

NASHVILLE ODERA

GILBERT & SULLIVAN'S
PIRATES

ARRRRGH YOU
READY FOR
FAMILY FUN?

AWESOME
NEW SEASON

2015
2016



SPRING 2015



REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE & CELEBRATE WITH US!

- 1.** TURANDOT: The grandest of the grand with one of the biggest hit songs ever sung!
- 2.** HYDROGEN JUKEBOX: Philip Glass! Philip Glass! Philip Glass!
- 3.** COSÌ FAN TUTTE: Mozart's operatic version of reality television.
- 4.** DIE FLEDERMAUS: OUR 100TH PRODUCTION is frothy, farcical FUN!
- 5.** An excuse to come to The Noah Liff Opera Center: Earl Swensson's masterpiece of modernism!
- 6.** The Nashville Opera Orchestra: We turn it up to ELEVEN.
- 7.** It's all about the BASS—and timpani, and strings. Feel the music in your bones when they hit it!
- 8.** The Nashville Opera Chorus: Amy Tate Williams' incomparable ensemble rocks!
- 9.** Closing the gap: Donating to our education programs help kids succeed in school!
- 10.** Free community performances of our ON TOUR children's operas across the region!
- 11.** The Mary Ragland Young Artists: You saw them here first.
- 12.** Opera@: We'll see you around town for some beers, baritones, sing-a-longs, and stargazing!
- 13.** You'll be an insider: Subscribers get the best seats, best prices, and free parking!
- 14.** Warm fuzzy: Know that you're helping opera thrive in Nashville!
- 15.** FORTE: Our young professionals help music teachers keep their classes singing!
- 16.** Come as you are or get glam!
- 17.** Opera or Opry: Who cares? Opera's like a long version of your favorite country song!
- 18.** Barihunks. (Look it up!)
- 19.** We're the best date night in town!
- 20.** It's not over until you visit our Guild's Hot Lady Boutique!



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19.
We're the best date night in town!

12 NASHVILLE OPERA @

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PIRATES

Gilbert & Sullivan Zaniness April 9 & 11!

The Pirates of Penzance has been called the most popular of all Gilbert and Sullivan's operas. From the delightful music to the clever libretto, the opera has proved an audience pleaser from its very first opening night.

The inspiration for *The Pirates of Penzance* came from a variety of sources. The first was Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, which had made the subject of pirates enormously popular in fiction and dramas. Secondly, there was an incident in Gilbert's childhood where he was kidnapped by Neapolitan bandits! Perhaps because of this early trauma, many of Gilbert's plots concern abduction or displaced people who are not what they seem to be. Gilbert also took every chance he could to show his less than respectful feelings toward the British military, the police, and the House of Lords. Finally, after Gilbert and Sullivan saw the performance royalties of their earlier operas stolen away by copyright thieves, the idea of pillaging pirates was a subject not too far from their minds!

Building on the British dramatic tradition of portraying the outlaw as a somewhat misguided but loveable rogue, Gilbert made the pirates the opera's moral center. The pirates display a noble courage and dignity which seem to be lacking in most of the authority figures in the opera. The Pirate King himself is the very model of decency who, when discussing his career, states: "I don't think much of our profession, but, contrasted with respectability, it is comparatively honest." Later in the opera, the pirates are revealed to be misguided noblemen.

The characters of *The Pirates of Penzance* are both more varied and better drawn than their counterparts in the earlier Gilbert and Sullivan opera *H.M.S. Pinafore*. The Pirate King himself is one of Gilbert and Sullivan's most likable and multi-dimensional characters and a joy to play. (Just ask any bass-baritone cast in the role). With Major General Stanley, Gilbert exposes the character of the know-it-all who is an expert in every field except the one to which he has been appointed. Late in the first act, the Major General is given the tongue-twisting patter song "I am the very model of a modern Major General" in which he states just that with hundreds of fast words and a zippy little tune.

Sullivan's music satirizes such sources as Italian romantic opera for Frederic's *bel canto* lament "Oh, is there not one maiden here." He also lampoons the serious sounds of Victorian oratorio for the delightfully pompous choral number "Hail, Poetry!" Finally, there is also a rich parody of the coloratura soprano aria in Mabel's famous waltz, "Poor Wandering One."

