

The logo for the NABUCCO 2012-2013 Season. The word "NABUCCO" is written in large, blue, block letters. The letters are set against a background of a large, stylized letter 'X' composed of several triangular segments. These segments contain different images: a blue sky with clouds, a golden-brown textured surface, a blue sky with clouds, a golden-brown textured surface, a blue sky with clouds, and a blue sky with clouds. Below the word "NABUCCO", the text "2012-2013 SEASON" is written in a smaller, grey, serif font.

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WELCOME

Friends, it is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the opening production of Minnesota Opera's 50th anniversary season. We are thrilled to be producing *Nabucco*, an opera never before staged by our company. I am also pleased to welcome Michael Christie as Minnesota Opera's Music Director. Michael was recently cited as a part of opera's "Next Wave" by *Opera News*. His talent and energy will move the company forward in many exciting ways.

Fifty years is a milestone worth commemorating for any organization, but perhaps especially something to celebrate in the case of an opera company. As we reflect on Minnesota Opera's first 50 years, it is with an enormous sense of gratitude. The company has benefitted from the generosity of donors, both individual and corporate, from the dedication of staff and from the gifts of artists. And as an article in the August 8 edition of *The New York Times* noted, we have an extraordinary audience: "What Minnesota has is, in Minneapolis and St. Paul, an audience that is used to adventurous culture."

Thank you for being part of this great adventure. Enjoy the show!

Kevin Ramach
President and General Director

Welcome friends to the 2012–2013 Minnesota Opera season! Each year the sounds of the chorus warming up and the voices of the Resident Artists resonate through the halls of the Minnesota Opera Center. The entire staff begins to kick into high gear with the first opera of the season. It's indeed a very exciting time and this year it is even more exciting as we launch into the 50th anniversary with this new production of Verdi's *Nabucco*.

Nabucco premiered in 1842 at La Scala in Milan and the entire world of Italian opera changed. Here was a singular and thrilling new voice. It was the voice of the Italian soul being articulated through the plight of the Jewish nation under the yoke of the Assyrians. The audience heard the struggle of the Italians in the beauty of one of the most famous choruses of the 19th century, "Va, pensiero."

With *Nabucco*, you need the three best singers in the world, and we are so excited for the return of Brenda Harris and Jason Howard. We are also honored to welcome one of the world's great basses, John Relyea, in his company debut.

Thaddeus Strassberger, the director and set designer for this production, brings a fresh eye to this work. His designs honor the originals for the production of 1842, yet make this production relevant to today's audience.

This is only the beginning of a brilliant Minnesota Opera season. Stay tuned!

Dale Johnson
Artistic Director

CONTENTS

6	Synopsis	18	Tempo
7	<i>Nabucco</i>	19	50 th Anniversary Season
8	Background Notes	21	Up Next: <i>Anna Bolena</i>
11	Giuseppe Verdi	22	Education at Minnesota Opera
12	The Artists	25	Minnesota Opera Board of Directors, Staff and Volunteers
16	Minnesota Opera at 50: The First Decade.	26	Minnesota Opera Annual Fund

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PART 1: JERUSALEM

The Temple of Solomon. 587 BC. Seeking refuge in the Temple, the Israelites are mustering their strength to resist the fearsome Nabucco, king of Assyria, who has attacked the city. Amidst the chaos, Zaccaria, the Israelites' spiritual leader, hurriedly seeks shelter from the warfare along with his sister, Anna. In an effort to negotiate an end to the siege, Zaccaria's forces have kidnapped Nabucco's younger daughter, Fenena. Ismaele, nephew of the king of Jerusalem, breathlessly recounts the horrors of the street combat that is swiftly approaching their stronghold in the Temple. Zaccaria believes his hostage will prove a powerful negotiation tool with his enemy.

It is soon evident that Ismaele and Fenena are not strangers but rather former lovers, having met while Ismaele was in Babylon on a failed diplomatic mission. Their romantic reunion is interrupted when Abigaille, Fenena's older sister, infiltrates the temple. She scornfully turns on Ismaele as a warrior weakened by love. She then confesses her own love of him, and implies that she has the power to call a truce, if only he will return her affection. Unable to deny his devotion to Fenena, he offers to forfeit his life for his people. Hebrew refugees and wounded warriors are driven back into the Temple. When Nabucco appears, taking possession of their most sacred stronghold, Zaccaria condemns his arrogance and threatens to slay Fenena, but Ismaele prevents her brutal execution. As the Jews turn on Ismaele for his treachery, Nabucco orders the temple sacked and burned.

INTERMISSION

PART 2: THE UNBELIEVER

Several months later in Nabucco's Palace in Babylon. Nabucco has left the palace to wage another war, leaving Fenena in charge as regent Queen in his absence, infuriating Abigaille who believes that she, as the elder daughter, should have that right. Confirming her growing suspicion, she has found an official document proving that she is

not Nabucco's daughter but rather the child of slaves with no line of rightful succession to the throne. Angry and hurt at Nabucco's deception, she swears vengeance on him and Fenena. The corrupt High Priest of Baal interrupts her musings to announce that Fenena has liberated the captive Israelites. To punish what they regard as Fenena's treason, the priests have hastily arranged Abigaille's ascension to the throne, falsely announcing that Nabucco has been slain in battle.

A gallery in Nabucco's Palace. Zaccaria prays that his faith will give him the resolve to continue fighting. He believes he may prevail in the conflict by converting Fenena, who has shown compassion for the Hebrews' plight. The Levites reproach Ismaele for his seeming treason, but Zaccaria reassures them that Ismaele has not betrayed them. Abdallo, a Babylonian guard, rushes in with the false report of the king's death, warning Fenena that she is now in danger.

A hall in the Palace. The High Priest, followed by Abigaille and her supporters, enters to proclaim Abigaille ruler; her first act as queen shall be to condemn the Hebrews to death. When Abigaille demands the royal crown that Nabucco has entrusted to Fenena, the girl refuses to yield it. To the astonishment of all, Nabucco – very much alive, if mentally unstable – suddenly appears, seizes the crown and places it on his own head. Sensing his power is slipping away, he brazenly announces that he is not only their king, but their God as well. As he commands them to prostrate themselves before him, his insanity becomes apparent to all. Abigaille seizes the moment of personal and political turmoil to usurp the crown from the deranged king.

INTERMISSION

PART 3: THE PROPHECY

The Hanging Gardens of Babylon. Abigaille, in collusion with the religious leaders, exults in the praise of her subjects. The High Priest exhorts her to put the Hebrews to death. Nabucco,

having descended further into madness, arrives to see his throne now occupied by his illegitimate daughter. Taking advantage of his confusion, she persuades him to give his approval to the death decree against the Hebrews. He wavers, but her venomous taunts soon convince him. When he asks what has become of Fenena, Abigaille replies that she has converted to the Jewish faith and will therefore be executed with the others. Horrified by Abigaille's intentions, he searches for the parchment that would reveal that she has no right to the throne. She produces and then quickly destroys the evidence. As he begs Abigaille to show clemency for Fenena, the guards, following Abigaille's orders, lead him off to prison.

The banks of the Euphrates River. Taking a moment of respite from their forced labor, the Hebrew exiles bid their plaintive thoughts to fly "on golden wings" toward their beloved homeland. Zaccaria urges them not to despair, but to use the power of their anger to break the chains of their captivity and to strike their oppressors in brutal retaliation.

