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BRAVO

THE MAGAZINE OF THE OPERA LEAGUE OF LOS ANGELES

LET'S GO CAMPING!

By KARYN BENKENDORFER

WHAT'S INSIDE

The Barber and the Spanish-Speaking World

The Magical Muse and the Mexican Muralist

Getting to Know India Carney, Mezzo-Soprano

AFTER THREE YEARS, OPERA CAMP IS BACK, LIVE AND IN PERSON, AND THE OPERA LEAGUE IS THERE TO PROVIDE THE VOLUNTEER PEOPLE POWER TO HELP PULL IT OFF.

LA Opera's immersive student program, Opera Camp, returned in the summer of 2023 after a pandemic-induced three-year hiatus, and the Opera League of Los Angeles was on hand to lend its support for this project once again.



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operaleague.org

From the President

Photo by Luis Luques



Once in a Lifetime

Dear Friends,

To quote David Byrne, lead singer of Talking Heads:
"Well, how did I get here?"

A refrain in the new wave band's 1981 hit, "Once in a Lifetime," this question could be a refrain for me personally, as I take the helm as president of the Opera League of Los Angeles.

I have been a passionate advocate for the performing arts, both personally and professionally, since the start of my career in 1980s New York City.

At first, my world was all theater. The red-carpet ride to the opera stage door happened by accident one cool, gray New York day when a colleague offered me her indisposed mother's subscription ticket to *Der Rosenkavalier* that evening at The Met. I looked at the ticket and thought: "Why not?" A few hours later, I found myself sitting in the upper-level Family Circle, scanning the Playbill for information about the opera I was about to see.

Mind you, these were the pre-Google days, so I had little time for research other than to quickly flip through the program for familiar names. The Met's music director, James Levine, seemed a good choice to conduct, plus he was somewhat familiar from PBS. I did think it odd, however, that mezzo-soprano Tatiana Troyanos would sing the young nobleman role of Octavian, and that soprano Kathleen Battle, pushing 40 at the time, would play a 17-year-old. But NYC in the '80s was a special, anything-goes time and place, so why not? And supertitles? What's that? Words above the stage? What a ridiculous idea!

That was all the "research" I had time for. Otherwise, I just sat back and let the music and the production guide me through the next few hours.

From Richard Strauss's opening notes, I became enraptured by the experience, simply dazzled as this magical world unfolded below me on The Met's grand stage. Needless to say, I was hooked. And to this day, *Der Rosenkavalier* remains my favorite opera, as it always takes me back to where and when I began my lifelong love affair with opera.

Opera League members like you can agree with me that opera, at its best, can be a transformative experience for all: the audience, singers, musicians and backstage production team.

At the end of July, I travelled with an Opera League group to Santa Fe, New Mexico where we experienced five operas in as many days at Santa Fe Opera, plus attended lectures, dinners and more. I could have easily spent a month there, returning again and again to the same opera, as each night would be slightly different, and I would discover and experience something new, perhaps by sitting in a different section of the house, or from that seemingly sudden thunderstorm blowing through that incomparable amphitheater of the high desert, altering the moment ever so slightly, yet tremendously.

That passion is something we Opera League members all share. That is why we strive to create more opportunities for you to help sustain that passion.

To that end, the ever-expanding calendar of Opera League programs and events can be found, as always, at the back of this issue. And as a sidebar to this, my inaugural President's Message, I have highlighted a few of my picks for you to peruse and ponder, and hopefully look forward to, on page 14.

I love opera. I love everything that comes with opera. And I want to take you with me on this journey for the next few years.

Thank you for your continued support of the Opera League of Los Angeles.

See you at the opera!

Gary W. Murphy
PRESIDENT & CEO

gmurphy@operaleague.org | 213.700.9645



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Send email to: info@operaleague.org

Send mail to: Opera League of Los Angeles
135 N. Grand Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90012

24-hour League Message Line: 213.972.7220

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BRAVO TEAM

Editor: Tom Lady
Contributors: Bill Green, Diane Eisenman, Gary W. Murphy, Karyn Benkendorfer, Judith Hyman, Susana Hernández Araico
BRAVO Live!: Gary W. Murphy, Karyn Benkendorfer
Newsletter Design: Studio Fuse, Inc.
Printer: Licher Direct Mail

THE ANNUAL SEASON OPENING COCKTAIL PARTY AT VESPAIO!

In what has quickly become a yearly tradition, eager Leaguers gathered for the Season Opening Cocktail Party on Saturday, September 9 at downtown L.A.'s festive Italian restaurant, Vespaio. We raised our flutes and toasted each other as we celebrated LA Opera's 2023-24 season, which kicks off Saturday, September 23 with Mozart's *Don Giovanni*.

Over 100 Opera League members and their guests were on hand to greet each other and catch up after a summer chockfull of operatic travel to Santa Fe, Glyndebourne, Aix en Provence, Bayreuth and more.

A grand time on Grand Avenue was enjoyed by all!



1: George Solomon and Wilma Freeman; 2: Brita Millard and Sue Correnti; 3: Ruth Bachofner and Lucy Kohn; 4: Ratna Jones, Marlene Chavez and Julie Levtow; 5: Susana Hernández Araico, Andy Moss, Tina Feiger, Judy Reidel and guests; 6: Tiffany Kuo (right) with Opera League guests; 7: Patrick Harrigan and Mimi Rotter; 8: Kelly Marble and Banke Barogun; 9: Simon Russell, Elizabeth Weber and Gary Murphy. Photos by Julie Levtow.

LET'S GO CAMPING!

CONTINUED FROM COVER



For two intensive weeks, Monday, July 24 through Saturday, August 5, the 40 campers, ranging in age from nine to 17, worked with staff from LA Opera Connects, LAO's community engagement and education team, as well as teaching artists, on music, dramatic expression and stage technique. All of this work culminated with two fully-staged performances of *Brundibár*, a children's opera by Jewish Czech composer Hans Krása (1899-1944) written for and first performed in 1942 by the children of Theresienstadt concentration camp in the Czech Republic. Krása himself died at Auschwitz two years later.

LA Opera originally presented *Brundibár* as its first ever Opera Camp production in 2003.

Auditions for Opera Camp 2023 and final

casting took place in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion rehearsal rooms on the fourth floor, before each student received their roles and assignments. Once *Brundibár's* cast and crew were finalized, it was ready, set, go, and the students were on their way to a life-changing performing arts experience of cultural enrichment.

"Whether you are 17 and ready to jump into your college audition, or nine years old and just beginning to learn about the world of performance, there is a place for you at Opera Camp," said Tehvon Fowler-Chapman, Vice President of LA Opera Connects.

LAO Connects' teaching staff created a nurturing environment in which aspiring performers learned how to focus on the necessary tasks to create an opera

performance. Students attended classes in singing, acting and movement, all under the keen eyes of resident stage director Eli Villanueva, acting and movement teaching artist Judy Johnson and music teaching artist Dr. Vivian I-Miao Liu, plus six dedicated camp counselors.

Each rehearsal day began at nine in the morning with stretching exercises followed by vocal warmups. After a few days of the basics, *Brundibár's* music was introduced into the morning schedule. The staff would help the campers learn the music, as each participant was responsible for quite a bit of memorization. Opera Camp music director Karen Vogel Brown led the students through each music rehearsal in addition to conducting the final performances.

LIVE FROM OPERA CAMP!

