

# Newsletter • Bulletin

Fall 2012

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Automne 2012

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## VIVA Opera Lyra Ottawa! by Murray Kitts

Like all opera lovers in our National Capital I was hoping that the OLO production of Puccini's *La bohème* would be as perfect as possible given the financial situation. As soon as the curtain rose I knew that my hope would not be fulfilled. The garret set used for Acts I and IV was barn-like and yet, as modified, seemed too small for all the action in Act II. It's true that the extra space in the garret scenes allowed for more room for horseplay comedy scenes. But the temptation to fill the space by, for example, separating the singers, positioning one to the back and above the other, proved irresistible to the stage director. Having a transparent screen at the rear may have produced some interesting effects but in Act II all the entrances from the centre distracted from what was happening on the rest of the stage. The lighting made certain that we knew that Parpignol and later Musetta were about to enter. At other times the lighting was notable by its absence. In Act III it was impossible to see Mimi's reactions to Rudolfo's confession of his fears about her health because all we could see of Mimi was a vague shape. Also, it seems to me that some small spotlighting would have helped the audience immediately realize who was singing what and where onstage at the beginning and well into Act II - Colline with his coat, Marcello chatting up some girls, Schaunard and his horn and Rudolfo and Mimi with the bonnet.

But, of course, none of the above criticisms really matter if both singing and acting are great and if the music is sublime. The NAC Orchestra under the direction of Alexander Shelley has never sounded better. The Opera Lyra Chorus and Children's Chorus performed well under the direction of Laurence Ewashko and Jamie Loback respectively. No matter how many times one has witnessed a

performance of *La bohème*, the soaring lyricism of Puccini's music depicting young love is almost overwhelming. The tragedy, almost unbearable. The cast

principals were all excellent. Our Mimi, Joyce El-Khoury, has a voice powerful enough to be heard in a large hall, but also capable of producing the most lovely pianissimos when called for by the score. As Rodolfo, tenor Michael Fabiano possesses a

faultless technique and an ardency in delivery which could very well propel him to opera world stardom. Joshua Hopkins may become one of the most sought-after interpreters of Marcello due to his beautiful baritone voice and acting skills. Who could resist the attack that Laura Whalen made on her former lover in her famous "Waltz Song" and then not be moved by her devotion to the dying Mimi? Making up the other half of the penniless garret dwellers were Peter McGillivray as the musician Shaunard and Valerian Ruminski as Colline, both effective in the high jinks. The latter used his great bass voice for an affecting farewell to his coat to be pawned to help the ill Mimi. Peter Strummer as both landlord Benoit and duped sugar daddy Alcindoro shines as an outstanding character singer-actor in opera. Who can forget his appearance with OLO as Don Pasquale? No wonder the capacity audience on the final night gave the performers their warmest applause.

We should not forget that two of the main singers are from our local population. No doubt school, church and other agencies have been helpful in helping them to this stage in their careers. But the presence of an opera company in the community has no doubt been

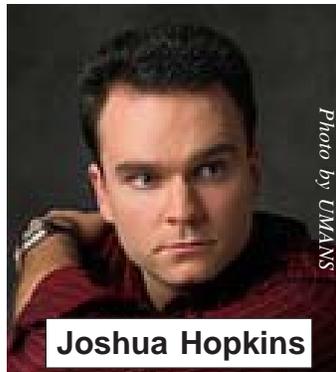


Photo by UMANS

Joshua Hopkins



Photo by ACOSTA

Joyce El-Khoury

(continued on page 2)

# President's Message

So many great things have happened. We welcome Sandra Graham, well-known for her professional career in opera and her experience in producing operas, as a new member of the Board. In Ottawa we have had concerts featuring Joyce El-Khoury and Philippe Sly, the latter winning nearly everything at the Montreal International Music Competition (see our home page at [ncos.ca](http://ncos.ca) for details). Both Joyce and Joshua Hopkins have been featured in Opera News as important new singers and both had major roles in OLO's *La bohème*. Isn't it great that two of our Brian Law winners are able to participate in the revitalization of our local opera company? Watch for Joshua next January in the Met's simulcast production of Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda* as the advisor to Queen Elizabeth I. Our hard-working critics have been to opera centres near and far in order to

bring you the latest news on productions of special interest to our group. We have some excellent opera DVDs to show you, the Verdi and the Wagner operas saluting the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth year of these two giants of the world of opera. At our summer meeting we again decided to support Opera Lyra's Young Artist Program and the Pellegrini Opera Company with grants of \$1,500. I've already received thanks from both groups. The next Brian Law Competition will be held tentatively on November 9, 2013 - mark it on your calendar. After Gerald Finley's magnificent recital I was pleased to hear from one of our readers how well our newsletter provides so much good information as well as a stimulation of interest in opera. Thanks Dave and Tom and all our contributors.



## VIVA Opera Lyra Ottawa! (continued from page 1)

vital to their development as artists. That's why OLO is so important and must be fully revived and sustained. Both Joyce and Joshua are winners of Brian Law Opera Scholarships under the guidance of the National Capital Opera Society. We should be proud of our role in assisting these talented singers. In speaking with Joshua I told him how we were so happy for his continuing success and that when he appears at the Met in *Maria Stuarda* and on the main stage of the

Glyndebourne Festival in the role of the Count in *The Marriage of Figaro* we can claim to our supporters that their donations have had an impact on the ability of young singers to reach their goals in such a great performing art.

Don't forget Julie, Shannon, Joyce, Philippe, and Arminè.

Hoorah for us!

**VIVA Opera Lyra Ottawa!**

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# Events You Could Have Enjoyed

**Stepping Stone Competition:** This prestigious event, involving 30 Canadian musicians, was held in Ottawa in June. Three of these were singers, all sopranos. From our last BLOC, third place winner Jana Miller made it to the semi-finals. Of the six finalists, Florie Valiquette was the sole singer and she won the third prize of \$2,500, with Michelle Yelin Nam, piano, receiving the second prize of \$5,000, and Vincent Lauzer, recorder, capturing the main prize of \$10,000. —Shelagh Williams

**Music and Beyond:** One highlight was the *Baroque Opera Soiree*, an all-Handel celebration backed by Daniel Taylor's Theatre of Early Music and accompanied by appropriate monologues by actress Megan Follows. The many arias, duets and almost full scenes were sung by such stars as Brit tenor Charles Daniels, and Canadians Nancy Argenta and Karina Gauvin, sopranos, Daniel Taylor, countertenor, baritone James Westman, and newcomer, soprano Agnes Zsigovics - a great evening!

*The Rivered Earth*, a four-part cycle by author Vikram Seth and composer Alec Roth, was hosted by the author. Part III, *The Traveller*, set in India, was an extravaganza production, combining tenor Lawrence Wiliford, violin Philippe Honore, harp Michelle Gott, the Christ Church Cathedral Boys and Girls Choirs under Matthew Larkin, and Seventeen Voyces, all under Kevin Reeves, for a marvellous hour and a quarter journey through the ages of man via an amalgam of spoken text, song and instrumental music! —SW

**Stratford Shakespeare Festival:** The lively production of G&S's *Pirates of Penzance* had lots of interesting ropes and moving instruments, and great singing, action and costumes. *42nd Street* had all those familiar numbers: *You're getting to be a habit*, *We're in the money*, *Lullaby of Broadway*, *Shuffle off to Buffalo*. A world premiere musical, *Wanderlust*, was based on the poems and life of Robert Service, and blessed with good diction. —S.W.

**Shaw Festival:** Bernstein's one-act opera, *Trouble in Tahiti*, was sung by Elodie Gillett and Mark Uhre

with an accompanying 9-member chorus and small orchestra of five musicians. The block buster musical this year was *Ragtime* —SW.

