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OPERALEX.ORG

WINTER 2015



Lavish and sensual

Offenbach's Paris glitters and delights

Tales of Hoffman (music by Jacques Offenbach; libretto by Jacques Bar-bier) was first performed at the Opéra-Comique in Paris in 1881. Offenbach, who died the year before, had earlier staged an abridged version in his home.

The operetta properly belongs, however, to the era of the Second Empire of Napoléon III, which ended with a disastrous war between France and Germany in 1870. Offenbach embodied the spirit of the Second Empire, one of the most glittering in French history. The Emperor, far from being irritated by the satirical content of the operettas, sometimes aimed at him, awarded Offenbach the *Légion*

d'Honneur.

Paris was the place to be between 1852 and 1870. Plays and operettas mixed lavish settings and sensual

Tales of Hoffman

Where: Lexington Opera House

When: March 5,6,7 at 7:30 p.m.;
March 8 at 2 p.m.

Cost: \$38.40 - \$54.75. Call (800)-745-3000, or visit the Lexington Center Ticket Office.

themes with political and social satire. High society frequently overlapped with the world of the theater. Wealthy men were seen at opening nights, fancy

balls, Maxim's, and the Longchamp race track with "arm candy" that might include actresses, singers, the *petits rats de l'opéra* (young dancers looking for a sugar daddy), and elegant courtesans. Even royalty followed the trend: the rotund Prince of Wales

Learn more at luncheon

Meet the singers, hear some of the stunning arias, learn more about the opera and enjoy a superb lunch with other opera fans at Portofino restaurant February 24th at 11:45 a.m. Ticket: \$22. For further information or to reserve a place, contact Sylvia Davis at sylvia.davis@twc.com or 263-2032 by February 20.



Opera LEX

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Now you can support us every time you shop at Amazon! Check out operalex.org.

See Page 5

New members join OperaLex board

Sanford Archer

Sanford Archer, M.D. has served on the LOS, now OperaLex board for many years and is actively involved in fund raising. As Medical Director of the UK Voice Disorders Clinic, he provides medical voice evaluations and works closely with students and professionals to help keep their singing voices healthy.

Sylvia Cerel-Suhl

Sylvia Cerel-Suhl is a physician who focuses on health improvement and community development. She has developed Kids Arts 4 Hearts, which teaches children about heart health through origami. A past president of the Central Kentucky American Heart Association board, she lives in Lexington with her husband, Dr. Jeremiah Suhl.

Laura A. D'Angelo

Laura A. D'Angelo grew up in Canada but horses – she shows jumpers -- drew her to Lexington to attend law school. She is a partner at Dinsmore & Shohl. She served six years on the LexArts board and frequently attends operas and musicals in Lexington, New York and Toronto. Her daughter, Lilly, 9, takes voice lessons through UKOT.

Jan Furst

Jan Furst is a proud Hoosier, born and raised in southern Indiana. She and her husband, Dick, moved to Lexington when he became Dean of the College of Business and Economics at UK. Dick was a member of the Lexington Opera Society, now OperaLex, until his death in 2012. Jan is pleased to have the opportunity to continue that support.

James Palumbo

James (Jamie) Palumbo, a native Lexington, was involved in theater, chorus and diving growing up. He has been coaching diving for 18 years and was voted the



Archer



Cerel-Suhl



D'Angelo



Furst



Palumbo



Reynolds



Stemple



Koenig-Thawley



Vaughn

Members represent many segments of the community

KHSAA Outstanding Girls' Diving Coach in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2014 as well as the Outstanding Boys' Diving Coach in 2011 and 2012. He works at Palumbo Lumber.

Andy Reynolds

Andy Reynolds is a Wealth Planner at Boardman Wealth Planning, Inc. From Columbus, Indiana, he graduated from Centre College and earned an MBA at UK. Andy serves on the Community Impact Committee at the Blue Grass Community Foundation and is a member of the Bluegrass Estate Planning Council.

