

BRAVO

the newsletter of the Opera League

Member Get a Member Campaign

Extend the benefits of Opera League membership to your friends and neighbors and you could win a pair of orchestra seats to opening night of either *Grendel* or *La Traviata*. The membership contest will last until May 15, 2006. To participate, call the Opera League 24 hour message line at (213) 972-7220 and leave your name, address and how many Membership Brochures and Application forms you would like. The Membership form is also available on the League's web site at: operaleague.org/membershipform.htm.

In either case, just write, or have your friends insert, "referred by (name)" at the bottom of each form so that you will get credit for the new membership. Forms with payment must be received by May 15th to qualify.

The League Member signing up the most new members will receive a pair of orchestra tickets to Opening Night of the World Premier of *Grendel*. The League Member who generates the greatest dollar amount from new memberships will receive a pair of orchestra tickets to the Opening Night of LA Opera's new production of *La Traviata*.

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Don't miss this opportunity to share your love of Opera with others and at the same time enhance their operatic experience by learning, helping and sharing through the Opera League.

Creation of *Grendel* Seminar

Director and co-librettist of the LA Opera world premier *Grendel*, Julie Taymor (Tony Award winner for *The Lion King*) will discuss her creative process with co-librettist and noted poet J.D. McClatchey and well-known choreographer on the French contemporary dance scene, Anglin Preljocaj, and (if rehearsal time allows) composer Elliot Goldenthal (Academy Award winner for *Frida*) for the Opera League's final seminar of the season on May 13. You won't want to miss this one, so get your reservations in early!

Grendel is a darkly comic exploration of the classic Beowulf epic, told from the monster's point of view. Using projections, puppetry and

masks, Taymor creates an enthralling visual landscape that accentuates Goldenthal's emotional, richly layered score. This tale is a world of kings and queens, storytellers and warriors, and a monster revealed as the quintessentially modern anti-hero. Taymor has said that creating the visual world after she was given the music was a new experience. Previously, when working with Goldenthal, who is also her partner, she would write and then he would compose. One of the opera's sets being constructed is a 20-ton wall; one side is of "ice" and the other of "roots" which the dancers will climb.

Please note our earlier start time. A continental breakfast will be served at



Grendel creative team members Elliot Goldenthal, Julie Taymor and J. D. McClatchey at New York press conference

9:30 am and the panel will start promptly at 10 am. See for yourself as this stellar panel share their passion and erudition in the making of *Grendel*. The invitation and details appear on

a word from our president

Spring is a time for new growth and we are growing both in volunteers and overall membership! Over 30 new volunteers attended recent orientation workshops to develop awareness of ever-expanding "opera-opportunities." Workshops will be offered again this autumn. Our spring "member get a member" campaign (see page 1) concludes with winners receiving opening night orchestra seats to the world premier of *Grendel* or to Marta Domingo's stunning new Art Deco production of *La Traviata*. If you have opera friends, tell them about our activities and invite them to join Opera League. Write "referred by (your name)" on their application. Then, bring them with you to upcoming League events! Share your passion!

Spring is bursting with Opera League membership benefits. LA Opera treated League members to an outstanding "Backstage Magic" evening with food, wine and insights on *Le Nozze di Figaro* sets and costumes by property coordinator Kirk Graves and costume production supervisor Anna Bjornsdotter. Soprano Barbara Bonney, our Susanna, led an amazing Master Class with Resident Artists. Patron and Sustaining League members enjoyed an exclusive salon evening with mezzo Lucy Schauer, LA Opera's petite Cherubino. League members and guests are invited to the African Americans for LA Opera spring recital on Sunday, April 23 in Hancock Park. Group discounted tickets also are available for June 7 opening night of *Traviata* with AALAO Evening at the Opera (phone the League hot line). The *Grendel* seminar on May 13 will be a sell out, so reserve early for your breakfast and seat for the lively panel of the *Grendel* creative team.

Contributing, Sustaining and Patron members are invited to the final dress rehearsal of *Grendel* on May 24. Volunteers receive tickets to dress rehearsals among *Grand Duchess*, *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Grendel* and *La Traviata* based on their hours served last year. Each



Rebecca Bowne, President

year, League members receive invitations to dress rehearsals based upon membership level donations and/or volunteer hours served.

