

- Spotlight on Cliff Jackson
- Opera 101—102!
- Spring Workshop
- Raising the bar—Dr. Julian Shew

Community Fund for Master Classes and the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions

A generous gift from members of the community to Pam Miller upon her retirement as Mayor of Lexington has blossomed into an endowment fund for the Lexington Opera Society. More than \$12,000 was raised initially, which the former mayor designated as a gift to the Lexington Opera Society to provide prize money for the winners of the Kentucky District Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and to support the master class held in conjunction with the auditions.

"I have been so impressed by the beautiful singers in the Metropolitan Auditions and the thrill of watching students learn in the master class that I wanted to make sure we could always keep these events in Lexington," said Miller.

LOS development committee chair Louise Shouse, who also has strong feelings about the benefits of

the auditions and the master classes for the students and their impact on the community, wanted to offer financial support for these activities as well. Her significant donation, when combined with the fund created by the friends of Pam Miller, and a contribution from Dr. Clifton Smith (District Chairman of the National Council Auditions), brought the total fund to the magic \$50,000 mark making it eligible for matching funds from the Research Challenge Trust Fund.

After the match is completed the endowment will be \$100,000, of which 4-5% annually can be used for the master classes and auditions in perpetuity. There remains a need to raise additional monies for the master classes and auditions as the annual tab for hosting these events usually runs between \$9,000 and \$10,000. The LOS is seeking sponsors to ensure that they will be able to continue to host the auditions and present the exceptional master classes that have become a major event in their own right.

Othello—the concert version!

Verdi's deep admiration for the plays of William Shakespeare was well known during the composer's lifetime, evidenced by his adaptation of three of the Bard's works. The first of these, *Macbeth*, premiered in 1847 in Florence, with a libretto by Francesco Maria Piave that adhered very closely to Shakespeare's text. Forty years passed before Verdi collaborated with Arrigo Boito on *Otello*, which opened at La Scala in Milan in 1887. In 1893, only eight years before Verdi's death, the third work in this trilogy appeared; Boito's libretto for *Falstaff* was based on "The Merry Wives of Windsor". Each one of these works requires skilled and mature singers for the principal roles, sizeable supporting casts and choruses, elaborate sets, and an orchestra capable of meeting the demands of Verdi's formidable score, and for those reasons, they are not often heard outside of the larger regional or national opera houses. In January, 2004, however, opera lovers in Central Kentucky will have two opportunities to hear a concert production of Verdi's *Otello*, the result of a new creative collaboration between Everett McCorvey, Director of UK Opera Thea-

BRAVO!

Raising the Bar—UK Orchestra Leader has high aspirations

Believe it or not, the internet and Rick Pitino played a part in attracting Julian Shew to the University of Kentucky to head its orchestra. “Well,” says Shew with a grin, “the university had a good reputation – for basketball. I knew about it before Tubby Smith. Everyone knew Rick Pitino!” When the job as Director of Orchestras was posted by the School of Music, Shew checked out the department on the internet. What he saw were a solid foundation and solid programs within the entire music department. The university was looking for someone who would take the orchestra to a level of national recognition. The former Director of Orchestras at Georgia State University and seasoned guest conductor saw the potential and was lured by the challenge. His vision and desire for the program at UK is to move it forward and as those who heard the orchestra at the UK Opera Theatre performance of “The Marriage of Figaro” couldn’t help but notice the new energy coming from the pit – not to mention the quality of the sound. That same vigor is evident in orchestra rehearsals.

“Opera is the most complete and challenging form of music,” says the Chinese-born Shew. “The group work, the ensemble is more complex than any other form of music and everyone needs to be more sensitive to each other.” It takes an enormous amount of cooperation between all those involved in the production – director,

vocal coaches, soloists, chorus members, etc. A good opera singer has excellent communication with the conductor. “But, when everything is done,” explains the musician, “everything is in the hands of the conductor.” Shew clearly



UK's new Director of Orchestras, Dr. Julian Shew, shown at a recent rehearsal. (Photo by P. Trotter)

understands the orchestra’s role in opera and how the conductor and director must work together to create that delicate balance between singers and musicians that gives the audience the marvelous spectacle of a live performance.

