OPERA GUILD OF ROCHESTER

Viva Voce

September-October 2026



Cosi fan tutte

Met Live in HD
October 4 - Meet-up at Tinseltown

page 31



Paris

October 4
Pegasus Early Music

page 41



Aida

October 6
Opera at the J

page 18



Adiemus, Songs of Sanctuary

October 30
Rochester Oratorio Society

page 52

Edition Viva Voce

September-October 2026

The Opera Guild of Rochester, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization with a mission to support opera and opera education in the greater Rochester area. Our addresses are P.O. Box 244, Pittsford, NY 14534; info@operaguildofrochester.org

The Guild presents Bravo Nights (free informal opera programs at the Little Café), free opera lectures at local libraries, trips to productions of local and regional opera companies, including the Glimmerglass Festival, the Haskell Rosenberg Memorial Series of DVD presentations in January, and recitals and concerts.

This newsletter is sent via email bi-monthly, currently to about 1,500 subscribers. For a free subscription go to our website and sign up at www.operaguildofrochester.org/subscribe-to-viva-voce

The deadline for submission of articles and event announcements for the next issue is the 5th of the month of publication.

Our website and Facebook pages serve as a resource for local and regional opera, concert, and recital information, with links to other music organizations in our area. Please visit us at Operaguildofrochester.org, at Facebook.com/OperaGuildofRochester, or on Instagram.com/operaguildrochester

Some events are now being recorded.
Click the YouTube logo to visit us there.

Opera Guild of Rochester,
P.O. Box 244, Pittsford, NY 14534

IN THIS ISSUE

Upcoming Events 3
News From Your Opera Guild 4
Volunteer 5
Editor's Corner 5
Donation Campaign 6
Meet-ups at Tinseltown 8
Essays 9
Opera at the J 18
OGR Bravo Nights 20
2026-27 Eastman Opera Theatre Season Preview 21
The Fringe Festival 22
- OGR Chile and Chocolate 22

Buffalo Opera Unlimited 24
Essay: Born Musical 26
The 2026-2027 Season 29
- The Met Live in HD Series 29
- Pegasus Early Music 41
- Buffalo Opera Unlimited 45
- Tri Cities Opera 47
- Canadian Opera Company 51
- Rochester Oratorio Society 52
- Publick Musick 55

Operatunities & Education 57
- Online Opera Education 57
- Opportunities for Singers 58
- Great Operatunities 59

Our Season 2026-2027 60
Holiday Special Notice 61

Upcoming Events

September 15–November 15

Sept 13	Eastman Opera Theatre	Fall Preview	21
Sept 15, 17	Fringe Festival	Kenneth Kam, Lutenist	22
Sept 18, 20	Buffalo Opera Unlimited	Viardot, *Cinderella*	24
Sept 19	Met Live in HD	Gala Celebration Tinseltown meet-up	30
Sept 19	Jessica Best	Pitch!	23
Sept 19, 24	Fringe Festival	Chile and Chocolate	22
Oct 3	Met Live in HD	*Così fan tutti* Tinseltown meet-up	31
Oct 3–18	Canadian Opera	*Così fan tutte*	51
Oct 4	Pegasus Early Music	*Paris*	41
Oct 6	Opera at the JCC	*Aida*	18
Oct 16–18	Tri-Cities Opera	*Hansel and Gretel*	47
Oct 17	Met Live in HD	Verdi's *Macbeth* Tinseltown meet-up	32
Oct 25	Opera Guild of Rochester	Bravo Night	20
Oct 30	Roch. Oratorio Soc.	*Adiemus,* *Songs of Sanctuary*	52
Nov 3	Opera at the JCC	*Madama Butterfly*	19
Nov 14	Met Encore	*Carmen* Tinseltown meet-up	33
Nov 15	Pegasus Early Music	*Sweet Harmony*	42



Ready to board the bus after dinner at the Brewster Inn

News From Your Opera Guild

Our Glimmerglass Trip this year to see *Oklahoma!* on July 27 had a few special features. Artistic and General Director Rob Ainsley dropped by during lunch to thank us for being there and tell us about next season. Then, during intermission, we were invited to the Pavilion to enjoy refreshments with the Glimmerglass Opera Guild, which also generously subsidized our use of the lodge for lunch. It's amazing to realize that the Glimmerglass Festival began with a production in the local high school and has grown to be the internationally known venue it is today! We look forward to next year.

We also anticipate with pleasure seeing you at all the OGR activities of the coming year – Meet-ups, Bravo Nights, Opera at the J, the Holiday Concert, AriaSlams, Beat the Blahs, Lectures and the Annual Recital. We will probably have another trip to Tri-Cities Opera in the spring to see *La Boheme*. Let the season begin!



Lunch at the scenic lodge in the woods

Editor's Corner

This is our first bi-monthly issue - it's a big one because of the 2026-27 Season and the number of essays. Everything's here, from the Eastman Opera Theatre Fall Preview on September 13 to Pegasus *Sweet Harmony* on November 15, and all the OGR activities, Met Live in HD, presentations and particular events in between.

Make sure to watch for your **October 15 email,** which may include more Season information not available for this issue at publication!



Volunteer

Please keep in mind that we are a volunteer organization!

You can enjoy the opportunity to meet and work with other opera fans and help sustain the programs you like. Currently we are looking for an assistant treasurer, event helpers, technical back-up and publicity committee volunteers. For information about these jobs or to speak with us about any volunteer interest, write to info@operaguildofrochester.org and the appropriate person will contact you.



Your donations make possible our programs, mostly free, for opera fans of all ages and tastes.

- **Meet-ups** at Tinseltown before the Met Live in HD performances, with refreshments and conversation.
- **Beat the Blahs** in January: Video presentations of great opera productions; a chance for fans to enjoy opera in a casual setting, with time for refreshments and discussion.
- **Free Lecture/listening Series** in March.
- **Special events** such as the Annual Holiday Concert, Aria Slams!, and Recitals.

And then there is the ***Viva Voce*** magazine you are reading, the **Annual Recital**, and the trip to **Glimmerglass**.

Most importantly, by supporting the Opera Guild you are also supporting the opera companies and singers for whom we provide funds and opportunities for performance, one of our primary missions.

All donors receive an invitation to the Annual Recital for Donors in the spring.



