

Join World Renowned Composer Daniel Catán for our First Opera League Seminar

By Anne Russell Sullivan

We are thrilled to announce the participation of composer Daniel Catán who will join Dr. Allan Edmiston on the podium Sunday, September 12th, to discuss the making of a brand new opera commissioned jointly by our own Los Angeles Opera, the Theater an der Wien (Vienna), and Théâtre du Châtelet (Paris). The long awaited commission is of course *Il Postino*, based on the very special 1994 Italian film directed by Michael Radford.

This new opera will star Maestro Plácido Domingo in the role of Chilean Poet, Pablo Neruda. The poet finds himself in exile in a quaint Italian fishing village and befriends his postman, Mario (sung by Charles Castronovo), a young rootless native, who to his own dismay finds himself unable to follow in his fisherman father's footsteps, since he seems to be allergic to fish. Hired by the village postmaster to deliver the voluminous mail to his famous visitor, Mario awakens to the passions of poetry and young love, while Neruda finds his life touched by the innocence and talents of this gifted young savant.

Catán brings this story to musical life with all of the gifts he brought to his previous operatic successes. Born in Mexico City, he studied philosophy at the University of Sussex and music at the University of Southampton. He received a Ph.D. from Princeton University, where he studied with Milton Babbitt, James K. Randall, and Benjamin Boretz.

Catán was the first Mexican composer to have an opera produced in the United States, when San Diego Opera produced his *Rappaccini's Daughter* in March, 1994. The success of this production brought Catán to the attention of the Houston Grand Opera. Looking to commission a Spanish-language work to reflect the city's increasingly Latin character, HGO director David Gockley, in cooperation with opera houses in LA, Seattle, and Bogotá, asked Catán to produce a new work, an opera that celebrated the "artistic, musical, literary, and visual aspects of Latin America". Given this marvelous opportunity, Catán turned to the works of Gabriel García Márquez for inspiration and created his masterpiece, *Florencia en el Amazonas*.

Catán is one of the most often performed of all living modern opera composers. When you hear his work it is not surprising. He is the best of all composers possible to give *Il Postino* its operatic voice. Make sure to join us on Sunday at 1:00 pm so we can begin this journey together.



Maestro Plácido Domingo as
Pablo Neruda

Photo: L.A. Opera

ATTEND AND SUPPORT 'OPERA TUNITIES' CONFERENCE

By Rebecca Bowne, OVI and Opera League 2010 Conference Chair

Treat yourself to a fantastic, reasonably priced, fall mini-vacation in downtown LA by attending all or part of the co-sponsored Opera Volunteers International (OVI) and Opera League of Los Angeles conference, from Thursday, September 23, through Sunday, September 26.

Events include two opening performances at LA Opera, a gala post-performance party, an opening Master Chorale concert, several cultural center tours, bonus opera entertainment, engaging interactive sessions on volunteer services, interactions with volunteers from all over America and Canada, and an opportunity for bids on opera goodies.

The conference, headquartered at the four-star historic Millennium Biltmore Hotel, coincides with LA Opera's 25th Anniversary opening weekend for *Il Postino* and *Marriage of Figaro*. Attendees may stay in a luxurious room for \$139 plus tax per night, single or double (just specify "OVI Conference" when making hotel reservations at 800-245-8673), or commute from home.

Many activities are included for those electing the Friday-only registration package (\$100). Presidents Judy Lieb – Opera League, Carol Henry – LA Opera Board, and Julie Benson – OVI welcome you to the conference. Opening panel presenters include LA Opera's Artistic Director, Joshia Winnograde,

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a word from our president

Dear Members and Friends,

Welcome to the new season! With the Ring Cycle and Ring Festival over, Opera League members took a short break from the many events this past spring. Thanks to all our volunteers who helped out at the Concierge Booth, the Arnold Bezuyen concert, and the Tony Palmer Film Festival. The League also provided volunteers for the Opera America Conference, which was hosted by LA Opera in June. Thanks also go to all the Artist Services, Cast Dinner and Speakers Bureau volunteers who worked hard to support the Ring Cycle.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of LA Opera. It is a great joy to support such a marvelous company. For more information about the season, see the article in this issue of Bravo or go to www.laopera.com.

