

2016/17

LYRIC OPERA NEWS


Lyric's Ring Cycle:
THE JOURNEY HAS BEGUN

THE ALL-STAR
*Chicago Voices
Gala Concert*

A NEW PRODUCTION of
*Mozart's enchanting
fairy tale*



SNEAK PREVIEW of 2016/17
Star Voices Still to Come
... and more!

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GENERAL DIRECTIONS

BY Anthony Freud
 General Director, President & CEO

Lyric's 62nd season is off to an amazing start. We hope that you've already had the pleasure of joining us for a performance or an event. As this all-new digital issue of *Lyric Opera News* reaches you, some of our most breathtaking and ambitious efforts are about to unfold from our main stage and from stages and places outside of the Civic Opera House.

As with every Lyric season, in 2016/17, the operas offer something for everyone. Taken together, these works will provide a sense of a journey, exploration, and discovery, as well as the opportunity to enjoy longtime favorites. We have begun Lyric's brand new production of Wagner's *Ring* cycle, beginning with *Das Rheingold*, which proved a huge critical and popular success. We've also thrilled audiences with the vocal virtuosity of our cast of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, scoring our second home run of the season. Right now, we are excited for two very different productions; the epic *Les Troyens* by Hector Berlioz, and Massenet's *Don Quichotte*. Both are masterpieces of the French repertoire and both conducted by music director Sir Andrew Davis with wonderful casts. I do hope you can join us.

We aim for all our productions to be thrilling, entertaining and thought-provoking. New productions of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Bellini's *Norma* and Bizet's *Carmen*, a classic revival of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* and Lerner and Loewe's *My Fair Lady* are all ahead of us. You'll be transported backstage to discover more about Lyric's current season in the pages that follow.

Lyric's power and reach also extends beyond the main stage through Lyric Unlimited, Lyric's vital community engagement and education arm. This season, we are able to offer an unprecedented range of activity, including a ground breaking initiative called Chicago Voices, inspired by our creative consultant Renée Fleming. The culmination of the first year of Chicago Voices will be celebrated at the Civic Opera House on February 4 with the Chicago Voices Gala Concert, an opportunity for everyone to enjoy a compelling array of performing artists, from a variety of musical genres, all coming together to celebrate Chicago's influential and legendary vocal music traditions.

The 2016/17 season and the exciting breadth of creative work it has spawned represents the future of Lyric as a dynamic innovator and helps to illustrate the power of opera.

We thank you for your support as we focus our collective energies on becoming the great North American opera company for the 21st century. Together, we are driven to ignite transformation through art.

We look forward to welcoming you to Lyric,

Anthony Freud
 General Director, President & CEO

PRE-OPERA TALKS Join us for our FREE pre-opera talks! Lyric staff and opera experts share their wealth of knowledge and insights to enhance your opera experience. The 30-minute talks start one hour prior to curtain for every mainstage opera performance (excluding all special events and *My Fair Lady* performances). Visit lyricopera.org for more details.

LYRIC OPERA NEWS

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ON THE COVER *The Magic Flute*

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For tickets and more information visit our website at lyricopera.org

TRIUMPHANT *DAS RHEINGOLD* LAUNCHES LYRIC'S NEW *RING* CYCLE

The journey has finally begun!

After years of dreaming, planning, casting, fundraising, designing, building, sewing, rehearsing, fitting, and fine-tuning, Lyric's new *Ring* cycle is off to a splendid start. The brilliant and inventive new production of *Das Rheingold* had audiences cheering like ecstatic Cubs fans and critics from across the country and beyond making the pilgrimage to Chicago's own Valhalla. (Wotan himself, bass-baritone Eric Owens, thrilled the closing-night audience with a booming "GO CUBS GO!" during the final curtain call, signaling the historic National League pennant win and trip to the World Series – woot!)

