



Issue 31
Fall 2012

BRAVO

the newsletter of the Opera League

**NEXT EXCITING
SEMINAR**

Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*

Sunday November 11

By Anne Russell-Sullivan

On Sunday November 11th, UCLA Theatre Department Chair Michael Hackett, and Santa Fe Opera's Desireé Mays, will bring us stunning new insights into Puccini's beloved classic. Desireé will explore the special world of the Geisha in Japan. Her presentation, entitled "Madama Butterfly: The Origins of her Story and the Tragedy of her Son" is sure to please. Michael will share some amazing theatrical traditions surrounding this very popular opera. Singers will entertain us and lunch will be served! See you Sunday morning November 11th. Sign up for this special morning at www.operaleague.org, or use the mail-in registration form on Page 5.



Michael Hackett



Desireé Mays

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SAVE THE DATE!

**Opera League
San Diego Opera Trips**

February 24
& April 7, 2013

For info, contact Kathy Crandall:

661.645.8693

skimeup@gmail.com



ERIC OWENS MASTER CLASS DECEMBER 4TH



Eric Owens

Renowned Bass-Baritone Eric Owens will be conducting a Master Class for several Domingo-Thornton Young Singers on December 4th at 7 PM, open to Los Angeles Opera League members and their guests.

Owens will be appearing this season in the LA Opera production of *Madama Butterfly* in the role of Sharpless. He created the title role in the LA Opera production of *Grendel*. In 2010 he made his debut as Alberich in *Das Rheingold* at the Metropolitan Opera, as Siegfried, and *Götterdämmerung*. Engagements for the 2011/12 season include complete *Ring* cycles at the Met, a recital tour, Beethoven's *Missa solemnis* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, and Jochanaan in *Salome* with the Cleveland Orchestra.

Signup forms for this exciting event are at www.operaleague.org, or on page 5.

a word from our president

As I entered the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion recently, I was reminded how fortunate we are in Los Angeles to have two great treasures leading the company: Plácido Domingo and James Conlon. What they bring to our audience is unparalleled. Great artistry and musicality forever surround our stage. L.A. Opera now has a third leader in Christopher Koelsch, the Company's new President and CEO. Christopher brings 15 years of experience with L.A. Opera to this position. He has served as L.A. Opera's Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice President since 2010. In those positions, he was responsible for overseeing the Company's artistic planning and marketing, the education and community outreach programs, and many other activities.

This trio is dedicated to giving all of us the ultimate opera experience this season and in years to come. However they can't do this without 100% support from all of us, and that includes filling the seats at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. The Met HD screenings in movie theatres provide a great experience, but there is nothing like experiencing the passion



Diane Gray, President

and immediacy of live opera on our stage. I hope to see all our Opera League members in the house during the 2012-2013 season.

Our League started off the new season on a high note with an outstanding seminar on I Due Foscari, which opened September 15th. Highlighting other Opera League events this season, we expect to have an exciting fund-raiser to supplement the League's Education Transportation Fund that pays for busses to bring students to the Dorothy Chandler, many experiencing opera for the first time in their lives. We also look forward to OLLA trips to San Francisco and San Diego. Take a look at our Calendar in this edition, or go to our website for current information on upcoming programs. There is something for everybody. Take advantage of as many events as you can and enjoy the Opera League camaraderie.

