

# L'Arria

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
SEATTLE  
**Opera Guild**

April 2017 • Volume 65 • Issue 4

## Mission Statement

The Seattle Opera Guild is a non-profit organization supporting and promoting opera. The guild provides financial support for Seattle Opera, funds vocal scholarships and promotes opera education for all age groups to ensure future opera audiences.

## President's Message

Photo credit: Ann Milam



As my term as President draws to a close, I would like to thank the Board members for all their hard work and support of our common goal. It has been my honor and privilege to work with you. For the rest of the membership, I know many of you have also contributed, either within your Preview Groups or on one of our Board committees. If you are curious about how we run this organization, may I suggest you make that step up to Board Member. Please let me know by email (caszabadi@gmail.com) of your areas of interest. You may find the work very rewarding and your help will be much appreciated.

One of the reasons I moved to Seattle ten years ago was its rich cultural scene. Upon my arrival I threw myself into everything the city had to offer—symphony, recitals, theatre and choral concerts, often ordering a ticket the day of performance. The only thing I didn't try at the beginning was opera. For some reason,

I felt uncomfortable going to the opera on my own. Then in a chance conversation in a Tacoma theatre lobby, I was invited to a SOG Preview. The light bulb went on, and I welcomed the opportunity to join the opera community! I have since made many friends who share my passion for this supreme art form. That's what we are about. That is what makes us unique. We are so fortunate; we have up close and personal operatic performances, often in our homes, we enjoy good company and good food...all that surrounded by the magnificence of our landscape and all it has to offer. By the time you read this, our Diamond Jubilee Celebration will be over. If you were unable to attend, do not despair! We are still in our 60th Anniversary season and are planning a very special Annual meeting on June 6! I would like to see our best turnout ever, so SAVE THE DATE!

*Christine Caszabadi*

## Our Diamond Jubilee Gala

By Ann Milam

Sunday, February 12 was a spectacular day of celebration! Our long awaited 60th Anniversary Gala was held at the Women's University Club, with over 119 attendees plus a group of very special singers. After checking in, we enjoyed the opportunity for professional photographs by Alan Alabastro and sipped wine as we mingled with our SOG friends and their guests.

Next was an enthusiastic recital by young singers Corinna Quilliam (soprano), Cheryse McLeod Lewis (mezzo soprano), Ryan Bede (baritone) and Jesse Nordstrom (tenor) in a delightful program directed by SOG favorite, Erich Parce. Entering the dining room, we enjoyed posters celebrating the 60-year history of the Guild, a beautifully decorated cake and tables featuring centerpieces of white roses and "diamonds."



Photo credit: Alan Alabastro Photography

Our fabulous entertainers (L to R):  
Victoria Livengood, Erich Parce and Lisa Bergman.

Continued on page 2

# Diamond Jubilee

*Continued from page 1*

We were greeted by Christine Szabadi, who introduced Seattle Opera's General Director, Aidan Lang, and former Director Speight Jenkins. Aidan spoke about SOG's many contributions to Seattle Opera and Speight reminisced about the early days of SOG and its importance to the founding of the Opera.

Our MC was Lisa Bergman, popular pianist and music commentator on KING FM. Lisa's mother was instrumental in the founding of SOG and made many contributions to our organization in its early days. The musical program featured a humorous rendition by baritone Erich Parce of Mozart's "The Calendar Song" from *Don Giovanni* plus "Stars" from *Les Miserables* by Schonberg. Next was a unique and hilarious presentation of "My Career Path Musical Story" by mezzo Victoria Livengood. Erich is well known and beloved by SOG members for his past performances for our group and we were so fortunate that Victoria was in Seattle to perform in the Opera's production of *Katya Kabanova*. The singers were accompanied by David McDade, who is well known to us from his excellent work with Seattle Opera and the Guild.

Lisa then recognized and introduced the Guild's past presidents and Award of Distinction recipients. The program concluded when Penny Wade and Maria Van Horn conducted raffle drawings, which featured a vintage diamond necklace donated by Menashe and Sons Jewelers and won by Ann Milam, plus music themed jewelry donated by Christine Szabadi and won by Ruthie Kallander. Pat Ernst won a festive basket of Fran's Chocolates and a bottle of bubbly.

