

3-6-2017

UNI Opera Presents: Night & Dreams, March 6-7, 2017 [program]

University of Northern Iowa

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Recommended Citation

University of Northern Iowa, "UNI Opera Presents: Night & Dreams, March 6-7, 2017 [program]" (2017).
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School of Music
University of Northern Iowa

UNI OPERA PRESENTS

Night & Dreams

OPERA SHOWCASE
SPRING 2017

MARCH 6-7, 2017
BENGTSON AUDITORIUM
RUSSELL HALL
7:30 PM

FREE ADMISSION



A Note from the Directors:

Thank you for your support of UNI Opera – we have had a fabulous year with even more to come! From last fall's productions of "Signor Deluso" and "L'enfant et les sortilèges," outreach performances, a faculty/student presentation at the National Opera Association Conference in Santa Barbara, an opera "exchange" with the University of Missouri, to tonight's scenes program, UNI Opera offers our students an exciting variety of performing and learning experiences. I couldn't be more proud of their achievements, including the work of student director Alexandra Saulsbury which is featured on tonight's program. I also invite you to our "Death By Aria!" fundraiser held on April 24 where you will hear the amazing talents of UNI Opera ensemble members in a dazzling array of arias and ensembles from some of the world's most famous operas! Tickets are available at any UNI box office and online. Don't miss it!

Tonight's showcase includes eight scenes primarily from the Romantic era, as well as two Classical era pieces from "rivals" and contemporaries Mozart and Salieri. Our theme tonight is "Night and Dreams." Several of our scenes take place at night (with two literally taking place in the dark, a somewhat peculiar operatic convention which usually leads to mistaken identities and misunderstandings), and the others involve yearning for something different. The Salieri is about neither of these things, but instead is placed in the middle of the program taking the role for which it was originally intended: that of a comedic "intermezzo" to break up larger dramatic works. Sets and costumes are purposely at a minimum, as our pedagogical goal for the students this semester was to have them focus on expressive singing and the creation of and commitment to character. I would like to extend my thanks to Professor Mark Bilyeu who is serving as coach and conductor this semester while Dr. Korey Barrett is on sabbatical, and to Professor Matt Weedman who told me this is the biggest fight he has ever choreographed! Enjoy the show!

Mitra Sadeghpour
Director of UNI Opera
opera.uni.edu

Antonio Salieri, though well-known in his time as a successful music teacher and prolific composer, is rarely performed today. As a fan of the movie *Amadeus*, I was thrilled to stumble upon "Little Harlequinade," a short comedy intermezzo from Salieri's larger dramatic work *Axur, re d'Ormus* (though I have since learned that it is unlikely that Salieri murdered Mozart. Sorry, movie buffs).

(Directors Notes continued)

I picked this piece because I wanted to share some of Salieri's truly delightful and tuneful legacy with a modern audience, and because I was instantly fascinated with the *commedia dell'arte* tradition of its subject matter. *Commedia dell'arte* is a form of improvised comedy performed by traveling players originating in 16th–18th century Italy, based on a cache of stock characters. I decided this would be the perfect kind of story for our scenes program, as I could stage it as a travelling troupe of actors barging in on our program and staging a scene of their own.

MaKayla, Sam, and Aaron have been such a joy to work with and always eager to try my crazy ideas. I owe many thanks to them, and to Dr. Mitra Sadeghpour, Professor Mark Bilyeu, James Jenkins, Gretchen Koinzan, Dr. John Vallentine, and the rest of the UNI Opera team and UNI School of Music for being so amazing and supportive of my efforts as a student director. I hope you enjoy "Little Harlequinade" and the rest of our wonderful scenes program, and remember: "If you like Salieri and our performance too, applause is customary!"

Alexandra Saulsbury
Director, "Little Harlequinade"

SAVE THE DATE:
MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2017:
Death By Aria!

UNI Opera Presents:
OPERA SHOWCASE 2017: NIGHT AND DREAMS

Monday, March 6 and Tuesday, March 7, 2017
Bengtson Auditorium, Russell Hall

Directed by Mitra Sadeghpour
Music Direction by Mark Bilyeu

Hänsel und Gretel (1893) Engelbert Humperdinck (1854-1921)
Act I, sc. i: "Susy, little Susy...Brother dance a step or two"

Gretel: Hannah Sealock
Hänsel: Elizabeth Paull
Pianist: James Jenkins
Choreography by Julie Tucker and Jamie Crispin

Hansel and Gretel are at home, waiting for their mother to return and working at their chores of sewing and broom-making. Hansel is bored, and both children are hungry. To entertain her brother, who is getting more and more restless and threatens to eat the only food in the house, Gretel teaches him a dance. They then run off into the forest and are soon lost....

