

LYRIC OPERA OF THE NORTH

THE SINGING TELEGRAM

WELCOME! to the first edition of our new quarterly newsletter. Inside you'll find the latest news about our work, upcoming performances, special opportunities, and ways you can help LOON. We hope you enjoy reading about all the ways opera is thriving in our region because opera IS fun!



"Opera is fun!"
– Bemidji 3rd grader.

photo by: Sek Designs

Little Opera of the North concludes its third season!

Elementary school gyms from Bemidji to Superior were filled with the sounds of opera this winter! Little Opera of the North visited schools in Ely, Bemidji, Superior, Duluth, Cloquet, Wrenshall, Aitkin, and Proctor with Opera for the Young's adaptation, Orpheus Returns. 16 students from each school learned the chorus part and performed for the rest of their school right alongside LOON's professional cast.

"This was our school's first experience with Little Opera of the North. Students were enchanted and are already asking of they'll be back! Everyone from our youngest students to our staff, teachers and principal were impressed with the quality of the performance. Thank you for providing this important experience for our community!" – Amy Frane, Music Specialist at Great Lakes Elementary, Superior

When you support Lyric Opera of the North, you not only help us bring full-length, fully staged operas to stages in the Twin Ports. You help provide opportunities for children throughout our region to experience opera each year that they are in elementary school –right in their own school gym!

Opera-inspired artwork by a Lowell kindergartener.
(From top left to right: Great Eagle, Persephone, Harp, Orpheus, Pluto)



Lights, Camera... Opera!

Lyric Opera of the North is celebrating the opening of the NorShor Theater with a stunning production of Don Giovanni set in the "Golden Age" of 1930s Hollywood. In this Mozart-meets-the-movies production, our leading man uses his power to play with the lives of everyone on set. But every action has a consequence, and although he's well-rehearsed, nothing could prepare him as the lines between fantasy and reality blur at the movie studio. Christina Baldwin directs, Dirk Meyer conducts, and Calland Metts stars in the title role. Performances are at the NorShor Theatre, June 22 at 7:30 p.m. and June 24 at 3:00 p.m. Tickets are on sale now! Visit loonopera.org for more information, or call the Norshore Box Office at 218.733.7555. Stay tuned for more information about an opening night party!



Christina Baldwin is a singer, actor, writer and director. She returns to Lyric Opera of the North after directing and singing in their touring production of Hansel & Gretel. Christina is an advocate of new work and serves as Artistic Associate, music director and performer with The Moving Company. Christina's collaborations at the Guthrie Theater range from Shakespeare and contemporary plays, to musical theater and operetta. A collaborator with Theatre de la Jeune Lune for nearly 10 years, she was a part of their Tony-award winning season and co-adapted and performed the title role in their critically-acclaimed touring production of Carmen. She performed with the Minnesota Orchestra, appeared on NPR's "Wits" and "A Prairie Home Companion," and lent her voice to animated short films by the Dutch filmmaker Rostom A.D (Cannes Film Festival award-winner). Christina has written, performed and directed opera outreach programs with Skylark Opera. She is a co-creator and director of a musical/sketch comedy show with John Moe "The East Farmington Town Meeting and Amusement Option" and directed "Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley" at the Jungle Theater in Minneapolis. She returns to the Jungle Theater this summer to direct the dark comedy Hand to God by Robert Askins.



The good times were rolling at LOON's Mardi Gras themed soiree on February 13. It was a fantastic party, complete with a rollicking Big Easy-style marching band playing horn and accordion, a spontaneous cancan line, and king cake for all. Topping the evening off, we watched Don Giovanni plunging toward Hell as we neared our fundraising goal. We hope you can join us next year when the soiree returns to Valentine's Day. Mark your calendar for February 14, 2019! And in the meantime, get ready for our popular Summer Sparkler on August 9 at the Historic Scott House in Carlton, MN.

Make a Don Gin-vanni, the signature soiree cocktail in the comfort of your own home!