The League continues to provide much appreciated volunteer assistance to LA Opera. This last season our marvelous volunteers contributed about 24,000 volunteer hours from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010. The company appreciates our support and relies on the League to provide many services to the staff and artists.

This past June, six of our directors retired from the board. I gratefully acknowledge their hard work and many hours spent enriching the Opera League: Eleanor Gnuip, Volunteer Coordinator; Laurel Howat, Hospitality Chair; Lucetta Kallis, PR Chair and Mailing Committee Chair; Steve Kohn, Social Chair, Education Chair,



Judy Lieb, President

and Fundraising Chair; Ed Lieb, Education Chair, Communications Chair and *Bravo* Editor; and Carlos Rodriguez, Membership Committee and founder of the Southeast Gathering. Also retiring was Boutique Consulting Director, Rebecca Bowne, the founder of our boutique. We look forward to seeing them at our events and they will continue to volunteer for many League activities and events.

I also heartily welcome our new directors; Kathy Crandall, Carol Der Garry, Ruth DePieri, Susan Heard, Trevor Roper, and Karynne Weiss. They will make great contributions to the League during their service on the Board.

We have so many wonderful and fun opportunities for our members to grow in their knowledge and appreciation of opera. Watch our Calendar page in the "Bravo" for listings of our upcoming events.

You can contact any member of the Board or request more information via email at info@operaleague.org or leave a message on our 24-hour message line at 213.972.7220. Since we do not have paid staff, an Opera League volunteer will respond to your inquiry in a timely manner.

Yours,
Judy



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Visit us at www.operaleague.org

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24-hour League Message Line: 213.972.7220

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If you want to be eligible for last minute benefits and Opera League notices, please send your e-mail address to info@operaleague.org. We would love to have all members on our e-mail list! Send your "second member" addresses also!



It's That Time Again!

Everyone who is participating in the Opera League/Ralph's Contribution program will need to register again, but not until after September 1. You can use the letter with the scanbar you got last year, or you can get a new letter from the Ralphs web site, www.Ralphs.com.

For members who have not used this

way of supporting our Opera League, you will need to copy (or download) the Ralph's "Community Contribution Letter." Then as you check out but before you pay, give the letter and your Ralph's card to the cashier. Your card will then be linked to the Opera League which will receive a donation for most of your purchases. You only need to show the letter once!

The Opera League and the Ring Festival LA

By Ed Shaff

The RING FESTIVAL LA is coming to a close, and the Opera League has been a busy partner to LA Opera and the Ring Festival program. Our efforts began with extensive planning by members of the Board of Directors over two seasons ago. The final choices were made and the appropriate committee's formed. The Ring Festival Committee was chaired by Ed Shaff, our Director of Communications. Three major events were planned for the Festival Period, a Tony Palmer Film Festival, the Opera League Concierge Booth and a special concert by Arnold Bezuyen, Loge in LA Opera's *Das Rheingold*.

The Tony Palmer Film Festival

Chair Brita Millard put together a fascinating two-day event. Her personal friendship with British Film Director Tony Palmer made it possible to have a World Premier of his new documentary on *The Wagner Family*, a showing of the director's cut of his documentary *Parsifal, the Search For The Grail*, starring Plácido Domingo and a full day showing of his epic drama *Wagner* starring Richard Burton.



Photo: Edward Lieb

Tony talking about his films

Tony Palmer flew in from England to be with us for the two-day event at the James Bridges Auditorium on the UCLA campus. Dr. Michael Hackett, well known to all League members, was an affable host to the Q & A sessions that preceded or followed the events. Brita arranged for refreshments, lunch and

dinner boxes on the long Sunday *Wagner* film day. Comments from attendees ranged from "wonderful" to "outstanding."

The Opera League Concierge Booth

A contest was held by the Board of Directors of OLLA to come up with suggestions for the League to undertake during the Ring Festival. One of the winning suggestions was made by Ed Shaff. It was his idea to have a Concierge Booth for the three "Ring" cycles in May and June at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. With the help of numerous volunteers Ed has manned the booth on each performance day from noon until the end of the second intermission.

