

London Opera Guild

Fall Newsletter – *September-October 2017*



A note from the editor:

I'm delighted to present this new format for our newsletter. I hope that you will enjoy it *and* that you'll write in. Consider submitting a review of an opera for the newsletter or make a request for one of your favourite arias for one of our upcoming concerts! I'd love to hear from you! Email ideas to OperaGuildEditor@gmail.com. Also, please visit us on Facebook: [facebook.com/LondonOperaGuild](https://www.facebook.com/LondonOperaGuild).

Some things in this issue:

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Upcoming Performances and Events

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|---|---|--|
| LOG Concerts | First Concert at St. James-Westminster Church Scholarship Winners concert at St. James-Westminster Church Third Concert Fourth Concert | October 8, 2017, 2:00pm November 5, 2017, 2:00pm TBA TBA |
| UWOpera | CARMEN by Bizet PIRATES OF PENZANCE OPERA GALA <i>http://www.music.uwo.ca/events/opera.html</i> | November 16-19, 2017 January 26-28, 2018 February 2-4, 2018 March 15 & 16, 2018 |
| Little London Community Opera | DIDO AND AENEAS BLACK WATER DON GIOVANNI <i>https://www.littlelondoncommunityopera.ca</i> | October 20 & 22, 2017 TBA January 2018 TBA April 2018 |
| The Met @ Cineplex <i>Saturday matinées</i> | NORMA by Bellini (NewProduction) DIE ZAUBERFLOTE by Mozart THE EXTERMINATING ANGEL by Adès TOSCA by Puccini (New Production) L'ELISIR D'AMORE by Donizetti LA BOHEME by Puccini SEMIRAMIDE by Rossini COSI FAN TUTTE by Mozart LUISA MILLER by Verdi CENDRILLON by Massenet <i>https://www.cineplex.com/Events/MetOpera for more information</i> | Live: October 7, 2017 Live: October 14, 2017 Live: November 18, 2017 Live: January 27, 2018 Live: February 10, 2018 Live: February 24, 2018 Live: March 10, 2018 Live: March 31, 2018 Live: April 14, 2018 Live: April 28, 2018 |

continued on page 2

Yes, the opera bus will continue! See page 2.

Upcoming Performances Continued

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Canadian Opera Company | ELISIR D'AMORE by Donizetti | October 15, 2017 |
| <i>Sunday matinées by Opera Bus</i> | ARABELLA by R. Strauss | October 22, 2017 |
| | RIGOLETTO by Verdi | February 4, 2018 |
| | THE ABDUCTION FROM THE SERALGIO | February 18, 2018 |
| | THE NIGHTINGALE by Stravinsky | April 22, 2018 |
| | ANNA BOLENA by Donizetti | May 20, 2018 |
| | http://www.coc.ca/Performances.AndTickets/1718Season.aspx | |

Opera Tickets:

There has been a steady decline in demand for the individual tickets to COC performances. As you may know, for many years the Guild has bought seat subscriptions from the COC and sold them as individual tickets. However, the COC's policy of not taking back unsold tickets now makes our buying of subscriptions too much of a financial gamble. Therefore, members will now have to buy tickets directly from the COC.

The good news is that David Stanley-Porter has been in touch with David Nimmo, the COC's ticket services supervisor and group sales coordinator. David can get members of the Guild tickets at 25% off the regular box-office price! You may e-mail him at davidn@coc.ca or phone him at 1-416-262-6671.

The Opera Bus fares:

Members: \$50.00 return, \$35 one-way per opera.

Students: \$20 return, \$10 one-way per opera.*

*One-way travel is possible only if the buses are not full. Please call or email Joan Mortimer *before* sending your cheque for a one-way fare at 519-868-6983 or mortimer4655@rogers.com

Payment Instructions for Tickets and the Bus:

- Cheques are payable to "The London Opera Guild" and sent to:
Joan Mortimer, 370 Tecumseh Ave E, London N6C 1T3.
- Please enclose a *self-addressed, stamped* envelope with your order. Your tickets will be mailed to you.
- To avoid confusion, please write the name(s) of the opera you plan to attend on your cheque.
- Ensure your name and phone number appear on the cheque or are attached.

To cancel without charge, Joan Mortimer must be notified *prior* to the two-week cutoff date. Otherwise all cheques will be cashed and your place confirmed, you may give your seat to someone else but there will be no refunds after that date. We prefer not to accept cash at the bus.

Departures: 9:15 a.m. from the Beal parking area on the west side of William St., between King and York Sts. Parking is FREE.

Patrons in the **Ingersoll/Woodstock** area are picked up at the car-pool lot on Highway 19, diagonally across from the Elmhurst Inn at approximately 9:45 a.m. Please mark this request by writing "**Ing**" on your cheque. We arrive in Toronto around noon, with drop-off by request at the Royal York. Return buses to London will depart from the Four Seasons Centre, no later than 15 minutes after the end of the performance. Buses usually arrive back in London about 7:30 pm, depending on the length of the opera.