However, part of the genius of Gilbert and Sullivan is that even if an audience lacks full knowledge of the satire and parodies, their operas still work brilliantly on many other levels. That is just one of the reasons that, for well over 100 years, *The Pirates of Penzance* is still referred to as the most popular Gilbert and Sullivan opera of all.

JOHN HOOMES
General and Artistic Director

artists



Pirate King
CRAIG IRVIN

baritone
Nashville Opera:
Iolanthe
Fort Worth Opera
Lyric Opera
Kansas City
Minnesota Opera
Pensacola Opera
Wolf Trap Opera



Major General Stanley
CURT OLDS*

baritone
Arizona Opera
Edmonton Opera
Central City Opera
Opera Memphis
Virginia Opera



Ruth
MARIA ZIFCHAK*

mezzo-soprano
The Bovender Principal Artist
Metropolitan Opera
New York City Opera
Arizona Opera
Houston Grand Opera
Seattle Opera



Sergeant of Police
AARON SORENSEN*

bass
Austin Lyric Opera
Fort Worth Opera
Des Moines Metro Opera
Glimmerglass Opera
Wolf Trap Opera



Mabel
HANNA BRAMMER*†

soprano
Opera North
Oratorio Society of New York



Frederic
CHRISTOPHER NELSON*†

tenor
Des Moines Metro Opera
Ohio Light Opera
Amore Opera
Opera Santa Barbara



Edith
CHRISTINE AMON*†

mezzo-soprano
Opera Memphis
Opera Theatre of Pittsburgh
Toledo Choral Society



Samuel
ALEX SOARE*†

bass-baritone
Des Moines Metro Opera
Opera Saratoga
Aspen Music Festival



Stage Director
DEAN ANTHONY**

Director of Opera, Brevard Music Center, Janiec Opera Company
Opera Director, Washington University, St. Louis
Opera Stage Director, University of Memphis
Florentine Opera
Fort Worth Opera
Opera Tampa
Tulsa Opera



Accompanist & Chorusmaster
AMY TATE WILLIAMS

Nashville Opera 1998-present
Nashville Opera:
Elmer Gantry, Romeo and Juliet, Don Giovanni, La Bohème, Tosca, Rigoletto, Andrea Chénier, The Girl of the Golden West, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat, Romulus Hunt, Florencia en el Amazonas



Conductor
WILLIAM BOGGS

Nashville Opera:
Iolanthe, Pagliacci, Elmer Gantry, The Student Prince, The Fall of the House of Usher, The Marriage of Figaro, Madame Butterfly, The Pearl Fishers
Capital Opera
Florentine Opera
Bay View Music Festival
Shenyang Symphony



Artistic Director
JOHN HOOMES

Nashville Opera 1995-present
Nashville Opera:
Elmer Gantry, Samson and Delilah, Salome, The Fall of the House of Usher, Andrea Chénier, The Girl of the Golden West, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat, Romulus Hunt, Florencia en el Amazonas
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Florentine Opera
Lyric Opera
Baltimore

* Nashville Opera Debut

† Mary Rogland Young Artist

** Nashville Opera Directing Debut

JOIN US!

* Reservations at 615.832.5242 or nashvilleopera.org.



Sunday, March 15

OPERA CLUB: Richard Strauss
2:30 p.m., Noah Liff Opera Center

Monday, March 16

Opera ON TOUR begins last week.

Thursday, March 19

Artists arrive for PIRATES rehearsals.

Saturday, March 21

OPERA@ FONTANEL
5 p.m., Natchez Hill Winery at Fontanel
(See page 12 for details.)

Tuesday, March 24

FORTE PUB CLUB



5:30–7:30 p.m., 312 Pizza Company
Have fun. Do good. Join Nashville Opera's young professionals dedicated to improving arts education in Middle Tennessee. No cover.

Sunday, March 29

IMPRESARIO COUNCIL
THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE
ARTIST SPONSOR DINNER & CONCERT *
6 p.m., Richland Country Club