Diane



Executive Committee

Diane Gray	President
Kathy Crandall	Vice President
Carol Donlan	Secretary
Robert Braun	Treasurer
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Carol Donlan/Judy Lieb	Boutique Coordinators
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Charles Stern	Parliamentarian
Mirjana Mahnovski	Social Chair
Susan Heard	Behind the Scenes
Larry Verdugo	Education Chair

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Robert Braun	Patron Event
Larry Verdugo	Asst. Volunteers
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Beverley Clarkson	AALAO/Co-Chair Dress
Ruth DePieri	Hotline
Cheryl Dowden	Asst. Sec./Cast Dinner & Boutique Scheduler
Bill Green	Asst. Membership
Marie Hadji	Overtures
Susan Heard	Fund Raising/Asst Special Events
Christine Hoffman	Asst. Communications/ Community Ed./Finance
Yolla Kairouz	Asst. Finance/ Volunteer Appreciation/Musicales
Steve Kohn	Special Events/Misc.
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Mirjana Mahnovski	Boutique Manager/Seminars/ Insider Preview
Carmen Paz	Community Ed. Scheduler
Helen Porter	Volunteer Chair/Patron-Sust./ Mail/Boutique
Mary Riggs	Asst. Education/Boutique/Cast Dinners
Rod Riggs	Parking Czar/Librarian/Cast Dinners
Monica Gutierrez Roper	Boutique Manager
Mimi Rotter	Open House Chair/Asst. Patron Dinner
Hirioko Seki-Blanco	Boutique Buyer
Thomas Shepard	Musicales/Master Class
Larry Verdugo	Community Ed. Chair
Jacque Lyne Wallace	Mailing/Hotline
Dick Wollmer	Community Ed./ Asst. Master Class/Musicales

Consultants

Bob Bernard	Artist Services
Dr. W. Allan Edmiston	Seminars
Joe Lee	Korean Community Liaison
Brita Millard	Special Events
Patricia O'Donnell	Gatherings

Visit us at www.operaleague.org

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AFRICAN AMERICANS FOR LA OPERA FALL RECITAL

Featuring Bass Cedric Berry

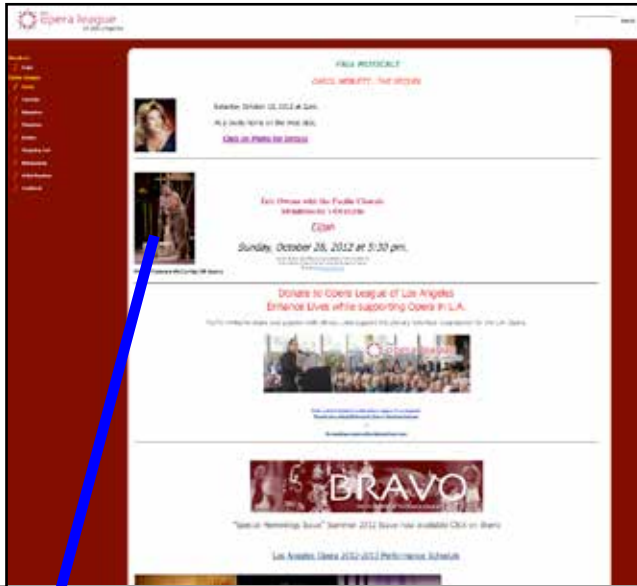
Sunday October 21, 3-6 pm

At a lovely home in Pasadena

Watch for further information in a separate mailing,
or contact Jacque Wallace at babi.jacque@gmail.com.

Your Guide to the Opera League Website

Login to www.operaleague.org here...



Having trouble logging in to the Opera League of Los Angeles website?

Forgot your username or password?

E-mail:

webmaster@operaleague.org

OR

Call the OLLA Hotline:

213.972.7220

Member	Renew Membership. Click here to renew membership
Members Name	Here you will find the calendar of all Opera League events and other events such as Metropolitan Opera Broadcasts.
Logout	Dates of upcoming Seminars, Masterclasses and Gatherings
Opera League	Upcoming Volunteer opportunities including Cast Dinners and Opera for Educators
Home	Information on upcoming Events such as Musicales, Masterclasses, and Hemmings Award Dinner
Renew Membership	Review and Change Membership Information; Here you can make changes to your personal information: Change of Address, e-mail, username and password, etc.. You can also renew membership on-line, and view all of your past purchases made on the website.
Calendar	Click here to view Membership Levels and Benefits. Also New Members can join here
Education	A description of this important volunteer activity
Volunteer	Here you will find copies of Past Bravos
Events	
Shopping Cart	
My Account	
Membership	
Artist Services	
Bravo	
Cookbook	

calendar

October

Education Opera 101

Saturday, October 13, 8-11 am
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 4th floor
Volunteers contact: Larry Verdugo