In the late 1700’s there was no such thing as a conductor separate from the orchestra. Often the group started or stopped playing at the direction of the person playing the harpsichord or the first violinist. But, as the orchestra evolved into a more complex and sophisticated entity, it became necessary for the person leading the group to abandon his other instrumental responsibilities and devote his energies into

“playing” the entire ensemble.

Musicians in an orchestra must learn to lose their individual musical identities and function as a team. In an operatic setting, they must also be aware of the action on stage and the vocal components of the music.

Enter the conductor whose most obvious function is to keep the musicians together – and together with the action unfolding on the stage above them. But a conductor also must serve as the interpreter of the musical score. We’ve all heard different orchestras perform the same symphony, but with varied styles and sound. How a conductor interprets a musical score shapes how we hear it. This is true whether performing a symphony or an operatic score. We also expect the conductor to put on a show – and conductors have lost their contracts solely because they were too sedate in their conducting! Can anyone in Lexington even imagine our own George Zack conducting the Lexington Philharmonic in a quiet, sedate manner? And would we stand for it! Of course not!

Shew is a dynamic and energetic force in front of his orchestra. If he were not he would not be the Principal Guest Conductor of the State Philharmonic of Burgas in Bulgaria nor would he have been a guest conductor in Albania, Russia, China, the Ukraine and Turkey as well as the United States. The university has brought to its

Cont’d on page 4

“But, when everything is done,” explains the musician, “everything is in the hands of the conductor.”

Spring Workshop

Next spring a select group of students from all over the country will descend upon the University of Kentucky Opera Department to take part in the Lexington Opera Society's annual Opera Theatre Workshop. Gail Robinson, Distinguished Artist in Music, Endowed Chair for Vocal Performance in the UK Opera Department will conduct a Master Class each day of the of the workshop. Professor Jim Rodgers will serve as dramatic coach and Cliff Jackson (see article pg 6) and Stephen Penn will lend their talents as vocal coaches. Laurie Fields will teach stage movement and Bob Havens will present seminars on theatrical make-up. The workshop will run from May 26 – June 4, 2004.

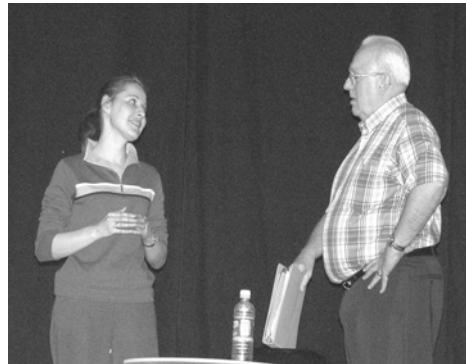
The workshop is designed for singers with operatic experience who are ready to move on to the next phase of their careers. For many years the workshop committee was chaired by Phyllis Jenness, who this year turned the reins over to Angela Rice, another LOS board member. A former UK voice professor who was instrumental in promoting opera in the Bluegrass, Phyllis oversaw the workshop through its growing pains and continues to remain active on the committee. Next year marks the 15th anniversary of the workshop and it remains one of the opera society's major educational offerings. LOS provides scholarships to assist students who would like to attend the workshop but are not financially able. Tuition for the workshop is \$500 and donations to the scholarship fund are welcomed in any amount.

The workshop culminates in "Scenes Night" when the students present scenes from various operas that they have worked

on during their 10-day stay. Gail Robinson selects the opera scenes based upon the vocal talents and level of training for each student. The entire coaching team provides the workshop participants with the many aspects of opera performance and the result is a wonderful night of entertainment open to the public.