It's a journey of many firsts:

- Lyric has never before opened a season with an opera by Richard Wagner in its 62 years.
- It's the first *Ring* cycle for director David Pountney, scenery designer Robert Innes Hopkins (who calls himself a "*Ring* virgin"), lighting designer Fabrice Kebour, and for Anthony Freud, Lyric's general director, president & CEO.
- It's Eric Owens's role debut as Wotan, the deeply flawed chief god and architect of Valhalla.
- It's Samuel Youn's American debut and role debut as Alberich, the Nibelung who steals the Rhinemaidens' gold, renounces love, forges the all-powerful ring, and curses it when Wotan steals it, leading to the series of catastrophes chronicled in the four-opera cycle.
- Also making American and role debuts: Tanja Ariane Baumgartner as Wotan's goddess-wife Fricka (protector of marriage, though hers isn't going so well) and Okka von der Damerau as Erda, the earth goddess who foretells the troubles the ring will bring to whoever possesses it.

- Additional role debuts include Ryan Opera Center alumna Laura Wilde as Freia (goddess of youth and beauty), and current ensemble members Dianna Newman/Woglinde and Annie Rosen Wellgunde (Rhinemaidens), and Jesse Donner/Froh (god of spring).

"There is no more ambitious, large-scale, or exciting venture that an opera company can undertake than a new *Ring*," declares Freud (who worked on a *Ring* at Welsh National Opera before becoming general director there, and planned one for Houston Grand Opera, but came to Chicago before it started). "Our audiences have just experienced powerfully intense, engaging storytelling, glorious music, and detailed, passionate performances with the first of these four magnificent operas." The journey continues with *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung* each season through 2020, when Lyric will present the full cycle three times over the course of three weeks following the regular season. Whether for first-time opera goers or longtime aficionados, Freud adds, "it's a thrilling, unforgettable experience, and Lyric's approach is very much our own. We have reclaimed the *Ring* for the theater."

Interconnected though the plots and characters are, each opera is distinct from the others; if you've seen one, you most certainly haven't seen 'em all. As director David Pountney told *Opera News*, "*Rheingold* is a fast-moving political cartoon, *Walküre* is a kind of Ibsenesque family story, *Siegfried* is a kind of naïve children's pantomime, and *Götterdämmerung* is a grand opera!" In an interview with *Musical America*, Pountney noted that the frame of the stage will remain "constant through all four pieces, but the elements that are added shift the style of each piece in a slightly different direction. So you're always aware that you're within the same book, but the chapters are different."

See more on *Das Rheingold* and the *Ring* cycle at lyricopera.org/videofeatures

“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*



“Wagner’s glorious score is played with rich, glowing, finely detailed sound by the splendid Lyric Opera Orchestra under Davis, who maintains supple musical continuity and alert synchronization with the stage.”

— *Chicago Tribune*



Sir Andrew Davis, Lyric’s music director and principal conductor, is “exhilarated” to return to the sweeping grandeur of the *Ring*. He first conducted the cycle in 2001-05 at Lyric, a revival of the August Everding production. “It’s almost like doing a new piece – a lot of water has flowed under the bridge since then,” he told *Musical America*. “In our new production, the emphasis is on the storytelling – the characters and their relationships are the focus, musically and dramatically.”

In an interview with *Chicago on the Aisle*, Maestro Davis noted that *Das Rheingold* is expository, and “stylistically much simpler than the rest of the cycle. What’s going on later, Wagner tells you in musical subtext, but that sort of layering doesn’t apply in *Rheingold*.” Even though there are 91 musicians packed into the pit, he calls the orchestral writing “quite spare, with very little of the complex contrapuntal writing

that’s prevalent in the three later operas....It’s a primitive story with a bare-bones quality. Wagner made a deliberate attempt to tell the story directly, using every kind of textural possibility, including the simplest. *Walküre* shows much greater subtlety and complexity, and there the gods become more human and are more affected by humans.”

Ah, so much to look forward to! The journey continues in the autumn of 2017, with Eric Owens as Wotan, Christine Goerke as his Valkyrie daughter Brünnhilde, and a host of the best and brightest young Wagner singers, to be announced in February.

Ho-jo-to-ho!

Lyric’s RING

“For Chicago music loves, “T
— *Musical America*



“to be continued” has never been more exciting.”