Joseph Stemple

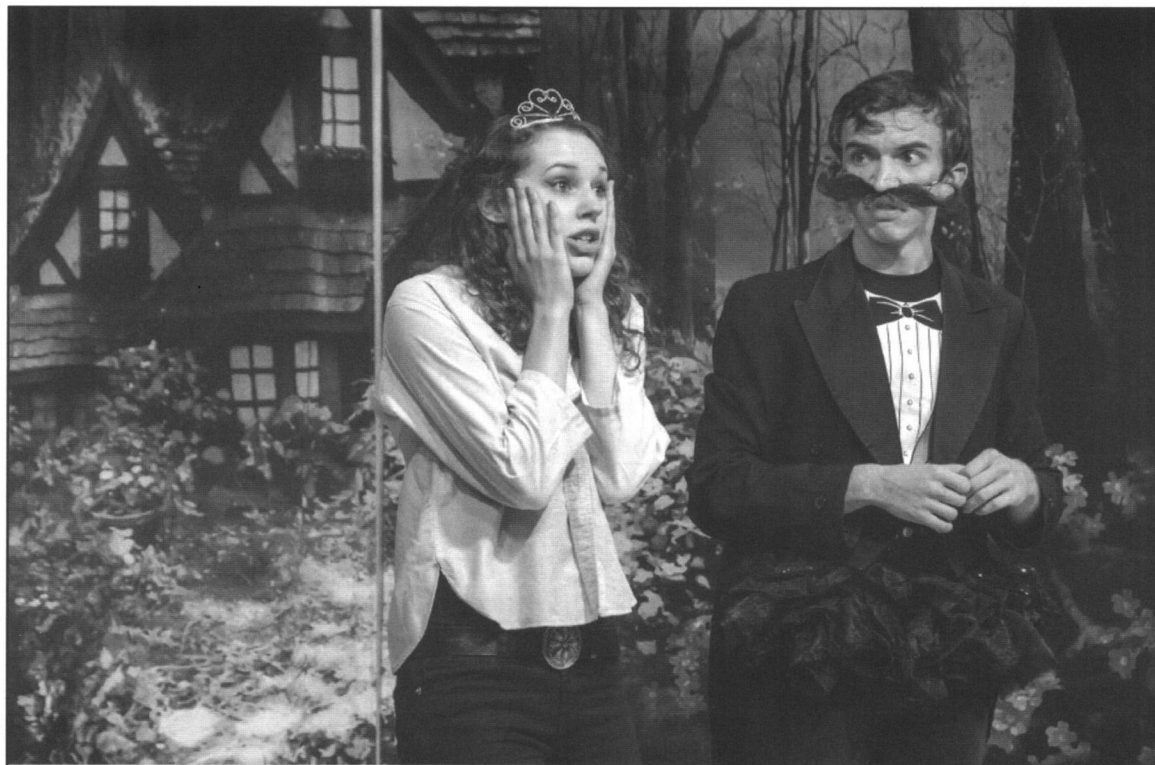
Joseph Stemple is professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders, College of Health Sciences at UK, where he specializes in the study of voice production and voice disorders. Current research interests include the biology of laryngeal muscles during exercise, the aging voice, and the central neural control of voice production.

Kathrin Koenig-Thawley

Kathrin Koenig-Thawley, a soprano, has been a featured concert soloist throughout Maryland, her home state, Delaware, and Virginia. She won second place in the graduate division of the 2012 Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition, allowing her to pursue a master of music degree in vocal x. She is scheduling coordinator for University of Kentucky Opera Theatre's Schmidt Opera Outreach Program (SOOP).

Abby Vaughn

Abby Vaughn is Vice President, Wealth Management at UBS Financial Services, Inc. in Lexington. She has more than 30 years of experience in the financial industry with an extensive understanding of providing personalized services in cash management and customized lending. She has served on many charitable community boards.



Katherine Hay, as Alice, was guided through Operaland by the Maestro, Samuel Themer.

"I hope they come back next year"

In its 11th season UKOT's Schmidt Opera Outreach Program reached out to almost 30,000 students last fall, performing 76 shows in 34 counties.

SOOP, named in honor of the late Bill Schmidt (see Page 6) who made the expansion of this program possible, travelled the state performing *The Adventures of Alice in Operaland*. The show takes the familiar character through a magic world where she learns the basics of operas and operatic performance. It was a hit.

