

Newsletter • Bulletin

Fall 2011

www.ncos.ca

Automne 2011

P.O. Box 8347, Main Terminal, Ottawa, Ontario K1G 3H8 • C.P. 8347, Succursale principale, Ottawa (Ontario) K1G 3H8

Six Promising Finalists for the 10th Brian Law Competition!

by Renate Chartrand

Our 10th Brian Law Opera Competition, formerly Opera Scholarship Competition, will be held Saturday, November 19, with Gerald Finley as the new Honorary Patron. Twenty two aspiring young opera singers have applied. On October 6 our preliminary jurors met to review applications and listen to their submitted recordings in order to select the finalists:

Frédérique Drolet, soprano

Bethany Horst, soprano

Arminè Kassabian, mezzo-soprano

Erinne-Colleen Laurin, soprano

Emanuel Lebel, baritone

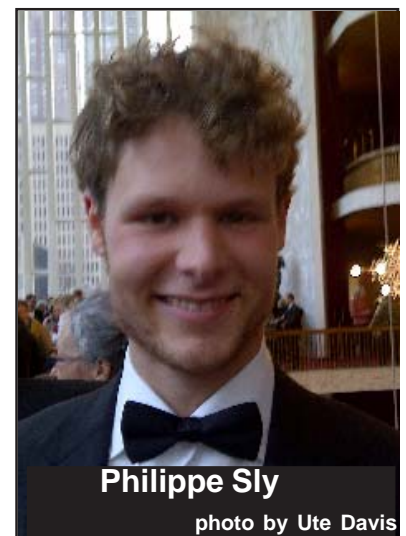
Jana Miller, soprano

For the finalists' education and operatic experience please see page 3. At the competition they will each perform three operatic arias, at least one preceded by a recitative, with their own piano accompanist. The panel of jurors will be announced at a later date (check our website).

To our delight bass-baritone **Philippe Sly**, the 2009 winner, has agreed to be our special guest and entertain us with some of his favourite arias while the jury retires to deliberate. His career path has been outstanding. Having received his Bachelor of Voice Performance degree from McGill University, Philippe is currently a member of the prestigious Canadian Opera Company Ensemble Studio. In March he was a winner in the 2011 Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions. Recently he played Bartolo in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with the San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program.

The suspense will be great when the jury returns to announce its decision. The winner will be awarded the 1st prize of \$5,000, the runner-up will receive the 2nd prize of \$3,000 and a 3rd prize of \$1,000 is again being offered by our board member Cavaliere Pat Adamo. The audience will have the pleasure of meeting the singers and jurors at the reception which follows. Master of Ceremonies for the evening will again be the much appreciated Rob Clipperton, former CBC host.

Tickets are \$25 general and \$10 for students at the door. They may also be reserved by calling 613-830-9827. For further information please visit our website at www.ncos.ca. Mark your calendar for this exciting evening!



Philippe Sly

photo by Ute Davis

Saturday, November 19, 7:00 p.m.

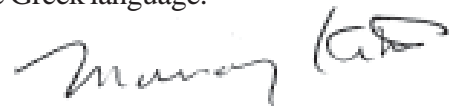
First Unitarian Congregation,

30 Cleary Avenue (off Richmond Rd., east of Woodroffe)

President's Message

I can assure you that we have six excellent contestants for the November 19th Competition. With twenty-two applicants it was difficult to choose only six - but that is the limit we originally set for the Brian Law Competition. Who gets chosen? It all depends on what the applicant presents for the preliminary jury to hear and read. An inexperienced singer might submit a voice recording of a selection too difficult to show off his or her voice qualities to best advantage. Another might start their program with the least successful aria of the three. Another has a good voice, sings accurately, but fails to convey the meaning of the words and music. Our finalists betrayed none of these negative features. Joining them will be our mini-recitalist, Philippe Sly, to present a wonderful evening of opera. What with door prizes and a

reception with buffet, \$25.00 for admission is the best bargain in Ottawa. On another topic, the current edition of Opera Canada devotes an entire page to a laudatory review of Somer's *Louis Riel*. What the reviewer doesn't tell you is that there are no subtitles in a work sung and spoken in English, French, Cree and Latin. A libretto is included but there are no translations in it. As a matter of fact the stage directions in the libretto often do not correspond to what the viewer is seeing. The biggest gaff in the libretto is to say that Riel speaks in Latin when he is saying the *Kyrie eleison*, the only part of the Latin mass in the Greek language.