By TOM LADY

Given that this year's Opera Camp was the first since 2019, and given it's the cover story of this issue of BRAVO, the team behind the Opera League's BRAVO Live! series thought Opera Camp would make the perfect subject for their next episode. This will be the eighth episode of our series of documentary shorts that the League launched in the spring of 2021.

Continuing BRAVO Live!'s charter of teasing back the opera curtain to educate and inform in a way only a visual medium could, our newest episode takes you inside Opera Camp. More than a viewer, you are an audience member watching the Camp and its student-performers learn and grow under the steady, nurturing baton of the staff at LA Opera Connects, LA Opera's community engagement

and education department that produces Opera Camp. Better yet, while we watch them interact with the students, the coaches and staff also speak directly to viewer, via talking-head interview and voiceover, about what Opera Camp is, what it means and why it is important, both to LA Opera's mission as well as to the growth, development and social justice awareness of the students themselves.

More than just another education program from LAO Connects, Opera Camp is somewhat of a passion project for the Opera League. For it is none other than the Opera League that provides the critical funding for the two-week summer camp at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. This funding lifeline includes financing Camp scholarships for all the student-performers.

After the daily lunch break, staging rehearsal would begin as they built the production. The sets, the props, the costumes and makeup were introduced at a gradual, yet steady, cadence, letting the rehearsing students become ever more able to envision the final product in which they would be starring.

Aside from teaching students about performance, another purpose is at work. "Opera Camp is part performance and part social justice oriented," says Fowler-Chapman. "On the performance side, we are providing students with lessons, master classes in singing and acting and movement as part of putting together the opera. On the social justice side, we are really looking at building socially minded artists in these students. Our opera choice is always focused on points in time or points in history in which there were major social movements, like the Holocaust or creation of the Civil Rights Act."

This year, Opera Camp invited Katy Haber to speak to the students and tell the story of her uncle, Martin Zelenka, who was the eight-year-old son of Franta Zelenka, the stage director and designer for *Brundibár* when it was performed at Theresienstadt in 1942. Katy brought family photos and some of her uncle's childhood toys that the family saved before the Zelenka family was sent to Auschwitz where they were killed. The students also took a field trip to Los Angeles' Holocaust Museum, which gave them a deeper understanding of the social and historical context as well as the deeper message of *Brundibár*: By working together, we can overcome adversity in the face of overwhelming odds.

As the rehearsals came to an end, it was showtime.



The seating was in place, and the stage was set for two performances in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion's Grand Hall. LA Opera *Connects*, in partnership with Opera League volunteers, welcomed eager operagoers as they arrived. To help set the tone of the opera, Maestro Vogel Brown began each performance with a reimagining of the popular traditional gospel song, "This Little Light of Mine," performed by the entire *Brundibár* ensemble.

The ensemble cast, along with the orchestra and crew, executed a moving and memorable performance. The audience, filled with family and friends of the performers, simply glowed with pride to see their young ones onstage performing a professional and polished production. If ever a standing ovation was called for, it was after each performance of *Brundibár*.

"The Opera League strongly believes in the power of the live performance, and LA Opera *Connects*' drive to engage students early in this magical world," said Opera League President Gary W. Murphy. "We [Opera League] are proud to support Opera Camp, as it is an invaluable experience for all including our own Opera League volunteers, who eagerly look forward to this annual event."

"My first experience with the Opera League was volunteering for these education programs," said Todd Calvin, the League's immediate past president. "In fact, it was for the Opera Camp production of *Brundibár*. At the time, Ela Weisberger, who was in the original Theresienstadt production and survived, was in attendance, which made the performance so special. It was one of the most moving experiences I've ever had in a theatre. I love my day job, but LA Opera and the Opera League really feed my soul, and I love it." 🌟

The funding comes courtesy of the Peter Hemmings Gala Award Dinner, the League's annual flagship fundraising event wherein we recognize an individual or organization who, over time, has made significant contributions to the development of opera in Los Angeles County (for more details on the Hemmings Gala, check out the article in this issue teasing the 2024 event).

Opera Camp is much more than your garden variety summer camp, much more than your average theater class. Students not only learn singing, dancing, dramatic performance and staging. They also immerse themselves in the social justice theme of the opera in which they will perform at the culmination of the rigorous two weeks. This includes field trips

to sites and interacting with guest speakers connected to the event dramatized in the opera. By fortnight's end, these kids will have learned and grown as culturally- and socially-attuned performers.

Yes, this latest episode of BRAVO Live! is more than just another episode. Given all the Opera League invests in Opera Camp, financially and emotionally, this time it's personal.

As always, the latest episode of BRAVO Live! is published front and center as a feature article on our website, operaleague.org.

For the full library of episodes, visit the Opera League's channel on YouTube.



Simply hit up youtube.com and search "opera league of los angeles" in the search box at the top of the homepage.

We hope you feel as informed and fulfilled watching BRAVO Live! as we do producing it. 🌟

CLIMBING EVERY MOUNTAIN

AN INTERVIEW WITH INDIA CARNEY, MEZZO-SOPRANO

By TOM LADY

Singer/songwriter, vocal arranger, vocal coach, actress...

A native of Brooklyn, New York, India Carney already had quite the wind at her back when she graduated from LaGuardia Arts High School. LaGuardia Arts is dubbed the "Fame" school due to its, well, fame as the high school from *Fame*, the 1980 film that has since become a cultural touchstone.

India swapped coasts after graduating from LaGuardia Arts to complete her classical music training at UCLA. Even before getting her bachelor's, the hard-working Bruin made her national television debut on the NBC series, *The Voice*. India sang on the Emmy-winning series' eighth season, which aired February to May 2015. One of the four celebrity judges that season was Christina Aguilera, and the Grammy-winning pop music icon picked India to be on her team.

Since graduating, India has toured with award-winning pop artist Katy Perry, and has sung for Grammy Award-winning artists like Dua Lipa, Mariah Carey, Justin Bieber, Lady Gaga, Billie Eilish, Meghan Trainor and H.E.R.

She has performed at the Academy Awards, Video Music Awards (VMAs), Grammy Awards, BET Awards, Coachella, *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, *The Late Late Show with James Corden* and *Jimmy Kimmel Live*.

As a vocal coach, India has worked with the singers of the reality series *American Idol*, *Alter Ego* and *I Can See Your Voice*.

Among more recent projects, India sang a cover of "Climb Ev'ry Mountain" for a four-song Rodgers and Hammerstein EP put out in August by the Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization to celebrate the 80th anniversary of when Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II kicked off what would become a legendary songwriting partnership.

Perhaps now you can see why African Americans for LA Opera (AALAO), a chapter of the Opera

League, is thrilled to welcome India Carney as our featured vocalist at this year's Michael Melton Memorial Recital on Sunday, October 22 at noon at the Ebell of Los Angeles.

To help us get to know her a little better, India graciously agreed to an interview.

BRAVO: WE ARE SO LOOKING FORWARD TO HAVING YOU AS OUR FEATURED VOCALIST AT OUR ANNUAL FALL RECITAL WHICH, AS OF LAST YEAR, WE HAVE REBRANDED IN HONOR OF THE LATE GREAT MICHAEL MELTON. THEY SAY MICHAEL WAS A BIG FAN OF YOURS. DID YOU GET TO KNOW HIM BEFORE HE DIED?

INDIA CARNEY: Thank you for having me! Yes, I did know Michael. Since we usually spoke before or after performances, our time together was often short, but I do remember his warm energy and encouraging, supportive spirit.