PART 4: THE SHATTERED IDOL

A prison cell. Wracked with guilt and suffering from a worsening derangement, Nabucco is uncertain whether he is awake or trapped in a nightmare. He imagines Fenena being led away to her death. Losing the last shred of his faith, he prays to the God of the Hebrews for forgiveness, pledging to convert his people. Though believing that he has been rescued by Abdallo and that his army is once again loyal to him, he sees the death decree being carried out before him. He hears Zaccaria hail Fenena as a martyr to the cause of the Israelites as she resigns herself to death. The distraught Nabucco renounces Baal and orders the god's idol to be destroyed. His senses failing him once again, he wonders if he sees Abigaille approaching. Having poisoned herself in horror at what her ambition has brought upon her kingdom, Abigaille confesses her crimes. Slipping in and out of consciousness, she prays to Jehovah for pardon as the Hebrews reaffirm that their God will always raise up those who are afflicted. ■

NABUCCO

Music by Giuseppe Verdi Libretto by Temistocle Solera

after Antonio Cortesi's ballet *Nabucodonosor*
and Auguste Anicet-Bourgeois' play *Nabuchodonosor* (1836)
World premiere at the Teatro alla Scala, Milan, March 9, 1842
September 22, 25, 27, 29 and 30, 2012, Ordway, Saint Paul
Sung in Italian with English captions

CAST

(in order of vocal appearance)

Zaccaria , <i>High Priest of the Hebrews</i>	John Relyea
Ismaele , <i>nephew of the King of Jerusalem</i>	John Robert Lindsey
Fenena , <i>younger daughter of Nabucco</i>	Victoria Vargas
Abigaille , <i>presumed daughter of Nabucco</i>	Brenda Harris
Anna , <i>Zaccaria's sister</i>	Christie Hageman
Nabucco , <i>King of Babylon</i>	Jason Howard
High Priest of Baal	Richard Ollarsaba
Abdallo , <i>Nabucco's officer</i>	Jon Thomas Olson

CREATIVE TEAM

Conductor	Michael Christie
Stage Director and Scenic Designer	Thaddeus Strassberger
Choreographer	Heidi Spesard-Noble
Costume Designer	Mattie Ullrich
Lighting Designer	JAX Messenger
Original Lighting Designer	Mark McCullough
Wig and Makeup Designers	Jason Allen and Ronell Oliveri
Associate Director	Joel Ivany
Assistant Director	Daniel Ellis
Assistant Conductor	Aaron Breid
Stage Manager	Alexander Farino
Surtitles™	Frank Rizzo

Setting: Jerusalem and Babylon, 587 BC

The Minnesota Opera season and *Nabucco* are sponsored by



NABUCCO

Background
Notes

by
David Sander

The composition of *Nabucco* is a watershed event in the history of music, both for the career of Giuseppe Verdi and for the operatic genre itself. Though others had already shown some signs of reform, namely Gaetano Donizetti in his French operas, Saverio Mercadante in *Il giuramento* and Giovanni Pacini in *Saffo*, no one could match the power and verve Verdi put into his unbridled third score. It is no wonder the opera's energizing momentum would become a symbol for political upheaval as well.

Verdi's beginnings had hardly been auspicious. In spite of his studies with Ferdinando Provesi and his involvement in the local philharmonic society, the composer's application to the Milan Conservatory had been declined after he failed his piano entrance exam. He was resigned to study privately with a provincial teacher, Vincenzo Lavigna, and destined to become the *maestro di cappella* of the local cathedral. His first public performance at the Milanese Società Filarmonica, however, eventually led to an unofficial commission by its director, Pietro Massini, who proposed Temistocle Solera's libretto for *Oberto, conte di Bonifacio*.

By 1838, Verdi had returned to Milan score in hand, and determined to become a self-made man, began to shop his new opera around town. With him came his new wife, Margherita, and their young son Icilio Romano. It was a risky venture. Already 25 years old, the composer could have been considered past his prime when compared to Mozart, Rossini and Donizetti. The Verdi family arrived amid the festivities of the visiting Emperor Ferdinand and Empress Maria Anna, for Lombardy was still part of the Austrian realm. At the same time, *Nabucodonosor*, a new ballet choreographed by Antonio Cortesi, was playing at the Teatro alla Scala. Times were hard – the couple was forced to borrow money from Margherita's father and she had to pawn her jewels – but Verdi was fortunate to have several people working on his behalf. Massini managed to get *Oberto* a booking at La Scala as part of a benefit for the Pio Istituto Filarmonico. Impresario Bartolomeo Merelli had an

impressive roster of singers at his disposal – tenor Napoleone Moriani, baritone Giorgio Ronconi and soprano Giuseppina Strepponi, then believed to be at the height of her career. Several rehearsals were held, but the usual vicissitudes of theatrical life and philanthropy postponed the premiere until the following autumn.

Oberto was a *succès d'estime* at best, not generating negative comments nor receiving any great admiration. Though Strepponi hadn't sung in the belated production, she had seen the score and had spoken kindly of it. Merelli thought Verdi's first effort worthy enough to offer a solid contract for three more operas composed at eight-month intervals. He also connected the young maestro to the House of Ricordi, which would publish his new work and maintain a life-long relationship through three generations.

Merelli offered several libretti to Verdi for a comic opera, and he chose the "least offensive," *Il finto Stanislao*, later to be named *Un giorno di regno*. Perhaps the first bad omen of many to come, the libretto had already been set by another composer and had failed miserably. As the serious and sublime Romantic age began to blossom, comedy had become somewhat passé in Italy. *Don Pasquale*, composed three years later, is perhaps the only work to survive in repertory. Adding to the mix was the great personal tragedy Verdi would suffer – first his young son died, followed by Margherita. Composed under a dark

cloud, Verdi's second opera was destined (in his eyes) for failure, complicated further by a lack-luster performance by its principal singers. Merelli pulled the opera after only one performance with the given excuse of an ailing soprano.

The events following *Un giorno* are somewhat shrouded in legend, complicated by Verdi's unreliable recollections set to ink many years after the fact. Even though the composer had supposedly given up on a career in music, Merelli held him to his contract and demanded another opera. At first, the composer considered *Il pros critto*, a libretto later set by Otto Nicolai. It is said Merelli then forced Solera's new libretto upon him, and when Verdi returned home that evening, he angrily threw the book across the room, where it magically opened on the pages with the text to the Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves, "Va, pensiero." He then slowly composed the opera piece by piece.

Merelli was not quick to produce Verdi's latest opus. In 1841, he had already announced his Carnival season, which included two world premieres: Donizetti's *Maria Padilla* and Alessandro Nini's *Odalisa*, the local premiere of Pacini's *Saffo* as well as restagings of Bellini's *La straniera* and Donizetti's *Belisario*. After some persuasion, he agreed to tack *Nabucco* on at the very end, but with repurposed scenery and costumes. Ronconi and Strepponi were engaged as the two principal characters, Nabucco and Abigaille.