Wednesday, April 1

NASHVILLE OPERA GUILD
BOARD MEETING
10 a.m., Noah Liff Opera Center

Thursday, April 9

OPERA INSIGHTS PREVIEW TALK 
6 p.m., Jackson Hall, TPAC
Sponsored by Hilton

BACKSTAGE TOUR *
6:30 p.m., Jackson Hall, TPAC

THE PIRATES
OF PENZANCE

7 p.m., Jackson Hall, TPAC



Saturday, April 11

GUILD PREMIERE DINNER *
5:30 p.m., Waller, Union Street

OPERA INSIGHTS PREVIEW TALK
7 p.m., Jackson Hall, TPAC
Sponsored by Hilton 

BACKSTAGE TOUR *
7:30 p.m., Jackson Hall, TPAC

THE PIRATES
OF PENZANCE

8 p.m., Polk Theater, TPAC

Sunday, April 19

OPERA CLUB: Joplin's Treemonisha
2:30 p.m., Noah Liff Opera CENTER

Tuesday, May 5

THE BIG PAYBACK
12:01 a.m.–11:59 p.m.
thebigpayback.org 

Tuesday, May 12

OPERA@ FAT BOTTOM
BEERS & BARITONES

5:30–8 p.m., Fat Bottom Brewing
900 Main Street, East Nashville

Thursday, May 14

Nashville Opera Guild
Annual Spring Membership Meeting *
10:30 a.m., home of Ellen Martin

Wednesday, June 3

NASHVILLE OPERA GUILD
BOARD MEETING
10 a.m., Noah Liff Opera Center

Saturday, June 6

OPERA ON THE MOUNTAIN
OPERA@ DYER OBSERVATORY

6 p.m., Vanderbilt Dyer Observatory
\$55 table seat, \$35 concert seat,
\$75 carload. Tickets on sale soon!

Sunday, July 19

OPERA@ FRANKLIN THEATRE
THE WIZARD OF OZ!

1:30 p.m., Franklin Theatre
Come sing with Dorothy and friends!
Tickets on sale soon!

At the Impresario Council Reception at *Florecia en el Amazonas*, January 23:

1. Claudia McCauley, Caroline Oakes, and Elizabeth Papel. 2. Laura Grider and Berkeley Nance. 3. Carolyn Schott, Megan Barry, and Gary Schott.

Addressing Vanderbilt's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the Noah Liff Opera Center:

4. Executive Director of Vanderbilt's Center for Latin American Studies Avery Dickins de Girón. 5. Nashville Opera General and Artistic Director John Hoomes.

FORTE members at *La Bella Notte*, January 17:

6. Jason and Corinne Bergeron with Cara Jackson and Andy Tarbutton.





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LA BELLA NOTTE

Presenting sponsor *Stellar Life*

1. Francis Robinson Award Recipient Helen Brown with one of several plumed Carnival dancers on hand. 2. Jessica Henderson and Adam Parkinson. 3. Julie and Bill Pursell. 4. Graham and Tina Stewart. 5. Martin and Laura Renkis. 6. Dick and Ping Ragsdale. 7. Nashville Opera Finance Director Lori Eubank and Art Director Cara Schneider receive The President's Award of Service from Opera Board President Don Holmes. 8. Shelley and Harry Page. 9. John Schank of Stellar Life and Linda Malone. 10. Brett and Meredythe Sweet. 11. Elaina and Ronald Scott. 12. Judith Hodges and Jan van Eys. 13. Eleanor and Gary Parkes. 14. La Bella Notte Chair Kathleen Evers. 15. Beth Fortune, Debbie Turner, and Lyn Plantina. 16. La Bella Notte committee members Sandra Frank, Betty Thackston, Esther Swink, Jocelyne McCall, Shery Hooten, Guild President Morel Enoch Harvey, Helen Brown, Anne Shepherd, Anne Pennington, and Debora Glennon.



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LA BELLA NOTTE 2015 CARNIVAL



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1. Host Ridley Wills is danced into dinner by an instructor from National Dance Clubs of Belle Meade. 2. General and Artistic Director John Hoomes and Barbara Bovender. 3. La Bella Notte Honorary Chairs Martin and Ann Marie McNamara with daughter Betsy and Ridley Wills, hosts of the Patron Party. 4. Jack Bovender and Michael Barton. 5. Patron Party Chairs Jocelynne McCall and Deborah Tallent-Barcus with Guild President Morel Enoch Harvey, center. 6. Soprano Elizabeth Caballero and June Bogle.



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 Mrs. Shirley Zeitlin

**La Bella Notte 2015
 Table Hosts**

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 Dr. Alice A Hinton

In memory of Teresa Coleman
 Mrs. Dancy Sanders

In memory of Mary M. Enoch
 Dr. Morel Enoch Harvey

In memory of William F. Fennessey
 Marion Pickering Couch

In memory of Edward Fish
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 Mrs. Theresa Lapidus

In memory of Edwin Anthony Heard, Jr.
 Phyllis Heard

In memory of Ruth Akin Hightower
 Mrs. Ruth Roberts Cowan

In memory of Camille Jordan
 Ms. Nancy Ellen Coleman

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In memory of Lucille Penterman
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JOHN HOOMES INTRODUCES 2015.16!

