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The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago
“Rising Stars in Concert”
to close spectacular 2007-08 season on Saturday, April 5, at 7:30 p.m.

Ensemble members of **The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago** will conclude an extraordinarily successful year of study and performance with the end-of-season **Rising Stars in Concert** for Lyric Opera donors Saturday, April 5, at 7:30 p.m. in the Ardis Krainik Theatre of the Civic Opera House.

Tickets for this concert are a benefit available only to Lyric Opera donors of \$50 and above. It is not open to the public.

Andriana Chuchman, Marjorie Owens, and Amber Wagner (sopranos), **Elizabeth De Shong** (mezzo-soprano), **Meredith Arwady** (contralto), **Bryan Griffin, Edward Mout, and David Portillo** (tenors), **Daniel Billings and Phillip Dothard** (baritones), and **Paul Corona and Darren Stokes** (bass-baritones) will perform selections from operas by Bizet, Massenet, Mozart, Richard Strauss, Verdi, and others. The singers will be accompanied by members of the Lyric Opera Orchestra, conducted by **Eugene Kohn**.

Baritone **Jordan Shanahan**, also a member of the 2007-08 ensemble, will not perform in the April 5 concert, as he is in rehearsals for *Satyagraha* at the Metropolitan Opera.

Rising Stars in Concert is generously sponsored by **Accenture, Accretive Health, Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust, Miriam U. Hoover, Howard Family Foundation, and the Chauncey and Marion D. McCormick Family Foundation**, with additional support from **The Lester S. Abelson Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Allan Drebin, and Molex Incorporated**.

Eugene Kohn has conducted performances at the Metropolitan Opera, Washington National Opera, Vienna Staatsoper, Hamburg Staatsoper, Berlin Staatsoper Unter den Linden, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona. Former principal guest conductor of the Bonn Opera, Kohn was music director of the Puerto Rico Symphony from 1994 to 2002 and has had symphonic engagements throughout Europe and South America. His audio and video recordings include collaborations with Plácido Domingo, Roberto Alagna, Neil Shicoff, and Thomas Hampson.

Several 2007-08 Ryan Opera Center ensemble members sang critically acclaimed principal and supporting roles during Lyric Opera of Chicago's 53rd season, which ended March 30. These included:

- ***La traviata***: **Marjorie Owens** (Annina), **Amber Wagner** (Annina, Jan. 14), **Edward Mout** (Giuseppe), **David Portillo** (Gastone), **Phillip Dothard** (Marquis), **Jordan Shanahan** (Commissioner), **Paul Corona** (Dr. Grenvil)
- ***La bohème***: **Edward Mout** (Parpignol), **Jordan Shanahan** (Custom Officer), **Paul Corona** (Sergeant)
- ***Giulio Cesare***: **Darren Stokes** (Curio)
- ***Die Frau ohne Schatten***: **Marjorie Owens** (Unborn Child), **Andriana Chuchman** (Servant/Unborn Child), **Amber Wagner** (Unborn Child), **Elizabeth De Shong** (Servant/Unborn Child), **Meredith Arwady** (Voice from Above/Unborn Child), **Bryan Griffin** (Apparition of Young Man), **Phillip Dothard** (Nightwatchman), **Daniel Billings** (Nightwatchman), **Paul Corona** (Nightwatchman)
- ***Doctor Atomic***: **Meredith Arwady** (Pasqualita), **Darren Stokes** (General Groves, Jan. 5)
- ***Falstaff***: **Elizabeth De Shong** (Meg Page), **Meredith Arwady** (Dame Quickly), **Bryan Griffin** (Fenton), **Paul Corona** (Pistola, Feb. 9)
- ***The Barber of Seville***: **Phillip Dothard** (Figaro, Mar. 6, 9), **Edward Mout** (Count Almaviva, Mar. 9), **David Portillo** (Sergeant), **Daniel Billings** (Fiorello)
- ***Eugene Onegin***: **Daniel Billings** (Captain), **Darren Stokes** (Zaretsky), **Meredith Arwady** (Filipyevna, Mar. 1)
- ***The Barber of Seville*/student matinees**: **Phillip Dothard** (Figaro), **Elizabeth De Shong** (Rosina), **Edward Mout** (Count Almaviva), **Darren Stokes** (Basilio), **Amber Wagner** (Berta), **David Portillo** (Sergeant), **Daniel Billings** (Fiorello)

Ensemble members also served as understudies for major and minor roles throughout the season.

Of the 13 singers in the 2007-08 ensemble, six will return to the program for 2008-09 after a brief hiatus: sopranos **Andriana Chuchman** and **Amber Wagner**, tenors **Edward Mout** and **David Portillo**, baritone **Daniel Billings**, and bass-baritone **Paul Corona**. Seven new ensemble members will join them: soprano **Angela Mannino**, mezzo-sopranos **Kathryn Leemhuis** and **Katherine Lerner**, tenor **Ryan Smith**, baritone **Corey Crider**, and bass-baritones **Sam Handley** and **Craig Irvin**.