Over 200 visitors, many from Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Canada as well as "Ringheads" from across the U.S. stopped at the booth. Many questions dealt with where to go in Los Angeles. Pamphlets and brochures from many of the 115 Ring Partner Organizations were available at the booth, in addition to city maps, bus and Metro schedules, and information on many of Los Angeles' attractions.



Photo: Edward Lieb

The "Concierge Service" booth

Special kudos go to Laurel Howat, Carol Donlan and Nina Haro for gathering much of the material. A special thank you goes to Eric Hayne, a new League member, for his untiring help in constructing the booth, and making the many journeys to the museums and other Partner locations hauling boxes of materials. We also applaud the 45 volunteers who helped man the booth.

The Arnold Bezuyen Concert

Mr. Bezuyen approached Immediate Past President, Dorothy Wait, at a cast dinner for *Das Rheingold*, stating he wanted to do something as a "Thank You" to the League for all the services we provided him and the rest of the company.



Photo: Edward Lieb

Arnold Bezuyen and accompanist Nino Sanikidze

After some discussion it was decided to have a benefit concert during the "Ring" Festival. The proceeds from the concert would be used specifically to provide transportation for Los Angeles students to attend opera dress rehearsals and other educational events.

The event took place on Saturday, June 12 at the beautiful home of Mr. & Mrs. Milan Panic in Pasadena. The weather was perfect, the music was thrilling and the League raised enough funds to provide approximately 27 buses for the next season.

DON'T MISS THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON OF LA OPERA!

For those of you who have not yet subscribed or purchased single tickets, now is the time to do so. If we want more operas in future seasons, we need to support the current one!

The season starts off with the World Premier of Daniel Catán's *Il Postino*, with a stellar cast including Plácido Domingo and conducted by Grant Gershon. Next is *Le Nozze di Figaro*, conducted by Plácido Domingo with Daniel Okulitch (remember him from *The Fly?*) as Figaro.

In November, James Conlon conducts *Lohengrin*, starring Ben Heppner in his LA Opera debut. It is followed by *Rigoletto*, starring George Gagnidze in his company debut, again conducted by James Conlon.

In February, Nino Machaidze returns to LA in *Il Turco in Italia*, with a cast including

Thomas Allen. James Conlon conducts this zany comedy by Rossini. Benjamin Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* opens in March, with Patricia Racette as the Governess, conducted by James Conlon.

In May, LA Opera, in collaboration with Dance at the Music Center and the Mark Morris Dance Group, presents *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*, by G.F. Handel. This first-ever collaboration features sopranos Hei-Kyung Hong and Sarah Coburn, Tenor Barry Banks and Bass-baritone John Relyea.

There are also several exciting recitals this season, René Pape on January 15th, Dmitri Hvorostovsky on February 10th and Jonas Kaufmann on March 11th.

In addition to the season, save Saturday, April 2, 2011 for the 25th Anniversary Gala. For the best seats, call 213.972.8001 or go to LAOpera.com

calendar

September

Opera League Seminar

Sunday, September 12, 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 5th floor
See the "Invitations" page

Cast Dinners

Sunday, September 12, Figaro, 5:30 pm
Thursday, September 16, Postino, 6 pm
Saturday, September 18, Postino, 6 pm
Saturday, September 25, OVI
Contact: Susan Heard

Opera for Educators

Saturday, September 11, Il Postino, 8 am to 4 pm
Saturday, September 25, Marriage of Figaro,
8 am to 4 pm
Contact: Wendy Van Haerlem

Opera Talk at ViNo & CuciNa

Monday, September 27, 6:30 pm
Contact John Spear
Reservations are required

Opera Talks in Long Beach

By John Spear

"Opera Talks in Long Beach" is modeled after the highly successful "Opera Talks at Julienne's." These monthly get-togethers feature members of the Speaker's Bureau of LA Opera giving exciting talks on our favorite subject—opera—with the accompaniment of good food and wine.

The venue is a new, genuine trattoria Italiana called ViNo & CuciNa ("Wine and Kitchen"). The restaurant is located on the northeast corner of Norse Way, the little street that connects Carson Street and Lakewood Boulevard.

The \$25 per person cover charge will cover the talk, a glass of wine (or non-alcoholic beverage), a "mini-pizza," and a small plate of one of their excellent pasta or chicken dishes (which will change from month to month) OR a main course salad.