“playful, buoyant production”
— *The New Yorker*



Production images from the new production and start of the *Ring* cycle, *Das Rheingold*, with Eric Owens as Wotan, Ștefan Margita as Loge, and Samuel Youn as Alberich.

“Eric Owens displayed a beautiful upper register to complement an expressive middle range.”
— *Chicago on the Aisle*

THE MAGIC OF *THE MAGIC FLUTE*

Lyric's new production reimagines a Mozart classic through the wonderment of children

A mischievous bird-catcher. Enchanted musical instruments. The gorgeous, startling Queen of the Night. Perhaps there is no opera more fantastic and inspired than Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. Add to these memorable characters and their thrilling adventure Mozart's incomparable, soaring score, and it's no wonder countless theatergoers of all ages list *The Magic Flute* as a favorite opera – one to be experienced, and savored, time and time again.

At the heart of Lyric Opera of Chicago's new, highly anticipated production – which centers on a delightful, original concept by acclaimed director Neil Armfield and designer Dale Ferguson – is the wonder and awe of childhood. In their vision, the entire fantasy world of *The Magic Flute* is framed by child performers engaged in acts of imagination and make believe. The children on stage mirror us, the audience, as we watch – and participate in – the breathtaking journey unfolding before us.

In the dreamlike world of Mozart's opera, Tamino, a dashing prince, along with his impish, beloved sidekick, Papageno the bird-catcher, sets out on a life changing quest, searching for Pamina, a beautiful captive princess. Along the way, the two are challenged by unbelievable obstacles – a serpent, magic spells, a secretive brotherhood of priests, and Pamina's cruel mother, the Queen of the Night, whose terrifying beauty and unscalable high notes electrify the stage.

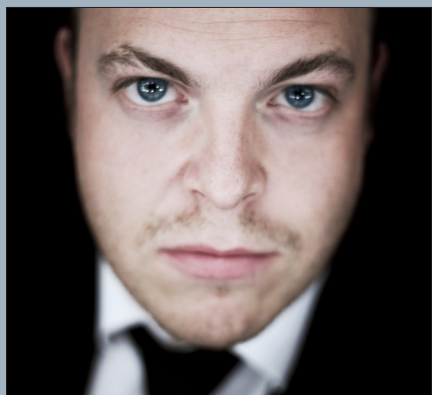
The Magic Flute treats audiences to a classic story, a triumph of good over evil, set to unforgettable music.

Mozart's opera first premiered in Vienna in September of 1791, just two months before the composer's death at age thirty-five. Mozart himself conducted the orchestra on opening night. Emmanuel Shikenader, who wrote the opera's libretto, portrayed the original Papageno. Even then, it was clear that what these men made was magic. Although Mozart would not live to see his opera truly take flight as one the most successful and most frequently performed works around the globe, *The Magic Flute* was an instant success, drawing vast crowds and enthusiastic fans from its eighteenth-century premiere on.

Lyric's production brings together an array of some of the most exciting Mozart singers of our time. Two exciting tenors share the role of the hero, Tamino. Andrew Staples, performing the role from December 10 to January 8, makes his awaited Lyric debut with the role; Matthew Polenzani, already beloved by Chicago audiences for his portrayals of Massenet's Werther and Mozart's Tito, takes up the hero's mantle January 12 to 27. These tenors are joined by celebrated Mozartian baritone Adam Plachetka, who brings his characteristic charm and wit to the role of Papageno. Christiane Karg returns to Lyric, this time as Pamina, a role for which she's won acclaim in Europe. A coloratura soprano with a growing international reputation, Kathryn Lewek sings the Queen of the Night, one of the most notoriously difficult roles, hitting some of the highest and most memorable notes of the season. At the other end of the range, bass Christof Fischesser plumbs the low, stirring depths of Sarastro, the noble high priest and the Queen of the Night's arch-nemesis. Leading Lyric's orchestra with precision and panache through

Hear some of the songs you know and love from *The Magic Flute* by visiting lyricopera.org/1617sampler