The Master Class with Gail Robinson, as well as the other sessions in the workshop, provides a rare opportunity for the public to eavesdrop on operatic training at its best. The many nuances of performing opera can be viewed almost as if under a microscope as each of the singers practices vocal technique, vocal style, acting, stage presence and much more. We would encourage everyone to attend one or more of the daily sessions and then

see the result of the students' effort in the Scenes Night performance on June 4th. More information on the workshop will be provided on our web site and in the spring issue of the *Bravo!* Newsletter. For additional information about the workshop or to donate to the scholarship fund contact Angela Rice at (859) 268-2659.



Professor Jim Rodgers coaches one of the workshop participants during scenes rehearsal.

(Photo by P. Trotter)

The public is encouraged to attend workshop sessions and the Scenes Night performance on June 4th.



2003 Workshop participants relax at the home of LOS board member, Mary Agnes Melton, who hosted a get-together to welcome them to the workshop.

(Photo by P. Trotter)

Moments from this year's Master Class with Dr. Stanford Olsen



Thanks to Pam Miller and Louise Shouse, and others who helped establish the new endowment, Master Classes like this will continue to be offered.



Photos by
P. Trotter

Julian Shew cont'd from page 2

The first challenge is to bring the orchestra up to full size of 90—100 musicians.

music program an internationally respected musician who understands what it will take to move the UK orchestra to recognition on the national scene and has the commitment to do it.

Shew's first task is to bring the orchestra up to size. Currently, there are approximately 65 musicians in the ensemble, which Shew says is good for classical music, such as "Figaro", but the modern and late romantic music calls for an orchestra of 90 – 100 musicians. Once he gets the orchestra up to full size, and has a correct balance between the divisions, he said he will get pickier about the individual musicians –

which is not to say he will simply add bodies in the meantime. The process will not happen overnight – it could take a few years, explains the new orchestra leader, depending on the success of recruiting and finding the right mix of talent. Like Tubby Smith and Rick Pitino seeking out potential basketball stars, Julian Shew is searching for good musicians. His orchestra is young and inexperienced, he says, but has the potential to excel.

He believes the best way to recruit students for the orchestra is by personal contact and he has already added his individual touch to the process by person-

ally visiting with prospective students. The core students he believes will come from Kentucky, including the Kentucky Youth Orchestra, as well as the surrounding states. But he would also like to recruit more international students and graduate students. He believes that broadening the base by bringing in musicians from different backgrounds will bring more maturity to the ensemble and enrich the musical quality of the group.

Surely under Shew's direction the UK Orchestra will reach its goal and the Lexington community will be the richer for it.

The BRAVO Committee and the LOS—A Working Partnership

The Lexington Opera Society (LOS) includes two groups of people who share a love of opera and who work together to support the programs of the University of Kentucky Opera Theatre (UKOT). The 26-member LOS Board of Directors constitutes one group. Each Director serves one or more three-year terms on the Board, and accepts the responsibility to make a substantial financial contribution to LOS each year, as well as agreeing to serve on various LOS committees.

We are excited about our relationship with UKOT - which began well before 'Town and Gown cooperation' became a catchphrase!

The other group, the Bravo Committee, is a small cadre of volunteers whose financial contributions are more modest in size but who give their time and skills to support opera by assisting with LOS fundraising events such as the annual the "Prelude to Grand Night" party in May. Bravo Committee members also help with publicity, hospitality for guest artists, and by working backstage at UKOT productions and LOS-sponsored events such as the Metropolitan Opera district and regional auditions each November, and the UK Opera Workshop each May. Other volunteer activities include ushering at events, staffing the Bravo publicity/CDs & tapes sales tables at these events (volunteers receive free admission), and providing and/or helping with refreshments when needed.

Two years ago the LOS Board of Directors decided to publish this quarterly newsletter to help spread the word about its activities and to help us identify more opera lovers willing to support the goals set forth in our Mission Statement - cited on the address page of this newsletter. If you have been thinking about joining the Bravo Committee but have put it off, we hope very much that you will do so now. See Membership Application below.

We are excited about our relationship with UKOT - which began well before 'Town and Gown cooperation' became a catchphrase! Please help us grow our support of this priceless community asset by joining BRAVO today!