Please donate!

You can do so online

by clicking the donate button

In the mail

OGR, P.O.Box 244
Pittsford, NY, 14534

Donations

As an Amici, your contribution in any amount is greatly appreciated. All donation levels receive an invitation to the Annual Recital. We find ourselves with ample room at the recital; therefore donors may bring guests (with notice).

Chorus: **$65 per person, $95 per couple.**
Comprimario: **$100-$249.**
Primo: **$250-$399.**
Diva: **$400-$549.**
Maestro: **$550-$999.**
Impresario: **$1000 or more.**

You may also mail a check to

Opera Guild of Rochester,
PO Box 244, Pittsford, NY 14534.

Please include an email or other address for your acknowledment.

A Note on Tax Receipts from the President

If you require a formal tax receipt for the IRS, please note “Tax Receipt Required” on your donation.

Donate Online



Meet-ups at Tinseltown!

2291 Buffalo Road, Rochester

Meet-ups are informal gatherings to give people a chance to chat about screenings of opera productions and all things opera. The Guild has reserved the party room at Tinseltown one hour before showtime so opera goers can meet for coffee and conversation beforehand. We'll have light refreshments on hand for all.

The meet-up is free, but you'll need to purchase a ticket to the actual screening.

Very special thanks to our generous donors,
Drs. Margaret and Arnold Matlin,
for underwriting our meet-ups!

Next Meet-ups — *Note New Times*

Sept 19, 12:30 pm — Twenty Years of the Met in Cinemas
Oct 3, 12 pm — *Cosi fan tutte*
October 17, 12 pm — *Macbeth*
November 14, 12:30 — *Carmen* Encore

Meet-ups begin 1 hour before the opera

THUS DO ALL WOMEN

Carol Crocca

I have sometimes wondered why I have never seen this opera advertised primarily by an English translation of its title. Perhaps it's because *Cosi fan tutte*, unless translated awkwardly and incorrectly, as it sometimes is, gives little information about the subject of the opera. It probably implied much more to its 18th century audience, however, because testing a woman's fidelity, or the lack of it, was a subject ad nauseam of opera, fable, literature and the stage in general up to and including that time. The theme goes back to the Roman poet Ovid, the 16th century Italian poet Ariosto, and was also used by Shakespeare, Cervantes, and Boccaccio. This opera was commissioned by the Emperor Joseph of Austria, at whose court Mozart and librettist Da Ponte were employed, and the emperor may also have suggested the theme.



Metropolitan Opera, Macbeth

The title, however, was chosen by Mozart and it came from Act I of The Marriage of Figaro. In that opera, Count Almaviva is relating how, in his recent visit to Barbarina's house, he removed the tablecloth to reveal Cherubino, the randy adolescent, hiding beneath the furniture. As he now lifts the dress covering a chair to illustrate his story - Voila! There is Cherubino hiding again! The music master remarks, "Cosi fan tutte le belle. Non c'e alcuna novita." (Thus do all beautiful women. This is not anything new.") Never mind that it is Cherubino who is caught for the second time. As usual, the women get the blame: Cosi fan tutti gli uomini (men).

It is justly considered a misogynistic theme, but there is a nod to fair play in Despina's remarks to the sisters when she expresses total surprise at the idea that soldiers having gone off to war would be faithful to their sweethearts back home. "Di pasta simile son tutti quanti, " she says, "They are all made of the same stuff."

One prominent characteristic of the opera is the alternation of parodistic and serious treatment of the material. Parody of opera seria was a staple of opera buffa. In the first duet, we meet the sisters mooning over their lovers, and their exaggerated delight in their lovers' charms gives way to a paean to love itself. The parody continues with Dorabella's extremely dramatic response to the news that the men have been called to war. And Fiordiligi's adamant insistence at the beginning of the deception that the women will be like rock in their fidelity merely sets them up for a harder fall from grace later on.

In addition, there are buffa shenanigans in the episode of the mock poisonings, and Dorabella's seduction (in Mozart's seduction key of A major; cf. *Don Giovanni*) with its delightful heartbeat motif. We know that she is the less serious sister of the two, and her new partner, Guglielmo, has not really fallen for her. But being Mozart, the composer is about to engage our more serious emotions. Fiordiligi's "Per pieta" expresses her genuine distress at the crack in her emotional armor occasioned by Ferrando's wooing. Unlike her sister, she intends to do something about it: join her fiancé at the front disguised in one of his uniforms. When Ferrando appears, the music tells us that she genuinely responds to his moving plea. In my favorite version of the opera, we are left in no doubt that they are in sincerely in love. (Director's choice here. If Ferrando immediately runs off to gloat at his triumph with Don Alfonso and Guglielmo in the background, for example, that's another interpretation.)

The sincerity of their feelings makes the subsequent revelations that much more painful and confusing. Despite the philosophic attitude urged by that old Enlightenment paragon Don Alfonso, the school of experience has created some sadder but wiser lovers who are probably not grateful for the lesson. That's why we don't say, "Oh, that cynical Mozart!"

For more about Mozart, see "Mozart's Magic, " "Idomeneo's Vow, " and "Mozart: The Man and the Myth" in the Opera Essays section of the Reading Room at our website.

*Firenze Sera, 15 Marzo, 1847

VERDI AND SHAKESPEARE OPEN IN FLORENCE

Verdi calls Shakespeare "Master of the human heart"

Last evening Maestro Verdi's new opera *Macbeth* opened at the Teatro della Pergola to a libretto by Francesco Piave. The composer said that he is extremely pleased to have set Shakespeare's play, as he has been an admirer of the British dramatist for many years and keeps two well-read translations of his works in the bookcase by his bedside.

Adding that he hoped to work with other plays by Shakespeare in the future, Verdi emphasized that he and his librettist had taken pains to be faithful to the story and the spirit of Shakespeare's masterpiece. Our critic agrees that they have succeeded, and much poetry in the libretto is taken directly from the play.

A few departures have been necessary to fulfill the demands of the opera genre. The enhanced role for Lady *Macbeth* should satisfy any prima donna who undertakes it, and in this case was ably performed by Marianna Barbiere-Nini. (See Madame Barbiere-Nini's comments on the dress rehearsal below.) In fact, Verdi gave us an exclusive insight into his ideas for the future, remarking that in any revision, he would include yet another aria for the Lady in Act II. His working title: "La luce langue."