BRAVO: WHEN DID YOU KNOW THAT SINGING WAS WHAT YOU WANTED TO DO WITH YOUR LIFE?

IC: I was nine years old. I was playing the role of Annie in my community production of *Annie*. One rehearsal day, as I was positioned downstage belting out my highest note, I realized I wanted to make this into a career. I started learning music, technically, at around two years old. At four, I started singing, playing piano and flute, and I didn't realize how much I was enjoying it until that moment at nine. I'm so happy I made that choice, because I've never looked back.

BRAVO: ARE YOU FROM A MUSICAL FAMILY?

IC: I am from a family of music lovers. Though I don't come from a family of professional musicians, many of my family members have dabbled in music at different times in their lives. My sister and cousin pursued music professionally for a time. On both sides of my family, there was always a beautiful piano to play in the house. My mother's side of the family hails from Jamaica, which has a very rich musical culture. Whether it's participating or just listening, we all LOVE music.

BRAVO: WHO WERE SOME SINGERS WHO INSPIRED YOU WHEN YOU WERE GROWING UP?

IC: I loved all the divas and any big voices: Whitney Houston, Mariah Carey, Shakira, Christina Aguilera, India Arie and the voice of every Disney princess.

BRAVO: YOU SANG ON SEASON EIGHT OF THE VOICE (AIRED FEBRUARY TO MAY 2015) WHILE YOU WERE STILL STUDYING AT UCLA. HOW DID YOU DEAL WITH THE PRESSURE OF THAT KIND OF SPOTLIGHT?

IC: I was less nervous than you'd expect because I had been performing in front of large audiences since I was young. I had time to practice getting past my stage fright. *The Voice* stage itself was relatively small. Even though I knew the world was watching, it didn't look like it because I could see everyone I needed to see in the studio audience. Honestly, the more I embraced the people in front of me, the easier it was to overcome any nerves. My bigger obstacles were my battles with myself, or my ideas of myself. I was a huge perfectionist, and



still am. A nationwide stage is the last place I want to be experimenting with my craft, so I was always focused on the details. The more focused I was on the details, the more I kept my head in the game. All in all, I think my attention to detail is what keeps me focused, and therefore, in control of my nerves.

BRAVO: YOU HAVE EITHER TOURED OR COLLABORATED WITH A NUMBER OF HUGE NAMES: KATY PERRY, DUA LIPA, MARIAH CAREY, JUSTIN BIEBER, LADY GAGA, BILLIE EILISH AND CHRISTINA AGUILERA, JUST TO NAME A SAMPLING. SINCE YOU'RE ALSO A VOICE INSTRUCTOR, IS THERE EVER AN OPPORTUNITY TO PASS ON WISDOM AND/OR LEARN FROM OTHERS?

IC: I often find myself in settings where I'm passing off wisdom. I love being in a position to be a mentor, because I've experienced so much. Many of my students come to me because of my resume as a singer, not solely because I happen to teach voice. So, I enjoy those moments where I can help give them new perspectives based on where my career has taken me. I wouldn't say there's one lesson I've learned that I've kept with me, but as a singer, singing other peoples' material starts to take different forms in your artistry and understanding of music as well. For example, prior to touring with Katy Perry, my original music was largely a fusion of pop, jazz, musical theater and even opera, and you could hear all of those variables, making my genre a little confusing at times. While singing these iconic pop melodies day after day, I started to gain a new understanding of what pop music could mean to me. It's one of those cerebral-level understandings. That's what I love about music. It's not something you do and become good at. It's something you feel and just become. Vulnerability at its finest.

BRAVO: WHAT ARE SOME DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SINGING POP SONGS AND SINGING OPERA?

IC: Oh, there are so many differences. The main one, in my opinion, is less of a technique difference and more of a stylistic difference. Making these stylistic changes is tough because they largely depend on your ear and its ability to adjust. In life, oftentimes you learn things the hard way. Why? Because you don't have enough lived experience to understand the "thing" when someone first warned you about it. It's a similar idea here. Being able to hear subtle differences is a skill that takes time and requires extreme sensitivity, attention and experience. It's not enough for me to ask someone to "sing this in an operatic style" if they don't fully understand what that sounds like. 🌟

Please join your fellow Opera League members and friends to hear mezzo-soprano India Carney as our featured vocalist at our annual Michael Melton Memorial Recital on Sunday, October 22 at noon at the Ebell of Los Angeles. Tickets are available at operaleague.org.

THEY SET THE STAGE, THEY SPREAD THE LOVE

ANNOUNCING AFRICAN-AMERICANS FOR LA OPERA (AALAO) AS THE RECIPIENTS OF THE 2024 HEMMINGS AWARD AT THE OPERA LEAGUE'S ANNUAL FLAGSHIP GALA By TOM LADY

"Bring more Black folks to see opera. There weren't many attending opera back then."

When BRAVO interviewed Eva Grant, founding member of African-Americans for LA Opera (AALAO), a chapter of the Opera League, for our Winter 2021 issue (#56), that was how she summed up AALAO's mission from the beginning.

The beginning, in this case, was 1994. That was when Eva and a few others got together to form a new Opera League chapter. This core group was composed of veteran operagoers who had been involved in volunteering for the opera and theater world in one capacity or other for many years. Indeed, a few had been habitués of the Music Center of Los Angeles since the day Dorothy Buffum "Buffy" Chandler inaugurated her namesake venue, the Music Center's first, in December 1964.

It was high time, they decided, to create a new sort of stage, a stage for a community for whom they felt opera would provide an experience of enrichment and uplift. Not just any community, of course. Their community.

On March 2, 2024, the Opera League will be honored and humbled to present the 2024 Peter Hemmings Award to AALAO during their milestone 30th anniversary season, at our annual Hemmings Award Gala Dinner.

The Hemmings Gala is the League's annual flagship fundraising event wherein we recognize an individual or organization who, over time, has made significant contributions to the development of opera in Los Angeles County.

More than just a League chapter, AALAO is a vital and cherished organization in its own right, with its own programming slate, its own leadership and its own volunteers who are some of the most passionate advocates of music, culture and arts you will ever meet.

AALAO has traveled a long road in the past 30 years, while their core mission has expanded. More than just exposing the Black community to opera, they also help foster the growth of talented Black opera singers.

"Our organization takes great pleasure in seeking and supporting young, talented singers and watching them grow," says Joel Graham, another founding member of AALAO. "And helping our community be aware of AALAO and the Opera League, and to support the music of opera."

"It has been a marvelous experience seeing young artists in opera develop over the years," says AALAO President, and 28-year-member, Beverley Clarkson. "I am honored to see their advancement and success. And I am very proud to be a member of AALAO "

Suffice it to say, the Hemmings Award is well-earned.

"The Hemmings Dinner is a time-honored tradition and an exemplary recognition of service," says Mary H. Lewis, 15-year AALAOer who says her favorite role has been new member recruitment. As it happens, Mary has twice co-chaired the Hemmings Gala for the Opera League and will do so again this season along with Chair Diane Gray, Opera League Vice-President. "As past co-chair of two Hemmings Dinners, I am so pleased that this year, I will serve in that same role to honor the 30th anniversary of AALAO. We've come a long way.

"My hope is we continue to grow and have a greater impact on the African-American community."