The Chair of this highly successful, festive occasion was our VP of Special Events, Gayle Charlesworth. Her committee included Marilyn Leck, Peggy O'Brien-Murphy, Christine Szabadi, Ann Milam, Maria Van Horn, Penny Wade and Suzy Wakefield. Our friendly greeters were Liz Bagshaw, Linda Flajole, Laura Gallino, Linda Heinen, Linda Voelker, and Penny Wade.

Late breaking news! Chair Gayle Charlesworth reports that the Gala raised a record \$12K for SOG!



*L to R: Victoria Livengood and accompanist David McDade. Photo credit: Alan Alabastro Photography*



*Singers (L to R): Jesse Nordstrom, Corinna Quilliam, Erich Parce, Cheryse McLeod Lewis and Ryan Bede.*

*Photo credit: Ann Milam*



*Our beautiful cake.*

*Photo credit: Alan Alabastro Photography*



*The lovely table settings.*

*Photo credit: Ann Milam*



*Greeters (L to R): Linda Heinen, Liz Bagshaw, Penny Wade, Linda Voelker and Linda Flajole. Photo credit: Ann Milam*

*Photo credit: Ann Milam*

# Our Memorable Holiday Luncheon!

by Ann Milam

Photo credits: Ann Milam



L to R: Luncheon Co-Chairs Penny Wade and Maria Van Horn.

Our annual Holiday Luncheon was held December 2 at the Seattle Tennis Club. Co-Chairs of the event were Maria Van Horn and Penny Wade (VP of Administrative Services). Liz Bagshaw and Zoe Erickson greeted the guests, Treasurer Seamus Smith collected fees, and Peggy O'Brien-Murphy and Paul Brott sold raffle tickets. Other committee members were Sam Gallino and Greg Van Horn. We had a record number of attendees, including 76 members, 26 guests and three performers.

The raffles were for two colorful holiday baskets generously donated by Penny and Maria, and a 60-year-old diamond pave necklace whose winner was announced at our Diamond Jubilee Gala on February 12.

President Christine Szabadi welcomed the guests and acknowledged all who helped with the luncheon. She thanked the underwriters: Gayle Charlesworth, Cheryl Lundgren, Maria Van Horn and Penny Wade, and introduced our guests Lisa Bury, Allison Rabbitt and Janell Johnson from Seattle Opera's Development Office. Our other special guests were Lisa Bergman from NOISE, Maxine and Paul Levy from MONC, and Kathryn Weld from the Voice Department at Western Washington University.

Maria also greeted the guests and thanked those who had volunteered to make this event so special. She introduced Regina Thomas, our former VP of Education.

Regina introduced our performers: Yuliya Varavina (soprano), Rachele Moss (contralto), and pianist Lisa Bergman. They delighted us with a program of individual arias, including "Donde lieta uscì" from *La Boheme* by Yuliya and "Weiche, Wotan, Weiche" from *Das Rheingold* by Rachele. They concluded with a lovely duet, "The Barcarolle" from *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*.

Both singers are recipients of SOG training awards. Each spoke movingly of how her award has enabled her to continue vocal studies and cover essential expenses as she develops her career. We are very proud of the long tradition of SOG support for young singers and opera education. This wonderful performance both rewarded and reminded us of the importance of our fundraising activities to support all aspects of opera study and performance.

Lisa Bergman, Chair of NOISE (Northwest Opera In Schools, Etc.) thanked SOG for our longtime support of her program (established in 1985), which brings



Greeters (L to R):  
Zoe Erickson and  
Liz Bagshaw.  
Photo credits:  
Ann Milam

Treasurer Seamus Smith collected fees, and Peggy O'Brien-Murphy and Paul Brott sold raffle tickets.



Treasurer Seamus Smith.



Photo credit: Suzy Wakefield.

L to R: Raffle sellers Peggy O'Brien-Murphy and Paul Brott.