La finta giardiniera (1775) Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
Act II, Finale: "In the darkness and shadows"

Sandrina: Haley Steele
Count Belfiore: Blair Remmers
Don Anchise, the Podestà: Luke Fosselman
Arminda: Athena Walton
Ramiro: Nicole Lengemann
Serpetta: Kelly Behling
Nardo: Adrian Horras
Pianist: Mariya Akhadjanova

The plot of Mozart's "The False Gardener," a dramma giocoso in three acts, is complicated and nearly impossible to summarize in one paragraph. Suffice to say, Sandrina and the Count were lovers until the Count stabbed her in a fit of jealousy and assumed her dead. Miraculously surviving, she and her servant, Nardo, take on new lives as gardeners and work in hiding at the estate of the Podestà. The Podestà falls in love with Sandrina, but Serpetta, the maid, loves the Podestà. Meanwhile, Nardo falls in love with Serpetta, and the Podestà's

niece, Arminda, is betrothed to the Count but is loved by the teenager, Ramiro. The Count is confused to see Sandrina, (who won't confess her true identity). Arminda and Serpetta plot to abandon Sandrina in a wild forest at night, but Nardo goes to rescue her, followed by the entire cast. Our scene begins here. In the darkness, there are mistaken identities as hopes of love are quickly gained and then lost. Sandrina and the Count lapse into a delirium amid the confusion as the others watch with differing levels of concern and horror.

***I Capuleti e i Montecchi* (1830) Vincenzo Bellini (1801-1835)**
Act I, sc. vi: "Ah! Mia Giulietta!"

Romeo: Megan Grey
Giulietta: Emily Secor
Lorenzo: Mike Sandmeyer
Pianist: James Jenkins

Thirteenth-century Verona: In Bellini's telling of the tragic tale of Romeo and Juliet, the Guelphs and Ghibellines are on the verge of war. Capulet refuses a pact for peace, to be sealed by the marriage of his daughter Giulietta with Romeo, and instead decrees that Giulietta should be married immediately to Tebaldo, a loyal supporter of the Capulet family. The family doctor Lorenzo has just told Giulietta of her father's decision, and Romeo arrives to persuade her to elope with him. She is torn between duty to her father and love for Romeo, but when she hears wedding festival music, she urges Romeo to leave.

***Adriana Lecouvreur* (1902) Francesco Cilèa (1866-1950)**
Act II: "Non rispondi"

Adriana Lecouvreur: Rachel Storie
La Principessa di Bouillon: Kayla Schmitz
Pianist: James Jenkins

Paris, 1730: Adriana Lecouvreur, an actress at the Comédie Française, and the Princess, are both in love with Maurizio. In a villa owned by her husband, the Princess has just had an assignation with Maurizio, the Count of Saxony, when her husband returns with a crowd of guests, including Adriana. The Princess hides in an interior room as Maurizio goes out to join the party. As he leaves, he gives her a posy of violets to calm her. In a twist that will ultimately prove fatal, Adriana had given him those flowers earlier in the evening as a token of her love. This duet scene begins when Adriana, at Maurizio's request, comes to the room and gives the Princess a key so that she can escape through the garden under the cover of darkness. The room is dim, and neither knows the identity of the other. However, each suspects the other of being a rival for Maurizio's love. As the women attempt to learn more about each other's motives, the party grows louder. Adriana calls for lights to be brought into the room, and the Princess flees through a secret exit.

Little Harlequinade (1788)* **Antonio Salieri (1750-1825)*

Directed by Alexandra Saulsbury
Columbine: MaKayla McDonald
Harlequin: Sam Coon
Brighella: Aaron DeSantiago
Theatre-goers: The Ensemble
Pianist: James Jenkins

... and now for something completely different. UNI Opera has been putting on a perfectly lovely and highly-successful scenes program – that is, until three hooligans arrive and literally steal the show! Sly and clever Columbine, starry-eyed Harlequin, and calculating Brighella make fast work of momentarily disrupting the regularly-programmed scenes in order to put on their own play. However, what’s a traveling theatre troupe without some drama? Every time the players stop in a new town to put on a show, Harlequin and Brighella demand that Columbine make up her mind about whom she loves – and today is no different. To amuse herself, she usually plays along, but now she’s had enough and is ready to teach them a lesson. Columbine offers the amorous actors a chance to draw tickets for her heart, and they eagerly accept. As they lose themselves in romantic reverie, Columbine secretly disguises herself as a much older woman (with some pretty sick dance moves.) Harlequin and Brighella are less than enthused about accepting the tickets from a slightly wrinklier Columbine and rebuff her, but quickly feel the error of their ways. There are no hard feelings, and the three joyfully sum up the moral of the day's events to an audience of (mostly) welcoming characters from other scenes throughout the program.

