



OPERA
SCENES

Experience the bright future of opera in
New Zealand with an evening of classic opera scenes staged by the talented
students from the School of Music's acclaimed voice programme.

18 - 19 September, 7.30pm
Music Theatre, School of Music

Director: Gregory Camp

FADE IN:

INT. HOLLYWOOD STUDIO EXECUTIVE OFFICE - DAY

The year is 1940. An imposing art-deco style office at the centre of the busiest studio in Hollywood. The studio HEAD himself sits behind it, just as imposing as the architecture. The young contract director bursts in, having managed to talk his way past echelons of secretaries, full of confidence and pep.

DIRECTOR

I've got it, A.B.: your next big production! A surefire hit!

HEAD

(usually not taken in by youthful enthusiasm, but this guy has just said the magic word)

Hit? How do you mean?

DIRECTOR

Yes, sir, a hit. Just one word: opera.

HEAD

Opera? You mean fat ladies singing and dying? It's been tried. Never makes a penny.

DIRECTOR

No, none of that old nonsense! This is new! This is fresh! This is original!

HEAD

Well, what is it?

DIRECTOR

It's opera, but with our youngest, hottest stars, and set right here in the present! 1940! Opera is a cinch for Hollywood. It's comedy, melodrama, tragedy, even westerns. It's Andy Hardy meets Gone with the Wind. And half the composers are dead: no royalties!

HEAD

I like that...

DIRECTOR

Well, what do you think?

HEAD

Write me a treatment. Have it on my desk in the morning.

FADE OUT on the DIRECTOR's face, realising the enormity of what he's just offered to do.



Act One

Street Scene

Opening Scene
*Outside a New York City tenement
on the hottest day of the year.*

Music: Kurt Weill
Words: Langston Hughes
Elmer Rice

Mrs Fiorentino: Emma Fussell
Mrs Jones: Grace Sturgess
Mrs Olsen: Alice Merrill
Mr Kaplan: Callum Blackmore
Mr Olsen: Samson Setu
Shirley Kaplan: Christina McDonald
Rose: Naomi Kang
Willie: Henrietta Reid
Mrs Marrant: Keani Pora
A Boy: Victoria Croucher
A Girl: Kelly Harris

Le Nozze Di Figaro

Aria: Non so piú cosa son
Trio: Cosa sento?
*The maid's room in a Hollywood
palazzo.*

Music: W.A. Mozart
Words: Lorenzo da Ponte

Count Almaviva, a mogul: Ben Kubiak
Susanna, maid: Kelly Harris
Cherubino, newsboy: Grace Sturgess
Basilio, music teacher: Calvin Baker

L'Enfant et les sortilèges

Chorus: Adieu pastourelles
Duet: C'est elle, la princesse
Aria: Toi, le cœur de la rose
A nightmarish battlefield

Music: Maurice Ravel
Words: Colette

Child: Henrietta Reid
Princess: Ella Ewen
Soldiers: Emma Fussell,
Naomi Kang,
Christina McDonald,
Alice Merrill,
Keani Pora,
Grace Sturgess

Sweeney Todd

Aria: Green Finch and Linnet Bird
Aria: Johanna
Outside Judge Turpin's house.

Music and words:
Stephen Sondheim

Johanna: Teresa Wojtowicz
Anthony, a sailor: Manase Latu
Beggar Woman: Stephanie Dow
Judge: Ben Kubiak
Beadle: Ipu Laga'aia
Bird Seller: Calvin Baker

Lodoïska

Aria: Voyez la belle besogne
Act One Finale
Way out west

Music: Luigi Cherubini
Words: Claude-François Fillette-
Loraux

Floreski, cowboy: Ipu Laga'aia
Lodoïska, his betrothed: Amy Jansen
Varbel, his valet: Callum Blackmore
Altamoras, professional varmint: Ben Kubiak
Henchmen: Calvin Baker,
Manase Latu,
Samson Setu



Interval of Fifteen Minutes

Act Two

Idomeneo

Aria: Zeffiretti lusinghieri

Duet: S'io non moro

Quartet: Andrò ramingo e solo
An army base.

Music: W.A. Mozart

Words: Giambattista Varesco

Idomeneo, a general: Manase Latu

Idamante, his son: Henrietta Reid

Ilia, POW in love with Idamante: Natasha
Wilson

Elettra, rival for Idamante's affections: Amy
Jansen

Il barbiere di Siviglia*

Duet: Dunque io son...

The Hollywood Hills.

Music: Gioacchino Rossini

Words: Cesare Sterbini

Figaro: Clinton Fung

Rosina: Kayla Collingwood

* NB: Will be performed on Friday only.

Les Contes d'Hoffmann

Aria: Elle a fui

Trio: Chère enfant

A movie studio after dark.

