

NATIONAL CAPITAL OPERA SOCIETY
Newsletter

August 1996

SOCIÉTÉ D'OPÉRA DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE
Bulletin

août 1996

P.O. Box 8347, Main Terminal, Ottawa, Ontario K1G 3H8
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Summary of forthcoming local events

Celebrity Auction	NCOS fundraiser	28 Sep	19:00	Westin Hotel	p. 3
<i>The Emperor of Atlantis</i> , by Victor Ullmann	Opera	22, 23, 24 Oct	20:00	NAC Theatre	p. 2
<i>Faust</i> , by Gounod	Opera	21, 23, 25, and 27 Sep	20:00	NAC Opera	p.6
Opera Insights	A talk about <i>Faust</i>	9 Sep	19:00	National Archives, Room 156	p.6

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- The CD bargain of the millennium, p. 5

Opera comes to Italian Week

Pat Adamo introduces the operatic performers. From the left, Frédéric Lacroix, Marilyn Carter, Fraser Rubens, and Shawne Elizabeth.



A first for both Ottawa and Italian Week was the outdoor opera concert held on the opening evening of the festivities, 14 June. The three singers, Marilyn Carter, Fraser Rubens, and Shawne Elizabeth, accompanied by Frédéric Lacroix on the piano, presented a popular program of mostly Italian opera favourites and well-known Neapolitan songs. A large enthusiastic audience of about 1500 settled down in their lawn chairs and very attentively enjoyed the varied program. Except for a light hum from the Queensway, one might have

thought one was in the NAC. The singers wound up the evening, as befits an open-air concert, by inviting the audience to join in a rousing rendering of 'Funiculi funicula', providing a wonderful finale to a wonderful evening.

Pat Adamo of the NCOS and the Italian Week organizer of the concert informs us that with such a huge success on their hands, Italian Week may just have started a new tradition to be repeated next year!

***The Emperor of Atlantis* and the triumph of the human spirit**

Under the patronage of the Ambassadors of Austria and Israel, Viktor Ullmann's opera *The Emperor of Atlantis* will be staged in Ottawa in the Theatre of the National Arts Centre, from 22 to 24 October.

In his colourful score, Ullmann blends jazz with traditional and avant-garde styles and cites classical composers such as J.S. Bach, Josef Suk, Antonin Dvorak, Gustav Mahler and

Joseph Haydn. Ullmann's short, powerful work will be remembered as one of the seminal works of the twentieth century.

In order to make the opera more accessible and to promote public education, the libretto will be available to opera-goers in English, French, and the original German. A special prologue is also being written to put the opera in context and to highlight its main themes and characters.

The opera will be performed by the Austrian ensemble Arbos, highly acclaimed for its interpretation of twentieth-century music and the subject of articles and feature broadcasts on European radio and television. For their 1993 Austrian premiere of Ullmann's opera, Arbos was awarded the prestigious 'Music Theatre Performance of the Year' award in Prague. It is this production, with original singers, musicians and set designs, which will be presented.

The presentation of this opera in Canada will mark the first North American production of the original score, an event that promises to be an outstanding and historical musical experience of a unique master work.

The work, composed while Ullmann was interned by the Nazis in the Theresienstadt concentration camp in the Czech town of Terezin, will also be the focus of a public education effort on the triumph of the human spirit in the face of the horror of the Holocaust.

A number of student tickets will be available at a subsidized price of \$10 each, and materials will be prepared for teachers relating to the opera's historical, musical and theatrical qualities.

The opera is being produced by B'nai Brith Canada's Commission for Jewish Culture, which is coordinating a broad community-based effort to look at how creativity can flourish even when surrounded by despair, cruelty and death. Cultural organizations such as Opera Lyra Ottawa, the National Arts Centre, and the Holocaust Memorial Centre of Montreal are assisting in making come alive this testimony to resistance, hope, and valour.

Rubin Friedman,
Commission on Jewish Culture of B'nai Brith

'Love work; despise power for power's sake;
and don't get too close to the government.'