Planned for the fourth Monday of each month, our meetings will start with socializing and food at 6:30 pm, followed by the talk at sometime between 7:15 and 7:30. You may pay at the door (credit cards are accepted), but you DO NEED to make a reservation.

To make a reservation, you can email John Spear at john.spear@earthlink.net or call him at (714) 899-9960. You can check out their excellent menu at: www.vinocucina.com

Contact Information

Cast Dinners:
Susan Heard
Phone: 626.683.8115
email: heardsd@sbcglobal.net

Education:
Wendy Van Haerlem
Phone: 714.998.4815
email: vanhaerlem@pacbell.net

Opera Talks:
John Spear
Phone: 714.899.9960
email: john.spear@earthlink.net

My Thoughts About OUR "Ring"

By Argyro Hadey

Back to the old routine . . . but the experience of the last few weeks has changed my life forever! I had seen all four of the "Ring" operas separately, but never consecutively in such a short period of time. And now I attended all four of them, three times, within one month.

As I played the music in the car on my home yesterday, I realized the difference after my immersion of the last few weeks. Before, I would hear some rather monotonous voices singing in German with a few melodic pieces in between. But now, after so many seminars, concerts, exhibits, and lectures that gave background to the story and the music, it all makes sense!

Now, as I listen to the music, I can picture the performance and remember the relationship of the characters to the music and the story. It is no longer a strange collection of some pleasant passages, but a long extension of 16 hours with meaning to every sound!

I have obviously only put my toe in the water, but enough to realize why Wagner is considered "unparalleled in the history of Western Art". I know it will be a lifetime process of learning that will give me hours of satisfaction whenever I am given the opportunity to read and hear more.

A young girl who sat next to me at the final performance (with tongue and lips pierced!) proceeded to tell me how she bonds with her father and grandfather, who first introduced her to the opera. People from all ages and all walks of life, were there to listen and learn about Wagner and to enrich their lives. And I was fortunate enough to be amongst them!

Antelope Valley

No Gatherings scheduled for these operas
You are encouraged to attend another location

Beverly Hills

Mimi Rotter 310.479.0259
Anne Russell Sullivan 323.697.9733
Postino and Figaro
Sunday, August 22, 10 am
10430 Wilshire Blvd, Unit #504, Los Angeles

Claremont

Patricia O'Donnell 909.447.5038
Postino
Saturday, August 21, 2-5 pm
150 North Mountain Avenue, Claremont
Figaro
Sunday, September 19, 2-5 pm
Location TBA

Hollywood/Hancock Park

No Gatherings scheduled for these operas
You are encouraged to attend another location

Orange County

Dianna Penza 949.348.2453
Sandy Persky 714.969.0589
Postino and Figaro
Sunday, August 29, 2-4:45 pm
19 Bella Rosa, Irvine

San Fernando Valley

Regi Merwin 818.400.2578
Postino and Figaro
Sunday, September 19, 2:30-5:30 pm
15926 Valley Wood Road, Sherman Oaks

San Gabriel Valley

Michael Sholer 818.502.1988
Postino and Figaro
Tuesday, September 14, 7-9:30 pm
5278 La Canada Blvd., La Canada

Santa Clarita

Kathy Crandall 661.480.9661
Postino and Screening of Florencia en el Amazonas
Monday, September 6, 5 pm
23710 La Salle Canyon Rd, Newhall
Figaro
Monday, September 27, 7 pm
23710 La Salle Canyon Rd, Newhall

South Bay

Ifang Hsieh 310.279.9927
Postino and Figaro
Please call Ifang for the date, time, and location

Southeast

Carlos Rodriguez 562.692.5577
Postino and Figaro
Please call Carlos for the date, time, and location

Ventura County

Ann Randall 805.445.8250
Postino and Figaro
Please call Ann for the date, time, and location

Westside

Monika Whitaker 310.826.4743
Chuck or Alice Bragg 310.454.9662
Postino and Figaro
Monday, September 20, 7:15-9:45 pm
425 South Burlingame, Los Angeles

invitations

Please note that this is the **ONLY** invitation you will receive for these events.