Nabucco 2012. © Scott Suchman for Washington National Opera

Verdi was probably thrilled with Ronconi, but perhaps not as much with Strepponi. Though she had risen to the pinnacle of operatic fame, she was showing signs of vocal distress. From the age of 19, she had embarked on an aggressive career, in part to assist her mother and fatherless siblings, and in response to demanding and amorous agents. The backstage theatrical *demimonde* was viewed with disdain by the average god-fearing citizen, as the irregular life of evening employment led to unconventional love affairs. It is said that most impresarios had their way with many of the prima donnas, and Strepponi was no exception. She may have had up to four children, one born right after a grueling performance of *Il giuramento*. The solutions for these unwanted pregnancies were few. Besides the stigma of being an unwed mother in 19th-century Catholic Italy, Strepponi was in no position to care for a child, given her itinerant life and her family's dependence. She had to either find a family to care for them, or simply abandon the newborn in the Ospedale degli Innocenti.

The stress of her pregnancies and her ambitious performance schedule took its toll on her voice and reputation. Once the shining star of bel canto opera, having excelled in the roles of Norma, Lucia, Lucrezia Borgia, Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*), Giovanna (*Anna Bolena*), Nina in *La pazza per amore* (her signature mad scene a subject of portraiture) and *Adelia* (the score even dedicated to her), she had become the topic of derision by Donizetti by the time of *Nabucco*'s premiere. As it turned out, Strepponi barely survived the highly demanding role of Abigail, which she would have to sing eight times before the run thankfully ended. She was not re-engaged for the fall revival, though she would sing in other Verdi operas until she finally retired in Paris. Nonetheless, she was immortalized in a painting with the score of *Nabucco* in her hands, and ironically, with camellias in her hair, the calling card of another Verdi heroine, the fallen *traviata*, Violetta. In spite of her shortcomings, she and Verdi would become friends, then lovers and finally spouses until her death in 1897.

The frenetic response to *Nabucco*'s bombastic, unrelenting score over those eight nights (with the onset of Lent, the season was at its end) encouraged Merelli to remount the opera in the fall, when it would receive a record-breaking 57 performances. Verdi's star was on the rise,



Giuseppina Strepponi
Museo Teatrale alla Scala, Milan

and the "boldly self-confident" composer would know a further triumph at La Scala with *I Lombardi* the following year. *Nabucco* would be staged in over 50 Italian opera houses in its first two years. Verdi, the parvenu, was invited into the Italian intelligentsia and his fate was secured.

"Va, pensiero" became wildly popular among the people. Much has been made about the composer's role in the *Risorgimento*, or the movement to reunite Italy in the 19th century. Throughout history, the concept of "Italy" had been more geographical than political as the last time the peninsula had been a unified country was during the Imperial Roman era. Since then, the region had been splintered by Dark Age barbarians, by Machiavellian princes of the Renaissance, and most recently, by the Austrian Hapsburgs to the north, and the Spanish Bourbons to the south, with Papal Rome in the midlands. During the Napoleonic invasions of 1798, the notion of a united Italy came back to the fore. The July

Revolution of 1830 in Paris, abolishing the antiquated government of Charles X in favor of the more bourgeois Louis-Philippe, fostered the notion of rebellion, and ultimately futile uprisings occurred in Parma, Modena and the Papal States. By the 1840s, sedition was rife, a serious topic of conversation in secret societies, such as the Carbonari, and artistic salons, including that of Clara Maffei, a home frequented by Verdi. In 1848, another series of insurrections further destabilized Europe. Momentarily unsuccessful, they paved the way to partial unification in 1861. Venetia was gained in 1866, and another Napoleon led to total unity in 1870 when the French emperor pulled his troops out of Rome as he needed them to fight in the Franco-Prussian War.

Back in 1842, on the opening night of *Nabucco*, there were likely Austrian soldiers in the audience, a point clearly made in this production presented by Minnesota Opera. Did Verdi compose his early operas as political vehicles? There are two schools of thought. One commentator has noted that the chorus "Va, pensiero" most associated with the revolution was not repeated as previously believed – such an outrage against the Austrian prohibition of encores certainly would have been reported in the papers. Perhaps Verdi became associated with the Risorgimento after the fact, his themes and choruses quite naturally reflecting public sentiment. Still, Solera was undoubtedly a librettist of the revolution, and Verdi appeared to have republican leanings – he even named his children after characters from the Vittorio Alfieri Roman-themed play *Virginia*. A precedent for public demonstration had already been set by Mercadante in *Caritea, regina di Spagna*, during which the chorus sings "Chi per la patria muor, vissuto è assai" (He who dies for his country has lived enough). It has been noted that many Verdi operas of the 1840s contain numbers exactly for this purpose, and the composer wrote them as boldly as the censors would allow, hoping to provoke audience reaction. One can't deny that *La battaglia di Legnano* was blatantly written to inflame the desire for unification (some have detected *La Marseillaise*, the

BACKGROUND NOTES



Nebuchadnezzar by William Blake (1757–1827)

Tate Gallery, London

French national anthem, in its overture). It is certainly significant that Verdi turned to more introspective subjects after the failed insurgencies of 1848–49.

Nabucco (the shortened version of *Nabucodonosor*) is based on Nebuchadnezzar (c. 605–562 B.C.), the fearless Assyrian ruler and one of Israel's worst villains, and comes through history from the Old Testament's 2 Kings and the book of Daniel. Aside from being a bloodthirsty tyrant, he was a voracious builder, said to be responsible for the Gate of Ishtar, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, and along with his father, the ziggurat Etemenanki, a reconstruction of the Tower of Babel. He is also responsible for sacking and destroying the first temple of Solomon. The Babylonian Captivity is an important chapter in Jewish history, accented poignantly by the famed operatic chorus already cited, itself based on Psalm 137: "By the waters of Babylon we sat and wept"

Otherwise, the opera, the Bible and history part ways. The action of *Nabucco* is divided into tableaux rather than episodes, each with its own descriptive title. Solera aptly introduces each section with a biblical quotation from Jeremiah. However, as we progress into the third and fourth parts, his references become more creative as these passages are either wrongly attributed, or simply invented. Ultimately the plot was based on a four-act Parisian play by Auguste Anicet-Bourgeois and Francis Cornu in which, other than Nabuchodonosor, the characters and plot are entirely fictitious. In a complex drama worthy of Eugène Scribe, Abigail begins with good intentions – she rescues Phénenna from

Israeli captivity and saves Ismael's life from the blade of an Assyrian soldier. She only turns evil when Nabuchodonosor shows preference for her younger sister, taking on a warrior princess persona as she is betrayed from every direction. When the king is struck by lightning for his blasphemy, she snatches the parchment bearing her secret as well as the crown. The subsequent madness, confrontation between foster-father and daughter and the prayer restoring the king's sanity play out as in the opera, but Phénenna, having been executed, is restored to life by divine intervention, and Abigail, rather than dying of self-inflicted poison, is struck down by her surrogate father's sword in retaliation for her treachery.

Nabuchodonosor's dream and subsequent madness do find a corollary in the Bible. After interpreting the king's dream of a great tree cut down, Daniel relays: "He was driven out from men, he ate grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like [an] eagle's and his nails like birds," a metamorphosis of king into beast. It is wonderful justice for the arrogant tyrant, who built a colossal graven image and burned those who refused to worship it in a fiery furnace. Remarkably, religious persecution – then and now – has consistently been made by oppressive political and religious figures with false idols and invented scripture. Far from being picture perfect, *Nabucco*'s story is a violent one, a geophysical force that resonates all the way from antiquity to revolution in Europe to the disquietude of the modern era. ■

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Born into a relatively poor family near the town of Busseto, Verdi owed his first musical training to Antonio Barezzi, a local patron. Barezzi arranged for Verdi to go to Milan, where he failed the entrance exams to the Conservatory. Verdi then returned to Busseto to assume, amid fierce controversy, the post of *maestro di musica* and to marry Barezzi's daughter, Margherita, in 1836. They had two children, but tragically, within a three-year period Margherita and their children died. In despair, Verdi pursued his career elsewhere. Then he returned to Busseto with Giuseppina Strepponi, the soprano who created the role of Abigaille in *Nabucco* and whom he later married. He bought a nearby farm, built a large comfortable house and – with only occasional interruptions to travel, compose or produce an opera – managed the farm until his death in 1901.