Music: Jacques Offenbach

Words: Jules Barbier

Antonia, an ingenue: Clare Hood

Dr Miracle, an evil director: Samson Setu

Antonia's Mother: Victoria Croucher

A Little Night Music

Octet: A Weekend in the Country

The homes of the rich and famous.

Music and words:

Stephen Sondheim

Anne Egerman: Kelly Harris

Petra, her maid: Stephanie Dow

Fredrik Egerman, her husband: Calvin Baker

Henrik Egerman, her stepson: Ipu Laga'aia

Charlotte Malcolm, her friend: Amy Jansen

Desiree Armfeldt, her rival: Teresa Wojtowicz

Count Carl: Magnus Malcolm

Charlotte's husband: Callum Blackmore,

Fredrika Armfeldt,

Desiree's daughter: Ella Ewen

CREDITS

Director: Gregory Camp
Pianists: Rachel Fuller
Robert Wiremu
Production Manager: Adam Thompson
Coaching: Juan Kim, Catrin Johnsson
Wardrobe: Victoria Croucher
Lights: Irazema Vera
Tech: Nathan Hauraki
Photography: Calvin Baker
Surttitle Translations: Gregory Camp
Producer: Te Oti Rakena
Events Coordinator: Jade Bosman
Marketing Advisor: Anna Starr

This production is possible due to the generous financial support of The Evelyn Harrison Trust; University of Auckland Alumni Relations and Development; University of Auckland School of Music and the National Institute of Creative Arts and Industries.

Costumes hired from Auckland Music Theatre, Dilworth School, First Scene, and friends and family members of the cast.

Film clips: His Girl Friday; Pearl Harbor newsreel; The Heiress; Red River; The Lady Eve; Queen Kelly; and Bringing Up Baby.



Opera in Classical Hollywood

While opera scenes programmes are usually performed with each scene as its own little world, I landed on the idea of using a 1930s-40s Hollywood context to give this varied series of scenes some aesthetic continuity. While on the surface none of these operas have anything to do with classical Hollywood, the idea is not as weird as it might seem at first. If we look at the structures that lie beneath the respective art forms, striking similarities begin to emerge. Just like most operas, Hollywood films of the 'golden age' were very tightly structured around genres, stars, and formal grammar. Hollywood film, as did opera, relied upon marketing: you go to see *that* star/diva in *that* genre by *that* director/composer. Audience expectations played an important role: if a movie star was miscast or did not live up to expectations the film would flop; if a favourite singer was miscast or did not live up to expectations the opera would flop.

The film studios at that time functioned as repertoire companies, much like opera companies did in the past. It also happens that the scenes we chose handled the transposition out of their original contexts well. *Figaro* and *The Barber of Seville* play like screwball comedies, *Lodoïska* is a western, *Sweeney Todd* (in the section we are performing) is an earnest romance, and *L'enfant et les sortilèges* could have almost come from the Disney studio. Moving operas around in time makes us see and hear them anew. Recontextualisation, and the various modes of intertextuality it entails, is exciting and surprising.

Any director must decide not only on the aesthetic approach to take in a staging, but must also consider his/her relationship to other theatre, film, and opera practitioners. As a young

director embarking for the first time on a fully-staged production, I found that a thorough knowledge of what has been done before is both imperative (to avoid wasting time re-inventing wheels) and daunting. I watch something great and, once I've recovered from the initial shock of excellence, think about what I can steal. My influences here come from both Hollywood and opera (and as a scholar of film music, what I have learned applies to my work beyond these opera scenes).

From Orson Welles I take commitment to the material and a sense of water-tightness: there is no extraneous material in a Welles film. I try to find something of Howard Hawks's sense of ease with the material; Hawks makes film directing and acting look like the easiest thing in the world.

If I have an ounce of Preston Sturges's wit I can die happy. The opera director Robert Carsen is an important influence, as he demonstrates the value of the recontextualisation I mentioned above. His *Rusalka* was the first opera production I saw that jolted me out of the *Werktreue*-induced stupor that most of us feel when first getting interested in any kind of art, showing that misplaced notions of fidelity to some chimerical 'original' version of a text, like the dreadful Metropolitan *Opera Ring of the Nibelung* from the 1980s, or to brainless pictorialism in the style of Franco Zeffirelli, really gets you nowhere (at least nowhere interesting). Julie Taymor (who has covered drama, opera, film, and musical theatre; do you need anything else??) reminds us that, no matter how fancy the accoutrements may be, the story must always remain at the centre of what we do.

Our excellent young singers have been more than up for the challenge of presenting repertoire that is mostly unfamiliar to them in a style of acting

and movement that is equally foreign. The repertoire was chosen, after much consultation with my colleagues in the voice department, to best highlight the skills of this particular group of singers. A different group would have resulted in a very different programme. I also wanted to present a mix of familiar and unfamiliar music. This gives us an opportunity to present our own take on warhorses like *The Barber of Seville* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, to play with operas that are familiar yet not so frequently performed like *Idomeneo* and *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, and to introduce works that *should* be better known like Cherubini's French Revolutionary opéra comique *Lodoïska*, a lost masterpiece if ever there was one, and one that fits surprisingly snugly into a Hollywood milieu.