Brian Law Competition Recital Door Prizes

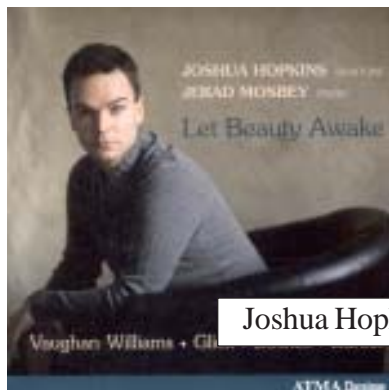
A chance to win a CD or DVD featuring some of our previous winners!



Julie Nesrallah - 1997



Shannon Mercer - 2001



Joshua Hopkins - 2003



All you need to do is attend the competition and register for the door prizes. Winners will be announced during the intermission.

Finalists for the 2011 Brian Law Opera Competition



Soprano Frédérique Drolet, 26, is a native of Buckingham, QC. She earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Vocal Performance at Laval University (2009, 2011) and is currently a member of Opéra de Montréal's Atelier Lyrique. Since her First Place finish at the Canadian Music Competition in 2008 she has received many other awards. At Laval University, Frédérique took on Despina in *Così fan tutte* and several roles in *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi*. This year, she appeared as Barbarina in Opera de Montreal's *Le Nozze de Figaro* and played Lucy in *The Telephone* with Atelier Lyrique.



Soprano Bethany Horst, 28, was a member of Opera Lyra Ottawa's Opera Studio last season. She performed as Mother/Witch in *Hansel and Gretel* and Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* and placed First at the 2011 Studio Competition. In 2008 she received her Master's of Music degree in Literature and Performance from the University of Western Ontario where she sang in *Albert Herring*, *Così fan tutte*, *The Merry Widow* and *Gianni Schicchi*. For Opera Kitchener she played Fiordiligi in 2009. She was the First Place winner at the Conservatory Canada Vocal Competition in 2009 and International Aria Competition, Tennessee, in 2010.



Mezzo-soprano Arminè Kassabian, 27, was born and grew up in Ottawa. She studied at the Schulich School of Music, McGill University, where she earned her Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance in 2007, Master's degree in 2009 and Artist Diploma in 2011. With Opera McGill she performed leading roles in several operas including Carmen in *La Tragédie de Carmen*. Last summer Arminè appeared as Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*) and Mercedes (*Carmen*) at the Green Mountain Opera in Vermont. She is currently a member of Opera Lyra Ottawa's Opera Studio, playing Rosina in *The Barber of Bytown*, an adaptation for children.



Soprano Erinne-Colleen Laurin, 29, is a native of Gatineau, QC. She received a Bachelor of Music with Honours in Vocal Performance in 2011 from Carleton University, having completed three years of the music program at the University of Ottawa in 2005. Also in 2011, Erinne-Colleen placed First in Operatic Solo at the Ottawa Kiwanis Music Festival and again First at the OMFA Provincial Competition, Voice Open Level. Representing Ontario at the National Music Festival in Nova Scotia, she received the Spirit Award. She has sung operatic arias with ensembles at Carleton University and at the Ottawa Kiwanis Gala Concert.



Baritone Emanuel Lebel, 26, is currently a member of Opera Lyra Ottawa's Opera Studio where he is playing Figaro in *The Barber of Bytown* in performances adapted for children. He holds a Bachelor's degree from the Conservatoire de musique de Québec (2009) and a Master's degree in Vocal Performance from Laval University (2011). While at Laval, he performed in *Gianni Schicchi* and as solo bass in Mozart's *Requiem*. In May of this year Emanuel was a Laureate of Jeunes Ambassadeurs Lyriques and in August he played two parts in John Estacio's *Lillian Alling* at the Opera as Theatre program at the Banff Centre.



Soprano Jana Miller, 25, was born in Ottawa. In 2011 she received her Master of Music degree in Solo Performance, Voice, from the Schulich School of Music, McGill University, where she had taken on roles in several Opera McGill productions. In 2008 and 2009 Jana received further training at the Banff Centre's Opera as Theatre program, and in 2010 she performed Nanetta in *Falstaff* with Opera Nuova. With Theatre of Early Music, Jana has sung Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas*. Last summer she was a participant at the Franz Schubert Institute and next year she will be playing Micaela in *Carmen* with Jeunesses Musicales of Canada.

