

Viva Voce

March 2021



The Met - re-emerging in the Fall



Rochester's new Opera Collective



Halliday-Quan



Holmquest



Slominski

The Opera Guild of Rochester, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization with a mission to support opera and opera education in the greater Rochester area.

The Guild presents free opera lectures at local libraries, tours to productions of local opera companies and the Metropolitan Opera in New York City, and our popular Beat-the-Blahs, Haskell Rosenberg Memorial Series, at Temple B'rith Kodesh in Brighton.

This newsletter is sent via eMail each month, currently to over 3,000 subscribers. For a free subscription go to our Website and sign up at <https://www.operaguildofrochester.org/subscribe-to-viva-voce>

Our Website and Facebook pages serve as a clearinghouse for local and regional opera, concert, and recital information, with links to other music organizations in our area. Please visit our Website at operaguildofrochester.org.

For up-to-date information on opera-related news and events, please visit us on [facebook.com/OperaGuildofRochester](https://www.facebook.com/OperaGuildofRochester) and at our Website at <https://www.operaguildofrochester.org/>

Some events are now being recorded. Click the YouTube logo to visit us there.



Reader Article submission deadline for the next issue is the 15th of the previous month.

Opera Guild of Rochester,
P.O. Box 25613, Rochester, NY 14625

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March 5, 7	Pegasus	Berwick Fiddle Consort
March 6	Friends of Eastman Opera	Voice Competition
March 19	Finger Lakes Opera	Carlos Dantelli Recital
<Anytime>	Pegasus	A Night at the Baroque Opera
<Anytime>	Rochester Oratorio Society	Various
<Anytime>	Finger Lakes Opera	Pinocchio, Williams and Piper Brown recitals, podcasts

EDITOR'S CORNER

Dear subscribers and other readers of Viva Voce,

As you can see, this is the debut issue in our new format! For at least the next few months, it will be a work in progress, as we work out the kinks and experiment with our new powers. While we were forced to move to a new publisher system by the reduction in editing options offered by Constant Contact, the new program offers many possibilities that allow the newsletter to look more and more like a magazine. We would very much like your feedback!

Imagine a new feature:

Letters to the Editor
YOUR INPUT HERE

Naturally, such a change provides the occasion for re-evaluation of the old ways and consideration of new ones. Let us know your ideas about what you would like to see, and what you don't care for. As we expand our offerings we can always use new, well-written content, so if you have a pet subject you would like to share in print, let us know that, too. Our new pagination, which may require fillers, has inspired me to finally produce a quiz feature, so imagine

Top Quiz Marks
YOUR NAME COULD BE HERE

News From Your Opera Guild

It is wonderful to be able to list the Met Live in HD season! By October, most people should be vaccinated and we can begin to see some normalcy return to our social and cultural lives. Although our Annual Recital for Donors will be virtual this year, we hope to provide the opportunity for those without computers to view it.

I wish to thank my husband, Bill Crocca, for his diligence in bringing our new newsletter format to fruition. He stepped up when our former technical publisher stepped down and not only took her place in getting the newsletter out, but learned the new format and oversaw the training of our new technical services person, Ava Sauer. As usual, he enriched the process with his creativity and skill to produce a result of quality. He has also contributed in various ways to our other virtual adventures.

Thanks are also mightily due to Mary Bonaccio, Chair of the Communications Committee, who has borne and continues to bear the burden of our increased virtual presence. Without her commitment and expertise, we could not have provided appropriate services during this pandemic which demands alternatives to live performance. We literally could not function in the twenty-first century without her.

Cindy Battisti is another contributor to our modern endeavors. In addition to keeping our Face Book page current and lively, she had the idea of putting the newsletter feature Behind the Scenes on the website so there could be a link for Face Book followers.

It is getting a bit less cold. Whatever the groundhog may prognosticate, we know that actual spring in Rochester is still pretty far off - but there is more light and warmth in the tunnel. The arrival of summer this year will indeed be welcome in more ways than one.

Carol

Please also keep in mind that we are a volunteer organization!

You can enjoy the opportunity to meet and work with other opera fans and help sustain the programs you like. Currently we are looking for an assistant treasurer, event helpers, technical back-up and publicity committee volunteers. For information about these jobs or to speak with us about any volunteer interest, write to operaguilddofrochester@gmail.com and the appropriate person will contact you.

Donations

As an *Amici*, your contribution in any amount is greatly appreciated. All donation levels receive an invitation to the Annual Recital; those listed below will be given priority until a date specified on the invitation, and at the *Comprimario* level and above may request extra tickets.

Chorus: \$50 per person, \$80 per couple.

Comprimario: \$100-\$199.

Primo: \$200-\$299.

Maestro: \$300-\$399.

Impresario: \$400 or more.

Donate
On Line

You may also mail a check to Opera Guild of Rochester, P.O. Box 25613, Rochester, NY 14625. Please include an email or other address for your tax receipt.