The Macbeths, Metropolitan Opera

Another departure is a choral scene with Scottish refugees, referred to but not depicted in the play. The chorus, similar to others in Verdi's operas (such as Nabucco's "Va Pensiero"), perhaps serves to remind the audience indirectly of its own desire for a national homeland.

The public received the new work well, despite its departure from the romantic theme of thwarted love now so popular; and despite its supernatural dimension, since witches are not so traditional a part of our folklore in Italy as they are in England.

As to that final dress rehearsal, Madame Barbiere-Nini recounts that the guests were already seated, and she and Felice Varesi, the baritone who sang *Macbeth*, were in costume, when Verdi called them and demanded yet another rehearsal of the Act I duet, in the foyer! {Maestro Verdi is well-known for his meticulous attention to all aspects of the performance, and has even been referred to as the "Bear of Busseto."} Signor Varesi protested that they had already rehearsed the duet at least 150 times. The Maestro replied, "I wouldn't say that again, for within half an hour it will be 151!"

Editor's note: While the "newspaper article" itself is fiction, all is based on fact. Verdi did revise the opera in 1865 for Paris, adding the new aria, and this is the version usually performed now. The incident of the duet rehearsal in the foyer is taken from the prima donna's memoirs.

Carol Crocca, for the Opera Guild of Rochester

This is a slightly edited version of the first "essay" on Met in HD operas I ever wrote, probably about 15 years ago. The format was the whim of the moment.

*Florence Evening newspaper



GEORGES BIZET (1838–1875)

INDEPENDENT BUT TROUBLED SPIRIT

Carol Crocca

The composer of *Carmen* would have had to have a streak of independence, for the opera shocked its audience and the theater management with its free-living heroine and her brutal onstage murder. But Bizet was also extremely self-critical and had difficulty finding his artistic way. Many of his fine compositions were never finished, among them several operas, and others were never performed or staged during his lifetime. Although he enjoyed some moderate successes, such as The Pearl Fishers, he died before knowing what an immense triumph his last opera became.

He was born into a musical family, and was perhaps as great a prodigy as Mozart or Mendelssohn; it is said that he could read and write music at the age of four. It seems his parents hid books from him to encourage his focus on music, and he was admitted to the Paris Conservatory when he was nine. His principal teacher there was the accomplished composer of *La juive,* Fromental Halévy, and he was also mentored by Gounod. He won many prizes as a student, and composed his Symphony in C, which is a popular concert piece today. True to form, however, he declined to have it performed at the time, afraid that it would be criticized as imitative.

In 1857 Bizet won the Prix de Rome, a scholarship for artists founded in 1666 by Louis XIV, which provided living expenses for studying abroad, particularly in Rome. Periodically students had to submit work to the judges. At the end of the first year, he had been asked to render a religious composition, but Bizet was an atheist and rather than be a hypocrite, gave the judges a comic opera instead.

Bizet returned to Paris three years later. Unfortunately, he had to take time away from composing by supporting himself with piano lessons and arranging the orchestral and opera scores of other composers. He called music "a splendid art, but a sad trade."

After several opera failures, he wrote *Les pecheurs de perles* (The Pearl Fishers) in 1863. Bizet had been working on a short comic opera, but abandoned the project when the prestigious commission came from the Theatre Lyrique. He destroyed the score he had been working on

and probably used some of the music in the new opera. It was a moderate success with the public, but many critics hated it. All except Hector Berlioz, perhaps the greatest of them all, who said that Bizet had much talent and a brilliant future. The opera has always been known for the beautiful Act I duet, "Au fond du temple saint" which provides a theme used throughout the opera to signify the effect of Leila the priestess on the friendship of Zurga and Nadir. Again true to form, Bizet considered the opera an "honorable failure."

He failed to complete another opera with an exotic setting, Ivan IV (1865). In 1867, his opera *La jolie fille de Perth* met with praise from the critics, but only a lukewarm reception from the public. Another opera with an exotic Egyptian location, *Djamileh* (1872) was greeted by the critics with accusations of Wagnerism, hardly considered a compliment by the Parisians. But in the period 1870 to 1874, Bizet wrote much of his best and best-known music, including *L'arlesienne* suites. In 1875 came *Carmen*, which established him, together with Berlioz, as one of the greatest 19th century French composers.

The critics did object to *Carmen*, but mostly on moral grounds. It was initially only a modest success, until it reached Vienna a few weeks later and went on to triumph all over the world. Unfortunately, by that time Bizet was dead, having suffered two heart attacks, at age 36. Tchaikovsky was saddened at his death, and predicted that Carmen would become the most popular opera in the world.

Opera at the J

High Notes & High Drama

1-5 pm

JCC of Greater Rochester, 1200 Edgewood Avenue, Rochester
Auditorium B

Refreshments at Intermission

Join us for these opera presentations on the big screen with an introduction by Carol Crocca, docent of the Opera Guild of Rochester. The best productions, with outstanding artists, include these coming this fall:

Verdi's *Aida*

Oct 6

This 1991 Met production, starring Aprile Milo, Placido Domingo, and Sherrill Milnes, is a spectacular presentation of the story of Aida, captured enemy servant to Amneris, who are both in love with Radames, the man who defeated Aida's father in battle. One of the most popular operas in the canon, it is replete with pageantry, drama and, of course, beautiful music.

Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*

Nov 3

A film by Jean-Pierre Ponnell, The Wiener Philharmoniker, Herbert Von Karajan, 1974, with Mirella Freni as Butterfly and Placido Domingo as Pinkerton. Puccini's love of exotic settings led him to compose this affecting tragedy of the naïve Japanese geisha and the irresponsible American naval officer.

Halévy's *La juive*

Dec 1

Jacques Fromental Halevy, libretto by Eugene Scribe, Weiner Staatsoper, 2003. This French Grand Opera was one of the most popular of the 19th century. In this revival, Neil Shicoff, leading American tenor of his generation, brings the character of Eleazer, Jewish father of Rachel (the Jewess of the title), intensely to life, in a dramatic story of conflict, rebellion, oppression and revenge.