Musicale

Saturday, October 13, 2 pm
SOLD OUT

Special Event

Attend 3 Operas in San Francisco

October 18-21
Contact: Kathy Crandall,
skimeup@gmail.com

AALAO Program

Sunday, October 21 3 -6pm
At a lovely home in Pasadena
Contact: Jacque Wallace,
babijacque@gmail.com
Invitation will be mailed

November

Education Opera for Educators

Saturday, November 3, 8-11 am
(Madama Butterfly)
Volunteers Contact: Larry Verdugo

Seminar

Sunday, November 11, 10 am
(Madama Butterfly)
See "invitations" page 5

Education Opera Wise

Tuesday, November 13, 3-6 pm
and 7:30-10-30pm (Madama Butterfly)
Volunteers Contact: Larry Verdugo

Cast Dinner

Tuesday, November 13, 5 pm (Madama Butterfly)
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 4th floor
Volunteers contact Cheryl Dowden

Opera Prep /Senior Dress Rehearsal

Thursday, November 15, 11 am-5 pm
(Madama Butterfly)
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 4th floor
Volunteers contact: Larry Verdugo

December

Education Opera 101

Saturday, December 1, 8-11 am
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 4th floor
Volunteers contact: Larry Verdugo

Master Class

Eric Owens, Tuesday, December 4, 7-9 pm
See "invitations" page 5

Opera Talks at Julianne's 7 PM

Held at Julianne's Fine Foods,
2649 Mission St., San Marino

Monday November 5

Monday December 3

Monday February 4

Contact: Carol Sholer

csholer1@att.net • 818-243-1818

E-mail Julie at julie@julienne.us or
call Julie at 626-441-2299, ext. 20
to make a reservation (\$10) and to
order a "Light Supper Box" (\$10)

Opera Talks at Long Beach 1 PM

Held at the El Dorado Library,
2900 Studebaker Road
(between Willow and Spring)

Saturday, October 13

(Madama Butterfly)

Saturday, January 12

(Cinderella and Flying Dutchman)

Contact: John Spear

john.spear@earthlink.net
714-899-9960

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Education:

Larry Verdugo
lverdugo@sbcglobal.net

Home: 626-796-8676

Cell: 626-590-5697

Cast Dinners:

Cheryl Dowden

dowden8983@roadrunner.com
323-255-0265

GATHERINGS

Antelope Valley

No gathering scheduled. You are invited to join
the Santa Clarita Valley Gathering

Beverly Hills

Mimi Rotter 310.479.0259
Anne Russell Sullivan 323.697.9733
Madama Butterfly
Sunday October 28, 10:00 am
10560 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles

Claremont

Patricia O'Donnell 909.447.5038
Madama Butterfly
Sunday November 4, 2 - 5 pm
530 West 11th Street, Claremont

Hollywood/Hancock Park

Ifang (pronounced ee-fong) Hsieh
310.279.9927
No gathering scheduled. You are
encouraged to attend another gathering.

Orange County

Sandy Persky 714.969.0589
No gathering scheduled. You are
encouraged to attend another gathering.