The Peter Hemmings Award Gala Dinner will take place at the Ebell of Los Angeles on Saturday, March 2, 2024. Details and tickets will be announced via membership eBlast, our social media channels on Facebook and Instagram as well as on our website, operaleague.org. We can't wait to see you there! 🌟

YAPPING WITH A YAP: SARAH SATURNINO, MEZZO-SOPRANO

A "BIG VOICE," AND TALENT TO MATCH By JUDITH HYMAN

Sarah Saturnino is letting everyone take joy in her rich mezzo-soprano voice that has already become renowned for its versatility and "range of local colors," according to the *Miami Herald*.

I'm video-calling Sarah over Apple's FaceTime mobile app. Sarah is dialing in from Tel Aviv, as she wraps up singing the role of Dorabella in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* at the Tel Aviv Summer Opera Festival. Through the video on my iPhone, I can see her standing on the sandy shores of the local beach, which has become a favorite place to hang out during her time there.

From Tel Aviv, Sarah will fly to New York where she will spend the first two weeks of August at the Bard Music Festival at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, about 100 miles north of Manhattan. There she will sing the role of Alice Ford in *Sir John in Love* by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

And from there? The Mexican-American from Northern California, a winner at this year's Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition and a finalist in the next Operalia in Cape Town, South Africa, will fly back to Los Angeles, where she will enter her second year in LA Opera's Young Artist Program (YAP).

Perhaps all this success was foreshadowed when Sarah was four years old. Her family likes to remind her about the day when the toddler Sarah leapt up onto the table and commanded, "Sing with me, everybody!" before proceeding to belt out a song from *The Sound of Music*.

For as long as she can remember, Sarah has always desired to be a performer, both on stage and on screen.

"I have always loved singing," she says. "In church, in school and for my family, but I never dreamed it would be my career... When I was playing basketball in high school, I got pretty severe shin splints that put me out for the whole season. With time on my hands, my choir teachers encouraged me to take voice lessons. I learned to sing my first Italian art song, and after my first voice lesson, I said to my mom, 'I like this, this is fun!'"

Sarah began to devote her energies to singing. At the Classical Singer Vocal competition in Chicago in 2012, just before her freshman year at Sacramento State, she met Juliana Gondek, Distinguished Professor of Voice Performance at UCLA. With an astute ear, Professor Gondek saw,

or rather heard, something special in Sarah, and she convinced her to transfer to UCLA.

The richness of UCLA's Voice program was crucial to Sarah's development, from language development to honing her acting abilities. When I pointed out to her that her portrayal of Emilia, Iago's wife and maid of Otello's wife, Desdemona, in LA Opera's spring 2023 production of *Otello*, demonstrated a sensitive, nuanced portrayal of the complex character, Sarah was delighted and credited UCLA Professor Peter Kazaras for his sensitive, personalized coaching.

After graduating cum laude from UCLA with a BA in Vocal Performance with a Music Industry Minor in 2016, Sarah was accepted into Yale University School of Music's master's program. Being plagued with imposter syndrome made her surprised she got into the prestigious school. Adding to the challenges was the transition from sunny climes and flip-flops to the more formal dresses and heels expected at the New Haven campus. Nonetheless, Sarah rose to the occasion, thrived at Yale and graduated with honors in 2018. Concurrent with her graduate status, Sarah was a Young Artist at Chautauqua Opera Company in Western New York State, completing that program in 2018 as well.

The first couple of years out of Yale saw Sarah struggle to find work. She stayed afloat DJing at a karaoke café, made ends meet as a nanny and worked as a manager at a "paint your own ceramics" store. "I really understand being a starving artist," she says. "But my parents never stopped supporting me. When the pandemic shut everything down, my father sent me an opera cake, a French cake made of layers resembling the layers of an opera house, that read: 'Just keep singing, Sarah!'"



Toward the end of 2020, she managed to find work with Shreveport Opera as their mezzo Resident Artist and performed with them for the 2020-2022 seasons. Shreveport's extensive outreach programming—school productions, outdoor opera—fostered a love of that kind of cultural philanthropy, hence her enthusiasm and praise for LA Opera for its extensive community engagement and educational programming, and its Off Grand series of opera productions.

As for how she wound up at LAO, Sarah credits the friends she made at Santa Fe Opera. Sarah was an Apprentice Artist for Santa Fe Opera's summer of 2021 and '22 seasons. "I was more or less an unknown and generated a lot of buzz due to my big voice." The roles she covered at Santa Fe to brandish that big, beautiful mezzo voice included Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Hippolyta in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the title character in Bizet's *Carmen*, Meg Page in Verdi's *Falstaff*, as well as scene work as Romeo in Bellini's *I Capuletti e i Montecchi*, and scene work as Eboli in Verdi's *Don Carlo*. It was during the summer 2022 season at Santa Fe that her colleagues encouraged Sarah to apply to LA Opera's Young Artist Program.

As she enters her second year as an LAO YAP, Sarah says she is "eternally grateful" for the "care and concern" LAO shows for each artist's physical and mental health needs, and she praises the faculty for their dedication to "making great opera singers." Sarah says, "The LAO Young Artist Program doesn't just treat you only like an artist. They treat you like a human who lives and breathes and sometimes needs breaks. They work really hard to make sure we have everything we need to succeed, and sometimes that's coaching with our amazing coaches, and they acknowledge that sometimes that's a trip to the beach to unwind."

Be ready to spot Sarah in LA Opera's 2023-24 season as Image #3 in *El Último Sueño de Frida y Diego*, as one of the Maids in *The Dwarf* and as Flora in *La Traviata*. And those of you willing to make the trip to Santa Barbara can be rewarded for your efforts by catching her as Carmen at Opera Santa Barbara September 29 and October 1 (Friday and Sunday).

I will be there to greet you. 🌸



THE QUEEN IS BAROQUE

BAROQUE MASTER HARRY BICKET AND THE ENGLISH CONCERT GO FOR BAROQUE WITH THE OPERA LEAGUE

By JUDITH HYMAN and TOM LADY

Her husband, the king, was deposed and then killed, while she and her babies were imprisoned by the new king for life.

That is, until...

...plot twist! Her husband turns up alive!

That's right, the deposed king had faked his death to keep the heat off himself while he spent ten years meticulously plotting his vengeful return to power, kicking off the homecoming to end all homecomings that would see him free his family and reclaim the long-lost throne.

That really happened.

Exciting, right? George Handel thought so too. Hence, his opera dramatizing those events, couching them in the tropes of an irresistible political thriller-cum-love story with one woman, believing her husband dead, facing off against vile, villainous, power-lusting scumbag men.

In what has fast become a seasonal tradition at LA Opera, Maestro Harry Bicket and The English Concert will return for a third time in two years for yet another Baroque masterpiece from German-British composer George Frideric Handel: *Rodelinda*.

The performance takes place on Tuesday, November 21 at 7:30PM.

Inspired by real-life events that took place in seventh century Lombardy, in present-day northern Italy, *Rodelinda* dramatizes the approximately ten years the title character and her children spent as hostages after the deposition of her spouse, the king of Lombardy.

Singing the role of Rodelinda is English soprano Lucy Crowe, who made her LA Opera debut as the sorceress Morgana, the title character's sister, in LAO's November 2021 production of Handel's *Alcina*, Maestro Bicket's first Baroque foray at LA Opera.

Opera League members who attended that performance of *Alcina*, and/or our second Baroque night, Handel's *Solomon* on March 10 of this year, experienced The English Concert as the internationally acclaimed period-instrument orchestra they are.

