



Special points of interest:

Volume 4, Issue 1

Fall 2004

- Metropolitan Opera National Council District Auditions
- Where are they now?

SHOWCASE WEEKEND

THE FALL 2004 SHOWCASE OF STARS: A TRIPLE BILL OF OPERA DELIGHTS

Music lovers take note! The last weekend of October will showcase opera stars of the future in three delightful programs: the UK Opera Theatre's Fall 2004 "Stars of Tomorrow Opera Gala", the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and a vocal Master Class. If you're longing to hear glorious arias and ensembles but can't make it to the Met in NYC or the Lyric Opera in Chicago, or you're new to opera and don't know where to begin, this Opera Weekend is exactly the place for you!

In past years, the "Stars of Tomorrow Opera Gala" has headlined the Winter Semester schedule for the UK Opera Theatre program. But this year, the Gala will kick off the 2004-2005 opera season in Lexington as part of the new "Showcase of Stars Weekend". On Friday, October 29th, join your fellow music lovers at 6 pm for a Prologue Gala Reception in the President's Room and UK Art Museum at the Singletary Center for the Fine Arts. Enjoy a splendid array of specially created hors d'oeuvre prepared by Bleu Ribbon Hospitality and select wines from Lexington Opera Society/UKOT's season sponsor, The



Strauss

Liquor Barn. Then stroll to the SCFA Concert Hall for the Opera Gala (beginning at 7:30 pm), which features some of opera's most beautiful and thrilling moments performed by UK vocal music faculty and the talented young artists from UK's vocal and opera program, accompanied by the outstanding University of Kentucky Orchestra. After the concert, enjoy your "Just Desserts" with champagne and dainties in the President's Room as a leisurely ending to a glorious evening!



Mozart

Sally Stunkel, the Guest Director for UKOT's outstanding production of *Le Nozze di Figaro* in 2003, returns to Lexington to direct the Fall 2004 Opera Gala. She has directed more than 70 operatic productions, has also sung in numerous performances by regional opera companies, and is also known for her distinctive operatic choreography. In February 2005, Ms. Stunkel will direct Puccini's passionate masterpiece, *Madama Butterfly*, for UKOT.

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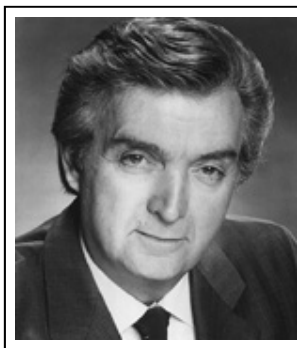
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BRAVO!

Metropolitan Opera National Council District Auditions

On Saturday, October 30, the Lexington Opera Society once again plays host to the Metropolitan Opera National Council District Auditions. The 2004 judges for this round of the Auditions are Dominic Cossa (Chair, Division of Voice/Opera, University of Maryland School of Music), Mikael Eliassen (Opera and Voice Coach, Head of Vocal Studies, The Curtis Institute of Music), and Anthony Dean Griffey (a critically acclaimed tenor who has performed with numerous opera companies and symphony orchestras worldwide).

Mr. Cossa has sung leading baritone roles with the Metropolitan Opera, the New York City Opera, and the San Francisco Opera companies. His roles include Germont in Verdi's *La Traviata*, Zurga in Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers*, Figaro in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, Pierrot in Korngold's *Die tote Stadt*, and Yeletsky in Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame*. He has concertized at London's Albert Hall and has sung operatic performances at Strasbourg's Opera du Rhin, Milan's Teatro Nuovo, Florence's Teatro della Pergola, and Teatro Bellini in Catania, Sicily. In addition to performing a repertoire of more than fifty operas, he has frequently appeared in recital and in concert with such orchestras as the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Sym-



Dominic Cossa

phony, the Boston Symphony, and the Israel Philharmonic, under the batons of such eminent conductors as Ozawa, Bernstein, and Solti. Mr. Cossa has toured the Far East extensively with concerts in Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Seoul, Taiwan, Singapore, and Kuala Lumpur. Mr. Cossa's recording credits include complete operas with Beverly Sills (*Julius Caesar*: RCA), Joan Sutherland (*Les Huguenots*: London), and Luciano Pavarotti

(*Elixir of Love*: London). He has also recorded *When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd* with the Boston Symphony for New World Records. He was chosen by Gian Carlo Menotti to appear in two premieres, *The Hero* (in which he sang the title role) and *Tamu-Tamu* in Spoleto, Italy.

The Danish-born coach and accompanist Mr. Eliassen received his early training in Copenhagen, Montreal and Vienna. He has appeared in numerous vocal recitals worldwide with Robert Merrill, Tom Krause, Theodor Uppman, John Shirley-Quirk, Elly Ameling, Edith Mathis, Florence Quivar, Mira Zakai, Sarah Walker, and Joan Patenaude-Yarnell, and has recorded for CBC, Hilversum Radio, Polish State Radio, Kol Israel, Irish Radio and Television, London Records, MHS and Supraphon. Mr. Eliassen has given master classes at the Shanghai Conservatory, Tchaikovsky Conservatory (Moscow), Jerusalem Music Center, National Opera of Prague and the Young Artists' program at the Metropolitan Opera (New York City). He is closely affiliated with the Royal Opera Academy (Copenhagen), Netherlands Opera Studio (Amsterdam) and Pittsburgh Opera Studio.

