

CHICAGO FALL WEEKEND

Wednesday, December 6th through Saturday, December 9th



Chicago on Lake Michigan

"Why is the Lyric Opera of Chicago packed to the rafters? Simple! People are having a marvelous time." Chicago Tribune

"Founded in 1891, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is consistently hailed as one of the greatest orchestras in the world." cso.org

"Chanticleer serves as a reminder of what a mesmerizing, haunting and ethereal sound an all-male adult choir can achieve."

Chicago Classical Review.

Amber Wagner: *"This is a world-class vocal instrument with echoes of Jessye Norman, but a far wider range to the top than Miss Norman ever knew."* Musical World

Marina Rebeka: *"A strikingly regal heroine who throughout bore herself with true dramatic and musical authority. The voice possesses a distinctively gem-like shine, particularly at the top..."* Opera, review of 'Norma'

Matthew Polenzani & Mariusz Kwiecien: *"But as they turn to each other, they join together. Their ardent, soaring performance... brought fresh urgency to the familiar music."* NY Times, review of the 'Pearl Fishers' duet at the MET

"As Mimi, Maria Agresta showed why she is swiftly becoming one of the most sought-after sopranos in the world." Latin Post, review of the MET's 'La Bohème'

For our annual Holiday Season in Chicago, we have chosen a **four-night** period to include a pair of beloved operas which mark the highlights of the **Lyric Opera**'s new season. No opera enthusiast will want to miss the combination of Giacomo Puccini's final opera, **Turandot** – in Allen Charles Klein's spectacular Chinese staging – and Georges Bizet's exotic **The Pearl Fishers**, set in ancient Ceylon. 'Turandot' will feature **Amber Wagner**, **Stefano La Colla** and **Maria Agresta** as the principals; and 'The Pearl Fishers' will offer a starry quartet of **Marina Rebeka**, **Matthew Polenzani**, **Mariusz Kwiecien**, and **Andrea Silvestrelli** as the protagon-

ists. With the Lyric's esteemed Music Director **Sir Andrew Davis** conducting both works, we are assured of the highest musical standards.

Our program is equally inspired by a pair of concerts, a pair of evenings in Chicago's hallowed **Orchestra Hall** on Michigan Avenue. On our first night, we will celebrate the Holiday Season with the San Francisco men's choir, **Chanticleer**, The Fourth Presbyterian Church (on East Chestnut Street) will be an ideal intimate venue for the Grammy-winning's performance of *A Chanticleer Christmas*. And on our final night, in the city's hallowed **Orchestra Hall** on Michigan Avenue, the **Chicago Symphony Orchestra** will be led by the Czech guest conductor **Jiri Belohlavek** in popular works by Bedrich Smetana, Samuel Barber and Antonin Dvorak. The radiant cellist **Alisa Weilerstein** will be the soloist.

Our accommodations for **four nights** will be at the venerable **Union League Club**, located in the heart of Chicago's 'Loop' within easy access of the Art Institute, Orchestra Hall and the Lyric Opera. Established in 1879, the Union League occupies an elegant downtown building where a major collection of 800 American artworks is displayed in the spacious public rooms. Dining facilities include the Wigwam Room (for breakfast and informal dinner), the Main Dining Room for formal lunch, the Carvery for informal lunch, and the Rendez-Vous Bar for lunch and light dinner. The Club also features an indoor swimming pool, exercise and massage rooms, and an inviting large library surrounded by important paintings. Your temporary guest card will entitle you to take advantage of the wide range of services offered by this private club.

Early Wednesday evening, December 6th, a **cocktail reception or pre-theatre dinner** (depending on the number in our group) will be arranged at the Club. This will be an opportunity to meet other members of the Tour.

At 7:30 pm on Wednesday, our first performance will



Marina Rebeka



Matthew Polenzani



Mariusz Kwiecien

be *A Chanticleer Christmas*, an 'a capella' concert of carefully curated Christmas rarities by the San Francisco men's choir, **Chanticleer**. We are fortunate to include this event in the **Fourth Presbyterian Church**, as New Yorkers are well aware that the annual performance at the Metropolitan Museum is always sold out months in advance. Selections range from Renaissance composers Byrd, Praetorius and Gabrielli to arrangements of popular carols and songs.