Hänsel und Gretel (1893)* **Engelbert Humperdinck (1854-1921)*
Act II, sc. ii. “I Shut the Children’s Peepers...When at Night I Go to Sleep”

Sand-man: Taylor Else
Gretel: Siena Fah
Hänsel: Maddy Langlitz
Angels: Members of the Ensemble, Genavieve and Michaella Koinzan,
and Friends of UNI Opera
Pianist: James Jenkins

Hansel and Gretel have been in the woods gathering strawberries when they realize they are lost as night falls. They become frightened, and the Sandman appears to sprinkle sand in their eyes and help them fall asleep. The children kneel for their evening prayer as the stars shine above them, and fourteen angels appear to watch over them through the night.

Suor Angelica (1918)Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)
Duet: "Il Principe Gualtiero vostro padre"

Suor Angelica: Kelly Noltner
La Zia Principessa: Leia Lensing
Pianist: Mariya Akhadjanova

A convent in late 17th-century Italy. Sister Angelica has spent seven unhappy years in the convent with no news of her family. In this chilling scene, Angelica's aunt, the Principessa, has come to see her for the first time. The Principessa greets her very coldly, and then asks her to sign away her inheritance to her younger sister so that she can marry. Angelica begs for compassion, and the details of her life prior to convent emerge. Angelica is overwhelmed by what her aunt has told her, and weeping, signs the document. Her aunt leaves without a word.

Carmen (1875)Georges Bizet (1838-1875)
Act I, no. 4: "La cloche a sonné; nous, des ouvrières"
Act I, no. 8: "Au secours! N'entendez-vous pas"

Zuniga: Corey Spiess
Guard: Carlos Cortes-Ortiz
Cigarette girls, soldiers, and loiterers:
Kelly Behling, Taylor Else, Siena Fah, MaKayla McDonald, Kelly Noltner, Alexandra Saulsbury, Hannah Sealock, Emily Secor, Haley Steele, Samantha Stevens, Rachel Storlie, Blair DeBolt, Megan Grey, Maddy Langlitz, Nicole Lengemann, Leia Lensing, Elizabeth Paull, Kayla Schmitz, Athena Walton, Sam Coon, Carlos Cortes-Ortiz, Aaron DeSantiago, Luke Fosselman, Blair Remmers, Corey Spiess, Adrian Horras, Mike Sandmeyer, Tommy Truelsen

Pianist: Mariya Akhadjanova
Fight choreography: Matt Weedman

At the cigarette factory in Seville, the factory bell sounds and the cigarette girls come outside to take their break. Their arrival delights the men who wait for them every day at break time. Break is over all too soon, and the factory bell summons the women back inside to work.

The women suddenly rush out of the factory, arguing about a fight between the gypsy Carmen and another worker. The women are split in their allegiances to the two fighters, and the ranking officer Zuniga is unable to control their frustration and anger or discern who started the fight. The stage quickly dissolves into an all-out brawl that only ends when the guard fires his gun into the air.

PRODUCTION PERSONNEL

Stage and Artistic DirectorMitra Sadeghpour
Music Director and ConductorMark Bilyeu
Production Stage ManagerGretchen Koinzan
Rehearsal PianistsMariya Akhadjanova and James Jenkins
Stage Director for "Little Harlequinade"Alexandra Saulsbury
Scenic Designer and Technical Director Alex Westrum
Lighting Designer and Light Board Operator Chris Tuzicka
Costume DesignerDanielle Mason
Props DesignerGretchen Koinzan
Supertitle Designer Kelly Behling
Sound Design, Technical AssistantShawn Poellet
Supertitle Operator Casey Chlapek
Fight ChoreographyMatt Weedman
ChoreographersJulie Tucker and Jamie Crispin
Poster Design Reilly Stratton
ProgramCaroline Francis
Paint CrewThe Ensemble
Opera Graduate Assistants Kelly Behling, MaKayla McDonald,
Blair Remmers, and Kayla Schmitz
Voice FacultyJeffrey Brich, John Hines, Jean McDonald,
Michelle Monroe, Katherine Osborne, Mitra Sadeghpour
Director, School of Music John Vallentine

SPECIAL THANKS:

Dean Fritch, Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center, Steve Carignan, Sandy Nordahl, Chuck Pugh and crew, Tom Barry,

Mandy Masmar, UNI Dance Program, UNI Theatre Department, Ron Koinzan, Haley Steele, Tammy Hook, UNI School of Music, Dr. Korey Barrett

2016-2017 UNI Opera Donors: Dallas and Jacqueline Bryant, Anonymous, Mark Grey, Margaret Sadeghpour-Kramer, Joan and Andrew Ackerman, Russell Campbell, Joel and Linda Haack, Gloria and Kenneth Workman

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