



# BRAVO

Issue 6  
Summer 2006

the newsletter of the Opera League

## Verdi, Massenet, Humperdink, Monteverdi, Weill, Wagner... Next Season's Seminars

by Dorothy Wait, Communications Chair

**M**. Scott Peck began his time-tested book *The Road Less Traveled* with this chestnut...life is difficult. So true it is for the Opera League in determining which operas to include in next season's seminars from such an embarrassment of riches offered by LA Opera. We concluded that each of the four seminars would include two operas.

We start on Sunday afternoon (1 to 4 pm), September 3 with *Don Carlo*, presented by Helen Greenwald, Professor, New England Conservatory of Music AND Patrick Smith, former editor of *Opera News* who will address *Manon*. The second seminar on Saturday, November 11 from 10 am to 1 pm will cover *Hansel and Gretel* with Desiree Mays, Educator, Santa Fe Opera speaking AND Michael Hackett, Professor, UCLA returning to inform us of *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*.

Our grandest event, scheduled for Saturday, February 3, 2007 from 10 am to 4 pm will include a luncheon. We hope to have James Conlon, the

new Music Director and conductor for both operas featured, in addition to Stephen Hinton, Professor, Stanford speaking on *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* AND Simon Williams, Professor, UCSB to cover *Tannhauser* – a full day to explore these operas. The final seminar on Sunday, April 29 from 1 pm to 4 pm combines *Porgy and Bess*, the speaker to be announced, AND Richard Traubner, New York will enlighten us about *Luisa Fernanda*.

Please note a venue change. The September and November programs will take place at the Wilshire Grand Hotel at 930 Wilshire Boulevard by 9th Street, easily accessible from the 110 Harbor Freeway. Explicit directions will be included with the invitations. Valet parking and surface parking are available for \$8. The locations for the February and April dates are yet to be determined. The League continues with one of its important stated goals of making exemplary opera-related educational opportunities available to its members and the community and we very much hope you will mark your calendar and plan to join us.

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Suzanna Guzmán and Alice Coulombe receive the Peter Hemmings Memorial Award in recognition of their contributions to opera in greater Los Angeles.

## a word from our president

As your president, it has been a privilege to greet so many of you at our exceptional social and educational events this past year. All directors are wearing silver name badges, so you can spot us and introduce yourself. If I haven't already done so, I look forward to meeting you during the coming year.

The Hemmings Memorial Awards Dinner provided a rousing finale to an outstanding opera season. Event chair and vice president Carol Sholer did a spectacular job. "Brindisi" and toasts to deserving award recipients Alice Coulombe and Suzanna Guzmán capped an evening of fine dining and entertainment.

Speaking of "rousing," how about that fabulous *Grendel*! Everyone pulled together to support this magnificent world premier. Eric Owens royally entertained us at Volunteer Appreciation Night, as well as at every exciting performance. Thank you to our members for your support and understanding with the many changes of schedule for the dress rehearsal and performances. LA Opera deserves great credit for continued support of the Opera League throughout this entire season.

The opera movie parties were popular events, drawing well over 120 guests to last summer's outdoor Italian evening featuring *Pagliacci* and again to the winter evening inside St. Peter's Church viewing of *Tosca*, with introduction by director Ian Judge. This August 6, Dick and Lynda Patton's Pasadena back yard will be transformed for an evening in Spain. Attendees will consume Catalan tapas catered by "Bar Celona," drink wine and enjoy *Hamlet* filmed at Barcelona's Liceu. Don't miss it!



**Rebecca Bowne, President**

This year's seminars were spectacular! Not only were the national and international speakers on each production knowledgeable, the special guest stars including directors Gary Marshall and Julie Taymor, composer Elliot Goldenthal, conductor Steve Sloane and superstar Frederica von Stade each enhanced our opera experience. Moderator Dr. W. Allan Edmiston and chair Dorothy Wait have planned another exciting season for next year as detailed on page one. In addition, Opera League continues to sponsor the pre-performance talks with generous co-sponsorship from the Flora A. Thornton Foundation. As these talks are so popular, 700 new chairs have been added for seating!

Many fundraising and educational activities this past year focused on bringing nearly 6,000 children to the student matinees of *Tosca* and will be directed towards *Hansel and Gretel* student matinees in the upcoming season. Sale of opera-wearable items and opera themed merchandise at the Opera League Boutique, staffed by volunteers, helps to fund student matinees. Education chair Ed Lieb discusses numerous other volunteer opportunities to support student matinees and other educational programs on page seven.