Tickets

JCC Members: $6, Non-members: $10

https://jccrochester.org/events/opera-10-26/

Tickets may be purchased at the door, but we appreciate your purchase ahead of time so we know how many people to anticipate. This helps us when setting up the room and ordering snacks!

Opera Guild of Rochester

Bravo Nights

The Little Café, 240 East Avenue

Bravo Nights are **FREE** performances of opera and musical theater selections by talented local singers in an informal setting. They are appreciated by both seasoned opera fans and newcomers who wish to learn about the art form.

Bravo Nights take place at The Little Café, which is located in the Little Theatre at 240 East Avenue. Refreshments may be purchased.

Watch for the 2026-2027 dates in Viva Voce or on the Web site.

Oct 25, 2026 — Young Artists of the Finger Lakes Opera

Feb 8, 2027 — Artists of Roberts Wesleyan University

April 19, 2027 — Artists of the Eastman School of Music



FRIENDS OF Eastman Opera

2026-27 Eastman Opera Theatre Season Preview

Sunday, September 13, 5 pm

Miller Center Atrium (25 Gibbs Street

This year brings three exciting works to the stage:

Candide by Leonard Bernstein

Songs for a New World by Jason Robert Brown

Hänsel und Gretel by Engelbert Humperdinck

Come hear excerpts and get a preview of what's ahead this season. **RSVP** to FEO1995@gmail.com

Chile and Chocolate

Sponsored by the Opera Guild of Rochester

Join mezzo-soprano Mariami Bekauri and pianist Hilda Collins for an operatic performance ideal for chocolate and poetry lovers alike. Celebrate the music of American composers Peter Lieberson and Lee Hoiby with “Neruda Songs, " a setting of the words of Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, and the one-woman opera “Bon Appétit!, " a whimsical musical monologue on Julia Child’s recipe for chocolate cake.



Kenneth Kam

Pluck Yeah! Renaissance & Baroque Hits



September 15, 17 | 7:30 pm

Hochstein school of Music,
Hilda D Taylor Recital Hall

Ticket required

Travel from the courts of the Renaissance to the vibrant streets of Argentina—all in one unforgettable Fringe performance. Guitarist and lutenist Kenneth Kam brings the Renaissance lute and classical guitar to life, weaving early masterpieces together with the fiery passion of tango. From delicate, intimate melodies to driving rhythmic intensity, this concert celebrates the timeless power and expressive range of plucked strings across centuries and continents.

PITCH!



Sat. Sept. 19, 2026 | 14:05 pm

The Little Theatre: Theatre 1

All Ages ASL is available at select performances
60 minutes, Website: Visit

“PITCH!” is a new musical revue based on the true story of Paul and Jane Wargo, told in a reflective style by their granddaughter, performer Jessica Ann Best. "PITCH!" tells the story of Paul, a Rochester Red Wings pitcher from Pennsylvania, who meets and marries the sweet singer and secretary, Jane, after World War II. “PITCH!” brings the “Great American Pastime” and the “Great American Songbook” to life in a beautiful and true love story that leaves an impression on many generations.

BUFFALO OPERA UNLIMITED

Fairy Tale Double Bill

September 18 at 7:00 PM
September 20 at 2:30 PM

Flickinger Performing Arts Center at Nichols School
1250 Amherst Street, Buffalo

Sung in French and English with projected translations
Featuring full orchestra and chorus

Operatic fairy-tale magic for the whole family! Pauline Viardot's *CINDERALLA* (1904) is paired with Michael Ching's new *NOTES ON VIARDOT* (2024) which shines a light on this important composer, performer, and teacher.



FINGER LAKES OPERA

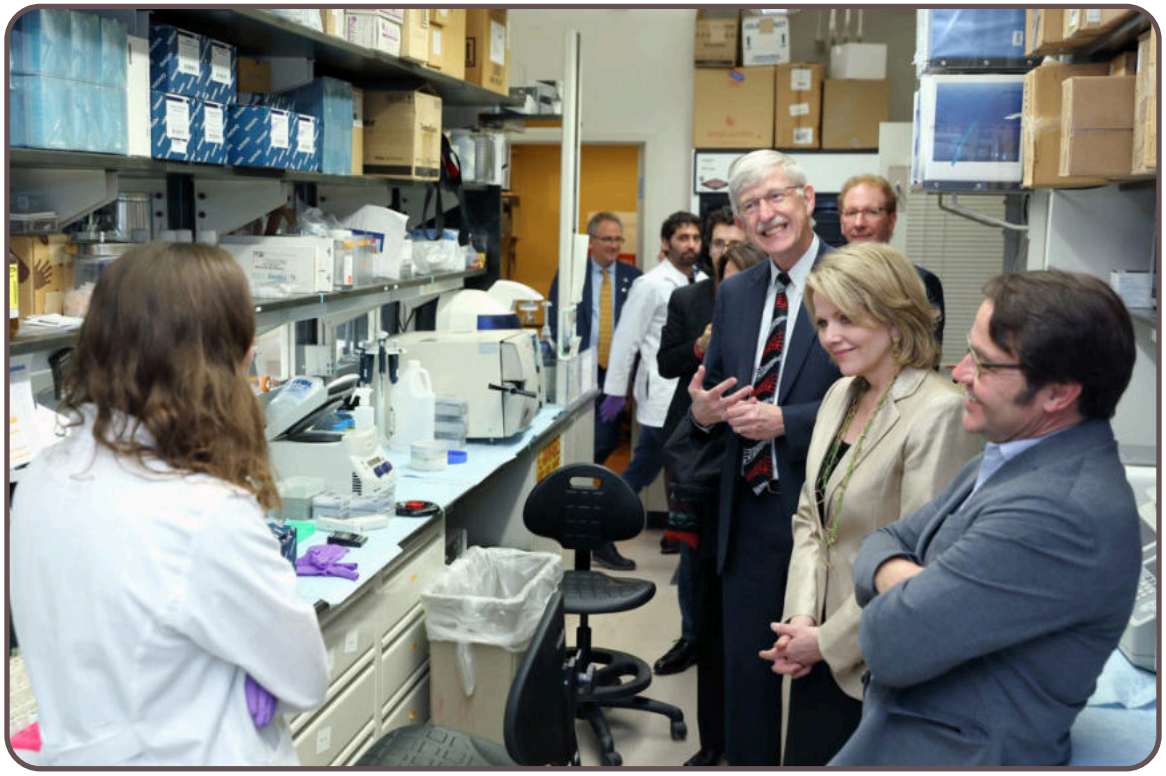
MOZART'S *THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO*

Finger Lakes Opera's 2026 Summer Festival closed on August 9 with a final performance of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro.* There were not one, but *two* interruptions by false fire alarms, and even so, the production was so compelling that everyone who could stayed until the end, which was about an hour later than scheduled..The singing, the staging, the costumes were all superb and transcended the inconvenience beautifully.