First Opera League Seminar

Daniel Catán's *Il Postino*

Sunday, September 12
1:00 to 3:30 pm

135 North Grand Avenue
(Enter under the outside stairs on Grand,
then take the elevator to the 5th floor)

Speaker: Daniel Catán
Moderator: Dr. Allan Edmiston

Members of the artistic and production
team will also be present
Light refreshments will be served during
the break

Tickets at the door: \$35 (or a voucher) for
members, \$45 for guests

Your mailed reservations must be
received by September 7, 2010

Online reservations must be received
by September 9, 2010

Seminar Tickets

____ x Member (or voucher) @ \$35 \$ _____
____ x Non-member @ \$45..... \$ _____
____ x Student member @ \$10..... \$ _____
Tickets mailed to you @ \$1..... \$ _____
Total..... \$ _____

OVI – Opera League Conference Registration (September 23-26)

You do not need to be a member of Opera League or OVI to attend
conference or events.

A guest may accompany conference registrants to the social
or ticketed events with an additional payment.

Friday Day package	\$100
Saturday Day package	\$100
Saturday Night at the Opera/Backstage	\$25
Full conference package	\$325

The following activities and tickets available only
with conference registration:

Private Getty Tour	\$35
(Thursday) 9:30 – 2:30 (lunch on own at Getty)	
Ticket to <i>Il Postino</i>	\$108
Welcome reception buffet and open bar	\$55
High Tea and Historic Biltmore Tour	\$40
Ticket to <i>Marriage of Figaro</i>	\$88
LA Master Chorale	\$60

Visit www.operavolunteers.org for complete information and optional
group tickets and tours. Send any questions to: rebowne@aol.com

Payment Information

Checks are payable to Opera League of LA
(on the memo line, write: OVI 2010).

Or use Visa, Master Card, or American Express. Include the card number
and expiration date along with your name, address and telephone.

Send to:

OVI Registration, Nina Haro
255 S. Grand Avenue #2009
Los Angeles, CA 90012-3045

EVENT ORDER FORM

Remember, you can order tickets for any Opera League event using
our web site. Bring up www.operaleague.org, log in with your User
Name and password, then click on the "Order Tickets Here" link.
When ordering by mail, use this order form to check the number
of tickets you wish to order. Enclose your check, credit card info,
or voucher(s) for the total amount. (2009/2010 vouchers are
valid for seminars, master classes, and musicales.)

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Credit Card (circle) M/Card Visa AmEx Total amount \$ _____

Credit Card # _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

Questions? Call the Opera League 24 Hour message line at 213.972.7220 or e-mail OLLA at: info@operaleague.org.

**Seminar tickets will be held at the door. For tickets mailed to
you, add \$1 to cover postage and handling. Sorry, no refunds!**

Mail to: The Opera League of LA, P.O. Box 8266, Calabasas, CA 91372.
Orders without a self-addressed and stamped envelope will be held at
will-call at the event.

'OPERA TUNITIES' CONFERENCE, *continued from page 1*

Domingo-Thornton Head Coach, Nino Sanikidze, and past League President and chair of the Metropolitan Opera Western Region Auditions, Molly Seifert. They will give us perspectives on how volunteers can assist visiting artists. Volunteer leaders from several opera companies will respond with what they do for visiting artists. The final morning session features small break-out groups on how to implement volunteer codes of conduct.

League co-founder and former president, Lorraine Saunders, greets all registrants at a three-course gourmet awards luncheon with special guest entertainment. After lunch, League board members and Symphonians Fabiola Hensley and Judith Moses lead private docent tours of the Music Center, including Disney Hall. To top off the day, League co-founder and first president Alice Coulombe greets conference participants at the Colburn School for an evening private tour of the new campus and Jascha Heifetz Studio, followed by a special concert.

Those electing the Saturday day-only registration packet (\$100) start the day with inspiring brief highlights from volunteers on successful (or unsuccessful) projects. The second session features the whys and hows of tracking volunteer hours with a very special award from President Obama for an outstanding volunteer. The morning sessions conclude with interactive small group discussions and presentation of ideas for unique volunteer rewards. Saturday's registration fee also includes an afternoon Victorian high tea (open-sandwiches, scones, assorted desserts, tea selections) in the elegant lower lobby, hosted by former League president, Monica Weil, followed by a hotel docent tour of the historical Millennium Biltmore Hotel.