Photo credits: Ann Milam



L to R: Megan Spaulding and Gayle Charlesworth.

live opera performances to schools in our region. This year SOG donated \$1500 to NOISE, and since NOISE's beginning, SOG's donations have reached \$50K! In addition to educating children, NOISE provides valuable singing experiences for young singers, many of whom are still in training. Maxine Levy also thanked SOG for support of the Metropolitan Opera National Council NW District and Regional Competitions. The MONC singing competitions are the oldest in our nation and have provided support and encouragement to many opera singers who are now stars on international stages.

Next on the agenda was the long awaited raffle drawing. Penny acknowledged the outstanding volunteers who made our annual raffle such a success by having them stand for a much deserved round of applause.



L to R: Entertainers Lisa Bergman, Rachele Moss and Yuliya Varavina.

Maria introduced Megan Spaulding, the daughter of Charles Hale and Dorothy Stansel, who each season have donated a week's stay in their Paris apartment to the SOG Raffle. Megan drew the winning tickets from the raffle drum and phoned the lucky winner of the Paris apartment stay — needless to say, the recipient was very surprised!

Suzy and Jay Wakefield were thanked for their generous donation of their Westport Condo to the raffle. Suzy selected the winning raffle ticket. The lucky winners of the raffle baskets were Vicky Downs and Ann Milam.

Many thanks to the organizers and donors for this highly successful and memorable Holiday Luncheon!

# Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions NW Region Finals: A Fabulous Day of Opera!

By Ann Milam

The NW Region Finals competition organized by Auditions Director Maxine Levy, Chair Clint Singley and the Executive Committee was held Sunday afternoon, January 8th. Nordstrom Recital Hall was filled with enthusiastic opera lovers.

Of the ten District winners competing for prizes, first place (\$5000) was awarded to mezzo-soprano Pascale Spinney (Western Canada District), who represented the NW Region in the MONC Semi-Finals in NYC. Second place (\$3000) went to soprano Madison Leonard (Idaho/Montana District) and third place (\$2000) was awarded to soprano Antonia Tamer (Oregon District). Each of the non-placing contestants received a \$500 participation award.

The distinguished judges were Gayletha Nichols (MONC Executive Director), Deborah Birnbaum (internationally-known voice and breath coach) and Christopher McBeth (Utah Opera Artistic Director). The singers were accompanied on the piano by audience favorite, David McDade, Seattle Opera's Head of Coach/Accompanists and a regular at our MONC auditions

As the judges deliberated, Seattle Opera's General Director Aidan Lang spoke about the challenges facing opera and the development of young opera singers. He emphasized the importance of competitions for young singers and the role that MONC has played over the years in helping the Met to discover some of its biggest stars. We can be proud that our NW Region has produced acclaimed singers Larry Brownlee, Angela Meade, Thomas Hampson and Noah Baetge, among others.

On Sunday morning, before the afternoon competition, the NW Region sponsored a Master Class with Deborah Birnbaum. The three lucky young singers who worked with Ms. Birnbaum were previous Encouragement Award recipients: Rachelle Moss (contralto, one of our SOG trainees), Catherine Thornsley (soprano) and Katie Kibota (mezzo-soprano). It was fascinating to observe the details of breath and intonation control emphasized by Ms. Birnbaum and the improvement in the young singers' performances under her tutelage.



Photo credit: Ava Driscoll.

Region award winners.  
L to R:  
Madison Leonard,  
Pascale Spinney  
and Antonia Tamer.

# The President's Column

by Christine Szabadi

## The Twelfth Man



Photo credit: Ann Milam

...of opera I mean. This is you, the audience. Without an audience the opera has no connection. The performers rely on the audience and its energy to bring that extra magnetism to the performance. As soon as the curtain rises, one can sense the breath of anticipation from the house. As the action progresses, certain customs occur that seem to apply only to opera. I am talking about the wild applause and shouts of "Bravo!" that appear spontaneously after major arias. Some enthusiasm spills over at some more inappropriate moments - but somehow it doesn't seem to matter; it's all part of the unique relationship of the audience with the performers. To illustrate the power of the opera—Seattle Opera just produced *La Traviata*. Now, we are all familiar with the story. We know Violetta is torn from her lover, Alfredo. We know she is going to die, and yet the tears begin to flow as we witness these events happening. Our emotions become completely involved as the drama unfolds, enhanced by the music and those exquisite voices!

