Stony Brook Opera
2012 - 2013 Season

A Letter from the Stony Brook Opera Artistic Director

We are pleased to announce our 2012-2013 season, which will again include three productions: a program of scenes, semi-staged with piano accompaniment in the Fall, a chamber opera in February, and a full production in April.

For the Fall scenes program, we will present “GREAT ROMANCES: Myths, Fairy Tales, and Literary Classics,” a program of scenes from French opera and operetta, including Offenbach’s La belle Hélène (the myth of the provocative and beautiful Helen of Troy), Massenet’s Cendrillon (the beloved fairy tale, Cinderella), Gounod’s Roméo et Juliette (Shakespeare’s tale of star-crossed lovers), and Massenet’s Werther (from Goethe’s sensation, The Sorrows of Young Werther). Metropolitan Opera soprano Jennifer Aylmer returns to direct the show, and I will conduct. The scenes will be semi-staged, and sung in the original French with projected subtitles in English.

In February, Stony Brook Opera will collaborate with members of the Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra in a production of Humperdinck’s popular Hansel and Gretel, in the world premiere of a new singing translation by Jennifer Aylmer, commissioned by Stony Brook Opera. The opera will be performed in a chamber version scored for flute, clarinet, horn, string quartet and piano, prepared by Kathleen Kelly, Director of the Musical Staff of the Vienna State Opera. Timothy Long will conduct, and JJ Hudson (Assistant Director during our 2011-2012 season) will direct, with lighting design by Jeanette Yew, and costumes from Indiana Opera Theatre.

In April, our full production will inaugurate a new three-year cycle with a Baroque opera: Handel’s Orlando (1733). This wonderful tale of love, betrayal, and sorcery, is familiar to New York area audiences from its highly successful New York City Opera production of 2004-2005. Toronto-based director, Guillaume Bernardi, makes his Stony Brook Opera debut as stage director, and Maruti Evans returns as set and lighting designer. The opera will be sung in the original Italian language, with projected subtitles in English. Arthur Haas will conduct the cast and members of the Stony Brook Baroque Players, who will be performing on period instruments.

For the dates, times and locations of all our performances this season, see the Dateline column at the end of this Newsletter. We are very excited about this year’s repertoire, and we look forward to seeing you at our performances.

Sincerely,
David Lawton
Our first program this season is a group of scenes from French opera and operetta. The first half will be Paris’s and Hélène’s arias and the duet “C’est un rêve” from Offenbach’s *La belle Hélène*, and the Act II duet between Cendrillon (Cinderella) and the Prince Charming, as well as Cendrillon’s aria “Enfin, je suis ici,” and the final scene from Act III of Massenet’s *Cendrillon*. The second half begins with Juliette’s arietta “Je veux vivre,” Roméo’s cavatina “Ah! Lève toi, soleil!”, as well as the balcony scene from Gounod’s *Roméo et Juliette*, and concludes with a long scene from Massenet’s *Werther*, including Charlotte’s famous “Va, laisse couler mes larmes” and Werther’s heartbreaking aria “Pourquoi me reveiller.”

There will be three performances at different locations:
Wednesday, November 14 at 12 noon at Berkner Hall, Brookhaven National Laboratory; Sunday, November 18 at 2 p.m. at the Sachem Public Library, and Monday, November 19 at 8 p.m. at the Recital Hall, Stony Brook. Admission for the Stony Brook performance is $5 general.
Many of you attended the wonderful evening at Evelyn Bromet’s home this past April, at which we introduced our new voice faculty, soprano Brenda Harris and baritone Randall Scarlata. They performed selections from musical theater works by Leonard Bernstein, accompanied by Tim Long at the piano, and introduced by Jamie Bernstein, the composer’s daughter. Both of these superb artists are active at the highest level in their profession. I thought you would enjoy reading about their current and upcoming professional commitments. I am also updating you on Tim Long’s and my recent and future engagements.

Brenda Harris and I first met in 2007, when we collaborated on a production of Verdi’s Stiffelio at Chautauqua Opera (she in the leading soprano role of Lina, and I as conductor). I was bowled over by her magnificent voice and her complete artistry — musical, as well as theatrical. In my opinion she is one of the best Verdi sopranos in America! Brenda just returned from Minnesota Opera, where she sang the formidable role of Abigaille in Verdi’s Nabucco. Upcoming engagements for her this current season include the title role in Puccini’s Turandot for Sarasota Opera, the title role in Richard Strauss’s Elektra for Des Moines Metro Opera, and Elisabetta in Donizetti’s Maria Stuarda for Washington Concert Opera. Recently she also performed the role of Leonore in Beethoven’s Fidelio for Utah Opera, and Lady Macbeth in Verdi’s Macbeth for Anchorage Opera. Our Stony Brook audiences will have the opportunity to hear her in the Staller Center on Saturday, November 3 at 8 p.m., when she will appear with the Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra in the world premiere of the orchestral version of Music Department Chairman Perry Goldstein’s song cycle, Should This Be Found: Six Songs on Scott’s Last Expedition.
Randall Scarlata is an extremely versatile artist who maintains a high profile career in art-song, oratorio, and opera. This season he will be performing several Schubert song cycles with some illustrious pianists, including our own Gilbert Kalish. He sings works of Auric and Poulenc for a special Les Six concert with the New World Symphony, and travels throughout the US for a variety of recitals, including a Poulenc celebration in New York City, Bernstein’s Arias and Barcarolles in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, and a premiere of a new work song cycle by Andrea Clearfield (with Lyric Fest of Philadelphia). His oratorio performances include performances of Handel’s Messiah and the Brahms Ein Deutsches Requiem, as well as the premiere of Van Stiefel’s Wyeth Songs with the Kennett Symphony and Children’s Chorus. In February, he joins the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center for performances of Ned Rorem’s Aftermath in Grand Rapids, Chicago, and New York City. Mr. Scarlata will also be a part of the AIDS Quilt Songbook 2.0 celebratory concert, broadcast and CD, commemorating the 20th anniversary of the classical music world’s first organized response to the AIDS crisis. This season sees the release of two new recordings, Gretry’s opera Le Magnifique on Naxos, and Samuel Barber’s Dover Beach for Sono Luminus Records.

