

# LYRIC OPERA OF THE NORTH

## THE SINGING TELEGRAM

*It is almost time for our favorite party of the summer, The Summer Sparkler, coming up on August 13 at Northland Country Club. Doors open at 5:30 and the concert starts at 6:30. This year's Summer Sparkler is a celebration of one of the things we love best about opera: the wonderfully implausible plots!*

### Opera is Stranger than Fiction!

Actor, singer, writer, and director Christina Baldwin brings her wealth of talent to this year's Summer Sparkler.

We fell in love with her when she directed the first Little LOON tour (Hansel and Gretel), and again when she directed last summer's Don Giovanni. Now we couldn't be more delighted to welcome her to the stage – for an evening of lovingly unraveling some of opera's most dizzying plots. There will be singing, storytelling, and a chance to win prizes at the Quiz Show: Opera or Reality. (Is this an opera plot? Or a modern-day news story? YOU guess!) It's a rare treat for us to have her here. Get your tickets now for

**SYNOPERASIS: Suspending Disbelief**  
with Christina Baldwin.



photo by Michelle Sangster



photos by Michelle Sangster

### Raffle Prize Drawing

Stock up on \$3.00 raffle tickets for a chance to win a round of golf for 4 people, with a cart, at beautiful Northland Country Club! Raffle prize winners will be drawn at the Sparkler. Need not be present to win.

Raffle tickets are on sale now via staff and board members and by calling the LOON office at 218.464.0922. They will also be available for purchase at the event. Cash or check only.

### Fill the Gym

Little LOON brings kid-friendly professional opera to Elementary School gymnasiums throughout the Arrowhead Region. You can help us achieve our goal of reaching at least 8,500 students at 30 different schools next season by purchasing Little LOON cutouts! Each cutout is just \$5.00, the approximate cost of bringing opera to one elementary school student. Buy one, two, five, ten... and help us fill the gym! Where can you purchase these cutouts? Contact a board or staff member, call us at 218-464-0922, or come to the The Summer Sparkler, where all the cutouts will come together in our mock gymnasium.

### Food and Drink

Burgers, brats, and beverages will be available for cash purchase at the Sparkler.



## Opera rookies, huddle up! It's time for another addition of *THE ROOKIE CORNER*!

The questions we've heard most over the past month (since the curtain came down on *The Elixir of Love*) are all about stage direction. Who decided to make the table squeak? Who decided Nemorino should be smart instead of stupid (like he usually is) and that Adina should be his friend, and not just a mean lady (like she usually is). Are there always two little kids at the beginning? NO?! Well, whose idea was THAT?!

In fact, we've heard stage direction questions from so many of you that we've decided to dedicate TWO issues of the Singing Telegram Rookie Corner to this topic.

We know that the composer writes the notes that are sung and played. We know that the librettist writes the words that they sing. We learned in a recent Rookie Corner about the role of the conductor. So now, to help us understand what the Stage Director does, we've enlisted the help of Bradley Greenwald, who directed *The Elixir of Love*, and who came up with so many of those moments of pure delight.



Whose idea was this?!

photo by Michelle Sangster

Q: What does a Stage Director do?

BG: The stage director conducts all the physical movement on the stage, and is responsible for the emotional communication of the storytelling, and if s/he is feeling bold, adding an interpretation to the original, like setting the story at Woodstock, or on a movie set, or in a pet store. When generous designers are involved (like at LOON!), the director has input on scenic and lighting elements, too. The music is the bailiwick of the conductor.

Q: How do you decide where / when you want to set the story - and basically, how do you decide the story you want to tell outside the score \*?

That depends on the individual opera-- some of these chestnuts were written in short order, like TV scripts that get churned out week after week, and sometimes the dramaturgy (the integrity of the rules of the storytelling) is a little lax, which can put off a modern audience. Today's audiences have a sophisticated palette when it comes to storytelling because of all the stories they watch on a screen. So the director has to make sure the humanity or the absurdity of the characters and story get a lot of attention. The director's job is to make sure the characters match the depth of the music (which is usually more subtle and profound than the wisp of a story). It also depends on whether it's a comedy or tragedy, a farce or satire-- then the director might rely on updating the setting into a frame of reference that not only heightens the emotional charge of the words and music, but lets the audience relax into a world that's more familiar to them, a frame of reference that means something to a contemporary audience and then allows the words and music to work their magic. Of course, this is all hard work from both the director and the performing artists, because they have to find the individual moments that make this all work. But that would be another question for later!