For the past 15 summers, he has taught at Chautauqua's Voice Program, and he also teaches in Italy and for the Santa Fe Opera's Young Artist program. Mr. Eliassen was Music Director of the San Francisco Opera Center from 1994 to 1996 and artistic director of the European Center for Opera and Vocal Art in Belgium from 1984 to 1994. He joined the faculty of The Curtis Institute of Music (Philadelphia) in 1986 and became the head of the department in 1988.

Anthony Dean Griffey has been the recipient of many awards and honors. He is profiled in the article "Master Class" on page 7 of this issue.

The 2004 judges for this round of the Auditions are Dominic Cossa, Mikael Eliassen and Anthony Dean Griffey

Showcase Weekend

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The Gala concert features many best-loved ensembles from the operatic repertoire, beginning with the closing trio from Richard Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier*, in which the youthful Octavian must choose between the Countess (his first love) and the virginal Sophie. Critics have called this scene 'the most beautiful music ever written by Strauss'; the composer liked it so much that he requested that it be played at his funeral.

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Verdi

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Così fan Tutte.

The evening's program also includes several lovely duets, such as 'Au fond du temple saint', one of the most beautiful works for tenor and baritone in the French operatic repertoire, from Bizet's



Bizet

Les Pêcheurs des Perles, and the ravishing 'Dôme épais, le jasmin', from Léo Delibes' *Lakmé* (familiar to us from a popular television commercial). The ethereal 'Hymn to the moon' (Mesičku, postůj chvíli) from Antonín Dvořák's *Rusalka* reminds us that this Czech composer's talents were not limited to his well-known symphonic music. And Figaro's sprightly aria, 'Largo al factotum' from Gioacchino Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, sung by everyone's favorite operatic busybody, brings the concert to a rousing conclusion.

On Saturday, October 30th, join Tedrin Blair Lindsay at 9:00 am at Joseph Beth Bookseller for an entertaining introduction to the history of the Metropolitan Opera, one of the lectures in his popular 12-week non-credit course "Opera 101", sponsored by UK Opera Theatre and the Lexington Opera Society. After this treat, head for UK's stately Memorial Hall at 12 noon to hear aspiring young opera singers from Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio and West Virginia vie for the top honors in the Metropolitan Opera National Council District Auditions. The three winners of this competition will advance to the Regional Auditions, to be held at UK on

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Showcase Weekend

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Saturday, November 20; the Regional winners earn a coveted spot in the final round of Auditions next spring on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera. And finish out this Triple Bill on Sunday, October 31st, at the Master voice class conducted by one of the three judges for the Met Auditions, tenor Anthony Dean Griffey, for local and regional voice students (see story on page 7)

Tickets for the complete "Stars of Tomorrow Opera Gala" evening on Friday, October 29, (including the Prologue Reception, concert, and "Just Desserts") at the Singletary Center are only \$75 per person, but space is limited so call the SCFA box office now at (859) 257-4929 for reservations. Tickets for the concert alone are \$12-\$32. (Bravo Committee members: show your current 2004/2005 membership card at the SCFA box office and receive the Bravo discount: buy one regular concert ticket at full price, and get 50% off the price of a second concert ticket.) Admission to the October 30 lecture at Joseph Beth Booksellers on the history of the Metropolitan Opera in the "Opera 101" non-credit course is \$25. The Metropolitan Opera National Council District Auditions (October 30) and the Master Class (October 31) at UK's Memorial Hall are both free and open to the public.

For this "Showcase of Stars" weekend (October 29-31), the Hilton Suites at Lexington Green is offering a special package: \$119 plus tax per night (including a continental breakfast for 2). This represents a discount of \$40 from the regular weekend rate for October. Contact Crystal Biroshchik (phone: 859-271-7101; fax: 859-271-7108; email: crystal.biroschik@ihrco.com) at the Hilton Suites for reservations.

Mary Powell and Pat Trotter

Opera Quiz

Test your knowledge about the famous "Three Tenors"

1. Which of the "three tenors", Pavarotti, Domingo or Carreras, underwent a bone marrow transplant without the use of anesthesia in order to save his voice?
2. Which of the "three tenors" cannot read music?
3. Which two of the "three tenors" made their U.S. opera debut at the new York City Opera?

For those of you who attended Tedrin Blair Lindsay's Opera 101 class the answers should be easy!

Answers:
1. Carreras
2. Pavarotti
3. Domingo and Carreras

Space is limited for the special Stars of Tomorrow Opera Gala Prologue Reception and 'Just Desserts'



Mark your calendars now for the UK Opera Theatre production of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*.
February 17, 18, 24 and 26, 2005
at the Lexington Opera House