

Opera League Seminars in 2011-2012

By Anne Russell Sullivan

Hello, Opera Leaguers, and welcome to the Summer of 2011. The following is a preview of what is ahead for us seminar-wise in 2011-2012.

We begin on Sunday September 11 with a double bill: Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* and Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. UCLA Slavic Studies Professor, Michael Henry Heim, will lead us into the dramatic, passionate world of *Eugene Onegin*. As is our new custom, Young Artist, Alexey Sayapin, will sing Lensky's heart wrenching aria for us, played to perfection on a beautiful Bleuthner piano provided by Helga Kasimoff. We might even have a mystery guest to spice up the morning.

Our own wonderful Simon Williams from UCSB will then introduce us to Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. If I must compare these two rather divergent operas, I would say that the love life of Mozart's time was certainly a lot more laid back and forgiving than the tragic, passionate world of Tchaikovsky's Russia. Those Russians just couldn't seem to get it right. Flirtations ended in tears, duels, deaths or lifetime regret. Mozart certainly understood that fickle hearts need their space and do-overs are just fine. The fun starts at 10 am with coffee, tea and juice. Lunch boxes are available for purchase to hold you over through 2 pm.

Mark your calendars for October 23, when Michael Hackett, newly appointed head of Drama at UCLA, and Simon Williams, UCSB, will double bill for a glorious Shakespeare morning highlighting our production of *Romeo and Juliet*. With a start time of 10 am, singers and lunch will be a part of this great event.

On January 28, 2012 we welcome visiting Professor Dr. Nancy Dersofi from Bryn Mawr College for what promises to be a stimulating discussion on *Simon Boccanegra*. I wish I could promise Maestro Domingo as our singing guest, but I am sure we will find someone wonderful to sing selections for us. This program starts at 1 pm with snack lunches available for purchase at the 2:30 break.

Last but not least, join us February 18, 2012, as visiting speaker Desiree Mays and UCSB's Simon Williams set the stage for our new fabulous production of *Albert Herring*, Britten's brilliant comedy—where the queen of the prom is a guy! Again, we will begin at 1 pm.

You can also go to our Opera League website, operaleague.org, to reserve your place and box lunch for these seminars.

CASINO NIGHT FUND RAISER



Photo: LA Opera

Left to right: Stacy Brightman, Brita Millard, Anne Prokopovych, Christopher Koelch, Judy Lieb, Diane Gray, Anne Russell Sullivan, Dorothy Wait

On June 6 the Opera League's Board presented a check for \$13,327 to Christopher Koelsch, LA Opera's Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, along with Stacy Brightman, Education and Community Programs Director. The money was raised at our Casino Night in honor of LA Opera's 25th Anniversary.



a word from our president



Diane Gray, President

Dear Members and Friends,

Welcome to the 30th Anniversary season of the Opera League of Los Angeles, (OLLA), the primary volunteer support organization for the Los Angeles Opera. As your new President, I invite you to join us for another exciting year. During Los Angeles Opera's 25th Anniversary season we celebrated with many exciting and enjoyable events, including a successful Casino Night fundraiser in May and our annual Hemmings Award Dinner, honoring Grant Gershon, in June.

We sincerely appreciate and are indebted to our retiring directors for their dedicated service, spending many hours enriching the League. Eleven of our directors retired from the board in June: Carol Der Garry, Assistant Treasurer; Paul Lippe, Assistant Hospitality; Paul Lowe, Hotline; Brita Millard, Fundraising, Assistant Backstage Magic; Margi Mostue, Boutique Coordinator; Patricia O'Donnell, Community Education; Anne Prokopovych, Treasurer; Monica Gutierrez Roper, Volunteer Coordinator and Hemmings Event Chair; Edmund Shaff, Communications Chair; Wendy Van Haerlem, Community Education; and Dorothy Wait, Immediate Past President and Casino Night Chair.

