



The Music Conservatory 2022–2023 Season

OPERA FEST XV

Stories on Stage

2–6 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday, November 5 and 6, 2022

Rudolph Ganz Memorial Hall
430 S. Michigan Avenue, 7th Floor
Chicago, IL 60605

Welcome to OperaFest!

As the newly appointed Director of Opera at CCPA, I am thrilled to be part of my first OperaFest, a musical and dramatic collaboration that I have enjoyed from the audience for many years. Since its inception fifteen years ago, OperaFest has stood out for its programming ingenuity, its diversity of repertoire, its thoughtful casting, its overall artistic excellence, and the immediacy of its connection with audiences through the stories it shares.

Storytelling is a fundamental part of being human, providing a common thread across cultures, eras, and generations, and offering a symbiotic exchange between those who tell stories and those who receive them. Stories help us understand each other and ourselves – our motivations, our desires, our fears, and our triumphs. I am indebted to my colleague Dr. Dana Brown for his curation of *OperaFest XV: Stories on Stage*, a program of contemporary works that challenge, delight, inspire, and move. In the skilled hands of directors Cathy Dunn and Aaron Hunt, each of the one-act operas presented today contains a powerful story (sometimes more than one!) about human nature and the human condition.

OperaFest focuses its participants on the process of opera, challenging its singing-actors to learn, to probe, to embody, and to *tell*; and challenging its audience members to sit up, to look, to listen, and to *receive*. OperaFest reminds us that the role of the storyteller is to step into another person's shoes with sincerity and understanding, even when it isn't easy to do so. I couldn't be more proud of our student singers and pianists, who have brought to their work the full weight of their empathy, talent, and skill, and who have shepherded their characters through often-difficult journeys. I am grateful to the entire OperaFest team for working to bring these four stories to life with such integrity and care.

Thank you for joining us today. Thank you for supporting our students, and thank you for receiving their stories.

Best wishes,



Shannon McGinnis
Director of Opera, CCPA

Schedule of Events

The schedule is the same on both Saturday and Sunday.

2 p.m.

The Selfish Giant (concert premiere)

Music by Clarice Assad [±]

Libretto by Lila Palmer

3 p.m.

Two Remain (Act One)

Music by Jake Heggie

Libretto by Gene Scheer

4 p.m.

Bluebeard's Waiting Room

Music and libretto by Milton Granger

5 p.m.

On Call: COVID-19

Music by David Shenton

Libretto by Christine Steyer

[±] CCPA alumna

2 p.m.

The Selfish Giant (concert premiere)

Music by Clarice Assad

Libretto by Lila Palmer

Based on the Short Story by Oscar Wilde

Commissioned by American Lyric Theater
Lawrence Edelson, Artistic and General Director

Stage Director..... Aaron Hunt
Music Director..... Dana Brown
Pianist..... Michelle Tapp
Assistant Directors..... Magda Travis

Mean Girl (Child 2)/North Wind..... Emily Wright
Bratty Boy (Child 3)/Snow..... David Kronenberg
The Unwanted Child/Spring Victoria Zamora
The Selfish Giant..... Timothy Krueger
An Enchanted Tree..... Alexis Neal

Covers

Morgan Babb (Mean Girl/North Wind), Swabu Jefferson (An Enchanted Tree),
Wesley Krist (Bratty Boy/Snow), Magda Travis (The Unwanted Child/Spring)

Although at first blush a charming children's fairy tale, on closer reflection this piece may be considered an allegory on the theme of trauma and its flow from the children to the children's children. The Giant cultivates a beautiful garden to hide from a world that has humiliated him, and refuses entry to any human, especially children, as he knows full well that they are groomed to criticize and censor others from birth. The spiral of disconnection is finally uncurled when a prophetic child, armed with the perspective drawn from their own damages, explains that the Giant cannot own the garden; As its caretaker, the garden owns him.

Program note by Aaron Hunt

3 p.m.

Two Remain (Act One)

Music by Jake Heggie

Libretto by Gene Scheer

Stage Director..... Aaron Hunt

Music Director..... Dana Brown

Pianist..... Raphael Chou

Krystyna Żywulska..... Andréa Jones

A poet and lyricist who survived Auschwitz

Krysia Kaleigh Watkins

The younger Krystyna

Zoia Alexis Neal

Krysia's co-worker and friend in the camp

Edka Danlei Zhao

Krysia's co-worker and friend in the camp

Mariola Tanya Landau

A Jewish woman who grew up with Krysia in Łódź

Cover

Veronica Samiec (Krysia)

The first act of Jake Heggie's opera tells the story of Sonia Landau, a Jew who changes her name, age, and nationality in order to survive in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Many years later, living in relative safety and comfort, she is asked once again to provide anecdotes about her life as a political prisoner. But the ghosts of her beloved friends challenge her to, "Tell the whole story this time." The traumas of this ugly chapter of life and time are as challenging to share as they are to hear. But we learn with Sonia that art has the power to uplift the heart and cradle the soul, and that we are all capable of extraordinary acts when survival is one of only two options.

Program note by Aaron Hunt

To learn more about Krystyna Żywulska and other artists persecuted, imprisoned, and killed during the Holocaust, please visit www.holocaustmusic.ort.org.

4 p.m.