TURANDOT by Puccini

October 8 & 10, 2015 ~ Andrew Jackson Hall, TPAC ~ The Patricia and Rodes Hart Production

After composing *LA BOHÈME*, *TOSCA*, and *MADAMA BUTTERFLY*, what could Puccini possibly do for a final statement? The answer: *TURANDOT*. Containing some of the greatest operatic music ever written, *TURANDOT* is the culmination of Puccini's brilliant career. This grand-scale opera is full of thrilling choruses, thundering orchestrations, and a cast consisting of, well, most of ancient China! This magnificent work—which features Pavarotti's signature aria, "Nessun dorma"—promises to be a landmark event for the Nashville Opera and an evening not to be missed. (Sung in Italian with easy-to-read English supertitles)

HYDROGEN JUKEBOX by Philip Glass

November 13, 14, & 15, 2015 ~ The Noah Liff Opera Center

NEW Production! Join us for an intimate voyage through the cultural landscape of America from the 1950's through the 1980's. Delving into such topics as life, death, the atomic bomb, sex, drugs, rock and roll, war, and significant political events, *HYDROGEN JUKEBOX* is a kaleidoscope of societal phenomena. This electrifying opera—featuring a haunting, dynamic score by Philip Glass and the prophetic poetry of Allen Ginsberg—promises to overwhelm your senses with a poignant experience that is at once passionately nostalgic and strikingly relevant. (Sung in English with easy-to-read English supertitles)

NOTE: This opera contains adult language and subject matter.

COSÌ FAN TUTTE by Mozart

January 22, 24, & 26, 2016 ~ James K. Polk Theater, TPAC

It all starts with a bet. Two young men enter into a wager with an older bachelor to prove the indestructible fidelity of their beautiful fiancées. Lesson #1: Never make bets in which the human heart is involved. This comic opera is the peak of Mozart's brilliant exploration into the workings of love. Following closely on the heels of such masterpieces as *THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO* and *DON GIOVANNI*, *COSÌ FAN TUTTE* is the ultimate statement on the dissimilarity between men and women when it comes to affairs of the heart. (Sung in Italian with easy-to-read English supertitles)

DIE FLEDERMAUS

by Johann Strauss

April 7 & 9, 2016 ~ Andrew Jackson Hall, TPAC

From "King of the Waltz" Johann Strauss comes the most popular comic operetta ever written. Based on a French farce (by way of Vienna), this madcap, comic production has been described as "The Marx Brothers meet *The Carol Burnett Show*" by critics and audiences alike.

Featuring elaborate sets, costumes, and split-second timing—and filled throughout with the magic and effervescent music of the glorious Viennese waltz—*DIE FLEDERMAUS* offers an unforgettable night of glorious music, thrilling singing, and side-splitting comedy. (Sung in English with easy-to-read English supertitles)

