

Lyric



Lyric Opera of Chicago
2016/17 Season Annual Report

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David T. Ormesher and Anthony Freud with Carol Fox Award recipient Lisbeth Stiffel



David T. Ormesher, Allan B. Muchin, and Anthony Freud with Carol Fox Award recipient Mary Ladish Selander

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Front Cover: *Les Troyens*

Back Cover: *Das Rheingold*

Photography: Michael Brosilow, Andrew Cioffi, Robert Kusel, Dan Rest, Todd Rosenberg, Jaclyn Simpson, and Cory Weaver.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Ormesher', written in a cursive style.

David T. Ormesher
Chairman of the Board

In 2012, Lyric Opera of Chicago launched our Breaking New Ground campaign, which concluded with enormous success this past season. Of the \$109 million raised, half was contributed as unrestricted funds for operations, and the other half for production sponsorship, innovation, stage improvements, The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center, and Lyric Unlimited. The campaign has been crucial in helping us work within our strategic plan of reaching a new level of artistic excellence on stage while also reaching communities we haven't served before. These funds enabled us to expand our level of activity, experiment with new artistic ventures, and broaden our reach throughout Chicago. We are taking action now to ensure that we not only survive, but thrive.

This year, one area of importance that we've focused on has been enhancing the customer experience for our audience members, through improvements in higher-quality concessions (even including sushi!), valet parking, and upgraded ticket-scanning to get patrons into the house faster.

We know that what today's audiences look for is an excellent entertainment and cultural experience from beginning to end. Every point in the process, from when you purchase a subscription or a single ticket, to your time in the theater, to when the valet delivers your car after a performance, is one in a series of experiences, moments of truth, when our brand is enhanced or challenged. We want to make your entire experience world-class.

This commitment to quality is evident throughout the company, and it starts with the Board of Directors. I'm honored

to chair one of the most distinguished nonprofit boards in Chicago. Lyric's Board is made up of many of the city's business leaders, who are helping us think in new ways about guiding Lyric forward. I've restructured board meetings to tap into this extraordinary brain trust. As a result, many Board members have told me they feel more engaged by Lyric than ever. They're invigorated by seeing ideas that had actually been generated in the board room becoming a reality within the organization.

We have also been generously supported by some of the world's top management consulting companies. I'm inspired by the contributions made this year by the Boston Consulting Group, whose extraordinary pro-bono services helped us to better understand our financial model. They have also been invaluable in helping us rethink our approach to identifying and attracting the next generation of Lyric audiences. We are neck-deep in that process right now. It's very encouraging, challenging, and exciting.

Collaborating with Anthony Freud, Sir Andrew Davis, and Renée Fleming, as well as with our Board of Directors, has energized me as I think about Lyric's future. I'm grateful to them, and to you, our loyal patrons.

My thanks go to all six of the Lyric volunteer boards, to Anthony Freud and his senior management team, and to the entire Lyric staff and family for making the 2016/17 season such an accomplishment.



Anthony Freud

General Director, President & CEO
The Women's Board Endowed Chair

Throughout the 2016/17 season, Lyric went from strength to strength, and we did so in a very challenging business environment that is as unpredictable and volatile as any we have ever encountered. I'm very proud of what we achieved during the season—not only the eight memorable opera productions and many other activities, but also how we are moving through these continuing turbulent times with exceptional self-awareness and transparency.

With the sustained engagement we've witnessed over the past year, our continued willingness to ask ourselves tough questions, and our determination to find imaginative, creative, and, at times, radical solutions, I'm confident that Lyric will tackle the challenges ahead, while continuing to deliver the kinds of life-changing artistic experiences that our audiences have come to expect.

Our universally acclaimed new production of the first opera of Wagner's *Ring* cycle, *Das Rheingold*, opened our season in glorious style, conducted by Lyric's brilliant music director Sir Andrew Davis, and directed by the matchlessly imaginative David Pountney.

The production's exhilarating theatricality elicited high praise, as did the musical excellence provided by the Lyric Opera Orchestra and the magnificent cast, led by Eric Owens in his role debut as Wotan, Štefan Margita's renowned Loge, and Samuel Youn's American debut as Alberich.

Two masterpieces of the bel canto repertoire were beautifully served: Graham Vick's atmospheric production of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, with the lovers superbly portrayed by Albina Shagimuratova and Piotr Beczala; and Bellini's *Norma*, directed by Kevin Newbury, with Sondra Radvanovsky truly formidable in the title role. Bel canto specialists Enrique Mazzola and Riccardo Frizza gave these productions wonderfully authentic style on the podium.

Three highly contrasting French works made a spectacular impact, beginning with Lyric's long-awaited company premiere of Berlioz's *Les Troyens*, magnificently led by Lyric's music director, Sir Andrew Davis and director Tim Albery. This thought-provoking contemporary view featured a sensational cast led by Christine Goerke, Susan Graham, and Brandon Jovanovich.

Massenet's *Don Quichotte*, in Matthew Ozawa's charming new staging, brought the return of the incomparable Ferruccio Furlanetto in the title role and the richly satisfying debuts of Clémentine Margaine as Dulcinée and Nicola Alaimo as Sancho. This ineffably touching production was elegantly conducted by our music director, Sir Andrew Davis.

Rob Ashford's direction and choreography for Bizet's eternally fresh *Carmen*, along with the expert conducting of Harry Bicket and the debuting Ainārs Rubiķis, perfectly highlighted the blazing performances of two exciting duos:

initially Ekaterina Gubanova and Joseph Calleja, then Anita Rachvelishvili and Brandon Jovanovich.

The holidays were made doubly enchanting by Lyric's new production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. It was the perfect family entertainment, set in 1950s Chicago and directed with charm and imagination by Neil Armfield. We had a terrific cast, with Andrew Staples and Matthew Polenzani sharing the role of Tamino, joined by Christiane Karg, Adam Plachetka, Kathryn Lewek, and Christof Fischesser, with conductor Rory Macdonald bringing an ebullient spirit to the opera.

The opera season ended with a glorious revival of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, with a trio of great artists—Mariusz Kwiecień in the title role, Ana María Martínez in her role debut as Tatiana, and Charles Castronovo as Lensky—breaking all hearts in Robert Carsen's exceptionally sensitive production, led by debuting conductor Alejo Pérez.

The combination of new work, tremendously exciting productions, and outstanding artists that you all helped make possible also resonated with our audiences and the media in measureable ways—creating great awareness of Lyric's activities, far beyond and at home here in Chicago.

Once again I must offer heartfelt thanks to Sir Andrew Davis and Renée Fleming; our senior management team, orchestra, chorus, technical staff and crews, and all other artists, technicians, and administrators; our remarkable chairman David Ormesher; our extraordinary volunteer boards; and, above all, our devoted Lyric audiences, whose enthusiasm has been our greatest joy throughout each season.



Lucas Meachem, David Govertsen, Catherine Martin, Corey Bix, Philip Horst, Annie Rosen, Christine Goerke, and Brandon Jovanovich, and the Lyric Chorus in *Les Troyens*



Laura Wilde in *Das Rheingold*



Christiane Karg and the Lyric Chorus in *The Magic Flute*



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Renée Fleming".

Renée Fleming
Creative Consultant

RENÉE FLEMING INITIATIVE SPONSORS

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- Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan

I look back on this past season at Lyric Opera of Chicago with great joy. During Lyric's 2016/17 season, we demonstrated our commitment to producing art that is relevant, thrilling, and reflective of the community we serve. A highlight of the season was the Chicago Voices Gala Concert, for which I was honored to be artistic director and work alongside an advisory group that included Chicago legends Kurt Elling, Herbie Hancock, and John Prine. The February 4 Gala Concert featured performances from Kurt, John, Broadway star Jessie Mueller, gospel singer Michelle Williams, tenor Matthew Polenzani, blues queen Shemekia Copeland, indie-rock duo The Handsome Family, rap artist Lupe Fiasco, and The Voices of Trinity Mass Choir, backed by a band led by music director Doug Peck—all artists with strong connections to Chicago. What a rush it was to have the opportunity to incorporate Chicago's incomparable musical legacy into the work we present on our main stage! A televised broadcast of the Gala Concert on WTTW/Chicago PBS on March 30, 2017, shared this one-of-a-kind concert with thousands more.

