

BEL CANTO

Newsletter of the Manatee Opera Guild

February 2022

<https://manateeoperaguild.org>

SWEETHEART LUNCHEON RESERVATIONS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Please send your reservations with a check (made out to MOG) to:

Jean Roberts
222 12th St West
Apt 302
Bradenton, FL 34205
730-0135
jeanrob222@gmail.com

Menu

Chicken Dijonnaise
Pecan Crusted Chicken Breast with Maple
Dijonnaise,
Green Beans & Butternut Squash Mash
Triple chocolate mousse

Please inform Jean Roberts of dietary restrictions

Please note your choice on your reservation.

Reservations due by February 11.

Let's all join together on February 16 to celebrate and thank this year's Manatee Opera Guild Valentine, **Maryanne Hazen!**

We have a lot to thank Maryanne for. She has served in many capacities for the board and Guild since becoming a member in 2006. In 2009, she became our Membership Chair, a position that she held for 4 years, during which time she redesigned our membership brochures, bringing them more visual appeal. In 2012, she took the role of Corresponding Secretary, a position she held until 2017 when she became our Treasurer, and Chair of the Finance Committee. In addition, Maryanne has been an instrumental part of the Stars of Tomorrow Committee, organizing the lunch for the Apprentice Artists before the concert, and preparing much of the food herself. Maryanne is an accomplished floral designer, and her creations have graced the tables of our Galas, Soirées, and other special occasions. This year, she has undertaken the design, implementation, and upkeep of our website, using both her computer and artistic skills. So, let's all gather on February 16th to thank Maryanne for her many gifts to the Guild. And, if you cannot attend, please consider sending Maryanne a tribute to be noted at the luncheon and published in the next *Bel Canto*.

It was a disappointment for all of us to miss the *Stars of Tomorrow Concert*. Sarasota Opera staff are understandably very protective of their singers and audiences. So when the State College of Florida wouldn't allow protective mandates, we had to cancel. Thank you to all members who donated their ticket money to the Guild, as it helps us to meet our goals for contributions to the Opera.

March 2 brings us another big party — our annual Fashion Show and Luncheon. This year will be our first experience with the fashions of Evelyn and Arthur, and checking out their website, it should be an exciting show. This year, for the first time, there will be singing by the artists of Sarasota Opera, along with piano music and delectable food. So, look for your invitations and plan to be there. This isn't just an event for the ladies; gentlemen are invited as well.

February 18 brings us our last Prelude. Phyllis Lowitt, an instructor of vocal music and long-time opera devotee will bring her expertise to her talk on Verdi's *Attila*. Our Preludes give us information that is not in books. Each Prelude this year has provided us with fascinating insights into the operas that we will see in the Winter Festival. Preludes are only \$5, and no reservations are required.

See you on the 16th for our Sweetheart Luncheon, and again on the 18th for our Prelude.

Reservation for the Sweetheart Luncheon
February 16, 2022

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Number of Reservations: _____

Number of Regular Reservations \$35.00 _____

Number of Patron Reservations \$40.00 _____

I cannot attend, but am sending a tribute to Maryanne
Hazen in the amount of \$ _____

Checks made out to MOG, please.

MUSIC FOR VALENTINES

By Elizabeth Aversa

According to the English National Opera, “For the last 400 years, operas have been based around themes of real human emotion: life, death, joy, anger, and most predominantly, love.” Since it’s the season for Valentines and romance, this column is about love in opera. But we’re not talking about the operas that come to mind on the mere mention of love – Puccini’s *La Boheme*, Verdi’s *La Traviata*, or Wagner’s *Tristan and Isolde* – rather, we’ll consider a half dozen less well-known love stories and enjoy their music. Happy Valentine’s Day to all!

***The Elixir of Love* (by Gaetano Donizetti, First Performed 1832)**

In this two-act comic opera Nemorino, who is in love with Adina, enlists in the army for a signing bonus so he can purchase a second bottle of the alleged “elixir of love” being sold by a peripatetic quack. The elixir is cheap wine disguised as a love potion. Having enlisted and having money in his pocket – and having a rich uncle who dies and leaves him a fortune unbeknownst to him - makes Nemorino more attractive to the ladies, including Adina, who faints in his arms when he says he may die in battle. He believes his good fortune is due to the elixir! He sings about love as Adina leaves him because she believes he isn’t interested in her; this piece sets the record straight and Nemorino gets his girl.