Now we have the opportunity to do so a third time with *Rodelinda*, Handel's 1725 masterpiece that is considered one of the top five opera seria among the approximately four dozen he composed.

Like the previous two Baroque nights, LA Opera is enticing Opera League members with a queen-sized discount of 40% off tickets for the one-night-only performance. The price tag for the private wine and hors d'oeuvres Opera League-exclusive intermission reception, affording eager Leaguers the chance to hang out and shoot the breeze with Maestro Bicket? A whopping \$25.

Or, as a queen might call it: a steal.

For more information and to reserve tickets for the Tuesday, November 21 performance of Handel's *Rodelinda* with an Opera League-exclusive intermission reception, head on over to our website, operaleague.org, and click the *Rodelinda* image on the homepage banner.

The discount code to get the 40% off is **LEAGUE40.**

LA OPERA'S DREAM

IN SPANISH: THE MAGICAL MUSE AND THE MEXICAN MURALIST IN *EL ÚLTIMO SUEÑO DE FRIDA Y DIEGO*

By SUSANA HERNÁNDEZ ARAICO

When it debuts at LA Opera on November 18, *El último sueño de Frida y Diego* (*The Last Dream of Frida and Diego*), by composer Gabriela Lena Frank, will be the first opera sung in Spanish at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion since the 2019 return of *El Gato Montés*. With a libretto by Nilo Cruz, the Cuban-American playwright who won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2003 for *Anna in the Tropics*, the opera focuses on two famous Mexican artists, Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) and Diego Rivera (1886-1957), highlighting the Mexican motif of *Día de los Muertos*.

However, this is not a strictly Mexican opera. The composer, of mixed Peruvian-Asian-Lithuanian-Jewish heritage, hails

from northern California, while the librettist immigrated from Cuba. Moreover, in a visually stunning staging premiered to great acclaim in San Diego last fall and debuted in San Francisco in June, this opera celebrates profound universal themes.

In Spanish, *último* means *last* or *most recent* (rarely *ultimate*) and *de* translates as *about* or *of*. Thus suggesting an original dream, the title recalls Pedro Calderón's 1630 tragedy *La vida es sueño*, translated by Cruz, where the theme of *Life is a Dream* points to the awakening of death from deceptive human experience. Additionally, the Mexican motif of *Día de los Muertos* merges with the Greco-Roman myth of Orpheus and Euridice, evoking a dreamy connection between life and possible existence after death.

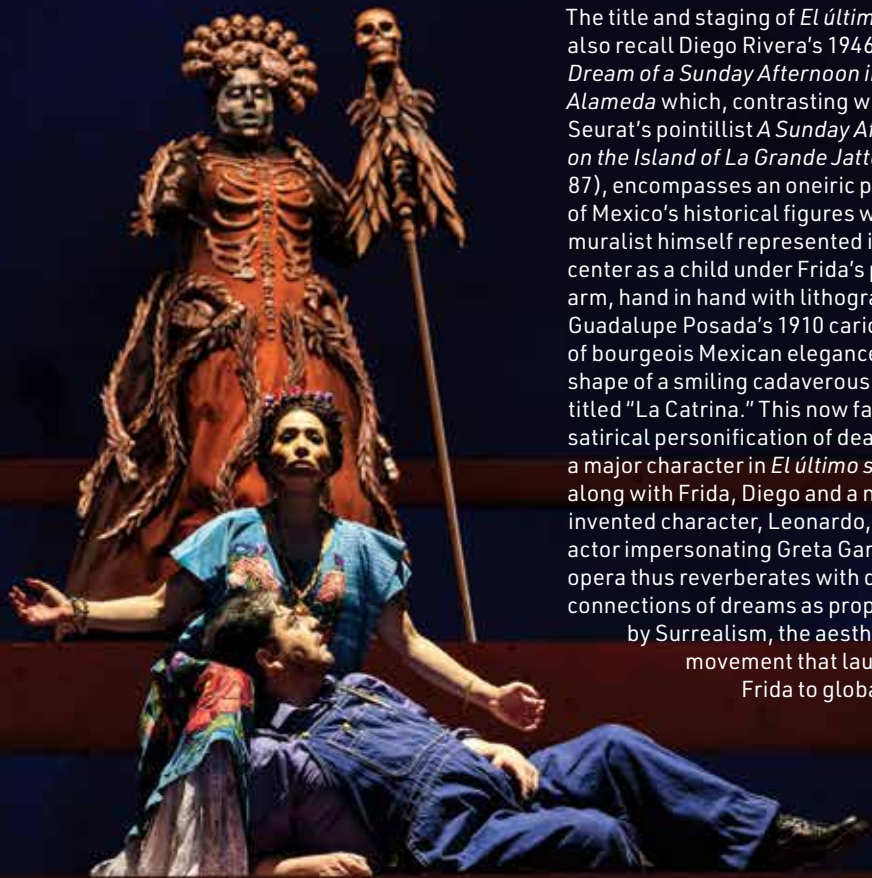
The title and staging of *El último sueño* also recall Diego Rivera's 1946-47 mural, *Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Central Alameda* which, contrasting with Georges Seurat's pointillist *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* (1886-87), encompasses an oneiric panorama of Mexico's historical figures with the muralist himself represented in the center as a child under Frida's protective arm, hand in hand with lithographer José Guadalupe Posada's 1910 caricature of bourgeois Mexican elegance in the shape of a smiling cadaverous female, titled "La Catrina." This now famous satirical personification of death portrays a major character in *El último sueño* along with Frida, Diego and a newly invented character, Leonardo, a deceased actor impersonating Greta Garbo. The opera thus reverberates with disparate connections of dreams as propounded by Surrealism, the aesthetic movement that launched Frida to global acclaim.

In 1938-1940, through André Breton, the Surrealist movement's veritable leader, Frida's art became increasingly identified in Mexico, the United States and France as powerfully Surrealistic, like a "ribbon around a bomb," in Breton's words. Frida retorted, "I never painted dreams; I painted my own reality." As Diego's murals had monumentally portrayed an expansive Mexican socioeconomic reality, Frida's art (mostly small scale) represented the intimacy of a woman in emotional turmoil, donning oneiric trappings of Mexican exoticism.

Frida's paintings came to be seen as inseparable from her self-reflection of physical pain due to injuries sustained in a bus accident in 1925 when she was 18, as well as psychological suffering caused by her husband's repeated infidelities. Her pictorial projection of a suffering woman in non-European folkloric Mexican attire, known in her own life to have engaged in bisexual relations, progressively connected with the emergence of feminism, the Chicano and LGBTQ+ movements, as well as today's selfie culture. Indeed, Frida's visage now appears everywhere like a patron deity of our times. Her self-portraits have generated an internationally ubiquitous image.

Vastly surpassing her husband in popularity and influence, Frida constitutes a magical muse for various art forms: opera, film, theater, ballet, even a forthcoming musical. Of three operas revolving around her, the only one completely in Spanish, *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*, imaginatively portrays her life as Diego's wishful recall from death, the ultimate exit about which Frida wrote: "I hope never to return."