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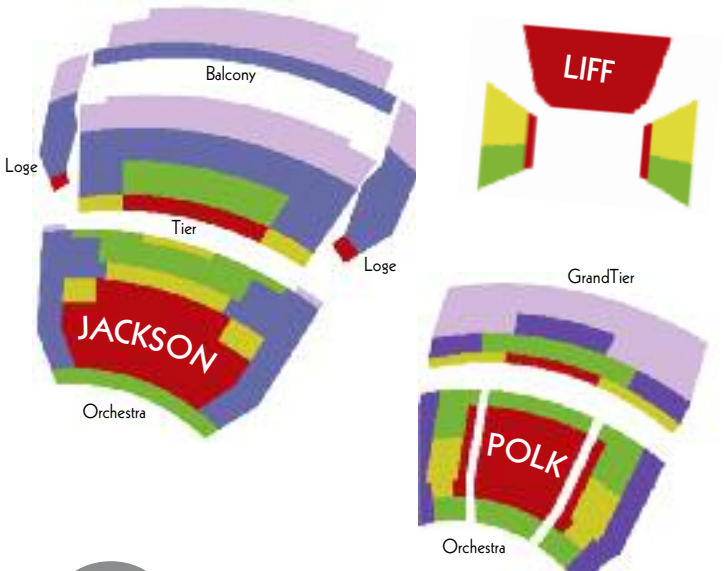
	Premiere	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	# of Seats	Price Each	Subtotal
TURANDOT Andrew Jackson Hall, TPAC								
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<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday, October 10, 2015 (8 p.m.)	<input type="checkbox"/> 99	<input type="checkbox"/> 79	<input type="checkbox"/> 66.50	<input type="checkbox"/> 46	<input type="checkbox"/> 26	_____	X _____ = _____	
HYDROGEN JUKEBOX Noah Liff Opera Center								
<input type="checkbox"/> Friday, November 13, 2015 (8 p.m.)	<input type="checkbox"/> 65	<input type="checkbox"/> 40	<input type="checkbox"/> 25			_____	X _____ = _____	
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<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday, January 24, 2016 (2 p.m.)	<input type="checkbox"/> 99	<input type="checkbox"/> 79	<input type="checkbox"/> 66.50	<input type="checkbox"/> 46	<input type="checkbox"/> 26	_____	X _____ = _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday, January 26, 2016 (7 p.m.)	<input type="checkbox"/> 99	<input type="checkbox"/> 79	<input type="checkbox"/> 66.50	<input type="checkbox"/> 46	<input type="checkbox"/> 26	_____	X _____ = _____	
DIE FLEDERMAUS Andrew Jackson Hall, TPAC								
<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, April 7, 2016 (7 p.m.)	<input type="checkbox"/> 99	<input type="checkbox"/> 79	<input type="checkbox"/> 66.50	<input type="checkbox"/> 46	<input type="checkbox"/> 26	_____	X _____ = _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday, April 9, 2016 (8 p.m.)	<input type="checkbox"/> 99	<input type="checkbox"/> 79	<input type="checkbox"/> 66.50	<input type="checkbox"/> 46	<input type="checkbox"/> 26	_____	X _____ = _____	

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NEW! OPERA@ FONTANEL

Saturday, March 21, 5 p.m.

4225 Whites Creek Pike, Nashville

This evening of story songs at Natchez Hill Winery Tasting Room at Fontanel features jazzical blues act MASTERS MARIE and Nashville Opera's Mary Ragland Young Artists. There is no cover, but a suggested \$20 donation at the door benefits the Opera. Enjoy a full bar and tapas menu. Show starts at 7. First come, first served.

OPERA@ FAT BOTTOM: BEERS & BARITONES

May 12, 5:30-8 p.m

900 Main Street, East Nashville

Gather your friends and toast, because \$1 from every beer purchase will benefit the Opera! No cover.

OPERA ON THE MOUNTAIN: OPERA@ VANDERBILT DYER OBSERVATORY

June 6, 6 p.m.

1000 Oman Drive, Brentwood

Enjoy picnic dining, an outdoor concert, and the opportunity to stargaze through the grand telescope. The cost is \$55 for a table seat, \$35 for a concert seat, \$70 per carload for grass seating, and \$85 for the Patron Level and its special perks.

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as you are or dress up as your favorite character! The cost is \$20 for cabaret and balcony seating, \$15 for orchestra.

OPERA@ NLOC: PAINT ALONG OPERA

August 11, 6:30 p.m.

3622 Redmon Street, Nashville

Learn about the visual elements of opera while you paint a scene inspired by TURANDOT. A \$45 ticket includes all supplies, refreshments, and instruction!

OPERA@ FRANKLIN THEATRE: WIZARD OF OZ

July 19, 1:30 p.m.

419 Main Street, Franklin

You can sing every song on the Yellow Brick Road aided by the subtitles! Come



RAISE YOUR GLASSES a champagne toast!

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Mary Ragland Young Artists Christopher Nelson and Hanna Brammer as Jack and his mother.

Below, Alex Soare as the Giant.



See Jack and the Beanstalk!

HCA TriStar Nashville Opera ON TOUR was scheduled for **7** weeks on the road with **73** performances at **45** schools and **14** community venues. Though the ice storm closed schools for part of run, we still covered **13** Middle Tennessee counties and had **14** schools on the **sold-out** tour waiting list! You and your family can enjoy a **free community performance** of John Davies' *Jack and the Beanstalk*. Join us at these locations!