In conjunction with the Gala Concert, I hosted a multi-day series of Expert Panels & Master Classes at Columbia College Chicago covering a range of topics related to the voice and the music industry. As part of this conference, I had the opportunity to hold a master class with high school students participating in Lyric Unlimited's Vocal Partnership Program.

The multi-year Chicago Voices initiative, which I developed in collaboration with Lyric Unlimited, is fundamentally changing the role of an opera company within the cultural ecosystem of our city. Its work engages community participants and leverages local talent to create exhilarating new works that speak to the experiences and perspectives of Chicago's residents. This dynamic and innovative series of programming would not have been possible without the support of our generous donors, including J. Thomas Hurvis,

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Ford Foundation, The Chicago Community Trust, the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, and the Eisen Family Foundation.

Working with The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center continues to be a rewarding experience. As advisor, I train Ensemble members through master classes and one-on-one coaching sessions, and scout exceptional emerging singers internationally. In July, I proudly invited the Ryan Opera Center Ensemble to perform with me in concert at the Harris Theater as part of the National Association of Teachers of Singing convention. Working alongside these tremendous rising stars is one of the great joys of my career.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the "Renée Brigade" for their generous ongoing support, and to all Lyric donors and subscribers who support Chicago Voices and the Ryan Opera Center. I look forward to continuing to be part of your Lyric family as I work with my dedicated colleagues to foster the growth and development of opera as a thriving art form in the 21st century.



Renée Fleming performing with John Prine at the Chicago Voices Gala Concert



Dick Kiphart was one of the great presidents and chairmen in Lyric's history, a visionary businessman, a leader, and a great humanitarian. In his tenure, Dick brought Lyric to new heights by chairing the Campaign for Excellence and recruiting Renée Fleming as Lyric's first-ever creative consultant. He was a legend in his own time, a visionary with a "fire in the belly" like no other. He gave his blood, sweat, tears, *and money* to Lyric. And this institution is that much greater because of him.

Dick worked for William Blair for more than 50 years. During his career, he worked in just about every department at the firm. Named a partner in 1973, he served on William Blair's executive committee for 20 years.

Persuaded by his wife Susie and his dear friend and business partner, Ned Jannotta, Dick joined the Lyric board in 1999. He served as president from 2006-2011, and chairman from 2011-2016. Upon the passing of Ken Pigott, Dick graciously reassumed the position of president in February of 2015.

Dick served on Lyric's Executive Committee, Finance, Investment, Nominating, and Production Sponsorship

committees. He was tough as nails when it came to watching Lyric's bottom line. His limitless energy earned him the nickname "The Eveready Bunny."

He loved to tell jokes to begin every board meeting and donor luncheon. He was passionate about the Ryan Opera Center Final Auditions and would engage everyone seated around him in a "contest" and award prizes for fellow audience members who best guessed the singers selected. He greeted every usher, stagehand, musician, and singer, and knew all their names.

Dick spent tens of thousands of hours in leadership meetings on the eighth floor at the Lyric Opera House. In fact, we still expect him to walk down the hall. Therefore, it is only fitting that in honor of the incredible legacy that Dick created for himself and Susie at Lyric Opera, on behalf of the Board of Directors, and the entire Lyric family, we pay tribute to them by naming, in perpetuity, the 8th floor administrative offices "The Richard P. and Susan Kiphart Administration Offices."

- David T. Ormesher



Anthony Freud with Susie and Dick Kiphart



Renée Fleming, Susie and Dick Kiphart, and Susan Graham



Dick and Susie Kiphart with Sheila and David Ormesher



2016/17
SEASON
HIGHLIGHTS
Lyric



NEW PRODUCTION

Das Rheingold

By: RICHARD WAGNER

In German with projected English titles

RING



“ This *Rheingold* is nothing short of a triumph on all fronts, intelligently conceived by the creative team, brilliantly executed by a top-flight international cast representing the new generation of Wagner singers.” – *Chicago Tribune*



Samuel Youn



Tobias Kehrer and Wilhelm Schwinghammer



Eric Owens and Tanja Ariane Baumgartner

New Lyric Opera production of the *Ring* cycle generously made possible by

LEAD SPONSOR:

An Anonymous Donor

COSPONSORS:



Mr. & Mrs. Dietrich M. Gross

Gramma Fisher Foundation of Marshalltown, Iowa



Ada and Whitney Addington

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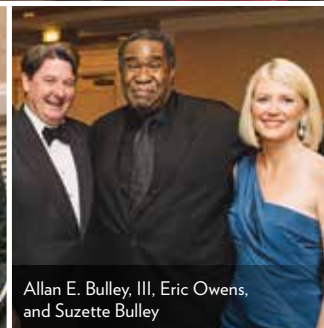
Dietrich & Erika Gross with Tanja Ariane Baumgartner



Jeanette Segel, Marlys Beider, and Okka von der Damerau



Liz Stiffel and Rodell Rosel



Allan E. Bulley, III, Eric Owens, and Suzette Bulley



Samuel Youn



Laura Wilde, Robin Angly, David Pountney, Annie Rosen, and Diana Newman



Matthew and Stephanie Fisher with Samuel Youn

WOTAN Eric Owens
ALBERICH Samuel Youn
LOGE Štefan Margita
FRICKA Tanja Ariane Baumgartner

FASOLT Wilhelm Schwinghammer
FAFNER Tobias Kehrer
ERDA Okka von der Damerau
FREIA Laura Wilde

Diana Newman (Woglinde), Annie Rosen (Wellgunde), Lindsay Ammann (Flosshilde), Jesse Donner (Froh), Zachary Nelson (Donner), Rodell Rosel (Mime)

CONDUCTOR
Sir Andrew Davis

DIRECTOR
David Pountney

ORIGINAL SCENERY DESIGNER
Johan Engels

SET DESIGNER
Robert Innes Hopkins

COSTUME DESIGNER
Marie-Jeanne Lecca

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Fabrice Kebour

CHOREOGRAPHER
Denni Sayers

6 PERFORMANCES:
Oct. 1, 5, 9, 13, 16, 22

New Lyric Opera production of Wagner's *Das Rheingold* generously made possible by



Marlys A. Beider



Liz Stiffel



Helen and Sam Zell



NEW-TO-CHICAGO PRODUCTION

Lucia di Lammermoor

By: GAETANO DONIZETTI

In Italian with projected English titles



Albina Shagimuratova

“ [Graham] Vick’s smart production is a canny frame for the staggeringly talented [Albina] Shagimuratova, who is a consummate exemplar of the coloratura art, with a breathtaking pianissimo and thrilling agility and volume at the bottom and the top.

— *Chicago on the Aisle*



Quinn Kelsey



Lindsay Metzger and Albina Shagimuratova



The Atzeff family and guests of the NIB Foundation with Piotr Beczala



Gael Neeson, Albina Shagimuratova, and Stefan Edlis



Piotr Beczala

Scenery realized by the Foundation of the Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino and Grand Théâtre de Genève.

LUCIA Albina Shagimuratova

EDGARDO Piotr Beczala

ENRICO Quinn Kelsey

RAIMONDO Adrian Sâmpetean

ALISA Lindsay Metzger

NORMANNO Matthew DiBattista

CONDUCTOR
Enrique Mazzola

DIRECTOR
Graham Vick

**SET AND COSTUME
DESIGNER**
Paul Brown

**REVIVAL PRODUCTION
DESIGNER**
Elena Cicorella

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Chris Maravich

CHORUS MASTER
Michael Black

7 PERFORMANCES:

Oct. 15, 19, 23, 26, 29; Nov. 1, 6

Lyric Opera
presentation of
*Donizetti's Lucia
di Lammermoor*
generously made
possible by



Stefan Edlis
and Gael Neeson



Sylvia Neil
and Daniel Fischel

NEW PRODUCTION AND LYRIC PREMIERE

THE TROJANS

LES TROYENS

By: HECTOR BERLIOZ

In French with projected English titles



“ Besides the tremendous energy of conductor Sir Andrew Davis and the expanded Lyric Opera Orchestra, a virtuosic cast.... drives this production with unflagging feeling and dramatic art.”

— Stage and Cinema

“ Lyric Opera’s new production [of *Les Troyens*] is an unparalleled masterpiece of glorious music.”

