

The National Capital Opera Society
presents

The 11th Brian Law Opera Competition

Gerald Finley, Honorary Patron

Frédérique Drolet
Nathan Haller
Ania Hejnar
Erinne-Colleen Laurin
Alexandra LeBlanc
Meghan Lindsay

Arminè Kassabian, guest recitalist

Rob Clipperton, host

9 November 2013

First Unitarian Congregation
30 Cleary Avenue, Ottawa

The National Capital Opera Society

The National Capital Opera Society was founded by volunteer opera lovers in 1983, following the cancellation of the summer opera festival at the National Arts Centre.

Today, to aid young, gifted singers of the National Capital Region, the Society holds the biennial Brian Law Opera Competition supported by the Brian Law Fund.

We foster interest in opera with DVD showings, newsletters and social events for members. The Society also helps young singers striving to gain experience and recognition in opera by its financial contributions to the Opera Lyra Ottawa Young Artists Program and Pellegrini Opera as well as general support for operatic events in the National Capital Region. We always welcome new members who share our passion for opera and wish to join us in our activities.

Gerald Finley, Honorary Patron



Photo: Sim Canetty-Clarke

The National Capital Opera Society is very proud to have as its patron the world-renowned bass-baritone Gerald Finley.

Gerald began singing as a chorister at St. Matthew's Church in Ottawa under the guidance of Brian Law and completed his musical studies at the Royal College of Music, King's College, Cambridge, and the National Opera Studio. He was a winner of Glyndebourne's John Christie Award. He is a Visiting Professor and Fellow of the Royal College of Music in London. Gerald has become one of the leading singers and interpreters of his generation, with award-winning performances and a vast discography on CD and DVD with major labels. He has performed regularly at the world's major opera and concert venues. Recent awards include a Grammy in 2012 for Best Opera Recording for *Dr. Atomic* and Best Solo Vocal Recording from Gramophone Magazine in 2011 for his CD of Britten songs.

On the opera stage, Mr. Finley has sung all the major baritone roles of Mozart. His Don Giovanni has been seen in New York, London, Paris, Rome, Vienna, Prague, Tel Aviv, Glyndebourne and Budapest, and recently at the festivals of Salzburg and Munich. As Count Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro*, his appearances include Covent Garden, Salzburg, Paris, Amsterdam, the Met and Vienna's Staatsoper. At Glyndebourne his roles have ranged from Figaro to Owen Wingrave and Agamemnon to Don Giovanni. In 2011, also at Glyndebourne, he scored a major success with his fine portrayal of Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger*, which was broadcast and recorded. At the Met, recent appearances include Count Almaviva, Marcello and Golaud. At Covent Garden his extensive repertoire includes Onegin, Yeletsy, as well as roles in *Die tote Stadt*, *Orfeo*, *Giulio Cesare* and *Rinaldo*. He has excelled in creating lead roles in contemporary operas, including *The Silver Tassie*, *The Fantastic Mr. Fox*, *L'amour de loin*, *Dr. Atomic* and *Anna Nicole*. Upcoming stage performances include Amfortas in *Parsifal* at Covent Garden and the title role in *Falstaff* at the Canadian Opera Company. As a recitalist, with pianist Julius Drake, Gerald regularly performs worldwide.

His recent honours include the elite "Ruby Award" from Opera Canada in 2012.

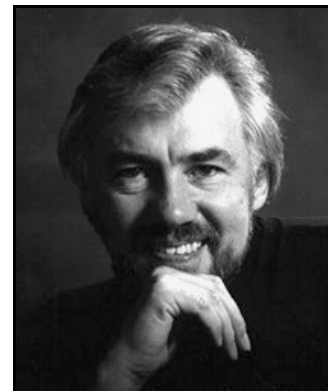
For more detailed information, please refer to www.geraldfinley.com.

The Brian Law Opera Competition

The Brian Law Opera Competition is a biennial opportunity for young singers from the National Capital Region (by birth, musical education or residency) who are focusing on an operatic career.

The 1st and 2nd prizes are currently set at \$5000 and \$3000, with a 3rd prize of \$1000 donated by Cav. Pasqualina Pat Adamo.

Notices are sent out to music-education organizations across the country. From all entries received, a preliminary jury chooses up to six finalists. For the 2013 competition, the members of the preliminary jury were Barbara Clark, Laurence Ewashko and Christiane Riel. At the public competition each finalist has to perform a selection of three opera arias, one with recitative, accompanied by his/her own accompanist, before a three-member jury.



The Competition, formerly known as the Brian Law Opera Scholarship Competition, was established in 1991 upon the departure of conductor and choir director Brian Law from Ottawa to become Director of the Christchurch City Choir in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Born and educated in London, he immigrated to Canada in 1965. During his twenty-five years in the National Capital Region, Brian Law was the Assistant Conductor and Chorus Master of *Festival Ottawa* for thirteen seasons and again when opera returned to the NAC in 1988. He fulfilled the same role with l'Opéra de Montréal from 1986 to 1989. He also was music director of the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra, the Ottawa Choral Society, and founding director of Thirteen Strings. For fourteen years (1965-80) he was Organist and Choirmaster at St. Matthew's Church in the Glebe where he brought the men's and boys choir to a standard of excellence comparable to that of British collegiate and cathedral choirs.