THE BIOLOGY OF MUSIC, PART 2

RENEE FLEMING and THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES of HEALTH



With Dr. Francis Collins, Director of the NIH, Renée visits the lab of Dr. John Tisdale, Senior Investigator in Molecular and Clinical Hematology

With Dr. Francis Collins, Director of the NIH, Renée visits the lab of Dr. John Tisdale, Senior Investigator in Molecular and Clinical Hematology

Renée is a leading advocate for the study of the powerful connections between the arts and health. During her tenure as Artistic Advisor to the **John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts,** Renée spearheaded a collaboration with the **National Institutes of Health (NIH),** with the participation of the **National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)**. The ***Sound Health*** initiative explored and brought attention to research and practice at the intersection of music, health, and neuroscience. The collaboration led to

workshops at the NIH, and events and performances at the Kennedy Center. In the wake of this initiative, the NIH awarded $20 million dollars in funding for music and neuroscience research over five years. The **Renée Fleming Foundation** also partnered with the **Foundation for the NIH** to develop a toolkit for standardizing music & health clinical research for brain disorders of aging.

As part of her advocacy, Renée is also Founding Advisor to the recently-launched **NEA/UCSF Sound Health Network** and Co-Chair of the Aspen Institute/Johns Hopkins **NeuroArts Blueprint**, both working to advance the field of arts and health.

How can someone with Alzheimer's be unable to recognize their own spouse, but perfectly recall songs from decades before? Why can some patients with Parkinson's disease, unable to rise from a chair or walk through a doorway, accomplish these tasks, or even dance, to the sound of a musical beat?

Renée is passionate about the central importance of music and the arts in our society. Most of us have, at times, felt moved or comforted by music, but scientists are now discovering that music can teach us a lot about the brain itself. Music engages many neural regions at once, and evidence suggests that it can shape and even alter our brains.

In addition to using music to better understand the complex functioning of the brain, researchers have found creative arts therapy to be effective tools in addressing the effects of an ever-widening array of conditions. Especially compelling is the fact that **music, dance, and art therapies are cost-effective, non-pharmaceutical, and non-invasive**. Many can be administered in group settings, offering benefits for emotional well-being, and through tele-health, increasing accessibility.

With an aging population, the potential implications of this work are immense. And the impact of arts on the developing brains of children is another burgeoning field of study, with effects reaching beyond test results and scholastic aptitude to creativity and success throughout life.

Renee's advocacy has been recognized with the Rosenfeld Award for Impact on Public Opinion, and in 2024, she received the David Mahoney Prize, for individuals who have significantly increased public awareness about brain science and disorders of the nervous system, from Harvard Medical School's Mahoney Neuroscience Institute.

The Renée Fleming Foundation has joined forces with the **NeuroArts Blueprint** initiative to establish the Renée Fleming Neuroarts Investigator Awards. The awards support both basic and applied research that expands the evidence base of the emerging field of neuroarts, the transdisciplinary study of how engaging in artistic activities measurably changes the brain, body, and behavior to improve health and well-being.

These are some of the conditions benefitting from work in the therapeutic and research applications of music:

- Memory disorders (e.g. Alzheimer's, dementia) and creative aging
- Movement disorders (e.g. Parkinson's, MS, stroke)
- Communication disorders (e.g. autism, TBI, stroke)
- Mental health and behavior (e.g. PTSD, depression, ADHD)
- Childhood development
- Chronic pain
- Cardiac and pulmonary health

*This essay is largely taken from Reneefleming.com/advocacy/music-and-the-mind/, which also cites her newly-edited book.

The Met has announced its season for Live in HD transmissions. The dates for these are as listed in *Upcoming Events* and below.

Theaters are AMC Webster, Eastview Regal, and Cinemark Tinseltown in Gates.

There is a free Meet-up before each opera at Tinseltown.

Essays on the operas appear in *Viva Voce* in appropriate months.

English Stream Text captioning is available for the Met's transmission. A transcript of the transmission will also be available to view after the live performance.



Twenty Years of the Met in Cinemas: An Anniversary Celebration

September 19

Two decades of onstage glory as experienced in movie theaters, featuring highlights of more than 185 onscreen performances. Hosted by star soprano Renée Fleming, this special presentation will showcase unforgettable moments from some of opera's greatest stars, culled from the series' transmissions, featuring such remarkable artists as Lise Davidsen, Natalie Dessay, Joyce DiDonato, Elīna Garanča, Dmitri Hvorostovsky, Jonas Kaufmann, Peter Mattei, Matthew Polenzani, Nadine Sierra, and, of course, Fleming herself.



Così fan tutte

October 3

Mozart's satirical comedy of fickle young love, one of the composer's most sublime creations. Phelim McDermott's "colorful, inventive" (The New York Times) staging, inspired by Coney Island in the 1950s, sets the uproarious story at a boardwalk amusement park, where the two pairs of lovers at the heart of the tale find themselves on one emotional—and literal—thrill ride after another. Soprano Federica Lombardi and mezzo-soprano Samantha Hankey sing Fiordiligi and Dorabella, opposite tenor Duke Kim and baritone Andrey Zhilikhovsky as Ferrando and Guglielmo. Bass-baritone Gerald Finley reprises his portrayal of the cynical Don Alfonso, with soprano Ana María Martínez as the witty maid Despina.



Macbeth

October 17

Verdi's take on the immortal Shakespearean tale of the scheming couple determined to seize power at any cost Quinn Kelsey is the Scottish king haunted by the ghosts of his murderous ascent to the throne, opposite Lise Davidsen, as the power-mad Lady Macbeth, whose ruinous ambition damns them both. Met Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin takes the podium for a penetrating production by Louisa Proske, a brilliant young director. Rounding out the all-star cast are tenor Freddie De Tommaso as the heroic Macduff and bass-baritone Ryan Speedo Green as Macbeth's friend-turned-victim Banquo.