— Around the Town Chicago



Susan Graham



Christine Goerke



Brandon Jovanovich with Anita Medina Tyson and guests of The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust



Sir Andrew Davis and Orit and David Carpenter with guests of Sidley Austin



Donna Van Eekeren, Susan Graham, and Dale Connelly



James L. Alexander, Christine Goerke, and Anthony Freud

DIDON Susan Graham

CASSANDRE Christine Goerke

ÉNÉE Brandon Jovanovich

ANNA Okka von der Damerau

CHORÉBE Lucas Meachem

NARBAL Christian Van Horn

IOPAS Mingjie Lei

HYLAS Jonathan Johnson

Takaaki Onishi (Trojan Warrior), David Govertsen (Priam), Catherine Martin (Hecuba), Annie Rosen (Ascanius), Corey Bix (Helenus), Philip Horst (Panthus), Bradley Smoak (Ghost of Hector), Patrick Guetti (Greek Captain), Kenneth Nichols (First Trojan Soldier), Nikolas Wenzel (Second Trojan Soldier)

CONDUCTOR
Sir Andrew Davis

DIRECTOR
Tim Albery

**SET AND COSTUME
DESIGNER**
Tobias Hoheisel

LIGHTING DESIGNER
David Finn

PROJECTION DESIGNER
Illuminos

CHORUS MASTER
Michael Black

CHOREOGRAPHER
Helen Pickett

5 PERFORMANCES:
Nov. 13, 17, 21, 26; Dec. 3

New Lyric Opera
production of
Berlioz's *Les Troyens*
generously made
possible by



The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust

Lloyd E. Rigler-Lawrence E.
Deutsch Foundation

The Nelson Cornelius
Production Endowment Fund



Donna Van Eekeren
Foundation



2016/17

NEW-TO-CHICAGO PRODUCTION

Don Quichotte

By: JULES MASSENET

In French with projected English titles



“Massenet’s score is exquisite, and is being exquisitely played by the Lyric orchestra, whose masterful conductor, Sir Andrew Davis, might well be the hardest-working man in any opera house. — *Chicago Sun-Times*”



Clémentine Margaine and Ferruccio Furlanetto



Ferruccio Furlanetto and Sir Andrew Davis with trustees of the Walter E. Heller Foundation



Barbara Greis and guests with Clémentine Margaine

Don Quichotte is a production of San Diego Opera.

DON QUICHOTTE Ferruccio Furlanetto

PEDRO Diana Newman

GARCIAS Lindsay Metzger

SANCHO Nicola Alaimo

JUAN Alec Carlson

DULCINÉE Clémentine Margaine

RODRIGUEZ Jonathan Johnson

BANDIT CHIEF Bradley Smoak

Takaaki Onishi (First Servant), Emmett O'Hanlon (Second Servant), William Combs (Bandit), Matthew Carroll (Bandit), John Concepcion (Bandit), Ronald Watkins (Bandit)

CONDUCTOR
Sir Andrew Davis

COSTUME DESIGNER
Missy West

DIRECTOR
Matthew Ozawa

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Chris Maravich

SET DESIGNER
Ralph Funicello

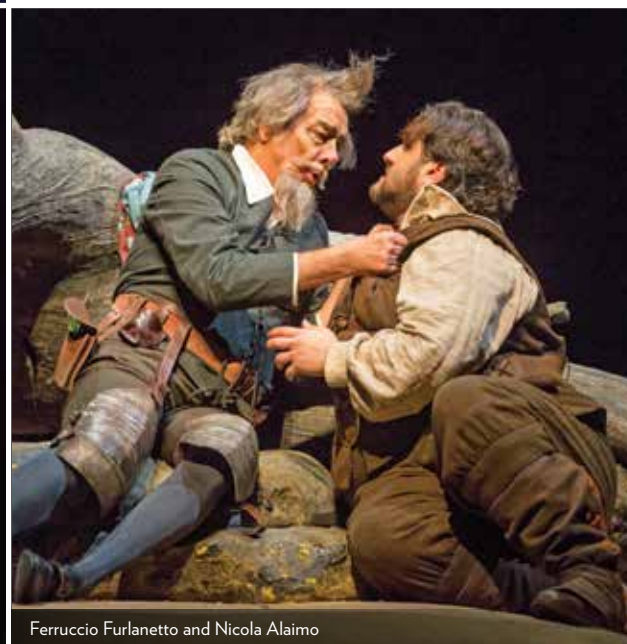
CHORUS MASTER
Michael Black

6 PERFORMANCES:

Nov. 19, 23, 28; Dec. 1, 4, 7



Nicola Alaimo



Ferruccio Furlanetto and Nicola Alaimo

Lyric Opera
presentation of
Massenet's *Don
Quichotte* generously
made possible by



Howard L. Gottlieb
and Barbara G. Greis

**Walter E. Heller
Foundation**

NEW PRODUCTION

The Magic Flute

By: WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

In German with projected English titles



Ann Toomey, Lauren Decker, and Annie Rosen

“ One thing you are not going to find at many other opera companies...is singing, conducting, orchestral playing and choral singing at the high international level Lyric is presenting with its *Magic Flute*. – *Chicago Sun-Times* ”



Christiane Karg and Kathryn Lewek



Dan and Marina Draper with guests of PowerShares QQQ by Invesco



Randy and Melvin Berlin with their family



Roberta L. and Robert J. Washlow and Adam Plachetka



Andrew Staples



Diana Newman and Adam Plachetka

TAMINO Andrew Staples
(Dec. 10-Jan. 8)
Matthew Polenzani
(Jan.12-27)

PAMINA Christiane Karg

PAPAGENO Adam Plachetka

PAPAGENA Diana Newman

THE QUEEN OF THE NIGHT
Kathryn Lewek

SARASTRO Christof Fischesser

THREE LADIES Ann Toomey
Annie Rosen
Lauren Decker

MONOSTATOS Rodell Rosel

David Govertsen (The Speaker), Alec Carlson (First Priest), Emmett O'Hanlon (Second Priest), Jesse Donner (First Armored Man), Patrick Guetti (Second Armored Man), Casey Lyons, Parker Scribner, Asher Alcantara (Three Genii), Ronald Watkins (First Slave), William Combs (Second Slave), Matthew Carroll (Third Slave), Christopher Filipowicz (Speaking Priest)

CONDUCTOR
Rory Macdonald

DIRECTOR
Neil Armfield

SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER
Dale Ferguson

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Damien Cooper

CHORUS MASTER
Michael Black

CHOREOGRAPHER
Denni Sayers

11 PERFORMANCES:
Dec. 10, 12, 14; Jan. 6, 8, 12, 14, 17, 22, 25, 27

New Lyric Opera production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* generously made possible by



The Negaunee Foundation



Randy L. and Melvin R. Berlin



Roberta L. and Robert J. Washlow



NEW LYRIC OPERA COPRODUCTION

Norma

By: VINCENZO BELLINI

In Italian with projected English titles



“Few singers today can command the mammoth role’s requisite fusion of amplitude and agility as well as [Sondra] Radvanovsky does. The soprano easily flooded the Ardis Krainik Theatre with gleaming sound....Both orchestra and chorus were in fine form in this worthy account of Bellini’s masterpiece. It was a grand night for bel canto.”

— *Chicago Stage Review*



Sondra Radvanovsky and Elizabeth DeShong



Russell Thomas and Brenda Shapiro



Julie and Roger Baskes with Sondra Radvanovsky

Coproduction by Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera, Canadian Opera Company, and Gran Teatre del Liceu.