"The children were totally engaged! This was our 4th SOOP presentation and I think it was the best," one teacher wrote scheduling coordinator Kathrin Thawley.

Students liked it, too. Some quotes:

"You had awesome costumes and pretty voices too." – Corey, grade 3.

"I usually don't like opera, but I really thought your opera was fun. I liked the ex-

pressions and the backgrounds. Thank you for coming." – Sarah, grade 4.

"I think the opera was awesome! I liked it so much I didn't want it to end. I also liked how there were only three people acting a bunch of characters and they had to change outfits. It was fantastic!!!" -- Violeta, grade 3.

UK Artist-in-Residence and alumnus Gregory Turay directed the cast that included Katherine Hay, last seen as Eponine in *Les*

Misérables, as Alice. With her, playing multiple roles were Wanessa Campelo, last seen as Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* and Fantine in *Les Misérables*, and Samuel Themer, last seen as Thernardier in *Les Misérables*. Maris Deddens played keyboard for the production.

The show for the 2015 season has not been chosen. Still, it's clear there's an eager audience awaiting it, according to Lucas, grade 3. "They gave a pretty cool performance because they would make us laugh and have a good time. I hope they come back next year."

"Awesome costumes and pretty voices too."
Corey, 3rd grade

SOOP, by the numbers

Fall 2014 was very successful for SOOP's production of *The Adventures of Alice in Operaland*. Here are some statistics:

- 76 shows
- 59 venues
- Nearly 30,000 students
- 34 counties

UKOT Sweeps Met auditions

Three singers advance to regionals

When the three distinguished judges announced their decision at the Metropolitan Opera National Council Kentucky District Auditions in November, University of Kentucky singers went 6-0.

Two graduates of UKOT's program advanced: soprano Rebecca Farley, who as a senior advanced the previous year to place second in the Mid-South Regional Auditions; and bass Matthew Turner, who sang the title role in one cast of UK's *Sweeney Todd* in the fall. The judges also chose graduate student Christopher Kenney, baritone, to move forward.

At the regionals they will compete with singers from the Arkansas, Middle/East Tennessee, North Alabama, and West Tennessee/Mississippi districts. Singers who win at the regional level will go on to compete in New York on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera for cash prizes and possible spots in the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.

Farley and Kenney study with voice professor Cynthia Lawrence. Turner studied with Dennis Bender, associate professor of voice, and Everett McCorvey, Lexington Opera Society Endowed Chair in Opera Studies and director of UK Opera Theatre.

Encouragement awards, with cash prizes, were also given to three UK students, who will not compete in the regional auditions. Named for famous Met soprano Gail Robinson, who taught at UK for several years before her death, the awards were given to junior Mary Catherine Wright, doctoral candidate Shareese Arnold, and graduate student Jonathan Parham.

OperaLex has hosted the district auditions in Lexington for several years. This year the regional competition will also be in Lexington, at Memorial Hall on the UK campus, beginning at 1 p.m. on February 21st. The event is free and open to the public.



Rebecca Farley



Matthew Turner



Christopher Kenney

Happenings

February

Regional Finals of the Metropolitan Auditions

Where: Memorial Hall, UK campus.

When: Feb. 21 at 1 p.m.

Cost: Free and open to public.

Preview lunch for *The Tales of Hoffman*

Where: Portofino Restaurant, 249 East Main St.

When: Feb. 24 at 11:45 a.m.

Cost: Ticketed event.

March

The Tales of Hoffman

Where: Lexington Opera House.

When: March 5, 6, 7 at 7:30 p.m., March 8 at 2 p.m.

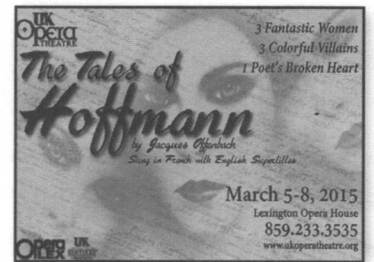
Cost: Ticketed event.

Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition

Where: Singletary Center for Arts, UK campus.

When: March 8 at 2 p.m.

Cost: Free and open to public.



April

Bravo Guild spring dinner meeting/election of officers

Where: Portofino Restaurant, 249 East Main St.

