



A Message from Richard Poppino, President of Friends of OSU Opera

Dear Friends of OSU Opera,

It is going to be another busy year for opera right here in Corvallis! I would like to tell you about the exciting events we have scheduled for the 2009-10 season. I would also like to recap some of the highlights from the past year and to let you know that our singers have been making their mark, not just in Corvallis, but regionally, nationally, and even internationally. Finally, I would like to encourage you to keep opera at OSU and in Corvallis thriving, by joining Friends of OSU Opera---affectionately known as FOO---or by renewing your membership.

Upcoming Performances 2009-2010

Our series of events for 2009-10 opens with fully staged performances of *The Pirates of Penzance*, a joint venture of the OSU University Theatre, the OSU Music Department and, of course, FOO. This innovative production, set in the antebellum South, is under the stage direction of George Caldwell—who has also designed the sets and lighting—and the musical direction of Steven Zielke. The costumes are by Barbara Mason. In addition to a dynamic cast of principal singers, this staging of *Pirates* features the OSU Chamber Choir as the chorus of pirates, militia, and southern belles. At peak moments, you will see over fifty people on stage, no small feat when half of them are wearing hoop skirts! We expect each performance to be overflowing with energy, sound...and fun. All six performances take place at the OSU University Theatre, Withycombe Hall: November 12, 13, 15 (matinee), 19, 20, 21. For further details and tickets, please go online to theatre.boxoffice@oregonstate.edu or call 541-737-2784.

In March 2010, the OSU Opera Workshop returns to its normal winter workshop format with *An Evening of Opera*. Our workshop productions eschew elaborate costumes, sets, and lighting, in order to focus on high quality singing and acting. This program of scenes from Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, and Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*, is under the direction of Marion Rossi, with musical direction by Marlan Carlson. Angela Carlson will be our pianist. Performances take place Friday, March 5 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, March 7 at 2:00 p.m., both at the OSU University Theatre, Withycombe Hall.

Five Master Classes in 2009-2010 with Exciting Artists

Along with our opera performances, FOO and the OSU Music Department will present three artists in five master classes. All three teachers are native Oregonians who have established important singing careers.

We are pleased to feature internationally acclaimed baritone **Richard Zeller** in a series of three master classes, one in each academic term. Well known to audiences in Edinburgh, Boston, Dusseldorf, San Diego, Hamburg, Chicago, Madrid, Portland, and the Met, Richard is also no stranger to Corvallis. He appeared last year with the Corvallis-OSU Symphony and the OSU Chamber Choir in Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*. Richard will present his first class on Monday, November 23, his second on Thursday, February 18, 2010. Richard's third class, the one for spring term, has yet to be scheduled. Please check our website for an update:

www.friendsofosuopera.com To read more about Richard and his singing career, go online to <http://www.dispeker.com/page/zeller.html>

Mezzo soprano **Angela Niederloh** will be our first master class teacher of the new calendar year, coming to Corvallis on Tuesday, January 5, 2010. Praised by the New York Times, “a charismatic mezzo,” Angela has appeared with the Houston Grand Opera, the San Francisco Opera Center, Opera Omaha, and Wolf Trap. She is well known to Portland Opera audiences, having sung leading roles in Rossini’s *Viaggio a Rheims* and *La Cenerentola*, and Cavalli’s *La Calisto*. This season she takes on the role of Dorabella in Portland Opera’s production of *Così fan tutte*. We are delighted that she has carved out some time ahead of her busy rehearsal schedule to offer a class for us. To learn more about Angela’s career as a singer and teacher, take a look at <http://www.angelaniederloh.net>

Our third master class teacher is also an acclaimed mezzo soprano. **Christine Meadows**, who heads the voice program at Portland State University, has performed with New York City Opera, Minnesota Opera, Houston Grand Opera, and Miami Opera, to name just a few of her credits. She has also sung in over twenty Portland Opera productions, including *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Sweeney Todd*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Roméo et Juliette*, *Rigoletto* and *The Merchant of Venice*. Hailed by director Baz Luhrmann as “...the most energetic woman in the world” and by the Vancouver Columbian as “a gracious performer with an elegant voice,” Christine has appeared frequently with the Oregon Symphony and the Portland Baroque Orchestra. We have not finalized a date for Christine’s class, but we do have a firm commitment from her to present a class during 2009-2010. Please check this website for an update. For more information about Christine’s wide-ranging activities, go to <http://www.pdx.edu/profile/christine-meadows>

All the master classes will take place in Room 303 Benton Hall on the OSU campus, from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. All five classes are free to Friends of OSU Opera, which means that a basic \$50 membership in FOO can pay for itself.