From November 18th through December 9th, LA Opera audiences will have the opportunity to experience in brilliant colors and melodic voices how life for the two Mexican artists and tormented lovers plays out as a final dream. 🌸





THE BARBER OF SEVILLE AND THE SPANISH-SPEAKING WORLD

By SUSANA HERNÁNDEZ ARAICO

The Barber of Seville (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Gioachino Rossini's renowned Figaro opera, is so closely related to French literature and Italian music that its title, highlighting one of the most important cities in Spain, may seem like one of the eponymous Barber's tricks; for the plot could conceivably transpire anywhere. Nevertheless, the Spanish roots of *Il barbiere di Siviglia* already resonated in its 1816 Roman premiere. As one of the most performed operas over two centuries, it has shown wide ramifications for the Spanish-speaking world.

Rossini's and other "*Il barbiere*" were adapted from the first play of a popular trilogy of French plays (1775-1792) by the enterprising Pierre Beaumarchais, whose travels through Spain and familiarity with Spanish comic theatre account for his satirical adaptation of the original Don Juan play, *The Trickster of Seville* (1616), and for his projection of biting humor and social criticism away from France and more safely onto Spain.

Beaumarchais' Figaro trilogy was so popular that the prolific and acclaimed Italian composer Giovanni Paisiello adapted the first play into the very first operatic *Il barbiere di Siviglia* in 1782 at Catherine the Great's St. Petersburg court. The revered composer's thirty-

four-year popular dominion over the operatic Figaro continued unchallenged by other versions until one with a new libretto premiered at the Teatro Argentina in Rome on February 20, 1816, by the young Rossini, who had already broken with the traditional *opera buffa* form.

Paisiello's *Il barbiere* would eventually be surpassed in popularity by Rossini's, though the latter's premiere was a colossal fiasco due to staging mishaps and riotous protests by Paisiello's admirers. Rossini had meant to downplay competition with Paisiello's *Il barbiere*, originally titling his opera, *Almaviva*. Thus, perhaps inadvertently, Rossini highlighted the Spanish significance of his Beaumarchais adaptation. For the Count's role at the premiere was sung by the most popular tenor of the time, a Spaniard who was also a composer of acclaimed Spanish folk pieces, and a Seville native, no less, named Manuel García. Born in 1775, Manuel García reputedly also provided Rossini with Spanish themes for the lost original overture for *Il Barbiere*.

This famous tenor-musician-turned-impresario, along with his Spanish wife, son and one of his two daughters, premiered *Il barbiere di Siviglia* as the first opera in New York ever performed in Italian, on November 29, 1825, at the Park Theatre. Likewise in Mexico City,

Manuel García and family initiated Italian operatic history with the performance of *Il barbiere* on June 29, 1827, at the Teatro de los Gallos. Almost two centuries later, Mexico City's Bellas Artes showcased Javier Camarena as Almaviva and José Adán Pérez as Figaro. Rossini's opera thus gained vast momentum in the Spanish-speaking world. *Il barbiere* had its Spain premiere in 1818 at Barcelona's Teatro de la Santa Cruz and debuted in December 1847 at the Gran Teatre del Liceu, where productions have continued through the 21st century.

The first opera ever performed in Argentina, in 1825, *Il barbiere* featured Italian baritone Titta Ruffo as Figaro as part of the inaugural season of Buenos Aires' Teatro Colón in 1908. Rossini's opera has repeatedly been staged there as well as in other cities throughout South America, Mexico and Spain, including Seville's Teatro de la Maestranza.

Undoubtedly, today's most important Spanish dimension in Rossini's *Il barbiere* springs from artists like the Peruvian tenor Juan Diego Flórez and Spanish sopranos María Bayo and Susana Cordon, featured in the Spanish director Emilio Sagi's 2005 production at Madrid's Teatro Real. That production was broadcast worldwide, released on DVD and eventually restaged in 2013 at the Teatro Real and at opera houses around the world, including twice at LA Opera starring outstanding Hispanic artists.

This fall's LAO production of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, opening October 21 under the baton of LAO Young Artist alum Louis Lohraseb, features Uruguayan tenor Edgardo Rocha as Count Almaviva. His melodic artistry won him acclaim in that role at Vienna's Staatsoper in 2012 and most recently at last year's Salzburg Festspiele. We look forward to seeing, and especially hearing, Señor Rocha sustain and carry forward *Il barbiere*'s Spanish dimension. 🌸

IN THE PIT

LOUIS LOHRASEB, CONDUCTOR MAESTRO ASCENDANT

By DIANE EISENMAN

Louis Lohraseb has been part of the LA Opera family since 2013, when LAO Music Director, Maestro James Conlon, first heard Louis play Verdi on a piano while Louis was pursuing his master's in conducting at Yale University.

Sometime later, when Louis was continuing his studies at Indiana University, Maestro Conlon invited him to be his assistant conductor for LAO's production of Verdi's *Nabucco* in the autumn of 2017. The following season, Louis joined LAO's Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist Program (YAP), serving two seasons as assistant conductor, from 2018-2020. That is where Louis met and married his wife, Erica Petrocelli, soprano and fellow YAP, who has been singing important roles in LAO productions since her second and final YAP season (2019-20), including Musetta in *La Bohème* and First Lady in *The Magic Flute*. In LAO's forthcoming 2023-24 season, Erica will sing the role Donna Clara in *The Dwarf*.

On Saturday, March 14, 2020, toward the end of his second and final YAP season, Louis was scheduled to conduct a performance of LAO's production of Donizetti's *Roberto Devereux*, his first big opportunity to conduct on the mainstage. But, as fate would have it, pandemic protocols were instituted on Thursday, March 12th. LAO had to close its doors two days before curtain.

Last year, Louis was asked back to LAO to replace a conductor, who cancelled her engagement to conduct Puccini's masterpiece, *Tosca*, at the last minute. Louis had all of one week to prepare to lead a full-scale mainstage production. How could he pull that off?

The way Louis looked at it, he had been preparing for that moment for 26 years, not just seven days, ever since studying and singing his favorite arias from *Tosca* while riding the bus to elementary school.

So how did Louis become the prodigy that Maestro Conlon spotted playing Verdi as a grad student?

It all started in July 1994, less than a week before Louis turned three. His parents were watching the 1994 World Cup final on TV,

featuring Italy and Brazil playing for the championship at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena. Following the overtime thriller, which Brazil won on penalty kicks, the station that broadcast the game, ABC, switched to a Three Tenors concert. Luciano Pavarotti, Plácido Domingo and José Carreras performed live from Dodger Stadium, with nearly 50,000 people in attendance and a staggering TV viewership of about 1.3 billion.

Louis's parents were about to turn off the TV when the concert began. "I made them keep the TV on," Louis recalls. "I was mesmerized by the singing."

After that, his parents started purchasing cassettes of opera performances for him, which Louis would listen to over and over. When he was still three, he came to own a "Pavarotti suit," which he proudly wore. Louis was still a toddler when he started exploring his toy piano. By five, he was taking formal piano lessons. In third grade, his Halloween costume was the Duke of Mantua from *Rigoletto*.

Growing up in New York, his parents started taking him to concerts. Twice, the first time when he was five and again at nine, Louis met Luciano Pavarotti. The legendary Italian tenor not only spoke with Louis, but heard him sing, and spoke with Louis' grandfather, Louis Miranda, who, being a native-born Italian, was so enthralled to have the chance to speak to one of Italy's most famous heroes. Afterward, the maestro signed two of his iconic handkerchiefs, which Louis still has and cherishes to this day.

During middle school, Louis immersed himself in Mozart. "My interest in Mozart made me want to keenly understand how music functions," he explains. He studied composing and theory with musicologist William Carragan and studied composition with Robert Levin from Harvard.