In a 54-year period, Verdi wrote 26 operas (two of which were revised extensively and retitled). Italian theaters in the early to mid-19th century were in constant need of new works. As a result, competent composers were in demand and expected to produce at an astonishing rate. Both Rossini and Donizetti had set the standard, and Verdi was required to adapt to their pace. These became his “anni di galera” (years as a “galley slave”) – between 1842 and 1853 he composed eleven new operas, often while experiencing regular bouts of ill-health. His style progressed from treating grandiose historical subjects (as was the custom of the day) to those involving more intimate, personal relationships. The early 1850s marked the peak of Verdi's career, with the composition of his three most popular pieces: *Rigoletto*, *Il trovatore* and *La traviata*.

In 1859 Napoleon III of France drove the Austrians out of Lombardy. As Verdi had long been considered an artist of revolution, he was pressed into accepting a seat in the new Italian Parliament. During his political career he found time to compose only one opera, *La forza del destino*.

Macbeth was revised in 1865 and presented in Paris, where Verdi agreed to write *Don Carlos*. *Aida*, first performed at the Cairo Opera House



Portrait of Verdi Standing
Museo Teatrale alla Scala, Milan

in 1871, proved the perfect vehicle for showcasing Verdi's gifts, and it contained some of his finest music.

Following *Aida*, Verdi firmly stated he had retired for good. He was now devoted to his villa, Sant'Agata, and to revising and remounting several earlier works, pausing briefly to write a powerful *Requiem*. Coaxed out of his retreat by a lifelong love of Shakespeare, the septuagenarian composer produced *Otello* and *Falstaff* to great acclaim.

Verdi's final years were focused on two philanthropic projects, a hospital in the neighboring town of Villanova, and a rest home for aged and indigent musicians in Milan, the Casa di Riposo. Giuseppina died in 1897, and Verdi's own passing several years later was an occasion of national mourning. One month after a small private funeral at the municipal cemetery, his remains were transferred to Milan and interred at the Casa di Riposo. Two hundred thousand people lined the streets as “Va, pensiero” from *Nabucco* was sung by an 800-person choir led by conductor Arturo Toscanini. ■



Michael Christie CONDUCTOR

Michael Christie became Music Director of the Minnesota Opera in September 2012 after eight years as the Virginia G. Piper Music Director of the Phoenix Symphony. Michael opens his 13th season as music director of the Colorado Music Festival in Boulder, Colorado this year and has been music director of the Brooklyn Philharmonic and chief conductor of the Queensland Orchestra (Brisbane, Australia).

Recent opera engagements have included acclaimed productions with Opera Theatre of St. Louis (*Alice in Wonderland*, *The Ghosts of Versailles* and *The Death of Klinghoffer*), Wexford Festival Opera, Minnesota Opera (*Madame Butterfly*, *La traviata*, *Wuthering Heights* and *Silent Night*) and Aspen Opera Theatre (*The Ghosts of Versailles* and *West Side Story*).

Upcoming engagements include *Anna Bolena* and *Turandot* with Minnesota Opera and his San Francisco Opera debut conducting the world premiere of *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene*.



Christie Hageman ANNA

Soprano Christie Hageman joins Minnesota Opera as a first-year Resident Artist singing Anna in *Nabucco* and Liù in *Turandot*. During the 2011–2012 season, she was heard as Abigail Williams in *The Crucible* with Rimrock Opera, Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette* with Livermore Valley Opera, Micaëla in *Carmen* with Opera Fort Collins and Clorinda in *La Cenerentola* with Opera Colorado. Christie graduated with her Master of Music degree from the University of Colorado – Boulder. Roles there include the title role in *The Cunning Little Vixen*, Emily in Ned Rorem's *Our Town*, Musetta in *La bohème*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Flora in *La traviata* and Paquette in *Candide*. Ms. Hageman has performed with the CU Symphonic Orchestra, the Billings Symphony Orchestra, Amalfi Coast Music Festival in Italy, Songfest Young Artist Program in Washington and on the Miss America stage in Las Vegas. She won first place in the prestigious Denver Lyric Opera Guild Competition in 2010 and was a regional finalist of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in 2012.



Brenda Harris ABIGAILLE

Soprano Brenda Harris has been heard at the Metropolitan Opera (Vitellia in *La clemenza di Tito*), Washington Opera (title role in *Agrippina* and Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*), Washington Concert Opera (Odabella in *Attila* and Elisabetta in *Roberto Devereux*), Minnesota Opera (title roles in *Norma*, *Armida* and *Semiramide*, Elisabetta in both *Roberto Devereux* and *Maria Stuarda*, Camilla in *Orazi e Curiazi* and Vitellia in *La clemenza di Tito*), Opera Omaha (the title role in *Ermione*), New York City Opera (title role in *Agrippina*, Donna Anna), Austin Lyric Opera (Chrysothemis in *Elektra* and Katarina in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*), Atlanta Opera (Violetta in *La traviata*, Desdemona in *Otello*, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* and Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro*), Michigan Opera Theatre (Norma and the Countess), Arizona Opera (Lady Macbeth in Verdi's *Macbeth*), Opera Theatre of St. Louis (Countess), Opera Pacific (Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* and Donna Anna) and Utah Opera (title role in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Leonore in *Fidelio* and Lady Macbeth).

Ms. Harris' appearance is generously sponsored by Martha and Art Kaemmer.



Jason Howard NABUCCO

Baritone Jason Howard is now recognized as one of the United Kingdom's leading performers on the international operatic stage.

With his most recent success as Wotan in David McVicar's production of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* at the Opéra National du Rhin, Strasbourg, he is now quickly establishing himself as a leading exponent of the German heroic repertoire. One review described him as "the Wotan of his generation" after his debut in *Die Walküre*. He expanded his German repertoire with Strauss' Orest, Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer* and Jochanaan in *Salome* in Lisbon and with Minnesota Opera in 2010.

In recent seasons, Jason sang Scarpia in *Tosca* in Salzburg and Frankfurt as well as Iago in *Otello* in America, Baron Jaroslav in *Věk Makropulos* at Opéra National du Rhin and Germont in *La traviata* at Welsh National Opera. Future engagements include his debut in Warsaw as Prus in *Věk Makropulos* and a return to the role of Wotan at the Longborough Festival and the Grand Teatre de Liceu.