When: April 7 at 6 p.m.

Cost: Ticketed event.

May

Encore!

Where: Keeneland Sales Pavilion

When: May 30, time TBA.

Cost: Ticketed event.

June

It's a Grand Night for Singing

Where: Singletary Center, UK campus.

When: June 12, 13, 19, 20 at 7:30 p.m. June 14, 21 at 2 p.m.

Cost: Ticketed event.

Another group of Getchell scholars

Fund honoring late Tom Getchell supports graduate students

The second group of Getchell Graduate Scholars was announced late last year.

The five students who received awards are: Taeun Moon, Ashley Jackson, Brittany Benningfield, Kathrin Thawley (pictured on Page 2), and Savanna Sokolnicki.

The awards, in honor of the late Tom Getchell, an opera enthusiast and board member of the Lexington Opera Society, support graduate students in the UK opera program.

Getchell advocated for such a fund after learning that many graduate students had to delay their studies in order to earn money to continue them. Upon his death in 2013 OperaLex began working to make his dream a reality.

The recipients are familiar to Lexington opera audiences from UK productions. Moon, baritone, will sing Coppelius and Dr. Miracle in *The Tales of Hoffman*; Jackson, soprano, will sing Antonia in *Hoffman*; Benningfield and Thawley, sopranos, both sang the Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro* in 2013; and Sokolnicki, soprano, sang Carlotta in *The Phantom of the Opera* in 2012.

If you wish to contribute to this fund, please send a check to OperaLex, with Getchell Scholarship Fund indicated, to: OperaLex, P.O. Box 8463, Lexington KY 40533-8463.

Encore!
PRESENTED BY OPERALEX

Encore! will be held on Saturday, May 30, at the Keeneland Sales Pavilion
Sponsors: Keeneland, Liquor Barn and Bryant's Rent-All

TALES OF HOFFMAN

From Page 1

(aka "Tum Tum") adored the Paris scene and Parisian women. The glamorous Empress Eugénie set styles: big hoop skirts and low-cut bodices. But the true stars of the scene were the *Grandes Horizontales*, the most accomplished courtesans: the Englishwoman Cora Pearl and the innocent-looking Marie Duplessis took lovers from the nobility and even from royalty. All this against a background of gold Baroque and marble, champagne and chocolates, diamonds and feather boas, sparkling chandeliers and mirrors, wealth and optimism.

Tales of Hoffman, which reflects this culture, is based on stories by the German Romantic E. T. A. Hoffman, who appears as the main character. He pursues three doomed loves, while his Muse, disguised as an old friend, tries to persuade him to devote himself to his art. The ladies are a courtesan, a singer...and a mechanical doll.

Each act has a villain to hiss and gorgeous arias to enjoy. Many people know the "Barcarolle," the theme song of the Italian courtesan Giulietta, but others are just as accomplished. The first "love," Olympia, has a solo with rather trite lyrics (to be expected from a wind-up doll) but with thrilling flourishes, trills and cascades of notes. Antonia, the singer, shares a beautiful love duet, "C'est une chanson d'amour." There is even a strange aria about a court dwarf, Kleinzach, in the prologue, which starts with a grotesque description of the subject, but breaks into a daydream about a beloved woman. The melody is one the audience might well be humming leaving the theater.

The operettas of Offenbach, especially *Tales of Hoffman*, have delighted audiences with lovely music, lavish settings, and emotional situations set in a dazzling period. In the first act, Hoffmann puts on a pair of magical blue glasses which turn reality into something dream-like. Let us all put on our magic glasses and enjoy!

— Dorothy Carter

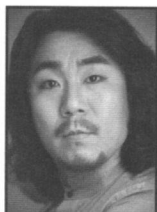
The casts

The major roles are double cast.

Hoffman is sung by Gregory Turay and Jonathan Parham; **Nicklausse/The Muse** by Wanessa Campelo and Holly Dodson; **Coppelius/Dr. Miracle** by Andre Campelo and Christopher Kenney; **Olympia** by Gabrielle Barker and Mary Catherine Wright; **Giuletta** by Whitney Myers and Brittany Jones; and **Antonia** by Ashley Jackson and Diana Vetter.