I also leapt at the chance to work in some Sondheim, our greatest living dramatic composer, and some of the unjustly neglected 'American' Kurt Weill.

I hope you enjoy our production as much as we have enjoyed working on it. A full

list of acknowledgements is elsewhere in the programme, but I must especially thank my colleagues in the School of Music, particularly our head honcho Allan Badley, for not saying "You've never staged an opera before, but you want us to give over 23 students and a budget? You must be mad", even though they probably thought it.

Thanks to this troupe of singers who are developing into a wonderful stock company to rival Preston Struges's, to our production manager Adam Thompson for keeping us all sane, and to our pianists Robert Wiremu, Rachel Fuller, and Juan Kim, who conquered bad scans of un-idiomatic piano reductions from 1791, poorly laid-out critical editions, and impossible demands of "this should be faster".

-Gregory Camp, September 2015





Meadowbrook PRESENTS -- NEW HOLIDAY FROCKS

A Halo of Lace!
Primer Your Face!
This time... or any time, you'll look like an angel of beauty in this soft, luscious Navy Crepe frock! The delicacy of the lace net upper collar with its long pointed flaps makes a most fetching beauty! Long sweeping sleeves make your figure look souring slenderness. Little pointed skirt, subtle length. **Size: 14 to 20 yrs., 12 to 18 bust.** **Black, Navy Blue (each costs rare)** **GSX238** **Black or Blue... \$9.98**

Two-Tone Colors—Fashion's Newest! Flattery for You!
Meadowbrook impresses this frock not only with sleeves that sweep waist of 1934... **CONTRAST!** The design is brilliantly carried out with satins on the yoke, jacket, collar... and even on the buttons! Beautifully tailored in the new silhouette of fitted Crepe! **Two-way belt... sweep back or front. High and ruffled collar, with tabs that flow down by large pointed buttons. Size: 14 to 20 yrs., 12 to 18 bust.** **Black with Blue, Brown with Blue.** **GSX239** **Black or Chinese Red... \$7.98**

"The Mandarin"
Vivid with Chinese Embroidery!
Meadowbrook takes the Chinese style piece beautifully in here! In this little, heart-Mandarin you'll find a pop-up sleeve! Thousands of silver, not just in shimmer at the embroidered neck and pockets... edged with perfect black, sparkling, buckle and trim for accents! **Size: 14 to 20 yrs., 12 to 18 bust.** **GSX236** **Black, Brown... \$8.98**

NEW! "The Mermaid"
A Peplum Waistline and Ruffled Bottom!

Exciting Sleeves—Latest High Neck
Glimmer of admiration will follow... as you glance through the holidays in this alluring Snow-Crepe creation! Demure high collar crowned with a row of snowy buttons. And, deeply shirred sleeves that will show every snap and sigh! **Size: 14 to 20 yrs., 12 to 18 bust.** **Chinese Blue, Black or Periwinkle Blue (each costs rare)** **GSX234** **Black or Brown... \$9.98**

Well Bred... Up to Six Rich Moire Placet Cies
Dramatic like a ruffled simplicity! That's the air that will surround you when you identify frocks in this distinguished Meadowbrook. Swooshers shirred to seductively... you'll almost want to share like a Frenchwoman! And when you're in luck! **Shirring White Moire—reproduced with a rich modulation. Tailored in new shirred lines of beautiful All Silk, French Crepe. You'll find two sizes, subtle. **Size: 14 to 20 yrs., 12 to 18 bust.** **Black, Navy Blue or Brown.** **GSX235** **Black or Brown... \$8.98****

NEW! "The Mermaid"
A Peplum Waistline and Ruffled Bottom!

State Size, Length and Color—You'll Be Fitted Perfectly—Spiegel's, Chicago



Calvin Peter Photography



Calvin Peter Photography

Support for The School of Music

There are many promising students who, because of their circumstances, are unable to come to university to further their training. Scholarships play a vital role in helping many students into tertiary education. If you would like to donate towards a scholarship or support the programmes offered by the University of Auckland in any other way, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

Heather McAllister
Development Manager

National Institute of
Creative Arts and Industries
h.mcallister@auckland.ac.nz
Ph: (09) 373 7599 ex 81792

What's Coming Up...

- 25.09** Lunchtime concert featuring chamber music ensembles.
- 27.09** Sundays @5: Aotea Flute Quartet.
- 30.09** Sounds Celestial starring the University of Auckland Symphony Orchestra and massed choir.
- 02.10** Lunchtime concert featuring early music students.
- 04.10** Sundays @5: Andrew Beer and Sarah Watkins.

For more info and to book, please visit our website:
www.creative.auckland.ac.nz/events