

Lyric
LYRIC OPERA OF CHICAGO



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Making its U.S. premiere,

Lyric Unlimited presents an opera for families:

The Scorpions' Sting

**Tickets on sale now for four performances at Chicago's
Studebaker Theater**

October 14 at 2 & 4pm; October 15 at 12 & 2pm

Chicago (8/7/2017) – **Lyric Unlimited** is thrilled to present the U.S. premiere of ***The Scorpions' Sting***, an opera for families and young people with music and libretto from acclaimed Canadian composer **Dean Burry**. The opera follows a group of archaeology students and their professor as they uncover the Lost Temple of Isis, the ancient Egyptian goddess of healing. A mythic tale unfolds as they discover the ancient hieroglyphics, and the students learn the importance of knowledge and the power of forgiveness. The production is ideal for families with children ages 7-12.

Tickets are on sale now for four performances that will take place at the **Studebaker Theater** (410 S. Michigan, Chicago) on **Saturday, October 14 at 2 and 4pm**, and **Sunday, October 15 at noon and 2pm**. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for children, and are available now by calling 312-827-5600. For additional information, visit lyricopera.org/thescorpionssting.

Directed by **Elise Sandell**, ***The Scorpions' Sting*** features **Curtis Bannister** (Professor Hornsby/Set), **Melinda Alberty** (Sally Smith/Isis), **Matthan Black** (David Sands/Osiris/Scorpions), and **Julia Hardin** (Molly Brown/Nephtys/Tahemet). Scenic designer is **Lauren Nigri**, and costumes are designed by **Noel Huntzinger**. **Matthew Gemmill** is music supervisor. The singers will be accompanied by piano, and the production is in English.

When an old professor is stung by a scorpion, his students carry him to safety in a cave. Upon entering the darkness, they realize this is no common cave – they have stumbled upon the Lost Temple itself. In a desperate attempt to help the professor, one student, Sally, remembers Isis was known as the Goddess of Healing and searches for clues within the ancient hieroglyphics on the temple walls. The quest begins to help their professor recover, while they also learn about the ancient and legendary gods of Egypt.

"Following the exciting adventure we took last season with young audiences through ***Jason and the Argonauts***, we are delighted to present ***The Scorpions' Sting*** to Chicago families," said **Cayenne Harris**, Vice President of Lyric Unlimited. "**Dean Burry's** delightful work, shaped by director **Elise Sandell**, is an operatic introduction that we think children and adults alike will enjoy."

Dean Burry (Music and Libretto) is an award-winning composer and librettist, dedicated to creating educational programs that introduce opera to children. *The Brothers Grimm*, Burry's work commissioned by the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto, premiered in 2001 and was presented by Lyric Unlimited in 2014. It catapulted Burry to success and visibility internationally, attracting over 150,000 school children across Canada, the United States and Europe. In 2011, Burry's radio opera *Baby Kintyre*, commissioned by CBC radio, was nominated for a Prix Italia. In that same year, he was awarded the prestigious Louis Applebaum Composers Award for his work in music for young people. Current projects include a setting of the Alfred Noyes poem *The Highwayman* for soprano and chamber ensemble; and *The Sword in the Schoolyard*, a King Arthur opera for Toronto's VIVA! Youth Singers.

Elise Sandell (*Stage Director*) has directed at the opera companies of Tulsa, Portland, Minneapolis, Madison, Tacoma, and Boise. Her recent production of *La Traviata* at Central City Opera was hailed as "first-rate" by *Opera News*. She staged two world premieres for HGOco, the outreach branch of Houston Grand Opera. She works frequently with the ensemble at Lyric Opera's Ryan Opera Center, where she directed the artists for Rising Stars in Concert and in their workshop this past spring. She also serves often on the directing staff at Lyric Opera of Chicago and has assistant directed 20 productions for Lyric, including Lyric Unlimited's *Popcorn and Pasquale* and *The Family Barber*. Her production concept of *Einstein on the Beach* was chosen as a finalist in OPERA America's Director-Designer Showcase, and she has served as assistant director at many prominent companies including The Met, San Francisco Opera, Portland Opera, San Diego Opera, and Houston Grand Opera.

Following the premiere performances at the **Studebaker Theater**, ***The Scorpions' Sting*** will be presented for student groups in and

around Chicago as part of **Lyric Unlimited's Opera in the Neighborhoods** program.

About Lyric

Lyric Opera of Chicago's mission is to express and promote the life-changing, transformational, revelatory power of great opera. Lyric exists to provide a broad, deep, and relevant cultural service to Chicago and the nation, and to advance the development of the art form.

Founded in 1954, Lyric is dedicated to producing and performing consistently thrilling, entertaining, and thought-provoking opera with a balanced repertoire of core classics, lesser-known masterpieces, and new works; to creating an innovative and wide-ranging program of community engagement and educational activities; and to developing exceptional emerging operatic talent.

Under the leadership of general director Anthony Freud, music director Sir Andrew Davis, and creative consultant Renée Fleming, Lyric strives to become The Great North American Opera Company for the 21st century: a globally significant arts organization embodying the core values of excellence, relevance, and fiscal responsibility.

To learn more about Lyric's current season, go to lyricopera.org. You can also join the conversation with @LyricOpera on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. #Lyric1718 #LongLivePassion

About Lyric Unlimited

Lyric Unlimited, a division of Lyric Opera of Chicago, offers a multifaceted program of education, community engagement and artistic initiatives. 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 ways in which opera as an art form can resonate more powerfully, and in a range of different ways, with people of multiple backgrounds, ethnicities, and interests. In the 2016/17 season, more than 100,000 individuals participated in Lyric Unlimited programs.

For more information about Lyric Unlimited program offerings, visit lyricopera.org/lyricunlimited.



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