In recognition of Brian Law's many achievements, the National Capital Opera Society established the biennial opera competition. The first competition, for a \$1000 prize, was held in 1993, with Brian Law in attendance, under the distinguished patronage of Maureen Forrester, C.C.

After the death of Ms. Forrester in 2010, bass-baritone Gerald Finley graciously agreed to become the honorary patron. Now one of Canada's greatest singers, he was born in Montreal and grew up in Ottawa, receiving his early music education from Brian Law as a boy chorister at St. Matthew's Church.

To make the competition possible, the National Capital Opera Society established the Brian Law Fund. It is steadily reaching its goal and now stands at over \$30,000, thanks to its many generous supporters. Donations have allowed the greatly increased prizes and are therefore always highly appreciated. They may be made to the National Capital Opera Society, identified as contributions to the Brian Law Fund. A tax receipt will be issued for all donations of \$20 or more. (A donation form is on p. 15 of this program. Copies are also available at the ticket desk and on our website.)

Registered Charity BN: 12589 8304 RR 0001

Brian Law Opera Competition Committee

Renate Chartrand, Ute Davis, Murray Kitts, Peggy Pflug, Lesley Robinson, Jean Saldanha

The Finalists

Frédérique Drolet, soprano, 28, a native of Buckingham, earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Vocal Performance at Laval University 2009/2011 and since then she has won the 2012 Jacques Lareau Foundation Award of Atelier Lyrique. She sang Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos* for Opera Nuova, 2012. This was followed in 2013 by Adèle in *Die Fledermaus* and Poussette in *Manon* for Opéra de Montréal as well as the lead roles in *Acis and Galatea* and *Amahl and the Night Visitors* for Atelier Lyrique. She was the soloist in *Concert sous le masque* for Quattr'Opéra.



Nathan Haller, tenor, 22, a native of Ottawa, earned his undergraduate degree in music at Juilliard, where he is presently in the Master's program of Music. His teachers include Edith Wiens, Steven Blier and David Clatworthy. Opera performances include *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, *Down in the Valley*, *Armide*, *La finta giardiniera*, *Le donne curiose* and *The Cunning Little Vixen*. During the last two years his concert performances have included composers from Bach to Wolf and have taken him to Dresden, Neumarkt/Reitstadl, Bayreuth, Carnegie Hall, Ottawa and Paul Hall at Juilliard.



Ania Hejnar, soprano, 25, resident of Ottawa, obtained her Bachelor's and Master's degrees at the University of Ottawa, 2010/2012. She is now a member of Opera Lyra Ottawa's Young Artists Program. Ania won a vocal scholarship of Inter-Cities Performing Arts Inc. for 2013 and was soprano soloist for that group's Verdi Bicentennial Commemoration in N.Y. City. Her guest artist performances include the 2013 Music and Beyond Festival, Ottawa, the Stellae Boreales and the Opera Lyra Gala at the Embassy of Argentina. She also sang in the Fourth Annual ABC Gala at Carnegie Hall.



Erinne-Colleen Laurin, soprano, 31, native of Gatineau, received a Bachelor of Music, Hons. in Vocal Performance, Carleton University, 2011, after having completed three years of the Bachelor of Music program at the University of Ottawa, 2005. With the Carleton University Baroque Ensemble, she has sung Romilda in *Serse* in 2011 and the lead roles in *Alcina* (2012) and *Armide* (2013). At St. Blasius Church in Salzburg she sang Mme. Herz and Goldnertriller in *Der Schauspieldirektor*, also master classes for Bruce Fowler and Manfred Mayrhofer. She has sung concert performances of Mozart, Vivaldi and Brahms in Ottawa in 2013.



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Alexandra LeBlanc, soprano, 28, born in the Ottawa area, earned a Bachelor of Music in Performance in 2008. She then completed the Advanced Diploma Program of the Glenn Gould School for the Performing Arts. Her staged concert performances include Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* and Jenny in Ned Roram's *Three Sisters who are not Sisters* and the Queen of the Night in *Die Zauberflöte*, all for the Glenn Gould School. As well as Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* for Opera By Request, Alexandra performed in the 2013 Saarburg Festival in Germany directed by Semyon Rozin.



Meghan Lindsay, soprano, 27, a native of Ottawa. She earned a Bachelor of Music from the Glenn Gould School, followed by studies at Opera Studio Nederland and Young Artists Program Glimmerglass. Meghan's performances in 2012/2013 include Mimi in *La bohème* with Northern Light Opera, Luisa Miller for Opera Nova Scotia, Agathe in *Der Freischütz* for Opera Atelier and Sidonie in *Armide* for Glimmerglass, Royal Opera Versailles and Opera Atelier. She has presented concert performances in Guelph, Cooperstown and Amsterdam and has performed in master classes for Joan Dornemann, Stuart Hamilton, Diana Soviero and Wendy Nielson.