While pursuing his BA in Music at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Geneseo, Louis found the synthesis of all his musical interests in the art of conducting. After graduating summa cum laude, he had a big decision to make for his graduate studies: musicology at Oxford, or conducting at Yale. Since he was the only one selected by Yale, out of hundreds of applicants, to be the 2013 Orchestral Conducting Fellow, Louis felt, "I was chosen. Conducting chose me."

Louis made his professional debut in February 2019 when, at age 27, he conducted a new ballet based on the music of *Carmen* at the Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, with subsequent debuts including *Carmen* at the Semperoper Dresden, and *La Traviata* at Komische Oper Berlin.

At the end of 2022, he conducted six performances of *Tosca* at LAO to rave reviews. The online opera magazine, Parterre Box, gushed: "The LA Opera Orchestra veritably erupted and sparkled under his [Louis's] sure-handed guidance. He made deft work of highlighting Puccini's kaleidoscopic orchestrations and showed a keen understanding of the work's musical architecture as well as providing excellent support for his singers."

For the upcoming LAO season, Louis will continue the momentum by conducting all six performances of *The Barber of Seville* in October and November, plus one performance of *La Traviata* in April 2024.

As it happens, Louis will be our featured speaker at the Opera League seminar on *The Barber of Seville* on Sunday, October 7 at noon.



A QUIZ WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

"The challenge and the joy [of conducting *Barber*] are the same," Louis explains, "namely, to create an inspiring performance which is successfully delivered to the public. One of the main issues is how to interact with the score. In many types of opera, including those of Rossini, the composer did not write down all that you need to do, but rather expected the performer to add to that which they had written down. Thus, the music demands a need to add things as part of one's interpretation. It is very much like following my great-grandmother Nicolina's recipes, which she never wrote down, and very rarely shared. And when she did, the measurements were, at best, vague, with a little of this and a little of that. The music of the bel canto era is very much the same: traditions which are passed down, expected, but unwritten, give one license to create. And for me, that is an exhilarating and fun aspect of bringing the score to life."

As LA Opera's 2023-24 season winds down next spring, Louis will not stay idle. In March he will make his Atlanta Opera debut conducting Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, starring fellow LAO YAP alumna and friend, Liv Redpath. The following month sees him travel to Peoria, Illinois to join the Peoria Symphony to conduct Richard Strauss's *Four Last Songs* with his wife Erica as soloist, and conduct and play Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20 in D Minor (K. 466), along with conducting Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony. In May, it's off to Hamburg, Germany to conduct *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Staatsoper.

Having accomplished so much before the age of 30, I cannot help asking Louis what's left on his opera wish list. "My wish list of operas I would love to conduct include *L'elisir d'amore*, *Aida*, *Idomeneo* and *La Bohème*."

But his number one wish is to do any opera with his wife Erica. How awesome to combine their talents as professionals, extending the love they have created with their new family and baby girl to the wider world.

Please join your fellow Opera League members and friends to hear Louis Lohraseb share his conductor's insights at our seminar on *The Barber of Seville* on Sunday, October 7 at noon at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. Tickets are available at operaleague.org.

LA Opera's production of Rossini's *Barber*, conducted by Louis Lohraseb, opens on Saturday, October 21. ✨

With LA Opera's production of *El último sueño de Frida y Diego* coming up in November, iconic painters Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera will take on new life, and new hues, on the opera stage.

That got us thinking about the portrayal of creative arts and artists in opera. After all, opera is chockfull of poets: Hoffmann, Rodolfo, Werther and Andrea Chénier spring (eternal) to mind.

Let us not omit Olivier in *Capriccio*. And we can probably count all those songwriters in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and *Tannhäuser*, since they write their own lyrics. Nicht wahr, Herr Wagner?

But what about artists of the more visual variety? At first "brush," visual artists like Frida and Diego seem to have gotten short shrift, and even shorter brush stroke.

Mark Lyons, LA Opera's Associate Director of Communications and Publications, will help us right the canvas with this issue's quiz celebrating the portrayal of visual arts in this most visual medium called opera.

1. The most famous statue in opera is the stone image at the grave of the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*, coming to life to drag the Don to Hell. (The world's fastest artist must have been hired to complete it less than 24 hours after the Commendatore's murder.) What does the inscription on the Commendatore's gravestone say, as read by Leporello?

- A. Here lies a dutiful father, slain unjustly.
- B. No sinner shall escape the wrath of Heaven.
- C. Here I await vengeance for the evil man who sent me to my death.
- D. Don Giovanni, you invited me to dinner and I will come.

2. What biblical scene is Marcello painting in Act One of *La Bohème*?

- A. Moses and the burning bush
- B. The return of the prodigal son
- C. The parting of the Red Sea
- D. The sermon on the mount

3. The story of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* was inspired by a series of famous engravings by what artist?

- A. Gustave Doré
- B. William Hogarth
- C. Albrecht Dürer
- D. William Blake

4. The casting of Cellini's famous *Perseus with the Head of Medusa* is depicted in an 1838 French opera about the sculptor and goldsmith. Who composed *Benvenuto Cellini*?

- A. Hector Berlioz
- B. Charles Gounod
- C. Giacomo Meyerbeer
- D. Camille Saint-Saëns

5. A portrait of Antonia's mother comes to life at a chilling moment in Offenbach's *The Tales of Hoffmann*. Why was the painting's subject worthy of having her likeness captured?

- A. Hoffmann painted the portrait to make Antonia fall in love with him.
- B. She was celebrated as the most beautiful woman in Munich, where the scene is set.
- C. She died in childbirth, so Antonia had never known her mother.
- D. She was a famous opera singer.

6. In the opening act of *Tosca*, what is Floria Tosca's sharp complaint about Mario Cavaradossi's painting of Mary Magdalene?

- A. The subject's rapturous expression is inappropriate to be displayed in the church.
- B. It looks too much like Tosca.
- C. The woman depicted is too beautiful.
- D. The blue-eyed blonde Magdalene should have dark features, like Tosca.

WHAT'S COMING UP!

As we look forward to the new season, new President Gary Murphy has a few highlights on his agenda.

SEMINARS

Many people join the Opera League just for our seminars, so we have scheduled a seminar in the lead-up to each and every LA Opera production during the 2023-24 season. Dr. Kristi Brown-Montesano of UCLA's Herb Alpert School of Music was up first on Sunday, August 27, when she enlightened us about the deep history and inherent challenges of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. On Saturday, October 7, conductor Louis Lohrasab, an alumnus of LAO's Young Artist program, will step away from the podium to chat with us about what draws him to Rossini's *Barber of Seville*. And we look forward to collaborating with Hispanics for LA Opera (HLAO) to present noted Mexican and Latin-American art expert Gregorio Luke on Sunday, November 12, six days before the premiere of *El Ultimo Sueno de Frida & Diego*.

BAROQUE NIGHT AT LA OPERA

For the third consecutive season, LA Opera will present a rarely staged Baroque masterpiece by the German-British composer George Frideric Handel, performed by the English Concert under the baton of the brilliant Harry Bicket. This time around, we will enjoy the Handel opera *Rodelinda*.

Once again, the Opera League will be on hand with a special intermission reception including a meet-and-greet with Maestro Bicket himself, plus a generous 40% ticket discount from LA Opera. A one-night only performance the evening of Tuesday, November 21, this Handel masterwork, about a woman contending with a veritable rafter of treacherous male turkeys, will serve up the perfect turkey-leg kick-off to your Thanksgiving weekend.