Why do we love opera? There are many different answers to this question, and that is because opera includes everything the performing arts have to offer. There is music, there are the singers (all our favorite voices!), there is the spectacle of staging and costumes, there is drama and there is comedy. What more could we want? As an audience, we are drawn into the action of this magnificent art form and lose ourselves, leaving our worldly lives behind for a few hours. We become opera's cheerleaders and the twelfth man.

# Singer Spotlight: Allison Pohl!

Ann Milam

Last season Allison was awarded a SOG Training Grant. Her youthful voice and comic, vivacious stage presence are bringing her great success. Her natural ability to connect with audiences and her honest musicianship have drawn enthusiastic responses across three continents.

Allison made her professional debut as Barbarina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Boston Lyric Opera. Her work has drawn positive reviews for her “sparkling voice” (outerstage.com) and “exuberant” performances (*Opera News*). Of her performance in *L’elisir d’amore* at Virginia Opera, *The Washington Post* wrote: “Allison Pohl stood out with a ripe, flavorful soprano and ample character.”

In Feb. of 2017, Allison received high reviews as Tatyana in Tacoma Opera’s production of *Eugene Onegin*, She recently sang Blanche in *Dialogues des Carmélites* with Vashon Opera.

In the 2014/2015 season, Allison made her New York City Opera debut as Clorinda in *La Cenerentola* in the company’s education program and as Frasquita in an abridged version of *Carmen* on tour in cities across the US and Canada. She debuted with Opera Providence as Yum-Yum in *The Mikado* and as a soloist with Canton Symphony Orchestra in the opening concert of their Masterworks Series. She returned to Opera in the Heights in Houston, TX as Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel*. Allison also made solo appearances with New Rochelle Opera, Richmond County Orchestra, and Shrewsbury Chorale.

In the 2013 season, Allison debuted with Opera in the Heights as Nannetta in *Falstaff* and returned to Buck Hill Skytop Music Festival and North Shore Music festival in *Il Tabarro* and as a concert soloist. Recently, Allison appeared as Juliette in scenes from *Romeo et Juliette* in Poor Richard Opera’s concert series “Romeos and their Juliets” in Philadelphia. She was a finalist in 2013 and 2011 Liederkranz Competitions (Opera Division).

2012 took Allison on a ten-city concert tour of China where she sang Violetta in the opening scene of *La Traviata* with the Camerata Philadelphia. Soon after, she returned to Opera on the James for its “Love Makes The World “Go ‘Round” concert series and to Golden State Philharmonic as the soprano soloist in Mozart’s *Requiem*. She debuted with Bronx Opera as Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel* and returned to North Shore Music Festival as Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*. Allison was a festival resident artist at Buck Hill Skytop Music Festival in the Poconos, where she also performed Flora and covered Violetta in *La Traviata*.

The 2009 season took Allison to Coeur d’Alene, ID to sing Lucy in Menotti’s *The Telephone* with Opera Coeur d’Alene. She also appeared as Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas* with Opera Meraviglia in NYC and the Boston Early Music Festival. Allison covered Adele and performed Sally in *Die Fledermaus* with Opera New Jersey with a star-studded cast.

Allison’s roles include Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Suor Genovieffa in *Suor Angelica*, Vera in Hoiby’s *A Month in the Country*, Noémie in *Cendrillon*, Bessie/Yvette in Weill’s *Youkali* and *Mahagonny Songspiel*, Sandmann in *Hansel and Gretel*, and Musetta in *La Bohème*. In 2007 Allison was selected by Simon Estes to sing the title role in Pergolesi’s *La Conversione di Guglielmo* with Orchestra Gemigniani in Tuscany, Italy. In 2006 she was a finalist in the Lotte Lenya Competition for Singers.



Photo credit: Arielle Doneson.

## Training Grant Auditions!

By Kathleen Martin

Circle Friday, April 7 on your calendar! That evening SOG will award a total of \$6000 to young singers at our 2nd Annual Singer Training Grant Auditions. The event is open to SOG members and the general public. Semifinalists will perform two arias for the audience and judges, and the winners will be announced at the evening’s conclusion.