Carmen Encore

November 14

Richard Eyre's beloved production of Bizet's masterpiece returns to theaters for a special encore this season, led by mezzo-soprano Elīna Garanča as the title character and tenor Roberto Alagna as Don José in the iconic 2010 Met performance—a fan favorite of The Met: Live in HD series. Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducts.



Samson et Dalila

December 5

Sacred, scandalous, and alluring, Saint-Saëns's drama of the biblical hero of legendary strength and the seductive Philistine whose beauty overpowers him returns in the Met. Featuring a massive orchestra and chorus and some of opera's most spellbinding tunes, this masterpiece of French grand opera is a feast for the eyes and ears. Giacomo Sagripanti conducts mezzo-soprano Aigul Akhmetshina and tenor Clay Hilley.



La Fanciulla del West

January 23

Puccini's exhilarating drama of the Wild West returns in a new staging by celebrated British director Richard Jones. Soprano Vida Miknevičiūtė makes an important Met debut as the larger-than-life Minnie, the tough tavern owner with a heart of gold who finds love when she least expects it. Tenor SeokJong Baek is the dashing bandit who rambles into the remote California mining town to steal her heart, opposite baritone Christopher Maltman as the lawman determined to deliver rough justice—and win Minnie for himself. Maestro Keri-Lynn Wilson takes the podium to conduct one of opera's most action-packed adventures.



Silent Night

March 20

Composer Kevin Puts returns to the Met with his Pulitzer Prize–winning first opera, inspired by the true events of the 1914 Christmas truce, when soldiers spontaneously set aside the horrors of the First World War and crossed the trenches to mingle, exchange gifts, and sing carols with the enemy. With a libretto by Mark Campbell based on the film *Joyeux Noël*, the opera has been widely acclaimed and receives an evocative staging by James Robinson that takes the audience directly to the battlefields of the Western Front. The cast, featuring soprano Elza van den Heever and tenors Ben Bliss and Rolando Villazón, is conducted by debuting maestro Dalia Stasevska.



Manon

April 3

Following her radiant performance in Gounod's Roméo et Juliette, superstar soprano Nadine Sierra takes on another alluring French heroine, the irresistible title character of Massenet's passionate drama. Leading tenor Matthew Polenzani is her idealistic lover, the Chevalier des Grieux, with rising-star baritone Andrzej Filończyk as her stalwart cousin, Lescaut, in a breathtaking Belle Époque staging by director Laurent Pelly.



Otello

April 24

One of today's leading dramatic tenors, Brian Jagde takes on the tour-de-force title role of what many consider the ultimate Italian opera. Verdi's monumental Shakespearean tragedy also features soprano Ailyn Pérez in her company role debut as the long-suffering Desdemona, with baritone Artur Ruciński as the sinister Iago. Michele Mariotti leads the full forces of the Met Orchestra and Chorus in the exhilarating score.



Tosca Encore

May 8

In this special encore presentation, soprano Lise Davidsen sings the title role of Puccini's ultimate diva, opposite tenor Freddie De Tommaso as Cavaradossi and baritone Quinn Kelsey as Scarpia, in the acclaimed 2024 Met performance of David McVicar's thrilling production. Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducts.



Parsifal

June 5

A profound philosophical meditation on compassion and reconciliation, this transcendent rendering of a medieval knight's heroic quest for the Holy Grail returns to the big screen in François Girard's celebrated production, a "thoughtful and intrepid staging, full of striking imagery" (The New York Times). Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducts a cast of Wagnerian superstars, including tenor Piotr Beczała in the title role, mezzo-soprano Elīna Garanča as the enigmatic Kundry, baritone Peter Mattei as the ailing Amfortas, bass-baritone Ryan Speedo Green as the sorcerer Klingsor, and bass Jongmin Park as the wise Gurnemanz.

Pegasus early music

All concerts take place at 4 pm

Downtown United Presbyterian Church
121 N. Fitzhugh Street, Rochester, NY 14614.

Free parking is available in the lot across the street.
The church is ADA accessible.

Paris

October 4, 2026

4 pm ET



A hub of musical activity in the 18th century, Paris inspired and welcomed composers such as Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre, Georg Phillip Telemann, Blavet, and Marais. At court and in private salons, audiences mingled with musicians and heard the latest in musical styles. Pre-concert talk at 3:15pm.



Sweet Harmony

November 15, 2026
4 pm ET

The art and variety of the duet, for sopranos and for violins, in music by Monteverdi, Barbara Strozzi, Handel, Purcell, Buxtehude, and early American composers. Pre-concert talk at 3:15.

Musical Landscapes Across the Americas

April 11, 2027
4 pm ET

Incantare
Alice Culin-Ellison, violin
Cynthia Keiko Black, violin
Liza Malamut, trombone
Ben David Aronson, trombone
Garrett Lahr, trombone
Naomi Gregory, organ
Laura Heimes, soprano
Kristen Dubenion-Smith, mezzo-soprano
Gregório Taniguchi, tenor
Jean Bernard Cerin, baritone
Deborah Fox, theorbo



Incantare and Pegasus Early Music present a program of music for singers, violins, lutes, trombones, and organ from the Spanish Americas and beyond. With Florida as its starting point, this concert expands to Spanish territories throughout the Americas, including sonorous polyphony, upbeat villancicos, and stately dances from Mexico, France, Guatemala, Peru, and the Iberian Peninsula.

Isabella's Circle



February 21, 2027
4 pm ET

The vision of Isabella d'Este, cultural and political influencer, and patroness of the arts in renaissance Mantua. Music of Ockeghem, Cara, Tromboncino, and more.