Volunteers are invited to two spring events. On May 17, all of the Music Center affiliated volunteers are treated to "Shining Stars" with brunch, gifts and entertainment by opera and film director Garry Marshall. A special Opera League evening June 5 honors our volunteers with recognition of hours served, door prizes and special awards for distinguished service in numerous categories. Entertainment features bass Eric Owens, lead in *Grendel*, who will sing and discuss his two roles in world premiers this year, *Dr. Atomic* and *Grendel*.

The highlight of our entire year comes on June 11 with the Peter Hemmings Award dinner when we recognize Alice Coulombe and Suzanna Guzmán for their lifetime contributions to strengthen opera in Southern California. Both women have truly made opera blossom in Los Angeles. Many thanks go to Audrey Hanson and her committee for selecting Alice and Suzanna among the many nominations.

Speaking of nominations, we received over 35 members for consideration as Opera League directors. New directors and positions will be announced in the Summer *Bravo*.

So, with all this activity for opera-lovers, ask your friends to join the Opera League and come with you to these exciting events! See you at the opera – in "free" seats for those of you who take time to recruit new members, join at generous donation levels or volunteer your precious time!

the opera league of los angeles

Executive Committee

Monica Weil	Chair/Past President
Rebecca Bowne	President
Carol Sholer	Vice President
Margaret Merrett	Treasurer
Nina Haro	Secretary
Kathleen Leonard	Parliamentarian
Bob Holmes	Membership & Communications
Dorothy Wait	Education

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Toni Bird	Special Events
Jim Cameron	Master Class/Musicales
Paula Radcliffe Dyke	Volunteers & Mailings
Gerald Elijah	Volunteer Coordinator
Jackie Johns	Public Relations
Beverly Johnson	Seminars & Membership
Steve Kohn	Membership
Ed Lieb	Community Education
Marcia McCormack	Fundraising & Events
Ernest Prokopovych	Nominating
Tadea Pylko	Boutique & Events
Dale Ross	Hospitality
Paula Settle	Boutique Manager
John Spear	Overtures
Stanley Stocks	Assistant Treasurer

Consulting Director

Dr. W. Allan Edmiston	Seminars
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24-hour League Message Line: 213-972-7220

Visit us at www.operaleague.org

Send mail to: PO Box 1006, Montrose, CA 91021-1006

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If you want to be eligible for last minute benefits, Inside Opera and 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!

Spring Fling at Opera Boutique

Be sure to arrive well before curtain to "shop on the left bank" (toward Grand Avenue) for gorgeous spring merchandise as you enter the opera house. As the Opera League's major fundraising project, all net proceeds are donated to LA Opera education programs.

Tusk Italian leather accessories include evening wallets, multi-pocketed small clutch purses, business card cases and checkbook/credit card wallets in French vanilla, celery and cantaloupe, as well as metallic silver and gold for the ladies. For the gentlemen, card cases, passport covers and billfolds are in black with

lime, brown and royal blue. New evening bags include intricate metal work on the handles and beautiful embroidered fabric, each holding a silk covered mirror inside the pocket. The Yilin Collection of evening bags are made with semi-precious stones in jade, turquoise, amethyst, silver and gold. New lines of jewelry includes one-of-a-kind, artist signature pieces crafted in silver, bronze and gold metal mesh, with hand painted flowers, leaves and insects. Another signature jewelry collection with bolder designs comes in sterling silver and gold plate, embellished with stones and metalwork. To complete your

outfit and keep off the evening chill, purchase a silk or lightweight wool stole woven with shiny metals threads in colors from the palest pastels to rich copper, gold and silver. Your shopping for Mother's Day and graduation at Opera Boutique will bring another child to the opera!

LA Opera tees include the *Grendel* monster, a hit with both men and women, and the enchanting Art Deco *La Traviata*. Opera note cards, hand crafted opera-themed photo albums, Diva cosmetic bags, opera totes and scarves are also available.

THE OPERA LEAGUE WISHES TO GIVE A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR PATRON MEMBERS!