Don Gin-vanni

1 oz. Vikre Spruce Gin
1/2 oz. St. Germaine liqueur
a splash of fresh lemon juice
3 oz. dry champagne, chilled



Shake the gin, St. Germaine, and lemon with ice until chilled. Strain into a champagne glass and top with the champagne. Santé!



*Interested in
advertising in the
Don Giovanni
program?
There's time to
place your ad!
Contact us at:
info@loonopera.org.*

Join our "Elite Ops" club! When you support LOON at an annual level of \$8,200 or more, you bring gorgeous professional opera to the stage, AND you get many fun thank you perks, including dinner at the home of the General Artistic Directors and photo recognition in our print and digital newsletters.



Rookie Corner

Huddle up here, rookies! Every issue of this newsletter will include information that might be helpful for you! Let's start with something you'll hear in *Don Giovanni*: recitative.

Recitatives are the parts of an opera that don't sound like a song, but do sound like singing. This is the "spoken dialogue" of opera. In a musical, this would be spoken. "Talk, talk, talk, SING!" In an opera, it's often all singing, all the time! Recitative is sung in the rhythm of normal speech, using lots of repeated notes, as opposed to the wide range of notes employed in other parts of the opera.

In *Don Giovanni*, you'll hear two kinds of recitative:

Secco ("dry") recitative is accompanied only by one or two instruments, usually harpsichord and/or cello. This makes it easier for the singers to deliver these lines of dialogue more like regular speech, speeding up and slowing down as the drama demands.

Accompagnato recitative is – you guessed it – accompanied by more of the orchestra. This means the conductor gets involved and now the singers' delivery is dictated by the rhythms and tempo (pace) of the musical score.

Game Plan: Lyric Opera of the North usually sings recitative in English, even when the rest of the opera is being sung in a different language. Why? Because unlike the arias (solo songs), duets, and ensembles of other sizes*, recitative moves along quickly and doesn't repeat itself! But even if you do miss a word, don't worry! Just look up – the English words will be right there on the supertitle screen.

Training Tip: Want to get your ears ready to hear people speaking with each other in their singing voices? Try it at home! "Please pass the salt," just sounds so fancy when you sing it! Children are especially good at this!

***Over-achievers:** One of our favorite things about Mozart is the way he wrote sections of music which called for several characters to sing at the same time.

In *Don Giovanni*, you'll hear duets, trios, and a quartet but also a sextet (six singers)!

You might ask, "Isn't this just a chorus?" Excellent question! But the answer is no! The chorus generally sings several different NOTES at the same time...

...but they tend to all sing the same lyrics. The sextets or septets we're talking about are like individual songs, woven into one musical number.

If you're thinking you'll never be able to hear all those words if everyone is singing at the same time, you're right! Here's how it goes, though: each character gets to establish his or her own thought for the piece, usually alone. So we hear what they're singing about. Then they repeat that while others introduce themselves, until it's a big fabric of musing characters. It's a wondrous thing to hear how it all weaves together.

Here are some other great ways to help LOON sing!

- Cal's Yard Sign Brigade. Help Cal Metts achieve a long-held dream of seeing LOON yard signs all over town! Your part is easy: put the sign up at the beginning of a production week, then take it down and put it in your garage until the next time!
- Do you like to paint? Pound nails? Our scenic shop relies on lots of volunteers. Come work in the shop with us!
- Another surprisingly frequent need: people who can carry things! We often find ourselves moving set pieces and props from one place to another. This is usually a weekend event and it always involves food!
- We need ushers! Lyric Opera of the North is seeking 15 ushers for EACH PERFORMANCE

at the NorShor in June. Ushers are required to attend a brief training session, and are given a free ticket to the opera for the night they usher!

- Artist Hosts. Do you have a spare guest room with a private bathroom? Or, are you looking for a house-sitter in June? Give us a call and we'll explain the mysteries of Host Housing! Or email us at: info@loonopera.org
- Hang posters! We're always looking for help distributing posters throughout the region.
- Invite a friend! If you like us, your friends might, too. Your endorsement is a really big deal! And people who are new to opera are more likely to attend if they know they will know someone there. (Fact!)
- Serve on a committee. Do you like planning events? Our events committee wants you!