Bach & the Edge of Order

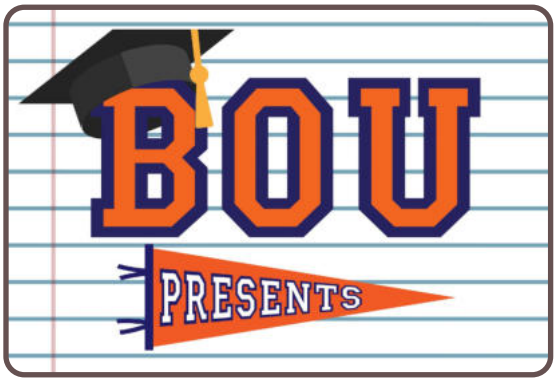
May 2, 2027 | 4 pm ET

Leon Schelhase, harpsichord

Featuring the dazzling freedom of Bach's keyboard toccatas, and works by Buxtehude and Frescobaldi that inspired and shaped the form. This solo harpsichord program explores the drama, variety, and improvisatory spirit of the *stylus fantasticus*. Harpsichordist Leon Schelhase brings these Baroque masterpieces to life with artistry that speaks across centuries.



BUFFALO OPERA UNLIMITED



BOU Presents: Operatic Stars of Tomorrow

February 7, 2027 at 4 PM

Westminster Presbyterian Church
724 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo

BOU features the next generation of operatic talent—students from WNY's university voice programs.

Opera on Tap: iOpera

February 27, 2027 at 4 PM

Resurgence Brewing Company
55 Chicago St., Buffalo

Explore the intersection of music and technology as only opera can! Program will feature Kahane's *Craigslistlieder*, *Twitterkreis*, and Paterson's *Captcha*.





Carry My Own Suitcase

June 11, 2027 at 7 PM
June 12, 2027 at 7 PM
June 13, 2027 at 2:30 PM

Canterbury Woods Performing Arts Center
705 Renaissance Drive, Williamsville

Carry My Own Suitcase tells a story about a family living in the kaleidoscope that is Autism. The story zigzags through time, space and memory after the family reach a crisis point one evening at home in a rollercoaster of comedy, chaos, pain, passion, and most of all love.

TRI CITIES OPERA

Hansel & Gretel

Fri. Oct. 16, 7:30 pm
Sat. Oct. 17, 7:30 pm
Sun. Oct. 18, 3 pm

Tri-Cities Opera Center
315 Clinton Street
Binghamton, NY 13905



Filled with lush, storybook music and moments of humor, heart, and suspense, *Hansel and Gretel* is a captivating journey for audiences of all ages—a timeless tale of resilience, imagination, and the power of love.

A Red White & Blue Christmas

Fri. Dec. 11 at 7:30 pm
Sat. Dec. 12 at 7:30 pm
Sun. Dec. 13 at 3:00 pm

Tri-Cities Opera Center
315 Clinton Street
Binghamton, NY 13905



From the beloved sounds of *White Christmas* and the Andrews Sisters to the iconic songs of Irving Berlin and the enduring legacy of Bob Hope's USO tours, this dynamic program blends patriotic favorites, classic carols, musical theater hits, and soaring operatic selections

Thanks to the generous support of our donors and funding partners, all veterans and active service members are invited to attend free of charge. Please call the box office at (607) 772-0400 to register for your free tickets.

Mozart's Così fan tutte
The Game of Love

Fri. Mar. 5 at 7:30 pm
Sun. Mar. 7 at 3 pm

Tri-Cities Opera Center
315 Clinton Street
Binghamton, NY 13905

A blend of Italian arias and dialogue performed in English.

Opening in the stylish 1960s world of polished norms, structured relationships, and carefully defined social roles, *The Game of Love (Così fan tutte)* begins in an atmosphere of order, confidence, and romantic certainty. Two young couples are secure in their devotion—until a cynical wager sets everything in motion.



PUCCINI'S LA BOHÈME

Saturday, Apr. 24
3 pm

Broome County Forum Theatre
236 Washington Street
Binghamton, NY 13901

Performed in **Italian** with English supertitles



Set in the bohemian Latin Quarter of 1830s Paris, *La Bohème* follows a group of young artists living on little more than dreams, friendship, and defiance of poverty. Sweeping, intimate, and heartbreakingly human, *La Bohème* is a timeless portrait of love found too briefly, friendship tested by circumstance, and the beauty that exists even in loss.

The 2026-2027 Season

Canadian Opera Company

CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY

VERDI

La Traviata

Giuseppe Verdi

September 18 - October 17, 202

6 Four Seasons Centre
for the Performing Arts





MOZART

Così fan tutte

October 3 - 18, 2026

Four Seasons Centre
for the Performing Arts

ROCHESTER ORATORIO SOCIETY

Adiemus: Songs of Sanctuary

Symphonic Choir

October 30, 2026

7:30 pm

Hochstein Performance Hall

50 N Plymouth Ave, Rochester, New York 14614



Since it was first heard in 1994, Karl Jenkins' *Adiemus* has captured the imagination of music lovers worldwide thanks to its unique combination of classical principles with the flavors of world and ethnic music. *Adiemus*, awarded 17 gold and platinum discs, receives its local premiere with the Rochester Oratorio Society Chorus and Orchestra, the Nazareth University Percussion Ensemble, the Roberts Wesleyan Chorale, and a Children's Choir directed by Carina Telesca. Community charity partner: M.K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence.

Holiday Warmth and Cheer

Symphonic Choir

December 18, 2026

7:30 PM



Hochstein Performance Hall, 50 N Plymouth Ae., Rochester, New York 14614

Join the Rochester Oratorio Society Symphonic Choir for some of the season's most celebratory classical favorites by Bach, Lauridsen, Mendelssohn, and Handel (including the Christmas portion of Messiah). Make your impact felt by donating a new coat for a child, accepted by Action for a Better Community.



A Jubilee of Psalms

May 7, 2027
7:30 PM

Hochstein Performance Hall
50 N Plymouth Ave, Rochester, New York 14526

Two world-class Rochester composers are featured in "A Jubilee of Psalms." Nathaniel Dett's *The Chariot Jubilee*, for tenor, chorus, and orchestra, blends the traditional Spiritual with thrilling choral writing. The Rochester-born master Adolphus Hailstork's cantata for the same forces, *I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes*, written a decade ago, sets Psalm texts in beautifully compelling choral writing. Be there for this exciting preview of the ROS's Carnegie Hall debut program.