Sondra Radvanovsky and Andrea Silvestrelli



Russell Thomas and Sondra Radvanovsky

NORMA Sondra Radvanovsky **OROVESO** Andrea Silvestrelli
ADALGISA Elizabeth DeShong **CLOTILDE** Hlengiwe Mkhwanazi
POLLIONE Russell Thomas **FLAVIO** Jesse Donner

CONDUCTOR
Riccardo Frizza

DIRECTOR
Kevin Newbury

SET DESIGNER
David Korins

COSTUME DESIGNER
Jessica Jahn

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Duane Schuler

CHORUS MASTER
Michael Black

7 PERFORMANCES:

Jan. 28; Feb. 1, 5, 9, 13, 18, 24

New Lyric Opera
coproduction of
Bellini's *Norma*
generously made
possible by



Roger and Julie Baskes

**Earl and Brenda Shapiro
Foundation**

Estate of Venrice R. Palmer

NEW LYRIC OPERA COPRODUCTION

CARMEN

By: GEORGES BIZET

In French with projected English titles



Brandon Jovanovich and Anita Rachvelishvili

“ The mid-run advent of mezzo-soprano Anita Rachvelishvili in the title role, with tenor Brandon Jovanovich now portraying the tragically smitten Don José, isn't just hot stuff; it is scorched earth. — *Chicago on the Aisle* ”



Ekaterina Gubanova



Joseph Calleja and Eleonora Buratto



Christian Van Horn with trustees of the Mazza Foundation



James and Laurie Bay with Joseph Calleja

John H. Krehbiel, Jr. and Karen Z. Gray-Krehbiel



Scott Santi and Christian Van Horn with guests of ITW



Ekaterina Gubanova with guests of the Seymour H. Persky Charitable Trust



Eleonora Buratto with guests of Exelon

Coproduction by Lyric Opera of Chicago and Houston Grand Opera.

CARMEN Ekaterina Gubanova
(Feb. 11-Mar. 6)
Anita Rachvelishvili
(Mar. 16-25)

DON JOSÉ Joseph Calleja
(Feb. 11-Mar. 6)
Brandon Jovanovich
(Mar. 16-25)
Michael Brandenburg
(Mar. 19 Acts III and IV)

MICAELA Eleonora Buratto

ESCAMILLO Christian Van Horn

FRASQUITA Diana Newman

MERCEDES Lindsay Metzger

REMENDADO Mingjie Lei

DANCAIRE Emmett O'Hanlon

Bradley Smoak (Zuniga), Takaoki Onishi (Morales), Alec Carlson (Lillas Pastia), Chicago Children's Choir

CONDUCTOR
Harry Bicket (Feb. 11-Mar. 6)
Ainārs Rubiķis (Mar. 16-25)

ORIGINAL COSTUME DESIGNER
Julie Weiss

DIRECTOR AND CHOREOGRAPHER
Rob Ashford

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Donald Holder

SET DESIGNER
David Rockwell

CHORUS MASTER
Michael Black

CHILDREN'S CHORUS MASTER
Josephine Lee

11 PERFORMANCES:

Feb. 11, 15, 19, 22, 28; Mar. 3, 6, 16, 19, 22, 25

New Lyric Opera coproduction of Bizet's *Carmen* generously made possible by



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EUGENE ONEGIN

By: PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

In Russian with projected English titles



Ana María Martínez and Mariusz Kwiecień

“Lyric’s production delivered the Russian goods idiomatically and in fine style with a largely inspired cast and an effective, imaginative production, closing its season on a positive note. — *Chicago Classical Review*”



Ana María Martínez



Margot and Josef Lakonishok with Mariusz Kwiecień



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Mariusz Kwiecień



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Donald Cameron, Ana María Martínez, and Marion Cameron

Production owned by Canadian Opera Company, originally created for The Metropolitan Opera.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
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- | | |
|---|--|
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| SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER
Michael Levine | |

8 PERFORMANCES:
Feb. 26; Mar. 1, 4, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20

Lyric Opera presentation of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* generously made possible by



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NEW-TO-CHICAGO PRODUCTION

My Fair Lady

Book and Lyrics by ALAN JAY LERNER; Music by FREDERICK LOEWE



Donald Maxell



Bryce Pinkham, Lisa O'Hare, Helen Carey, and Richard E. Grant



Richard E. Grant and Lisa O'Hare

“ The Lyric production....is as true to the Broadway spirit of the 1956 hit as any revival could be: well paced, well acted, a feast for the eyes and the ears—and even for the brain.

— *Chicago Reader*

Lyric Opera
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Bryce Pinkham with trustees of The Davee Foundation



Guests of Northern Trust



Richard E. Grant with Susan and Robert Morrison and family



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David Chase and Liz Stiffel

Production created by the Théâtre du Châtelet Paris, on December 9, 2010, in coproduction with the State Academic Mariinsky Theatre.

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Carmen Roman (Mrs. Eynsford-Hill), Nikolas Wenzel (Bystander), Peter Morgan (Bystander), Joe Shadday (Hoxton Man), Hoss Brock (Selsey Man), Bill McGough (Bartender), James Romney (Jamie), Jackson Evans (Harry & Charles), Peggy Roeder (Angry Woman), David Lively (Butler), Sara Sevigny (Mrs. Hopkins), Laurie Seely Vassalli (First Maid), Corinne Wallace-Crane (Second Maid), Matthew Carroll (Footman), Michael Joseph Mitchell (Zoltan Karpathy), Yvette Smith (Queen of Transylvania), Ron Watkins (Prince of Transylvania), Janet Marie Farr (Mrs. Higgins' Maid)

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25 PERFORMANCES: April 28-30; May 9-14, 16-21

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Featuring Ailyn Pérez, Michael Spyres, members of The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center, and the Lyric Opera Chorus and Orchestra

Conducted by Eugene Kohn
Directed by Matthew Ozawa

Lyric Opera House

MARCH 9, 2017

Michael Spyres, Ailyn Pérez, Plácido Domingo



ITZHAK PERLMAN IN RECITAL

Featuring pianist Rohan De Silva

Lyric Opera House

APRIL 23, 2017

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Lyric
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CHARLIE PARKER'S YARDBIRD

Music by Daniel Schnyder
Libretto by Bridgette A. Wimberly
Conducted by Kelly Kuo
Directed by Ron Daniels
Harris Theater
MARCH 24 and 26, 2017

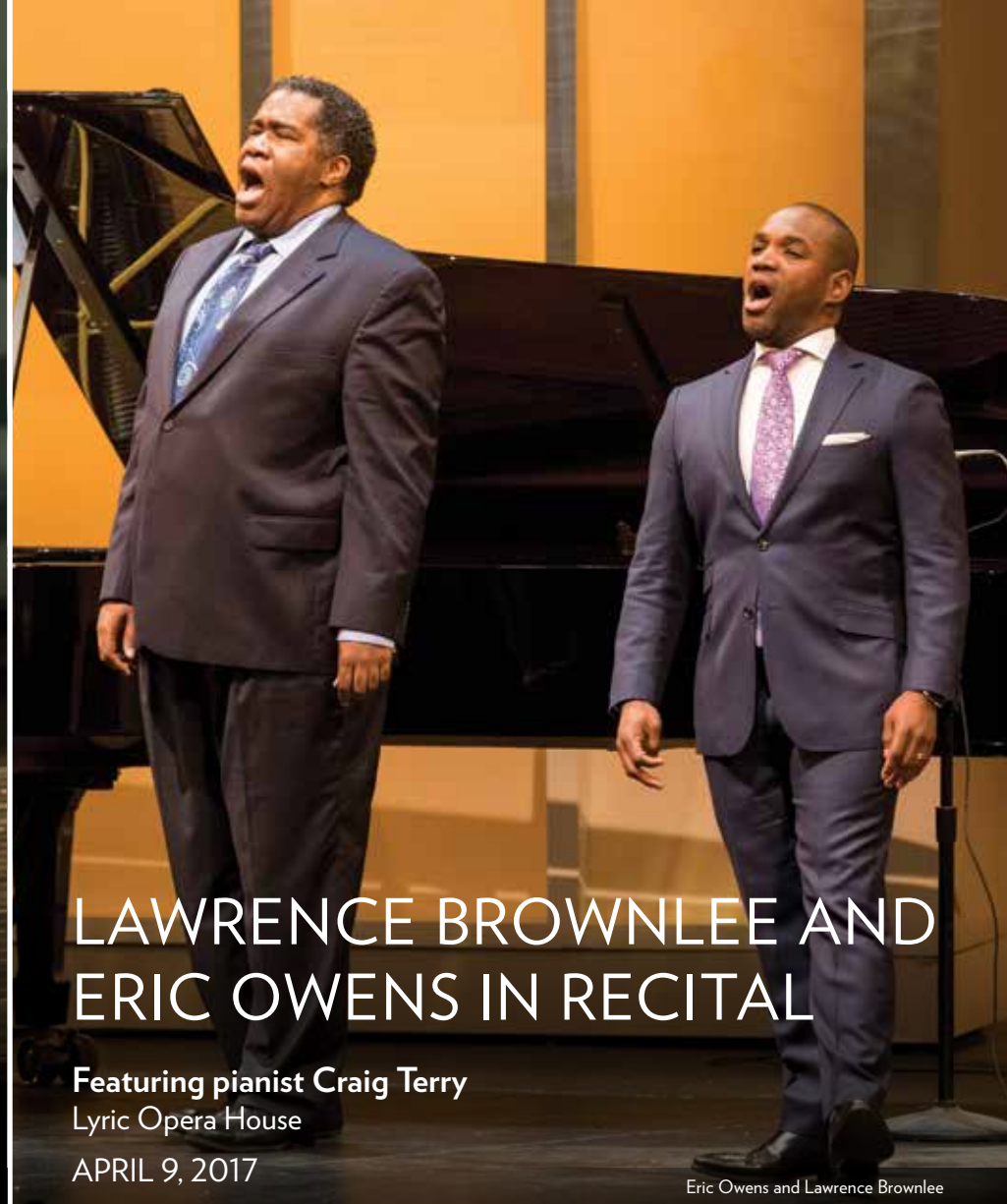
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LAWRENCE BROWNLEE AND ERIC OWENS IN RECITAL