Mr. Howard's appearance is generously sponsored by Dr. Tracy and Mr. Eric Aanenson



Joel Ivany ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Canadian Joel Ivany's recent projects include directing *Hansel and Gretel* (Canadian Opera Company); *The Turn of the Screw* (Against the Grain Theatre); *Così fan tutte* (The Banff Centre); and as associate director, *Nabucco* (Washington National Opera). He was a recent finalist and winner in the European Opera – Directing Prize for his concept of Bellini's *I Capuleti ed i Montecchi*. Mr. Ivany has assisted and revived Thaddeus Strassberger's production of *Le nozze di Figaro* as well as assisting on *Rigoletto*, both for Norwegian National Opera, and at the Bard Summerstage for *Le roi malgré lui*. He has also assisted Robert Carsen for *Orfeo ed Euridice* and *Iphigénie en Tauride* (both for Canadian Opera Co.); and *La fanciulla del West* (Norwegian National Opera). He is the founder and artistic director of Against the Grain Theatre in Toronto. Upcoming engagements include assisting Robert Carsen at Deutsche Oper Berlin on a new production of *L'amour et les trois oranges*. Ivany will be directing a new production of *Les contes d'Hoffmann* with Edmonton Opera in February 2013.



John Robert Lindsey ISMAELE

Colorado native tenor John Robert Lindsey is a recent graduate of the University of Colorado at Boulder, where he earned his Master of Music in vocal performance under the tutelage of Julie Simson. Past engagements include the Tenor Soloist in Handel's *Messiah*, Sam Polk in Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*, the Stage Manager in Ned Rorem's *Our Town* and Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*. Mr. Lindsey was met with numerous successes in competitions recently. He was a regional finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions for the past two years, as well as taking third place in 2010 and first place in 2011 at the prestigious Denver Lyric Opera Guild competition.

For Minnesota Opera's 2011–2012 season, Mr. Lindsey appeared as Jonathan Dale in *Silent Night*, Schmidt in *Werther*, Normanno in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Goro in *Madame Butterfly*. He also sang a concert of *Carmen* highlights with the Mankato Symphony. This season he returns as Ismaele in *Nabucco*, Hervey in *Anna Bolena* and Pang in *Turandot*.

Nabucco is a coproduction between Minnesota Opera, Opera Company of Philadelphia and Washington National Opera. Costumes were constructed by the Washington National Opera Costume Studio. Michael Hagen, Inc. contributed to the scenic art painting.

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Mark McCullough

**ORIGINAL
LIGHTING DESIGNER**

Mark McCullough has lit productions for such opera companies as the Metropolitan Opera (*Le nozze di Figaro*); New York City Opera (*Il viaggio a Reims*); Washington Opera (*Die Walküre*, *Das Rheingold* and *Porgy and Bess*); Strasbourg's Opéra National du Rhin (Benjamin Britten's *The Beggar's Opera*); Royal Opera Covent Garden (*The Queen of Spades*); Opera North (*Eugene Onegin*); Boston Lyric Opera (*Aida*, *Madama Butterfly* and *Tosca*); Florida Grand Opera; Virginia Opera; Bard College (Shostakovich's *The Nose*); Glimmerglass Opera (John Philip Sousa's rarity *The Glassblowers* and *The Mother of Us All*); San Francisco Opera (*Rigoletto*, *Arshak II*, *The Mother of Us All*); Seattle Opera; Dallas Opera (the world premiere of Picker's *Thérèse Raquin*); Teatro Real, Madrid, Spain (*Luisa Miller*); San Diego Opera and numerous productions at Opera Theatre of St. Louis. Among his theater credits are *Rebecca* (Broadway); the revival of *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Broadway and U.K. tour); *Whistle Down the Wind* (Aldwych Theatre, London); Webster's *The White Devil* and Schiller's *Don Carlos* (Royal Shakespeare Co.).


JAX Messenger
LIGHTING DESIGNER

JAX Messenger lives with his family in Austin, Texas. Most recently, he will be assisting in the design of *Rebecca* for Broadway. Lighting design engagements include *The Barber of Seville* for the Merola Opera Program; *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Fluctuating Hemlines*, *Shoogie* and *Don Quixote* for The Washington Ballet; *Requiem* and *The Elixir of Love for Families* for San Francisco Opera; *Waltzpurgnacht* and *Majisimas* for Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo; *Odyssey* for The Crucible as well as recreating designs for *High Lonesome* (Nick Phillips), *The Nutcracker* (Tony Tucci), *Romeo and Juliet* (Kevin Meek), *The Four Temperaments* (Tony Tucci), *Cor Perdut* (Nacho Duato), *Push Comes to Shove* (Jennifer Tipton) and *Wonderland* (Jeff Bruckerhoff), all for The Washington Ballet.

Mr. Messenger has served as Assistant Lighting Designer on productions for Washington National Opera (*Nabucco*), San Francisco Opera (*Xerxes*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *The Heart of a Soldier*, *The Ring Cycle*) and The Washington Ballet, working with Mark McCullough, Paul Pyant, Jeff Bruckerhoff, Chris Maravich, Duane Schuler and Christina Gianelli.


Richard Ollarsaba
HIGH PRIEST

Bass-baritone Richard Ollarsaba recently completed his studies for a Master of Music degree and a Post Graduate Certificate from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. His credits include Cecil in *Maria Stuarda*, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* and Sir John Falstaff in Nicolai's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. He made his Piedmont Opera debut in its 2010 production of *Il trovatore* as Ferrando and returned for productions of *Don Giovanni* as Masetto and *The Crucible* as Reverend Hale. He then reprised Ferrando for North Carolina Opera in 2012.

Mr. Ollarsaba was a two-time fellow at the Music Academy of the West and a young artist with Chautauqua Opera. He is a first place winner of the Charles A. Lynam Competition, which earned him featured performances of select arias with the Greensboro Symphony Orchestra, where he was praised for his "wonderful artistry and beautiful and moving voice" – *CVNC*. He was a Metropolitan Opera National Council North Carolina district winner, taking second place in the regional competition.


John Relyea
ZACCARIA

Bass John Relyea has appeared at the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Seattle Opera, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Paris Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, Vienna State Opera and the Mariinsky Theater. His roles include the title roles in *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Bluebeard's Castle*, *Don Quixote*, *Attila* and *Aleko*; Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Colline in *La bohème*, Don Alfonso in *Lucrezia Borgia*, Don Basilio in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Alidoro in *La Cenerentola*, Giorgio in *I puritani*, Banquo in *Macbeth*, Garibaldi in *Rodelinda*, Méphistophélès in both *Faust* and *La damnation de Faust*, the Four Villains in *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Marke in *Tristan und Isolde*, Caspar in *Der Freischütz*, Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress*, Collatinus in *The Rape of Lucretia* and King René in *Iolante*.

In 2012–2013, Mr. Relyea returns to the Royal Opera House as Bertram in *Robert le diable* and the Metropolitan Opera as Méphistophélès in *Faust*.


Heidi Spesard-Noble
CHOREOGRAPHER

Heidi Spesard-Noble is a highly versatile dancer, singer and choreographer. Her credits include *Midlife: the Crisis Musical*, *Brigadoon*, *The Christmas Show* and *Big Bang* at Chanhassen Dinner Theatre and the Minnesota Opera's productions of *Carmen*, *La traviata*, *Orzi e Curiazi*, *Lakmé* and *Wuthering Heights*. She has also served as assistant choreographer for Doug Varone's *Cinderella* as well as for productions of *The Grapes of Wrath* in Minnesota, Salt Lake City and Pittsburgh. As a director, she has staged *Sesame Street Live*, and for Project Opera, Henze's *Tom Thumb*, Britten's *Noye's Fludde* and Weill's *Down in the Valley*.