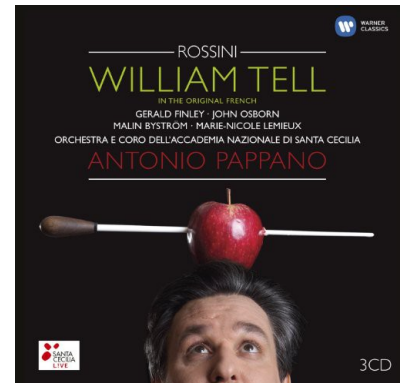


¹ Photo of Erinne-Colleen Laurin © Couvrette/Ottawa (613) 238-5104 www.couvrette-photography.on.ca

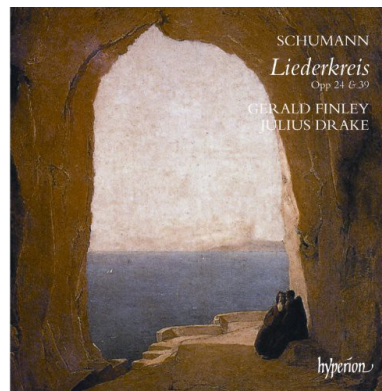
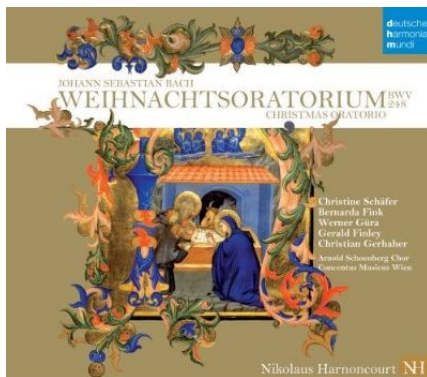
This evening's program...

- Welcome by the president of the National Capital Opera Society
- Recital by the six finalists – for the program see the centre pages.
- Ten minutes intermission
- Announcement of door prize winners
- Reading of a message from honorary patron Gerald Finley, sent from England
- Reading of a message from Brian Law, sent from New Zealand
- Guest recital by Arminè Kassabian, mezzo-soprano – for the program see page 10
- Announcement of the winners by the Chair of the Jurors and presentation of the prizes:
 1st prize - \$5,000 and 2nd prize - \$3,000 presented by NCOS president Murray Kitts
 3rd prize - \$1,000 donated and presented by Cavaliere/Chevalier Pasqualina Pat Adamo, member of the NCOS board.
 In addition, the other finalists receive cheques to help cover their expenses.
- Reception: All are invited to meet the jurors, competitors, and guest recitalist in the adjoining hall, where complimentary light refreshments will be available.

The door prizes



(signed by Gerald Finley)



Win a CD or DVD
by our Honorary Patron,
Gerald Finley.

Did you fill out a ballot?

The Jurors

This evening's jurors are:

Susan Blyth-Schofield, Juror



Soprano Susan Blyth-Schofield works in a variety of related musical areas. As a performer she has received critical acclaim in opera, operetta, and musical theatre across Canada and in Europe with such companies as The Canadian Opera Company, Opera Lyra Ottawa, Comus Music Theatre, Toronto Operetta Theatre, and Festival Estival Musical (Belgium). Her repertoire of some thirty-two roles includes Musetta (*La bohème*), The Witch (*Hänsel und Gretel*), The Old Lady (*Candide*), Marion (*The Music Man*), Eliza (*My Fair Lady*), and Maria (*West Side Story*).

Chamber opera has a special appeal for Susan; roles in that genre include Lola (*Gallantry*), Mlle. Warblewell (*The Impresario*), Geraldine (*A Hand of Bridge*), Miss Pinkerton (*The Old Maid and the Thief*), Elle (*La voix humaine*), Judith (*Herzog Blaubarts Burg*), and the three roles she created: Baby (*Baby*), The Judge (*Space Opera*), and Sally (*Killing Time*). No stranger to the concert stage, she has been featured in recital at The Barbican Centre (London), The Classical Music Series at The Canadian Embassy (Washington D.C.), The National Arts Centre, and Music Unlimited (Brussels), and has been heard on CBC radio and on Belgian radio and television.

As a stage director, Susan has worked for Opera Lyra Ottawa, Music Unlimited (Belgium), Ooh La La Opera (Ottawa), Between Friends Music Theatre (Kitchener-Waterloo), and The Queen Elizabeth Dinner Theatre (Toronto). She teaches voice and interpretation in her studio in Ottawa, and at Carleton University, where she directs the Musical Theatre Ensemble and lectures in the history of musical theatre. She also teaches and directs the musical theatre production company at The Ottawa School of Speech and Drama.