Francesca's Focus Changes Glimmerglass by Shelagh Williams

This summer it was a case of new Director, new directions at the renamed Glimmerglass Festival (GGF), under new Artistic and General Director Francesca Zambello, who is also the new Artistic Advisor to Washington National Opera. The major change was the replacement of one opera with a classic American musical, with strong unamplified voices and full orchestra. We chose again to enjoy our four new productions under the auspices of Road Scholar's Explore New York organization and were not disappointed!

For the first opera, Georges Bizet's *Carmen*, we had a private lecture by the conductor and GGF Music Director, David Angus, who will move to Boston this Fall as Lyric Opera's new Music Director. Surprisingly, it was his first time to conduct the whole opera, and he was refreshingly excited about it. He explained the preparation necessary, including deciding which version to do and whether to keep the original operatic spoken dialogue - which they did! Incidentally, the French Diction Coach was Young Artist (YAP) Eve Legault from Ottawa! Theatre director Anne Bogart set the piece in South America in the 1920s and used the bullfight and ring as a basis for her staging, with lots of modernist chairs, much martial movement and people circling about, even between acts. Fortunately, because of the musical, there were four YAPs with Broadway training who could dance, and so choreographer Barney O'Hanlon was able to produce some very good and realistic dancing in the lively tavern scene by integrating them fairly unobtrusively into the rest of the chorus. James Schuette's costumes were appropriately dull for the real people being portrayed, while his thrifty set of three short walls with multiple doors was fairly minimal, often having the middle removed to show the back wall of the theatre. The many doors on the set allowed the tension during the last scene to build as Don Jose slowly closed each door so that Carmen was completely cut off and alone when he finally confronted her: very striking! No other cast member came on afterwards to dilute the dramatic ending. Robert Wierzel's lighting brightened things up a bit and heightened the effects. Musically, conductor Angus gave us a great, spirited performance, with his excellent orchestra, chorus, children and soloists, all of whom, save the two male leads, were doing *Carmen* for the first time! Because of the weather and the open air nature of the theatre, allergies played a large role at

GGF this year, sidelining the original Escamillo, Keith Miller, after one apparently hoarse-sounding performance. He was replaced for two reportedly stunning performances by YAP cover, Ukrainian Aleksey Bogdanov, and finally by baritone Michael Todd Simpson, whom we heard. Tall and striking in his costumes, he sang well, and gave no indication that he had not been in the cast from the very beginning. Soprano Anya Matanovic looked, and sounded, beautiful in her GGF debut as Micaela, and in her sensible blue suit with large handbag was a pure and innocent foil to Carmen. Korean tenor Adam Diegel, a tall, strong singer who debuted as Cavaradossi last year in *Tosca*, carried off his portrayal of Don Jose well. Finally, as the gypsy Carmen, debuting 24 year old Sicilian mezzo Ginger Costa-Jackson looked and acted the part and had a lovely rich voice. Unfortunately, for me, Carmen's bobbed hair and "modern" costuming robbed her of any gypsy mystique - I much



Photo by Julieta Cervantes

preferred the more traditional presentations of *Carmen* by the MET and by Green Mountain Festival's Julie Nesrallah. Maestro Angus asked us to listen to the opera as if this was the first time we had heard the tuneful masterpiece, and this production was indeed fine musically and stirring theatrically.

Francesca's Focus Changes Glimmerglass (continued)

Our introduction to Irving Berlin's *Annie Get Your Gun* was via baritone Rod Gilfry, an opera singer who also sings musicals, who was the male lead, Frank Butler. He outlined the preparation necessary for learning an opera role, in whatever language, and then described and illustrated the differences in style between musical theatre where the text must be clear and crisp and the voice brighter, and opera where lots of resonance is needed for lovely tone and maximum carrying over a large orchestra. Francesca Zambello directed this first of her annual American musicals, and for this potpourri of show-stopping tunes she nabbed Wagnerian Deborah Voigt as all-American sharpshooter Annie Oakley and GGF's first Artist in Residence. Zambello's production was lively and stylish, with choreographer Eric Sean Fogel brilliantly setting the Indian Ceremonial Dance behind a backlit scrim, silhouetting the dancers and their eagle feather headpieces fascinatingly as they moved. Court Watson's colourful costumes and his scenery of a rising sun backdrop plus publicity posters of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, including one for Annie herself, enlivened the proceedings. Ethel Merman famously created the role of Annie on Broadway in 1946, and reprised the role in the 1966 revival, the version GGF used this summer.