**Thousand Islands Playhouse:** The Firehall Theatre hosted *Amelia*, an interesting musical about Amelia Earhart, written and composed by John Gray of *Billy Bishop Goes to War* fame. The Springer Theatre presented the zany rock and roll musical *Little Shop of Horrors*. —SW

**The Glimmerglass Festival:** The Festival has recently adopted a policy of including one American Broadway-style musical in their line-up of summer presentations. This year the musical was Meredith Willson's *The Music Man*. Many musical aficionados consider this piece to be the best of all Broadway musicals. It certainly had an auspicious beginning with a Tony Award for best musical in 1957. (To give you an appreciation of the competition that year *West Side Story* was one of the also-rans) In the last 55 years *The Music Man* has been revived numerous times, most notably at the Stratford Festival in 2005. As well, there has been a very popular movie and a recent TV adaptation. The Glimmerglass version this summer was excellent with great singing, acting and, especially, great dancing. A talented and enthusiastic cast energized the production and the two principals, Dwayne Croft as Harold Hill and Elizabeth Futral as Marion Paroo, both renowned opera singers, were superb.

Next year the musical on offer from Glimmerglass will be Lerner and Loew's *Camelot*. —Tom McCool

**Opera in 3D:** Two Covent Garden productions, *Carmen* and *Madama Butterfly*, were shown recently at the SilverCity Cinema. Both were in 3D and both were well worth the ticket price of \$17.95. Although both operas were Covent Garden productions neither had the "big name" singers usually associated with that prestigious opera house. However, the unfamiliar casts were most capable and the orchestra, chorus, costumes and sets were what one would expect from Covent Garden. Aside from the 3D element they were both high quality productions and 3D added to the spectacle that many opera enthusiasts enjoy. Opera in 3D may not be for everyone but if you like 3D movies you will probably like opera in 3D. —TM

# Novelties Not To Be Missed!

by Shelagh Williams

This year's Santa Fe Opera (SFO) offerings were too tempting to miss, combining several rarely performed or newish operas with one standard in five all-new productions! - Richard Strauss's *Arabella*, Gioachino Rossini's *Maometto II*, Giacomo Puccini's *Tosca*, Karol Szymanowski's *King Roger*, and Georges Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers*. Plus, someone finally saw sense so that we had an 8 p.m. start for the operas, rather than 9 p.m., as had previously been the case!

The week started with a wonderful concert, *Susan Graham and Friends*, and a couple of delightful Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival concerts to get us in the right mood. Our first opera was Richard Strauss's final collaboration with librettist Hugo von Hofmannsthal, the romantic *Arabella*. We had not seen this opera since the late 60's at Covent Garden with the late great Fischer-Dieskau in a lavish production - I still remember the grand staircase! - and SFO's lovely presentation did not disappoint. The complicated action takes place in Vienna during one Shrove Tuesday, the last day of Carnival, and concerns an impoverished aristocratic Viennese family which must recoup its finances by advantageously marrying off the elder daughter, Arabella, while disguising the younger daughter, Zdenka, as the boy Zdenko! This was a new co-production with Canadian Opera Company (COC), directed by Tim Albery, and so we should have a chance to see it again soon. Designer Tobias Hoheisel provided a set consisting of cleverly interchangeable grey pieces against which his period costumes stood out charmingly, while Albery matched this with straightforward and skilful direction, and Sir Andrew Davis artistically conducted his excellent young cast plus orchestra in the marvellous music. As the parents, Count and Countess Walden, bass-baritone Dale Travis and mezzo Victoria Livengood played and sang their roles well, making them more sympathetic than would have been expected from a modern point of view! Tiny soprano Heidi Stober pulled off the difficult role of Zdenka, in a clumsy suit and spectacles and singing seriously as Zdenko, yet charming in her female night attire at the end, having actually won her heart's desire, the officer Matteo, sung by the handsome young debuting tenor, Zach Borichevsky. Mandryka, a rich Croatian landowner and nephew to the Count's now dead army pal, having fallen in love with Arabella's photo, arrives on the scene

and Arabella instantly falls in love. Baritone Mark Delavan, who has come a long way since his early Glimmerglass Opera (GGO) days, had great fun por-



traying the unpolished but good-hearted suitor. In the title role, Canadian soprano Erin Wall combined beauty of face and voice for an ideal portrayal, although from the fourth row I thought I detected the early signs of pregnancy - later confirmed! It was a real treat to have such a great all-round production of this rarely-performed gem of sumptuous music.

Using a new critical performing edition, SFO presented Rossini's non-comical and rarely produced bel canto opera *Maometto II*, a vehicle written for his wife, the great Isabella Colbran, and requiring four superb singers - which the SFO had! In fact, the complete production was splendid, a pleasant surprise when I realized David Alden was the director! The complex story involves a fifteenth century Venetian noblewoman, Anna, whose father, Paolo Erisso, Governor of Negroponte, wants her to marry General Calbo, who loves her, for her added protection as the end of Sultan Maometto II's bitter siege approaches. Anna refuses, as she loves another, whom she had met in Corinth, but finds, as the Turkish siege ends, that the conquering Maometto and her lover are one and the same! Since Maometto still loves her, he offers to make her his queen and pardon her father and Calbo (whom he believes her brother). Unfortunately, she now loathes him for lying to her as a spy, and so betrays his forces to her father and marries Calbo. When Maometto returns for revenge she defiantly kills herself - although in this production not with her father's

## Novelties Not To Be Missed! (continued)

stiletto but by pulling Maometto's sword into herself, before the incredulous Maometto could stop her! Alden directed well and clearly, for example combining the almost imperceptible slinking in of the first few Turks, late in Act I, with the dramatic initial entrance of Maometto himself, bursting through the wall, as Negroponte was taken from the Venetians! Debuting designer Jon Morrell's versatile unit set consisted of large curving white moveable walls with a plaque on the left which raised to reveal a Madonna and Child in a niche for a church setting, or allow a drawbridge to descend with Maometto's chariot and three statues of galloping horses for a magnificent exit! For the Turkish camp in Act II, a triangular red cloth suggested Maometto's tent, and at one point a row of the heads of veiled harem women astonishingly appeared along the top for their chorus! Duane Schuler's dramatic lighting accentuated these effects well. Although supposedly set in 1820, the year Rossini wrote the opera, Morrell's costumes, while attractive, and easily distinguishing Venetians and Turks, covered a wide temporal range, with Maometto's elegant outfit more appropriate to the actual time of the story. In the pit, Frederic Chaslin, beginning his second season as Chief Conductor, kept Rossini's tricky music flowing, providing great support for the singers, who were first-rate singly and in ensemble. Needless to say, the Apprentice Artists Chorus was also superb. Irish mezzo Patricia Barden made her debut in the pants role of General Calbo with a strong voice and managed to look the part, while tenor Bruce Sledge as Anna's father presented well as both a loving parent and strong leader. In a major role, debuting soprano Leah Crocetto was quite marvellous - no wonder she won the Cardiff Singer of the World Competition last year! Her voice combined both power and agility and her acting showed Anna's developing maturity as she chose duty over love - quite a feat! Probably forty minutes passed before Venezuelan bass-baritone Luca Pisaroni as Maometto made his sensational entrance: tall, good-looking and with an ease with coloratura that belied his low range, yet with sufficient strength to be heard - what skill and presence! Each of the two acts lasted 1½ hours, yet the time flew



by in an instant, so cleverly staged, well paced, and beautifully sung and played was this production - a resounding success!