NEW! A Note on Tax Receipts from the President: Due to the help of a generous volunteer, we are now able to send a personal thank you to all contributors.

The IRS does not require a charity to give, or the donor to have, a formal acknowledgment from the charity for donations under \$250.00. Your canceled check or credit card record is sufficient evidence for your donations below this amount if you itemize them. Donations of \$250.00 and above will receive the required acknowledgment from the Opera Guild before January 31st following the end of the calendar tax year. The invitation to the Annual Recital is our way of showing our appreciation to our donors and we sincerely hope to see you there!

GREAT OPERA-TUNITIES

(For those wishing to explore opera without spending a lot of money)

FREE - Friends of Eastman Opera Voice Competition. 2021 will be online, see listing. Look for next year in February 2022 *Viva Voce*. 8 pm, Kilbourn Hall, Gibbs Street, Rochester.

FREE - The Lotte Lenya Competition: young multi-talented singer/actors performing both opera and musical theater selections. See *Viva Voce* for more information about the 2021 event.

FREE - Opera Guild Lectures See August 2021 for lectures at Fairport Library, February and March 2022 *Viva Voce* for lectures at Brighton Memorial Library.

\$9/10 suggested donation - Opera Guild "Beat the Blahs." Opera DVD presentations at Temple B'rith Kodesh. In normal times, four Sundays in January at 1 pm. Pre-performance talk, refreshments at intermission, children and students always FREE. This year's presentations may be rescheduled later in 2021.

\$24; UR students \$10 with ID - **The Eastman Opera Season:** (Eastman voice students). Pre-performance talks; see full listing in *Viva Voce*.

\$25 per (senior) ticket - Metropolitan Opera simulcasts in HD. The **20-21 simulcasts have been canceled**. These performances usually take place on Saturdays at 1 pm. An encore performance, not live, is given on the Wednesday following for \$23. Theaters are at Tinseltown, Eastview, Webster and Henrietta. See full listing and essays in *Viva Voce*.

FREE - Opera Guild Bravo Nights, in normal times at The Little Café. Live accompanied singers perform opera favorites in an informal atmosphere. See *Viva Voce* for next virtual date.

\$18 Opera performances from the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden are screened several times a year at **The Little Theatre**, as listed in *Viva Voce*. There are no Royal Opera House presentations currently scheduled.



ROCopera is the brainchild of three professional opera singers: Elisabeth Halliday-Quan, Heather Holmquest and Kerri Lynn Slominski (Our own 'Three Sopranos'?). It was created to broaden opera's reach in the Rochester area by reimagining and reinterpreting existing classical vocal music through a contemporary lens. It also promotes new works for the classical voice; and seeks to bring opera out of the concert hall and into everyday spaces (although right now, that would be the internet).

The principles have assembled a growing team of local professional opera singers and instrumentalists into a regional opera collective, both a producing organization and a mechanism for promoting and supporting the work of local artists. When they launched their Face Book page, the response was great and the women were very thankful for free social media to get them started!

The company made its public debut at the *2020 KeyBank Rochester Fringe Festival* with their virtual audience-interactive engagement **Total Request Live: OPERA EDITION!** In October, they performed at the **ImageOut Transgender Day of Remembrance**. **ROCopera** recently wrapped up their virtual **Song Cycle Festival** for which performers produced their own interpretations of composers works through audio/video digital presentation.

Kerri Lynn Slominski relates, "My colleagues and I were originally developing as a chapter of OOT (Opera On Tap*) for Rochester. In light of recent events, we have elected to go in a more independent direction in order to create effective socially-distanced performance opportunities as well as anticipated future stage performances.

Kerri Lynn is a local Rochesterian from a musical family who performed at one of the first Bravo Nights. She and Elizabeth Halliday-Quan both attended Peabody Conservatory, where they met. Elizabeth, like many singers, has a dual presence, here and in New York City, where she works with companies to commission and premier new repertoire, and is a co-founder and artist of the ensemble Rhymes With Opera. Heather Holmquist, an early music specialist, wears hats as soprano choral scholar at Third Presbyterian Church, teacher of music theory at Nazareth College, and private piano and voice teacher. She received both master's and doctoral degrees in Musical Arts from Oregon University.

If you haven't already encountered the talented members of this group, watch for ROCopera's virtual Bravo Night, scheduled for June.