Bluebeard's Waiting Room

Music and Libretto by Milton Granger

Stage Director.....Cathy Dunn
Music Director.....Shannon McGinnis
Pianist.....Piotr Nowak
Assistant DirectorKatilynn Meine

RN (Registered Nurse) Anastasia Antropova
LPN (Licensed Practical Nurse) Lillian M. Vellom
Mirette.....Jenna Weitman
Luciette.....Camden McLean
Fanette.....Emily Wright
ClaudetteHannah Zizza
Doctor.....Hillary Watkins

Covers

Jaylene Capinpin (Fanette), Savannah Hegyi (LPN/Suzette),
Katilynn Meine (Mirette), Hillary Watkins (Claudette)

Duke Bluebeard has had a heart attack and is in the hospital in intensive care. His next of kin has been notified. Confusion ensues when five women, each from a different era, enter the waiting room claiming to be his wife. Mirette, Luciette, and Claudette speak of Bluebeard with affection and love, but Suzette and Fanette are less fond of the man they all call husband.

Since Bluebeard is unconscious, the RN asks his wives to sign consent forms so that an operation may be performed. The wives either sign the forms or don't, each giving her reason for wanting him to live or for being ambivalent, exclaiming, "You don't know him like I do!"

Bluebeard suddenly regains consciousness and asks to see his wife. The question is, which one? After drawing broken tongue depressors to determine who will go see him first, the wives enter one after the other. Bluebeard rejects them all and continues to ask for his wife. The women question what they mean to Bluebeard and if they ever really knew him. Suddenly, Code Blue is called and the RN and the doctor rush to save Bluebeard as the LPN returns from his bedside to the waiting room in a daze. The concerned wives ask what has happened. Her answer surprises everyone.

Bella Bartok's opera, *Bluebeard's Castle*, is based on the 1697 play by Charles Perrault, in turn based on a French folktale. The tale tells the story of a wealthy man who murders his four wives and the failed attempt of his fifth wife to avoid their fate. *Bluebeard's Waiting Room* puts a new spin on the old story, but asks the same question: Do any of us really know one another?

Program note by Cathy Dunn

5 p.m.

Working in Concert/Bellissima Opera's

On Call: COVID-19

An opera in 3 scenes

Music by David Shenton

Libretto by Christine Steyer

Stage Director.....Cathy Dunn

Music Director.....Shannon McGinnis

Pianist.....Leandro Isaac Motta

Assistant Directors.....Douglas Orofino, Jose Vargas

Seoul Healthcare Worker.....Emily Thompson

Rio de Janeiro Healthcare Worker..... Laura Ash Strickland

Chicago Healthcare Worker Adam Lehman

Lombardy Healthcare WorkerColeman Dzedzic

Lebanon Healthcare Worker..... Charles D. Butler

New York Healthcare Worker..... Anastasia Antropova

Ensemble

Morgan Babb, Jaylene Capinpin, Savannah Hegyi, Swabu Jefferson, Wesley Krist, David

Kronenberg, Timothy Krueger, Katilynn Meine, Erica Moll,

Douglas Orofino*, Catherine Robinson, Veronica Samiec, Sergio Savala,

Magda Travis, Jose Vargas, Hillary Watkins

* chorus master

Covers

Douglas Orofino (New York), Catherine Robinson (Seoul),

Sergio Savala (Chicago), Jose Vargas (Lombardy)

A pandemic literally affects every person on earth. It is a time in which the resilience of the human spirit is tested. As the events of the COVID pandemic unfolded, all of us were moved by the images of global healthcare workers risking their lives in service to others.

Winner of the 2020-2021 National Opera Association Production Award, *On Call: COVID-19* looks in on a series of Zoom calls with six healthcare workers struggling with the humanitarian and personal toll of the unfolding pandemic. Calling in from Chicago, Seoul, Rio de Janeiro, Bergamo, New York City, and a Syrian refugee camp near Beirut, the colleagues provide each other a lifeline that extends into and affects the larger world.

The opera takes place in three scenes – late April, late September, and on New Year's Eve of 2020. Each of the three Zoom encounters provides a “snapshot of this moment” during a daunting, challenging time that inexorably and permanently changed our world.

Program note by Cathy Dunn

Stock footage provided by Matt S., Phil Fried, James Cheney, and Videvo, downloaded from www.videvo.net

Upcoming Music Conservatory Events

All Music Conservatory events are free and open to the public and, unless otherwise noted, take place in Ganz Hall, Roosevelt University's award-winning architectural landmark.

PianoFest 2022

Monday, November 7–Saturday, November 12 | Ganz Hall

CCPA's annual festival featuring master classes and performances by piano faculty, students, and guest artists

CCPA Puentes Latin Jazz Ensemble

Monday, November 7, 7:30 p.m. | Jazz Showcase (806 S. Plymouth Ct.)

CCPA Vocal Jazz Showcase & New Deal Jazz Ensemble

Monday, November 14, 7:30 p.m. | Jazz Showcase (806 S. Plymouth Ct.)

CCPA Symphony Orchestra

Friday, November 18, 7:30 p.m. | Symphony Center (220 S. Michigan Ave.)

Registration is required to attend events on campus.

To be added to the guest list for an upcoming event, please visit www.roosevelt.edu/ccpa-events or call 312-341-2352.

Your Gift to CCPA Makes an Important Difference

Each year, the generosity of CCPA audience members and friends helps our students meet and exceed their artistic and educational goals. Your tax-deductible gift does many things—including providing students with much-needed scholarship support and helping CCPA programs such as this one!

We are grateful for every gift we receive. To make a donation, go online to our secure site at roosevelt.edu/give.

Roosevelt University is positioned on the traditional, unceded homelands of the Council of the Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Nations. Other tribes such as the Miami, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac, and Fox also called this area home. Today Chicago is home to one of the largest urban Indigenous communities in the United States. With this land acknowledgement, the Roosevelt University community honors, with gratitude, this land and the Indigenous people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. We recognize the Indigenous people who laid the foundation for the city we inhabit, as well as the diverse Indigenous nations that reside here today. We vow to do our part to right the historic wrongs of colonization, to support Indigenous communities' struggles for self-determination, and to be better stewards of the land that we inhabit.