Our middle opera was a nice traditional production of Puccini's *Tosca*, though with a few unexpected twists! The debuting production team of Australian director Stephen Barlow and Greek designer Yannis Thavoris decided to set the opera in the actual Roman locales indicated, but slightly reconfigured, often turned 90 degrees. Thus in Act I, Sant' Andrea della Valle appeared on its side, so that we looked into the huge dome and Cavaradossi's painting became the floor, similar to COC a few years ago. At the end of the act, Duane Schuler's lighting of the dome provided a wonderful backdrop to the vivid costumes of church and lay singers during the impressive *Te Deum* procession. For Act II part of the floor flipped up to display on its underside an old painting as background for Scarpia's office in the Palazzo Farnese. The Castel Sant' Angelo in Act III had Cavaradossi's cell wall as the floor, and then the roof top from which Tosca jumped, with tilted church spires to give an impression of height and perspective. As to the action in Act II, a servant cleared the table and also took the knife from Tosca, so she had to be even more resourceful, and finally used some sort of long hair ornament or slender stiletto originally from her hair to stab Scarpia - I was at the other side of the theatre, so I wasn't sure! Then she unceremoniously dragged the body ironically into the torture chamber, with neither candles nor crucifix in attendance! Also, the boy soprano opening the

# Novelties Not To Be Missed!

by Shelagh Williams

final act was a clearly visible cleaner rather than just an off-stage voice. Chief Conductor Frederic Chaslin was again at the helm, leading his excellent orchestra and singers in a fine performance. Bass Raymond Aceto gave us a good performance as Scarpia, but did not seem to be a complete villain! Debuting tenor Brian Jagde, hired as one of Arabella's minor suitors, but set to sing Cavaradossi soon at San Francisco, was fortunately able to take over that role here only one week before opening when the scheduled Andrew Richards became ill, and he did a great job, both acting and singing - one



could not have guessed! However, SFO should have alerted patrons with some sort of announcement or insert - I only realized afterwards when I checked the photos and remembered it was mentioned by Desiree Mays! In the title role South African soprano Amanda Echalaz looked and sang very well, but I always feel that had Tosca not been so silly and tiresomely jealous, everyone would not have come to grief! However, this was a very good production, well done and straightforward, with interesting nuances to keep it entertaining!

Our next treat was Szymanowski's *King Roger*, a rare twentieth century Polish Symbolist opera, which is one in which everything can represent something else, but here based roughly on Euripedes' *The Bacchae*, with a happy ending! The basic story, by Karol Szymanowski and his cousin Jaroslaw Iwazskiewicz, is that a charismatic shepherd, a follower of Dionysius and preaching sensual freedom, wanders into the unhappy King Roger's conventional Sicilian kingdom. He over-

comes the initial general resistance and entices both Queen Roxana and the common people into debauchery. Roger too is tempted but resists, and at the end, transformed and strengthened by the experience, he reaches out to Apollo and returns to reason, order and dignity. As Desiree Mays in *Opera Unveiled* puts it: "The whole opera is set in dream-time beginning with the dying day and ending with the dawn." According to the SFO programme, director Stephen Wadsworth felt that the opera was not so much about Roger as about Szymanowski himself and his idealization of Sicily as a "place of open debate and tolerance." Therefore he and scenic designer Thomas Lynch used a plain stage with little furniture or props, so as to permit dancing, and placed high above it painted panels which turned to provide a suitable background for each of the three acts, also well delineated by Duane Schuler's lighting. Anne Hould-Ward's costumes, especially Roger's red robe, added colour and distinguished characters well. Szymanowski's sumptuous music is a brilliant amalgam, with an impressionistic style, slow-moving and exotic to mirror the lack of action, yet soaring and insistent, especially for the Bacchanal and for the finale. Debuting young conductor Evan Rogister harnessed his fine forces for a great straight-through reading of this 90 minute score. The chorus was marvellous and versatile, from the opening, singing an a cappella chant *Holy, Holy* in the cathedral, to the vigorous Bacchanal much later. Bass Raymond Aceto sang the Archbishop, while tenor Dennis Petersen gave us a fine Arab scholar and counselor, Edrisi. Soprano Erin Morley, as Queen Roxana, was lovely to look at and listen to. Tenor William Burden, who sang Jupiter in the COC's spring *Semele*, is handsome, with a lovely tone, but perhaps a little old to be the beautiful and irresistible youth one expected from Edrisi's description, and was certainly not aided by his unbecoming costumes! Polish baritone Mariusz Kwiecen has been championing this opera, and his performance as King Roger displayed his obvious love for the role and his ability to play and sing it well, relishing in his

## Novelties Not To Be Missed! (continued)



own native language as he did so. This was a very good production of this newish opera, although the orgy was more of a Canadian orgy, definitely not wild! I am very glad to have seen and experienced this thankfully short opera, with its intriguing music, but I would not make a special trip to see it a second time.

Bizet's *Pearl Fishers* is justly famous for its male duet *Au fond du temple saint* but, thankfully, there is much more to the score than that, and so we were glad to see it again for the first time since the Opera Lyra Ottawa (OLO) production a few years ago. The multinational team of director Lee Blakely and costume designer Brigitte Reiffenstuel, who both worked on COC's spring *Tales of Hoffmann*, and French scenic director Jean-Marc Puissant combined to create a lovely production. First of all, one was led into the staging by a French colonial setting at the edge of a huge gold picture frame surrounding the Ceylonese village square on the edge of water, and then through the open back of the stage to the natural backdrop: a gorgeous Santa Fe sunset over the mountains - wow! They should do that more often! The beginning of the opera was clarified, with the dangers of pearl-diving and the need for the choice of a new king (Zurga) obvious when the dead king was carried in at the start of Act I and remained, flower covered, at the temple in Act II. Then during the duet Leila arrived spectacularly on a hand, lifted up from the sea, dressed and

veiled as a Hindu goddess in red, as a figment of the singers' imagination. Lighting designer Rick Fisher produced a stupendous storm for Act II, with loads of rain and lightning, and the picture frame falling away along with much of the temple. The final burning of the village was cleverly done off stage using lighting effects! The costumes were also good, with Leila in a gorgeous sexy gown when she wasn't on priestess duties, and the two leading men easily distinguished because Nadir, now a hunter, was dressed like Indiana Jones! Surprisingly, though, Zurga, who started out half naked was, after the cataclysm, much better dressed! French conductor Emmanuel Villaume, in charge of this French opera, obviously knew what he was doing and was blessed with a good chorus of Apprentice Artists and orchestra, and great soloists. The High Priest, Nourabad, in long dark robe and red turban, was austere played but strongly sung by bass Wayne Tigges. Tenor Eric Cutler, who recently sang Roberto in *Maria Stuarda* at the COC, was the good looking, big-voiced Nadir, who got the girl. Baritone Christopher Magiera as the main male protagonist, Zurga, sang and acted very well, but a bit more physical height and strength of voice would have been even nicer! Finally, Nicole Cabell, who sang for Cathedral Arts in Ottawa a few years ago, looked and sounded a marvellous Leila - I was fortunately in the fourth row with a good view and in easy hearing range. She graciously attended an after-opera party where I was able to congratulate her. This was a great production of a fine opera and a fitting ending of our opera week in Santa Fe.



# Gerald Finley Highlights Westben Season

by Ute Davis

As part of a brief Ontario summer tour, Gerald Finley, the much valued Patron of our National Capital Opera Society, starred in a Sunday afternoon concert on 22 July 2012 at Westben. It lies immediately N.W. of Campbellford, ON, where there is a large “barn” specially built for the purpose. The Finley and Bennett families host a popular summer music festival in this small town, now in its thirteenth season which is most successful; tickets for this “Sunday Afternoon at the Opera” sold out in February.

