



Viva OPERA!

March 18, 2008 at 7:30 p.m.

Part of my education as a classical pianist was to play for singers. Hence, my early exposure to opera music sparked an interest. I have had the privilege to conduct operas since college and the excitement of a live dramatic performance coming to life through music has always been hard to resist. Operas run the gamut of human emotions and situations – the perfect canvas for music of unconventional power and expression.

Once again, we have chosen to focus our attention on one particular aspect of a given theme. All the selections for *Viva Opera!* will be in Italian, by Italian composers. Operas have been written in every language and by musicians of various nationalities, but the Italians were the instigators of the genre. In the late 1500's artists and thinkers inspired by Greek dramatic concepts met in Florence to discuss the creation of a new art form that would encapsulate many facets of art at that time. The word *opera* came from the plural form of the Latin word *opus*, which means "work". Thus, opera is the sum of different works, or in this case, art forms.

Drama, music, costume and scenic designs, ballet, to name a few, came together to create a unique spectacle. Yet, the first operas were considered too intellectual and they did not appeal to a wide audience. Just a few years later, Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643) became the first great composer of operas, and the stage was set for this rich new tradition.

From then on, opera rapidly spread all over Europe. By the mid-late Baroque era (1650-1750), opera was all the rage for famous composers such as Purcell, Vivaldi, Telemann, Rameau, and Handel. They were closely followed by Classical masters like Gluck, Salieri, Mozart, and even Franz Joseph Haydn. In the

Romantic era (1800-1900), opera would undergo even more dramatic developments, especially in Germany with Weber & Wagner, but also in Italy.

In the early 1800's, Italian masters were composing operas in the traditional style, with the emphasis on virtuosity of the singers and dramatic elements at the service of performers. This was the path most Italian opera musicians had followed. Fortunately, composer Gioacchino Rossini (1792-1868) was able to transcend the limitations of this approach. Yet, a renewal was needed, and it came through Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901). Verdi re-centered the focus of Italian opera on drama, but did not let go of the vocal quality of Italian music. With Verdi, Italian opera offered a counterpoint to the imposing Germanic musical frescos of Richard Wagner. Later on, a current of verismo had an impact on the Italian style. Verismo was a depiction of real-life situations and characters in opera in order to provide audience members with a dramatic portrayal of their own lives. Composers Puccini, Leoncavallo, and Mascagni wrote many operas with this concept in mind.

With 60 **Texarkana Symphony Orchestra** musicians, 75 singers from the **Texarkana Regional Chorale, Texarkana College Choir, Shreveport Chorale, Jane Redding & Lawrence Harris** guest soloists, all on stage - this is going to be the performance of the year in Texarkana. Don't miss it, and make sure to bring a friend (or two!). See you all on March 18 for a great Season **Finale!**

Marc-André Bougie

Music Director

Texarkana Symphony Orchestra

Perot Theatre Box Office: 903.792.4992
Monday - Friday: 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

CONCERT PREVIEW 6:45
BEFORE EVERY CONCERT

Marc-André Bougie will introduce each concert with an informative talk the whole family will enjoy.

VIVA OPERA!

March 18, 2008 - 7:30 P.M.

Featuring Soprano Jane Redding,
Baritone Lawrence Harris, and Regional Choruses

JANE REDDING, Soprano



Hailed for her dazzling virtuosity and charismatic charm, American soprano Jane Redding continues to amaze audiences and critics alike with her near-flawless musicianship, thrilling high notes, and wide-ranging versatility. Engagements for Ms. Redding during the 2006-07 season include the title role in *Lucia De Lammermoor* with New Orleans Opera; Gilda in *Rigoletto* with Opera Southwest; Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Des Moines Metro Opera; Musetta in *La Boheme* with San Antonio Opera; and a return to Virginia Opera as Poppa in Handel's *Agrippina*. Concert engagements during the 2006-07 season include the *Brahms Requiem* with the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra; *Carmina Burana* with both the Hartford Symphony and the Shreveport Symphony; Bach's *Cantata No. 51* with the Pensacola Symphony; and an Opera Concert with the Buffalo Philharmonic. Upcoming engagements during the 2007-08 season will include Violetta in *La Traviata* with the Mobile Opera, Pamina in *The Magic Flute* with Pensacola Opera, and Yum-Yum in *The Mikado* with Nevada Opera. Concert engagements during the 2007-08 season will include an *Opera Gala* featuring excerpts from *La Traviata* with the Texarkana Symphony Orchestra.