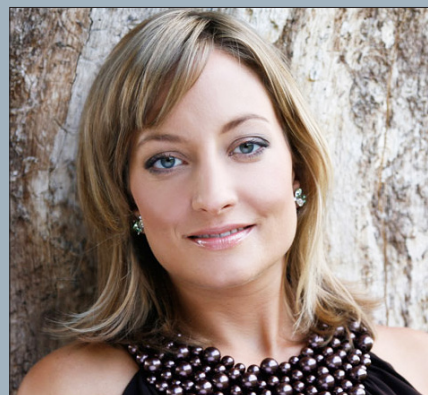
The Magic Flute



ANDREW STAPLES
Tamino (12/10-1/8)



MATTHEW POLENZAN
Tamino (1/12-27)



CHRISTIANE KARG
Pamina

GUELLA SCHENKER



ADAM PLACHETKA
Papageno



KATHRYN LEWEK
Queen of the Night

SMITH PALLY



RORY MACDONALD
Conductor

MARCO BORGHERVE

“Lyric’s new undertaking of *The Magic Flute* — with its dazzling production design, imaginative concept, and outstanding performers — is certain to enchant a new generation of opera lovers. ”

Mozart’s ingenious final opera score is conductor Rory MacDonald.

The Magic Flute is an ideal introduction to opera. You will adore the opera for its quirky characters, triumphant storyline, and for its incredible music most of all. Mozart’s famous overture, glorious arias, and mesmerizing duets are hallmarks of the composer’s inimitable style. And the opera’s sublime music is matched only by its deft comedy – audiences burst with laughter one minute before being swept up in transcendent operatic sound the next.

Even longtime fans of *The Magic Flute* will be excited by the innovative design Lyric’s creative team has dreamed up: Armfield’s singular vision stunningly executed by a team of brilliant designers, including Dale Ferguson and Damien Cooper, and by esteemed choreographer Denni Sayers. The far-off, far-out fairy tale world of Lyric’s new production highlights the potential of *The Magic Flute* to ignite our imaginations, to set free the inner child in all of us.

Armfield, the mastermind behind this reimagining of Mozart, was himself only a child when he first felt the enduring creative power of *The Magic Flute*; in fact, according to the director, it was the first opera recording he ever owned, a gift he received one Christmas. *The Magic Flute* turned out to be a prescient gift indeed, one that Armfield now shares with Lyric audiences in Chicago. You, too, can give the gift of *The Magic Flute* this holiday season by inviting the whole family to experience this delightful journey through music and make believe.

Mozart’s perennial favorite has been beloved by audiences for centuries now. Lyric’s new undertaking of *The Magic Flute* – with its dazzling production design, imaginative concept, and outstanding performances – is certain to enchant a new generation of opera lovers.

To purchase tickets visit lyricopera.org/flute.

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My Fair Lady

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LYRIC OPERA OF CHICAGO

CELEBRATING CHICAGO'S UNIQUE VOCAL HERITAGE

A one-night-only, multi-genre concert on February 4
pays tribute to the city's musical past and present

"My whole life and career has been a preparation for this." So says Douglas Peck, musical director for the Chicago Voices Gala Concert, who will play a vital role in preparing what is sure to be an unforgettable night of vocal artistry across many genres. The extraordinary one-night event, taking place Saturday, February 4, at Lyric's Civic Opera House, promises to be a joyful, star-studded occasion. Brimming with musical surprises and delights, the concert will pay homage to the past and present-day Chicago vocal scene, while highlighting some of the signature sounds for which the city is known. Acclaimed for his triumphs as music director for productions at The Goodman Theatre, Court Theatre, Writers Theatre, the Chicago Humanities Festival, and elsewhere, Peck will work with vocal artists from a variety of genres. The resulting one-night-only performance will celebrate the successful first year of *Chicago Voices*, Lyric's newest community initiative.