Featuring pianist Craig Terry
Lyric Opera House
APRIL 9, 2017

Eric Owens and Lawrence Brownlee

Generously made possible by

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Lyric Unlimited

In addition to producing exceptional opera and musical theater on and off the main stage, Lyric continued throughout the 2016/17 season to offer a broad and dynamic range of education and community engagement programming in Chicago Public Schools and in neighborhoods throughout the city through Lyric Unlimited.



Cast of The Second City in *LONGER! LOUDER! WAGNER!*

LYRIC UNLIMITED BUILDS ON MORE THAN THREE DECADES of extensive arts education and engagement initiatives at Lyric Opera of Chicago, and is integral to the company's commitment to delivering meaningful and enriching programming. The purpose of Lyric Unlimited is to provide a relevant cultural service to communities throughout the Chicago area, including communities for whom opera and opera companies have been largely irrelevant; to explore a wide range of ways in which Lyric can collaborate with cultural and community organizations throughout the area; and to advance the development of opera, exploring how opera as an art form can resonate more powerfully, and in a range of different ways, with people of multiple backgrounds, ethnicities, and interests, and provides multiple entry points to connect new audiences to the company and to opera itself.

Lyric Unlimited programming during the 2016/17 season included innovative educational initiatives in Chicago Public Schools and dynamic community engagement initiatives that have forged new and meaningful connections with Chicagoans in all corners of the city. Core programs included: *Chicago Voices*, *Jason and the Argonauts* at the Vittum Theater, NEXT discount student tickets, Opera in the Neighborhoods, Opera Residencies for Schools, Performances for Students, Pre-Opera Talks, the free annual Senior Matinee, the free annual Stars of Lyric Opera at Millennium Park concert, Student Backstage Tours, Teacher Professional Development Workshops, Vocal Partnership Program, and Youth Opera Council. Across all programs, Lyric Unlimited served **102,168** people in the 2016/17 season, including **43,302** children.



Pre-Opera Talk before *Eugene Onegin*



Visitors tour the set of *My Fair Lady*



Student Backstage Tour

In developing school-based initiatives, Lyric Unlimited works closely with teachers and administrators to ensure programs meet evolving classroom needs, and offers professional development workshops for teachers to provide them with the necessary tools to approach Lyric Unlimited programs as active, engaged participants making cross-curricular connections. Across all youth education programming, Lyric Unlimited's goal is to support classroom learning and to serve as a resource and advocate for the arts in neighborhood schools. Lyric Unlimited arts education programming represents an opportunity to creatively rethink student learning and expression at participating schools, as Lyric Unlimited staff and teaching artists work with teachers and administrators to influence change in arts learning.

Lyric Unlimited also presented several special initiatives during the 2016/17 season. In collaboration with The Second City, Lyric Unlimited created a musical comedy production

called *LONGER! LOUDER! WAGNER!* to enhance the audience experience of the mainstage production of *Das Rheingold*. Lyric Unlimited also presented the Chicago premiere of *Charlie Parker's YARDBIRD* by composer Daniel Schnyder and librettist Bridgette A. Wimberly. With a cast that featured several of today's most renowned and respected African American singers, *Charlie Parker's YARDBIRD* highlighted the exceptional role that African American artists have played and continue to play in the fields of composition, music history, and performance. The two nearly sold-out performances reached a total audience of **2,741** at the Harris Theater. In addition, **440** students attended a free dress rehearsal of the opera. Following each performance, the Chicago Jazz Philharmonic played music by Charlie Parker himself, offering a holistic experience of the legendary artist and his compositions.



Jason and the Argonauts



Opera in the Neighborhoods participants

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LONGER! LOUDER! WAGNER!
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Stars of Lyric Opera at Millennium Park

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PROGRAMMING



Chicago Voices TALK at the Chicago History Museum

CHICAGO VOICES WAS DEVELOPED COLLABORATIVELY BY LYRIC UNLIMITED,

Lyric Opera of Chicago's education and community engagement division, and Lyric Opera creative consultant Renée Fleming. This multi-genre initiative aimed to bring together thousands of Chicagoans in a celebration of the human voice through a broad range of activities and programs, including: Community Created Performances; Expert Panels & Master Classes; an all-star, multi-genre Gala Concert at the Lyric Opera House; and Chicago Voices Fest, a series of events spanning several months and encompassing a wide range of educational and artistic opportunities for Chicagoans of all ages.

Through Community Created Performances, Chicago Voices leveraged the talent and creativity that exists within our city to share the stories of the communities that define us. For two cycles, one in 2016 and one in 2017, Chicago-based community groups were invited to apply to transform their diverse narratives into original music theater works. Groups representing a wide range of Chicago neighborhoods and communities applied in each cycle to share their compelling stories with the public. Three finalist groups were selected through a public vote on the Chicago Voices website each year: Harmony, Hope & Healing, Tellin' Tales Theatre, and the Kirin-Gornick Band in 2016 and Kuumba Lynx, YOLO Boomers, and Blu Rhythm Collective in 2017. Each group worked with a Lyric-hired creative team to draw out their narrative and bring their stories to life in fully-staged original works of music theater, performed for a packed house at the Harris Theater.

Beginning in June 2016, Lyric Unlimited offered a broad range of engaging and interactive initiatives throughout the city as part of Chicago Voices Fest, including: a photo exhibition featuring retrospective images of iconic Chicago singers both historic and contemporary (Chicago

Voices VIEW); a three-part speaker series paired with live performances at the Chicago History Museum focusing on preeminent Chicago vocalists past and present (Chicago Voices TALK); and an opportunity for all Chicagoans to capture their individual vocal styling on video and share their performances on the Chicago Voices website (Chicago Voices SING). Lyric Unlimited also offered a free, week-long intensive songwriting workshop in June 2017 for high school students. For four days, students crafted original songs, working both independently and in roundtable sessions where they received constructive input from teaching artists and their fellow participants. At the end of the workshop, students recorded their original works in a professional recording studio.

Lyric Opera of Chicago believes that it is our responsibility as a major arts organization within this city to cultivate the creativity of local artists, community groups, and students, and to support and promote a thriving cultural life for all Chicagoans. The four distinct but interweaving elements of Chicago Voices offered an unprecedented opportunity to engage with our community through large-scale, participatory arts experiences. Passionately led by Ms. Fleming, Chicago Voices was sparked by the idea that there has never been a more crucial time to invite the whole city to find common ground in our musical riches, to honor the great voices of our past, and to nurture the evolving musical life of the city today. Partnering with the Chicago Public Library, Chicago History Museum, and Columbia College Chicago, Chicago Voices is engaging and interacting with the entire Chicago community in innovative, resounding ways.