We have made previous visits to this location for concerts by Gerald, the first time around attending with Bobbi Cain, our previous president, who was also a major fan of his work. On this occasion the pre-concert chat was given by Iain Scott, musicologist and popular public speaker. He has appeared many times with Richard Turp on the Saturday Afternoon at the Opera Quiz when both have proved highly entertaining and devastatingly knowledgeable.

The concert consisted of a wide range of operatic arias by Bizet, Händel, Mozart, Rossini, Verdi and Wagner, sung by Gerald with support from soprano Virginia Hatfield, mezzo Beth Turnbull and tenor James McLean. As always, it was a delight to hear Gerald excel at delivering perfect diction in at least four languages. The very talented managing director of Westben, Brian Finley, accompanied the singers at the piano and the Finley cousins shared the introductions and explanations with multiple sallies from each at the other’s expense. This light-hearted summer festival atmosphere did not prevent Gerald giving us a currently best -in-the-world calibre performance.

The afternoon began with a wonderful rendition of “Sibillar gl’ angui d’ Aletto” (*Rinaldo*). Gerald’s beautiful “Sois immobile” (*Guillaume Tell*) and the extremely touching and emotionally charged “Credo in un Dio” (*Otello*) will not be forgotten. Indeed his “Hai gia vinta la causa” (*Nozze*) was an object lesson for any young bass baritone! Rarely have I heard “Deh vieni alla fenestra” (*Don Giovanni*) so delicately performed... and both of these pieces are regularly sung by the best young talent in competition.

It was perhaps unfortunate that all the other competent singers suffered by comparison. Towards the culmination of this extremely satisfying opera afternoon, Gerald delighted the audience with a more lighthearted fare of “Was duftet doch der Flieder” (*Meistersinger*), “Edelweiss” (*Sound of Music*) and “My Boy Bill” (*Carousel*).

This visit by Gerald and his wife, Heulwen Keyte,

as well as Mrs. Rae Finley, his Ottawa resident mother, led to a family get-together by the numerous “Finley clan” following the concert, not seen since our visit to the Met in 1997 where we were charmed by a most memorable Papageno, as well as a lovely reception at the Canadian Consulate.

Gerald goes on to a concert and master classes in Toronto, a Lieder Abend presentation as part of the Ottawa Chamberfest series and some engagements in the U.S.

Gerald will next be seen -and honored- 16 Oct at the “Rubies” in Toronto, the Opera Canada Awards. He will then go on to perform “Count Almaviva” in *Nozze* at the Met, towards the end of October and into November of this year.



Rae and Gerald Finley

# Yannick-Muriel Noah Pays a Return Visit to Ottawa

by Ute Davis

Soprano Yannick-Muriel Noah, the Brian Law winner of 2007, continues to establish a distinguished career following her years with the Toronto/COC Ensemble Studio and two main stage roles as *Tosca* and *Butterfly*.



Ute Davis and  
Yannick-Muriel Noah

The Ottawa “Music and Beyond” summer festival under Julian Armour, selected her, together with Toronto’s most talented baritone James Westman, to provide the solo vocal offerings at the Gala Opening 4 July 2012.

Yannick-Muriel, just having returned from a year in Heidelberg, Hannover and Valencia gave a beautiful and nuanced rendition of “Glück, das mir verblieb” from Erich Korngold’s *Die tote Stadt*, followed by an extraordinarily intense “O patria mia” from Verdi’s *Aida* and a more relaxed and quite seductive “Meine Lippen die küssen so heiss” (Lehár).

Expecting her third child at the end of this summer, Yannick-Muriel is managing to balance her private and professional lives. In addition to multiple performances in Canadian opera venues, she has appeared in various European opera houses, mostly being sought after for her *Aida* and *La Wally* in places like Klagenfurt, Heidelberg, Hannover and Valencia as well as *Ariadne auf Naxos*, a new role for her. Her two little girls appeared delightfully fluent in German (as well as English and French),

having attended school in Heidelberg for the last year. We are looking forward to hearing more of Yannick again, now that she has returned to Toronto.

# Ben Heppner a Hit at “MUSIC AND BEYOND”

by Ute Davis

For the Gala Closing Concert of his 2012 Festival on 15 July, Julian Armour invited Heldentenor Ben Heppner to perform. Ben came up to all expectations. He charmed his audience with a wide range of Lieder (art songs) by Franz Schubert, Robert Schumann, Hugo Wolf and Richard Wagner, then moved into operetta with immensely popular arias from “Die Rose von Stambul”, “Gräfin Mariza” and “Land des Lächelns”.

Ben further endeared himself to fans of Pellegrini Opera, indeed the entire audience, when he noted that it was Maria Pellegrini’s birthday and proceeded to lead the audience in a resounding chorus of “Happy Birthday”.

Mr. Heppner was consistently in excellent voice for this concert, a thoroughly enjoyable finish to a festival which was as pleasing to devotees of vocal as those of instrumental music.

Again, the pianist, John Hess, deserves major accolades for his contribution to the success of this aptly titled evening “Künstlerleben”, the life of an artist. We are very much looking forward to seeing Ben as Tristan in the upcoming production of “Tristan und Isolde” at the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto (Feb. 2013).



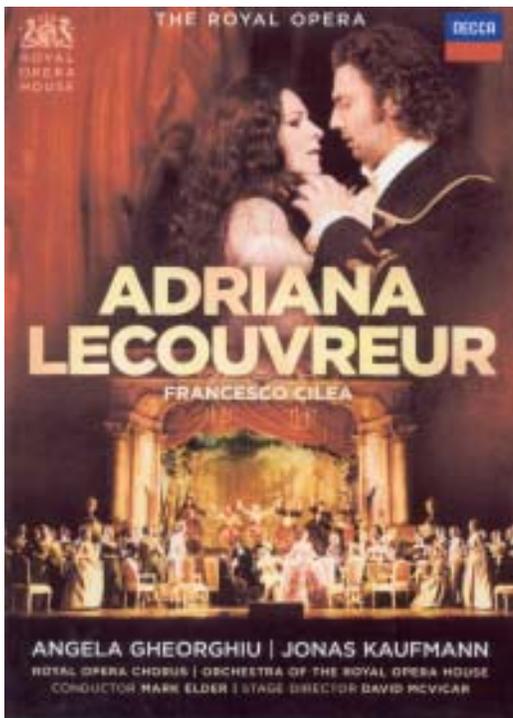
Ben Heppner and Maria Pellegrini

Photos by Ute Davis

# 2012 - Opera alla Pasta

## The Place: St. Anthony's Soccer Club

DVD presentations of outstanding operas from the great opera houses of the world followed by a delicious meal.