David N. & Margie Barry
Frank E. & Kathy Baxter
Ellen Bergeron
Rebecca & Stuart Bowne
Bonnie Brae
Marilyn & Don Conlan
Joseph H. & Alice Coulombe
Brian Dockweiler & Hillary
Esketh Crahan

Myrna Cruz Aedo
Jack & Barbara Dawson
Dan & Carol Donlan
John C. & Leslie A. Dorman
W. Allan Edmiston, MD
Gerald Faris
Virginia & Gordon Footman
Bruce & Adele Gainsley
Edward T. & Eleanor T. Gnuip
Stuart R. Grant

Audrey & Alan Hanson
Robert & Molly Holmes
H. Kirkland Jones
Ralph & Joyce Kavanagh
Olive M. Kemp
Ben & Delores Kerr
Norman Koplof
Rosalie Kornblau
Larry & Jennifer Levine
Mike & Claudia Lin Margolis
Robert & Marguerite Marsh, PhD
Morency & Cecily Maxwell
Randy Melson
Jane Gray Morrison
Tai Jun Park
Cat Jagger Pollon
Clyde & Nancy Porter
Al & Laura Rabin
Larry Rappaport
Sol R. & Neddy Rubin
Dr. Armin & Mrs. Barbara Sadoff
Melody & Warren Schubert
Charles & Barbara Schufreider
Richard Seaver
Doris M. Shimabukuro
Jack Shine
Marie H. Song
Catherine & Howard Stone
Libby Wilson



Artists at the Master Class, Gregorio González, Jinyoung Jang, accompanist Cathy Miller, Andrew Wilkowske, Peter Nathan Foltz, Jessica Swink, and Mariana Ramirez congratulate Soprano Barbara Bonney for her outstanding lessons. Photo by Ed Lieb



calendar

april

Patron & Sustaining Member Event

April 10 (Monday) 6:30 to 9:30 pm
Interview of Lucy Shauffer
At the Home of Kathy & Frank Baxter

Spring Recital African Americans for LA Opera

April 23 (Sunday) 3 to 6 pm
Home of Ben & Delores Kerr
Cedric Berry, Bass-Baritone
Leberta Clark, Mezzo-Soprano
Cathy Miller, Accompanist
\$30 League members, \$35 guests

Education Program*

April 29 (Saturday) 8 am - 4 pm
Opera Challenge
California State University, LA

may

Opera Talks at Julienne's

May 1 (Monday) 7 pm
2649 Mission, San Marino
\$15 cash for refreshments

Education Program*

May 6 (Saturday) 8 am - 4 pm
Opera for Educators - *La Traviata*
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Seminar

May 13 (Saturday) 9:30 am - noon
The *Grendel* Creative Team
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion 5th Floor

Education Program*

May 13 (Saturday) 8:30 am - Noon
Saturday Mornings at the Opera
Journey to Cordoba

Cast Dinner**

May 16 (Tuesday) 3:30 - 7 pm
Grendel
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Shining Stars Event

May 17 (Wednesday) 9:30 - 11:30 am
Music Center Volunteer Event
With Garry Marshall
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion Grand Hall

Cast Dinner**

May 18 (Thursday) 3:30 - 7 pm
Grendel
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Cast Dinner**

May 19 (Friday) 3:30 - 7 pm
Grendel
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Education Program*

May 20 (Saturday) 8 am - 4 pm
Opera for Educators *Grendel*
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Dress Rehearsal Honoring Opera League

May 24 (Wednesday)
Lecture 6:30, Performance 7:30 pm
Grendel Final Dress Rehearsal
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
Contributing, Sustaining and Patrons
by invitation

Cast Dinner**

May 30 (Sunday) 4:30 - 7:30 pm
La Traviata
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

june

Cast Dinner**

June 2 (Friday) 4:30 - 7:30 pm
La Traviata
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

League Volunteer Tickets

June 4 (Sunday)
Lecture 6:30, Performance 7:30 pm
La Traviata Final Dress Rehearsal
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Volunteer Appreciation