It is with pleasure that I welcome our new directors: Lorna Blancaflor, Robert Braun, Beverley Clarkson, Marie Hadji, Marjana Mahnovski, Carmen Paz, Larry Verdugo, and Sally White. I am looking forward to working with them as we strive to contribute to the success of the Opera League.

As we move into our 30th Anniversary and the 2011-12 LA Opera season, I am trying to set a few goals for the coming year:

- Continue to expand the use of our website and email for improved communication with our membership.
- Develop new fundraising activities and special events, starting with the publishing of an Opera League Cookbook this fall.
- Dust off the old and bring new marketing and Board procedures into the 21st century.
- Encourage new members to join and augment our organization.

OLLA continues to bring to opera lovers a wide range of opportunities and events with which to feed our musical souls. If you are not already an active participant of the League, I offer you the opportunity to join us as a volunteer and participate.

You can contact me or any member of the Board via info@operaleague.org or leave a message on the 24 hr message line at **213-972-7220** with your questions, suggestions and concerns.

Warmest Regards,

Diane

Executive Committee

Diane Gray	President
Kathy Crandall	Vice President
Carol Donlan	Secretary
John Lacey	Treasurer
Judy Leib	Immediate Past President
Carol Donlan/Judy Leib	Boutique Coordinators
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Charles Stern	Parliamentarian
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Directors

Lorna Blancaflor	Asst. Hospitality
Robert Braun	Asst. Finance/Patron Event
Beverley Clarkson	AALAO/Asst. Sec.
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Fred Dear	Asst. Education/Gatherings
Ruth DePieri	Hotline/Master Class
Marie Hadji	Asst. Finance
Fabiola Hensley	Boutique/Asst. Patron Event
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Judith Moses	Boutique/Hotline
Carmen Paz	Comm.Ed.Scheduler
Hirioko Seki-Blanco	Boutique Buyer
Amalia Shebby	Boutique Scheduler
Thomas Shepard	Musicales/Master Class
Larry Verdugo	Community Ed. Chair
Sally White	Overtures/Asst.Gathering
Jacque Lyne Wallace	Mailing/Hotline

Consultants to the Board

Bob Bernard	Artist Services
Dr. W. Allan Edmiston	Seminars

Visit us at www.operaleague.org

Send mail to: PO Box 712727

Los Angeles CA 90071-7727

Send e-mail to: info@operaleague.org

24-hour League Message Line: 213.972.7220

Protecting Our Youngsters

Last season LA Opera began asking for fingerprints and a TB test from everyone who gives presentations about opera to the students in LA and other cities. For anyone who has not yet complied with this request, please call Kelly Christ at 213-972-3140 or email her at kchrist@laopera.com.

Editor	Diane Gray
Assistant Editors	Edward Lieb, Janet Ciriello
Newsletter Design	Bacall:Creative
Printer	Licher Direct Mail

Dishing with the Stars!!!!

By Thomas Shepberd

Opera diva Carol Neblett garnered highest marks from all in attendance at the League's Spring Musicale. On a beautiful April-California's-Best in the elegant home of hostess Lucille Kerhulas, Carol entertained a packed house with arias and stories from her world-renowned career as America's Soprano Idol. She was accompanied by the fabulous Mark Robson, and brought three of her young singers from the vocal studios of Chapman University: Emily Dyer, soprano; Rachel Wilson, mezzo; and Efrain Solis, baritone.



Carol telling an opera story

jumping off turrets... of murder and mayhem and all of the wackily wonderful U-Verse of OPERA.

The talented young singers gave us a preview of stars-to-be. Carol charmed us, cajoled us with her stories, moved us to tears with her own singing, and above all, reiterated to us just what it is that bestows the status of Diva upon those few truly deserving. In a world of flash and the mediocre, we found ourselves reveling in the

presence of supreme artistry infused with the gift of inspiration that is the best of the human spirit. Thank you Carol. We are so fortunate to have you among us!!