Whether purely for fun or additionally educational, it's been a fabulous year and I look forward to learning, helping and sharing with you next season. See you at the opera!



### Executive Committee

Rebecca Bowne	President
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Beverly Johnson	Ed Shaff
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Judy Lieb	Anne Russell Sullivan
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### Consulting Director

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

### Visit us at [www.operaleague.org](http://www.operaleague.org)

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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](mailto:info@operaleague.org). We would love to have all members on our e-mail list! Send your "second member" addresses also!**

## getting together

### SIZZLING SUMMER MUSICALE AT "THE OC!"

Have you been an Opera League member for awhile but you've never attended a Musicale? Are you a new member interested in attending your first Musicale? We have good news for you because the perfect opportunity has arrived! We've planned an exciting Musicale for you at Sylvia and Gordon Traub's beautiful Placentia, Orange County, home on Sunday, July 29 from 7 pm to 9 pm. Join us and make new friends, see old friends and listen to tomorrow's opera stars perform your favorite arias. After the recital you'll meet the singers and enjoy a tempting assortment of desserts. We look forward to seeing you at The OC!

### BARCELONA "LICEU" FILM PARTY

Barcelona, Spain! Capital of Catalunya! Creator of suquet, fideus, cava and the sardana. Home of Gaudí, Dalí, Miró and the Gran Teatre del Liceu opera, which has nurtured great voices such as Caballé and Carreras. If you yearn to experience Barcelona and attend an opera at the Liceu, yearn no more. On Sunday, August 6 at 7 pm. Barcelona will be recreated on the grounds of Lynda and Dick Patton's magnificent Pasadena estate. Thrill to the 2003 Liceu production of Ambrose Thomas' *Hamlet*, starring Simon Keenlyside and Natalie Dessay. Keenlyside is considered by many to be the best inter-



preter of the role of *Hamlet*, which includes a bravura drinking song and red-blooded duets. Dessay is superb in the demanding role of Ophelia and you'll thrill to her interpretation of the challenging mad scene. But wait! Can you be in Barcelona and not go to the local tapas bar? No problem! Enjoy wine and Spanish tapas catered by Pasadena's Bar Celona. Perhaps you'll be one of the lucky winners of a door prize from the Liceu's gift shop! Fins aviat!

### THE MAGIC OF MOZART AT THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL!

*Amadeus Live* is an evening under the stars, continuing the celebration of the composer's 250th birthday. The Bowl presents favorites by Mozart as part of a staged production of scenes from Peter Shaffer's *Amadeus*. The Los Angeles Philharmonic orchestra will be led by Leonard Slatkin conductor, featuring Mary Dunleavy, soprano, and Shai Wosner, piano. James Robinson is the director.

The Opera League of Los Angeles is offering discounted tickets in Section G2 for \$30 (regularly \$34) on Thursday, July 20 at 8 pm. Bring a bottle of wine or dessert to share with like-minded music lovers and enjoy a wonderful night out among friends in the magnificent setting of the Hollywood Bowl.

## Membership Benefits Update

WITH YOUR FEEDBACK, the board made several changes in membership benefits. Highlights of new benefits include flexible vouchers, consolidation of the "Regular" category and increased rewards to encourage members to upgrade to Sustaining and Patron levels. Details of these and other membership benefits are included in your renewal packets.

Flexible vouchers replace seminar and musicale vouchers. Each flexible voucher may be redeemed for a seminar, musicale or master class. Typically there are four seminars, three musicales and one master class each year, depending on operas and artist availability. Personal preferences, geographic location and timing can make some events more attractive to you than others, so it's your choice now! Regular members receive one flexible voucher, Contributing two, Sustaining four and Patrons six vouchers.

With the consolidation of "Regular" membership categories, former "Singles" now receive invitations for two tickets to Insider Preview and Backstage Magic. The second event ticket may be used to bring a guest or the second member. While Opera League has many "single" members, many prefer to bring a friend to major events.

Patron and Sustaining members may bring two guests without additional charge to the Insider Preview. Some flexibility is extended to Patron and Sustaining members to select an additional final dress rehearsal, among those available, or bring guests to the final dress rehearsal designated for Opera League. Patron members continue to receive first priority for seating. Both Patron and Sustaining members are invited to an elegant home for a reception and salon interview with a featured LA Opera artist. Patron members are treated to an exclusive dinner served by the board with a special guest from LA Opera.