—Ethics of the Fathers.

Annual fundraiser

Come to our postponed celebrity auction on 28 September

As you all know, the exciting Opera Celebrity Auction that we were planning for 25 May was postponed until 28 September because of very poor ticket sales. People were either already away or going away, had weddings to attend, or had their other reasons.

What a marvellous evening we are still planning! How exciting it will be to view auction items from famous singers such as Joan Sutherland, Marilyn Horne, and Canada's own Gino Quilico and Ben Heppner! Not only can you view them, you can also bid on them and beat all the friends that you bring to the draw.

We are especially thrilled as our friend Dave Smith will be our Celebrity Auctioneer, and Rob Clipperton of CBC Radio will be the Master of Ceremonies. During the evening Shawne Elizabeth (soprano) and Kelly Robertson (tenor) will perform a recital of opera favourites, accompanied by Frédéric Lacroix on the piano. They have planned a terrific program that you should not miss!

We will have a host of wonderful door prizes for you to win. After the bidding is finished a luscious dessert buffet featuring strawberry and chocolate goodies will be served, along with tea and coffee. A cash bar will be open all evening, and everyone will be able to have a great time.

To top everything, this evening of opera goodies from all over the world, of melodious operatic arias and duets, of sparkling door prizes and yummy desserts will be dedicated to a lady who worked hard for the NCOS in its early years and has been a Life Member since 1986—Trudi LeCaine, who will be present.

Tickets for the evening are \$27 for one, or \$50 for a pair. They are available from any member of the Board of Directors or by calling 225 2652 or 225 0124. Perhaps you can first have an 'opera' dinner at Daly's and then join us at 7 pm.

Here is the evening's timetable:

7:00 Cocktails (cash bar)

- 7:30 The Master of Ceremonies presents the celebrity Auctioneers, who will start the auction (part 1)
- 8:15 First drawing for door prizes
- 8:30 Recital of opera arias by Shawne Elizabeth, soprano, and Kelly Robertson, tenor, accompanied by Frédéric Lacroix on the piano
- 9:30 Auction (part 2)
- 10:30 Strawberry and chocolate dessert bar, with tea and coffee, and liqueurs available at the bar
- 10:45 Second drawing for door prizes

11:15 Auction items redeemed

12:30 Close

Items to be auctioned include donations also from singers John Doddington, Judith Forst, Diane Loeb, and Gary Relyea, from maestros Mario Bernardi and Trevor Pinnock, from opera quiz-master Stuart Hamilton, and from Hollywood superstar Elizabeth Taylor.

For further information, please phone one of the previously mentioned numbers, or Murray Kitts at 830-9827

BC

AGM of the NCOS

Jean Thérèse Riley gives her NAC report

Our guest speaker this year was Jean Thérèse Riley, Chairman of the Board of the NAC Trustees, and she announced that she would be giving us a report card on the NAC .

The NAC had been born in an optimistic and dream time in Canada, and during the last 25 years or so the NAC had defined the arts in Canada in many ways, but recent realities include a thirty per cent cut in funding over three years, a fact of life that had caused some erosion of that dream. The task now was how to rebuild that eroded dream.

The NAC now needs to pay greater attention than it used to to programs that will draw regular subscription money, to be more careful than ever about spending, and to put on festivals only with some assurance that they will draw enough income.

Ms Riley is trying to shepherd the NAC to a renewal of the its mission, moving away from an earlier didacticism and relying more on volunteers and the community. The hunt is on for corporate joint ventures. The new vocabulary is 'music and opera', as Ms Riley hopes to be able, little by little, to change perceptions.

The components of a new vision that she hopes will lead the NAC to be a pinnacle and a catalyst

for leading Canadian and international artists and at the same time a celebration of the cultural identity of Canada. She hopes the NAC can become one of the great stages of the world with a clear program focus. The NAC would revitalize itself, it would manifest a new definition of excellence, it would be fiscally responsible and enter productive partnerships. In time it would achieve a more equitable distribution of money among the various program areas. It would celebrate Canada's artists, it would be a welcoming place. It would be a place for exploring information technologies, a place for growth and training. And the commercial use of the facilities, including the lobbies, would be encouraged.