(And, keep your eyes open here in "Bravo" for a possible second season-return engagement with Carol on your local **OLM** station... that's **Opera League Musicale!**)



Carol, her students, and Mark Robson

For well over an hour she held us hypnotized by her tales of tricking neurotically nervous Franco Corelli out of his dressing room onto to the stage for a performance of *La Bohème*... by her first phone call from Plácido Domingo ("Plastic-who?")... of



Carol and Thomas

THE OPERA LEAGUE INCREASES ITS USE OF ELECTRONIC CORRESPONDENCE

By Bill Green

In order to reduce mailing costs and achieve more timely communication with our membership, we are increasingly using electronic mail for communicating with our membership. You will also find that you can renew your membership and register for events very efficiently using the League website, www.operaleague.org.

If you have not registered for a user account on the website, please send an email request to webmaster@operaleague.org. You will receive a reply giving you an initial User Name and Password that you can use to access your membership account and all the functions now available on the website (such as paying for a League event).

You can change the user ID and password after you log on to the website. This will also make sure we have your current email address in your profile. And don't worry, if you are not inclined to use email or the website. We will still be communicating with you the same way we always have, if that is your preference. Thanks!

calendar

August

Opera Talks in Long Beach

Saturday, August 13, 2 pm
(*Così Fan Tutte* and *Mozart*)

El Dorado Library in Long Beach
Contact: John Spear

Opera for Educators

Saturday, August 27 (*Eugene Onegin*)
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 4th floor
Contact: Norm Cadman

LA Opera's "Opera Camp"

Saturday, August 13, 11:30 am and 2 pm
Sunday, August 14, 11:30 am and 2 pm
Barnsdall Gallery Theater
Contact: Norm Cadman

September

Opera for Educators

Saturday, Sept. 10 (*Così Fan Tutte*)
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 4th floor
Contact: Norm Cadman

Cast Dinners

Saturday, Sept. 3, 5:30-7 pm (*Onegin*)
Wednesday, Sept. 7, 5:30-7 pm (*Così*)
Saturday, Sept. 10, 6-7:30 pm (*Onegin*)
Monday, September 12, 6-7:30 pm (*Così*)
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 4th floor
Contact: Susan Heard

October

Opera for Educators

Saturday, October 1 (TBD)
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 4th floor
Contact: Norm Cadman

Opera Talks at Julienne's

Monday, October 3
Contact: Carol Sholer

Opera Talks at Long Beach

Saturday, October 8, 2 pm
(*Roméo et Juliette*)
At the El Dorado Library in Long Beach
Contact: John Spear

Opera 101

Saturday, October 22 ("Beginnings of Opera")
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 4th fl
Contact: Norm Cadman

Opera for Educators

Saturday, October 29 (*Roméo et Juliette*)
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 4th fl
Contact: Norm Cadman
Cast Dinner
Saturday, October 29, 5:30-7 pm
(*Roméo et Juliette*)
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 4th fl
Contact: Susan Heard

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Cast Dinners

Susan Heard
Phone: 626-683-8115
email: heardsd@sbcglobal.net

Education

Norm Cadman
Phone: 909-626-0646
email: noreg.28@verizon.net

Opera Talks at Julienne's

Carol Sholer
Phone: 818-243-1818
email: csholer1@att.net
Call Julienne's at 626.441.2299, to make a reservation, \$10, and to order a "Light Supper Box", \$10.

Opera Talks at Long Beach

John Spear
Phone: 714-899-9960
email: john.spear@earthlink.net
At the El Dorado Library,
2900 Studebaker Road
(between Willow and Spring)

Antelope Valley

Dr. Harald Krueger 661.728.0671
Eugene Onegin and *Così Fan Tutte*
Please call Dr. Krueger for additional information

Beverly Hills

Mimi Rotter 310.479.0259
Anne Russell Sullivan 323.697.9733
Eugene Onegin and *Così Fan Tutte*
Sunday, August 28, 10 am
2816 Tilden Ave., Los Angeles