\*Glossary word: The score is the printed music. Usually singers use a score that just shows the piano part and the vocal parts. The conductor's score shows what EVERY instrument is doing!!

In the next issue, we'll ask Bradley Greenwald how he got into directing, how staging an opera differs from staging a musical or a straight play, and whether a singer's voice or their appearance is more important – among several other questions submitted by LOON patrons! If you have a question you'd like us to ask, just let us know!





## Farewell to the LOONburban!!

Lovingly known as the LOONburban, this vehicle has carried set pieces, costumes, lumber, and most importantly, the entire Little LOON company from Duluth to Bemidji to Ely to Cloquet and to many points between! It is being retired to "in-town only" status. General Artistic Director Cal Metts will still haul set pieces and lumber in it - but no more trips to schools. And so, this is the beginning of our search for a new donated vehicle!

Do you know someone who has a vehicle they want to donate? We don't mind a bit of rust!!



Little LOON performs at Lowell Elementary in 2018  
photo by Mike Smisek.

Little LOON is getting ready for more school gym opera magic!

Little Opera of the North will begin its 5th season in October, and the tour dates are filling quickly! This year we'll bring Opera for the Young's adaptation of Massenet's Cinderella to Elementary Schools throughout the region. Tour dates are October 21-25, February 3 - 7, February 10 - 14, and February 24 - 28, with additional dates opening up as needed.

**More information is available at [www.loonopera.org](http://www.loonopera.org), and we're happy to answer questions if you call 218.464.0922.**

See why one Moose Lake 5th Grader claimed, "This opera is the best one I've ever been to!"





## Running for Opera!

Calling all runners: Lyric Opera of the North will sponsor several runners for Grandma's Marathon 2020. If you'd like to help raise money for Lyric Opera of the North while also having the fun of challenging yourself and running the race, give us a call and we'll talk you through the details: 218.464.0922.

LOON General Artistic Directors, Cal Metts and Sarah Lawrence will run the half -- join them! They're fun to run with!

LYRIC  
OPERA  
OF THE  
NORTH

## 2019-2020 SEASON

NOVEMBER 23  
2019

### ***A Night at the Opera: Opera's Greatest Hits***

Concert with the DSSO  
DECC • Duluth, MN

Touring Fall 2019  
& Winter 2020

### ***Little Opera of the North***

Presents Opera for the Young's  
adaptation of Massenet's *Cinderella*.

JANUARY  
24 & 26  
2020

### ***Amahl and the Night Visitors***

- Gian Carlo Menotti  
MASONIC TEMPLE • Duluth, MN

FEBRUARY 14  
2020

### ***Valentine's Day Soirée***

LOON's biggest fundraising event of  
the year. Fancy fun, food and music.

GREYSOLON BALLROOM • Duluth, MN

JUNE 12 & 14  
2020

### ***Tosca***

- Giacomo Puccini  
NORSHOR THEATRE • Duluth, MN

# LYRIC OPERA OF THE NORTH

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525 S Lake Ave  
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Duluth, MN 55802

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### ***Put LOON on your payroll!***

If you are someone who:

Wants to support Lyric Opera of the North?

Likes to "set it and forget it?"

If so, this is the giving method for you! It just takes a few seconds to set up a Sustaining Member donation on the LOON website. Go to [www.loonopera.org](http://www.loonopera.org). Click the

"Support LOON" tab, then the "Set up a recurring donation to LOON" link -- then YOU choose how much to donate, and how often (Monthly, Quarterly, or Annually). You can even put in a STOP date if you like, and of course you can stop these donations at any time for any reason.

LOON board members are sponsoring a little thank you gift for sustaining memberships starting at the \$10 per month level!

Thanks to ALL who help in the ongoing work of Lyric Opera of the North!

ARROWHEAD  
REGIONAL  
ARTS  
COUNCIL

Operating support is made possible in part by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.