Photo by William Brown

Annie Frank

Broadway conductor Kristen Blodgett remarked that it was a real treat to conduct a full 40-odd piece orchestra vs. the usual Broadway 24. She showed this pleasure in her capable handling of the orchestra and all of the other musical components of the performance. Broadway mezzo Klea Blackhurst had a Merman-like penetrating voice with excellent diction, bringing out all of the humour in her role as Frank Butler's assistant - she had no

trouble being heard over the full orchestra! Buffalo Bill Cody was embodied by GGF veteran bass-baritone Jake Gardner, done up like Col. Saunders! Frank Butler, Annie's love interest, was sung and portrayed quite marvellously by Rod Gilfry although the noisy pelting rain did distract him for a second and put him off one line of a song! And of course Deborah Voigt sang Annie, and certainly presented an attractive portrayal. However, Miss Voigt's voice does not project well in the lower range in which the part is set, and so she did not fare as well as either Rod Gilfry or Klea Blackhurst, except in a couple of spots where, with a wink, she let loose with some high notes! Perhaps a higher key might have helped. She also seemed a bit old to be playing the teenage Annie and lacked the dancing skills and high energy required. Nevertheless, Deborah Voigt certainly gave it her all, and with such great music so well performed and attractively staged, it was an entertaining production.

However, the hit show was our second French opera about a forceful woman, Luigi Cherubini's rarely performed 1797 *Medea* - what a revelation! Cherubini (1760-1842) was born of Mozart's time and lived until Wagner's time, and was a bridge between classic and romantic grand opera and greatly influenced later French opera. According to Andras Batta in *Opera*, *Medea* was the role whose interpretation in 1953 at La Scala gave Maria Callas her international breakthrough. Perhaps because of Callas's peerless performance in what became a favourite role, few have dared stage *Medea* since, and so everyone in the production, and most of the audience, was encountering it for the first time. Based on Euripides ancient Greek tragedy, *Medea* is a revenge opera, with Medea countering her husband Jason's perfidy in abandoning her, taking away their two children, and planning to take a trophy wife, Glauce, King Creon's daughter, by finally and dramatically murdering (off stage!) her own children - there is no fury in Hell like a woman scorned! The Italian version with sung recitatives, as performed by Callas, was used rather than the original opera-comique version with dialogue. Debuting director Michael Barker-Caven and set and costume designer Joe Vanek combined to give us a stunning production. From the balcony we watched the Saturday changeover from *Annie* to *Medea* and saw the crew assemble an interesting floor with a central

Francesca's Focus Changes Glimmerglass (continued)

altar-like opening to below, and a lovely intricate classical set. A snake was painted encircling the walls of the set to encompass the action, while Jason's Golden Fleece hung above, with for the second act an added moon which of course turned red for the finale, courtesy of Robert Wierzel on lighting. Dynamic 28 year old Italian conductor Daniele Rustioni, already with an impressive CV, including La Scala, La Fenice and Covent Garden, started off with an arresting overture and did not let up until the end, harnessing his musical forces wonderfully in the service of the score and story. Allergies again forced a cast change, with Wendy Bryn Harmer withdrawing from the role of Glauce in favour of YAP Jessica Stavros, who has a big, rather shrill soprano voice. Due to injury, we also lost Jason Collins as Jason, but he was ably replaced by YAP tenor Jeffrey Gwaltney, tall, good looking and able to act and sing Jason beautifully - a really good replacement. Equally admirable was YAP mezzo Sarah Larson as Medea's maidservant Neris, with some serious singing and emoting in the lead-up to the finale. I like bass-baritone David Pittsinger, who sang the 7 baritone roles in GGF's 2005 *Death in Venice*, and here he provided a strongly and nobly sung and performed King Creon, holding his own against Medea in their big confrontation scene wherein he banished her, while fatally allowing her just one more day with her children. But the star of the show was Canadian soprano Alexandra Deshorties, whom we had not heard before, although she has sung Mozart roles at the MET and elsewhere. She came on stage impressively with two veiled handmaidens or Fates in the middle of Act I and never left the stage, nor could one take one's eyes off her! She is tall and striking with long dark hair, and she was beautifully gowned throughout, and moved lithely, often taking odd positions reminiscent of Greek vases or fascinatingly slinking supplely like the aforementioned snake on the set. As she sang she embodied Medea, bemoaning her fate, berating Jason, and entreating Creon, and then at the end she emerged from below covered with blood and in a sexy brief black swimsuit-like garment, uncontrollably jubilant. She had us in the palm of her hand, blessed with the requisite voice and stamina to pull it off - a spectacular