Susan is an experienced and sought-after adjudicator and is the Quebec District Governor for The National Association of Teachers of Singing, sitting on the Ottawa Branch council for The Ontario Registered Music Teachers Association.

Cavaliere Maria Pellegrini, Juror



A win at the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions followed training at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto for Soprano Maria Pellegrini. She then embarked on a brilliant career, which took her to the leading opera houses and concert halls of Europe, Canada, the United States, Asia and the Caribbean.

Her debut as Gilda (*Rigoletto*) with the Canadian Opera Company was followed by eleven seasons at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, under the baton of Sir Georg Solti, where she sang Mimì in *La bohème* opposite Luciano Pavarotti. She also performed at Royal Albert Hall, Welsh National Opera, English National Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Vancouver Opera Company, l'Opéra de Montréal, Opera

Lyra Ottawa, Teatro Nacional de Santo Domingo, the Taipei Opera Festival as well as many opera houses in Italy and the United States.

Audiences and critics have praised Ms. Pellegrini above all in her signature role of Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly*. Other roles included Violetta (*La traviata*), Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), Mimì/Musetta (*La bohème*), Amelia (*Simon Boccanegra*), Alice Ford (*Falstaff*), Elvira (*I puritani*), Liu (*Turandot*), Lucia (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Manon Lescaut (*Manon Lescaut*), Desdemona (*Otello*), Nedda (*I pagliacci*), Micaëla (*Carmen*) and Aida (*Aida*). She worked with conductors Sir Georg Solti, Sir Charles Mackerras, Sir Colin Davis, Sir Edward Downes, and Giuseppe Sinopoli.

Maria Pellegrini was awarded "Best Italian Soprano" in 1991. In 2007, she was honoured with the award of Cavaliere dell'Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana. In Ottawa in 2004, she founded Pellegrini Opera and continues as its Artistic Director. Besides private voice coaching, she has given master classes at McGill University and the University of Ottawa. She has just returned from being honoured in Taipei where she again conducted a series of master classes and staging of various opera.

Richard Turp, Juror



Richard Turp was born in Montreal but from the age of 6 was raised in London, UK. Having graduated from the University of London (Russian Regional Studies and Music), he began vocal studies with his father, the renowned tenor, André Turp. For a decade he worked principally in Europe as an operatic tenor and also appeared with his father in l'Opéra de Montréal's production of Verdi's *Macbeth* in 1983.

From 1988 to 1991 he was the Artistic Director of the Montreal International Music Festival, then joined l'Opéra de Montréal as Director of Special Projects for two seasons. He became Artistic Director of the Lachine Music Festival in 1997, a post he still holds today. In 1997 he co-founded and assumed the artistic direction for fourteen years of the André Turp Musical Society that presented a prestigious vocal series in Montreal. He is a co-founder of the Canadian Vocal Arts Institute and since 2009 directs the vocal program at the Orford Academy.

Richard Turp is regularly invited to adjudicate vocal competitions and is a board member of both the Jeunesses musicales du Canada and Opera Canada magazine. He has worked extensively for both the French and English networks of the CBC and assumed the artistic and musical conception and writing of several series (*Opera Easy*, *Opera Stories*, *Portraits of Mozart*, *Shakespeare in Music*, *Klassical Kabaret*, *Musical Voices*) for BRAVO television. For many years he was a highly entertaining member of the panel of experts in the Quiz section of the CBC's "Saturday Afternoon at the Opera."

He has lectured widely, including for l'Opéra de Montréal, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, and the Wagner Society and has hosted two editions of the Opera Canada Awards Gala (the Rubies). In addition, he has written many program notes for musical organisations and record companies and has been a frequent collaborator with *Opera Canada* and *Opera Now*. Richard Turp has taught vocal literature at UQAM and l'Université de Montréal and French vocal diction at McGill University.

Rob Clipperton, Host



Rob Clipperton is a former host and producer at CBC Radio in Ottawa. Rob retired in the fall of 2007 after twenty-eight years behind the microphone, while his program *In Town and Out* was the highest rated CBC Saturday morning show in the country. Rob continues to play an active role in the musical, cultural and charitable communities of the National Capital Region. He is in constant demand as a Master of Ceremonies for concerts, recitals and special events. His voice continues to be heard on audio-guides at the National Gallery of Canada. Now that life isn't quite so hectic, Rob and his wife Peggi spend more time at their country home, a log house on the shores of a quiet lake in West Quebec.

The Board thanks...

The jurors: Susan Blyth-Schofield, Maria Pellegrini, Richard Turp

The preliminary jurors: Barbara Clark, Laurence Ewashko, Christiane Riel

Host: Rob Clipperton

The First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, Greenbank Flowers, Marjorie Clegg, Michael Davis, Cheryl Laflamme, Tom McCool, Sabine Rohlf, Al Saldanha, Klaus Siemsen, David Williams

Brian Law Opera Competition Program

Frédérique Drolet, Soprano

Joanne Moorcroft, Pianist

Aria: "Scoglio d'immota fronte" from *Scipione*, Georg Friedrich Händel
(Berenice rejects Scipio's love; she declares that, faithful to another, she can weather any storm.)