President's Report

One of the signs that summer is ending for members of the London Opera Guild is the appearance of the fall LOG Newsletter. Since this is the first Newsletter in many years not edited by Mary Possmayer, my first duty is to thank Mary, on behalf of the Guild, for the quiet, courteous and very capable way in which she fulfilled the responsibilities of editor of the Newsletter.

Too few of us really know how much work goes into the preparation of a Newsletter. Every contributor has to be reminded several times to get reports in on time; the contents and the layout have to be monitored so that every report is full of the correct information and then placed where it belongs. Then the Newsletter has to be printed and distributed by e-mail and Canada Post. So thank you, Mary, for your dedicated and long service to the Guild!

My second duty (also very pleasant) is to welcome Chad Louwse as editor. As most of you know, Chad is an accomplished bass-baritone who has interrupted a growing operatic career to study for a doctorate in performance in the Faculty of Music at the University of Western Ontario. Those of you who attend UWOpera performances will remember his outstanding performance of the title role in Verdi's *Falstaff*. He is not only a singer equally at home in the operatic and recital repertoires, he is also well-equipped to take over the editorship from Mary. On behalf of the Guild, I welcome Chad to his new responsibilities.

Some members of the Guild have been worried that we would no longer be providing bus service to Sunday matinee performances of the COC. Let me reassure you that *we are indeed continuing with the opera bus*, under the very competent management of Joan Mortimer. As I have pointed out before, given our price of \$50 for the return trip to the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto, we simply need an average of 26 people per trip to break even; and regardless of the demand for bus seats this season, we are committed to running the opera bus for each of the six COC productions.

The Guild's policy on the sale of individual tickets for COC performances, however, has changed. Because of a steadily decreasing demand for such tickets and because the non-return policy of the COC has made our traditional buying of subscriptions (for sale as individual tickets) too much of a financial gamble, we have decided to stop our historical practice and leave ticket-buying up to our members and the COC box-office. Joan Mortimer has all the up-to-date information in her report elsewhere in this Newsletter.

By this time, it probably is clear to all members of the Guild that our small part of the operatic world is changing. Our members, like many people who attend symphony concerts, plays or churches, are aging. In some case, they have discovered that they can no longer last the ten or twelve hours of a trip to the COC, comfortable though the bus may be. In other cases, financial constraints make the choice between high-definition Metropolitan Opera simulcasts (around \$25) and a day at the opera in Toronto (around \$250 or so) rather easy.

As I have said before, these developments, largely demographic in origin, have implications. Historically, our two main sources of revenue have been the margins in our sale of COC tickets and our sale of seats on the opera bus. The first source has been diminishing for years and is now gone, while the second source has reached a kind of equilibrium in which it is possible for us to run an opera bus but without making any profit which used to go into our contributions to the COC and the opera program at

the University of Western Ontario. The immediate result has been the cessation of our annual donation to the COC, which for most of the eight years in which I have been president, has been \$3500/annum. We have not, however, stopped supporting the students in the opera program. There has been unanimous agreement from members of the Board and from those members of the Guild who have expressed themselves on the topic that continuing to support the opera program at the Faculty of Music is more important than continuing to support the COC. This new policy, which I support wholeheartedly, will become even more important because of the budgetary constraints imposed on the Faculty of Music by the senior administration of the University of Western Ontario. We will continue to give scholarships and to support UWOpera as long as we are able to do so.

Finally, allow me to say something about the coming season's events for the Guild. Our customary practice has been to have four events: three speakers and the Scholarship Winners concert on the first Sunday in November. Given the small attendance at our speakers' events (there were three members of the Guild present for a thoroughly researched and highly interesting talk last season) and the cost of the honorariums, we are trying a different model this coming season: an all-recital model. Instead of three talks there will be three recitals by opera students from the Faculty of Music, the first of which is described by Chad Louwse elsewhere in this Newsletter. At each recital we will ask members of the audience to donate as much as they can; and the money otherwise paid in honorariums (and as much more as we can afford) will go to the students. I hope that many of you will attend these recitals; they will be enjoyable and entertaining, and you won't have to remember what speaker said what about which opera.

To all of you: welcome to another great season of opera, at the COC, at the Metropolitan Opera, and at UWOpera. Attend every opera you can, and save some of your energy for the young singers who are the future of opera in this country!

Ernie Redekop, September 2017

A Note About Our First Concert Of The Year

As Ernie mentioned, I'm going to be producing three concerts this year for the guild that will feature students and alumni alike. My goals are to give past and present students an opportunity to perform and to showcase singers we may not have heard before whenever possible.

The first concert will feature soprano Hillary Tufford, mezzo-soprano Jade Vaughan, tenor James Smith, bass-baritone Chad Louwse with Brian Cho on the piano.