At Chanhassen she has appeared in numerous productions including *The Music Man* as Pic-a-little, *My Fair Lady* as Lady Boxington, *Can Can* as Marie, *Crazy For You* as Mitzi, *42nd Street* as Anytime Annie, *Phantom* as Fleur, *Hello Dolly*, *Oklahoma* as the Saloon Girl and *Brigadoon* as Maggie.

As a dancer, Ms. Spesard-Noble has been seen in *Cinderella* with Ballet of the Dolls, the Opera's *The Merry Widow* and many productions with Minnesota Dance Theatre.


Thaddeus Strassberger
**STAGE DIRECTOR
AND SCENIC DESIGNER**

Thaddeus Strassberger is "a young American director who manages to straddle the sometimes very different worlds of European and United States opera production seamlessly," writes *Opera Now*. He began his career when he was awarded the prestigious European Opera Prize in 2005 for *La Cenerentola* (Opera Ireland/Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden). Recent productions include *Les Huguenots*, *Der ferne Klang* and *Le roi malgré lui* (Bard Summerscape), *Hamlet* and *Nabucco* (Washington National Opera) and *I due Foscari* – with Plácido Domingo making his role debut (L.A. Opera). Upcoming debuts include Palau de les Arts in Valencia, Theater an der Wien in Vienna and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. He returns to Minnesota Opera for *Hamlet* in 2013. Strassberger earned his degree in Engineering from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York City and received a Fulbright Fellowship to complete the Corso di Specializzazione per Scenografi Realizzatori at Teatro alla Scala in Milan in 2001.



For more biographical information about these artists, visit our website at mnopera.org/season or go to get.neoreader.com on your smartphone and then snap this QR code.

The appearances of Christie Hageman, John Robert Lindsey and Richard Ollarsaba, regional finalists of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, are made possible through a Minnesota Opera Endowment Fund established for Artist Enhancement by Barbara White Bemis.

The appearances of the Resident Artists are made possible, in part, by the Virginia L. Stringer Endowment Fund for the Minnesota Opera Resident Artist Program.



Mattie Ullrich COSTUME DESIGNER

Mattie Ullrich makes her Minnesota Opera debut. Her recent work in opera includes *I due Foscari* for Los Angeles Opera, in coproduction with Vienna, Valencia and London; *The Rape of Lucretia* for the Norwegian Opera, *Le roi malgré lui* and *Der ferne Klang* for Bard SummerScape; and *Zaide, Così fan tutte* and *Ariadne auf Naxos* for Wolf Trap Opera. She received the European Opera Prize in 2006 for her collaboration with Thaddeus Strassberger for Opera Ireland's production of Rossini's *La Cenerentola*. Her repertoire also encompasses film, theater, musicals and print. She designed the costumes for a reworking of the Stephen Schwartz musical *Working* with new songs from Lin-Manuel Miranda (Tony Award-winning creator of *In The Heights*). Other credits include Off-Broadway's *The Pride*, directed by Joe Mantello, and *The Starry Messenger*. Her film work includes *Year of the Fish* (Sundance 2007) and the award-winning short *Sovereignty*. She is currently collaborating on a new production of *Don Giovanni* for the Norwegian Opera as well as *Le roi malgré lui* for the Wexford Opera Festival.



Victoria Vargas FENENA

Mezzo-soprano Victoria Vargas returns to the Minnesota Opera, having appeared as Tisbe in *Cinderella*, Anna in *Mary Stuart*, Flora in *La traviata*, Nelly in *Wuthering Heights* and Alisa in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. This season, she sings Fenena in *Nabucco* and Smeton in *Anna Bolena*.

Regionally, Ms. Vargas recently sang with the Duluth Festival Opera and a concert of *Carmen* excerpts with the Mankato Symphony. She has been at both Sarasota and Chautauqua Operas, where she covered the role of Mamma Lucia in *Cavalleria rusticana*. At Chautauqua, she won the company's Guild Studio Artist and Apprentice Artist Awards, singing Laura in *Luisa Miller* and the Second Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*. She also won an encouragement award at the Met districts.

Other opera credits include Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro* for Ash Lawn Opera and Martina Arroyo's *Prelude to Performance*; the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel*, the title role in *Carmen* and Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* for Hillman Opera; Madame Armfeldt in *A Little Night Music* for Lyric Arts International; and Miss Todd in *The Old Maid and the Thief* for Fredonia Opera Theater.

MINNESOTA OPERA ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Allison Ostrander
Concertmaster
Julia Persitz
David Mickens
Judy Thon-Jones
Angela Waterman
Hanson
Conor O'Brien
Natalia Moiseeva
Giselle Hillyer
Heidi Amundson
Maisie Block

VIOLIN II

Laurie Petruconis
Elizabeth Decker
Stephan Orsak
Melinda Marshall
Margaret Humphrey
Elise Parker
Lydia Miller
Huldah Niles

VIOLA

David Auerbach
Emily Hagen
Laurel Browne
Jenny Lind Nilsson
Susan Janda
James Bartsch

CELLO

Jim Jacobson
Sally Gibson Dorer
Rebecca Arons
Thomas Austin
Teresa Richardson
Kristen Whitson

BASS

John Michael Smith
Constance Martin
Jason C. Hagelie

FLUTE

Michele Frisch
Amy Morris
(double piccolo)

OBOE

Michael Dayton
(double
English Horn)
Mark Seerup

CLARINET

Karrin Meffert-Nelson
Nina Olsen

BASSOON

Coreen Nordling
Laurie Hatcher Merz

HORN

Matt Wilson
Charles Hodgson
Timothy Bradley
Lawrence Barnhart

TRUMPET

John G. Koopmann
Christopher Volpe

TROMBONE

Phillip Ostrander
John Tranter
David Stevens

CIMBASSO

Ralph Hepola

TIMPANI

Kory Andry

PERCUSSION

Matthew Barber
Paul Hill

HARP

Min J. Kim
Nikki Lemire

CHORUS

Matt Abbas
Alex Barnett
Nathan Bird
Kristen Bond
Theo Brown
Carolyn Cavadini
Joseph Clegg
Cecile Crozat-Zawisza
John deCausmeaker
Greg Dokken
Peter Frenz
David Goudzwaard
April Hanson
Michelle Hayes
Sandy Henderson

Jason Hernandez
Ben Hills
Cresta Hubert
John Humphrey
Peg Joyce
Mary Kent Vandrove
Erin Klenovitch
Liz Kohl
Josh Kowitz
Gary Kubert
Rick Latterall
Michelle Liebl
Eric Mahutga
Cassandra McNally
Riley McNutt

Megan Miller
Mary Monson
Kristin Morant
John Allen Nelson
Jessica Nesbit
Phong Nyguyen
Mary Ohm
Matt Opitz
Rick Penning
Alex Ritchie
Mary-Lacey Rogers
Bob Schmidt
Eric Sorum
Justin Staebell
Staci Stringer

Tyler Stroebel
Jennifer Sylvester
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Kristie Tigges
Lara Trujillo
Colyn Tvete
Eryn Tvete
Taylor Van Denburgh
Rachel Vickers
Lola Watson
Dominique Wooten
Tracy Zavadil

DANCERS

Drew Atwood
Joseph Bingham
Natalie Bucey

Bryan Godbout
Anneva Knapp
Tristan Koepke

Colleen McClellan
Ueland
Jeff Quast

Lucy Rahn
Joanne Spencer

SUPERNUMERARIES

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Alex Cotant
Jaden Cusick
Aliyah Davis
Chari Eckmann
Ron Elmquist
Stephen Hage

Ellie Hahn
Joseph Johnson
Ryan Kantor
Fiona Long
Wesley McClain
Stephen McIntyre
Tammara Melloy

Alex Meyer
Amy Morrison
James Norgard
Andrew Northrop
Natalia Peterson
Steven Pomije
Curtis Roth

Jonathan Slayton
Alex Sundvall
Madycin Vinar
Michael Walker
Fletcher Zavadil

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1963–1964

AN ADJUNCT OF WALKER ART CENTER, CENTER OPERA COMPANY IS BORN, SHEPHERDED BY MARTIN FRIEDMAN AND NORTON HINTZ. PERFORMANCES TAKE PLACE AT THE NEW GUTHRIE THEATER.