November 11, 2012

## Adriana Lecouvreur

by Francesco Cilea

*This long neglected masterpiece by Cilea was brought to new life at the Royal Opera House in December of 2010 in a most splendid fashion, encompassing celebrity, passion, romance, jealousy and death. McVickar's production is excellent with a cast of impeccable calibre at the height of their voices, a director of vision and a sensitive conductor with a superb orchestra. This is a truly great performance, wonderfully recorded both in picture and sound. Probably one of the best that we have seen from any opera house within the last number of years.*

February 3, 2013

## La forza del destino

by Giuseppe Verdi

*This production resulted in one of the Wiener Staatsoper's most celebrated achievements of recent years. Powerful performances are given by a dream cast, headed by Nina Stemme as Leonora, Salvatore Licitra as Alvaro and Carlos Alvarez as Don Carlo. Zubin Mehta leads the Staatsoper Orchestra with agility, subtlety and mastery.*



# Opera alla Pasta - 2013

The Time: 2:00 P.M. The Cost: \$20

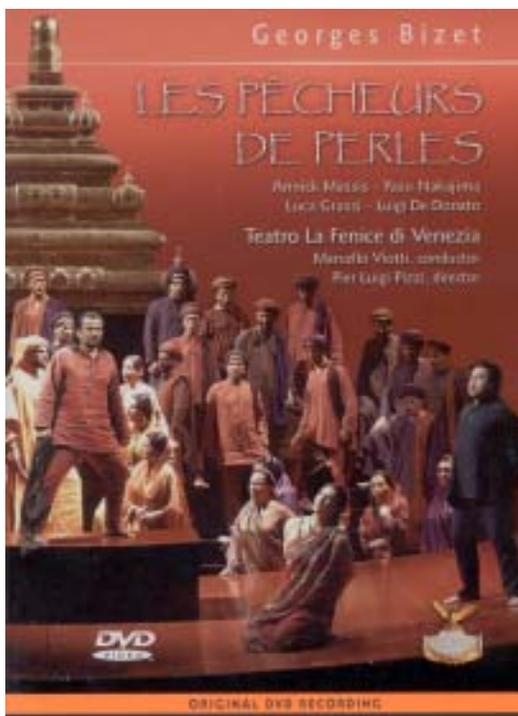
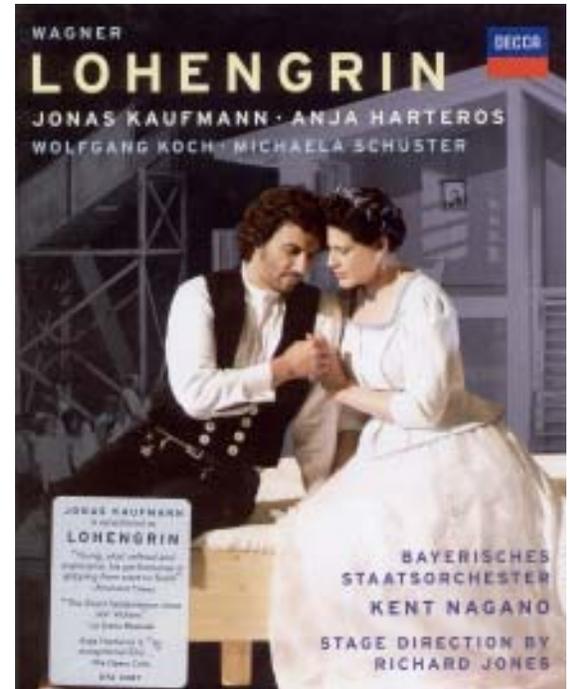
## *Sunday Afternoon at the Opera*

April 14, 2013

### Lohengrin

by Richard Wagner

*The visual part of this DVD may not be pleasing to all, it being a “radical” new production from the 2009 Munich Festival. However, the soloists are vocally spectacular. Jonas Kaufmann is the best Lohengrin of this generation and possibly of the past half century. Anja Harteros and Michaela Schuster are authoritative interpreters of Elsa and Ortrud in this most beautiful score. The remainder of the cast, the chorus and the orchestra under Kent Nagano are simply wonderful*



May 26, 2013

### Les pêcheurs de perles

by Georges Bizet

*This is one of those rare operatic gems. A very easy opera to stage, yet not staged enough. A surprisingly strong performance from Venice's Teatro Malibran with a talented young cast. Beautifully conducted by veteran Viotti, the Fenice orchestra and chorus are superb.*

**Call 613-721-7121**

at least 3 days before the date of the DVD presentation in order to reserve a place. Also, because some dates may have to be changed, Elizabeth Meller at 613-721-7121 can confirm the exact date of each presentation.

## A Season of Conflict by Shelagh Williams

This year's Glimmerglass Festival (GGF) offerings involved a struggle or strife of some kind - Verdi's *Aida*, Lully's *Armide*, Weill's *Lost in the Stars* and Willson's *Music Man*. The latter two are reviewed on pages 15 and 3.

*Aida* is envisioned by most as a grand opera, but GGF's new production under director Francesca Zambello scaled it down for the small GGF theatre, focussing on the intimate relationships and conflicts between the four principals. She also updated it to today's Middle East and, in general, the concept worked - certainly much better than the Canadian Opera Company (COC)'s recent travesty! Set designer Lee Savage provided a basic easily-transformable unit set consisting of a large bombed-out structure, and added a tall mobile



Photo by Karli Cadel

Aida  
Amonasro

framework to support orators, priestesses, banners, whatever! He also supplied a cute jeep in the second half for the Egyptian generals to spread maps over, and for Aida and Radames to try to escape in! Fashion designer Bibhu Mohapatra provided attractive costumes but from various eras rather than a consistent time frame. The Egyptian King, High Priest and Priestess and the handmaidens of the chorus were in usual ancient style garb, and Aida and her father Amonasro were in white royal Ethiopian outfits with striking red embroidery - the Egyptians should have twigged to their high status immediately! However, Princess Amneris seemed to be in an alternative universe, rather overdressed in a war zone in the latest formal length Paris fashions! Yet she was at least in the same era as Radames and the male chorus, who were dressed in American army uniforms for present day Middle Eastern conflicts. Directorially, one scene did work very well, where, in

the temple, the Egyptians unrolled their prayer mats and knelt to reverently sing the chorus. However, some of the decisions evoked snickers, such as a machine gun as Radames' holy weapon, and really weird Ethiopian trophies proudly paraded about! Others provoked disgust, such as the unnecessary thumping of the Ethiopian prisoners and the gratuitous water boarding of Radames during his questioning - I definitely do not pay to witness torture! Also unpleasant was the execution of Radames by lethal injection - fortunately the slowest acting lethal drug on record, so that he could still sing his final scene before dying! The last act therefore left a really bad taste in the mouth and this production, like Toronto's, may be hard to rent to other companies! Egyptian maestro Nader Abbassi, head of the Cairo Opera, knows *Aida* well, having conducted it, played in the orchestra and sung in the chorus and as King - and it showed. He matched Zambello's dramatic tension with crisp and beautiful music-making with his top-notch singers and players. Mezzo Daveda Karanas, who is to sing in *Tristan und Isolde* at the COC, was Amneris, the Egyptian Princess. She had stage presence and a large voice but seemed to shriek at times. The voice of good looking young tenor Noah Stewart was fine, though occasionally a bit harsh, and he played Radames with bravado. Bass-baritone Eric Owens, whom we had heard in his GGF debut in *Rape of Lucrece* back in 2001, has been singing Ramfis, the High Priest. Here his role debut in the major role of Aida's father showcased his lovely



Photo by Karli Cadel

Amneris  
Radames

## A Season of Conflict (continued)

mellow voice and strong acting skills. Soprano Michelle Johnson, a fellow winner with Philippe Sly in the 2011 MET Auditions, had the voice and looks for an ideal Aida. This GGF production was, musically, very good, and it certainly was a brave effort. A few years ago Opera Lyra Ottawa (OLO) managed a most enjoyable traditional production of *Aida*. I feel that if an opera company such as GGF or COC won't do justice to *Aida*'s pageantry, then it should leave it to companies such as OLO who can and will, and not disappoint its patrons.