San Fernando Valley

Regi Merwin 818.400.2578
Madama Butterfly
Sunday November 4, 2:30 - 5:30 pm
23919 Bessemer St, Woodland Hills

San Gabriel Valley

Michael Sholer 818.502.1988
Carmen Paz 818.515.0815
Madama Butterfly
Wednesday November 7, 7-9:30 pm
5278 La Canada Blvd., La Canada

Santa Clarita

Ann Anderson, Ron Gordon 661.259.9619
Madama Butterfly
Monday November 12, 7:00 pm
25506 Longfellow Place, Stevenson Ranch

South Bay

Ifang Hsieh 310.279.9927
Call for information

Westside

Monika Whitaker 310.826.4743
Chuck or Alice Bragg 310.454.9662
No gathering is scheduled. You are
encouraged to attend another gathering.

invitations

Opera League Seminar

Madama Butterfly

Dedicated to Sherwin Sloane,
 Founder of the Opera League Seminars

Sunday November 11, 10 AM to 1:30 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 Hackett and Desiree Mays
Moderator: Dr. Allan Edmiston
With Domingo-Thornton Young Artists
accompanied by Nino Sanikidze

Bluthner piano provided by Helga Kasimoff
 (Kasimoff-Bluthner Piano Co.)
 A selection of box lunches available for \$15/person,
 see order form below
 Advance orders \$35 or a Voucher for Members,
 \$45 for Guests
 Same day purchase at the door, \$45

Your order must be received by November 5, 2012

Master Class with Eric Owens

Bass-Baritone Eric Owens, who will be appearing
 with LA Opera in the role of Sharpless this season,
 will coach a small group of Domingo-Thornton
 Young Artists

Tuesday December 4
7 to 9 PM

Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
 135 North Grand Avenue
*(Enter at the Artist's Entrance on Grand,
 then take the elevator to the 4th floor)*

Advance orders, \$25 (or a Voucher)
 for members, \$35 for guests
 Student Member Tickets \$10

 Same day purchase at the door, \$35

Your order must be received by November 28, 2012

EVENT ORDER FORM

___ x Member @\$35	\$ _____
___ x Member (Vouchers)	_____
___ x Non-member @ \$45	\$ _____
___ x Student member @ \$10	\$ _____
___ x Turkey Club Wrap Box Lunch @ \$15.....	\$ _____
___ x Tuna Salad Sandwich Box Lunch @ \$15.....	\$ _____
___ x Asian Chicken Salad Box Lunch@ \$15.....	\$ _____
___ x Grilled Chicken Caesar Salad Box Lunch @ \$15.....	\$ _____
___ x Tina's Taco Tostada (Vegetarian) Salad Box Lunch @ \$15.....	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Master Class Tickets	
___ x Member @ \$25	\$ _____
___ x Member (Vouchers)	_____
___ x Non-member @ \$35	\$ _____
___ x Student member @ \$10	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

You can order tickets for any Opera League event on 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. *If you need a User Name and Password, send an email to webmaster@operaleague.org*
 For orders by mail, use this form. Check the number of tickets you wish to order, then enclose your check, or 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 49-1057, Los Angeles, CA 90049-9057.

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.

Dudamel Conducts Domingo at Hollywood Bowl

By Kathy Crandall, Picnic Event Chair

When you think of sold-out concerts where no one knows what the program will be, you think of rock stars. On August 19th, LA's two superstars of the classical music world decided to make music together for the first time, with no pre-announced program, and rocked a sold out Hollywood Bowl at a fundraiser for the LA Philharmonic Musicians pension fund. Opera League members were there in force!

The League decided to plan a picnic prior to the concert and we invited members via email since the decision was made too late to announce it in the Summer Bravo. Initially, the League purchased twenty tickets. Within 24 hours of the email announcement, we were sold out. Thanks to Treasurer Robert Braun, we obtained more tickets and sold 50 seats for the concert. Other League members obtained tickets on their own. We reserved a picnic site where League members gathered prior to the concert, at tables shaded by large oak trees, with lots of food and drink.