The Masque of Angels
The Masque of
Venus and Adonis
Albert Herring

DOMINICK ARGENTO COMPOSES *THE MASQUE OF ANGELS* FOR THE OPENING SEASON OF CENTER OPERA.

1964–1965

The Rape of Lucretia
The Wise Woman and the King

JOHN LUDWIG IS GENERAL MANAGER. WESLEY BALK DIRECTS *THE WISE WOMAN AND THE KING*.

1965–1966

The Abduction from the Seraglio
The Good Soldier Schweik

ROBERT ISRAEL DESIGNS *THE GOOD SOLDIER SCHWEIK*.

1966–1967

The Mother of Us All
The Sorrows of Orpheus
The Harpies
Socrates
Three Minute Operas

ROBERT INDIANA DESIGNS *THE MOTHER OF US ALL*.

1967–1968

The Man in the Moon
A Midsummer Night's Dream

NICHOLAS KRUSHENICK DESIGNS *THE MAN IN THE MOON*.

1968–1969

Così fan tutte
Horspfa
The Wise Woman
and the King

PHILIP BRUNELLE CONDUCTS *COSÌ FAN TUTTE*.

1969–1970

Oedipus and the Sphinx
Punch and Judy
17 Days and 4 Minutes
The Wanderer

CENTER OPERA BECOMES INDEPENDENT FROM WALKER ART CENTER.

1970–1971

Christmas Mummeries
and Good Government
Faust Counter Faust
The Coronation of Poppea
The Mother of Us All

YALE MARSHALL COMPOSES *CHRISTMAS MUMMERIES* AND *GOOD GOVERNMENT*.

1971–1972

Postcard from Morocco
The Business of Good
Government
The Good Soldier Schweik
The Marriage of Figaro

JOHN CONKLIN DESIGNS *THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO*

1972–1973

The Threepenny Opera
Postcard from Morocco
The Barber of Seville
Transformations

CENTER OPERA COMPANY BECOMES MINNESOTA OPERA.

The First Decade: 1963-1973

INTERVIEW WITH NORTON HINTZ FOUNDING BOARD CHAIR

I came to Minneapolis in 1952 to take a faculty position at the University, and I met some people who were members of an invitation-only volunteer organization called the Center Arts Council. I worked closely with the Walker Art Center and around that time, the director was Martin Friedman. The Center Arts Council put on various programs – dance, lectures, architecture and concerts – and I got involved with the music committee. After various successes, including the famous water music concert in Loring Park, I became chairman.

While visiting Copenhagen, I went to the opera quite often and really liked the idea of an opera company. Minneapolis only had the St. Paul Opera nearby, which was sort of a “pick-up” company that brought in singers and scenery. So when I returned, the Guthrie Theater was being built, and the T. B. Walker Foundation had given the land in back of the museum for the theater. In return, the Walker was to have one night a week while the plays were on and four or five nights when it was dark. I felt that it was our chance to start a modest little opera company. We didn’t think in terms of a permanent company at that point, but intended to put on small-scale pieces, chamber operas using local singers and local musicians. Our first opportunity was at the close of the Guthrie’s season in 1963. I immediately got in touch with the leading composer, Dominick Argento, and also Tom Nee, who was the conductor of the Minneapolis Civic Orchestra. We formed a committee, and it was decided we would start with the baroque opera *Venus and Adonis* and a commission by Argento, *The Masque of Angels*.

An unofficial general manager, I was also doing research in physics and teaching. My secretary nearly quit because of all the calls coming to her, and we had trouble with the unions and the set people – all the problems you would expect from

a start-up organization. But somehow we got it on the stage. The Guthrie people laughed at us, but congratulated us afterwards. The theater at the time seated 1,437 seats, and we had about 900 the first night, which was very good, all things considered. It was a fairly big success and the critics praised it. For our second opera that season, we chose Benjamin Britten’s comic opera *Albert Herring*. Essentially everyone was a volunteer except the singers and musicians, who were paid, but not much. Our total budget turned out to be about \$30,000 that year. Critics came from *The New York Times* because they had heard about this new, innovative opera in Minneapolis and we got a rave review.

One of the early things Martin did was to encourage that we use young artists as set designers rather than the traditional Broadway people. One he discovered was this kid in his early 20s at MCAD named Robert Israel, and of course Bob became famous all over the world. He designed several very innovative productions for us. As we got bigger and bigger, Martin gently pushed us out, and we then formed our own non-profit board. I was chairman for the first couple of years, and Martin had hired John Ludwig as general manager, realizing that I couldn’t carry that role any longer.

John brought a colleague from Yale, Wesley Balk, who became the artistic director. They started doing a combination of chamber operas by Britten and Haydn alongside world premieres. The opera started to expand beyond small-scale works. It had outgrown the Center Arts Council and so Center Opera was a misnomer. At some point, it morphed into Minnesota Opera.

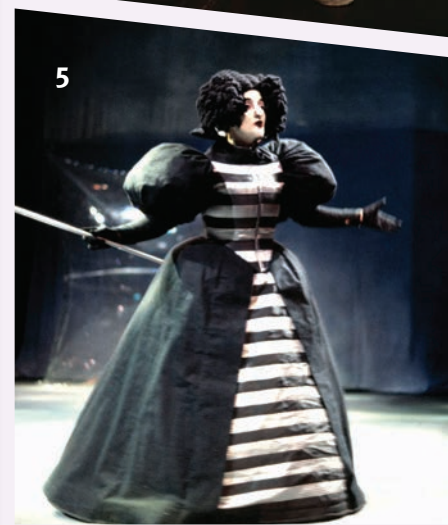
Minnesota Opera was built and founded by a number of key people. All I can claim credit for saying is, “How about we do an opera at the Guthrie.”