LAWRENCE HARRIS, Baritone

Baritone Lawrence Harris hailed by The New York Times critic Bernard Holland as a "major voice" is widely praised as "a singer with incredible dramatic intensity and enormous versatility".

The 2006-7 season debuts include High Priest in *Samson & Delila* with Hawaii Opera, Germont in *La Traviata* with San Antonio Opera, Scarpia in *Tosca* with Opera East Texas, Lebrecht in David DiChiera's *Cyrano* with Michigan Opera Theatre, King Melchior in *Amahl & The Night Visitors*, as well as his Lincoln Center debut as the Burgomaster in Victor Herbert's *The Red Mill*. Mr. Harris bowed again as Scarpia in *Tosca* at Philadelphia's Kimmel Center. He was also a featured artist in an online interview with Opera Online.

In 2004, Mr. Harris made his baritone debut in the

title role of *Rigoletto* at Philadelphia's Kimmel Center. The response established Mr. Harris overnight as an important new Verdi baritone. His *Rigoletto* with Connecticut Grand Opera earned him an Opera Online nomination for 2005 Best Leading Male Performance. Critic Paul Joseph Walkoswki of Opera Online praised Mr. Harris portrayal of *Rigoletto* as "truly moving and insightful." Metropolitan Opera tenor Jon Vickers has also praised Mr. Harris as having one of the most beautiful voices in the world. Metropolitan Opera soprano Phyllis Curtin has endorsed him as a significant singer of the Verdi repertoire.

Mr. Harris is also a former professional football player having played with the Houston Oilers, Buffalo Bills and the Toronto Argonauts. He maintains an active schedule with his national outreach program entitled *From Football to Opera*.



TSO Hires Part-time Executive Director

The Board of Directors of the Texarkana Symphony Orchestra is pleased to announce the selection of R. Andrew Clark as its new part-time executive director effective April 1, 2008. Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, and raised in the suburbs of Dallas, TX and St. Louis, MO, Andrew holds the Bachelor of Music in organ performance degree from Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, AR, and the Master of Arts in music history degree from the University of North Texas in Denton, TX. His graduate research was completed at Yale University.

~ continued on page 2

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

PLEASE SEND YOUR COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS TO: REMICAG@AOL.COM. INCLUDE TSO IN THE SUBJECT LINE OF YOUR E-MAIL.



JASON ASHLEY, *Violinist*

We proudly welcome Jason Ashley, who is the first of what we hope to be numerous professional musicians relocating to Texarkana because of the TSO. He moved here last summer in response to an online ad that we had placed in collaboration with two of our school districts, seeking a strings teacher and a TSO musician. He said the ad appealed to all of his interests: playing professionally and teaching, and particularly teaching and serving as a role model to some underprivileged and minority students. He teaches at North Heights Junior High, Spring Lake Park Elementary, where he initiated a strings program, and Texarkana College.

Born in Hamilton, Ohio, Jason grew up on a farm there and went to college in Hartford, Connecticut. He began violin lessons at age 3 in a Suzuki program and credits his parents with instilling the discipline required to get him to the point that he enjoyed practicing without their encouragement.

After college, he played professionally and taught in schools, where he discovered his passion for teaching. He recognized that he would be a better teacher with a Masters Degree and earned that at Illinois State University in Bloomington-Normal. For several summers, he has directed the strings program at French Woods Performing Arts Camp in New York's Catskills. He has played his violin all over the country and world, touring with several orchestras, opera companies, Andrea Bocelli, and *The Producers* Broadway musical.

Some of Jason's favorite composers are Mendelssohn, Smetana, and John Corigliano, who is still living. His favorite work may be the Saint-Saëns *Organ Symphony*. By no means a classical music snob, Jason also loves playing trumpet in big jazz bands. Non-musical interests include martial arts, being in nature, collecting antiques, and traveling, particularly in New England, specifically the Green Mountains of Vermont.

