



## NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2013

### Board of Directors Election

Nov. 19, 2013

Members of the San José Opera Guild will elect directors and officers at a general membership meeting to be held at 10:00 AM, November 19, just before our scheduled Opera San José program at the JCC, 14855 Oka Road, Los Gatos.

The following slate was recommended by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Board of Directors. Serving on the Nominating Committee were Nina Gherardi, Laurel Kaleda, Alice Swanson, and co-chairs Connie Zilles and Phyllis Whitney.

#### Directors

Corinne Carter	Joan Shomler
Wendy Dewell	Colette Siegal
Argo Gherardi	Diane Snow
Edna Herman	Alice Swanson
Laurel Kaleda	Phyllis Whitney
Olga Nespole	Connie Zilles
Hannelore Romney	Steve Zilles

#### Officers

Peggy Heiman, President  
Jan Eurich, Vice-President  
Margaret Boddy, Recording Secretary  
Nina Gherardi, Corresponding Secretary  
Elliot Swanson, Treasurer  
Susan English, Parliamentarian  
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### Opera Preview

by Mort Levine

What shape will opera take in the future? What do the most creative composers, librettists, and directors think about this art form's next reincarnation?

Because we live in Silicon Valley's high technology playground, we can be sure there will be some efforts made to embrace our many local forward thrusts into the mix of ideas that will be shaping the operatic world as well as other art forms across the 21st century.

Now wait, you might say, haven't we already experienced some new works written in this still young century? Yes, indeed. The latest example

immediately at hand is the just concluded run of *Delores Claiborne*. In many ways, a successful opera yet redolent of some of the verismo and romantic aspect of century old productions. Careful listening to the Tobias Picker opera of Stephen King's gothic tale brings with it many rewards, but 21st century it is not.

Instead, let's take a peek into the coming year. On February 16, 2014 we can be treated to a free HD simulcast of an opera that may fit the bill we've described. It will be shown here at the new 21st century Bing Concert Hall on the Stanford campus. We'll be sharing a worldwide transmission  
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## Opera Preview

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sion to hundreds of venues around the globe.

The new opera is called *Death and the Powers*. It is by an accomplished opera composer, Tod Machover, to a witty, clever libretto by the former poet laureate of the US, Robert Pinsky. One reason it gets especially interesting is that Machover is also the director of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Media Lab.

The opera story concerns a terminally ill billionaire, Simon Powers, who wants to know just how far humans can push the limits of immortality. He decides to download his consciousness into a robot's brain, and, from then on, the audience will be seeing things through the robot's eyes and understanding them through its brain.

Pushing out the frontiers of high technology, we will all have a chance to interact with the robot through use of our smart phones, our iPads, or tablets. Additional devices will be supplied as needed.

The opera has been presented twice already in Boston and in Monte Carlo. Now, the Dallas Opera has taken this on as part of its commitment to their Opera of the Future project. Thus, the HD simulcast comes to us from the stage of the Winspear Opera House.

Machover's music takes flight in what critics have called an exciting new techno-direction which is clearly of our new century. The composer stresses that just as there should be no limits to life long learning in all its forms, so should opera and other musical forms find their own limitless directions.

Highly respected opera critic Andrew Porter summed it up in an article in *Opera Magazine* when he declared: "*Death and the Powers* is a rich, new serious truly grand opera". See you at the Bing on Feb. 16. Don't forget your smart phone.

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## Career Updates

Soprano **Lori Phillips** (OSJ 1995-96) stepped in at the last minute for Alwyn Mellor (who is suffering from allergies) to sing Brünnhilde in the Cycle 1 *Siegfried* at Seattle Opera's McCaw Hall. As soon as the last notes faded & the curtain came down the audience exploded in a roaring standing ovation that seemed to go on forever & measured at least 7.0 on the Richter scale. Kudos to Lori & OSJ!

Baritone **Scott Bearden** (OSJ 2000-2002) returned to OSJ to appear in Verdi's *Falstaff*. Richard Scheinin in the San José Mercury News noted that "baritone Scott Bearden is one of the most powerful and charismatic artists to ever work with this company." During the 2008-2009 season, he appeared as Iago (*Otello*) with Oakland East Bay Symphony, Tonio (*I Pagliacci*) for Knoxville opera, covered Conte di Luna for San Francisco Opera's production of *Il Trovatore*, a role he also performed for Festival Opera in the summer of 2008. On May 31, 2008, Mr Bearden was named the First Prize winner and audience favorite of the second annual Irene Dalis Vocal Competition.

Baritone **Daniel Cilli** (OSJ 2006-2010) sang the roles of Marco (*Gianni Schicchi*) and Captain Corcoran (*HMS Pinafore*) for Music in the Mountains in the Spring of 2013. In June of the same year he sang the title role in *Gesualdo, Prince of Madness*, in a premier reading with Opera Parallele of San Francisco. On the concert stage, he will appear as soloist in Faure's *Requiem* with the Louisiana Philharmonic. Performances during the 2011-12 season included Bobby in *Mahagonny Songspiel* for West Edge Opera, Escamillo (*Carmen*) for Townsend Opera Players, and the title role in West Bay Opera's production of *Don Giovanni*. In February of 2011, Mr. Cilli appeared on short notice in the role of Papageno for a semi-staged production of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Music Director Marin Alsop.