PHOTOS:

- (1) *The Masque of Angels* (1964) (2) *The Wise Woman and the King* (1965)
(3) *The Good Soldier Schweik* (1966) (4) *To Hellas* (1967) (5) *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1968) (6) *The Man in the Moon* (1968) (7) *Horspjal* (1969)
(8) *Oedipus and the Sphinx* (1969) (9) *Punch and Judy* (1970)
(10) *Postcard From Morocco* (1971) (11) *The Mother of Us All* (1971)



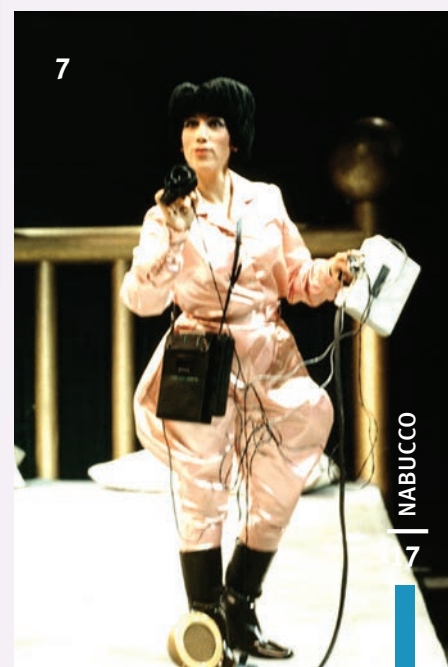
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MADAME BUTTERFLY AFTER PARTY

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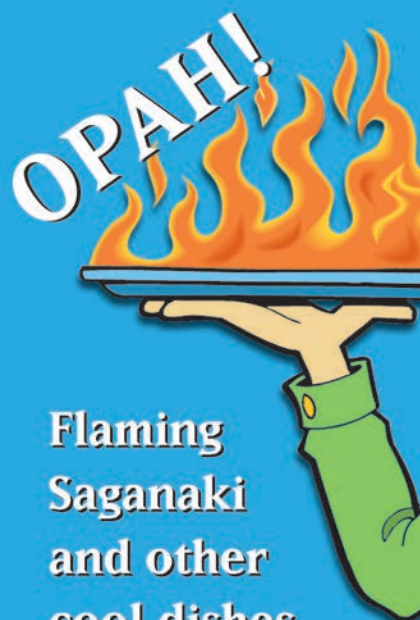


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February 2013 A festival of films based on and inspired by opera,
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The Trylon

50th Anniversary Celebration

April 6, 2013 A concert and dinner celebrating 50 years and looking toward
Minnesota Opera's future
Ordway and The Saint Paul Hotel

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June 2013 Enjoy a free outdoor concert staging of *La bohème*
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ANNA BOLENA Nov. 10 – 18, 2012

A notorious life hangs precariously in the balance.

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Summer Opera Camp

On the beautiful campus of Shattuck-St. Mary's School in Faribault, Minnesota, 32 teens from around Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois spent a very intensive week in June learning, staging and performing opera. The students this year focused on Mozart, performing scenes from *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Magic Flute*, *The Impresario* and *Così fan tutte* among others. Each day the singers have vocal coaching sessions, staging rehearsals and sessions in movement.

Check out more pictures from the Camp at imagineopera.org.

Johanna Traynor as Pamina, Mary Brennan and Grace Peck as the spirits in *The Magic Flute*



Campers playing an acting game



Spencer Kopp as Tamino in *The Magic Flute*



Lucas Jackson, Sarah Shoaf (bottom left) and Leah Pickhardt in *The Impresario*



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Behind the Curtain

Get the inside scoop!

Behind the Curtain explores the music, history and design of each opera. Classes will feature talks led by opera experts and informative discussions with members of the cast and creative team.

Join us for our class on *Anna Bolena*, Monday, October 22, 2012, from 7-8:30pm at the Minnesota Opera Center.

Visit mnopera.org/BehindTheCurtain for more information.

Purchase tickets at mnopera.org or call the Minnesota Opera Ticket Office at 612-333-6669. (\$35/adult, \$28/subscriber, \$10 students)

Minnesota Opera is happy to introduce Bergen Baker as Teaching Artist.

Over five weeks this fall, Bergen will lead an extensive in-school residency in Austin, Minnesota. During her time there, she will work closely in all four elementary schools presenting *Through the Eyes and Ears of Mozart*, an interactive program that teaches students about Mozart and opera.

She will also participate in a three concert series with the Austin Symphony Orchestra on Sunday, Oct. 28 (2pm) and Oct. 29 (9am and 12pm), 2012. Check out austinnmsymphony.org for concert information.



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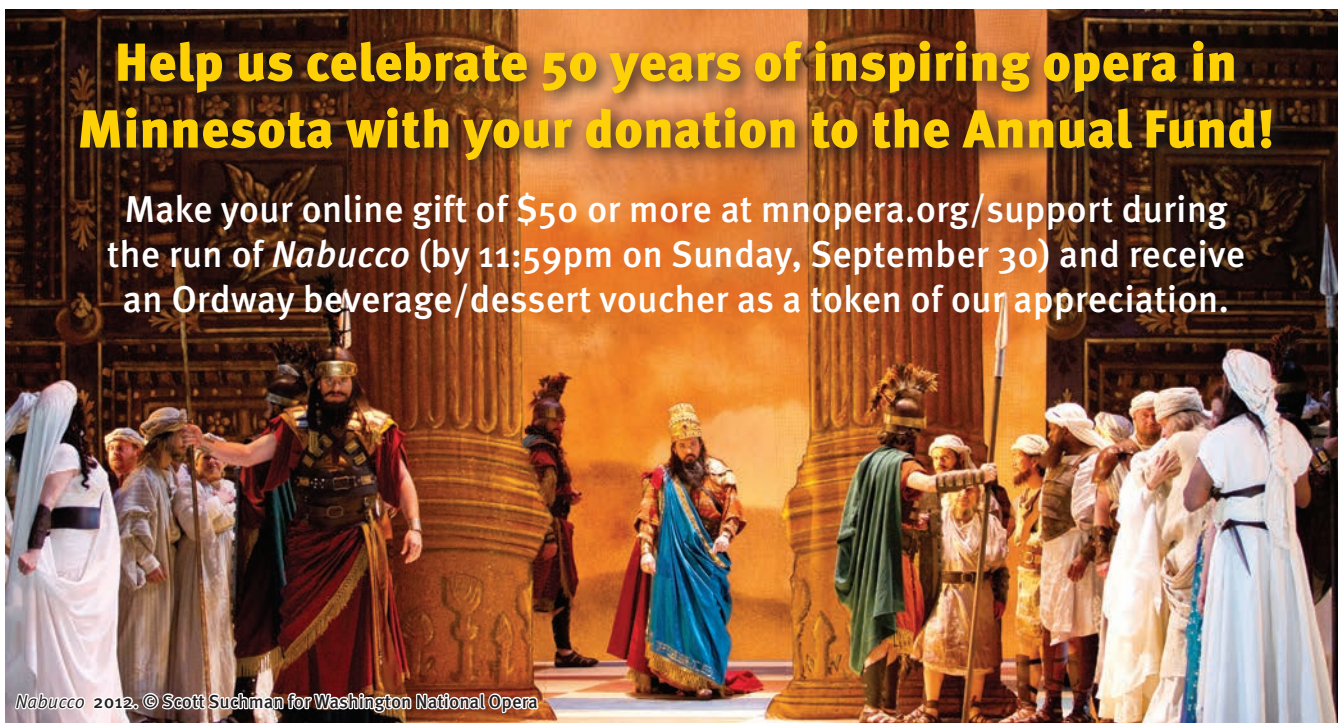
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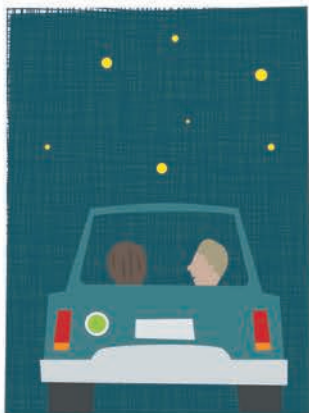
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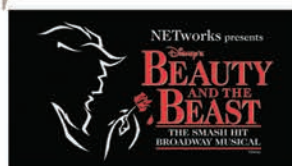
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