Jason's goal is to help stabilize strings teaching in Texarkana schools. Very committed to "his kids," he fears that they may be left without further instruction as they move into the high schools, which currently offer no strings programs. He gets goose bumps talking about how students "find themselves" learning to play strings, developing pride, confidence, musical and mental stamina, and opening their minds to unlimited possibilities besides sports and video games. His dream is to continue doing everything he is right now, and, in addition, form a string quartet, which would tour, record, and attract more students and professional musicians to our area. Welcome, Jason!

BRAVO! Viva Opera!
concert sponsored in part by:
Dr. George W. English, III

TSO gratefully acknowledges special gifts in *Memory or Honor* of friends and family.

GIFTS IN MEMORY OF...

James E. Davis
Remica and Danny Gray
Sharon A. Reed

GIFTS IN HONOR OF...

- Mr. Ed Bickley**
Anonymous
- Mr. Greg and Rev. Dianne Brown**
Ms. Nancy Lacy
- Dr. John Calhoun**
- R. Andrew Clark**
Anonymous
- Mr. and Mrs. George Crank**
Ms. Nancy Lacy
- Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Crank**
Anonymous
- Mrs. Wanda Davis**
Ms. Nancy Lacy
- Mr. and Mrs. Danny Gray**
Anonymous
- Margaret Harrell**
Pat Abernathy
- William Harris**
Stacy Harris
- Mrs. Jack King**
Ms. Nancy Lacy
- Mrs. Joan King**
- Mrs. Nancy Lacy**
- Mrs. Dolly McGinnis**
- Mr. and Mrs. Rob McGinnis**
- Mr. and Mrs. Josh Morriss**
- Mrs. June Owen**
- Dr. and Mrs. Ernest Poulos**
- Mrs. Rosie Sanderson**
Anonymous
- Nancy and Howard Spry**
Mary Beth and Jim Spry
- Dr. and Mrs. William Tompkins**
Ms. Nancy Lacy

(as of February 2008)

GRAND
Presenting Sponsor



Viva OPERA! Concert Repertoire

Act I
Overture to La gazza laddra, by **Rossini**
Una voce poco fa, by **Rossini**
Zingarelle Chorus, by **Verdi**
Anvil Chorus, by **Verdi**
Cortegiani, vil razza danata, by **Verdi**
Intermezzo from I Pagliacci, by **Leoncavallo**
Te Deum from Tosca, by **Puccini**

Act II
Overture to La forza del destino, by **Verdi**
O mio babbino caro, by **Puccini**
Humming Chorus, by **Puccini**
Duet from Traviata, by **Verdi**
Gloria all'Egitto, Grand March, & Vieni from Aida, by **Verdi**

~ continued from page 1

Andrew has over 10 years experience as a professional musician, educator and community arts volunteer – seven of those years serving the Texarkana community as the first full-time Director of Music Ministries and Organist at First Presbyterian Church, as an adjunct instructor of music at Texarkana College, as president of the Texarkana Regional Chorale Board of Directors, and as manager of the Sing for the Cure project, a collaborative concert production with the Chorale, Shreveport Symphony Orchestra and Texarkana Regional Arts and Humanities Council. Most recently working as a church music director in Dalton, GA, Andrew has provided leadership in establishing, organizing and funding fine arts presentations to the community including groups such as the Chattanooga Bach Choir and Orchestra and the Cornerstone Chorale and Brass. While pursuing a doctoral degree at a near-by university, Andrew will be serving TSO in the areas of long-range planning, fundraising and development, marketing and administration.

**Engaging the
community in on-going,
active learning in the arts...**

In conjunction with this concert, Mr. Harris will present two in-school student programs entitled *From Football to Opera*, and Ms. Redding will conduct a master class for vocal students. These presentations are supported by TSO and the Junior League of Texarkana.

SYMPHONY TICKETS NOW
AVAILABLE ON-LINE @
www.texarkanasymphony.org
or call 903-792-4992.
or visit the Perot Theatre Box Office at
221 Main Street, Texarkana, Texas

March 18, 2008 at 7:30 p.m.



MARC-ANDRÉ BOUGIE, MUSIC DIRECTOR

421 Hickory Street • Texarkana, Arkansas 71854
Symphony
Texarkana
Orchestra

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TEXARKANA, TX
PERMIT NO. 93