PUBLICK MUSICK



Quartets New and Old

Saturday October 17,
7:30 pm

Episcopal Church of St. Luke and St. Simon Cyrene,
Two Saints Church
17 S. Fitzhugh St., Rochester, NY

Sunday October 18
3:00 pm

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
21 Clara Barton St., Dansville, NY

Cynthia Roberts, violin
Boel Gidholm, violin
James Marshall, viola
Christopher Haritatos, cello

The 2026-2027 Season

Eastman Opera Theatre

EASTMAN Opera Theatre 2026–27 SEASON

Eastman Opera Theatre:

Candide

November 5, 6, 7 | 7:30 pm
November 8,
2:30 pm

Kilbourn Hall

Live stream available



Eastman Opera Theatre Presents

Songs for a New World (1995)

December 10, 11, 12 | 7:30 pm
December 13 | 2:30 pm

Sloan Performing Arts Center



Eastman Opera Theatre:

HÄNSEL UND GRETEL (1893)

April 8, 9, 10 |7:30 pm
April 11 | 2:30 pm

Kodak Hall, Eastman theatre



Online Opera Education for Young and Old

The Metropolitan Opera has many resources for both adults and students. If you haven't explored them already, go to the main menu at metopera.org and click on 'discover.' This leads to another menu of all kinds of educational features from podcasts and articles to more formal educational materials for students.

San Francisco Opera has a great education site for youngsters with materials that can be used in the home as well as by educators. https://www.sfopera.com/learn

Los Angeles Opera has programs for both adults and children at laopera.org/community

Utah Opera at https://utahopera.org/education/students/ also has good student materials.

From Arizona Opera, at https://azopera.org/education-community/opera-home-virtual-learning-tools, videos for middle school and older students with introductions to four operas. Although produced for Arizona Opera presentations, they are suitable as general references.

Many opera companies have such sites; you can search "virtual opera education" for more.

Opportunities for Singers

Immanuel Arts

Immanuel Arts, Inc. is seeking SATB singers for the premiere of *Immanuel*, a full-length theatrical cantata for choir and orchestra.

Performance

Friday, February 26, 2027 – 7:00 PM

Browncroft Community Church (Rochester, NY)

Immanuel traces the story from Creation through the Fall and points toward redemption in Christ, combining choir, soloists, and chamber orchestra in a dramatic, narrative-driven setting.

Choir Details

Approx. 40 singers (SATB)

Mixed ensemble of volunteer singers and paid section leaders

Rehearsals mainly Saturday mornings (Sept-Feb, East Rochester)

Additional required full ensemble rehearsals in February

Commitment: Volunteer singers attend approximately 11 rehearsals, plus full ensemble rehearsals, dress rehearsal, and performance.

Audition: Submit a short audio/video recording (simple phone recording acceptable)

To express interest: immanuelcantata@gmail.com

Great *Opera*tunities

For those wishing to explore opera without spending a lot of money

NEW Resource for opera at operaonvideo.com
24,000 operas available to view free. You can donate a modest amount to get screenings ad-free, and if you scroll down on the home page, will find search advice.

FREE - Opera Guild Lectures - Free talks with video excerpts on opera and on aspects of opera production offered on Wednesdays during March.

$10 - Opera Guild "Beat the Blahs," opera DVD presentations. Includes pre-performance talk & refreshments at intermission.

Opera at the J (Jewish Community Center), JCC members $6, non-members $10. Same program as "Beat the Blahs."

$24; UR students $10 with ID - The Eastman Opera Season (Eastman voice students). Pre-performance talks; see full listing in Viva Voce.

$25 per (senior) ticket - Metropolitan Opera simulcasts in HD. These performances usually take place on Saturdays at 1 pm. An encore performance, not live, is given on the Wednesday following for $23. Theaters are at Tinseltown, Eastview, and Webster. See full listing and essays in Viva Voce.

FREE - Opera Guild Bravo Nights at The Little Café. Live accompanied singers perform opera favorites in an informal atmosphere. See Viva Voce for next date.

FREE - The Lotte Lenya Competition: young multi-talented singer/actors performing both opera and musical theater selections. See Viva Voce for information about the event.

Opera Guild of Rochester Season

Opera Movie Theater Meet-Ups — Cinemark Tinseltown, before the Met Live in HD screenings. Free, but you'll need to purchase a ticket to the actual screening.

Bravo Nights — At the Little Cafe - Free

Young Artists of Finger Lakes Opera — October 25, 2026 - 7 PM
Artists of Roberts Wesleyan University — February 8, 2027 - 7 PM
Artists of Eastman School of Music — April 19, 2027 - 7 PM

Holiday Bravo* — December 18, 2026, 7 PM. Asbury Gathering Center, 1050 East Ave, Rochester, NY 14607. Tenor Mark Daniels, Mezzo Soprano Jessica Ann Best, and pianist Rob Goodling

2026 Beat the Blahs* Haskell Rosenberg Memorial Series — **Tales of the Supernatural.** Opera video presentations of acclaimed productions by your favorite composers. Pittsford Community Center, 35 Lincoln Ave, Pittsford, 1-5 PM.

Jan. 10 — Lucia di Lammermoor
Jan. 17 — Pique Dame
Jan. 24 — Don Giovanni
Jan. 31 — Faust

Opera at the J* — Opera video screenings of acclaimed productions with opera talk introduction. JCC of Greater Rochester, 1200 Edgewood Ave, Rochester, 1-5 PM.

Oct 6 Aida
Nov 3 Madama Butterfly
Dec 1 La juive

Spring Lecture Series - Wednesdays **March 3, 10, 17, 24 @ 6-7:45 PM** at Brighton Memorial Library, 2300 Elmwood Avenue, Rochester, NY 14618. Subjects TBA

Annual Recital For Donors — Details TBA

Aria Slams! — A unique free event presenting young professional operatic vocalists. It's a "peek behind the curtain" to see and hear what it takes to hone the voice. Asbury Gathering Center, 1050 East Ave, Rochester, NY 14607

September 11, 2026 7 PM
February 26, 2027 7 PM

Join us for day trips! — Performances and Dates TBA

Tri-cities Opera
Glimmerglass Festival

**Ticketed events*

Special Notice →

Holiday Bravo Concert

December 18, 2026

Tickets are now available!

https://www.operaguildofrochester.org/holiday-bravo-nights

OPERA GUILD OF ROCHESTER

P.O. Box 244, Pittsford, NY 14534
eMail: info@operaguildofrochester.org