Whatever membership level suits your interests and pocketbook, Opera League welcomes you! Our events and educational programs are planned to minimize cost and increase your enjoyment of opera.

# calendar

## july

### **"Amadeus Live" at Hollywood Bowl**

July 20 (Thursday) 8:00 pm  
Mozart favorites with  
Staged scenes from *Amadeus*  
Invitation page 5

### **Orange County Musicale**

July 29 (Saturday) 7-9 pm  
Arias, duets and refreshments  
In a beautiful Placentia home  
Invitation page 5

## august

### **"Barcelona" Opera Film Party**

August 6 (Sunday) 7:00 pm  
Liceu production of "*Hamlet*" with  
Simon Keenlyside and Natalie Dessay  
Elegant gardens in Pasadena  
Invitation page 5

### **Cast Dinner\*\***

August 27 (Sunday) 4:30 – 7:30 pm  
*Don Carlo*  
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

## september

### **Cast Dinner\*\***

September 2 (Saturday) 4:30 – 7:30 pm  
*La Traviata*  
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

### **Seminar**

September 3 (Sunday) 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm  
Helen Greenwald on *Don Carlo*  
Patrick Smith on *Manon*  
Wilshire Grand Hotel  
730 Wilshire Blvd.  
\$25 or voucher members  
\$35 nonmembers

### **Cast Dinner\*\***

September 3 (Sunday) 4:30 – 7:30 pm  
*Don Carlo*  
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

### **Cast Dinner\*\***

September 5 (Tuesday) 4:30 – 7:30 pm  
*Don Carlo*  
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

### **Education Program\***

September 16 (Saturday) 8 am – 4 pm  
Opera for Educators – *Don Carlo*  
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

### **Cast Dinner\*\***

September 21 (Thursday) 4:30 – 7:30 pm  
*Manon*  
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

### **Education Program\***

September 30 (Saturday) 8 am – 4 pm  
Opera for Educators – *Manon*  
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

### **\*Education Programs**

Contact: Edward Lieb  
edwardlieb@sbcglobal.net  
24-hour message line  
213-972-7220

### **\*\*Cast Dinners**

Contact: Monica Gutierrez  
monylamony@yahoo.com  
24-hour message line  
213-972-7220



Nearly 200 Opera League friends and fans celebrated with award winners **Alice Coulombe and Suzanna Guzmán** at the **2006 Peter Hemmings Memorial Awards** held at the Fountain Court in Hollywood.

# invitations

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

## Hollywood Bowl – Amadeus Live with The Los Angeles Philharmonic led by Leonard Slatkin

*Favorites by Mozart with staged scenes from Peter Shaffer's Amadeus*

Bring a beverage or dessert to share!

**Thursday, July 20, 2006 at 8 pm**

Tickets: \$30 Tickets are limited

## Orange County Musical

*in a beautiful Placentia residence*

**Sunday, July 29, 2006 from 7 pm to 9 pm**

Tickets: \$35 or 1 voucher for Members, \$45 for Non-members, \$10 for Student Club Members

Seating is limited

## Barcelona Liceu "Hamlet" Film Party

*Catalan Tapas, Beverages and Door Prizes*

*in an elegant Pasadena garden*

**Sunday, August 6, 2006 at 7 pm**

Tickets: \$25

### ORDER FORM

Hollywood Bowl reservations must be received by July 13 to receive tickets

Musicale and Film Party requests due by July 22

Hollywood Bowl July 20	_____	x Tickets @ \$30	\$ _____
OC Musicale July 29	_____	x Member tickets or Vouchers @ \$35	\$ _____
	_____	x Non-member tickets @ \$45	\$ _____
	_____	x Student Club Members @ \$10	\$ _____
Film Party August 6	_____	x Tickets @ \$25	\$ _____
			Total \$ _____

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guests \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Enclose your check (or Voucher(s)) payable to the Opera League, together with a self-addressed stamped envelope and tickets and directions will be mailed to you. **No refunds.** Mail to: The Opera League of Los Angeles, P.O. Box 1006, Montrose CA 91021-1006. Questions? Call the Opera League 24 Hour message line at 213.972.7220.