The repertoire will include favourite opera arias and

ensembles and a few fun pieces. There may even be some singing by the audience!

We'll also have a guest artist, soprano Melina García. She's the artistic director of the new Little London Community Opera, a local opera company launching its first season with *Dido and Aeneas*, *Blackwater*, and *Don Giovanni*. She'll be singing and I'll interview her about the company.

As usual, admission to the concert is free but we ask that you donate to support the cost of the concert and the UWO scholarship fund.

Visit us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/LondonOperaGuild.

Opera Tours and Courses with David Stanley-Porter

A New Friends Operatour - October 24 – November 3, 2018

Royal Opera House, Covent Garden
 WAGNER *Der Ring des Nibelungen*
c. Sir Antonio Pappano d. Keith Warner

The ever EXPANDING World of OPERA – September – December 2017

TWELVE 2½ to 3 hr. Sessions: Thursdays at 6.30pm / Saturdays at 9.30am.

The opportunity to see and hear and study operas that may be new to you, two of which form part of the COC's repertoire for the coming season.

September 7/9 and 14/16: Richard STRAUSS ARABELLA (1933) The Met (1995). An unusual love story involving a soprano with a baritone instead of a tenor. Set in Vienna of the 1860's and containing some of the composer's most ravishing music for the soprano voice.

September 21/23 and 28/30: George Friderick HANDEL SAUL (1739) Glyndebourne (2015). Nothing but praise for this new production of the Old Testament story of David and Jonathan and the madness of Saul: "virtuoso stage craft" and "a theatrical and musical feast of energetic choruses, surreal choreography and gorgeous singing" - *from Barrie Kosky*.

No classes October 5/7 (Thanksgiving)

October 12/14 and 19/21: Benjamin Britten THE RAPE OF LUCRETIA (1946) Glyndebourne (2013). Britten's first chamber opera is given "a performance of enthralling emotional power and physical beauty" gifted with "piercingly intelligent immaculately realized staging and superb acting, singing and playing."

October 26/28 and November 2/4: Jean-Philippe RAMEAU DARDANUS (1739) Opera de Bordeaux (2015). Rameau at 56 composed a work that is somewhere between a tragic opera and a ballet. It is pervaded by a supernatural atmosphere which often takes on a dream-like quality.

November 9/11 and 16/18: Antonio SALIERI EUROPA RECONOSCIUTA(1778) Teatro alla Scala Milan (2004). This was the first opera performed at La Scala in 1778; thereafter it lay forgotten until Riccardo Muti revived it when the theatre was renewed with new technical facilities to impressive effect – 25 rapid scene changes in two hours. The opera requires spectacular singing from 2 coloratura sopranos and 2 richly deep voiced mezzos.

23/25 and 30 November/2 December MOZART ABDUCTION FROM THE SARAGLIO (1782) Glyndebourne (2015). Director David McVicar's original-period vision of this Mozartian gem allows its genius to speak for itself "offering a mesmerizing, sensitive...outstanding' portrayal of Enlightenment fascination with the East."

TWELVE 2½ to 3 hr. Sessions: Thursdays at 6.30pm / Saturdays at 9.30am.

Thursdays and Saturdays are interchangeable (if need be).

Location: 509 Canterbury Rd. Parking on Canterbury Rd or in my driveway.

Fee: \$120 p.p. If sessions are taken on an individual basis, cost is \$12 per session taken.

Payment at the door

For more information, please contact David Stanley-Porter: 519-432-3240

Little London Community Opera

Little London Community Opera was created in the fall of 2016 by Melina Garcia, Bethany Hynes, and Ethan Lacey. Their passion for opera moved them to create a space where both the performer and audience are able to relate to each other, and to others around the world through the lens of historical and contemporary perspectives of music, and drama. Their first season will include *Dido and Aeneas* (performing October 20, 22), *Black Water* (January 2018), and *Don Giovanni* (April 2018). Find out more or buy tickets at littlondoncommunityopera.ca.



London Opera Guild (LOG)

Membership Renewal Form 2017-2018

Please enclose a cheque made payable to: **London Opera Guild** and send to
Ronnie Moser, 607-127 Belmont Drive, London, ON N6J 4J7

Benefits of membership: discounted COC tickets, free access to Opera Guild events, and a quarterly newsletter. Only one membership is required per family.

Please select which membership option you prefer, detach the form, and mail it in with your cheque.

- Option 1** includes **postal** delivery of the newsletter. It is \$30 per year. We encourage you to add your email address. It will only be used to advise you of opera-related events not published in the newsletter.
- Option 2** includes **email** delivery of newsletter as well as additional opera notices not posted in the newsletter. It costs \$25 per year.
- Option 3** is for **students**. It's just like option 2 but costs just \$10 per year.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Telephone (____)_____

Email: _____