achievement. This was a riveting performance of the opera, where all aspects came together as a whole to produce a breathtaking experience - grand opera at its best!

Sunday morning our final presentation was by Jeanine Tesori, composer and conductor, whose first opera was GGF's world premier commission *A Blizzard on Marblehead Neck*. She enlightened us on her composing process, the economics of balancing commercial vs. artistic commissions, the difficulties of waiting for a libretto to then have to compose quickly, the rehearsal process, and related topics - what an introduction to that afternoon's operas! *Blizzard* was the second half of a contemporary opera double bill, for which, incidentally, our pre-show chat was by Ottawan Eve Legault who was assistant coach and pianist on both double bill operas! The first opera, *Later the Same Evening*, by composer John Musto, was Canadian Leon Major's idea for a piece for his Opera Studio at Maryland U., to tie in with a 2007 National Gallery Edward Hopper exhibition, and was performed here at GGF in its professional premiere in conjunction with an interesting Hopper show at the Fenimore Art Museum! The opera takes

Francesca's Focus Changes Glimmerglass (continued)

the characters in five Hopper paintings - duplicated and hanging as if in a gallery throughout the piece - and ingeniously connects them as they attend a Broadway musical on a rainy evening - it has been called "a love song to New York City". Leon Major directed, David Angus conducted, and soprano Patricia Schuman and bass-baritone Jake Gardner played an older couple among the excellent YAP cast, for an interesting reading of this new opera.

Blizzard tells the episode of the near death of Eugene O'Neill, sung by bass-baritone David



Pittsinger, when, after a blazing row with his wife, Carlotta, sung by Schuman, he stormed out into a blizzard but was saved by a policeman, sung by YAP tenor Jeffrey Gwaltney. Director Zambello kept the fight tense, and the opening snow scene was a treat for the audience on a hot day! Both operas were well sung and produced, and each in its own way was enjoyable. Francesca Zambello is to be congratulated for adding to the opera repertoire.

The delightful individual YAP recitals are no more, replaced this year by concerts entitled *Meet Me at the Pavilion*, involving the YAPs and other artists. We were lucky enough to attend one of these, *Voigt Lessons*, a brave autobiographical show by Deborah Voigt in which she told us her life story through words and music, to the delight of her adoring public.

Next year's programme includes Verdi's *Aida*; Weill's *Lost in the Stars* with Cape Town Opera; Lully's *Armide* in an Opera Atelier co-production; and *The Music Man*, starring Cooperstown native Dwayne Croft; all of which certainly sounded fascinating when described by Francesca Zambello!

Events You Could Have Enjoyed by Shelagh Williams

Music and Beyond: People who went to hear Ottawa countertenor Daniel Taylor and Les Voix Humaines singing early English gems had the unexpected pleasure of Emma Kirkby joining him in delightful duets and also solos in her signature repertoire! Menotti's opera *The Telephone* was given a most enjoyable airing for the composer's centennial year. With pianist Jean Desmarais, baritone Denis Lawlor and COC Ensemble Studio alumna soprano Lisa DiMaria provided a stylish and funny rendition, with excellent diction. This was followed by songs of Barber and Copland, sung clearly and expressively.