*Opera On Tap is a national and international network which produces, as its name suggests, opera in community venues such as bars. Its programs promote young singers, local composers and new music



Finger Lakes Opera

FLO's featured recitalist for March will be tenor Carlos Enrique Santelli. Santelli, who is a 2018 Metropolitan Opera National Council Winner, is one of four stars scheduled to appear on the main stage this summer. Carlos's program is listed below:



"Torna, vezzosa fillide"
"Ecco ridente in cielo"
"Questa o quella" from *Rigoletto*
"Granada"

Vicenzo Bellini (1801 – 1835)
Gioachino Rossini (1792 – 1868)
Guiseppe Verdi (1813 – 1901)
Augustín Lara (1897 – 1970)

FLO Website: <https://www.fingerlakesopera.org/>

FRIENDS OF
Eastman Opera

FEO Voice Competition

Saturday, March 6, 2021

Prerecorded competition will be released at 8:00 p.m. ET

Live-streamed Awards Ceremony will follow

The Friends of Eastman Opera would like to invite you to the twentieth annual FEO Voice Competition, adjudicated by Miah Im, Director of Opera Studies at Rice University. The prerecorded competition and live-streamed awards ceremony can be viewed [here](#).



March 5, 2021 @ 7:30 pm ET

March 7, 2021 @ 4 pm ET

[Berwick Fiddle Consort](#), Strings & lute

“Ayont Yon Glen”



Brahms from Oz

March 19, 2021 @ 7:30 pm ET

March 21, 2021 @ 4 pm ET

[Daniel Yeadon](#), cello

[Neal Peres Da Costa](#), Keyboards



From a Hall of Mirrors

April 16, 2021 @ 7:30 pm ET

April 18, 2021 @ 4 pm ET

[Geoffrey Burgess](#), oboe

[Leon Schelhase](#), harpsichord



Pegasus Rising: The New Consort: O Stars, Conspiring Against Me

May 27, 2021 @ 7:30 pm ET

May 30, 2021 @ 4 pm ET

[The New Consort](#), Singers

The New Consort, Brian Mummert, director



Exile and Connection

April 29, 2021 @ 7:30 pm ET

May 2, 2021 @ 4 pm ET

[Incantare](#), violins, sackbut & organ

[Rebecca Cypess](#),

[Liza Malamut](#),

Stories of Jewish Musicians and their Contemporaries in Early Modern Europe
Musicians and musicologists Liza Malamut and Rebecca Cypess, and Incantare

COCOA AND CAROLS: How did they do it?

Reprinted with permission of Tri-Cities Opera, John Rozzini, General Director

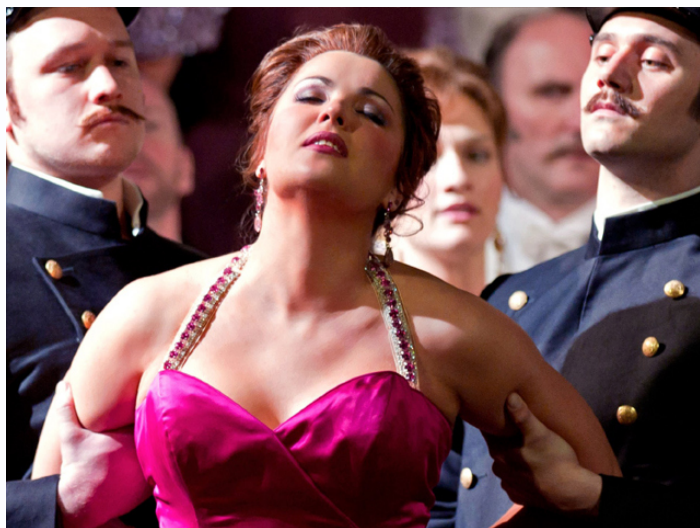
Please consider supporting Tri-Cities Opera: click [here](#) for the Website.



While TCO was unable to produce live & in-person events this fall, we wanted to share something special with all of you for the holidays. The artists pictured above helped the company produce its first online alumni event ever, Cocoa & Carols.

While each artist was offered a stipend for participation, they had to record themselves using whatever technology they had... largely their phones. They recorded their lines in separate takes and recorded their singing while wearing headphones and singing along to a track provided by TCO. They then sent their individual audio and video clips to TCO's Assistant Conductor John Cockerill who worked it all into the magic sauce seen and heard during the concert. BRAVI TUTTI!

As we plan for the return on Cocoa & Carols in December of 2021, TCO hopes to be able to raise some money to purchase microphones & ring lights to lend to singers as professional "in-home studio" production resources. We think this will help us raise the bar for another cozy, festive, and fun holiday event.



We are very fortunate to have a great variety of streamed opera presentations at no charge during this time. See operaguildforrochester.org for weekly listings of Metropolitan Opera offerings, among others. For a purportedly **complete listing of streamed opera showings, including European and other international houses**, go to operawire.com.

Another great site for all kinds of listings, including opera streaming schedules, is bachtrack.com.

NEW: The Canadian Opera Company has announced a new program of streamed offerings called *Opera Everywhere* - see coc.ca for details.



Divinely Inspired: The Masses of Franz Peter Schubert A Virtual Singing Opportunity

Learn and sing along at home with the Rochester Oratorio Society!