June 5 (Monday) 7:30 - 9 pm
Bass Eric Owens, *Grendel*
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
Invitations will be mailed

African Americans for LA Opera

June 7 (Wednesday) 7:30 pm
Evening at the Opera *La Traviata*
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Education Program*

June 10 (Saturday) 10 am - 2 pm
Final Opera Challenge
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Peter Hemmings Award Dinner

June 11 (Sunday) 6:30 pm
Fountain Court in Hollywood
Invitations will be mailed

AALAO Membership Campaign Recital

June 18 (Sunday)
Invitations will be mailed

*Education Programs

Contact: Edward Lieb
ejglieb@earthlink.net

24-hour message line 213-972-7220

**Cast Dinners

Contact: Dale Ross
daleross1@worldnet.att.net

24-hour message line 213-972-7220

invitations

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

Grendel Seminar

World premiere

Saturday, May 13, 2006 - 9:30 am to noon

9:30 am Continental Buffet Breakfast – 10:00 am Panel Discussion

5th Floor Banquet Hall, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

135 North Grand Avenue, Entrance just south of garage on Grand Avenue

(Note parking is \$8.00 at the Music Center)

The Grendel Creative Team

Julie Taymor - Director Co-Librettist

Elliot Goldenthal - Composer (rehearsals permitting)

J.D. McClatchey - Co-Librettist

Anglin Preljocaj - Choreographer

Additionally sponsored by The Opera Guild of Southern California

Tickets: \$20 or 1 Seminar Voucher for Members, \$30 for non-members and members at the door,

\$5 for Student Club Members in advance

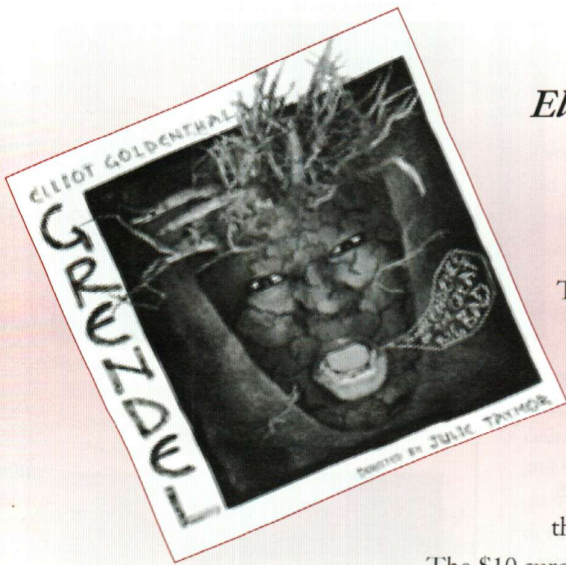
Reservations should be received by May 8th

Mail your check or voucher(s) (NO REFUNDS) and stamped self addressed envelope to:

the Opera League of Los Angeles, PO Box 1006, Montrose, CA 91021-1006

The \$10 surcharge for non-members will be credited if a membership is purchased at this event.

For Information call the League's 24 hour message line: (213) 972-7220



Grendel Gatherings Schedule

REGION	DATE	ADDRESS	TIME	CONTACT	PHONE
San Fernando Vly.	Friday, May 5	10240 Camarillo St. # 102, Toluca Lake	7-9:30 pm	Jackie Johns	818.980.5743
Historic L.A.	Saturday, May 6	418 S. McCadden Pl., Los Angeles	2-4:30 pm	Sandra Kohn	323.935.9943
Antelope Vly.	Sunday, May 7	43422 25th St., Lancaster	2-4:30 pm	Dr. Harald Krueger	661.728.0671
Claremont	Sunday, May 7	150 N. Mountain Ave., Claremont	2-4:30 pm	Patricia O' Donnell	909.447.5038
Orange County	Sunday, May 7	815 W. Broadway, Anaheim	2-4:30 pm	Claire Chambless	714.533.4186
San Gabriel Vly.	Tuesday, May 9	5278 La Canada, La Canada	7-9:30 pm	Carmen Paz	818.765.2293
Westside	Monday, May 15	425 S. Burlingame Ave., L.A.	7:30-10 pm	Dr. James Schumaker	310.829.1069
Santa Clarita	Wed., May 17	24271 San Fernando, Santa Clarita	7-9:30 pm	Olga Joseau	661.297.3086

getting together

As the primary volunteer support group for LA Opera, the Opera League is essential to LA Opera's success. Opera League volunteers, the heart and soul of our organization, enjoy an increasing number of opportunities to go behind the scenes and become part of the action.

