathryn Walat.

Thumbprint tells in operatic form the searing story of a gang-rape ordered by a village council in India. Mukhtar Mai defied the conventions and brought her attackers to justice, becoming a symbol of hope for the oppressed. The composer is Kamala Sankaramin and combines Hindustani and western music. The libretto is by Susan Yankowitz.

The Prototype concept is the brainchild of Beth Morrison, youthful, multi-talented producer-impresaria out of Yale drama school who has linked up her vision with other women producers and institutions to create this festival. Part of her innovative mission is to bring in presenters of cutting edge work from around the country and show-case new works that they could participate in furthering. One example is a forthcoming connection of Prototype with Fort Worth Opera and the Los Angeles Opera and the Red Cat, a smaller Los Angeles venue. This partnership will move *Dog Days* by composer David Little into two new presentations in the next two years. This gritty opera of the days following an Apocalyptic post-war setting has a libretto by Royce Vavrek. Another opera by the same team is called *JFK* and is likely to follow a similar shared production approach.

Opera Traveler

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Meanwhile, veteran composers new and rare works are also being championed. Last month Bay Area Composer Kirke Meacham enjoyed the NY premiere of his 2002 take on *The Rivals*, the famed Restoration comedy farce by Sheridan. It was presented by Bronx Opera at the Kaye Playhouse in midtown Manhattan's Hunter College. Meacham's first opera, *Tartuffe*, produced by both SFO and Opera San José may be the most performed American opera, with at least 350 separate productions.

And another Bay Area alumna, Conductor Sara Jobin, now music director for New York's Center for Contemporary Opera, last month presented *El Cimarron* by Hans Werner Henze. The venue was Symphony Space in upper Manhattan.

So, for the adventurous who don't mind traveling, there is literally a bountiful harvest of new and rarely performed new opera works to replenish the future repertoires.

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Career Updates

Tenor **Alek Shrader** (Merola 2007) sang the role of Tamino in the Metropolitan Opera's recent production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. "He brings a sweet clear voice and earnestness to Prince Tamino" (*Classical Review*). Mr. Shrader began the 2012-13 season with two engagements at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. He made his house debut as Ferdinand in Ades' *The Tempest*, a "modern masterpiece" conducted by the composer himself and Shrader returned to sing Almaviva in the English version of *The Barber of Seville*. He sang Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* at the Hamburgische Staatsoper and then returned to the U.S. for a North American recital tour, including Music for Youth in Connecticut, San Francisco Performances, Oberlin University, and his Carnegie Hall debut. In January, 2014 he sang Tamino in the Metropolitan Opera's production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Mezzo-soprano **Betany Coffland**, (Opera San José 2008-2012) was a soloist in Mozart's *Coronation Mass* with the Sacramento Philharmonic and had a recital on the 405 Shrader concert series in San Francisco, both in the Spring of 2013. In May she sang the role of Carmen in Concert with the Diablo Symphony, and performed as soloist at the Firehouse Theater in Pleasanton with Livermore Opera. Previous 2012-2013 engage-

ments included the role of Nicklausse and the Muse for West Bay Opera, the role of Flora (*La Traviata*) for Livermore Opera and a solo recital in Kansas City.

Tenor **Michael Daily**, (Opera San José 2008-2012) returned to OSJ in the 2012-13 season to perform the role of Alfredo in *Die Fledermaus*. Roles performed with other companies include Rodolfo (*La bohème*) with Portland Opera to Go and Sportin' Life (*Porgy and Bess*) with the New York Harlem Production company. For Tri-Cities Opera, he has performed the role of Romeo (*Roméo et Juliette*), Camille (*The Merry Widow*) and Parpignol (*La bohème*); for Virginia Opera, he has performed the roles of Don Basilio (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Benvolio (*Roméo et Juliette*), and Melot (*Tristan und Isolde*). On the concert stage, Mr. Dailey has been a featured soloist with the Virginia Choral Society in their performances of Bruckner's *Te Deum* and Vaughn Williams *Serenade to Music*. He has also appeared as a soloist in Mozart's *Missa Longa* (Todfi Music Festival) and *Requiem* (Schola Cantorum), and Handel's *Messiah* (Virginia Wesleyan College and Virginia Beach Symphony Orchestra).

Baritone **Daniel Cilli**, (OSJ)2006-2010) performed Marco in *Gianni Schicchi* and Cap-

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Luncheon Concert

Adler Fellow to Sing in Los Gatos



Adler Fellow Jacqueline Piccolino

Adler Fellow Jacqueline Piccolino, who made her San Francisco Opera debut last summer, will sing at a luncheon concert on Friday, February 7, 2014. This event is at the APJCC from noon until 2:00 PM. It is being jointly sponsored by the JCC, the San José Opera Guild and the San Francisco Opera Merola Program.

Miss Piccolino's debut season included roles as Stella in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and as a maid in the world premiere of *Dolores Claiborne*.

The cost is \$7.50 for general admission or \$5 for JCC members and includes a catered hot lunch and the performance in the APJCC Auditorium.