Once there is a renewed Board and a new chief executive is found, practices normal in other institutions but hitherto absent from the NAC, such as performance ratings for senior staff, will be introduced.

Of course one thing everyone wanted to know was who would succeed Trevor Pinnock at the NAC, but, again of course, nothing could be said.

JMC

We really need a secretary

All members of the new Board have been assigned their offices, but we have a very serious gap: we need a secretary, and these are the duties:

- to take the minutes at Board meetings, which are about once a month (less often in summer)
- to send the minutes to the Board members within a fortnight after meetings
- to take a lively interest in what goes on

- to contribute the occasional output of cerebral processes

Correspondence is handled mainly by the President.

So, as you have guessed, we are asking for a volunteer to join the Board. For more information, or, if you are wavering, to help you with your decision to volunteer, please call 225 0124.

BC

This is the CD bargain of the year, the century, the millennium

For about \$60 you can buy the Philips recording of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (Philips 446 057-2). That's correct, fourteen CDs for about \$60. And this version of the Wagner masterpiece is one that has to be almost given away. Right? Wrong, very wrong! This is one of the three most highly recommended versions of *The Ring* listed in the prestigious *Penguin Guide*.

And why is it so highly recommended? The conducting of Karl Böhm for one thing, and a whole group of superstars including Birgit Nilsson, Leonie Rysanek, Wolfgang Windgassen, and the marvellous Bayreuth Festival Chorus and Orchestra.

So where's the catch? Well, if you already have a recording of *The Ring* and a copy of the text, you'll have no problems. This recording, however, contains only brief summaries of the action of the operas, quite inadequate for any real enjoyment of them. There is, though, an

excellent translation by Andrew Porter published by Norton which used to cost about \$10 (US) and which could be used to follow this particular version, since the German and English texts are given in full in side-by-side columns on each page. I must confess that I haven't had time to listen to all fourteen discs; but I had a copy of this particular recording of *Das Rheingold* on LP previously and enjoyed it immensely. So if you want a super-bargain edition of *The Ring*, don't hesitate to buy this one.

Incidentally, the recording of Rossini's *Tancredi* (Naxos 8.660037.8), which was touted in this Newsletter as being a very good buy, has been nominated by *The Gramophone* magazine as one of the best opera recordings of the year. Also recommended here was Ben Heppner's recording of Massenet's *Herodiade* (EMI 7243 5 55378 2 9), another recording nominated for the top opera-recording award.

MK

Bobbi Cain wins special award

Our President, Bobbi Cain, has been involved in the Ontario Choral Federation since 1971, at times in a senior executive or organizational position. On 8 June the Federation celebrated its 25th anniversary, and 25 people from throughout the province were chosen for special recognition. The Lieutenant-Governor of

Ontario, Hal Jackman, gave Distinguished Service Awards to Bobbi and her other colleagues, who included Elmer Iseler, Nicholas Goldschmidt, and Robert Cooper. The awards were beautiful plaques to mark 25 years of service, in Bobbi's case volunteer service, to choral music.

Opera Lyra news

Faust opens the new season

The next big event is the fall production of Gounod's *Faust*, on the four evenings of 21, 23, 25, and 27 September. On the opening night there is a fund-raising dinner called 'The Devil made me do it', a black-tie affair starting with a cocktail reception at 5 pm, followed by the dinner itself. Then there is the opera, for which you will have bought your tickets separately. Finally you get to the post-performance dessert reception. The price for this excellent full evening is \$135 net per person, for which an income tax receipt for \$55 will be given. The dinner will be in the NAC itself.