## behind the scenes

### VOLUNTEERS ASSIST WITH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

by Ed Lieb, Education Coordinator

*If you haven't volunteered to help at one of the many educational events that LA Opera staff puts on, you've really missed some interesting and exciting times.*

I have been at most of these events (sometimes managing, sometimes just helping) and have not only seen and heard some really great presentations, but have met the most interesting group of people – some of whom have done volunteer work for LA Opera even before there was an LA Opera (but that's a story for another time).

When Plácido Domingo and Peter Hemmings were first getting LA Opera off the ground, they both emphasized reaching out to young people in our area. One of the “biggie” events during the opera season is the presentation of two Student Matinees. Many months before this event, teachers all over the LA area submit lesson plans to Education and Community Programs, who then selects participating schools. Next, LA Opera staff meet with all the selected teachers

who are given a great series of handouts about the opera the kids are going to see (this season it will be *Hansel and Gretel*). I've seen some of these proposals and they are not just “listening-to-the-opera”. The lessons involve delving into the history surrounding the opera, the theatrics involved in the opera, and the relationships between the characters. Each class also receives a presentation about the opera from a member of LA Opera Speakers Bureau. So by the time the children actually see the opera, they are well prepared.

One of the jobs of the Opera League volunteers is to meet the students on the busses as they arrive, welcome them to the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, and remind them of a few guidelines for attending an opera. Since most of the students have never seen an opera, it is quite an exciting experience for them. The morning of the opera, the plaza is filled with laughing, joyous, eager children, many dressed in their Sunday best.

Another outreach program where Opera League members help is the series of “Opera for Educators” events. LA Opera staff develops an extensive program about each of the season's operas for teachers in the LA basin. More than 100 teachers



attend each event. Volunteers help register the teachers, hand out instructional materials, and set up refreshments. Of course the added bonus is that we also get to see the presentations from outstanding speakers and listen to the artist performers who also participate in the programs.

Some of the most fun events are a series called “Saturday Morning at the Opera”. Parents (and especially grandparents) bring their young children to the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion where the kids begin by participating in various activities and crafts with which our volunteers help. After this the kids hear a short opera written especially for their age level. The cast includes young singers with LA Opera, performing age-appropriate operas in English.

These are just a sampling of the many kinds of events with which Opera League members help. Educational programs will be listed in the Bravo Calendar. At the beginning of the season, I'll send out a detailed list with dates for all who might be interested in helping with these important and interesting educational opportunities. Let me hear from you if you want to participate!



# Volunteer Appreciation Night

by Gerald Elijah, Volunteer Coordinator

Hollywood has its Academy Awards, The Music Center recently celebrated volunteers with its 'Shining Stars', but the Opera League of Los Angeles held a super-celebration of ITS stars on June 5, when over 140 volunteers responded to invitations to Volunteer Appreciation Night.

In the midst of last minute scheduling and rehearsal changes for its world premier of *Grendel*, LA Opera managed to make it possible for *Grendel* himself, in the person of bass Eric Owens, to attend as featured guest. Mr. Owens graciously not only spoke of what it is like to do two world premier roles in one year (General Leslie Groves in *Doctor Atomic* at San Francisco Opera as well as *Grendel*), he charmed the audience with his reminiscences of growing up and discovering his talent, first as an oboist, and eventually in voice.

A memorial tribute to long-time volunteer Wendy Darby preceded the Distinguished Service Awards. Wendy single-handedly managed the light-walking program and worked regularly in the LA Opera offices. Rebecca Bowne, Opera League president, and Gary W. Murphy, Director of Public Relations, LA Opera, spoke movingly of her contributions.

Volunteers in attendance enjoyed "Goodie bags" filled with opera shirts, posters, 20th Anniversary mugs, pencils, letter openers, and note cards prepared by the League directors. Awards for Distinguished Service were presented by each of the major committee chairs to one of their outstanding volunteers. The Artists Service Award was presented by Bob Bernard to Marion Spencer. Paula Settle presented the Award for service in the Boutique to Stuart Bowne, while Edward Lieb recognized Biruta Schultz for her service to Community Education. Rebecca Bowne presented the Fund-



*Volunteer Appreciation Night brought out a large audience of members who were acknowledged for their many hours of contribution.*

raising award to Bob Gilman for his service of many years chairing the Luxury Drawing and assistance with the recent Tosca campaign. The award for Gatherings was presented by Dorothy Wait to Claire Chambless. The inimitable Dale Ross, (the 2005 Volunteer of the Year) presented the Hospitality Award to Sue Fractman (in absentia). The

Overtures Award, presented by Rebecca for John Spear, went to John Welch, and Paula Radcliffe Dyke presented the award for Shop At The Opera to Fabiola Hensley.