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|
| Saturday, March 14 | 10 a.m. | Conexion @ Casa Azafran |
| | 2 p.m. | Goodlettsville Library |
| Sunday, March 15 | 2 p.m. | Belle Meade Plantation |

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AN EXPRESSIVE LIFE IN A CREATIVE PLACE

Music City offers it, and we think OPERA adds in a big way!

It's almost impossible to have missed the avalanche of glowing press touting Nashville's high quality of life, cultural vitality, and recent economic successes. What may be less obvious is a major reason for these complimentary accolades: Nashville boasts a population with one of the most avid appetites for arts and culture in the entire country. Behind only Washington, D.C., in terms of overall "vibrancy," Nashville consistently ranks in the top 10 in every measure for leading an "expressive life," a term coined by former National Endowment for the Arts Chairman and Vanderbilt Curb Center Director Bill Ivey.

I've had a lot of time to think about the expressive life here in Nashville and all the ways in which our community—government leaders, citizens, artists of all types, and businesses—continue to cultivate and nurture this vitality. It came full circle to me in November, when I was invited to participate in a convening at the NEA to talk about

a practice called "creative placemaking." The term was originally coined by Rocco Landesman, who, during his term as the 11th chair of the NEA, wanted to develop ways for the arts to leverage the creative potential already present in a place and develop diverse opportunities—including economic opportunities—for citizens to thrive in that place. He envisioned fostering vibrant neighborhoods that, by capitalizing on their diversity, would make spontaneous interaction among residents and businesses more natural, creating a greater sense of community and at the same time presenting a business-friendly environment.

When you think about it, that's exactly what Nashville has done so well! Of course, it doesn't hurt that we attract some of the most talented artists in the world to our city, but the collaboration of community, business, and civic leaders has ensured our creative placemaking achievements. The success is highly visible on all fronts—artistic, economic, entrepreneurial, ethnic and cultural diversity, and civic engagement. We have much to be proud of.

The concept of creative placemaking is deeply ingrained in the fabric and fiber of our city, largely because our leaders



Part of a creative collaboration between Vanderbilt University's Center for Latin American Studies, Conexión Américas, and Nashville Opera included the screening of the film *THE HOUSE OF THE SPIRITS* at the Noah Liff Opera Center, January 8.

saw the potential of the arts as a change-maker before the concrete was even laid. As a relatively young opera company (the 2015-2016 season will be our 35th; by contrast, the Met will be ending their 135th this spring!), Nashville Opera could never have ascended to our current level without the ardent support of our city leaders who laid the groundwork for a culture of,

well, *culture*. Naturally, the Opera owes a great deal to our decades of passionate patrons, Nashville's welcoming business environment, and an education system willing to bring our celebrated ON TOUR program into schools well before other communities saw the benefit of such a program. But, it has been the unwavering dedication of our collaborative community that has provided the bedrock for our thriving opera—and arts—culture. It goes without saying, then, that Nashville itself is a key reason that we are able to innovate, engage, and serve this dynamic and rapidly evolving city.

NOAH E. SPIEGEL
Chief Operating Officer

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FLORENCIA EN EL AMAZONAS, January 2015

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YOUNG VOICES: THE MET AUDITIONS

The Metropolitan Opera Auditions, Middle and East Tennessee District, were held on Saturday, January 3, 2015, at the new Natalie L. Haslam Music Building at the University of Tennessee Knoxville. Twenty-five singers participated. The judges were Dean Anthony, Director of Janiec Opera Company Brevard, North Carolina; Carroll Freeman, Valerie Adams Distinguished Professor in Opera, Georgia State University; and Jerome Shannon, Conductor of the Brevard Music Center. Funding for the event came from the Nashville Opera Guild, the Knoxville Opera Guild, and a \$1,500 gift from Eleanor Currie in memory of her brother, Jimmy Bradford. The winners were mezzo-soprano Amanda Palmeiro from Memphis; tenor Stephen Martin from Rochester, Michigan; and tenor Todd Barnhill from Tabor City, North Carolina. (Stephen Martin was a winner at the District in 2014 and won the encouragement award at the Region. Todd Barnhill was a winner of the encouragement award at the District in 2014.) The three competed at the Regionals in Lexington, Kentucky, February 21. Three encouragement awards were given to baritone Nicholas Davis of Petersburg, Tennessee; baritone Thaddeus Ennen of Buffalo Center, Iowa; and baritone Makoto Winkler of Seaford, New York. The accompanist was Eileen Downey, Knoxville Opera vocal coach.