A couple of weeks before *Faust* there will be an illustrated talk about the opera, in the series Opera Insights, by local expert and opera aficionado Jeffrey Morgan. The talk starts at 7 pm in room 156 of the National Archives, and the price of admission is \$15 net.

The Opera Lyra Ottawa Boys' Choir will be performing in Viktor Ullmann's opera *The Emperor of Atlantis*, the subject of an earlier article in this issue.

In November, on Saturday the ninth to be exact, there will be a workshop for the new opera *Gianni* that Opera Lyra Ottawa has commissioned from Steven Gellman. It will take place at the Great Canadian Theatre Company, but at present the details of time and price have to fall under that old acronym TBA, but nearer the date we recommend calling the OLO office at the number below.

Opera RSVP Concerts have become a regular and popular feature and will take place during the next season on 4 and 5 February.

To buy tickets or obtain further information on any of OLO's events, call the office at 233 9200.

JMC

Don't forget that Ben Heppner is coming to the NAC

As we mentioned in the last Newsletter, next season's orchestral concert series at the NAC includes two nights of Ben Heppner singing operatic arias. The dates are 13 and 14 November, and if you have not already bought your tickets, tarry no longer, for these recitals will surely be sellouts.

While you are the box office, remember Bach's St Matthew Passion, a masterpiece and a special

treat for anyone who likes the voices of Nancy Argenta, Catherine Robbin, Howard Crook, Benjamin Butterfield, Simon Keenlyside, and Brian Bannatyne-Scott. This constellation will perform under Trevor Pinnock, with the Cantata Singers, The Ottawa Choral Society, and the Ottawa Board of Education Central Chamber Choir. The date?—29 March 1997.

Please renew your membership

If you have not yet renewed your membership for 1996, please do so promptly, using the form at the back of this Newsletter.

Opera videos will start again

We plan to resume our occasional Sunday showings of opera videos in October, but the program and dates have not yet been worked out. We are hoping to find a more suitable site than the one we have used hitherto.

Opera within reach

Here are the schedules for the forthcoming seasons of opera houses and other sites of interesting events close enough to Ottawa for the serious and mobile opera fan.

Ottawa

Opera Lyra Ottawa

Faust, by Gounod. 21, 23, 25, and 27 September.

Die Fledermaus, by J. Strauss. 8, 10, 12, and 14 Feb.

Opera RSVP Concerts. 4 and 5 Feb.

These will be in the Opera of the National Arts Centre. For information, call 233 9200.

Montreal

L'Opéra de Montréal

Les pêcheurs de perles, by Bizet. 21, 23, 26, and 28 September, and 2 and 5 October.

Suor Angelica, by Puccini, and *I pagliacci*, by Leoncavallo. 16, 18, 21, 23, 27, and 30 November.

Rigoletto, by Verdi. 15, 17, 20, 22, and 26 February, and 1 March.

Jenufa, by Janacek. 22, 24, and 27 March, and 2 and 5 April.

Carmina Burana, by Orff, and *Hiver dans l'âme*, by Prévost. 5, 9, and 10 May.

Turandot, by Puccini. 31 May and 2, 5, 7, 11, and 14 June.

All performances are in the Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier in the Place des Arts. Box office: (514) 985 2222.

Toronto

Canadian Opera Company

Salome, by R. Strauss. 27 September and 1, 6sm, 10, 16, and 19 October.

Elektra by R. Strauss. 2, 5, 8, 11, 17, and 20sm October.

Béatrice et Bénédicte, by Berlioz. 21, 24, and 29 January, and 1, 6, and 9sm February.

Dialogues des carmélites, by Poulenc. 25, 28, and 30 January, and 2sm, 5, and 7 February.

Manon Lescaut, by Puccini. 8, 11, 16, 19, 24, and 27sm April.

Luisa Miller, by Verdi. 12, 15, 17, 20sm, 23, and 25 April.

And *La Calisto*, by Cavalli. A COC Ensemble Studio Project. 29 November and 1 December.
sm Sunday matinée.

