



NEWSLETTER

Argo Gherardi, Editor

February, 2006

Ann Haggerty New Guild President

I grew up surrounded by music. My mother taught classical piano in our homes in Nevada City and San Francisco. My father, who had at nineteen sailed around the world as the pianist of a shipboard quartet, continues his love of piano even to this day. He's ninety-three as I write. (My mother is ninety-two.) I played the clarinet as a child and sang my way through high school and college. Singing and traveling with the Cal Treble Clef and the University Chorus were highlights of my time at Berkeley.

Attending musical events always was the major source of my recreational pleasure, but

it was a trip to Santa Fe in 1982 that turned my interest in opera into an "addiction." Since then my husband Tim and I have sought out opera in many parts of the world. In addition to going to Santa Fe almost yearly, we've been to the Met often, the Chicago Lyric, several west coast companies, and many opera houses in Europe. This spring we'll go to Paris for Robert Wilson's interpretation of the *Ring*.

I am honored to have been elected president of the San José Opera Guild. I am eager to contribute to the growth of our guild and I am proud of our support of young singers.

Alexandra Amati-Camperi To Talk Again

There was such praise for Alexandra Amati-Camperi's lecture on *Norma* last year that your SJOG Board has asked her to speak again. We have chosen a Saturday, March 25, so that those of you who work will be able to attend. Her program is entitled, "From bel canto to realismo," a much broader subject than we usually provide for our lectures in the fall. It will be held at the Los Gatos History Club, 123 Los Gatos Boulevard, Los Gatos. Coffee will be served at 10AM, and the lecture will begin at 10:30. At noon we will break for lunch. We will reconvene at 1:00 for the second half of the lecture.

Dr. Amati-Camperi received a BA/MA in Slavic Studies from the Università degli studi di Pisa and received her M.A. and Ph.D. in musicology from Harvard University. She is currently an Associate Professor of Music at the

University of San Francisco where she is Director of the Music Program. Dr. Amati-Camperi has published numerous books and papers. She has taught at Harvard University, UC Davis and San Francisco Conservatory of Music and has received many awards for her teaching. Her specialties include the Italian madrigal and Italian Opera. She is currently finishing the critical edition of one of Rossini's earliest operas. The charge for the event is \$30 per person, including lunch. To reserve, use the reservation form on page five. Send a check or credit card information to Elliot Swanson, 13427 Old Oak Way, Saratoga, CA 95070. Since this event is not ticketed, reservations will be held at the door. Credit card reservations will cost an additional \$2 per person. For more information, please call Ann Haggerty at 408-395-1498.

Career Updates

Mezzo-soprano **Layna Chianakas** (Opera San José, 1995-97) will be heading to Sarasota, Florida this month to sing Cherubino in ten performances of *The Marriage of Figaro* (Feb. 11-March 25). Baritones **Constantinos Yiannoudes** (Opera San José, 1999-2000) and **Bojan Knezevic** (Merola Opera 1992-94) will be singing Count Almaviva and Figaro respectively in the same opera. Other future engagements for Ms. Chianakas include performing selections from *Carmen* with the Vallejo Symphony on April 29th and singing Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* in August with Festival Opera in Walnut Creek. Son Ghythe turns 5 in June and will enter kindergarten next fall.

Soprano **Cynthia Clayton** (Opera San José, 1992-96) is now a full-time Professor of Voice at the University of Houston. In addition, she'll sing the title role in *Madama Butterfly* with Anchorage Opera and perform as soprano soloist for the Verdi *Requiem* with Tennessee Symphony of the Mountains in March, Beethoven's *Ninth-Symphony* with the Corpus Christi Symphony in April, and Mahler's *Second Symphony* with the University of Houston in April. She'll then sing the title role in *Manon Lescaut* with Intermountain Opera in Bozeman, Montana, in May, and the title role in *Susannah* with husband baritone **Hector Vasquez**

(Merola Opera, 1989-90) as Blitch with Cedar Rapids Opera Theater in June. Mr. Vasquez was recently appointed Program Director for the Houston Grand Opera Studio, replacing Diane Zola in that position. The couple's two sons, now four and eight, continue to do well.