Be the first to hear up and coming young artists in the lovely ambience of the Women’s University Club. Many of our past Training Grant recipients now perform in main stage productions or our previews, including Serena Eduljee, Ryan Bede, Corinna Quilliam and Sarah Larsen.

The Auditions will be at the Women’s University Club, 1105 6th Ave, Seattle, WA. 98101. Friday, April 7, 2017, from 7:00-9:00 PM. Light refreshments will be served and a no host bar will be available. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door.

Parking is available in nearby facilities. For tickets or to request handicapped parking in the WUC garage, call Sue Buske (206) 420-2926 or Kathleen Martin: (208) 705-0973.



Photo credit: Ann Milam

Last year’s Training Grant competition semifinalists.

# The Magic Flute

## Preview Schedules

by Wolfgang Mozart

### Saturday April 22, 2017 Magnolia/Queen Anne\*\*\*

Brookdale  
805 4th Ave. N  
Seattle WA 98109  
Arrival: 6:30pm  
Program: 8:00pm  
RSVP: Alicia Rossano 206.284.7556  
aleciarossano@gmail.com

### Sunday April 23, 2017 Bellini and Vivace\*\*\*

The Inglewood Golf Club  
6505 Inglewood Road NE  
Kenmore, WA  
Arrival: 3:30 pm with no host wine bar  
Brief Welcome/Introduction: 4:20pm  
Program: 4:30 pm  
Grand Buffet: 5:30pm  
Contacts: Sally Buckingham 425.293.4510  
Suzy Wakefield 425.828-6186

### Thursday April 27, 2017 Lakeside

The Summit on First Hill  
1200 University St.  
Seattle, WA 98122  
Arrival: 12:30 pm  
Program: 1:30 pm  
Contact: Julie Thompson 206.329.9960

### Friday April 28, 2017 Parties and Previews

TBD  
Arrival: 7:30 pm  
Program: 8:30 pm  
Contact: Sandy Boyd 425.450.0671  
Sfboyd10@gmail.com

### Saturday April 29, 2017 Amici

Home of Bill and Shannon Dagmar  
6020 NE 60th  
Seattle, WA 98115  
206.730.9880  
Arrival: 5:00pm  
Program: 5:30pm

### Sunday April 30 Allegro and Mercer Island

Aljoya Retirement Home  
2430 76th Ave. SE  
Mercer Island, WA 98040  
Arrival and Lunch: 1:00 pm  
Program: 2:30 pm  
Contact: Nancy English 206.409.9361 C,  
206.232.8429 H

\*Host phone numbers are provided for last minute driving directions.  
Please call listed contacts for all other enquiries.

\*\*\* RESERVATIONS PLEASE.



## In Memoriam Susanne Fisher Hubbach

Susanne Hubbach passed away at age 96 on January 5, 2017. A family and close friends' memorial was held March 4, 2017. Sue, born and reared in Seattle, became actively

involved with Seattle Opera and the Seattle Opera Guild in 1975. She served for many years on Seattle Opera's Board of Trustees. Sue was a member of the Bel Canto preview group and chaired the Seattle Opera/SOG "Divas and Diamonds" Fashion Show luncheon in 1992 and 1993. Sue received our Award of Distinction in 1998 and devoted countless hours as Chair of our Annual Raffle, where she secured fabulous prizes from donors, lined up ticket sellers and raised record-breaking sums for the Guild.

Sue's love of opera began in 1936 when she attended *Lohengrin* and *Tosca* at the Met Opera in NYC. Later, she became a strong supporter of Seattle Opera. Its former Executive Director, Kelly Tweeddale, eulogized Sue in the recent *Katya Kabanova* program.

We celebrated Sue's many contributions to the Opera and SOG with a recital in her honor at the Ruins in 2009. It featured remarks by Speight Jenkins and a performance by soprano Eglise Gutierrez.

Sue is survived by her son, John Hubbach (wife Dana) in Colorado and daughter Carol (husband Norbert Fratt, Jr.) in Arizona, four grandchildren and 10 great granddaughters.

Memorials may be sent to the Seattle Opera Guild Memorials and Tributes Fund (2226 Eastlake Ave E., Box 222, Seattle, WA 98102) or to Children's Hospital Foundation, (POB 5371, Seattle 98145).