For reservations after January 31, 2014, please call Cherie Ravel at 408.357.7462. Send a check payable to "APJCC" to: Cherie Ravel, APJCC, 14855 Oka Road, Ste. 201, Los Gatos, CA 95032.

For more information call: 408.357.7462. www.SiliconValleyJCC.org ###

Career Updates

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tain Corcoran in *HMS Pinafore* for Music in the Mountains in Spring of 2013. In June, 2013, he performed the title role in *Gesualdo, Prince of Madness*, in a premier reading with Opera Parallèle of San Francisco. On the concert stage, he appeared as soloist in Faure's *Requiem* with the Louisiana Philharmonic. For the Avedis Chamber Ensemble he performed as soloist in Ravel's *Chanson Madécasses*. ###

Do We Have Your Correct Email Address?

Now that the Guild's Newsletter is being placed on the website and members are being notified that a new issue is ready to be read, we need to be sure that your email address is correct.

When you change your email address, please let us know at: <membership@sjoperaguild.org>.

Published in Feb., May, Aug., Nov. by the San José Opera Guild, P.O. Box 33025, Los Gatos, CA 95031-3025.

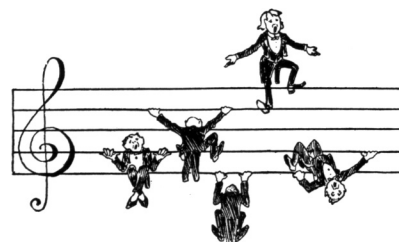
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Calendar

FEBRUARY 7, 12:00-2:00, San José Opera Guild, JCC, and San Francisco Merola Opera Program present a Luncheon Concert with Adler Fellow Jacqueline Piccolino. \$7.50 general admission includes a catered hot lunch and the performance. JCC Auditorium,

FEBRUARY 8, 9:55 am, Metropolitan Opera Simulcast in HD, *Rusalka* by Dvorak, live at CineArts Oakridge 20, 225-7340; Santana Row 6, 554-7010; and Cupertino 16, 871-2262. Cost \$24.00 for adults, \$22.00 for seniors. Encore: Wednesday, February 12th, 6:30 pm. Encores cost \$22.00 for adults and \$20.00 for seniors. (Prices may vary for the various HD operas.)

FEBRUARY 14, 16, 22, 23, West Bay Opera, *L'Elisir D'Amore* (Elixer of Love), 8pm except Sunday at 2pm, tickets 650-424-9999 or order online www.WBOpera.org. Student, senior, and group discounts.

FEBRUARY 15,16,20,22,23,25,28, MARCH 2, Opera San José presents *Madama Butterfly* by Puccini, California Theatre, 8pm except Sundays at 3pm. Introduction to Opera meets one and a half hours before the opera. Tickets: 408-437-4450 or www.operasj.org.

MARCH 1, 9 am, Metropolitan Opera Simulcast in HD, *Prince Igor* by Borodin. Encore: Wednesday, April 12, 6:30pm. See February 8 for details.

MARCH 15, 9:55 am, Metropolitan Opera Simulcast in HD, *Werther* by Massenet. Encore: Wednesday, March 19, 6:30pm. See February 8 for details.

APRIL 5, 9:55 am, Metropolitan Opera Simulcast in HD, *La Bohème* by Puccini. Encore: Wednesday, April 9, 6:30pm. See February 8 for details.

APRIL 19,20,24,26,27,29, MAY 2,4, Opera San José presents *Don Giovanni* by Mozart, California Theatre, 8pm except Sundays at 3pm. Introduction to Opera meets one and a half hours before the opera. Tickets: 408-437-4450 or www.operasj.org.

APRIL 26, 9:55 am, Metropolitan Opera Simulcast in HD, *Così fan tutte* by Mozart, Encore: Wednesday, April 30, 6:30pm. See February 8 for details.

MAY 10, 9:55 am, Metropolitan Opera Simulcast in HD, *La Cenerentola* by Rossini, Encore: Wednesday, May 14, 6:30pm. See February 8 for details.

MAY 27, San José Opera Guild and the Saratoga Foothill Club co-sponsor a lecture on the San Francisco Opera's production of *Show Boat* by Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II with Oliver Prezant, 10 am, Saratoga Foothill Club, Admission \$10 at the door.

SAVE THE DATE !!!!! Saturday May 31, 2014, Annual San José Opera Guild Champagne Brunch at La Rinconada in Los Gatos. Plan ahead for May!!

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Please visit our website at: www.sjoperaguild.org or visit us on Facebook at http://www.facebook.com/sjoperaguild

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An Invitation to Join

Established in 1947, the San José Opera Guild was formed to promote the appreciation and enjoyment of the operatic arts and to provide both volunteer and financial support to opera.

The Guild incorporated in September 1958 as a non-profit corporation under the laws of California. The original purpose of the Guild has not changed over the years since it's founding. Financial support of promising young artists in the community is a high priority for the Guild, which helps sponsor singers each year at Opera San José, and the Merola Opera Program, as well as other opera groups.

Throughout the year, the Guild sponsors lectures and previews at three different venues to coincide with the San Francisco Opera and Opera San José's seasons.

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