Shaw Festival: The Shaw's production of *My Fair Lady* in the Festival Theatre was a treat! The leading couple were perfectly cast: Deborah Hay as Eliza Doolittle and Benedict Campbell as Prof. Henry Higgins, with Neil Barclay a gritty Alfred P. Doolittle and Patrick Galligan a suitably stolid Colonel Pickering. The visual theme of a bird in a cage was cleverly maintained by Ken MacDonald's setting, with a delicate

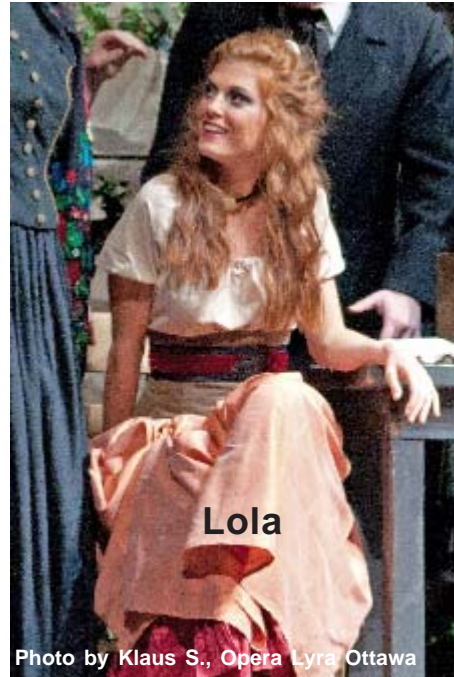
skeletal cage for Higgins's house, and girders for Eliza's slum, with flying birds projected during scene changes!

Stratford Festival: Lloyd Webber's rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar* was a pleasant surprise, as I had not seen it before. The story of Holy Week was powerfully portrayed from the point of view of Judas Iscariot, and the application of the 40 lashes counted out one by one was quite stunning. The casting was great, with Paul Nolan as Jesus, Chilina Kennedy as Mary Magdalene, charismatic American Josh Young as Judas, and Brent Carver as Pontius Pilate. But the highlight was Bruce Dow as King Herod! The setting was a unit set that did not evoke time or period but was very versatile. Another gorgeous Lerner and Loewe musical, *Camelot*, was a total delight. Again, it sported a first rate cast, with Geraint Wyn Davies as King Arthur, often naturally falling into a Welsh accent as he declaimed his lines, Kaylee Harwood as Guenevere, and Brent Carver as both Merlin, with a live falcon, and then as a delightfully odd King Pellinore. They were all enveloped in a luxurious elegant setting.

Who's On First At Opera Lyra? by Murray Kits

Let's start with the program. I don't think too many people were attracted by the enormous skull either in the newspaper ads or on the cover of the program. We are about to see *Pagliacci* in big bold letters; and *Cavalleria Rusticana* in smaller discrete letters. But wait a minute – we don't see *Pag* first and *Cav* second; just the reverse. These operas are listed as being by Pietro Mascagni and Ruggero Leoncavallo; but Leoncavallo wrote *Pag* and Mascagni wrote *Cav*. Someone at Opera Lyra is badly confused. They may also not be aware that many opera lovers (including myself) feel that *Cav* is the superior opera. But why then did the people with whom I attended the opera all pick *Pag* as the better of the two? I believe it was the fault of stage director Michael Cavanagh who decided to put his own spin on this story of the destructive power of love. In the first place, the tragedy for Santuzza is not that she has been excommunicated but that she has been deserted by Turiddu who has returned to his previous love, Lola. Turiddu's attraction to Lola makes him risk all and turns Santuzza's love for him into destructive hatred. Instead of emphasizing the main plot the director introduces the priest, banning Santuzza from church, confronting her during the glorious Easter hymn, spoiling the impact of this scene, and blunting our awareness of the depths of Santuzza's religious faith. There is even the invention of a nun (perhaps a sister of the sacristan from *Tosca*) to stop Santuzza from entering the church. The nun is given the task of announcing Turiddu's death – what is a nun doing at a duel, anyway? And those comparatively short skirts she is wearing (grounds for excommunication, perhaps?). Even more serious is the penultimate scene. This leads to the question – how far can a director change the plot of an opera just for the sake of change and at the expense of the audience's understanding? In any version of this opera that I have seen and following the text of the original play Mamma Lucia emerges from the church after the Intermezzo and goes into her wineshop. She does not emerge until Turiddu calls her and she is puzzled by his asking for her blessing realizing at the last moment that something is horribly wrong. In this version Mamma Lucia is present for the deadly challenge by Alfio, the acceptance by Turiddu, the action of the women getting Lola out of the way (Mamma Lucia helps) and, further emphasize

ing her presence, Alfio bites his thumb at Mamma Lucia. This makes absolute nonsense of the scene where Mamma Lucia asks Turiddu what is the meaning of what he is saying. She has seen it all and unless she is suffering from mental deterioration she would react very differently to what her son intends to do. What is the poor audience to make of this? Fortunately there was much to com-