[Register Now](#)



The prolific Austrian composer, Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828), wrote six Latin Masses and one German Mass, among numerous sacred choral works. These are some of the most admired of all choral music for their sublime beauty, directness of expression, innovative harmony and structure and progressive orchestration. From relatively simple, functional works of modest duration, the works grow longer and more complex through his output, while remaining always beautifully gratifying to sing and to hear. By the end of the series, with Mass No. 6, the musical sophistication is of the highest order, requiring a secure technique and a good understanding of choral ensemble.

Online Opera Education for Young and Old



Join Glimmerglass Music Director Joseph Colaneri at on Saturday nights 6:30 p.m. EDT for a six-episode series offering insights on the operatic art form.



Created with the support of the Glimmerglass Festival Guild, the series will offer a brief episode Saturdays at 6:30 p.m. Each episode can be viewed on the [Glimmerglass Festival website](#) or our [YouTube channel](#). Can't make it at 6:30 p.m.? Check back to view the episodes on your own time.

Other learning opportunities:

Of course, the Metropolitan Opera has many resources for both adults and students. If you haven't explored them already, go to the main menu at metopera.org and click on 'discover.' This leads to another menu of all kinds of educational features from podcasts and articles to more formal educational materials for students.

From Chatauqua Opera, at chq.org/opera-video-index, you will find a listing of all the features that were part of the 9-week summer video opera events, which are archived on the website's Virtual Front Porch platform. These include conversations with artists, vocal events, master classes, the Opera Song Cycle, new compositions, and more.

San Francisco Opera has a great education site for youngsters with materials that can be used in the home as well as by educators. sfopera.com/discover-opera/education

Los Angeles Opera has programs for both adults and children at laopera.org/community

Utah Opera at <https://utahopera.org/education/students/> also has good student materials.

From Arizona Opera, at <https://azopera.org/education-community/opera-home-virtual-learning-tools>, videos for middle school and older students with introductions to four operas. Although produced for Arizona Opera presentations, they are suitable as general references.

Many opera companies have such sites; you can search "virtual opera education" for more.



Bravo Nights

Bravo Nights are performances at The Little Café of opera and musical theater selections by talented local singers in an informal setting. They are appreciated by both seasoned opera fans and newcomers who wish to learn about the art form.

In normal times, Bravo Nights take place at The Little Café, which is located in the Little Theatre at 240 East Avenue, performances are 7-9 pm, and refreshments may be purchased there.

Watch here for our next scheduled Bravo Night, featuring ROCopera, sometime in June.

Eastman School of Music - Eastman Opera Theatre 2020 -2021 Season ANNOUNCEMENT SHAPING THE FUTURE.

Eastman Opera Theatre Statement Regarding Covid-19:

Despite the unprecedented challenges posed by Covid-19, Eastman Opera Theatre is committed to presenting a full, varied, and artistically fulfilling 2020-21 season. Our primary focus, as always, remains on the growth of our students. While the specific performance parameters of each work may change as we all adapt to an unpredictable pandemic, we have chosen titles and performance projects that may be adapted to whatever performance guidelines are dictated by changing circumstances.

In celebration of Eastman's 2021 Centennial, we have chosen to present titles during the 2021 calendar year by Eastman alumni. We will also offer an all-Mozart program in May 2021 to complement the contemporary nature of a season featuring Eastman composers.

WINTER PRODUCTION - Dates TBD (Late March or April)

Eastman Opera Theatre Scene Shop

Postcard from Morocco -1971 Dominick Argento (ESM '58) & John Donahue

Steven Daigle, Director; Timothy Long, Conductor.

KODAK HALL - JUNE 2021

Elizabeth Cree, Kevin Puts (ESM '94, '99) & Mark Campbell

Stephen Carr, Director; Timothy Long, Conductor

Kurt Weill

THE KURT WEILL FOUNDATION FOR MUSIC

THE LOTTE LENYA COMPETITION



Final Round Competition Judges: Victoria Clark, Andy Einhorn, and Mary Beth Pell

The Final Round will take place in person, with or without an audience, on Saturday, 29 May 2021 in either Rochester, NY or New York City. If travel restrictions prevent an in-person final round on this date, it will be rescheduled for a date after 15 August 2021. See kwf.org for details.



Presented by The Rochester Oratorio Society

Rising Stars | Distinguished Judges | An Event Like No Other

Young artists perform thrilling renditions of the most moving classics of opera, art song, and oratorio. Participate in this one-of-a-kind evening of music by voting for your favorite performance.

Save the Date – RIVC Showcase

May 1, 2021 | 7:00 PM ET

Facebook Live

RSVP [here](#)

The 2020-2021 Winners have been announced! For 2020 first, Kara Dugan, mezzo; second, Mary Beth Nelson, mezzo; third, Kyle Sanchez Tingzon, counter tenor. For 2021, first, Allison Gish, mezzo; second, Keymon Murrah, counter tenor; third, David Walton, tenor.