Claremont

Patricia O'Donnell 909.447.5038
Eugene Onegin and *Così Fan Tutte*
Sunday, August 28, 2-5 pm
530 West 11th Street, Claremont

Hollywood/Hancock Park

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

Orange County

Sandy Persky 714.969.0589
Eugene Onegin and *Così Fan Tutte*
Sunday, August 28, 2-5:00 pm
5305 Camino de Bryant, Yorba Linda

San Fernando Valley

Regi Merwin 818.400.2578
Eugene Onegin and *Così Fan Tutte*
Sunday, September 18, 2:30-5:00 pm
22711 Cass Ave., Woodland Hills

San Gabriel Valley

Michael Sholer 818.502.1988
Eugene Onegin
Thursday, August 25, 7-9:30 pm
Così Fan Tutte
Wednesday, September 7, 7-9:30 pm
5278 La Canada Blvd., La Canada

Santa Clarita

Ann Anderson 661.259.9619
Sally White 661.259.9407
Eugene Onegin
(with a seasonal opening potluck)
Monday, August 29, 5 pm
Così Fan Tutte
Monday, September 12, 7 pm
25506 Longfellow Place, Stevenson Ranch

South Bay

Ifang Hsieh 310.279.9927
Eugene Onegin and *Così Fan Tutte*
Tuesday, September 13, 7 pm
1437 East Oak Ave., El Segundo

Southeast

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

Ventura County

Ann Randall 805.445.8250
Eugene Onegin
Sunday, September 4, 2 pm
520 San Clemente Way, Camarillo

Westside

Monika Whitaker 310.826.4743
Chuck or Alice Bragg 310.454.9662
Eugene Onegin and *Così Fan Tutte*
Monday, September 12, 7:15-9:45 pm
425 South Burlingame Ave., Los Angeles

invitations

Opera League Seminar

Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* and Mozart's *Così fan Tutti*

Our League Seminars are dedicated to Sherwin Sloan, founder of the Opera League Seminars

Sunday, September 11, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

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

Speakers: Michael Henry Heim and Simon Williams
Moderator: Dr. Allan Edmiston

With Young Artist singer, Alexey Sayapin

A box lunch (vegetarian or meat or fish) will be available for \$15

Advanced orders, \$35 (or a voucher) for members, \$45 for guests or same day purchase at the door.

Your order must be received by September 5

EVENT ORDER FORM

Seminar Tickets

___ x Member (or voucher) @ \$35	\$ _____
___ x Non-member @ \$45	\$ _____
___ x Student member @ \$10	\$ _____
___ x Vegetarian box lunch @ \$15	\$ _____
___ x Meat/fish box lunch @ \$15	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

You can order tickets for any Opera League event using our web site, www.operaleague.org. Log in with your User Name and password, then click on the "Click Here" link for the tickets you want to order.

For orders by mail, use this form. Check the number of tickets you wish to order, then enclose your check, credit card info, or voucher(s) for the total amount. (Vouchers are valid for seminars, master classes, and musicales.) A confirmation of your order will be emailed to you.

Tickets to all League events will be held at the door. Sorry, no refunds! Mail this order form to: Opera League of LA, PO Box 712727, Los Angeles CA 90071-7727

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.

The Patron Dinner

By Laurel Howat

Last April, the Opera League of Los Angeles honored over seventy of its Patron members at its annual Patron Dinner, which took place this year in the lovely home of Carol and Warner Henry, with its lush landscape and spectacular view of the Pasadena Arroyo.

The crew of twenty plus volunteers, under the very capable direction of the gracious Fabiola Hensley, welcomed guests with delectable hors d'oeuvres, champagne and exotic drinks, all to the debonair piano accompaniment of Opera League volunteer Dan Donlan. The team cooked and served a delicious feast that included a cold fruit soup, a colorful yummy salad tower, fish, chicken and Portobello mushrooms en



Photos: Edward Leib

Opera League cooks preparing the dinner



Opera League "Patrons"

papillote, and a scrumptious chocolate torte with raspberry sauce.