OPERA LEAGUE CONVERSATION SERIES

We are thrilled to bring back this series of educational and entertaining conversations for the first time since the pandemic. Join us as we chat up notable opera and classical music experts and practitioners about all things opera. For the 2023-24 season, we are honored to welcome Jennifer Miller Hammel, host of Classical KUSC's The Opera Show (Sundays, 9pm-10pm) as well as weekday early mornings 6am-9am and Saturdays 7am-10am, as well as veteran *Los Angeles Times* music critic Mark Swed. From LA Opera we look forward to hearing from Paul Hopper, senior director of Artist Planning, brand new Young Artist head coach, Blair Salter, as well as Tehvon Fowler-Chapman, vice president of LA Opera Connects, LAO's community engagement and education department.

OPERA LEAGUE FAMILY & FRIENDS RECITAL SERIES

We saw overwhelming turnout the last Thursday of May at our recital featuring LAO Young Artist and tenor Anthony León at the Ebell Theatre. Using that success as wind at our backs, plans are now underway to present more family-style recitals including with conductor, pianist and LAO Young Artist alum Louis Lohrasab performing with another former Young Artist, his wife, soprano Erica Petrocelli. Keep your culture-hungry eyes peeled for more details on our website, operaleague.org, later this season.

GATHERINGS AT THE LA ATHLETIC CLUB

Eat great food, grab a refreshment, perhaps an adult beverage, and get smart about opera with like-minded friends and friends-to-be in a classy venue harking back to turn-of-the-century Los Angeles. Open since September 1880, the Los Angeles Athletic Club is a place like no other, and that's before you get to the façade's inimitable Beau-Arts architecture. Since returning to in-person programming, the Opera League has added LAAC as one of our new venues for our gatherings. The below two gatherings will take place at the classy club this fall. Be sure to check out the details on our website while keeping your eyes peeled for more via our membership eBlasts, Facebook and Instagram.

Saturday, September 30

In Love with Mozart—From Don Giovanni's seduction and Cherubino's infatuation to Elettra's jealousy and Papageno's delight, Mozart's operas present us with countless, rouge-tinted versions of falling head over heels. Tell me more!

Sunday, November 5

Opera in—and of—the Wild, Wild West – Cowboys, cowpokes and Calamity Janes enjoyed opera as much as the next horse thief. Giddy-up if you're up for learning more.

PETER HEMMINGS AWARD DINNER

Mark your calendars, as the next Peter Hemmings Award Dinner, our annual flagship gala, is set for Saturday, March 2, 2024.

To see the League in action, be sure to Like and Follow us on Facebook and Instagram, where we post about recent and upcoming programs three to four times a week. And of course, if you ever have any questions, don't be shy. Drop us a line at info@operaleague.org, or hit us up on our hotline at 213.972.7220.

OPERA LEAGUE CALENDAR OF EVENTS FALL 2023

The most up-to-date details on Opera League events can always be found on the League website, operaleague.org, and are communicated to League members via email and our social media channels on Facebook and Instagram.

AUGUST

SEMINAR

Don Giovanni

Sunday, August 27 from
Noon-1:30pm

LOCATION: Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
4th Floor, Rehearsal Room 1

SEPTEMBER

SPECIAL EVENT

Season Opening Shindig

Saturday, September 9 from
4pm-6pm

LOCATION: Vespaio, 225 S Grand Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

EDUCATION

OperaWise: Don Giovanni

Tuesday, September 19 from
6pm-10:30pm

LOCATION: Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Opera Prep: Don Giovanni Dress Rehearsal

Thursday, September 21 from
5pm-10:30pm

LOCATION: Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
4th Floor, Rehearsal Room 1

GATHERINGS

Don Giovanni

Sunday, September 10 at 10am

LOCATION: Private Residence
in Beverly Hills

Don Giovanni

Monday, September 11 at 7pm

LOCATION: Private Residence in La Cañada

Don Giovanni

Monday, September 18 at 7pm

LOCATION: Private Residence
in Santa Clarita

In Love with Mozart

Saturday, September 30 at Noon

LOCATION: Los Angeles Athletic Club

OCTOBER

RECITAL

African Americans for LA Opera (AALAO) Presents: Michael Melton Memorial Recital

Sunday, October 22 at Noon

LOCATION: Ebell Club of Los Angeles
3rd Floor, President's Tea Room
VOCALIST: India Carney, Mezzo-Soprano

SEMINAR

Barber of Seville

Saturday, October 7 from 1:30am-1:30pm

LOCATION: Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
4th Floor, Rehearsal Room 1

EDUCATION

OperaWise: Barber of Seville

Monday, October 16 from 6pm-10:30pm

LOCATION: Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Opera Prep: Barber of Seville Dress Rehearsal

Wednesday, October 18 from 5pm-10:30pm

LOCATION: Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Elementary Student Matinee #1

Thursday, October 26 from 9am-1pm

Location: Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Elementary Student Matinee #2

Friday, October 27 from 9am-1pm

Location: Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Saturday Morning at the Opera #1

Saturday, October 28 from 8:45am-1pm

LOCATION: Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

GATHERINGS

Barber of Seville

Monday, October 2 at 7pm

LOCATION: Private Residence in La Cañada

Barber of Seville

Sunday, October 8 at 10am

LOCATION: Private Residence in Beverly Hills

Barber of Seville

Monday, October 16 at 7pm

LOCATION: Private Residence in Santa Clarita

Frida y Diego

Sunday, October 29 at 10am

LOCATION: Private Residence in Beverly Hills

Frida y Diego

Monday, October 30 at 7pm

LOCATION: Private Residence in La Cañada

NOVEMBER

SPECIAL EVENT

Rodelinda: A Night at the Opera with Exclusive Opera League Reception

Tuesday, November 21 at 7:30pm

LOCATION: Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

SEMINAR

Frida y Diego

Sunday, November 12 from Noon-2pm

LOCATION: Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
4th Floor, Rehearsal Room 1

EDUCATION

OperaWise: Frida y Diego

Monday, November 13 from

6pm-10:30pm

LOCATION: Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Opera Prep: Frida y Diego Dress Rehearsal

Wednesday, November 15 from

8:15am-3pm

LOCATION: Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

GATHERINGS

Opera in—and of—the Wild West

Sunday, November 5 at Noon

LOCATION: Los Angeles Athletic Club

Frida y Diego

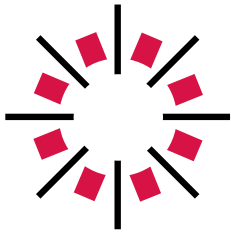
Monday, November 13 at 7pm

LOCATION: Private Residence in Santa Clarita

If It's Baroque, I Can "Handel" It

Sunday, November 19 at 2pm

LOCATION: Private Residence in
Hollywood/Hancock Park/
East San Fernando Valley



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OF LOS ANGELES

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Permit #740

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Volunteering remains hands-down the best way to get the most value out of Opera League programming. We always encourage League members to find that one activity they feel will take them further behind the curtain while helping spread the love of opera in Los Angeles County. Whether it be **The Shop at the Opera**, a master class, membership recruitment, light walking (yes, that's a thing), any of our myriad educational programs (e.g. seminars, gatherings), and much, much more, the Opera League offers volunteer opportunities for every culture culture.

Interested? Just shoot us a line at info@operaleague.org, or hit up our hotline at 213.972.7220. ☀