Spearheaded by world-renowned soprano Renée Fleming, *Chicago Voices* is a multi-year, groundbreaking program launched in January 2016 to celebrate the human voice, the individual stories of Chicagoans, and the diverse musical culture of the city. The initiative encompasses citywide events, performances, and exhibitions, engaging audiences through participatory arts experiences and cross-genre programming. Chicago's musical heritage is one of the city's

greatest gifts to the world, and *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. Photo exhibits, master classes, expert panels, and community-created performances are just a few of the ways this dynamic program encourages Chicagoans to take part in the citywide celebration that honors and embraces the unique vocal tapestry this city has to offer.

The *Chicago Voices Gala Concert* will feature vocal artists from several musical genres, all with deep ties to Chicago. Fleming, who has served as Lyric's first-ever creative consultant since December 2010, will curate and perform in the concert. The program will celebrate the city's diverse musical traditions and will include top singers in blues, jazz, rock, hip-hop, gospel, and classical, among other genres. Performers include legendary folk singer/songwriter John Prine, a Grammy Hall of Fame member and Maywood, Illinois, native; "New Queen of Blues" artist Shemekia Copeland, fresh off her win at the Blues Music Awards for Best Contemporary Blues Female Artist; world-renowned tenor Matthew Polenzani, an Evanston native and former Ryan Opera Center member; and husband-and-wife duo The Handsome Family, an alternative/ indie/folk group formed in Chicago, best known for their hit song, *Far From Any Road* (theme song for HBO's hit series, *True Detective*), among others.

In addition to Fleming's guidance, the concert will also be shaped by an illustrious advisory group, including famed jazz-funk musician Herbie Hancock, jazz vocalist Kurt Elling, John Prine, and

Check out lyricopera.org/chicagovoicesgala to find out more about most recent artist announced for this concert.



Clockwise from top left: Lyric's creative consultant Renée Fleming, "New Queen of Blues" artist Shemekia Copeland, Legendary folk singer/songwriter John Prine, World-renowned tenor Matthew Polenzani, Douglas Peck, musical director for the Chicago Voices Gala Concert, Husband-and-wife duo The Handsome Family

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“I couldn’t be more thrilled about collaborating with these top-flight musical artists across the full spectrum of performance styles.”
— *Renée Fleming*

comedienne, cabaret singer and television star Jane Lynch. Fleming says, “I couldn’t be more thrilled about collaborating with these top-flight musical artists across the full spectrum of performance styles.” She continues, “I know our combined efforts will make the evening an unforgettable celebration of Chicago’s dazzling, diverse musical culture.”

Chicago is indeed a musically rich city, credited with being the historic home of influential artists from every genre imaginable, and also the birthplace of unique forms of rock & roll, electric blues, and Chicago Style house, gospel, jazz, and soul music. Peck says, “I am certain that the *Chicago Voices Gala Concert* will illuminate the musical strength and diversity of Chicago, connecting our storied past with our glorious present.” He is particularly excited to be working with artists and musical styles that originated here. “Chicago music, like Chicago theater, is honest. We do honest and simple very well. Our music, no matter what genre, always tells a story,” Peck says.

The evening will pay tribute to great Chicago vocalists of the past, such as opera singer Mary Garden, “Queen of Gospel” Mahalia Jackson, blues pioneer Muddy Waters, soul legend Sam Cooke, and others. Narrated video segments will be interspersed throughout the evening, connecting historic social and political movements with

the music of the times. As part of the performance, the artists will collaborate with one another, crossing genres and blending these iconic musical styles in a performance experience that audiences will surely remember for years to come. “As Lyric Opera opens itself up to other styles of music, great new energy comes into this hallowed space. The multi-genre collaborations will be particularly exciting!” says Peck. As Copeland says, “It’s incredible to have the chance to share the stage and work with other artists I admire so much. John Prine? It doesn’t get any better than that. I can’t wait!”

The gala concert has a lofty \$2 million fundraising goal, of which 100% of the proceeds will benefit Lyric Opera and programs of Lyric Unlimited, the division of the company devoted to education, community engagement, and new artistic initiatives. After the successful first year of *Chicago Voices*, highlighting the stories and vocalism of Chicago, the gala is sure to be a triumphant, compelling event using music as a catalyst to celebrate our great city. Peck adds, “Music is truly a universal language that allows us to break down barriers. Now more than ever, our city and our country need its musicians to lead the way.”