Sue Hubbach and  
Speight Jenkins.  
Photo credit: Ann Milam

# UPCOMING OPERA EVENTS

By Ann Milam

## March 31-April 9, 2017

Mozart's *Don Giovanni*  
Pacific NW Opera (formerly Skagit Opera)  
McIntyre Hall in Mt. Vernon  
skagitopera.org/performances/

## April 1, 6, 7 & 9, 2017

*The Combat*  
A Muslim Christian Love Story  
in a Time of War  
Seattle Opera Studios  
200 Terry Ave N, South Lake Union  
(206) 389-7676

## April 7, 2017

SOG Training Grant Auditions  
Women's University Club  
1105 6th Ave.  
Seattle, WA, 98101  
(208) 705-0972

## April 9 & 30

Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*  
UW Music and Pacific MusicWorks  
Meany Theater  
tickets.artsuw.org/Tickets/#!/Tickets  
/Prod/8739  
(206) 543-4880

## April 20-28, 2017

*Les Féluettes* (Lilies);  
A New Canadian Opera  
The Royal Theatre of Victoria, BC  
www.pov.bc.ca/feluettes.html  
250-385-0222

## April 28-May 13, 2017

Verdi's *Otello*,  
Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*  
& Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*  
Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Vancouver, BC  
http://festival.vancouveropera.ca  
(604) 683-0222

## April 29-May 7, 2017

Offenbach's *La Perichole* by Tacoma Opera  
The Rialto Theater  
www.tacomaopera.com  
253-627-7789

## May 6-20, 2017

Mozart's *Magic Flute*  
Seattle Opera at McCaw Hall  
www.seattleopera.org/tickets/  
206-389-7676

## May 19 & 21

Puccini's *Tosca* by Vashon Opera  
Vashon Center for the Arts  
www.brownpapertickets.com  
/event/2535631  
1-800-838-3006

## May 21, 2017

Music of Remembrance  
Spring Concert: *Ceija*  
Illsley Ball Nordstrom Recital Hall  
200 University St, Seattle, WA 9810  
www.musicofremembrance.org  
(206) 365-7770

## June 6, 2017

SOG Annual Luncheon  
Seattle Yacht Club  
1807 East Hamlin Street  
Seattle WA, 98112

## Memorials & Tributes

*Barbara Howell in memory  
of Sally Easterbrook*

## Save the Dates!

### SOG Annual Meeting June 6, 2017

Seattle Yacht Club

### M/QA Preview Group Presents ¡Viva España!

*A Musical Evening in Seville*

**Saturday, June 17  
5:30-9 pm**

805 4th Ave North  
Seattle, WA 98109

## *The Combat: A Muslim Christian Love Story In A Time of War*

### *Music by Claudio Monteverdi & François Couperin*

An early Music Trilogy. Join Seattle Opera for an immersive theatrical experience in a unique location. Based on Tasso's epic poem set during the Crusades, *The Combat* combines works by Monteverdi and Couperin to explore how differing cultural identities impact the lives of two star-crossed lovers. A Muslim warrior woman and a Christian crusader fall in love, unaware of each other's faith. When they meet again during a nighttime battle, they fail to recognize one another, with tragic consequences. *The Combat* is performed by a soprano and 2 tenors, accompanied by a by a 5-piece Baroque ensemble conducted by Stephen Stubbs. This is a project by Seattle Opera's Education & Community Engagement Department

Performed at Seattle Opera Studios, 200 Terry Avenue North, Seattle.

Tickets: \$40, general admission, 206-389-7676

### Performance Dates:

**April 1, 6, and 7 at 8:00 PM**

**April 2 at 2:00 PM**

**April 9 at 7:00 PM**

Sung in English. Approximate running time is 50 minutes with no intermission.

# SEATTLE Opera Guild

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If email is not available, the Editor will accept a typed article. Mail to: 725 9th Ave, Apt. 1206  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Photographs** should include subjects' names & name of the photographer.

**Editorial Policy:** Editorial changes to submitted articles, other than correction of grammatical errors, will be made after consultation with the contributor.

**Deadline for July issue of *L'Aria*:** June 1, 2017

## SOG Officers

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