Brittany Benningfield



Taeun Moon



Ashley Jackson



Savanna Sokolnicki

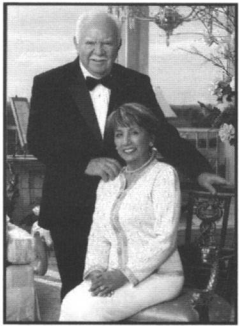
Bill Schmidt, Ray Garman

Two great friends of UKOT remembered

The Lexington opera community lost two wonderful friends and champions recently, Ray Garman and Bill Schmidt.

Bill Schmidt founded the Schmidt Youth Vocal Competition in honor of his sister, Annalee, after her death.

Kris Gilbert, coordinator of that competition for several years, shared some memories. "Bill Schmidt loved beautiful music, but perhaps even more so, loved young singers and helping them grow and develop their talents.



Bill and Casiana Schmidt.

"Bill was a very kind and generous man who quietly helped many people. Those who knew him soon learned that he also had a very finely tuned sense of humor. Although Parkinson's disease slowed him physically, his humor, love for others, and generosity never wavered. He was a wonderful person."

Dr. McCorvey recalled his partnership with Bill and Casiana Schmidt. "I learned that he was from Kentucky and asked why he wasn't hosting a competition in his home state. Bill's response was, 'Everett, you build it, we will come!' And boy did they come! Their generous donation of \$1,000,000 allowed us to break ground on the renovation of the Schmidt Vocal Arts Center, and endowed the Schmidt Opera Outreach Program (SOOP). We worked together to expand the Schmidt competition to 10 states.

"I loved Bill and was so honored that through our collective and very different talents, we were able to create



Ray Garman, center, setting out for a Saturday morning walk with Mark Pittman, left, and Everett McCorvey.

something very special for students throughout the United States. I will miss him very much."

Ray Garman led many lives, as a physician, soldier, teacher, canoeist, and generous father, husband, and friend. He gave freely of his time, humor, and intellect and provided money for many efforts to improve our community. He served twice as president of the board of the Lexington Opera Society and guided its transition to OperaLex.

McCorvey shared these thoughts: "Ray was a great friend, mentor, supporter, and walking buddy. We enjoyed many Saturday mornings together, along with Greg Pitts, Mark Pittman, and Lance Brunner, walking three, four or five miles and then going to a restaurant (usually Bob Evans – Ray's favorite) and putting all the weight back on that we had just melted off! Ray was a wonderful advisor and a great friend to UKOT and to OperaLex. I think of him every day. He loved the students at UK and loved being a part of the program. The students loved him as well. We will miss him."

UKOT's Christmas gift of *Amahl*

Like the three kings, UKOT's undergraduate presentation of *Amahl and the Night Visitors* was not deterred from its task.

Days before the show opened King Balthazar was put out of commission by appendicitis while flu struck Amahl (Joshua Steinbach). SCAPA student Grace Brown graciously stepped in during rehearsals, but Steinbach recovered by the opening. Assistant director Thomas Guenther

jumped in to sing for the missing king. Joining them were Laura Salyer (Mother), Willnard Anderson (Melcior), and Matthew Pearce, (Kaspar.)

Directed by Gregory Turay, *Amahl* was UKOT's first production in the historic Lyric Theater.

Almost 800 people welcomed the Christmas season at the three performances. UKOT plans to again present *Amahl* this December.