Our journey to the Bowl was well rewarded. Plácido Domingo was joined by soprano extraordinaire Ana Maria Martinez, an Operalia winner, last seen here as Simon Boccanegra's daughter. Ms. Martinez and Maestro Domingo entranced us in a first act with operatic arias and duets and in the second act

with zarzuela, operetta, and some crossover music. The crowd demanded multiple encores, and Granada brought the audience to its feet! Maestro Dudamel was his usual charming self and showed himself to be a highly seasoned opera conductor, sensitive to the pace, volume, and interactions of the singers. It was a wonderful evening and a great "happening" for Los Angeles. Many thanks to Lorna Blancaflor for shopping and setting up the picnic, President Diane Gray for arranging wine, and Treasurer Robert Braun for managing the tickets and picnic area.

All agree we must consider doing a Hollywood Bowl trip again next year!



OPERA LEAGUE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Education Programs

Many members of the League enjoy assisting at LAO's Education and Community Service programs. These include seminars for teachers, student events at either dress or working rehearsals, community performances, and Saturday Mornings at the Opera, an event for young children. These events provide our volunteers with special memories of their conversations with students and teachers, and interactions with young children who may be experiencing their first encounter with opera. Here is a list of volunteer opportunities supporting LAO's Education programs.

Opera for Educators is designed to provide teachers with information about

LAO's current productions, provide tips on how to introduce the subject of opera into the classroom. Teachers earn "in service" credits for these sessions. These take place on Saturdays, featuring speakers and performers. Volunteers assist with hosting the event, signing in attendees, answering questions, providing help with the refreshments, and can stay for the program.

Opera Prep is a special event for high school students. Participating schools are invited to a dress rehearsal and students attend a special seminar before the performance. Volunteers interact with the students and teachers, providing information and acting as their host throughout the rehearsal.

Opera Wise is for college students from various disciplines: music, theater,

literature and other related fields. They attend a working rehearsal to observe the creative process and witness great artists developing their performances. Volunteers host the evening, answer questions and provide information throughout the evening.

A special atmosphere surrounds **Saturday Mornings at the Opera**. Young children crowd into the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion to see a special opera designed for the occasion, and enjoy crafts projects that add a unique touch to the day. Volunteers help with the opera related crafts, and then help guide and shepherd all to the performance.

Contact Larry Verdugo at 626.796.8676, or lverdugo@sbcglobal.net to indicate your interests.

Our Incomparable Comprimario

by Bob Bernard

First he got “stuffed” for the rent. Then, shortly thereafter, he was dumped by the gorgeous Musetta, while getting stuck with the bar bill at Café Momus. This, of course, was bass-baritone Philip Cokorinos, reprising the dual roles of landlord Benoit and aging admirer Alcindoro for Los Angeles Opera’s recent production of *La bohème*.

Mr. Cokorinos has been an audience favorite here ever since his initial turn in this Puccini favorite. For many of us, our first experience of enjoying the art of Mr. Cokorinos was for the April 1990 telecast of *Don Giovanni* from the Met. In that he was Masetto, paired with the Zerlina of Dawn Upshaw:

Photos from LAO productions
by Robert Millard



In Act One: Contentious



In Act Two: Cuddly

This role followed from his being a winner of the 1985 Met Audition competition. Phil’s recollections of that occasion remain vivid: His opening aria was Don Basilio’s ‘La calunnia’ from *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, sung with his kneecaps operating much as independent pistons in an engine that was misfiring. In fact, after exiting the stage at aria’s end, he was unable to recall a single note which he had sung, yet retained the clear memory of his malfunctioning kneecaps! Gathering himself during the two-hour break before his second aria, Phil adopted a career-enhancing attitude: he, eschewing nervousness, willed himself to simply enjoy this once-in-a-lifetime experience. So, in singing Osmin’s aria ‘Wer hungrig bei der Tafel sitzt’ from Mozart’s *Zaide*, he projected the aria’s celebration of the enjoyment of food so well that the judges later cited this as being a decisive factor in their rendering of the awards.