Chicago Voices programming was made possible by major support from



J. Thomas Hurvis



Chicago Voices School Slam at The Chicago High School for the Arts



Tellin' Tales Theatre at the Chicago Voices Gala Concert Flip Side After Party



Chicago Voices Songwriting Workshop studio session



Kirin-Gornick Band rehearsal for Chicago Voices Community Created Performances



Community Created Performances—Stories and Songs of Chicago



CHICAGO VOICES FEST



Chicago Voices

LYRIC OPERA OF CHICAGO

RENÉE FLEMING SERVED AS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR FOR THE CHICAGO VOICES GALA CONCERT ON FEBRUARY 4, 2017, a star-studded array of vocal talent with deep ties to Chicago that paid tribute to the city's wide-reaching influence across genres including blues, jazz, rock, folk, hip-hop, gospel, and classical music. The evening featured performances and unique collaborations by artistic director **Renée Fleming**, starred **Shemekia Copeland**, **Kurt Elling**, **Lupe Fiasco**, **The Handsome Family**, **Jessie Mueller**, **Matthew Polenzani**, **John Prine**, **Michelle Williams**, and **The Voices of Trinity Mass Choir**. Music director for the concert was five-time Jeff Award winner **Doug Peck**. **Kate Flannery**, **Rev. Jesse Jackson**, **Terrence Howard**, and **Jussie Smollett** served as special guest presenters during the concert.

Co-chaired by Scott and Nancy Santi and Eric and Kim Smith, the night kicked off with a reception and dinner curated by Karen and John Shields of Smyth. Following the concert, the Flip Side After Party celebrated the voices and flavors of Chicago throughout the Lyric Opera House.



Renée Fleming



Michelle Williams and The Voices of Trinity Mass Choir



Brett Sparks, John Prine, and Shemekia Copeland



Jessie Mueller and Matthew Polenzani



Lupe Fiasco



Co-Chairs Eric and Kim Smith with Nancy and Scott Santi



Alexandra Nichols, Tim Jessell, Renée Fleming, and John Nichols

Kurt Elling, Linda Myers, and Kirkland & Ellis guests



Herbert Kohler, Natalie Black Kohler, and guests



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Renée Fleming with J. Thomas Hurvis

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Lyric

RYAN
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2016/17 WAS A VERY FULFILLING YEAR FOR THE 15 ENSEMBLE MEMBERS OF THE PATRICK G. AND SHIRLEY W. RYAN OPERA CENTER.

From May through August our artists maintained a full schedule of lessons, coachings, and classes in voice, language, and acting. Complementing this high-level training were a variety of performances, including our third collaborative concert with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, conducted by Lyric's music director Sir Andrew Davis; our Summer Workshop; a recital with Ryan Opera Center advisor Renée Fleming for the National Association of Teachers of Singing; and an appearance with the Grant Park Music Festival. Lyric season rehearsals began in September, and Ensemble members significantly contributed to each production's artistic success. Several participated in the Harris Theater's Beyond the Aria series, as well. The season came to a celebratory end with Rising Stars in Concert, which included a selection conducted by Ensemble pianist Mario Antonio Marra.

Seven Ryan Opera Center artists concluded their tenures in 2016/17 and shared reflections of their experiences in the program.



JESSE DONNER (3rd year, right)

I take great pride in the work that I have done in my three-year residency. In addition to the unparalleled performing opportunities I've had in Lyric's productions, I've also been able to grow artistically through several projects provided by the Ryan Opera Center. In this past season alone I sang my first public high C in a concert with The Civic Orchestra of Chicago, conducted by Sir Andrew Davis, I sang a duet with Renée Fleming at the National Association of Teachers of Singing convention, I portrayed Lennie in *Of Mice and Men* at the Grant Park Music Festival and recorded a recital at WFMT. I look forward to being among the esteemed alumni who have departed and successfully launched operatic careers.



MINGJIE LEI (2nd year, right)

The Ryan Opera Center has given me so much support during my time here. I have been able to improve a great deal by working with our outstanding music staff and teachers, and the opportunity to coach with guest artists like Matthew Polenzani was incredible. Singing the role of Iopas in *Les Troyens* was definitely a highlight of the season for me. It was a very special experience to perform this epic opera with such a supportive company. My colleagues here have been amazing, and I look forward to watching us grow together as we embark on our individual journeys into the opera world.



JONATHAN JOHNSON (3rd year, left)

Being in the Ryan Opera Center has been a wonderful chapter of my life. I have grown immensely in my time here. The experiences of working with the teachers, coaches, and conductors, as well as being on stage, have helped me to gain the skills required of an operatic career. Last season I was particularly honored to share the stage with the amazing Renée Fleming, who has also been an incredible mentor to me and the entire Ensemble. In addition to my roles at Lyric, I'm so grateful to have had the opportunity to make debuts with other companies such as Portland Opera and San Diego Opera. Those engagements have demonstrated how my time in the Ryan Opera Center has given me the skills and experience to transition to a professional career.



MARIO ANTONIO MARRA (2nd year)

To play under the baton of Sir Andrew Davis, to sit in rehearsals led by the likes of Sir David McVicar, to be given the opportunity to coach the Ryan Opera Center singers and guest artists coming through the opera house—these are the greatest gifts of this program. The addition of an Ensemble pianist position to the Ryan Opera Center is integral in assuring the future success of this art form, and I am privileged to have filled that position these last two years. The Chicago opera community is a vibrant and caring one; it has been an honor to be a part of the important work that we do here.



HLENGIWE MKHWANAZI (3rd year, left)

My experience at Lyric this season has been wonderful artistically and socially. I got a chance to work with amazing artists and also to watch them perform on our stage and feel how powerful the human voice can be. One of my highlights was listening to Joseph Calleja sing the “Flower Song” from *Carmen*. His voice was so full of vibrant energy and it made my whole body shake with excitement. In that moment, everything was just right—it was inspiring and made me feel like I can do anything!



ANNIE ROSEN (2nd year, left)

My time in the Ryan Opera Center has been invaluable and transformational. The program has given me a safe environment to experiment and take the risks I needed to grow, while simultaneously pushing me to perform at the highest standard of which I was capable. I’ve had the opportunity to sing alongside some of the greatest talents in our industry and to learn from conductors and directors working at the premier level, and through them to begin to discover what my own voice can do. Most important, I have benefited from the support of a legion of colleagues, administrators, and audience members whom I’m proud to consider my artistic family.



BRADLEY SMOAK (3rd year)

My three years as an Ensemble member with the Ryan Opera Center have been truly transformative. I entered the program having no idea the amount of improvement I was capable of, let alone the belief that I could realize that potential. And yet, the one constant above all others during my time here has been the unending support, encouragement, and patience of director Dan Novak, music director Craig Terry, and director of vocal studies Julia Faulkner. They are the magic behind this incredible institution, and a huge reason I am the performer I am today. I will never forget my time at the Ryan Opera Center, and the experience of sharing this historic stage with some of the all-time greats. It has been a dream, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

BREAKING NEW GROUND

A CAMPAIGN FOR LYRIC



The Breaking New Ground campaign was launched in January 2013 to implement the company's blueprint for a world-class, 21st century opera company. This campaign allows Lyric to continue to produce major productions of the highest caliber; update media, marketing, and audience development programs; and fortify Lyric's endowment. The campaign also provided funding to begin modernizing the stage of the Ardis Krainik Theatre with state-of-the-art equipment.

The Breaking New Ground campaign surpassed its \$100 million goal with a final total of more than \$109 million.

LES TROYENS



Our new turntable allows us to rotate set pieces with precision and control. Its effect was first displayed in our premiere of *Les Troyens*. Despite holding more than 80,000 pounds of scenery, the turntable allowed for seamless transitions between scenes.



DAS RHEINGOLD



New stage lifts enhanced the industrial, eerie setting of Nibelheim, pulling mechanical men from beneath the stage. They also gave home to Erda, the oracle who foretold Wotan's doom.

THE MAGIC FLUTE



The wizardry of our new turntable helped put the magic in *The Magic Flute*. In the opening sequence of the production, an entire house rotated as neighbors passed through and around it, taking us through a dizzying introduction to this production's 1950s suburban Chicago setting.

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THE OVERTURE SOCIETY: PLANNED GIVING AT LYRIC OPERA

The loyalty and generosity of our dedicated Overture Society members exemplifies what it means to be part of the “Lyric family.” Their thoughtfulness and foresight will ensure the continued growth of Lyric’s annual fund and endowment.

The Overture Society represents some of our most dedicated supporters, currently comprised of 528 patrons, who have made commitments in their estate plans to provide for Lyric. Each year, Overture Society members attend appreciation luncheons and dress rehearsals, enjoy individualized ticket services, and participate in our estate planning seminars.

Many of these planned givers have generously committed to multiple planned gifts to Lyric, representing more than 600 total planned gifts. In addition, 115 of our planned givers are honored as Bel Canto Benefactors for making major planned gifts while continuing to support Lyric’s annual campaign.