Saturday night, conference participants go to the opera house, this time strictly backstage. The Opera League hosts us as we enjoy a buffet dinner in a rehearsal hall. Bob Bernard, Lynne Mitchell, Paul and Judy Lippe, and Susan Heard present an amusing "how to" on Artist Services, Light Walking, and

Cast Suppers. We top off the evening with an in-depth backstage tour lead by LA Opera's Production Director, Rupert Hemmings. This Saturday evening event is included with full conference registrations or free for those making contributions for dinner coordinated through the Opera League's "Cast Suppers." Day registrations or guests pay \$25 for "A Night at the Opera/Backstage."

For those of you who might enjoy the full conference both days, registration of \$325 includes the welcome dinner party with open bar at the hotel following Il Postino, two breakfasts, all conference sessions Friday and Saturday, Friday Awards Luncheon, tours of the Music Center and the Colburn School with recital, and Saturday's "A Night at the Opera/Backstage."

During the conference we will enjoy a silent auction, where conference attendees enjoy lively bidding for bargains or extravagances such as premier opera tickets from large and small companies, dining options, DVDs, CDs, books, jewelry, scarves, web design services, and other items unique to opera-lovers. All proceeds benefit grants to deserving opera education projects. Be sure to participate, both as a donor and bidder.

Many Opera League members are assisting with this conference. Besides those already mentioned are Gerald Elijah, Eleanor Gnup, Nina Haro, Audrey Hanson, Anne and Ernie Prokopovich, and Warren Schubert (who now lives in Maine).

Go to the Opera Volunteers web site at www.operavolunteers.org for a detailed schedule of conference events and registration information. Optional events and tickets for guests and volunteers are only available with full or day conference registration.

Whether you come for one day or the entire conference, join us for a rewarding time at "Volunteer 'OperaTunities' of Service and Rewards." See page 5 for more information.

Restaurant Listings for Opera League Members

These are the restaurants that will give Opera League members a discount when you present your membership card during the upcoming season (2010-2011). This information will also appear on the back of your membership card.

These restaurants give a 15% discount on food (beverages, tax, and gratuity not included).

Bonaventure Brewing Company 213.236.0802

(on Figueroa)

Checkers Restaurant (on Grand) 213.624.0000

These restaurants give a 10% discount on food (beverages, tax, and gratuity not included).

Border Grill (4th St. in Santa Monica) 310.451.1655

Café Pinot (on 5th St.) 213.239.6500

Ciudad (on Figueroa St.) 213.486.5171

McCormick & Schmick's 213.629.1929

(4th and Hope)

Sai Sai (on Olive St.) 213.624.1100

Smeraldi's (on Grand) 213.612.1562

Zucca Ristorante (on Figueroa) 213.614.7800

This restaurant gives a complimentary dessert with your entrée purchase.

Morton's "The Steakhouse" 213.553.4566

(on Figueroa)

Reflections and a Thrice-Told Tale

By Bob Bernard

With the conclusion of LAO's three Ring cycles, we can now pause and reflect, not only upon this experience, but also upon the abundance of other operatic riches that have been afforded us over the past season. Here is a sampling:

- The USC Thornton School of Music Opera Program presented the West Coast premiere of Wagner's *Das Liebesverbot*.
- For another West Coast premiere, UCLA Opera gave us Jonathan Dove's contemporary opera, *Flight*.
- Pepperdine University's Flora L. Thornton Opera Program produced *La Bohème*
- California State Northridge's Opera Theater, besides doing Kurt Weill's *Street Scene*, continued its summer "OperaWorks" workshop, concluding with *Pride & Promiscuity*, the latest in a traditional exercise in which the students stitch together a "new" opera, comprised of each student's selected aria and tied together with improvised dialogue.
- The Santa Monica College Opera Theater, working with composer Tobias Picker, presented Mr. Picker's *An American Tragedy*.
- The Lyric Opera of Los Angeles, an all-volunteer organization, provided us with the first U.S. staged production of the early Wagner opera, *Die Feen*, at the Pasadena Playhouse.