This event was particularly festive, as the celebration marked the 25th anniversary of Los Angeles Opera. After dinner, guest speaker, LA Opera's Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Christopher Koelsch, shared past accomplishments and future visions of the opera company.

A grand time was had by all!

A Well-Plated Aria

The new Opera League cookbook, *A Well-Plated Aria*, coming this fall, can be purchased at the Boutique and online at the League website. Plan for a thoughtful, useful, gift cookbook for many friends and family this holiday season. There are over 170 contributions from volunteers, staff and artists. Look ahead and enjoy trouble-free shopping.



The Peter Hemmings Award Event

By Monica Gutierrez-Roper

Mr. Peter Hemmings (first general director of Los Angeles Opera, from 1984 to 2000) created a company which not only demonstrates continuous growth and attracts a wider audience, but at present has achieved national and international recognition. Since 2004, the Opera League has acknowledged those who, like Peter Hemmings, share this passion and contribute significantly to the development of opera in the greater Los Angeles area. Each year this Opera League event celebrates an individual along with the opera company as it continues to transcend borders and attract different groups.

There is no one more appropriate than Mr. **Grant Gershon** to receive this honor during the 30th anniversary of the Opera League and the 25th anniversary of LA Opera. Mr. Gershon has a long history of collaborating with LA Opera. His credits with



Grant Gershon receiving the Hemmings Award from Jeff Kleeman

were splendidly accompanied by Jeremy Frank at the piano.

Mr. Gershon received his award from Mr. Jeff Kleeman, who, together with Mrs. Richard and Lenore Wayne, were recipients of our 2010 award. The evening was followed by an elegant three course dinner.

If you have not yet attended this event, don't miss it next year!

the company include Associate Conductor, Chorus Master, and Conductor.

This year's event was both intimate and cheerful. It took place at the historic "Los Angeles Athletic Club" in downtown Los Angeles. Once in the stunning ball room, we were welcomed by Judy Lieb, at her last event as president of the Opera League.

The artistic part of the program was performed by Elissa Johnston (Grant's wife), and Michele Hemmings (Peter Hemmings' daughter-in-law). They

VOLUNTEER CELEBRATION!

By Judy Lieb

Sixty plus volunteers attended the Volunteer Celebration last May 19. Attendees enjoyed refreshments before the heads of Opera League committees introduced their volunteers. Gary Murphy, LA Opera's Director of Communications and Public Relations thanked all the volunteers on behalf of Maestri Plácido Domingo and James Conlon. They expressed their gratitude for all that the League does to support LA Opera.

This year, for the first time, we presented the "President's Volunteer Service Award" to 62 volunteers. This award comes from the White House and honors volunteers with 100 hours or more service. Bronze awards are for 100-249 hours; silver awards are for 250-499 hours and gold awards are for 500-plus hours. Thanks to Opera Volunteers International (OVI) for their assistance in ordering the awards for our fabulous volunteers!

The highlight of the evening was our special guest, Director and Composer Eli Villanueva. He spoke about his in-school opera, *The White Bird of Poston*. Eli is part of the Education and Community Programs Department and composed this opera about life in the World War II Japanese internment camp located in Poston, Arizona. We were thrilled to hear excerpts from this powerful work sung by Eli, Karen Vuong, and Miki

Yamashita. Dan Redfeld accompanied them on the piano. Eli also talked about the process of producing this work in high schools around Southern California. Those present were very moved by the performance, and several in our audience had personal connections to this story.



Our volunteers listening to Eli Villanueva (with Karen Vuong and Miki Yamashita)

The League is proud and honored to have so many hard-working volunteers as the backbone of our programs that support LA Opera. If you are a volunteer, BRAVO!

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. Also, you only need to show the letter once!



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Los Angeles, CA 90012

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INVITATION IS INCLUDED

Opera League Seminar
Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*
and Mozart's *Così fan Tutti*

Sunday, September 11, 2011
See p.5 for more information