Chautauqua to Return to Its Tent Roots in 2021

CHAUTAUQUA OPERA COMPANY

Opera, theater open to all to be presented in an outdoor venue on Pratt Avenue.

Following analysis of the potential use of Norton Hall as the primary venue for Chautauqua Theater Company and Chautauqua Opera Company performances in 2021, Institution officials have opted instead to construct a temporary performance pavilion on Pratt Avenue for the presentation of performances with lawn seating open to all gate pass holders. The plan includes the presentation of approximately 40 theater, opera and selected other programs over the nine-week Summer Assembly. In addition to lawn space open for self-seating and requiring no additional ticket, a limited number of reserved seats under the cover of the pavilion will be sold for each performance at \$25 per person. Recognizing the Pratt Avenue location is normally used informally and in limited ways during a typical Summer Assembly, programs at the pavilion will be scheduled to take place during the day and early evening hours only, and all public events will occur on a pre-published schedule. For more information, [go here](#).

An aerial photograph of Chautauqua Park and Lake Chautauqua. The park is lush with green trees and features several buildings, including a prominent red-roofed structure. The lake is calm, with a few boats docked along the shore. The text "START PLANNING YOUR 2021 CHAUTAUQUA EXPERIENCE!" is overlaid in large, bold, white letters on a dark blue background. Below the image, a green banner contains the text: "Click or tap here for more information on accommodations, tickets and passes, 2021 themes and everything else you need to craft a safe and memorable stay."

**START PLANNING YOUR
2021 CHAUTAUQUA
EXPERIENCE!**

Click or tap here for more information on accommodations, tickets and passes, 2021 themes and everything else you need to craft a safe and memorable stay.

Sales for long-term gate passes, parking and docks begin [Feb. 9](#)



Nickel City Opera

MARK YOUR 2021 CALENDARS

Sotto Voce and Nickel City Opera present

The Second Sight

RESCHEDULED to June 26th & 27th 2021

An original opera by Jessie Downs

Unitarian Universalist Church

695 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo [More Info Here](#)

An Opera Calamity

This disaster happened not once but twice! In the last act of Lohengrin, a swan boat appears to carry off the title character. The boat arrived for Lauritz Melchior as ordered but took off before he could board. Apparently quoting Leo Slezak, another famous Lohengrin similarly deserted, he looked at the audience and sang, 'Wenn geht der nächste Swann?' – 'When does the next swan go?'

Here is Newman Levy's take on the scene, from Opera Guy'd, p. 60, the last verses of his humorous poem about Lohengrin, Alfred A. Knopf, NY, 1923.

To the plain comes Elsa grieving for her knight who now is leaving.
Clad in mail, he glitters gaily
As he nears the fateful spot.

"Well" he says 'my name is Lohengrin; not Murphy, Smith nor Cohen.
And your brother is no other than the bird that pulls my yacht."

So the lad, restored by magic, ends this drama sad and tragic,
Elsa, crying, falls back dying,
But her knight just leaves her flat.

Any man who acts so formal toward his wife is not quite normal
No sane guy'd forsake his bride for such a damn fool cause as that.

Pegasus Early Music

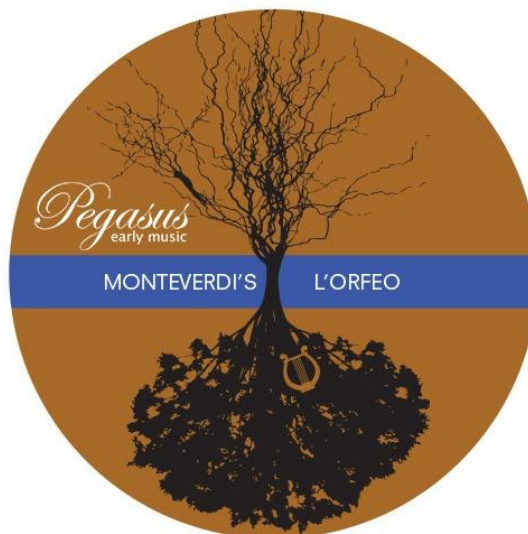
L'Orfeo

by Claudio Monteverdi

August 19, 20 and 22, 2021

Pre-concert talks 1 hour before each performance

Hart Theater at the Louis S. Wolk Jewish Community Center
1200 Edgewood Avenue, Rochester



This ground-breaking opera, written in 1607 and considered the first "real" opera, still has the power to captivate audiences over 400 years later, with its universal story, virtuosic expressive music, and colorful orchestration. Its themes of love and loss, human weakness and strength, redemption and the power of music, remain relevant today and will resonate profoundly with our audiences.