In 2016/17, Lyric received bequests from 26 estates. Of these, approximately half supported the annual campaign and half were designated toward Lyric’s Breaking New Ground campaign. The latter was used to fortify Lyric’s endowment while making much-needed improvements to our stage equipment.

Overture Society members continued their 15-year streak of meeting the goal for the Overture Society Challenge Grant. Totalling more than \$122,000, the grant was used to match donor support for Lyric Unlimited programming through our annual Operathon fundraiser.

Lyric Opera of Chicago is deeply grateful to all Overture Society members for establishing the cornerstone of Lyric’s financial future.



Clients and staff of Morgan Stanley at an Overture Society Estate Planning Seminar



Rodell Rosel and Tanja Ariane Baumgartner with Overture Society luncheon sponsors Henry S. and Rhoda L. Frank

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Mimi Mitchell

Mimi Mitchell
President

What an exhilarating year it has been for the Women's Board! I am pleased to announce the Women's Board raised a total of \$3.5 million for Lyric Opera of Chicago. Thank you to each and every member for her dedication, hard work, and incredible generosity throughout the 2016/17 season.

On October 1, the curtain rose from the depths of the Rhine River to unveil our new production of *Das Rheingold*. At the helm of our Opening Night and Opera Ball festivities were Co-Chairs Regan Rohde Friedmann and Eileen Murphy, who led the Women's Board in raising nearly \$1 million for Lyric. Following the sold-out performance, nearly 500 guests were transported to the Hilton for the dazzling Opera Ball. Thank you to Aon for once again sponsoring the Opening Night Gala, ITW and Northern Trust for cosponsoring the Opera Ball, Bartlit Beck Herman Palenchar & Scott LLP for sponsoring the Grand March of the Stars, and the many loyal Lyric family members who so generously supported Opening Night and Opera Ball 2016.

Education and community engagement are key to the mission of the Women's Board. In November, we took the Opera in the Neighborhoods production of *Jason and the Argonauts* to the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago. Countless patients and their family members were able to enjoy this live production thanks to the generosity of an anonymous Women's Board member. It is always a joy to witness the healing power of music in action. Another educational tradition of the Women's Board is the Commentaries Project, which feature our very own Lyric Opera experts shedding light on the upcoming season. Commentaries for all eight operas are available free of charge on the Lyric Opera website and are accessible to everyone. Thank you to the Patrick G. and Shirley Welsh Ryan Foundation for once again sponsoring the Commentaries Project in honor of their parents.

On February 4, 2017, the Women's Board and Board of Directors joined forces for the one-night-only Chicago Voices Gala Concert and After Party. Co-Chairs Nancy and Scott Santi and Eric and Kim Smith created an evening unlike anything else in Lyric's history which resulted in more than \$2 million for the company. The night began with a surprise performance by the Chicago Bulls Bucket Boys, which led to an incredible dinner curated by Chicago chefs Karen and John Shields of the Michelin-starred Smyth and its sister restaurant, The Loyalist. Celebrating the diverse array of musical voices making up the fabric of our city, the Chicago Voices Gala Concert was the vision of our very own Renée Fleming and had the audience on its feet from start to finish. Following a star-studded encore, guests were invited to explore several floors of the Lyric Opera House for a Chicago street fest-themed After Party filled with the city's many flavors and sounds. From a live DJ in the Daniel F. and Ada L. Rice Grand Foyer to an intimate jazz set in The Sarah and Peer Pedersen Room, guests also enjoyed food from the many distinct neighborhoods of Chicago, including Chinatown, Pilsen, Little Italy, and more. We are deeply grateful to Lead Sponsor Liz Stiffel, Supporting Sponsor J. Thomas Hurvis, Lead Corporate Sponsor Kirkland & Ellis LLP, and the many generous donors who brought this momentous evening to life.

On May 12, we were "off to the races" with our Ascot-themed *My Fair Lady* Spring Musical Celebration in collaboration with the Guild Board of Directors. Co-Chaired by Suzette Bulley & Meredith Wood-Prince of the Women's Board and Minka Bosco & Daria Lewicky of the Guild Board, the evening raised more than \$500,000 for Lyric! After enjoying a "lovely" English dinner and a spectacular performance of *My Fair Lady*, guests were ushered onstage for an After Party with the Stars to "dance all night" with a view from The Ken Pigott Stage. Tremendous thanks to our Lead Sponsor, Zurich, for making

this evening possible and to each and everyone who attended and contributed to our Spring Musical Celebration.

Looking ahead to next season, the Women's Board is already hard at work on the 30th Anniversary of Wine Auction on April 14, 2018. Co-Chaired by Keith Kiley Goldstein and Nancy S. Searle, Wine Auction 2018 will honor our very own Shirley Ryan, who conceived this event in 1988. We are thrilled to announce that our Honored Guest for the evening is the incomparable Château Margaux, and we hope that everyone will be a part of this special anniversary. Thank you to our Presenting Sponsor, Northern Trust, and Catalogue Sponsor, Liz Stiffel.

My term as Women's Board president has come to an end, and I cannot express how grateful I am to have had the opportunity to work with such a passionate, dedicated, and remarkable group of women for the past three years. I am consistently amazed by what can be accomplished when strong women join forces in support of a shared cause. I thank each and every member of the Lyric family for your continued generosity.



Alison McNally, Elizabeth Cole, Carrie Parr, Lisa Wissink, Liz Ryan, Andrea Garber, and Eileen Murphy



Nancy S. Searle, Todd Searle, and Maggie Holtgrieve



Betsy Rosenfield, Donna La Pietra, and Caryn Harris



Christina and Ron Gidwitz



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Nitschke".

John Nitschke
President

2016/17 was one of the most active seasons in recent memory for The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center. Within the first few days, the three first-year singers worked in individual sessions with Ryan Opera Center advisor Renée Fleming, setting the bar very high for the level of experiences to come!

The first month also launched the wide range of training activities—voice lessons, vocal coachings, acting and language classes—provided throughout the entire season and taught by our expert resident and guest faculty as well as master artists (many from the main stage roster), Renée Fleming, and Sir Andrew Davis, Lyric’s music director.

In June we were thrilled to collaborate again with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago in presenting a concert of emerging talent from both institutions, beautifully conducted by Sir Andrew. Just a few weeks later, the Ensemble performed a wonderful selection of operatic scenes for the Summer Workshop, closely followed by a recital for the National Association of Teachers of Singing at which they shared the stage with Renée Fleming, a once-in-a-lifetime experience!

Other performances throughout the season included appearances with the Grant Park Music Festival, Rush Hour Concerts, and the Art Institute of Chicago. Lyric donors and subscribers again joined us for the Ryan Opera Center’s Final Auditions, and we were thrilled to share with listeners worldwide the fifth season of our Recital Broadcast Series on WFMT. Many of the Ensemble were featured alongside stars of the Lyric stage and Craig Terry in the Harris Theater’s Beyond the Aria series.

Our 14 singers again made major contributions to the artistic success of the Lyric Opera season, performing 38 roles and understudying 48. Ensemble pianist Mario Antonio Marra joined Lyric’s music staff for *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Numerous

alumni returned to Lyric in leading roles, among them Elizabeth DeShong, Quinn Kelsey, Matthew Polenzani, and Christian Van Horn.

Capping off the year of numerous accomplishments, the entire Ensemble was featured in their annual showcase performance, *Rising Stars in Concert*. Timothy Myers made his Lyric debut on the podium and graciously shared it with Mario Antonio Marra for one selection.

We are so blessed to have such strong support on all fronts. Our administrative team of director Dan Novak, music director Craig Terry, director of vocal studies Julia Faulkner, and advisor Renée Fleming leads us to new successes each year. Our Ryan Opera Center Board of Directors is second to none in their generosity and advocacy. The Board’s second fundraiser, *No Tenors Allowed*, netted more than double the amount from last year, thanks to the efforts of many. They—and all of the contributors in the Ryan Opera Center family—make it possible for the program to thrive year in and year out, for which we are all deeply grateful. What the future holds is promising and exciting!



The 2016/17 Ryan Opera Center Ensemble at *Rising Stars in Concert*



No Tenors Allowed sponsors and event co-chair with featured performers



2017/18 Ryan Opera Center Ensemble with sponsors of the Final Auditions



Advisor Renée Fleming coaches Ensemble member Hlengiwe Mkhwanazi at a master class.