Sneak Peek at Grendel

“In Gardner’s *Grendel*, composer Elliot Goldenthal and his partner, director Julie Taymor, hear a hero crying out for a home in grand opera” notes Matthew Gurewitsch in “*Evildoer*” in April’s *Smithsonian Magazine*. Opera League members have several unique “behind the scenes” opportunities to watch the development, hear insights and welcome the cast and crew of *Grendel*, long before the opera press core arrives from around the world for this highly publicized grand opera premier!

Artist Services greeted and transported the *Grendel* creative team for working visits over the last several years, then assisted the cast and crew arriving for rehearsals beginning early this April. Nine Regional Gatherings will provide welcome settings for insightful speakers on *Grendel* between May 4 and May 21. Each Gathering includes shared refreshments and informal social mixers with other opera fans. Our May 13 Seminar provides an “up close and personal” panel discussion among the international award-winning creative team. Next, Hospitality Committee

members will cook and serve dinner to the cast and crew of *Grendel* three times in mid-May, each time quietly observing the working rehearsals after dinner. As a special treat, Opera League donors at the Patron, Sustaining and Contributing levels, as well as select volunteers, will receive invitations to attend the final dress rehearsal. The hard-working League member who wins the “Member get a Member” contest will have orchestra seats at the world premier May 27.

American bass Eric Owens will entertain active volunteers within Opera League at Volunteer Appreciation night on June 5. Mr. Owens will share his insights on roles from two world premier performances: his own as the monster *Grendel* in LA Opera’s *Grendel* and as General Leslie Groves in *Doctor Atomic* for San Francisco Opera.

Through membership in Opera League, we have many opportunities to be a part of opera history in the making! Take advantage of these opportunities through your volunteerism and/or donations with Opera League.



Marcia McCormack, tenor Peter Nathan Foltz, Jim Cameron, accompanist Vicki Kirsch and soprano Jessica Swink at the Pasadena Musicale



Margaret Merrett, Rebecca Bowne, Judy Lieb and Kathleen Leonard greet Musicale guests at the home of Jo and Shawn Libaw. Photo by Henry Merkle



Members Audrey Hanson, Larry Rapport, Bob Holmes and Alma Guzman serve dinner to the cast

behind the scenes

Covering With A Couple

by Bob Bernard, Artist Services Chair

Whenever I think of itinerant artists, I recall the 1954 Fellini movie: *La strada* (*The Road*). In this film the couple, Zampanò (Anthony Quinn) and Gelsomina (Giulietta Masina), travel from town to town performing their rather limited repertoire. Gelsomina doubles as a public relations person, beating a drum and calling out, “è arrivato, Zampanò!” (Zampanò has arrived!).

Similarly, our visiting artists are often referred to as ‘musical gypsies’: traveling musicians who fly in, have LAO’s Public Relations people ‘bang the drum’, do their show, and motor on down to the next town.

Of recent date we have enjoyed the company and artistry of a delightful couple, both individuals possessing, thank goodness, considerably more talent than either Zampanò or Gelsomina. This couple came to town and had both some predictable—and some surprising, professional experiences.

The visiting artist-couple was Gary Lehman & Susan Foster.

Professionally, their careers have been balanced, each regularly taking on major roles at lower echelon opera houses. This parity manifested itself in the casting for LAO’s second pair of operas for the 2005-06 season: Susan Foster covered the role of



Gary Lehman as Siegmund in Long Beach Opera's *Ring*

Tosca (Recall: Susan had covered Vanessa for Dame Kiri just one year ago), and Gary Lehman covered the role of Parsifal.