Soprano **Barbara Divis** (Opera San José 1996-2000), now a resident of New York, will travel to Hawaii this month to sing all three heroines in *Il Trittico* (Georgietta in *Il Tabarro*, The title role in *Suor Angelica* and Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*) with Hawaii Opera Theatre Feb. 24, 26 and 28. From Hawaii she'll go to San Diego where she'll sing Micaela in *Carmen* with San Diego Opera March 25, 28 and 31 and April 2 and 5. In May (6, 9, 12, 14 and 17) she'll sing First Lady in *The Magic Flute* with San Diego Opera. In January and February 2007, she'll sing the title role in *Madama Butterfly* with Arizona Opera.

Baritone **Douglas Nagel** (Opera San José, 1988-92), now education director for Opera San José, has produced and directed an abbreviated version of *La Bohème* that is presently touring local schools. The production, which features Opera San José artists singing in English, will continue through June. Mr. Nagel also recently stage-directed and sang Frank in Sacramento Opera's

Die Fledermaus. He is currently on tour throughout Montana in Rimrock Opera's *The Night Harry Stopped Smoking*.

Tenor **Thomas Rolf Truhitte** (Opera San José 1997-2001) is presently in Monte Carlo singing Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. From there, he'll head for Toronto to sing Froh in *Das Rheingold* for the Canadian opera company's Ring Cycle. He performed the same role in summer 2005 for Seattle Opera's Ring Cycle. Other recent engagements include Tristan in Virginia Opera's *Tristan and Isolde* and Don José in Nashville Opera's *Carmen* opposite former Opera San José artist Layna Chianakas in the title role.

San José Opera Guild
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President

Ann Haggerty

Editor

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Mission City Opera Another Choice For The South Bay

Lea Frey
SJOG Director

The Mission City Opera is a little known professional opera company, headquartered in Santa Clara. It is dedicated to presenting high quality performances of operatic works at affordable prices in intimate productions. Founded in 1996, it is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization committed to producing quality opera, leveraging local talent. MCO seeks to educate youth and adults in this performing art, to instill a lasting love for opera in the participants and audience and, in so doing, secure the continuation of opera for generations to come.

MCO will be staging their fourth main stage production - Bizet's *CARMEN* - in February, 2006. Performed in French with full orchestra, MCO chorus, childrens' chorus, and full costuming and staging, it will feature professional soloists, and the Mission City Opera Orchestra in their new performance home, the Mission City Center for Performing Arts, 3250 Monroe, Santa Clara. Performances will be at 8:00 PM except for one Sunday Matinee on February 19th at 2:30 PM. Specific dates and times for performances are:

Friday,	February 17, opening night, 8 PM
Saturday,	February 18, 8 PM
Sunday,	February 19, MATINEE, 2:30 PM
Thursday,	February 22, 8 PM
Friday	February 23, 8 PM
Saturday,	February 24, 8 PM

The final dress rehearsal will be open to several community charitable groups, students, and selected single parents and children, as part of MCO's community outreach. Tickets for performances are available online at their website: www.missioncityopera.org; email:

tickets@missioncityopera.org They are also available by phone: 408.749.7607 or at Wilson's Bakery, 1285 Homestead, Santa Clara, CA.

Mission City Opera is excited to introduce itself to the San Jose Opera Guild and its members, and in looking forward to an ongoing relationship. They hope to meet some of SJOG's members at the opera. I did the diction coaching for this production and will be going to the opening on February 17th. Hope to see some of you there!