Recitative: "Oui pour ce soir..."

Aria: "Je suis Titania la blonde" from *Mignon*, Ambroise Thomas
(As Queen of the Fairies in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Philline sings a brilliant polonaise.)

Aria: "Mein Herr Marquis," from *Die Fledermaus*, Johann Strauss
(Adele, recognized by her employer as his wife's maid, attempts to laugh off such an "absurd" identification.)

Ania Hejnar, Soprano

Judith Ginsburg, Pianist

Aria: "Où va la jeune Hindoue..." from *Lakmé*, Léo Delibes
(Lakmé is forced to sing about how an outcast girl rescued the god Vishnu with her bells.)

Aria: "O zittre nicht..." from *Die Zauberflöte*, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(The Queen of the Night commissions Prince Pamino to rescue her daughter, Pamina, from captivity by Sarastro.)

Recitative: "Gualtier Maldé..."

Aria: "Caro nome..." from *Rigoletto*, Giuseppe Verdi
(Gilda rhapsodizes over the supposed name of the young man who has stolen her heart.)

Erinne-Colleen Laurin, Soprano

Frédéric Lacroix, Pianist

Recitative: "...Que vois-je là?..."

Aria: "Ah! je ris de me voir..." from *Faust*, Charles Gounod
(Trying on the jewels, Marguerite feels she has been transformed into a king's daughter.)

Aria: "Thus the ever Grateful Spring..." from *The Fairy Queen*, Henry Purcell
(The allegorical figure of Spring pays tribute to the god Phoebus for all that appears in this reborn season.)

Aria: "Ah! non credea mirarti...Ah! non giunge..." from *La sonnambula*, Vincenzo Bellini
(Still sleep-walking, Amina laments the loss of her lover, Elvino, but on waking she is reunited with him and is overcome with joy.)

Nathan Haller, Tenor

James Wright, Pianist

Recitative: "Lunge da lei..."

Aria: "De'miei bollenti spiriti..." from *La traviata*, Giuseppe Verdi

(Alfredo reflects on how precious his whole life has become through his love with Violetta; it is like being in heaven.)

Aria: "Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön,..." from *Die Zauberflöte*, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(Prince Tamino gazes in wonder at the portrait of Princess Pamina and falls instantly in love with her.)

Aria: "Dein ist mein ganzes Herz" from *Das Land des Lächelns*, Franz Lehár

("You are my heart's delight" from *The Land of Smiles*, Franz Lehár)

(Prince Sou-Chong passionately tries to convince his European wife, Lisa, that his heart belongs only to her.)

Alexandra LeBlanc, Soprano

Judith Ginsburg, Pianist

Recitative: "Crudele? Ah no, mio bene!"

Aria: "Non mi dir, bell'idol mio..." from *Don Giovanni*, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(Donna Anna protests that she is not being cruel by rejecting Don Ottavio's marriage proposal as premature because she still loves him.)

Aria: "Depuis le jour..." from *Louise*, Gustave Charpentier

(Louise sings of her happiness with her new existence and with her lover, Julien.)

Aria: "Klänge der Heimat..." from *Die Fledermaus*, Johann Strauss II

(Rosalinde, disguised as a Hungarian countess, praises her "native" land honouring especially the czardas and Tokay wine.)

Meghan Lindsay, Soprano

Frédéric Lacroix, Pianist

Aria: "Qui la voce...vien diletto" from *I puritani*, Vincenzo Bellini

(Driven mad by the loss of her lover Elvira hopes for death but then hallucinates about the joys of her impending wedding.)

Recitative: "Wie nahe mir der Schlummer..."

Aria: "Leise, leise fromme Weise..." from *Der Freischütz*, Carl Maria von Weber

(Drifting off to sleep, Agathe sings a prayer full of hope and love which is answered when she hears Max approaching.)

Aria: "Mi chiamano Mimì..." from *La bohème*, Giacomo Puccini

(Mimì describes herself and her simple life revealing her sensitivity and love of beauty.)

Intermission: 10 minutes

Guest Recital

Arminè Kassabian, Mezzo-soprano Judy Ginsburg, Pianist

“Una voce poco fa” from *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Gioachino Rossini

“Oui, Dieu le veut....Adieu, forêts...” from *The Maid of Orleans*, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

“Non più mesta” from *La Cenerentola*, Gioachino Rossini

“Habanera” from *Carmen*, Georges Bizet

Arminè Kassabian, mezzo-soprano



Ottawa born mezzo-soprano Arminè Kassabian earned her Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance, a Master's degree and an Artist Diploma from the Schulich School of Music, McGill University. Miss Kassabian was the 2011 Brian Law Competition winner. She has won additional prizes at the Capital Music Competition, New Jersey Association Verismo and Le Prix Haricléa Darclée and scholarships from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and McGill Schulich School of Music. She was a finalist in the Riccardo Zandonai International Competition in Riva del Garda, Italy.