Susan, also singing the two Student Matinees, drew rave response. Indeed, LAO must have been tempted to ask Susan to do her well-remembered Tosca leap that she did in Washington, D.C. a decade ago. Described by some as the most chilling exit ever—Susan stood at the top of the parapet and flung out, “O Scarpia, avanti a Dio!” while facing the audience. Then, arms outstretched in a cruciform and still facing the audience, blindly fell backwards to her death.

While never wishing another ill, most every Cover must hope for an opportunity to step in and sing a regular performance. This *almost* happened to Susan: Violeta Urmana felt indisposed on December 18...but was able to go on.

That Gary was covering Parsifal was serendipitous: Last June, with Susan singing the role of Marianne in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Gary dropped into town to visit and cheer. Coincident with his visit, the scheduled Parsifal Cover cancelled. Gary auditioned (his debut as a tenor) and was signed for the part. At first, it looked as though Gary’s experience as a Cover was going to echo that of Susan’s: Domingo felt indisposed during the performance of Parsifal on December 8...but was able to go on.

Speaking with Gary after that performance gave us a glimpse of what happens when an artist feels indisposed. Domingo, feeling a cold coming on, had an announcement of his condition broadcast at the second intermission. Gary, in the wings with his music in front of him, watched and waited. If Domingo had ever felt that he couldn’t continue that night, he would have given a particular hand signal (something evidently differentiable from a “Wilson-ian gesture), and Gary would have commenced singing, with Domingo miming the role on stage.

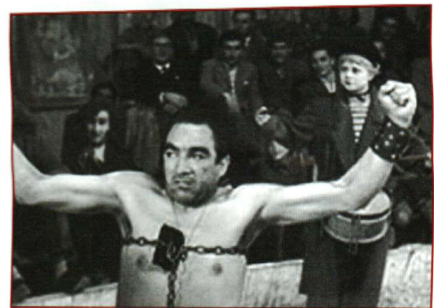
During this same conversation, Gary had joked that he wanted to have a tape recorder



Susan Foster and Gary Lehman

running if his name ever *was* announced as a substitute for Domingo—He wanted to record the groans and boos for the family archives! Well, Gary got his chance just six days later. Domingo’s cold worsened, and Gary was announced as Parsifal on December 14. Yes, Gary heard the groans and boos at 7pm, but was rewarded with cheers and accolades at 11:30pm. After Gary repeated his remarkable performance on December 17, Domingo personally acknowledged and thanked him at the closing cast party.

Gary continued his run of success, singing Siegmund in the Long Beach Ring. Susan lingered here long enough to see the first cycle of LBO’s Ring, but then was off, to fill an engagement in Florida. Now, our two artists have gone off down their respective roads, their professional careers, and perhaps even their personal relationship, a bit changed, but most definitely, having left the musical experiences of their audiences in Los Angeles considerably enriched.



Anthony Quinn in Fellini’s “La Strada”

Hemmings' Memorial Award

Opera League proudly announces the Third Annual Peter Hemmings' Memorial Award recipients Alice Coulombe and Suzanna Guzmán. This award, dedicated in the memory of LA Opera's founding general director Peter Hemmings, recognizes individuals for their promotion of opera in greater Los Angeles.

Mezzo soprano Suzanna Guzmán delights international opera audiences, and currently presents her 31st role with LA Opera in *La Traviata*. She is active in many organizations that reach out to bring the joy of opera to broader audiences, including the lead in "Don't be Afraid, It's Just Opera" performed for over 200,000 inner city school children from Alaska to Florida.

Before opera, there was Alice Coulombe pushing to make it happen, and over the years she has remained in that role supporting young artists, being instrumental in developing opera-connected groups, raising funds, recruiting board members, stimulating and opening the door for more people to enjoy this wonderful art form.

The Hemmings Award gourmet dinner will be held at the beautiful and historic Fountain Court in the 1918 Hollywood Assistance League Building. Join us Sunday, June 11 at 6:30 pm with toasts and opera singers presenting "brindisi" to Alice, Suzanna and the legacy and memory of Peter Hemmings. Invitations will be mailed.



Suzanna Guzman



Alice Coulombe



135 North Grand Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90012

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

INVITATIONS ARE INCLUDED

★ Grendel Seminar
MAY 13

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