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Rising Stars in Concert

April 1, 2017

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Listings reflect gifts in direct support of
The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan
Opera Center.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Staples". The signature is stylized and cursive.

James Staples
President

Since the 1960s, the Guild Board of Directors has supported Lyric Opera with energy, passion, and dedication. Serving as ambassadors, the Guild Board created countless opportunities to connect people with Lyric this year through public and private receptions, exclusive conversations with opera superstars like Samuel Youn, Susan Graham, and Ana María Martínez, and partnerships with Chicagoland area auxiliary groups.

With the Guild Board's strategic plan and Board of Directors Chairman David Ormesher's "One Lyric" initiative as the north star, the Guild Board joined forces with the Women's Board to raise more than \$500,000 in support of the Spring Musical Celebration surrounding *My Fair Lady*. Starting with an elegant dinner, a lovely performance, and dancing the night away, the Guild Board continued their tradition of bringing the fun to fundraising. We are grateful for Lead Sponsor Zurich and the many other cosponsors that helped make this evening a success.

After 25 years of memories and service, the Guild Board said farewell to hosting premium backstage tours. Lyric Unlimited will lead all public tours going forward. However, the Guild Board will continue to share the history of Lyric Opera as we reimagine our partnership with the inaugural Lyric Unlimited Family Day in 2018. We are thrilled to be a part of this interactive event that will bring families into the opera house!

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as president of the Guild Board. I look forward to continuing our work as we engage and strengthen our membership, raise funds, and share our love for Lyric in the season ahead.



Guild Board annual meeting



Guild Board Premium Backstage Tours



Guild Board members Anne Zenzer and Nathaniel Pusey



Justin Breitfelder
President



Lyric Young Professionals at La TRIVIA trivia night

After doubling membership, ticket sales, and social media reach to record levels in 2015/16, our 2016/17 season strategy prioritized member engagement and mission-focused brand building. Lyric Young Professionals is a group of 150 opera lovers dedicated to building the next generation of Lyric supporters. We added more meaning to our mission by focusing fundraising on supporting our next generation peers — the operatic talent at The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center.

With the Cubs being in the World Series for the first time in over a century, we quickly adapted our 2nd annual Halloween Masquerade by integrating Game Three to raise important funds and have fun. Ryan Opera Center members Lindsay Metzger and Patrick Guetti led masqueraders in singing “Take Me Out to the Ball Game” during the seventh inning stretch.

Social media and original content creation have been key to growing our footprint the past few seasons, and 2016/17 was no exception. A video of the masquerade sing-a-long on Facebook helped us extend the reach of the event to more than 10,000 people. This is over 50 times the average reach of posts when we first launched our Facebook page in 2011.

Our Cocktails and Conversations educational series featured celebrated Ryan Opera Center alumnus Matthew Polenzani and Lyric dramaturg Roger Pines leading our members in a vibrant discussion. Pre-opera dinners have become a valued benefit of membership in addition to our Medley subscription series—a casual way for members to meet and share their operatic passion. To better measure ticket sales in the context of member engagement, we began tracking the percentage of our members who are subscribers. LYP subscribers were up 20% in 2016/17 and 71% of our members take advantage of this exclusive series.

It has been an honor to serve on our leadership board for these past few years. We are most grateful for the opportunity to cultivate Lyric’s future audience.



Lyric Young Professionals at the *My Fair Lady* Spring Musical Celebration after party.



Lyric Young Professionals at the second annual Halloween Masquerade



Lyric Young Professionals during intermission at *Lucia di Lammermoor*



Sherie Shapiro

Sherie Shapiro
President, Chapters' Executive Board

The Chapters represent Lyric Opera in their communities with over 800 members in 14 Chapters located throughout the Chicagoland area and Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

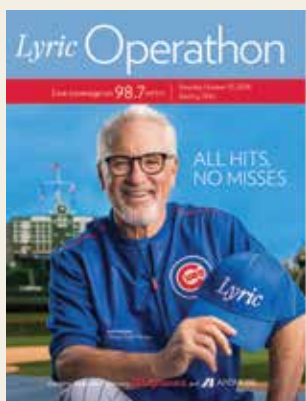
Our annual live-radio marathon fundraiser on 98.7WFMT, Operathon, celebrated its 37th anniversary with a very successful 10-hour broadcast on Saturday, October 15. Under the leadership of Rick Greenman and Claudia Winkler, Operathon 2016 exceeded its \$500,000 goal through challenge grants and merchandise sales—many thanks to our Chapter volunteers who helped sell our exclusive Lyric merchandise in our OperaShop kiosk and through OperaShop Online—and grateful appreciation to our generous challenge grant donors and merchandise sponsors (list on page 44). Special thanks to Walgreens, Ardmore Associates, and 98.7WFMT for their generous continued sponsorship. We are grateful for all of our wonderful on-air guests, and of course, all of our volunteers.

The Season Preview Concert in September, made possible by the Komarek-Hyde-McQueen Foundation and the Lake

Geneva Chapter, is a favorite presentation of donors at the Member giving level and is always popular with our new subscribers. This year's program was no exception, and all who attended were delighted to hear select arias and learn more about the upcoming productions.

The Chapters have continued our "Getting to Know You" greeters program with our volunteers serving as ambassadors during the run of *My Fair Lady*, providing information and assistance to the many new visitors that join us during our musical productions. The success of this project led to many of our volunteers embracing a new opportunity to serve as hosts during Friends First intermission receptions in the Malott Room and have a chance to thank Lyric's many donors in person.

Thanks to my fellow board members, the dedicated Chapter volunteers, and to all at Lyric Opera of Chicago for their passion and dedication to this world-class organization.



Joe Maddon,
Chicago Cubs
Manager, on the
Operathon 2016 cover



Mary Robins and Barb Eckel at the All Chapters Social



Lyric dramaturg Roger Pines, *Lucia di Lammermoor* conductor Enrique Mazzola, WFMT host Dennis Moore, WFMT program director David Polk, and general director Anthony Freud on-air during Operathon 2016



Paul J. Carbone
Treasurer

The 62nd season of Lyric Opera of Chicago consisted of 61 performances of eight mainstage opera productions, 25 performances of the musical in our Musical Theater Initiative, and four concerts. In addition, we continued our acclaimed Lyric Unlimited programming, advancing our goals of community engagement, education, and artistic innovation.

We ended our 2017 fiscal year with breakeven results. Operating revenue and support was \$84.5 million, with 256,684 tickets sold generating \$27 million in ticket revenue. Annual support from our donors and operating funds provided by our Breaking New Ground

campaign contributed \$43.2 million to our operating costs. Operating expenses were well managed within budget.

We thank our generous Lyric donors and sponsors, whose support allowed us to produce an outstanding artistic season, exciting new productions, and the ability to engage our community in deep and meaningful ways.

I am pleased to share some of the financial highlights from our fiscal year below. For a complete audited financial statement, visit www.lyricopera.org and click on "About Lyric," "Financial Statements."

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

	12 months ended June 30, 2017	12 months ended June 30, 2016
Ticket Sales	\$26,960,878	\$26,800,672
Other Operating Revenue	14,276,096	12,600,968
Total Operating Revenue	41,236,974	39,401,640
Total Operating Support	43,264,927	38,764,253
Total Operating Revenue and Support	84,501,901	78,165,893
Total Operating Expenses	84,501,901	78,165,893
Change in Unrestricted Operating Net Assets	\$ -0-	\$ -0-
	As of June 30, 2017	As of June 30, 2016
Long-Term Investments	\$183,790,164	\$167,306,612
Total Assets	305,892,469	311,530,643
Total Net Assets	208,989,329	210,163,548
Operating Revenue as a percentage of Operating Expenses	49%	50%

NON-FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Opera, Musical, and Lyric Unlimited Attendance	256,684	264,256
Number of Other Community Engagement and Education Events	522	518
Other Community Engagement and Education Event Attendance	102,168	94,376

Annual Meeting Sponsor

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2016/17 Season

Das Rheingold

Lucia di Lammermoor

Les Troyens

Don Quichotte

The Magic Flute

Norma

Carmen

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My Fair Lady

Lyric

Lyric Opera of Chicago
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