Following further training as an emerging artist with Opera Brasov, Romania, Arminè joined the Opera Lyra Studio Development program in the 2011-12 season, performing at Opera Lyra concerts, the Italian Garden Party and as Rosie in *The Barber of Bytown* for young audiences. Arminè performed as Carmen in the Jeunes Ambassadeurs Lyriques concert tour in China.

In addition to many concert and oratorio performances in Ottawa, Gatineau and Montréal she has sung a wide variety of stage roles for Opera McGill, Opera Brasov and Green Mountain Opera, Vermont. These include *Così fan tutte*, *La Cenerentola*, *Evangelina*, and *Maria de Buenos Aires*. Her McGill experience included stage roles in *Hänsel und Gretel*, *La tragédie de Carmen*, *Dialogues des Carmelites*, *Alcina* and *Dido and Aeneas*.

In the 2013-14 season Arminè has performed the role of Mercédès in *Carmen* for Opera Lyra Ottawa and Ruth in *The Pirates of Penzance*. She will return to sing Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*. Other upcoming engagements include Der Komponist in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Pacific Opera Victoria.

Judith Ginsburg, pianist



Judith Ginsburg is a graduate of the University of the Ottawa School of Music where she studied with the internationally acclaimed pianist and pedagogue Jean-Paul Sevilla. She pursued further advanced studies in London, England, with the renowned former Glyndebourne Opera Music staff member and BBC staff accompanist Paul Hamburger. Upon her return to Canada, Judith completed the Repetiteur Training Program at the University of Toronto Opera Division. While at the Opera Division, Judith participated in extensive accompanying classes and master classes with Martin Isepp and Menahem Pressler.

Since 1987 Judith has been Principal Repetiteur of Opera Lyra Ottawa and Principal Pianist with the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra. She is to be heard on CBC radio and is a frequent performer in Ottawa's hugely successful International Chamber Music Festival, Music and Beyond Festival, the National Arts Centre's *Music for a Sunday Afternoon* and the *Almonte in Concert* series. Judith has worked for the National Arts Centre's English Theatre, most recently as piano

coach for *The Unanswered Question*.

As an accompanist Judith has collaborated with many of Canada's leading artists, among them Alan Monk, Theodore Baerg, Tracy Dahl, Eilana Lapalainen, and Gerald Danovitch. Judith is presently Opera Studio Manager and Principal Repetiteur for Opera Lyra Ottawa.

Past Winners – Where are they now?

1993 *Laura Dziubaniuk*



Soprano Laura Dziubaniuk, an Ottawa native, received her Bachelor of Music Degree in Vocal Performance at the University of Ottawa. She won several Vocal Scholarships and furthered her studies at the Kiev Conservatory (Kiev, Ukraine), the Sixth International Interpretation Courses (Piestany, Slovakia) and the European Mozart Academy (Kraków/Krasków, Poland).

From 1991-97, she was a member of Opera Lyra Ottawa Associate Artist Program and from 2004-06 she was a member of Bytown Opera Works where she performed the roles of Lola (*Gallantry*), Helene (*Hin und Zurück*) and Violetta (*La traviata*). She has been a member of Ooh La La Opera!, a company showcasing artists from the National Capital region and beyond. She has performed opera, oratorio, concert and chamber music in North America and Europe.

Laura has worked with many private schools, music schools and continuing education programs in the Ottawa-Gatineau area.

1995 *Mary Ann Swerdfeger*



Mezzo-soprano Mary Ann Swerdfeger graduated with a Bachelor of Music in Voice from Carleton University, a Master of Vocal Performance from the New England Conservatory of Music and a Master of Teaching in Music Education from The City University of New York's Lehman College.

As a New York City Teaching Fellow, Mary Ann has taught general music, singing and choral music in the south Bronx and in Staten Island. The New York City Teaching fellowship is a program that recruits professionals to teach in high-needs urban schools.

Mary Ann has performed extensively in opera, recital, and musical theater throughout the United States, Canada, and Japan. She is currently a teacher of voice and opera workshop at the prestigious LaGuardia High School of Art, Music and the Performing Arts in Manhattan.

1997 *Julie Nesrallah*



Mezzo-soprano Julie Nesrallah regularly charms audiences with her opera, concert and festival performances in Ottawa, throughout Canada and internationally. Her engagements have included performances with the Vancouver Opera, Opera Lyra Ottawa, Opera Hong Kong, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra and the National Arts Centre Orchestra.

Julie's favourite role is the title role in *Carmen*. Other roles include Isabella (*L'Italiana in Algeri*), Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Angelina (*La Cenerentola*), Der Komponist (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*), Maddalena (*Rigoletto*), Meg Page (*Falstaff*), Anita (*West Side Story*), Dritte Dame (*Die Zauberflöte*), Queen Elizabeth (*Maria Stuarda*) and Queen Henrietta (*I puritani*).