Listen to [“Una furtiva lagrima”](#)

Luciano Pavarotti as Nemorino

***Don Pasquale* (by Gaetano Donizetti, First performed 1843)**

This comic opera involves Don Pasquale’s desire to marry, a crazy plot to have him marry his nephew’s girlfriend Norina (who immediately turns into Bridezilla), then for her be freed to marry Ernesto. In the end Pasquale is relieved to be rid of his wife and he confers blessings on his nephew and his ex. The music has Ernesto declaring his love to Norina.

Hear [“Tornami a dir che m’ami”](#)

Ryland Davis as Ernesto; Lillian Nash as Norina

***Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (by Richard Wagner, First performed 1868)**

David Pogue’s humorous and irreverent guide, *Opera for Dummies*, warns “The Master-Singer[s] is the longest opera still performed today. If performed in its entirety, you’re looking at five hours of good music and dry wit. Pack a suitcase.”

Wagner’s only love story/comedy is about a singing contest with the grand prize being Eva, who is attracted to one of the apprentice singers, Walther. After “five hours of good music” and local townspeople engaging in much critiquing, jealous high jinks, and underhanded tricks, Walther sings the song that came to him in a dream and wins the contest and the girl.

Listen to [“Prize Song”](#)

Peter Seiffert as Walther

***Otello* (by Giuseppe Verdi, First performed 1887)**

In this three-act opera based on Shakespeare’s *Othello* we have an especially tragic situation. Otello and his wife Desdemona clearly love one another, as the music demonstrates. But suspicion, jealousy, and evil plots and schemes abound and lead to Otello killing his wife and then, upon learning that she has been faithful after all, stabs himself and dies over Desdemona’s lifeless body. It

is hard to imagine that the love professed in this music would lead to such an unhappy ending.

Listen to [“Love Duet”](#)

Franco Corelli as Otello, Teresa Zylis-Gara as Desdemona

***The Queen of Spades* (by Peter Ilitsch Tchaikovsky, First performed 1890)**

Love is a secondary theme in this tragic Russian opera. Prince Yeletsky and military officer Hermann both love Lisa, whose grandmother holds a secret key to winning at cards. Although the Prince doesn’t win Lisa’s love, he does have a beautiful aria that professes his love for her. (Spoiler: grandmother dies of shock, Lisa throws herself into a canal, and Hermann stabs himself to death.) The Prince is the last principal left standing at the very unhappy ending.

Hear [“Ya vas lyublya”](#)

Ludovic Tézier as Prince Yeletsky

***Il Tabarro* (by Giacomo Puccini, First performed 1919)**

This tragic opera is part of Puccini’s *Il Trittico* that consists of a comedy, a tragedy, and an uplifting story of redemption. *Il Tabarro*, the tragedy, involves a love triangle where the faithful husband (Michele) kills his wife Giorgetta’s lover (Luigi) – and hides him under his cloak. In the opera’s so-called “great duet,” Luigi and Giorgetta profess their love and arrange a meeting that is derailed by the jealous husband.

Hear [“The great duet”](#)

Renatto Scotto as Giorgetta and Vasile Moldoveanu

Enjoy the music! See you at the opera.



Adelaide Boedecker and Geoffrey Apgalo as Adina and Nemorino in Sarasota Opera’s 2020 production of *The Elixir of Love*.

PLEASE WELCOME NEW AND RETURNING MEMBERS:

Joan Vasilopoulos (N)
9405 Andover Circle
Bradenton, FL 34210
941-567-4723
508-423-5243
jonvas@verizon.net

Rich Lutz (R)
4204 37th Avenue Drive W.
Bradenton, FL 34205
717-872-1290
rlutz019@comcast.net

MANATEE OPERA GUILD CALENDAR 2021-2022

Meetings

At Palm Aire Country Club
5601 Country Club Way, Sarasota, FL 34243

Dates

February 16 (Manatee Opera Guild Valentine Party celebrating our own member, Maryanne Hazen) 11 a.m.
March 16 (Spring Fling Brunch includes the Helen Jepson Dellera and Deane Allyn Awards) 10:30 a.m.

Preludes

All Preludes take place at Westminster Towers Auditorium
1533 4th Avenue West, Bradenton 34205
Refreshments at 9:30, Program at 10
\$5 at the door, no reservations required
Masks are required

February 18 *Attila*
Phyllis Lowitt

Fashion Show

Lakewood Ranch Country Club
Date: March 2, 11:30 a.m.
Fashions from Evelyn and Arthur, Main Street, Sarasota

Board Meetings (All members are invited to attend)
At the home of Angela Korsmo. 319 36th Street NE

Second Tuesday
10 a.m.