Opera Guild Seeks Volunteers

The San José Opera Guild is compiling a list of Guild members who would be willing occasionally to volunteer their services for Guild functions as well as for special projects (mailings, etc.) for local opera companies. The object is to keep on file a list of individuals who can be called upon to volunteer their time on short notice when the need arises. That way, an event chair or opera company can simply call the Guild volunteer coordinators when help is needed. Also needed are people who would be willing to provide transportation for those who need it to lectures and other Opera Guild functions. In that case, an individual needing a ride would call the volunteer coordinator, who would then contact volunteer drivers. Anyone interested in joining one or both of the lists can do so by calling Elaine Veloz (408) 395-1842 or Olga Nespole (408) 395-2035 or e-mailing fmichael@gte.net. Please indicate your area of interest (i.e. event- setup, donation solicitation, decorating, mailing, tech. support, proof-reading, transportation, etc.).

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 7: SAN JOSÉ OPERA GUILD'S DOWNTOWN LECTURE/PREVIEW. Larry Hancock will lecture on Puccini's *La bohème* at noon at the San José Museum of Art, Wendel Center. Artists from Opera San José will sing excerpts from the opera. Free admission. Co-sponsored by Opera San José and San José Opera Guild. Information: Gerry Pighini 408-275-6199 or MrPio@msn.com.

FEBRUARY 11: THE WAGNER SOCIETY OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA will present Conductor Michael Downes speaking on "Wagner's Influence in France at the Close of the 19th Century" in the Laurel Heights Conference Center, 3333 California Street, San Francisco. WSNC members, free; non-members, \$10. Information: 415-421-4412 or www.wagnersf.org.

FEBRUARY 11-24: OPERA SAN JOSÉ will present Puccini's *La bohème* in the California Theatre, 345 South First Street, San José. Tickets, \$65 to \$85. Information: 408-437-4450 or www.operasj.org.

FEBRUARY 18-19 and 24-26: WEST BAY OPERA will present Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* at the Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Tickets, \$46 and \$50. Information: 650-424-9999 or www.wbopera.org.

MARCH 21: THE WAGNER SOCIETY OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA will present member Glen Gould to speak on "*The Legendary Arturo Toscanini*" at the Laurel Heights Conference Center, 3333 California Street, San Francisco. WSNC members, free; non-members, \$10. Information: 415-421-4412 or www.wagnersf.org.

APRIL 4: MONTALVO ARTS will present Frederica von Stade and Samuel Ramey in concert at the California Theatre, 345 South First Street, San José. Tickets \$60-\$100. Information: 408-961-5858 or www.montalvoarts.org.

APRIL 8: THE WAGNER SOCIETY OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA will present Mrs. George London to speak on "George London's Heroic Career in Bayreuth" at the Laurel Heights Conference Center, 3333 California Street, San Francisco. WSNC members, free; non-members, \$10. Information: 414-421-4412.

APRIL 18: SAN JOSÉ OPERA GUILD'S DOWNTOWN LECTURE/PREVIEW. Larry Hancock will lecture on Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at noon at the San José Museum of Art, Wendel Center. Artists from Opera San José will sing excerpts from the opera. Free admission. Co-sponsored by Opera San José and San José Opera Guild. Information: Gerry Pighini 408-275-6199 or MrPio@msn.com

APRIL 22-MAY 5: OPERA SAN JOSÉ will present Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in the California Theatre, 345 South First Street, San José. Tickets, \$65 to \$85. Information: 408-437-4450 or www.operasj.org.



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An Invitation to Join

Established in 1947, the San José Opera Guild was formed to promote the appreciation and enjoyment of the operatic arts and to provide both volunteer and financial support to opera.

The Guild incorporated in September 1958 as a non-profit corporation under the laws of California. The original purpose of the Guild has not changed over the years since its founding. Financial support of promising young artists in the community is a high priority for the Guild, which helps sponsor singers each year at Opera San José, and the Merola Opera Program, as well as other opera groups.

Throughout the year, the Guild sponsors lectures and previews at three different venues to coincide with the San Francisco Opera and Opera San José's seasons.

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Memberships: Family \$60
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c/o Joan Shomler
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Morgan Hill, CA 95037

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Contributions are fully tax deductible to the extent provided by the law.
Does your company have a matching grant program?
Visit our website at www.sjoperaguild.org