Mannino has performed with her hometown company, New Orleans Opera, and as an apprentice artist with Santa Fe Opera and Central City Opera. **Leemhuis**, a native of Columbus, Ohio, has appeared at the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, Tanglewood Music Center, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, and in recital at Carnegie Hall. **Lerner** has performed with Opera Theatre of St. Louis and the Chautauqua Institution, and as a soloist with the Cleveland Orchestra and at the Kennedy Center. **Smith** was a Grand Finals winner in the 2007 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and has performed at the Metropolitan Opera, Santa Fe Opera, and Atlanta Opera. **Crider** has performed with Glimmerglass Opera, Florida Grand Opera, the opera companies of Omaha, Nashville, Dayton, and Aspen, and with the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra and Symphony, Lexington Philharmonic, and Kentucky Symphony. **Handley** is a former member of the young-artist programs of San Francisco Opera and Santa Fe Opera, has performed with the Houston, National, Santa Fe, and Nashville symphonies, and has recorded with Peter Schickele (P.D.Q. Bach). **Irvin**, an Iowa native, has sung with the opera companies of Orlando, Naples, Des Moines, Augusta, and Knoxville.

Currently scheduled upcoming engagements for departing members of the 2007-08 ensemble include the following:

Marjorie Owens: *Ariadne/Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Giulietta/Verdi's Un giorno di regno*, recital, Wolf Trap Opera Company; soprano soloist, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*, *Mimì/La bohème* and *Leonore/Fidelio* (excerpts), National Symphony. **Elizabeth De Shong:** *Ruggiero/Alcina* and *Composer/Ariadne auf Naxos*, Wolf Trap Opera Company; alto soloist, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*, National Symphony; *Hansel/Hansel and Gretel*, Glyndebourne Festival Opera tour; *Hermia/Britten's A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Canadian Opera Company. **Meredith Arwady:** *Mahler Symphony No. 2*, Houston Symphony; *Pasqualita/Doctor Atomic*, Metropolitan Opera (debut); *Ulrica/Un ballo in maschera*, Oper Frankfurt; *Myrtle Bagot/Previn's Brief Encounter* (world premiere), Houston Grand Opera (debut). **Bryan Griffin:** tenor soloist/*Les Noces*, New York City Ballet. **Phillip Dothard:** Recital, University of Illinois Chicago; *Figaro/The Barber of Seville*, Southern Illinois Music Festival; *Falke/Die Fledermaus*, Music by the Lake, Lake Geneva, WI.

Jordan Shanahan: understudy/*Satyagraha*, Metropolitan Opera. **Darren Stokes:** *Marquis/Verdi's La forza del destino*, Cincinnati May Festival; *Calkas/Walton's Troilus & Cressida*/Opera Theatre of Saint Louis; baritone solo/*Rachmaninoff's The Bells Opus 35*, Grant Park Music Festival; *Ferrando/Il trovatore*, Indianapolis Opera; *Undertaker/Porgy and Bess*, Lyric Opera of Chicago.

The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago (previously known as the Lyric Opera Center for American Artists) was established in 1974 as the professional artist-development program for Lyric Opera of Chicago. Since its inception, the Ryan Opera Center has been recognized as one of the premier programs of its kind in the world. That standing is maintained by providing the finest up-and-coming singers with unparalleled training and experience. Gianna Rolandi is director of the Ryan Opera Center, and Dan Novak is manager.

Selected from some 400 singers who audition annually, the Ryan Opera Center ensemble members are in residence for twelve months. Over the course of the year they receive advanced instruction in numerous aspects of operatic performance, including voice lessons and coachings, language and acting training, and master classes with some of opera's most renowned artists, including Sir Thomas Allen, Marilyn Horne, Renata Scotto, Frank Lopardo, Dolora Zajick, Joyce DiDonato, and several others.

Ryan Opera Center members gain valuable performing experience by participating in recitals and concerts at many Chicago-area venues. During Lyric Opera's mainstage season, they perform and understudy roles at all levels. This presents an extraordinary opportunity to work with the world's greatest opera singers, conductors, directors, orchestra, and chorus.

A testament to the Ryan Opera Center's caliber and success is the roster of distinguished alumni who perform regularly on the stages of leading international opera houses. It includes Harolyn Blackwell, Nicole Cabell, David Cangelosi, Mark S. Doss, Jennifer Dudley, Christopher Feigum, Elizabeth Futral, Donald Kaasch, Joseph Kaiser, Maria Kanyova, Kathleen Kuhlmann, Gregory Kunde, Dina Kuznetsova, Cynthia Lawrence, Gary Lehman, Emily Magee, Nancy Maultsby, Susanna Phillips, Matthew Polenzani, Robynne Redmon, Patricia Risley, Erin Wall, and Guang Yang.

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