pensate for the plot muddled by the director. The orchestra played beautifully and the choir work under Laurence Ewashko was exceptionally fine. Santuzza is a difficult role and Lisa Daltirus did a good job with it. The role of Mamma Lucia is often given to a singer whose best days are gone but Emilia Boteva was in excellent voice. We all loved to hate the attractive Wallis Giunta (one of our Brian Law winners) as the detestably seductive Lola. The dependable Gaétan Laperrière was vigorous as Alfio in his aria assisted by the children who cracked the whip for him – something that can become tedious. Richard Crawley was quite adequate as Turiddu, not helped by having someone move around the stage during his *Siciliana*. I thought that both he and Alfio did not adequately project the terrifying suppressed violence in the duel challenge barely kept under control by the “rustic chivalry”. With such a fine orchestra, chorus and principals

Who's On First At Opera Lyra? (continued)

this was a missed opportunity for an excellent performance of a great opera.

Pagliacci went much better in a traditional performance. The village square in Sicily served fairly well as the square in Calabria across the Straits of Messina. Having the clowns' stage already on stage presented no real problem. The same excellent chorus made their contribution with our fine



orchestra. Of the principals I must say that Yannick-Muriel Noah as Nedda had the finest singing voice combined with a newly acquired ability to play comedy in the play-within-the-play as well as act a dramatic role to which she has been more accustomed. Of course I am delighted with the progress in the career of one of our first-prize Brian Law winners. Richard Leech can still deliver a powerful and affecting portrayal of the tortured, murderous Canio. Gaétan Laperrière gave a spirited account of the famous Prologue and went on to portray the pathetic, lecherous, Tonio who eggs on Canio as well as playing his own role as a clown. Antonio Figueroa as Beppe really shone in his Serenade. Brian Law finalist Jonathan Estabrooks, as Silvio, managed to convince Nedda to run off with him, leading to the final double murders. Their scene together was not as torrid as in some productions that I've witnessed. From more than one source I heard that conductor Richard Buckley was not very good at his job. But, at the final performance which I attended, I perhaps mistakenly thought that the operas were well paced and that the beautiful music of *Cav* received full treatment. I hope my friends who liked *Pag* best will get a chance to see a really good *Cav* in the future.

NCOS Board of Directors 2011-2012

President	Murray Kitts	Publicity	Renate Chartrand
Past President	Bobbi Cain		Ute Davis
Vice President	Ute Davis	Events	Peggy Pflug
Secretary	Jean Saldanha		Pat Adamo
Membership	Vera-Lee Nelson		Elizabeth Meller
Treasurer	Gordon Metcalfe	Webmaster	Jim Burgess

Newsletter Editors

David Williams

Tom McCool

Website: <http://www.ncos.ca>

The Met: “Live in HD” 2011 Season

Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* – New Production

October 29, 2011, 12:55 pm Mariusz Kwiecien brings his youthful and sensual interpretation of Mozart’s timeless anti-hero to the Met for the first time, under the direction of Tony Award-winning director Michael Grandage and with James Levine conducting. Also starring Marina Rebeka, Barbara Frittoli, Ramón Vargas, and Luca Pisaroni.

Wagner’s *Siegfried* – New Production

November 5, 2011, 12 pm In part three of the Ring, Wagner’s cosmic vision focuses on his hero’s early conquests, while Robert Lepage’s revolutionary stage machine transforms itself from bewitched forest to mountaintop love nest. Gary Lehman sings the title role and Deborah Voigt’s Brünnhilde is his prize. Bryn Terfel is the Wanderer. James Levine conducts.

Glass’s *Satyagraha*

November 19, 2011, 12:55 pm The Met’s visually extravagant production is back for an encore engagement. Richard Croft once again is Gandhi in Philip Glass’s unforgettable opera, which the Washington Post calls “a profound and beautiful work of theater.”

Handel’s *Rodelinda*

December 3, 2011, 12:30 pm

Sensational in the 2004 Met premiere of Stephen Wadsworth’s much-heralded production, Renée Fleming reprises the title role. She’s joined by Stephanie Blythe and countertenor Andreas Scholl, and Baroque specialist Harry Bicket conducts.