As Orfeo, famous for his musical prowess, joyfully celebrates his marriage to Euridice, a messenger brings the news that she has died. Orfeo travels the treacherous path to the Underworld to win her back-with his seductively entrancing music -only to lose her again because of his own doubt. Eventually escorted by the god Apollo, he ascends to the heavens where he can be reunited in the stars with his Euridice. A cast of shepherds, nymphs, spirits, and gods support the flow of the drama with dance, heartfelt solos, and dynamic choruses, that comment on and interpret the action.

We are thrilled to present tenor Colin Balzer in the virtuosic and dramatically expressive role of Orfeo, the singer who must travel to Hell and back to regain his beloved Euridice.

[Michael Beattie](#), music director

[Emily Cuk](#), stage director

[Julia Noulín-Merat](#), scenic designer

[Peggy Murray](#), choreographer

Whitney Locher, costume designer

John Cuff, lighting designer

Orfeo: Colin Balzer, tenor

Musica & Proserpina: Laura Heimes, soprano

Apollo: Sumner Thompson, tenor

Messenger & Speranza: Debi Wong, mezzo-soprano

Caronte: Steven Hrycelak, bass

Euridice: Madeline Healey, soprano

Plutone: Mischa Bouvier, baritone

Pastori, Spiriti: Andrew Fuchs, Jonas Budris, tenors; Douglas Dodson, countertenor;
and a chorus that includes young emerging artists of the Pegasus Rising program

For more information go to <https://www.pegasusearlymusic.org/opera/>

The Metropolitan Opera

The Met has announced its new season for Live in HD transmissions, but there is no sign of them in the theaters yet.

2021-22 Season

Modest Mussorgsky

[Boris Godunov](#)

Sat, Oct 09, 2021 12:55 PM

Bass René Pape, the world's reigning Boris, reprises his overwhelming portrayal of the tortured tsar caught between grasping ambition and crippling paranoia. Conductor Sebastian Weigle leads Mussorgsky's masterwork, a pillar of the Russian repertoire, in its original 1869 version, which runs two-and-a-quarter hours with no intermission. Stephen Wadsworth's affecting production poignantly captures the hope and suffering of the Russian people as well as the tsar himself.



Terence Blanchard / Kasi Lemmons

[Fire Shut Up in My Bones](#)

Sat, Oct 23, 2021 12:55 PM

The Met's first performance of an opera by a Black composer. Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducts Grammy Award-winning jazz musician and composer Terence Blanchard's adaptation of Charles M. Blow's moving memoir, which The New York Times praised after its 2019 world premiere at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis as "bold and affecting" and "subtly powerful." The opera tells a poignant and profound story about a young man's journey to overcome a life of trauma and hardship. Baritone Will Liverman, one of opera's most exciting young artists, stars as Charles, alongside sopranos Angel Blue as Destiny/Loneliness/Greta and Latonia Moore as Billie.

Matthew Aucoin / Sarah Ruhl

[Eurydice](#)

Sat, Dec 04, 2021 12:55 PM

The ancient Greek myth of Orpheus, who attempts to harness the power of music to rescue his beloved Eurydice from the underworld, has inspired composers since opera's earliest days. Rising American composer Matthew Aucoin now carries that tradition into the 21st century with a captivating new take on the story—a product of the Met's commissioning program. The opera reimagines the familiar tale from Eurydice's point of view. Yannick Nézet-Séguin is on the podium; there is a new staging by Mary Zimmerman. Soprano Erin Morley sings the title role, opposite baritone Joshua Hopkins as Orpheus and countertenor Jakub Józef Orliński as his otherworldly alter-ego. Bass-baritone Nathan Berg is Eurydice's father and fellow resident of the underworld, with tenor Barry Banks as Hades himself.

Jules Massenet

[Cinderella—Holiday Presentation](#)

Sat, Jan 01, 2022 12:55 PM

Continuing a treasured holiday tradition, the Met presents a new installment in its series of abridged opera adaptations for family audiences. Laurent Pelly's storybook staging of Massenet's Cendrillon, a hit of the 2017–18 season, is presented with an all-new English translation in an abridged 90 minutes, with mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard as its rags-to-riches princess. Maestro Emmanuel Villaume leads a delightful cast, which includes mezzo-soprano Emily D'Angelo as Cinderella's Prince Charming, soprano Jessica Pratt as her Fairy Godmother, and mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe and bass-baritone Laurent Naouri as her feuding guardians.

Giuseppe Verdi

Rigoletto

Sat, Jan 29, 2022 12:55 PM

The Met rings in the new year with the gala premiere of a bold new take on Verdi's timeless tragedy from Bartlett Sher. The Tony Award-winning director resets the opera's action in 1920s Europe, with Art Deco sets by Michael Yeargan and elegant costumes by Catherine Zuber, themselves boasting a combined eight Tony Awards. Baritone Quinn Kelsey, a commanding artist at the height of his powers, brings his searing portrayal of the title role to the Met for the first time, starring alongside soprano Rosa Feola as Gilda and tenor Piotr Beczala as the Duke of Mantua, with leading maestro Daniele Rustioni on the podium.