Talking with Tedrin

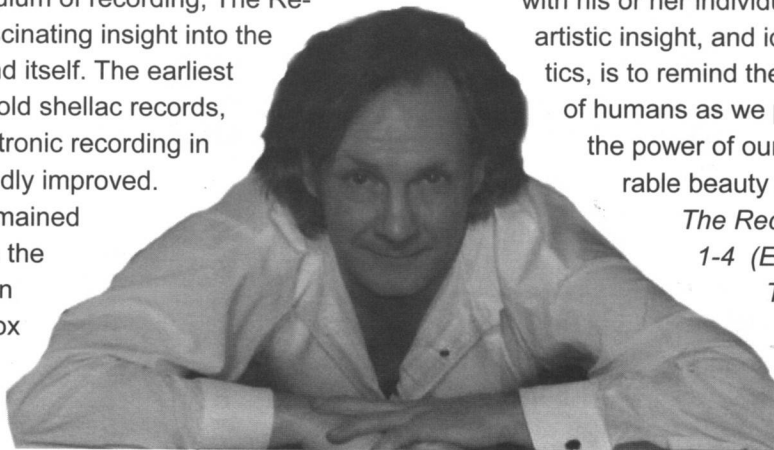
Amazing record of 100 years of opera

By Tedrin Blair Lindsay, PhD

In 2009, the recording label EMI issued a 20-disc, 2-box set called *The Record of Singing*. The first 10 cds, compiled from a larger EMI retrospective of old-time operatic artists, are packaged together under the subtitle "The Very Best of Volumes 1-4: 1899-1952." The remaining 10 cds comprise "Volume 5: 1953-2007." My dear friend Michael Rintamaa gave me this remarkable collection several years ago, and I have finally gotten around to absorbing it – I have been listening to it for weeks in my car!

It is an amazing experience to hear rare recordings of great divas of a century ago or more, whose names and reputations I have long known, but in most instances am only now actually hearing: Mary Garden, Adelina Patti, Lilli Lehmann, Louise Homer, Victor Maurel, the de Reszke brothers, and even a real castrato on the opening track! As the first box set plays on, legendary singers like Enrico Caruso, Nellie Melba, Rosa Ponselle, and Beniamino Gigli give way to the likes of slightly later legends like Lotte Lehmann, Kirsten Flagstad, and Lauritz Melchior. The second box set proceeds to illustrate why the so-called "Golden Age" was so golden, with all the great names from Nilsson and Corelli to Tebaldi and Björling, and many lesser luminaries as well, closing out in the final cds with all the beloved opera stars of our own era, like Leontyne Price, Jon Vickers, Frederica von Stade, Kathleen Battle, and Jessye Norman, right up to the present time with the likes of Renée Fleming, Natalie Dessay, Bryn Terfel, and Roberto Alagna.

In addition to providing an exhaustive survey of literally all the notable classical singers whose art has been preserved through the medium of recording, *The Record of Singing* gives a fascinating insight into the evolution of recorded sound itself. The earliest examples are from fragile old shellac records, but with the advent of electronic recording in 1925, sound quality markedly improved. The little 78 rpm record remained the state of the art through the early 1950s, the delineation point observed by these box sets. From the introduction of the stereophonic long-playing vinyl re-



Opera 101

Dr. Lindsay will explore in detail five of opera's most celebrated scenes – their music, verbal and philosophical content, structure, and what makes them work so magnificently.

March 7: *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Mozart), Act 2 Finale

March 14: *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Donizetti), Act 3, Scene 1 (Mad Scene)

March 21: *Carmen* (Bizet), Act 4 (Confrontation Scene)

April 11: *Aida* (Verdi), Act 4, Scene 1 (Judgment Scene)

April 25: *Götterdämmerung* (Wagner), Act 3 Finale (Immolation Scene)

Classes are 10:00 a.m. to noon in the Gail Robinson Music Room at the Schmidt Vocal Arts Center at Rose Street and Rose Lane. \$20 adults, \$5 students. Proceeds benefit OperaLex.

cordsa(33-&-1/3 rpm) in 1953, aural excellence and expanded playing length transformed the industry, and many connoisseurs claim that the warmth and amplitude of that sound still have not been surpassed, even in the digital age represented at the end of this survey.

I also like the sheer evenhandedness of this colossal endeavor. No attempt has been made to identify the greatest singers by giving them more than one excerpt: even the superb Maria Callas is represented with just one aria like everybody else. Thus, the effect of hearing more than 500 singers, each serving the lyric art

with his or her individual technical prowess, artistic insight, and idiosyncratic characteristics, is to remind the listener of the fragility of humans as we pass through time, and the power of our efforts to create memorable beauty during that journey.

The Record of Singing, Vols.

1-4 (EMI Classics 2289562)

The Record of Singing, Vol.

5 (EMI Classics 2289492)

Dr. Lindsay is your guide to the opera.

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