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# Calendar

NOVEMBER 9, 9:55 AM, Metropolitan Opera Simulcast in HD, *Tosca* by Puccini, live at CineArts Oakridge 20, 225-7340; Santana Row 6, 554-7010; and Cupertino 16, 871-2262. Cost \$24.00 for adults, \$22.00 for seniors. Encore: Wednesday, November 13th 6:30 pm. The encores cost \$22.00 for adults and \$20.00 for seniors. (Prices may vary for the various HD operas.)

NOVEMBER 16, 17, 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, DECEMBER 1, Opera San José presents *Hansel & Gretel* by Humperdink. California Theatre, 8pm except Sundays at 3pm. Introduction to Opera meets one and a half hours before the opera. Tickets: 408-437-4450 or [www.operasj.org](http://www.operasj.org).

NOVEMBER 19, San José Opera Guild's final presentation of the Fall. General Director Larry Hancock will present the remainder of the Opera San José season for us. Opera San José singers will appear in person and sing excerpts from the final three operas which are *Hansel and Gretel* in November, *Madama Butterfly* in February and *Don Giovanni* in April. Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy live opera up close! JCC of Silicon Valley, 14855 Oka Road, Los Gatos. 10 am to noon. SJOG and JCC members free. Non-members \$10.00.

DECEMBER 8, 4pm, Special Event, Opera Classics, A benefit for West Bay Opera. "The best moments from your favorite operas." Menlo-Atherton Performing Arts Center, 555 Middlefield Rd., Menlo Park, CA 94027, for more information 650-424-9999.

DECEMBER 14, 9:55 AM, Metropolitan Opera Simulcast in HD, *Falstaff* by Verdi, live at CineArts Oakridge 20, 225-7340; Santana Row 6, 554-7010; and Cupertino 16, 871-2262. Cost \$24.00 for adults, \$22.00 for seniors. Encore: Wednesday, December 18th 6:30 pm. Encores cost \$22.00 for adults and \$20.00 for seniors. (Prices may vary for the various HD opera.)

FEBRUARY 8, 9 AM, Metropolitan Opera Simulcast in HD, *Rusalka* by Dvorak, live at CineArts Oakridge 20, 225-7340; Santana Row 6, 554-7010; and Cupertino 16, 871-2262. Cost \$24.00 for adults, \$22.00 for seniors. Encore: Wednesday, February 12th 6:30 pm. Encores cost \$22.00 for adults and \$20.00 for seniors. (Prices may vary for the various HD operas.)

SAVE THE DATE !!!!! Saturday May 31, 2014, Annual San José Opera Guild Champagne Brunch at La Rinconada in Los Gatos. Plan ahead for next year! ###

## Additions to our Membership Roster

Kurjan, Philip (408) 738-1931

Noel Butler & Baba Herrick

657 Coleraine Court, Sunnyvale, CA 94087

[phil.kurjan@comcast.net](mailto:phil.kurjan@comcast.net)

Nemeth, Eunice M. (408) 736-0489

786 Belfair Court, Sunnyvale, CA 94087

[Senrr10175@aol.com](mailto:Senrr10175@aol.com)

Orlady, Ellen M. (408) 356-6807

16188 Escobar Avenue, Los Gatos, CA 95032

[horlady@aol.com](mailto:horlady@aol.com)

Poindexter, Lucy (408) 313-0116

P.O. Box 9174, San Jose, CA 95157

[lpondex@bix.netcom.com](mailto:lpondex@bix.netcom.com)

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President: Susan English

Editor: Argo Gherardi

Calendar: Connie Zilles

Career Updates: Nina Gherardi

Publicity: Jan Eurich 408-243-9793

[www.sjoperaguild.org](http://www.sjoperaguild.org)

San José Opera Guild  
c/o Argo Gherardi  
P.O. Box 33025  
Los Gatos, CA 85031-3025

## An Invitation to Join

Established in 1947, the San José Opera Guild was formed to promote the appreciation and enjoyment of the operatic arts and to provide both volunteer and financial support to opera.

The Guild incorporated in September 1958 as a non-profit corporation under the laws of California. The original purpose of the Guild has not changed over the years since it's founding. Financial support of promising young artists in the community is a high priority for the Guild, which helps sponsor singers each year at Opera San José, and the Merola Opera Program, as well as other opera groups.

Throughout the year, the Guild sponsors lectures and previews at three different venues to coincide with the San Francisco Opera and Opera San José's seasons.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Family Member \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Memberships:      Family \$60  
                              Single \$45  
                              Organization \$75  
Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send check payable to:  
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