SPRING MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The Nashville Opera Guild spring membership meeting will be held on Thursday, May 14, at 10:30. Ellen Martin has generously offered her fabulous home for our meeting. Please mark your calendars to attend and enjoy some good food, hear about the upcoming year's operas, and visit with all your Guild friends. Guests and new friends are welcome to attend. For reservations and details, please call 615.832.5242.



As a salute to the outstanding work of the Nashville Opera Guild, a celebration with champagne, sweet treats, and performances by the Mary Ragland Young Artists was held February 15 at the Noah Liff Opera Center. Hosted by the Nashville Opera Board and Advisory Board, the afternoon provided a time for all the Opera's most valuable and tireless volunteers to gather and meet new and old friends. 1. Guild members Marion Couch and Sue Claxton. 2. New Board member Cal and Amanda Renegar. 3. Hanna Brammer's aria fills the Ragsdale Grand Lobby.



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CURTAIN CALL

Get to know fellow Nashville Opera fan STACY WIDELITZ, a new Opera Board member and an accomplished musical composer and writer.

What is your music background?

Growing up on Long Island, I started studying piano when I was almost 8 years old, decided I wanted to be a professional musician at 13, and started playing clubs in a lounge band at 15. I attended Manhattanville College as a music major but quit after two years because I was starting to get my first work as a composer. I worked with a studio in Connecticut for a number of years after that and at 24 wrote my first national TV theme—for *The Richard Simmons Show*. I moved to Los Angeles the next year and pursued a career as a TV and film composer, working on such shows as *Beverly Hills, 90210*, and composing the music for over 20 television movies. Along the way, Patrick Swayze and I wrote “She’s like the Wind,” which got picked up for *Dirty Dancing*. I’m very gratified that it’s now considered a classic. I moved to Nashville at the end of 2000 and have been actively writing since then!

What was your first opera and what was your impression of it?

It was *Die Fledermaus*, and I saw it when I was in elementary school. All I remember is enjoying it!

How did you become involved with Nashville Opera?

I’ve known John and Carol for a while and had the chance to be part of a collaboration between the Opera and ALIAS Chamber Ensemble, where I serve as board president. They performed the score for *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field*, which was a GREAT

production.

Subsequently, John and I had lunch to discuss a project I’m working on, and he brought up the idea of me joining the Opera Board. I thought about it and decided to join.

What’s something about you that people would be surprised to learn?

I played Captain Corcoran in a 6th-grade performance of *H.M.S. Pinafore*. I’ve loved Gilbert and Sullivan ever since.

What was your favorite concert? Favorite opera?

My favorite concert was Pierre Boulez conducting the New York Philharmonic in a performance of *The Rite of Spring*. His interpretation made clear how much Debussy and Impressionism influenced Stravinsky. My favorite opera is *The Magic Flute*. The aria for the Queen of the Night is unbelievable. I also love *The Mikado*; besides being very funny, the music is extraordinary.

What would you tell a first-time opera-goer?

Try not to get too caught up in the words. Get caught up in the music, the singing, and the raw emotion.

Do you have a favorite musical experience you’d like to share?

I got to be the accompanist for Anne Bancroft on a TV show years back, and she was a joy to work with. Playing with legendary guitarist Jeff “Skunk” Baxter at the China Club in LA ranks right up there. We had cigars and scotch on



stage. That’s the way to perform!

How do you compare your opera experience in Nashville to your opera experience in other cities?

I’ve actually seen more opera since moving to Nashville than I did anywhere else I’ve lived!

Use one word to describe the Nashville music scene.

Diverse.



From the top, Stacy with Gloria Estefan and Patric Swayze in 1989 receiving BMI awards. Stacy (center) with Jeff “Skunk” Baxter, lead guitarist from Steely Dan and The Doobie Brothers; Doreen Ringer-Ross, head of film/tv for BMI; and Caryn Richman, star of the TV’s *The New Gidget*. On keyboards in his first band, age 15. A recent photo playfully captures “a typical day at home.”

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on April eleventh, at five-thirty, punctually.

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enjoy dinner and libations in the style of British manor lords.
Hosts Nancy Coleman and Andy Valentine will be greeting,
toasting Major General Stanley, Frederic, Mabel,
and the Pirate King!

For a merry evening filled with misadventures and comedy,
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