Richard Strauss

Ariadne auf Naxos

Sat, Mar 12 2022 12:55 PM

The exhilarating soprano Lise Davidsen brings one of her signature roles to the Met for the first time as the mythological Greek heroine of Strauss's enchanting masterpiece. The outstanding cast also features mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard as the Composer of the opera-within-an-opera around which the plot revolves, with soprano Brenda Rae as the spirited Zerbinetta, tenor Brandon Jovanovich as Ariadne's lover, the god Bacchus, and Sir Thomas Allen as the Major-Domo. Marek Janowski conducts.

[Read Synopsis](#)

Giuseppe Verdi

Don Carlos

Sat, Mar 26, 2022 12:55 PM

The Met presents the original five-act French version of Verdi's epic opera of doomed love among royalty, set against the backdrop of the Spanish Inquisition. Yannick Nézet-Séguin leads a world-beating cast including tenor Matthew Polenzani in the title role, soprano Sonya Yoncheva as Élisabeth de Valois, and mezzo-soprano Elīna Garanča as Eboli. Bass Günther Groissböck and bass-baritone John Relyea are Philippe II and the Grand Inquisitor, and baritone Étienne Dupuis rounds out the cast as Rodrigue. Verdi's masterpiece receives a monumental new staging by Sir David McVicar that marks his 11th Met production, placing him among the most prolific and popular directors in recent Met memory.

Giacomo Puccini

Turandot

Sat, May 07, 2022 12:55 PM

The title role of the legendary cold-hearted princess is taken by superstar Anna Netrebko, making her long-awaited Met role debut after providing a hair-raising preview in 2019's New Year's Eve Gala. Tenor Yusif Eyvazov is the bold prince determined to win Turandot's love, alongside soprano Michelle Bradley as the devoted servant Liù and bass Ferruccio Furlanetto as the blind king Timur. Marco Armiliato conducts Puccini's stirring score.

Donizetti

Lucia di Lammermoor

Sat, May 21, 2022 12:55 PM

Soprano Nadine Sierra, who has brought down the house at the Met with virtuosic vocalism and captivating stage presence, takes on one of the repertory's most formidable and storied roles, the haunted heroine of Lucia di Lammermoor, in an electrifying new staging by in-demand Australian theater and film director Simon Stone, conducted by Riccardo Frizza. Show-stopping tenor Javier Camarena adds to the bel canto fireworks as Lucia's beloved, Edgardo, with baritone Artur Ruciński as her overbearing brother, Enrico, and bass Matthew Rose as her tutor, Raimondo.

[Read Synopsis](#)

Brett Dean / Matthew Jocelyn

Hamlet

Sat, Jun 04, 2022 12:55 PM

When Australian composer Brett Dean's *Hamlet* had its world premiere at the Glyndebourne Festival in 2017, The Guardian declared, "New opera doesn't often get to sound this good ... Shakespeare offers a gauntlet to composers that shouldn't always be picked up, but Dean's *Hamlet* rises to the challenge." Now, this riveting contemporary masterpiece arrives at the Met, with Neil Armfield, who directed the work's premiere, bringing his acclaimed staging to New York. Many of the original cast members have followed, including tenor Allan Clayton in the title role. Nicholas Carter makes his Met debut conducting a remarkable ensemble, which also features soprano Brenda Rae as Ophelia, mezzo-soprano Dame Sarah Connolly as Gertrude, baritone Rod Gilfry as Claudius, and legendary bass Sir John Tomlinson as the ghost of Hamlet's father.

Opera Quiz

(1) In recent years, Met sopranos have accepted the challenge of singing all three of these operas about queens in one season. Name the operas and the composer.

Name at least three other operas that have a queen as a character.

(2) The same name. List two operas in which characters with the following names appear: Elvira, Leonora, Arturo, Lindoro, Marie, Tonio, Sophie, Rodolfo.

(3) What do the following operas have in common? *La traviata*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Carmen*.

(4) The following are choruses from Italian operas. Name the opera and its composer:

- a. *O, Pastorelle addio*
- b. *Trema, Banco*
- c. *Regina Coeli*
- d. *Guerra, Guerra*
- e. *Va pensioro*

(5) In which operas do the following "Don's" appear? Don Fernando, Don Ramiro, Don Diego, Don Magnifico, Don Ottavio, Don Alvaro, Don Jose, Don Alfonso?

EXPERT:

(1) Which two Italian composers were contemporaries of Mozart but much more popular in their day? Name one opera by each.

(2) Name the composers of the following operas: *Dardanus*, *Giulio Cesare*, *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *Giasone*.

(3) Which librettist had the following name at birth? Emmanuele Conigliano.

Want to submit your answers? Send them to OperaGuildOfRochester@gmail.com.