Gounod’s *Faust* – New Production

December 10, 2011, 12:55 pm

With Jonas Kaufmann in the title role, René Pape as the devil, and Marina Poplavskaya as Marguerite, Gounod’s classic retelling of the Faust legend couldn’t be better served. Tony Award-winning director Des McAnuff updates the story to the first half of the 20th century with a production that won praise in London last season. Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducts on the heels of his *Don Carlo* success.

January 21, 2012 *The Enchanted Island*

February 11, 2012 Wagner’s *Götterdämmerung*

February 25, 2012 Verdi’s *Ernani*

April 7, 2012 Massenet’s *Manon*

April 14, 2012 Verdi’s *La traviata*

For details of these HD presentations check the Met’s website: <http://www.metoperafamily.org>

Opera Within Reach

Ottawa

Opera Lyra Ottawa

Barber of Bytown adapted from Rossini
October 15, 16, & 21, 2011 at NAC Fourth Stage

The Flying Dutchman (concert version) by Wagner
February 29, 2012 in Southam Hall at the NAC

Tosca by Puccini
March 31 & April 2, 4, 7, 2012
in Southam Hall at the NAC

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

Orpheus Society

White Christmas by Berlin
November 11-20, 2011 at Centrepointe Theatre

Rent by Larson
March 2-11, 2012 at Centrepointe Theatre

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

Montréal

Opera de Montréal

Rusalka by Dvorak
November 12, 15, 17 & 19, 2011

Performances are in Salle Wilfrid Pelletier at Place des
Arts Information: <http://www.operademontreal.com>

Toronto

Canadian Opera Company

Tosca by Puccini
January 21, 25, 29 & 31, 2012
February 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 16, 21, 23 & 25, 2012

Love From Afar by Saariaho
February 2, 4, 8, 10, 12, 14, 18 & 22, 2012

Performances are in the Four Seasons Centre
Information: <http://www.coc.com>

Opera Atelier

Don Giovanni by Mozart
October 29, 30, November 1, 2, 4, & 5, 2011

Armide by Lully
April 14, 15, 17, 18, 20 & 21, 2012

Performances are in the Elgin Theatre
Information: <http://www.operaatelier.com>

Syracuse

Syracuse Opera

La Traviata by Verdi October 21 & 23, 2011

Performances are in the Syracuse Civic Center.

<http://www.syracuseopera.com>

Check for times and other details on the Websites.

Opera alla Pasta

Excellent productions of three great operas....

Friday

1 pm, November 25, 2011

Un Ballo in Maschera

"Opera alla Pasta" opera showings usually occurred on Sunday but this presentation will take place on Friday. The place: St. Anthony's Soccer Club. Lunch (\$20) is at 1:00 pm. So mark **Friday, November 25 at 1: 00 pm** on your calendar.



Un Ballo in Maschera is one of Verdi's most controversial operas and one of his best. The controversy stems from the fact the story involves the assassination of the King of Sweden and this did not sit well with the censors of the day. *Ballo* is one Verdi opera that requires a strong tenor and this production from the Met features Luciano Pavarotti at his best.

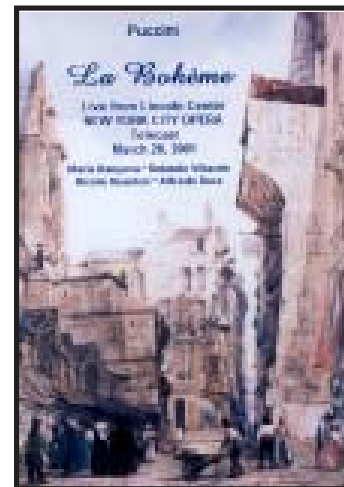
Reserve by November 20 by calling Elizabeth Meller at 613-721-7121

2012



The specific dates for the showing of these two operas have not been determined.

Massenet's *Le Cid* was first performed in 1885 and was initially very popular but, except for the ballet suite, has faded from the repertory. It has been revived recently and this 2001 production starring superstar Placido Domingo as Spain's greatest hero is from the Washington Opera. Beautiful music and great singing are the hallmarks of this unfairly neglected masterpiece.



Puccini's *La Bohème*, based on a novel portraying young Bohemians living in the Latin Quarter of Paris in the 1840s, has always been one of the most popular operas in the repertoire and remains so today. This New York City Opera production was telecast live in 2001 and has been acclaimed as one of the best *Bohèmes* ever. A very strong cast is anchored by the superb tenor, Roland Villazón.