The box office telephone number is (416) 363 2348, or 800 250 4653.

All performances are at the O'Keefe Centre, except for *La Calisto*, which is at the Du Maurier Theatre, Harbourfront Centre. Curtain time is 8 pm, other than on Tuesdays when it is 7 pm and Sunday matinées when it is 2 pm.

There are two weekends in which you could see two operas, one on the Saturday night and one on the Sunday afternoon. These are 5–6 and 19–20 October, and in both cases it is the pair of Strauss operas that you can take in on a single trip.

Opera in Concert

Sadko, by Rimsky-Korsakov. 26 and 27sm October.

Marina, by Arrieta. 7 and 8sm December.

L'italiana in Algeri, by Rossini. 26sm January.

Rusalka, by Dvorak. 6sm April.

Soprano Heroines: a benefit concert by Linda Maguire. 24sm November.

sm Sunday matinée.

All are at the Jane Mallett Theatre, except for *L'italiana in Algeri*, which is in the George Weston Recital Hall at the Ford Centre for the Performing Arts. Box office: (416) 366 7723.

Toronto Operetta Theatre

A Night in Vienna, by J. Strauss, Jr. In English, semi-staged (piano, costumes, and props, but no sets). 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31 December and 3 and 4 January.

The Beggar Student, by Millocker. In English, semi-staged (piano, costumes, and props, but no sets). 30 April and 1, 2, and 3 May.

Sundays of Comedy and Romance:

'Play, Gipsy, Play: A Tribute to Imre Kálmán.' 6sm October.

'The Savoy Tradition: The Gilbert and Sullivan Monarchy.' 17sm November.

'Canto Latino: A Musical Adventure in Latin America and Spain,' with the Arte Flamenco Spanish Dance Company as guests. 14 and 16sm February.

'Continental Variety: An Operetta Cabaret.' 13sm April.

sm Sunday matinée.

All are at the Jane Mallett Theatre.

Subscriptions are available for the two operettas,

for the Sundays of Comedy and Romance, or for both the operettas and the Sundays. Box office or further information: (416) 366 7723.

Hamilton

Hamilton Opera

Un ballo in maschera, by Verdi. 28 September and 3 and 5 October.

Così fan tutte, by Mozart. 23, 28, and 30 November.

Popera. 30 January and 1 February.

Carmen, by Bizet. 12, 15, and 17 April.

Telephone: (905) 526 6556.

Opera on Saturday afternoons continues all year

Here are the next few months of the CBC Stereo opera broadcasts continue between Met seasons.

- 17 Aug *Pelléas et Mélisande*, by Debussy. Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Brussels.
- 24 Aug *Der zerbrochene Krug*, by Ullmann, and *Iolanta*, by Tchaikovsky. Semperoper, Dresden.
- 31 Aug *Parsifal*, by Wagner. Bayreuth Festival 1996.
- 7 Sep *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, by Wagner. Bayreuth Festival 1996.
- 14 Sep *Elektra*, by Strauss, Salzburg Festival; and *Salomé*, by Strauss, Opéra Bastille, Paris.
- 21 Sep *Leonore*, by Beethoven. Salzburg Festival, 1996.
- 28 Sep *Fidelio*, by Beethoven. Salzburg Festival, 1996.

- 5 Oct *Osud*, by Janacek. Théâtre des Champs Élysées, Paris.
- 12 Oct *Billy Budd*, by Britten. Opéra Bastille, Paris.
- 19 Oct *Manon Lescaut*, by Puccini. Opéra Bastille, Paris.
- 26 Oct *King Roger*, by Szymanowski. Théâtre des Champs Élysées, Paris.
- 2 Nov CBC 60th Anniversary Special: Operatic highlights from the Golden Age of the CBC Opera Company.
- 9 Nov *Turandot*, by Puccini. Edmonton Opera.
- 16 Nov *Eugene Onegin*, by Tchaikovsky. Calgary Opera.
- 23 Nov *The Makropoulos Case*, by Janacek. Vancouver Opera.
- 30 Nov. *Gianni Schicchi*, by Puccini and *I pagliacci*, by Leoncavallo. The Canadian Opera Company.