In January 1992 we got to see Phil once again, this time as the English Ambassador in the telecast of the world premiere of Corigliano’s *The Ghosts of Versailles*. An experience from one of the technical rehearsals for this premiere remains as a sweet, treasured memory for Phil. The rehearsal for Act One’s finale had been progressing haltingly, with a series of starts and stops: This chaotic scene, involving, as it did, Figaro in ‘drag’, an on-stage band of Turkish musicians, a vagrant Wagnerian singer, and a circling five-member group of eight-foot-high paper mache heads [Yes, Julie Taymor was the Artistic Consultant], repeatedly came to a halt because

of the many collisions which occurred. While everyone was picking themselves up from one of these accidents, Phil, with his positive attitude, was lying back, smiling and relaxing, when the now-sainted Charles Anthony [he of what-came-to-be 2,928 performances over 57 seasons], delighting in finding someone who was enjoying himself, joined Phil, coalescing newbie and patriarch in a ‘just happy to be here’ moment.

Of recent date, we’ve seen Phil in Met HD telecasts as Billy Jackrabbit (*La Fanciulla del West*, January 2011) and as the Innkeeper in this season’s *Manon*. Here is a photo montage of Phil in the above roles, along with his recent roles for LAO as Baron Douphol (*La Traviata*), Antonio (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Zaretsky (*Eugene Onegin*), and the Duke of Verona (*Romeo et Juliette*):



Photo montage by May Wang

Sir Thomas Allen once declared, “Every major singer has one role which has a special relationship for them; one role they must continue to explore; one role which has ‘gotten under their skin.’” That role for Phil Cokorinos is Leporello, the role he has performed more than any other. He has analyzed how it plays against the Don, as well as how the other principals relate to this master/servant pair, bringing his interpretation to regional opera companies from Calgary (on CBC) to Opera Pacific to Atlanta.

Being a bass-baritone, it has fallen to be Phil’s lot to take on many roles of operatic “losers”. Recognizing, specifically, in addition to the Benoit/Alcindoro duo:

- As Baron Douphol, he loses both a stack of money while gambling and, ultimately, an (offstage) duel
- As Betto (*Gianni Schicchi*), he is one of the several losing relatives of Buoso
- As the gondolier Zuane (*La Gioconda*), he loses a race on the Grand Canal
- As Hermann Ortel (*Die Meistersinger*), he is one of the losing Master Singers
- As Masetto, he, after almost getting cuckolded on his wedding eve, gets sucker-punched by the Don at the start of Act 2

These circumstances, coupled with his popularity with the volunteers on the Artist Services Committee, provided

Continued on page 8

Our Incomparable Comprimario, continued from page 7

the inspiration for Phil to receive one of the Committee's 'Nice Guy' awards. Accordingly, Phil was presented with the Committee's first (tongue-in-cheek) Wozzeck Award [so named when an ad hoc sub-committee concluded that this opera was the prominent example of unrelenting hardship and exploitation]. His award took the tangible form of a personalized DVD of the film *Lost Horizon*. As shown, when presented with this award by Committee member Stella Leontsini, Phil reacted with his characteristic good humor:

Mr. Cokorinos operates as a free agent, negotiating his roles one-by-one with regional and national opera companies alike. This arrangement has worked well here in Los Angeles: LAO values his undiminished vocal skills and naturalistic stage presence; Phil relishes the artistic depth of the casting and the commitment of his colleagues, both on and off stage.

Mr. Cokorinos still dreams of new artistic challenges, such as adding Leporello to his list of roles at the Met, or adding the roles of Dr. Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*) and Don Pasquale to the seventy-six already in his résumé. An itinerant medicine man and an elderly bachelor await their opportunity to come on stage.



Award photo by Bob Bernard



135 North Grand Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90012

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INVITATIONS ARE INCLUDED

- ★ Opera League Seminar
Madama Butterfly
Sunday November 11, 2012
- ★ Master Class with Eric Owens
Tuesday December 4, 2012
See Page 5 for more information

USERS GUIDE TO OLLA WEBSITE

★ See Page 3