We were delighted to be able again to enjoy Opera Atelier's marvellous *Armide*, which we saw in the spring in Toronto, and which was reviewed in the summer Newsletter. All of the major elements were intact except for orchestra and cho-



rus which were from GGF. Conductor David Fallis gave an excellent, enthusiastic and informative pre-talk. He indicated that this French Baroque opera was Lully's last major work, wherein dance was an important and integral component. It is a Romeo and Juliet type story between the Christian knight Renaud and the Saracen warrior princess Armide. Thus, as the opera opens in the Saracen camp, with rejoicing over a victory against the Crusaders, one could at first be taken aback to see Christian icons and flags displayed, until one realized these were trophies captured from the Crusaders. Musically, the Toronto Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra used baroque instruments which Lully wrote for. Since the GGF orchestra is modern, and tuned a tone higher, the whole score had to be rewritten lower for them! Of course, the added baroque harpsichords, theorbos and recorders were fine! As in

the Toronto production, director Marshall Pynkoski and choreographer Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg had the same beautiful presentation of set designer Gerard Gauci and costume designer Dora Rust D'Eye to work with. Bonnie Beecher's lighting seemed slightly different, but better, perhaps because of a newer theatre and equipment. The GGF stage is larger, which certainly gave Zingg and her dancers more room and scope for their so-important dances. Maestro Fallis handled the music side with his usual panache, keeping his orchestra, his Young Artists Program chorus, all in black and again in the left side boxes, and his singers all on task. However, some of the singers at times sounded a bit husky, and not as strong as in Toronto, perhaps due to the larger stage, different acoustics, or even the cold and open air environment - last year several GGF singers had big problems, especially with pollen. One cast change took place in *Armide*'s lovely ladies-in-waiting, with Mireille Asselin here joining Meghan Lindsay, previously in the cast, to give us two Ottawa sopranos to delight in! Otherwise, bass Joao Fernandes as Armides' elegant uncle Hidroat and bass-baritone Curtis Sullivan as the barihunk Hate in skin-tight fiendish body suit completed *Armide*'s associates, and the two chevaliers who came to rescue Renaud from *Armide* were again bass-baritone Olivier Laquerre (Ubalde) and tenor Aaron Ferguson. Colin Ainsworth's high tenor and tall good looks compelled *Armide* to fall in love for the first time with his Renaud, and soprano Peggy Kriha Dye convincingly sang *Armide*'s long role,



forever torn between love and hate. It was great to be able to revisit this magnificent production, and Artistic and General Director Francesca Zambello must agree since she has invited Opera Atelier back for 2014 with Lully's *Persee*!

# Events you might Enjoy by David Williams

**The Opera Lyra Guild** presents *'High C' and High Tea* with Murray Kitts on Sunday, September 30 - 1 p.m. at Library and Archives Canada. This presentation will cover singers who are no longer performing. 'High Tea' with sandwiches, scones and baked goodies will be served after the presentation. For information and reservations call: Judy Burrows 613- 224-9638; Dagmar Stonehouse 613-623-8138; Mary Frances Taylor 613-730-8450

**The Ottawa Choral Society** presents its *Discovery Series* with a recital by Philippe Sly and Jordan de Souza on Monday, October 15 - 7:00 p.m. at St. Andrews Church. [www.ottawachoralsociety.com](http://www.ottawachoralsociety.com)

**Cathedral Arts** will present *Autumn Rhapsody*, featuring Louise Pitre in a Tribute to Edith Piaf on Saturday, October 20 - 8:00 p.m. and its *Annual Christmas Concert*, with Marie-Josée Lord on Saturday, December 8 - 7:30 p.m. Both at Christ Church Cathedral. [www.cathedralarts.com](http://www.cathedralarts.com)

**St. Lukes Recital Series** presents *The classical song in America: songs by Gottschalk, Beach, Burleigh, Barber, Bernstein, Floyd and more*; featuring Joan Fearnley (soprano) with Frédéric Lacroix (piano) on Sunday, October 14 - 7:30 p.m. *An evening exploring the music of*

*Schubert, Spohr and Mozart* featuring Stephanie Piercey Beames (soprano) with Nicolas Tremblay (clarinet) and Frédéric Lacroix (piano) on Sunday, October 28 - 7:30 p.m. A quartet of singers from Musica Divina will perform music from the past, highlighting Remembrance Day on Sunday, November 11 - 7:30 p.m. <http://stlukesottawa.ca>

**The Ottawa Baroque Consort** presents *The Cares of Lovers, the great musical love stories of the 17th century*. Saturday, November 10 - 8:00 p.m. at Glebe St James United Church with special guest Ann Monoyios, soprano. <http://www.ottawabaroque.ca/>

**Thirteenstrings** presents *Candlelight with Vivaldi* featuring his famous "Gloria". Soloists Charlotte Corwin soprano, and Marion Newman mezzo-soprano are joined by Ottawa's own Seventeen Voyces. Dominion-Chalmers Church, December 11 - 8:00 p.m. <http://thirteenstrings.ca/>

**Ottawa University** and **Carleton University** have not yet announced their fall programs. For information check <http://www.music.uottawa.ca/calendar/concerts.html> and <http://www2.carleton.ca/music/events/>

## An Evening with Gerald Finley - August 6, 2012

Opera fans might have anticipated disappointment that the program announced was strictly song. But not afterwards. Gerald Finley's voice is better than ever, his diction superb, his ability to express meaning and emotions unparalleled. His song selections provided opportunities to demonstrate his mastery of this genre of singing. The ballads set to music by Carl Lowe from the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century ranged from the humorous to the horrendous. The Song Cycle Op. 24 by Schumann used poems by Heine to express beautifully the "Romantic Agony" of love - the longing, the apprehension, the despair, the thoughts

of suicide, and finally acceptance. It takes wit and genius as a composer for Maurice Ravel to compose songs from a group of poems called "Histoires naturelles" by Jules Renard, extraordinary and often funny portraits of birds - peacock, swan, kingfisher, guinea-fowl with the addition of a cricket. Finally Benjamin Britten's settings of English folk songs ranging from *Greensleeves* to a hilarious sea shanty called *The Crocodile*. The singer and his excellent accompanist, Stephen Ralls, were applauded enthusiastically by a capacity audience. — **Murray Kitts**

### Capital City Opera

MOZART'S

2012 Inaugural Season

ROSSINI'S

*Così fan tutte*

September 27 at the Mayfair Theatre  
and 30th at Perth Studio Playhouse

*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*

December 20th at the Mayfair Theatre  
and 22nd at the Perth Studio Playhouse

Information: <http://www.capitalcityopera.ca/>

# Lost in the Stars Revisited

by Lesley Robinson

Having attended the opening night of Kurt Weill and Maxwell Anderson's *Lost in the Stars* last November in Cape Town, we were interested to experience the evolution of the production when it finished its run at the Glimmerglass Festival in Cooperstown, New York. We were surprised at how different the experience actually turned out to be. A number of changes were made for Glimmerglass and the production evolved further after opening.

The set and costumes remained unchanged, preserving the stark atmosphere of the South Africa of the 1940s. The visual experience was enhanced by new choreography created by Anthony Salatino especially for Glimmerglass's multi-talented Young Artists. Sadly, only five cast members from the Cape Town production came to Glimmerglass to join the renowned Young Artists Program and only one, Amos Nomnabo, baritone reprised his principal role as John Kumalo, with Makudupanyane Senaohana, tenor taking on the role of Absalom. Both of them spoke highly of the experience they had had in the Glimmerglass Young Artists program. They worked hard and learnt a great deal during their summer in Upstate New York.

The American cast were totally engaged in the drama and although some struggled with accents in the spoken dialogue, their vocal performance was full of intense emotion. Sean Panikkar, a promising young tenor from Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania was outstanding in the role of the Leader and Chrystal E. Williams, mezzo-soprano delivered a saucy rendition of *Who'll Buy* as Linda. Eric Owens, Glimmerglass's Artist in Residence was the heart and soul of the production in the role of Stephen Kumalo. His heart-wrenching performances of *Lost in the Stars* at the end of the first act and of *O Tixo, Tixo, Help Me!* when Stephen is doubting his faith were delivered with such passion, that there was hardly a dry eye in the house.