Chanticleer

Thursday morning, December 7th, we have planned a visit to the **Art Institute of Chicago**, which contains priceless galleries of American artists and European masters. The Art Institute is the home of Georges Seurat's celebrated *La Grande Jatte*, Marc Chagall's soaring stained-glass windows, and a wealth of canvases by Monet, Renoir and Gauguin. Not to be missed are the world-renowned 68 **Thorne Miniature Rooms** depicting European and American furnishings from their earliest periods up to the 1930's. The museum's gift shop is also exceptionally interesting. You will be free to enjoy your own leisure time at the Museum.

Thursday evening, we will attend the 7:30 pm performance of Georges Bizet's French opera, **The Pearl Fishers**. "Heavenly perfumed music takes us to exotic Ceylon where two friends swear to forget a sarong-clad Brahmin priestess... One man will win her heart - and the other will lose his life." (*Lyric Opera*).

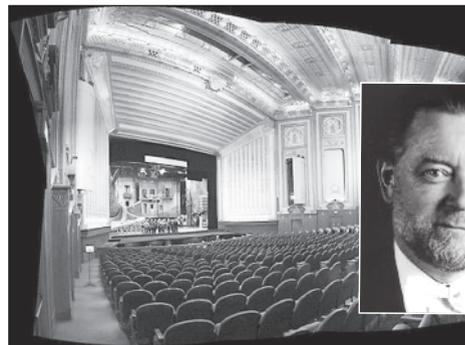


Thorne Miniature Room

(for the tenor Nadir) account for the hypnotic impact of this richly melodic opera. Premiered in Paris in 1863, 'The Pearl Fishers' has established a popular position in the repertoire over the past decade as audiences have grown familiar with Bizet's evocative score. A brilliant cast is headed by the same pair of romantic rivals who lifted the MET's recent revival into the surprise hit of the '15 - '16 season: American tenor **Matthew Polenzani** as the handsome Nadir opposite Polish baritone **Mariusz Kwiecien** as the head fisherman Zurga. The MET's Latvian soprano **Marina Rebeka** stars as the priestess Leila, and Italian bass **Andrea Silvestrelli** completes the quartet of principals as the Brahman priest Nourabad. The staging is by the team of director **Andrew Sinclair** and scenic designer **Zandra Rhodes**. The conductor is the Lyric's Music Director, **Sir Andrew Davis**. *Sung in French with English titles.*

Both Friday and Saturday are left free during the day for independent activities. You may want to visit the city's **Museum of Contemporary Art** or the renowned **Marshall Field Museum of Natural History** on Michigan Avenue. Nearby stores for convenient holiday shopping include Macy's (in the old Marshall Field building on the corner of State and Washington Streets, one of Barnes & Noble's biggest bookstores, and Nordstrom Rack on State Street.

At 7:30 pm on Friday evening, December 8th, we will return to the **Lyric Opera** for Giacomo Puccini's **Turandot**, the culminating work of the composer's career (premiered at La Scala in 1926). The backdrop of Peking 'in legendary times' inspired Puccini to compose his most original score, richly orchestrated and highlighted by Princess Turandot's icy aria of defiance 'In questa reggia', the slave-girl Liu's two poignant arias of devotion to Prince Calaf ('Signore, ascolta' and 'Tu che di gel sei cinta'), and Calaf's familiar *romanza* 'Nessun dorma'. Tonight's cast will feature the Lyric's own dramatic soprano **Amber Wagner** in the title role, following her MET portrayal of Senta ('Der Fliegende Holländer') this spring; the sought-after Italian lyric soprano **Maria Agresta** in her eagerly awaited Chicago debut as Liu; and Italy's stentorian tenor **Stefano La Colla** in another debut as Prince Calaf. The



Lyric Opera of Chicago; Sir Andrew Davis, Music Director

spectacular co-production with the San Diego Opera is new to Chicago and is directed by **Rob Kearley** with sets designed by **Allen Charles Klein**. The conductor is again **Sir Andrew Davis**. *Sung in Italian with English titles.*



Amber Wagner



Maria Agresta

Early Saturday evening, December 9th, we will enjoy a pre-concert **dinner** at one of the restaurants between the Union League Club and Orchestra Hall.

Our final event will be the 8:00 pm concert by the revered **Chicago Symphony Orchestra** at **Orchestra Hall**. Guest conductor **Jiri Belohlavek**, Music Director of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, has announced a program of *Selections from Bedrich Smetana's The Bartered Bride*, Samuel Barber's *Cello Concerto*, and Antonin Dvorak's *Symphony No. 5*. The soloist is the American cellist **Alisa Weilerstein**.



Stefano La Colla

Independent departures should be on Sunday morning, December 10th.

Chicago

Price per person, based on double occupancy	\$ 2,980
Single room supplement	\$ 490