Conductor and vocal coach Timothy Long will receive the Distinguished Alumni Award from Oklahoma City University next month, an institution that has graduated other celebrated performers, including Kristin Chenoweth, Leona Mitchell, and Chris Merritt. Tim’s recent conducting projects have included La Cenerentola at Opera Colorado, Dream Seminar/Drömseminarium with the Companion Star Ensemble of Sweden, Beautiful Creatures with Stage/Time Collaborative in NY, In Praise of Women with Jamie Bernstein at the Oregon Bach Festival, and a return to the Maryland Opera Studio for Dominick Argento’s Miss Havisham’s Fire and A Few Words About Chekhov, the latter with internationally renowned mezzo-soprano, Frederica von Stade. In the coming year, Tim will be making his debut at Utah Opera with Die Zauberflöte, and will then embark on a European tour with the International Sejong Soloists as harpsichordist for Vivaldi’s The Four Seasons with the famed violinist, Gil Shaham.

This past summer I published two articles for the general public in prestigious publications. For the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels, I wrote an article for the program book of their production of Verdi’s Il trovatore, entitled: “A perfect fusion of music and drama: the place of Il trovatore in Verdi’s Romantic Trilogy.” In addition, my article “Dark Shadows” appeared in the September 13, 2012 edition of Opera News, concerning Verdi’s early opera I due Foscari, in anticipation of Los Angeles Opera’s production of the opera starring Placido Domingo in the baritone role of the Doge. Upcoming conducting engagements include a reading of Beethoven’s Fidelio for Occasional Opera Company at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Manhattan on Saturday, November 3. I will also be conducting the Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra in a performance of Tchaikovsky’s Violin Concerto on Saturday, December 1 on the Main Stage of the Staller Center. In April I will be returning to OperaDelaware to conduct Verdi’s Macbeth, using the critical edition of the opera that I published in The Works of Giuseppe Verdi in 2005 (University of Chicago Press/Ricordi), for which I was awarded the Claude Palisca prize by the American Musicological Society.

--David Lawton

Randall Scarlata

Stony Brook Opera

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I. “GREAT ROMANCES: Myths, Fairy Tales, and Literary Classics”:

Scenes from French Opera and Operetta
(Three Performances)
- Wednesday, November 14, 2012 at 12 noon: Brookhaven National Laboratory
- Sunday, November 18, 2012 at 2 p.m.: Sachem Public Library
- Monday, November 19, 2012 at 8 p.m.: Staller Center Recital Hall, Stony Brook University

II. Humperdinck’s Hansel and Gretel
(Two performances)
- Friday, February 22, 2012 at 8 p.m.: Staller Center Recital Hall, Stony Brook University
- Sunday, February 24, 2012 at 2 p.m.: Southampton Cultural Center

III. Full Production of Handel’s Orlando
(Three performances)
- Wednesday, April 10, 2013 at 12 noon: preview performance, Brookhaven National Laboratory
- Saturday, April 13, 2013 at 8 p.m.: Staller Center Main Stage, Stony Brook University
- Sunday, April 14, 2012 at 2 p.m.: Staller Center Main Stage, Stony Brook University

Save the dates!
As we open our 2012-2013 season, we would like to take a moment to thank our kind patrons for their continued loyalty and support for Stony Brook Opera.

We greatly appreciate your continued interest in the Long Island Opera Guild and we hope you enjoy our newsletters! We welcome back Amanda Sherlip as our Managing Creative Editor.

Ms. Sherlip is a recent graduate of the Stony Brook Music Department. She is formerly a violin student of Dr. Joanna Kaczorowska. Ms. Sherlip has travelled across the globe performing in such places as Australia, South America, East Asia and the Polynesian Islands. In addition to Stony Brook, she has also studied at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. As a teacher she has a studio of over 35 string and piano students.

Ms. Sherlip is a native New Yorker and the daughter of a Stony Brook alumna. Ms. Sherlip is involved in a variety of organizations and committees devoted to promoting opportunities for arts education as well as arts entrepreneurship. Her mission is the raise awareness and public participation for the orchestral and concert tradition.

Stay tuned for our next two issues coming in 2013!