Bingeing is a bargain at the CD Warehouse

Since the discount at CD Warehouse is still fairly new, here is another reminder. Any NCOS member presenting the membership card gets \$2 off each regularly priced CD set, whether the set is a single disc or a set of four, for example. The deal applies once per year, but on the

occasion you take advantage of it, there is no limit on quantity.

There are two local stores, one at 1383 Clyde Avenue (near Baseline), the other at 1717 St Laurent Boulevard.

NCOS Board Members and responsibilities

President	Bobbi Cain	Publicity	Pat Adamo, Almut Fleuriau-Chateau, Gaetan Fleuriau-Chateau
Vice-President	Peggy Pflug	Events	Norma Torontow, Peggy Pflug, Bobbi Cain
Treasurer	Murray Kitts	Membership	Gerda Ruckerbauer
Secretary	vacant	Scholarships	Bobbi Cain
Newsletter	John Clegg	Films and Videos	John Clegg

Some telephone numbers

Bobbi Cain	225-0124 (h)
Pat Adamo	729 9518 (h)

Peggy Pflug	226-5482 (h)
John Clegg	765 4599 (w)

The National Capital Opera Society
presents an

Opera CELEBRITY AUCTION

A benefit for the Brian Law Opera Scholarship

Saturday September 28, 1996 ♦ 7pm ♦ Westin Hotel

Rob Clipperton
Master of Ceremonies

&

Dave Smith
Auctioneer

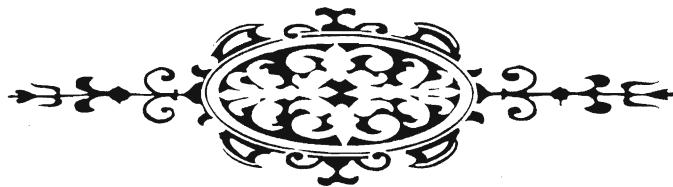
IN CONCERT

Shawne Elizabeth
soprano

Kelly Robertson
tenor

Frédéric Lacroix, piano

☉ STRAWBERRY and CHOCOLATE DESSERTS ☉



\$27 single ♦ \$50 couple

Call 225-0124 or 225-2642 for reservations and information

The Brian Law Opera Scholarship was established in 1992 in recognition of Brian Law's contribution to opera in the National Capital Region. Its goal is to encourage and support talented young singers from the Ottawa region who hope to pursue careers in Opera.

La Société d'opéra de la Capitale nationale
présente un

Encan des CÉLÉBRITÉS d'Opéra

Campagne de financement pour la Bourse Opéra-Brian Law

samedi le 28 septembre, 1996 ♦ 19h00 ♦ Hôtel Westin

Rob Clipperton
maître de cérémonie

&

Dave Smith
crieur

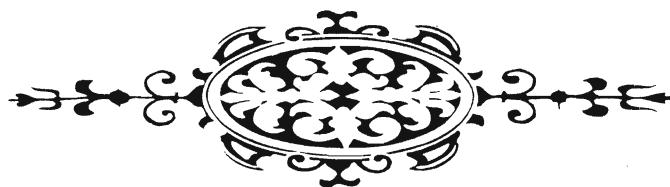
— *En concert* —

Shawne Elizabeth
soprano

Kelly Robertson
ténor

Frédéric Lacroix, piano

Ⓞ un goûter de fraises et chocolat Ⓞ



\$27 ♦ \$50 le couple

225-0124 ou 225-2642 pour renseignements et réservations

La Bourse Opéra-Brian Law fut établi en 1992 en reconnaissance des contributions de Brian Law envers l'opéra dans la région de la capitale nationale. Elle a comme but d'encourager et supporter les jeunes chanteurs talentueux de la région d'Ottawa qui ont comme espoir de poursuivre une carrière opératique.