Julie is well known throughout Canada as the host of Tempo, CBC Radio 2's flagship national classical music program.

1999 Sandra Stringer



Mezzo-soprano Sandra Stringer, a native of Ottawa, was an Associate Artist with Opera Lyra Ottawa, performing roles in *Aida*, *Die Fledermaus*, and *Madama Butterfly*. Sandra has also been engaged as a guest soloist with the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra, Thirteen Strings, and the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.

Sandra is a graduate of the Doctor of Musical Arts program from the University of British Columbia. Her roles for the UBC Opera Ensemble included Cherubino (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Meg Page (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*), Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*), and Dido (*Dido and Aeneas*). Her Vancouver Opera debut was as Flora in *La traviata*. Sandra's other roles include Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*) and Second Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*).

Sandra is currently Professor of Voice at the University of Lethbridge, where she has been heard in recital on a number of occasions and in performances with the Lethbridge Symphony Orchestra. She has also employed her directing talents at the University of Lethbridge opera workshop.

2001 Shannon Mercer



Versatile soprano Shannon Mercer's repertoire ranges from early to contemporary music, with a challenging calendar of opera, concert and recital performances across North America and Europe. Shannon's 2013-2014 season will include Fauré's *Requiem* with the Kansas City Symphony, Händel's *Messiah* with the Edmonton Symphony and Portland Baroque Orchestra, Bach's *St. John Passion* and *St. Matthew Passion* with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, Händel's *Solomon* with Les Violons du Roy and La Chapelle de Québec and performances of Mozart's *Requiem* with the Vancouver Chamber Choir.

Shannon's discography includes more than a dozen recordings, ranging from baroque to contemporary and including the 2009 Juno award-winning *Gloria! – Vivaldi's Angels*.

Shannon's operatic roles include Sesto (*Giulio Cesare in Egitto*), Oscar (*Un ballo in maschera*), Elvira (*L'italiana in Algeri*), Despina (*Così fan tutte*) and Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*).

2003 Joshua Hopkins



Baritone Joshua Hopkins' 2013-2014 season includes performances as Marcello in *La bohème* at the Canadian Opera Company, a role he sang in Opera Lyra Ottawa's 2012 production and as Schaunard in the Metropolitan Opera's revival of Franco Zeffirelli's famed production of the same opera. He will also appear in Britten's *The Canticles* at Carnegie Hall, Fauré's *Requiem* in Kansas City and *The Messiah* in Detroit and San Francisco.

Highlights of the past season include the role of Cecil in *Maria Stuarda* at the Metropolitan Opera (broadcast live in HD) and a highly acclaimed performance as the Count in *Le nozze di Figaro* at the Glyndebourne Festival.

Joshua features in a number of recordings including *Let Beauty Awake*, a collection of songs by Vaughan Williams, Glick, Bowles, and Barber.

2005 Joyce El-Khoury



Soprano Joyce El-Khoury is a graduate of the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program and the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia. She is a First Prize winner in a number of competitions including the Loren L. Zachary Competition, the Opera Index Competition, the George London Foundation, and the Mario Lanza Vocal Competition.

Joyce returned to Ottawa in 2012 to sing the role of Mimi in Opera Lyra Ottawa's production of *La bohème*. Last season also saw acclaimed performances as Violetta in *La traviata* in the United States, the Netherlands and France.

The 2013-2014 season takes Joyce to Toronto for performances as both Mimi and Musetta in *La bohème* at the Canadian Opera Company, to Seattle for Verdi's *Requiem*, to San Antonio for *Rusalka* and to Santa Fe for the role of Micaëla in *Carmen*.

2007 Yannick-Muriel Noah



Soprano Yannick-Muriel Noah is renowned in North America and Europe for her lyricism and dramatic intensity. Her repertoire includes the title roles in *Madama Butterfly*, *Tosca*, *La Wally* and *Aida*, as well as Micaëla (*Carmen*) and Marguerite (*Faust*). Yannick-Muriel sang the role of Nedda in *Pagliacci* for the Opera Lyra Ottawa in 2011. Recent performances have taken her to the Melbourne Festival in Australia, the Lyric Opera Dublin, to Edmonton with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, the Michigan Opera Theater and to the Elora Festival in Ontario.

In the 2013-14 season she will be performing as Tosca and Aida at the Theater Bonn Opernhaus in Germany.

Yannick-Muriel has won numerous prestigious awards including several top prizes at international competitions in Canada and beyond. She graduated with a Bachelor of Architectural Studies with a Minor in Italian from Carleton University.

2009 Philippe Sly



While still attending McGill University's Schulich School of Music, Ottawa bass-baritone Philippe Sly won the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in 2011 and was also the winner in 2012 of the Concours International Musical de Montréal. He spent a year in the COC Ensemble Studio program in Toronto, appearing in a number of their productions. After having made his Salzburg Festival main stage opera debut in von Winter's sequel to Mozart's *Zauberflöte*, "das Labyrinth," he launched his first CD "In Dreams," followed in rapid succession by his second CD, Rameau's "Les Amants Trahis."