Don’t miss this once-in-a-lifetime event! Visit lyricopera.org/chicagovoicesgala to book your tickets.

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Lyric Unlimited was launched with major catalyst funding from **The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation** and receives major support from the **Caerus Foundation, Inc.**



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Matthew Polenzani



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John Prine

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THE MAGIC FLUTE Mozart
Dec 10 – Jan 27

NORMA Bellini
Jan 28 – Feb 24

CARMEN Bizet
Feb 11 – Mar 25

EUGENE ONEGIN Tchaikovsky
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**BREAKING
NEW GROUND**

A CAMPAIGN FOR LYRIC | 

SOARING IN SONG

Lyric's casts in the second half of the season are stellar

Lyric audiences are accustomed to hearing the greatest singers in the world on our stage. Take, for example, the second half of the 2016/17 season. The singing is sure to inspire euphoric shouts of "Brava, diva!" and "Bravo, divo!"

Mozart's *The Magic Flute* needs a wide variety of different vocal types. The vengeful Queen of the Night demands a stratospheric coloratura soprano, and few singers have truly mastered the role. One of them, America's Kathryn Lewek, who's sung it in 15 major houses (including the Met and the Vienna State Opera), is making an eagerly awaited Lyric debut. At the other end of the vocal spectrum is the noble high priest Sarastro, sung by Christoph Fischesser, one of no fewer than three outstanding German basses to debut at Lyric this season. Another debuting artist is English tenor Andrew Staples (Tamino, Dec. 10-Jan. 8), a remarkable Mozartian who's collaborated numerous times with Lyric music director Sir Andrew Davis, including at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

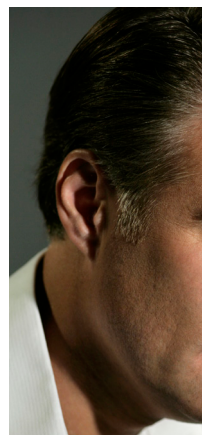
The Magic Flute brings back three artists who have already endeared themselves to our audiences. Ryan Opera Center alumnus Matthew Polenzani (Tamino, Jan. 12-27), the acclaimed tenor hero of many Lyric productions, is renowned the world over for his Mozart portrayals. Czech baritone Adam Plachetka (Papageno) and German soprano Christiane Karg (Pamina) entranced everyone last season at Lyric in *The Marriage of Figaro* – you can expect sheer delight in their return to our stage.

Bellini's *Norma* needs a vocally stupendous quartet, and Lyric has it! Italian opera's most formidable prima-donna roles hold no terrors for American

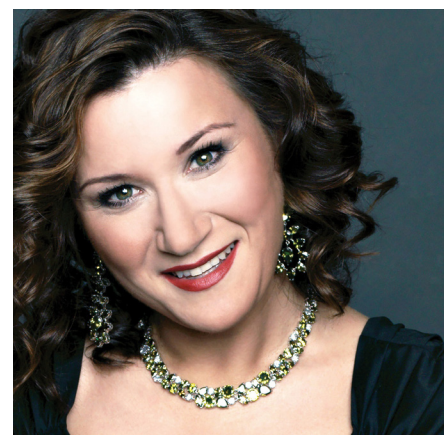
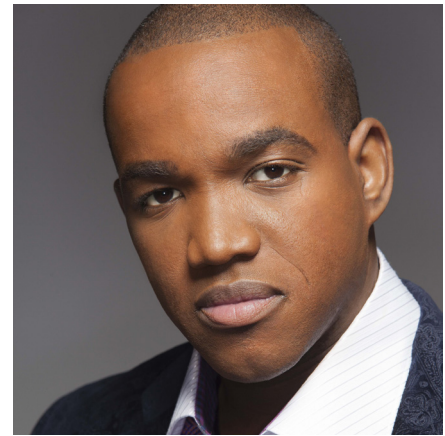
soprano Sondra Radvanovsky, whose *Norma* has been one of her greatest successes at the Met, San Francisco and Toronto. She'll be matched by Ryan Opera Center alumna Elizabeth DeShong (Adalgisa), now established as one of the leading lyric mezzo-sopranos of her generation. Their partners onstage are a new discovery for Lyric audiences, American tenor Russell Thomas – he of the burnished vocalism and the aristocratic bel canto style – and Italian bass Andrea Silvestrelli, whose hugely imposing voice has been a staple of Lyric performances for the past 15 years.