There were changes made in the music for Glimmerglass with the cooperation of Kim H. Kowalke, President of the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music. This was a perfect piece for Glimmerglass, since Kurt Weill's work could be said to bridge the gap between classical

composition and musical theatre into which Glimmerglass has ventured in recent years. Weill sought to put a classical sound on Broadway. Two never-before performed songs were added for Glimmerglass. The juxtaposition of the joyful rendition of *Gold* with the tragedy that follows heightens the pathos of Absalom's dream of rising out of poverty, which leads only to disaster. *Little Tin God*, performed by John Kumalo refers to the worship of money that John cynically chooses over the faith of his brother. Its ticking rhythm is reprised in *Four o'clock*, sung by the chorus as Stephen Kumalo heartbreakingly awaits his son's execution.

45 minutes of dialogue were cut for the Glimmerglass production. This focused attention on the raw emotion of the music. As a lover of theatre, something was lost in this for me. In the first act there was less awareness of Stephen Kumalo's lengthy and frustrating search for his son, being always one step behind and unable to find him until it was too late. Towards the end I also missed the long and helpless wait and the slow, gradual steps towards redemption that are expressed in scenes of dialogue.

Changes were made even after the opening at Glimmerglass. With the first act ending on a moment of powerful tragedy, the following entr'acte seemed inap-

propriately upbeat and incongruous with the emotionality of the moment, so it was subsequently mostly cut. The ending that Weill had written for the original Broadway production in 1949 had the feeling of a glitzy Hollywood ending that was not in keeping with the mood of the tragedy, but allowed for the hope and optimism that was expected by

Broadway audiences. Instead, the Glimmerglass production ended with a reprise of *Cry, the Beloved Country* and the two fathers crying together for the loss of their sons. This was the most powerful, moving moment I have ever experienced in a theatre.

The final curtain call of the production had the entire audience on its feet and many tears were shed by performers and audience members alike.



Eric Owens graciously chatted with Lesley and Mark Robinson after the performance.

# A Lover and His Lass

by Ute Davis

Moments after they appeared on stage at the “Music and Beyond” Festival on 5 July 2012, it was evident from the chemistry between mezzo-soprano Wallis Giunta and baritone John Brancy that the title of their concert was particularly appropriate. Indeed these two highly talented young singers are ‘an item’, so to speak, as well as both being very busy with their burgeoning careers developing at the Lindemann Program and Juilliard School in New York City. Their diverse program explored the music of Bernstein, Britten, Duparc, Mozart, Rossini, Schumann and Vaughan Williams, providing a demonstration of not only gorgeous vocalizing but beautiful diction in four languages. They made a particularly attractive young couple, Wallis as always so polished in every aspect of her stage presence in exquisite designs by David McCaffrey haute couture, the sponsor of the evening, who also displayed close to a dozen gowns he has designed for Wallis over the last few years; with John as an outstandingly gracious and considerate partner. I was fortunate to have met him just a month earlier at the International Voice Competition in Montréal, where his clean, beautiful voice had impressed me.

Pianist Peter Dugan deserves special mention. I always feel that a lot of the credit for a truly successful concert should go to the accompanist.

National Capital Opera Society colleagues will remember Wallis for her excellent performance at our Brian Law Competition in 2009 when she was very narrowly beaten by Philippe Sly. Interestingly, John, who sang beautifully and demonstrated a definite acting ability at the forementioned Montréal voice competition finished third to Philippe Sly and Ukrainian/Swiss Olga Kindler.

Wallis’ career is progressing really well and in the 2012-13 season she will be singing the Countess Ceprano role in the Metropolitan Opera production of *Rigoletto* and will appear as Annio in the Canadian Opera Company’s *Clemenza di Tito*, next to Michael Schade’s Tito. In addition Wallis and John will both be singing in Germany, engagements include venues in Nürnberg, München and the Semper Opera in Dresden.



Peter Dugan, Wallis Giunta and John Brancy

# Italian Ambassador Gives Opera Lyra a Helping Hand

by Ute Davis



His Excellency,  
Andrea Meloni  
and  
Mrs. Paola Meloni

The Ambassador of Italy and Mrs. Paola Meloni graciously hosted a garden party for the supporters of Opera Lyra Ottawa at their beautiful Gatineau residence on Tuesday, 10 July.

Canada provided perfect weather for the occasion, while our hosts provided excellent prosecco and hors d’œuvres to put the large crowd of guests in a mood to appreciate the entertainment.

Comfortably seated before the natural stage provided by the portico of the

lovely home, the audience enjoyed an eclectic selection of arias from Italian opera. These were sung by Laura Whalen

(Soprano), Arminè Kassabian (Mezzo) and Brian Wehrle (Bass) accompanied by Judith Ginsburg at the piano. Opera Lyra expressed its gratitude to the Italian Canadian Community Centre for their much appreciated sponsorship of these artists.

The programme concluded with Ms. Kassabian’s “hot” rendition of Astor Piazzola’s “Yo soy Maria”, producing a record high temperature for the day. The willowy ladies modelling gowns from Earlene’s House of Fashion provided a very tasteful foreground for the picturesque garden surrounding.

Opera Lyra Ottawa board chairman Malcolm McCullough spoke, noting the recent severe financial difficulties of Opera Lyra Ottawa and sincerely thanked Signor Meloni and his wife for their help in a time of crisis. Indeed it is appropriate to recognize that this group needs all the support we can offer if live opera is to continue in Ottawa at the NAC.

# Golden “Voice 2012” Winner Philippe Sly

by Ute Davis

Attending the Concours Musical International de Montréal in June, I was again reminded of the wonderful voices with which we in Canada are blessed.

This prestigious event took place at the new home of the MSO, La Maison Symphonique with its excellent acoustics designed by architects Diamond/Schmitt, who also were responsible for the wonderful home of the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto as well as the new Mariinsky Opera House in St. Petersburg.

The jury was headed by the Chairman of the Jeunesse Musicale of Canada Foundation since 1997, M. André Bourbeau. The distinguished international panel of jurors included Sir Thomas Allen (U. K.), Edith D. Bers (U.S.A.), Jean-Pierre Brossmann (France), Dominique Meyer (France), Joseph Rouleau (Canada), Kwamé Ryan (Canada), Renata Scotto (Italy), Dmitry Vdovin (Russia) and Edith Wiens (Canada). A group of official pianists, Louise-Andrée Baril, Martin Dubé, Esther Gonthier, Francis Perron and Marie-Ève Scarfone provided talented accompaniment for the singers.

During ten years of this competition, which alternates between voice, violin and piano, some fine singers have worked their way through the quarter-, semi- and final rounds. Successful vocal candidates over the years have included Measha Bruggersman (2002), Marianne Fiset (2007) and Angela Meade (2009) with Yannick-Muriel Noah coming in a close second that year.

2012 should go down in musical history as a true success story for Ottawa’s Philippe Sly. The 23 year old bass-baritone went swimmingly through the various stages of the competition, making it a grand-slam victory in the finals. He won the first prize of \$ 30,000 together with an adjunct Career Development Grant of \$ 20,000. He also won the prize for best Canadian Artist (\$10,000) and the Best Artist from Québec, the Best Performance of a Compulsory Canadian Work and the People’s Choice Award (each worth \$5,000).