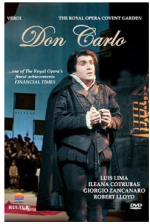
Philippe moved on to the prestigious Adler Program in San Francisco where he was awarded the lead role of Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*. Under Kent Nagano he sang Méphistophélès in *La damnation de Faust* with the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal. He will sing in both the Winnipeg and the NAC *Messiah*. In the spring he will be appearing in the Fauré *Requiem* with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Yannick Nézet-Séguin and in Händel's *Solomon* with Les Violons du Roy under Bernard Labadie.

2011 Arminè Kassabian

See page 10 for her biography.

Opera alla Pasta

Opera on DVD, followed by dinner
Sundays at 2 p.m. at St. Anthony's Soccer Club (Preston at the Queensway)
Cost: \$20 (including dinner)
Please reserve in advance by the deadline given.

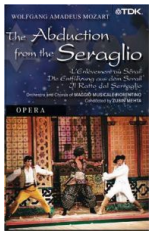


Sun Feb 16, 2014, 1 p.m.

Don Carlos by Giuseppe Verdi (1813 – 1901)

Luis Lima, Robert Lloyd, Ileana Cotrubas, Giorgio Zancanaro; Royal Opera House Chorus, Orchestra of the Royal Opera House; Bernard Haitink (conductor). Recorded 1985.

Reserve by **Thu Feb 13** by calling **(613) 721-7121** (Elizabeth Meller)



Sun Mar 30, 2014, 2 p.m.

The Abduction from the Seraglio by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791)

Markus John, Eva Mai, Patrizia Cioti, Rainer Trost, Mehrzad Montazeri, Kurt Rydl; Chorus and Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Florence; Zubin Mehta (conductor). Recorded 2002.

Reserve by **Thu Mar 27** by calling **(613) 721-7121** (Elizabeth Meller)



Sun May 25, 2014, 2 p.m.

Tosca by Giacomo Puccini (1858 – 1924)

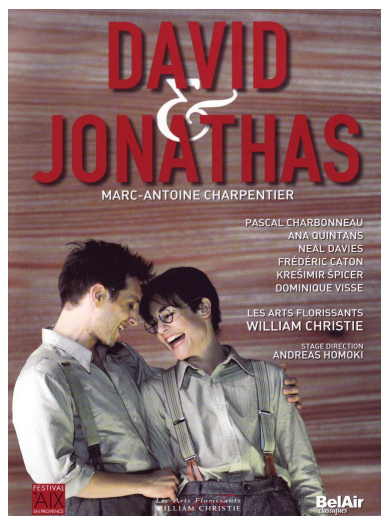
Angela Gheorghiu, Jonas Kaufmann, Bryn Terfel; Orchestra and chorus of the Royal Opera House; Antonio Pappano (conductor). Recorded 2011.

Reserve by **Thu May 22** by calling **(613) 721-7121** (Elizabeth Meller)

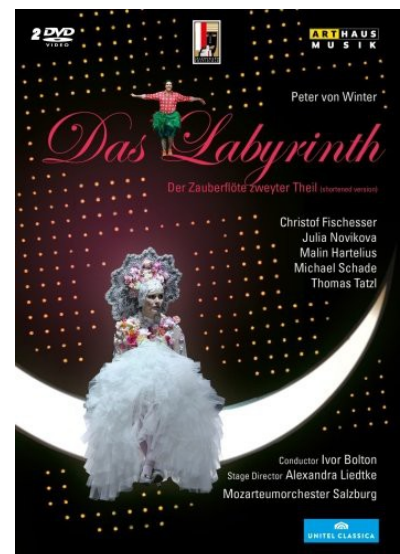
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(1st place, 2003) as Ping



With Pascal Charbonneau
(2nd place, 2003) as David



With Philippe Sly
(1st place, 2009) as Sithos

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We also wish to acknowledge the generosity of those people who remembered the society and its projects in their wills.

Special acknowledgement is due to artists who gave fund-raising concerts in the early days of the competition:

- The late Louis Quilico with his friends from New York, tenor Raul Melo and pianist Tom Muraco
- Gerald Finley with his cousin Brian Finley

Congress Travel, under the direction of Mr. Donald and Mrs. Lois Harper, arranged fund-raising trips to New York's Metropolitan Opera to debuts and performances by Gerald Finley and Daniel Taylor.

The following opera celebrities participated in receptions or dinners:

- Mario Bernardi
- Gerald Finley
- Ben Heppner

Last but not least, many thanks to all jurors who have so generously given of their time over the years:

Susan Blyth-Schofield	Sandra Graham	Diane Loeb	Guillermo Silva-Marin
Donna Brown	Stuart Hamilton	Michael McMahon	Charlotte Stewart
Barbara Clark	Garth Hampson	Mark Pedrotti	Marcia Swanston
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the late Nicholas Goldschmidt	Brian Law	Roxalana Roslak	

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