A great favorite, Bizet's *Carmen* brings us two different couples to share the leading roles. The first series of performances brings an exciting role debut from our *Carmen*, Russia's elegant Ekaterina Gubanova; she stunned Lyric audiences a few seasons ago as a memorably imperious Foreign Princess in *Rusalka*, and she also opened the current season at the Met in *Tristan und Isolde*. Her Don José at Lyric, the captivating Maltese tenor Joseph Calleja, a star of every major house internationally, scored a great success earlier this year in his widely heralded role debut in *Carmen* in Frankfurt.

Starring in the second series of *Carmen* performances are two artists who have made this opera their signature, triumphing with it in well over 20 leading international theaters between them. The mesmerizing Anita Rachvelishvili from Georgia (eastern Europe, that is) burst onto the operatic scene at La Scala as *Carmen*, and the passionate American tenor Brandon Jovanovich – already our valiant Aeneas in *Les Troyens* at Lyric this season – debuted at the Met and Glyndebourne as Don José. American bass-baritone Christian Van Horn, a Ryan Opera Center alumnus now immersed in an impressive international career, is back as the toreador Escamillo, and the ravishing Italian soprano Eleonora Buratto (Micaëla), who enraptured one and all in her CSO and Met debuts last season.



See, hear, and read more about these artist when you visit lyricopera.org/insidelyric

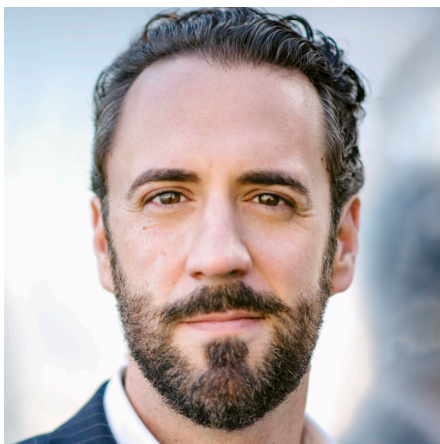
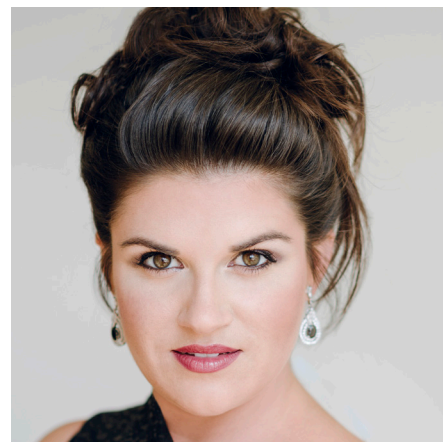


Clockwise from top left: Adam Plachetka, Ana María Martínez, Anita Rachvelishvili, Lawrence Brownlee, Joseph Calleja, Charles Castronovo, Christof Fischesser, Elizabeth DeShong, Dmitry Belosselskiy, Eleonora Burratto, Eric Owens, Ekaterina Gubanova, Brandon Jovanovich, Christiane Karg, Mariusz Kwiecień

The artists for Tchaikovsky's heartbreaking *Eugene Onegin* comprise a team that every opera house worldwide could envy. Lyric audiences are eagerly awaiting the reunion of the incandescent duo from our recent *Don Giovanni*, Mariusz Kwiecień (Onegin) and Ana María Martínez (Tatiana) – each a great Lyric favorite, and each acknowledged by critics as a superbly gifted artist. The Polish baritone is returning to one of his most celebrated portrayals, while the Puerto Rican-born soprano is making one of the most anticipated role debuts of the season. Joining them will be the dashing American tenor Charles Castronovo (Lensky), the “go-to” guy internationally for a remarkable range of lyric-tenor heroes, and Dmitry Belosselskiy (Gremin), the galvanizing Russian bass who raised the roof with his Lyric debut in last season's *Nabucco*.