A requirement of the competition is performance of a piece by a Canadian composer to be sung by all competitors. This year the set piece was “Daybreak” composed by John Estacio to a poem by John Murrell, frequent collaborators in opera. Philippe treated this as he would an art song, giving it great emotional intensity but with a delicacy which the other competitors had proven unable to match. This is not an easy piece to sing, but the



vocal picture which Philippe painted was, to my ear, totally real and convincing. Further proof is not needed to show that Philippe has the artistry to make a career in Lieder as well as singing operatic roles. The audience agreed with this opinion, judging by their applause and their selection of Philippe for the People’s Choice Award.

I have concentrated on Philippe’s achievements but I have to point out that this prestigious competition drew an international group of highly talented artists. Soprano Olga Kindler from Switzerland placed second with a beautifully plaintive aria from Menotti’s *The Consul* being the highlight of her presentation.

American baritone John Brancy placed third. He especially impressed me with his vocal clarity and precise diction but at the same time convincingly bringing to life the character of Figaro in his version of the rather too-frequently heard “Largo al factotum”.

A special prize was awarded to the tenor Yuri Gorodetski from Belarus, This consisted of a contract to make a CD recording for the Atma label.

I should also mention that Philippe Sly has made a CD recording with Analekta, called “In Dreams / En Rêves / In Träumen”. He is accompanied by pianist Michael McMahon and the recording is due out shortly. Mr. McMahon himself is to be an honoree at the “Rubies” awards ceremony in Toronto, 16 October, when Philippe will be singing on his behalf.

Photos by Ute Davis

# Saturday Afternoon at the Opera

**September 29** – From the Canadian Opera Company –  
*THE TALES OF HOFFMAN*

By Jacques Offenbach

Johannes Debus – Conductor

Russell Thomas – Hoffmann

John Relyea – The Four Villains (Lindorf/Coppelius/Dr.  
Miracle/Dapertutto)

Lauren Segal – The Muse/Nicklausse

Erin Wall – Antonia

**October 6** – new live recording of *DON GIOVANNI*  
(released on Deutsches Gramophon)

By Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Yannick Nézet-Séguin - conductor

Ilderando D'Arcangelo - Don Giovanni

Vitalij Kowaljow - Il Commendatore

Diana Damrau - Donna Anna

Rolando Villazon - Don Ottavio

Joyce DiDonato - Donna Elvira

Luca Pisaroni - Leporello

Konstantin Wolff - Masetto

Mojca Erdmann - Zerlina

Vocal Ensemble Rastatt

Mahler Chamber Orchestra

**October 13** – Royal Opera, Covent Garden -  
*THE FLYING DUTCHMAN*

By Richard Wagner

Egils Silins, bass-baritone, The Dutchman

Anja Kampe, soprano, Senta, Daland's daughter

Stephen Milling, bass, Daland, a Norwegian sailor

Endrik Wottrich, tenor, Erik, a huntsman

Clare Shearer, contralto, Mary, Senta's nurse

John Tessier, tenor, Daland's Steersman

Royal Opera House Orchestra

Jeffrey Tate, conductor

**October 20** - Teatro Real, Madrid – *RIENZI*

By Richard Wagner

Andreas Schager, tenor, Cola Rienzi, Roman Tribune

Anja Kampe, soprano, Irene, his sister

Stephen Milling, bass, Stefano Colonna, a nobleman

Claudia Mahnke, mezzo-soprano, Adriano, his son

James Rutherford, bass, Paolo Orsini, another patrician

Friedemann Röhlig, bass, Orvieto Cardinal, Papal Legate

Jason Bridges, tenor, Baroncelli, Roman citizen,

Carsten Wittmoser, bass, Cecco del Vecchio, Roman citizen

Marta Matheu, soprano, The Messenger of Peace,

Teatro Real Chorus Teatro Real Orchestra

Alejo Pérez, conductor

**October 27** - Festival Aix-en-Provence – *LA FINTA  
GIARDINIARA*

By Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Colin Balzer, tenor - Don Anchise, Mayor of Lagonero,

Layla Claire, soprano - La Marchesta Violante Onesti

Julian Pregardien, tenor - Il Contino Belfiore

Ana Maria Labin, soprano - Arminda, a Milanese lady

Julie Robard-Gendre, mezzo-soprano - Il Cavalier Ramiro

Sabinhe Devieille, soprano - Serpetta, the Mayor's maid

John Chest, baritone - Roberto, Violante's servant

Andreas Spering - Musical direction

Le Cercle de l'Harmonie - Orchestra

**November 3** – La Monnaie, Brussels – *ORLANDO*

By G.F. Handel

Bejun Mehta, altus, Orlando, a knight

Sophie Karthäuser, soprano, Angelica, Queen of Cathay

Kristina Hammarström, contralto, Medoro, an African prince

Sunhae Im, soprano, Dorinda, a shepherdess

Konstantin Wolff, bass, Zoroastro, a magician

B'Rock Baroque Orchestra

René Jacobs, conductor

Additional listings and details of productions are available on the CBC website.



[www.cbc.ca.ca/sato](http://www.cbc.ca.ca/sato)

## The Met: “Live in HD” 2012-13 Season

Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*  
October 13, 2012, 12:55 p.m.

Verdi's *Otello*  
October 27, 2012, 12:55 p.m.

Adès's *The Tempest* — Met Premiere  
November 10, 2012, 12:55 p.m.

Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito*  
December 1, 2012, 12:55 p.m.

Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera*  
December 8, 2012, 12:55 p.m.

Verdi's *Aida*  
December 15, 2012, 12:55 p.m.

Berlioz's *Les Troyens*  
January 5, 2013, 12 p.m.

Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda* — Met Premiere  
January 19, 2013, 12:55 p.m.

Verdi's *Rigoletto*  
February 16, 2013, 12:55 p.m.

Wagner's *Parsifal* – New Production  
March 2, 2013, 12 p.m.

Zandonai's *Francesca da Rimini*  
March 16, 2013, 12 p.m.

Handel's *Giulio Cesare*  
April 27, 2013, 12 p.m.

Complete details of all the productions are available on the Met's website.

# Opera Within Reach

## Ottawa

### Opera Lyra Ottawa

*La bohème* (Puccini)

September 8, 10, 12 & 15, 2012 at the NAC

*Cinderella* (Rossini)

November 3, 4 & 9, 2012 at Arts Court Theatre

*La traviata* (Verdi) March 21 & 23, 2013 at the NAC

Information <http://www.operalyra.ca>

### Orpheus Society

*Footloose*

Nov. 23-December 2, 2012 at Centrepointe Theatre

Information: <http://www.orpheus-theatre.ca>

## Montréal

### Opera de Montréal

*La traviata* (Verdi) Sept 15, 18, 20 & 22, 2012

*Le Vaisseau fantôme* (Wagner) Nov 10, 13, 15  
& 17, 2012

Performances are in Salle Wilfrid Pelletier  
at Place des Arts

Information: <http://www.operademontreal.com>

## Toronto

### Canadian Opera Company

*Il trovatore* (Verdi)

September 29, October 2, 5, 10, 13, 19,  
21, 25, 28 & 31, 2012

*Die Fledermaus* (J. Strauss)

October 4, 9, 12, 14, 17, 20, 24, 27, 30  
November 1 & 3, 2012

Performances are in Four Seasons Centre

Information: <http://www.coc.ca>

### Opera Atelier

*Der Freischütz* (von Weber)

October 27, 28, 30, 31 & November 2 & 3, 2012  
at the Elgin Theatre

Information: <http://www.operaatelier.com>

## Syracuse

*Tosca* (Puccini)

October 19 & 21, 2012  
at the Crouse-Hinds Theater

Information: [www.syracuseopera.com](http://www.syracuseopera.com)

Check for times and other details on the Websites.