In order to gain some insight into how our local institutions go about producing opera, we visited one of them, California State University Long Beach [CSULB], observing both rehearsals and performances of this past spring's production of Offenbach's *Les contes d'Hoffmann*.

The proverb, 'The apple doesn't fall far from the tree', has rung true again with former LAO artists David Anglin and Stephanie Vlahos having supervised this production for the Bob Cole Conservatory Opera Institute at CSULB.

Dr. Anglin, having earned a MFA in Performance Practice at UCLA and a DMA from USC, became associated with LAO in its early days, working as a coach

and translator, as well as writing the supertitles for over twenty productions. Now, with the added interim experience of being an adjunct member of USC's Vocal Arts Faculty and Opera

Program Coordinator for the Sydney Conservatorium in Australia, Dr. Anglin has been the Associate Director of Opera and Vocal Studies at CSULB since 2005.

Ms. Vlahos, possessed of advanced degrees in music and theater from Juilliard and Yale, had an eclectic performance career that spanned the extremes of cabaret to that of grand opera. She also harks back to early times at LAO. As Suzuki, she was paired with Maria Ewing in *Madama Butterfly*; was Hermia in Gordon Davidson's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; and, as Hoffmann's best friend Nicklausse, appeared with Domingo in LAO's 1987 *Hoffmann*.

These two artists collaborated in their assumption of the primary creative team disciplines, with Dr. Anglin conducting the ten-member pit orchestra (a string quintet, plus a wind quintet) and Ms. Vlahos, as a Distinguished Guest Artist, being the Stage Director.

Remarkably, the production was double-cast, which allowed for four performances during a single weekend at the William Link Theatre on campus. Their *Hoffmann* was sung in French with English Supertitles, along with a little bit of English dialogue. The traditional ordering of the acts was used: Olympia, then Antonia, then Giulietta.

The Bob Cole Conservatory at CSULB is able to have at hand such depth of talent largely because of the generous endowment gift of \$16.4 million dollars from the estate of Bob Cole, a Long Beach real estate investor and long-time music lover, who died in 2004. This endowment is directed to be used for scholarship aid and, as such, has been a significant inducement in attracting young talent from around the world. At present the Conservatory has approximately one hundred voice majors, mostly at the undergraduate level. Each year, by audition, eighteen to twenty of these students are invited to join the Opera Institute.

The spring opera is the second major annual production produced at CSULB each year, the other being two (November) performances of "Opera Masterpieces", always a series of semi-staged operatic scenes. This past time around the scenes were excerpted from the works of Puccini, Mozart, Rossini, Bizet, Poulenc, Cimarosa, Debussy, and Stravinsky. When praised for his work in preparing his students so thoroughly for such a rigorous program, Dr. Anglin revealed one of his teaching secrets: "I don't tell them how difficult this all is."



Ms. Vlahos at an early piano rehearsal



Dr. Anglin with rehearsal pianist Paul Jarski

Continued on page 8

Reflections and a Thrice-Told Tale, continued from page 7

In conversation with several of the students participating in both the Opera Masterpieces and Hoffmann productions, it was a pleasure to see the joy they all were experiencing in performing this great music. Nicola Said (Olympia) is a native of Malta, having been introduced to the CSULB program while on tour with The International Lyric Academy of Rome. Juan Castañeda (Hoffmann), a Vocal Performance major, will be beginning his fourth year as a member of the Opera Institute and is a student of Shigemi Matsumoto.



Photo: Kip Polakoff

Nicola Said as Olympia



Juan Castañeda as Hoffman

Ryan Ross was one of the cast's graduate students, singing both the roles of Luther and Crespel. Ryan, from Rock Rapids, Iowa, is traveling in Europe this summer, doing research regarding composers Schreker, Eisler, Weill, Schoenberg, and Ullmann, this in gathering material for his thesis, "Suppressed Composers Under The Third Reich." One of the scenes in this November's production of CSULB's Opera Masterpieces will be from Ullmann's *Kaiser von Atlantis*.

From Wagner to Weill; from Offenbach to Picker; this past season's student productions have been but a prologue of what is to come, and the prognosis is excellent!



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See p.5 for more information