Lyric's special events will bring more spectacular artistry: “Celebrating Plácido,” a special performance by a true legend of opera, the incomparable Plácido Domingo; at the Harris Theater, a spectacular new American opera, *Charlie Parker's Yardbird*, showcasing a true American virtuoso, tenor Lawrence Brownlee, for whom the piece was written; and a thrilling duo recital for Brownlee and bass baritone Eric Owens, *Musical America's* 2016 “Vocalist of the Year” and Lyric's magisterial Wotan this season.

Lyric general manager Carol Fox once said, “I have very simple tastes – I only want the best.” And when it comes to singers at Lyric in 2016/17, it's nothing but the best!



Clockwise from top left: Kathryn Lewk, Plácido Domingo, Matthew Polenzani, Christian Van Horn, Russell Thomas, Sondra Radvanovsky, Andrea Silvestrelli

PHOTOS: DEREK BLANKS, PAUL SIROCHMAN PHOTOGRAPHY, DARIO ACOSTA, SIMON PAULY, TOM SPECHT

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BROWNLEE &
ERIC OWENS**

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Two of the most dynamic artists of our day come together for a single performance at Lyric Opera displaying their talents, artistry, and exciting range of repertoire.

Tenor Lawrence Brownlee, who debuted at Lyric to great acclaim in *Cinderella* in 2015 and returns for *Charlie Parker's Yardbird* this season, teams up with bass-baritone Eric Owens, who stars as Wotan in Lyric's *Das Rheingold*, for a recital of art songs, opera arias, and spirituals.



Clockwise from top left: Bradley Smoak in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Christian Van Horn in *Cinderella*, Takaaki Onishi in *Bel Canto*

PHOTOS BY TODD ROSENBERG

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The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center is internationally recognized as one of the premier artist-development programs of its kind in the world. During their residency, the Ensemble artists actively participate in Lyric's mainstage productions; in the 2016/17 season, they will perform thirty-six roles and understudy forty-seven. Additionally, ten roles are sung by celebrated Ryan Opera Center alumni this season, as Lyric continues to engage successful graduates of the program.

On Monday, February 27, 2017, supporters of the Ryan Opera Center will gather at The Casino Club for an evening of merriment and song benefitting the program. Current Ensemble baritones and basses Patrick Guetti, Emmett O'Hanlon, Takaaki Onishi and Bradley Smoak will join alumnus bass-baritone Christian Van Horn and music director Craig Terry for an unforgettable and intimate evening, as other alumni and current members join guests for an elegant seated dinner.

For more information or to attend the event, please call Meaghan Stainback at 312-827-5691.

Post-opera performance by members of the **Chicago Jazz Philharmonic**. Enjoy the music of Charlie Parker performed live following the performance — free for all ticket holders.

**LYRIC
PREMIERE**

**Starring
Lawrence Brownlee**

**Music by
Daniel Schnyder**

**Libretto by
Bridgette A. Wimberly**

CHARLIE PARKER'S YARDBIRD

**MARCH 24 7:30 PM
MARCH 26 2:00 PM**

**PERFORMED AT THE
HARRIS THEATER**

New York City, 1955. As his body lies unclaimed in the morgue, saxophone great Charlie Parker returns in spirit to the jazz club Birdland, determined to compose a final masterpiece. Family and friends blend in and out of his memories in an acclaimed new opera that tells of his tortured, brilliant life.

Performed in English with projected English texts

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2017

THRILLING PERFORMANCES STILL TO COME IN LYRIC'S 2016/17 SEASON

NORMA

Bellini

Jan 28 - Feb 24



CARMEN

Bizet

Feb 11 - Mar 25



EUGENE ONEGIN

Tchaikovsky

Feb 26 - Mar 20



My Fair Lady

Lerner & Loewe

Apr 28 - May 21

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