It was a wonderful night. One where the spotlight fell on our "behind-the-scenes" stars.

## FAREWELL AND WELCOME TO DIRECTORS

Here is a special tribute of thanks to recognize two outstanding Opera League directors completing their terms, Bob Holmes and Paula Dyke.

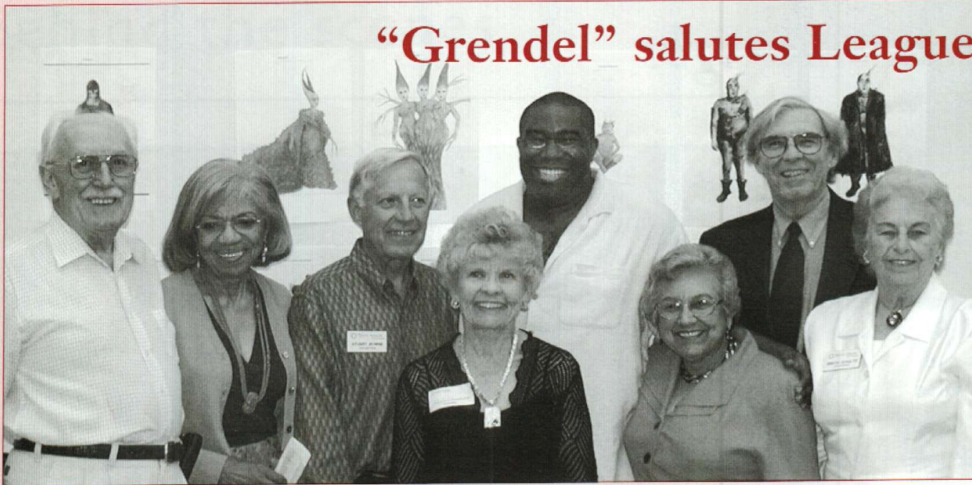
Bob Holmes served as "ex officio" for many years, establishing and maintaining the Opera League data base. In his most recent position on the Executive Committee as Membership and Communications Chair, Bob managed all aspects of Membership and the production of Bravo. Bob adds an incredible wealth of opera knowledge to board discussions and is renowned for his meatloaf and mustard crusted pork at cast dinners.

Paula Dyke volunteers over 1,000 hours annually, most recently serving as Volunteer Coordinator, Mailings Coor-

dinator, handling volunteer requests to dress rehearsals, scheduling both Shop at the Opera and the Boutique and lending a helping hand at almost all League activities. Paula is a past Gatherings Chair. Paula is highly adept at telephoning and helping to smooth rough edges wherever needed.

Please welcome newly elected directors Fred Dear, Eleanor Gnup, Monica Gutierrez, Alma Guzman, Stella Leontsini, Judy Lieb, Brita Millard, Margi Mostue, Anne Kokawa Prokopovych, Ed Shaff, Anne Russell Sullivan and Wendy van Haerlem. With all Paula and Bob accomplished, no wonder it takes twelve newly elected directors to replace them!

## "Grendel" salutes League Volunteers



**Volunteer Distinguished Service Award** recipients John Welch (*Overtures*), Marion Spencer (*Artist Services*), Stuart Bowne (*Opera Boutique*), Claire Chambless (*Gatherings*), special guest Eric Owen (*LA Opera's Grendel*), Fabiola Hensley (*Shop at the Opera*), Bob Gilman (*Fundraising*) and Biruta Schultz (*Community Education*) proudly receive awards, gifts and recognition for their outstanding service at the Opera League Volunteer Appreciation Night. Not able to attend Sue Fractman (*Hospitality Dinners*).



Photo: Lynne Mitchell

Sue Fractman, awarded the Distinguished Service Award for Hospitality Dinners, Paula Settle with "Shadow Grendel", Jonathan Hayes, at a cast dinner.



135 North Grand Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**INVITATIONS ARE INCLUDED**

- ★ Hollywood Bowl July 20
- ★ Musicale July 29
- ★ Film Party August 6

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