Mona Seghatoleslami, Musicologist and More

By Carol Crocca

Mona who? Although you may or may not know how to pronounce her name, many of you will know Mona Seghatoleslami as the classical radio host on WXXI on weekday afternoons from 3 to 7 pm. (Note from Mona's youth: she persuaded her father not to shorten their Iranian name, which means, "a man all Muslims can trust"; she loved both its oddness and its musicality). Mona has always, it seems, worn many hats: she is assistant producer and host of *Noontime at Hochstein* on Wednesdays, which moves outdoors to High Falls in the summer, creates special radio and movie features, represents the station at opera and other musical events, introduces performers at the Annual Jazz Festival, and manages the music heard in The Little Café. This last intersects with the Opera Guild, for she works with board member and Communications Chair Mary Bonaccio to present our Bravo Nights programs.

Mona grew up in New Jersey, where she began musical study at the age of ten with the viola. Like other elementary students, her choice of instrument was urged upon her by the fact that the orchestra could use a violist, already having its full complement of violin players. Her parents found her a wonderful teacher, principal violist of the Chicago Symphony Robert Glazer, from whom she absorbed a great love of music and a great love for the stories of its composers and performers. As a younger student Mona did not have much experience of opera, with one exception. On a high school chorus trip she attended no less than the Vienna Staatsoper, a production of Wagner's *Rienzi*. She sat with the school orchestra's trombone player and what she remembers most is that their seats offered a great view of the orchestra's trombonist!

Mona continued with the viola as an undergraduate performance major at Illinois State University. Although she discovered she was not destined to be a professional violist, in part because of a slight tremor, she also realized that her love for music history was another professional avenue she could pursue. And she took all the music history courses she could.

She found her place at Indiana University in a master's program which combined musicology and music librarianship. Here she received a well-rounded music education which included composition and theory in addition to many more music history courses. A key academic course was "Writing About Music for General Audiences." Students practiced writing concert reviews, program notes, CD liner notes, and articles, the goal being to convey clearly something meaningful about the music without resorting to jargon or specialist language inappropriate for the general reader. Indiana also has a very well-regarded conservatory which presented seven fully-staged operas each year, and this was Mona's true introduction to opera. And here, most significantly for the future, she had her first experience in radio.



While working as a music librarian intern, Mona found herself constantly thinking of her other job at the student radio station, WIUS, helping her fellow student Thom Pease host a classical music program. Later, she applied for a job at the station, where she was gradually given opportunities to expand her role: she did some announcing, some audio production, created an opera quiz, did interviews, and wrote program notes for operas. Mona had evidently found a milieu which stimulated her creativity and provided an outlet for her many musical interests and talents. Oh, and something else - by the time she left Indiana, she had married Randy Pollok, an all-round musician who is director of music at the First Presbyterian Church in Brockport, and who plays and teaches piano, clarinet, guitar and ukulele.

Mona's next step was her first "real job," at West Virginia Public Radio, a state-wide public radio station based in Charleston, which included all music genres as well as news and features. Again, her work was in the music library, with a bit of announcing ("You're listening to..."), but she soon was filling in on occasion for music show hosts, and then became a substitute for the classical host, who was out for three months after surgery. She also created a blog, "Classically Speaking" and interviewed performers from other genres, such as

folk singer Judy Collins. And of course, since Mona is a person with an apparently boundless enthusiasm and energy for her work, she also wrote all kinds of reviews for the newspaper, taught American music at a local college, and was on the board of the chamber music society.

Although she was offered the opportunity to do other kinds of productions at the radio station, after five years Mona and her husband decided to leave West Virginia. On Mona's part this was largely because she wanted to concentrate on music rather than general radio work. She had a connection with Rochester because her sister had gone to college here, and interviewed with Peter DuBois, successor to Richard Gladwell as WXXI host of *With Heart and Voice*, who, as it happened, was originally from West Virginia. And so Mona came to Rochester, where she enriches our lives with her enthusiasm and knowledge.

A small challenge for Mona was hosting *Noontime at Hochstein*, where "real people see you." She soon got over her jitters, however, and now loves her

connection to Hochstein, and its connections to Rochester history and the settlement house movement, on which she did a program for the school's 100th anniversary. At Hochstein she also met other biking enthusiasts and was inspired by board member Jim Blake to become a team member in the Tour de Cure event on behalf of the American Diabetes Association.

At the Little Café, Mona changed the system of rotation of the musical groups for the Café, and added classical guitar night and the Bravo Nights opera program. One of my favorite Mona creations was a panel discussion a few years ago with the audience of *Moonstruck*, a movie with an opera connection for which we share an enthusiasm. These days, in addition to her afternoon radio broadcast, Mona continues to write special features (see her spot on the WXXI web site), and program for the virtual Little Café. She looks forward, as do we all, to the time when we can again share live music, as well as other face-to-(maskless) face pleasures, like sitting in the theater or café.



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