March 8
April 12

Tributes

Tributes are a note of kindness and acknowledgement. As your own lives unfold this year and events of meaning arise, consider recognizing these with an MOG tribute. Fill out this form, and send to Syble DiGirolamo, 3509 Little Country Road, Parrish, 34219

My gift of \$_____ is given:
____ In memory of _____
____ In honor of _____
____ On the occasion of _____
Please send an acknowledgement card to:

From: _____

Checks made out to MOG please



March 2, 2022
11:30 am

Lakewood Ranch Country Club
7650 Legacy Boulevard
Lakewood Ranch, FL 34202

Fashions from Evelyn and Arthur
Main Street, Sarasota

Look for your invitation in the mail

JANUARY MEETING NOTES



Sarasota Opera Director of Development, and MOG Sustaining Member, **Scott Guinn**, left, speaks to the Guild, congratulating members on their dedication to Sarasota Opera.



JoAnna Pope, Elizabeth Novella, Johannes Löhner, Billy Huyler, and Levi Hamlin



Four Studio Artists from Sarasota Opera, along with the Maestro Johannes Löhner, Director of the Studio Artist program, entertained with impressive renderings of popular and lesser-known arias at our January meeting.

British-American soprano Elizabeth Novella, left, will cover the roles of Leïla in *Les Pecheurs des perles* and Marie in *La Fille du Regiment* with Sarasota Opera in the spring of 2022. As a Studio Artist in the Winter of 2020, she performed both Giannetta in *L'Elisir d'Amore* and Musetta (cover) in *La Bohème*. Ms. Novella was Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* with the Aspen Music Festival, for which the press hailed, "Novella dazzled with rich sound and impressive intensity". Hear more of Ms. Novella at her website: <https://www.elizabethnovella.com/media>



JoAnna Pope, mezzo-soprano, recently sang with the Boston Lyric Opera in their *The Handmaid's Tale*. Other operatic roles Ms. Pope has performed include Carmen (*Carmen*) and Hansel (*Hansel and Gretel*) with Opera51 in 2019; Prince Charmant (*Cendrillon*) with Opera del West in 2019; Prince Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*) with Vox New England in 2019; Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*) with the Bay View Music Festival in 2018; and Elizabeth Brigmann (*Sweets by Kate*) and Mrs. Bass (*Emmeline*) with the Boston University Opera Institute in 2017. JoAnna joined Sarasota Opera as an Apprentice Artist for the 2020 Winter Festival season. She returned to the company as a Resident Artist in their reimagined Spring 2021 season where she sang the Spirit and the Second Witch in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. Listen to JoAnna at her website: <https://joannapopemezzo.com/videos/>



Levi Hamlin, Tenor, and graduate of Western Michigan University won the 2015 First Prize in the Opera Grand Rapids Division II University Competition. As a 2019 Resident Artist at Opera North, he played Macduff in their production of *Macbeth*. He joined Sarasota Opera in 2018 as a Fall Apprentice Artist, and returned in 2019 as a Fall and Winter Apprentice Artist. He was a Winter 2020 Studio Artist.



Billy Huyler was most recently seen in April 2021 making his debut with Opera Southwest singing the role of Tarabotto in Rossini's *L'inganno felice*. In the 2019-2020 season he was selected as an Apprentice Artist with Sarasota Opera where he made his mainstage debut singing the Doganiere in *La bohème*, and covering the roles of Grégorio in *Roméo et Juliette* and Usciére in *Rigoletto*. Billy also was selected to perform the role of Tom in the New York premiere of Laura Kaminsky's *Some Light Emerges* with Utopia Opera. In the 2018-2019 season he sang the role of Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Estates Theatre in Prague, Czech Republic. With Manhattan School of Music Opera Theater he performed the roles of the Baron de Montefiascone in Isouard's *Cendrillon*, the Badger/Parson in *The Cunning Little Vixen*, and Count Carnero in J. Strauss's *Der Zigeunerbaron*. With Indiana University Opera Theater he performed the roles of Commander Harbison in *South Pacific* and Bill Bobstay in *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Montefiascone. He received his Master's of Music in Voice from the Manhattan School of Music and his Bachelor of Music Education in Voice from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. Hear Mr. Huyler sing "[Papageno's Suicide](#)".