Your Dollars Have Been Well Spent: A Look at Past Year

During the 2008-2009 season Friends of OSU Opera was active producing opera performances, collaborating with the OSU University Theatre, and bringing important artists to Corvallis for master classes. Our singers drew recognition for their talent and artistry not just locally, but in the region and beyond. I would like to list just some of the highlights:

---FOO provided financial support for the production of *The Mikado*, a collaborative venture with the OSU University Theatre and OSU Music Department. The show opened in August 2008 and was revived in October. The stage director was Charlotte Headrick and the musical director Joey Prather. Sets were by George Caldwell and costumes by Barbara Mason.

---In November 2008, FOO and the OSU Opera Workshop presented *Law and Disorder*, a scenes program consisting of Gilbert and Sullivan’s short operetta *Trial by Jury* and the first act finale of Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*---under the musical direction of Sean Paul Mills and stage direction of Richard Poppino.

---Also in November, FOO brought the internationally acclaimed bass-baritone and longtime Corvallis favorite Clayton Brainerd to town for a master class. For more about Clayton, go to <http://www.claytonbrainerd.com>

---In February 2009, we enjoyed a three-day residency by vocal coach/accompanist Mary Dibbern. A winner of the Grand Prix du Disque and the author of three books on French opera, Mary is on the staff of Minnesota Opera. For more, see www.mary-dibbern.com

---In March, FOO and the OSU Opera Workshop presented *Chaos and Coincidence*, a program of scenes from Rossini’s *La Cenerentola*, Weill’s *Street Scene*, as well as the full third act of *The*

Marriage of Figaro.

---In April, four singers active in Opera Workshop (Josh Randall, Mari Stoner, Daniel Madrid, and Laurel Mehaffey) won their divisions at the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) District Auditions. Four others (Jeffrey Larkin, Nickoli Strommer, Andrew Hancock, and Laurel Mehaffey) received Honorable Mentions. This was the strongest overall by any college or university involved in the auditions.

---In May, Scott Ingham made his professional opera debut, as Schaunard in *La Boheme* with Rogue Opera.

---In June, Scott Ingham, Mari Stoner, Jeffrey Larkin, and Nickoli Strommer took part in the Astoria Music Festival, singing in a program of opera scenes as well as in mainstage productions of Verdi's *La Traviata* and Purcell's *The Fairie Queene*. In August, Scott and Jeffrey reprised their *Traviata* roles in a concert performance at Washington Park in Portland.

---In July and August, Nickoli Strommer was a featured singer at the University of Miami program in Salzburg, Austria.

---Abbe Groh, familiar to Corvallis audiences since the 2007 production of *HMS Pinafore*, was crowned Miss Linn-Benton 2009. At the Miss Oregon Pageant, she was one of four award winners, netting a sizeable scholarship. Her audition piece was "Chacun le sait" from Donizetti's *Daughter of the Regiment*.

We Can't Do It Without You

In many people's ideal world, the activities of a student opera workshop and theater would be funded entirely by the university. But, particularly in these difficult economic times, that is not the case. Along with support from OSU, we rely strongly on individual contributions to fund the operatic productions and master classes we present. We would greatly appreciate your help, your tax-deductible help. So, I would like to direct your attention to the donation form found on this website. It not only outlines the upcoming events that FOO is sponsoring, but tells you how you can contribute. Thank you for your consideration. Your donation will help us present moving, entertaining opera in Corvallis and bring important artists to work with our young singers.

Sincerely,

Richard Poppino
President, Friends of OSU Opera