BRAVO Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Circle category:

Bravo Committee Membership \$15.00 single \$30 family

Opera Buff \$30.00—\$50.00

Duet \$51.00—\$100.00

Aria \$101.00—\$500.00

Overture \$501.00—\$1000.00

Figaro \$1000.00+

Total enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to the Lexington Opera Society and mail to:
 Lexington Opera Society
 P.O. Box 11982
 Lexington, KY 40579-1982

Spotlight on Cliff Jackson—Vocal Coach Extraordinaire

Professor Cliff Jackson's official job title is "Vocal Coach" in the Vocal Music Area in the School of Music at the University of Kentucky, but don't picture him in sweats with a towel and whistle around his neck, yelling plays at sopranos and tenors in the Singletary Center Recital Hall. Picture, instead, Cliff in his usual 'habitat': elegant in tux and black tie, poised at the piano to accompany one of the Vocal Area graduate students in a solo recital . . . or Gregory Turay auditioning for the Metropolitan Opera . . . or operatic superstar Kathleen Battle on tour in Europe. It's been a long road from Gary, Indiana to Lexington, Kentucky (via New York and Miami), with many interesting stops along the way.

As a child, Cliff began picking out tunes "by ear" on the family piano at age 5, and began formal lessons two years later after entering primary school. At his home church, First Baptist Church of Gary, Indiana, two musicians helped encourage and shape his love of music: church organist Eva Brooks (mother of television star Avery Brooks), and choir director Lois Penn, wife of the pastor, Rev. Robert E. Penn. The congregation at First Baptist preferred traditional Christian anthems instead of gospel music, and he first heard Handel's "Messiah" there. The televised church programs of Robert Schuyler were also popular with his family, and introduced him to more great classics of religious music, such as the 'Hallelujah' from Beethoven's "Mount of Olives". Formal piano lessons were discontinued for a few years due to his father's illness and financial difficulties. However, at age 12 Cliff began to study organ

with Dwight Davis, a member of the music faculty at the Gary campus of Indiana University. Church choir director Mrs. Penn felt that Cliff should continue studying the piano as well as the organ. Realizing that his family could not afford piano lessons, she offered to teach him without a fee. In return he assisted her with the church choirs and her concert choir at the junior high school.

After high school, Cliff entered the Oberlin Conservatory of Music to major in Organ Performance and Music Education. Here he developed his love of opera and other vocal music, and soon switched his major to Piano. After graduation, he moved to New York to enter the Graduate Accompanying Program at the Manhattan School of Music. He was hired by the Dance Theatre of Harlem as piano soloist/rehearsal pianist.

DTH choral ensemble director Robert Bass encouraged Cliff to audition for the American Opera Center at Julliard of Music as an Apprentice Coach/Pianist, where he worked with Gian Carlo Menotti and other American composers at Julliard's American Opera Center. In 1987, after ten years spent as a free-lance musician in New York, Cliff moved to Miami, Florida as Pianist/Coach for the Miami Opera. During his four years there, he was also adjunct professor at the New World School of the Arts, teaching courses and coaching the young singers there.

In 1992, Cliff was contacted by an old acquaintance from New York, Everett McCorvey, who had recently moved to Lexington, Kentucky, as Director of the University of Kentucky's Op-

era Theatre. Professor McCorvey invited Cliff to come to UK to interview for the new position of Vocal Coach in the School of Music. Cliff came to Lexington, liked what he saw at UK and in the city, and moved to Bluegrass Country.

What does a Vocal Coach do, and how does this job differ from that of a Voice Teacher? First of all, Cliff explained, most voice teachers begin their musical careers as singers, whereas most vocal coaches begin as pianists. Voice teachers focus upon vocal technique (how a singer physically produces a particular sound), and must have a thorough knowledge of those areas of human physiology involved in producing sound (the muscles, nerves, and structures of the head, neck, and thorax); vocal coaches focus on the singer's interpretation of specific selections of vocal music - diction, emotional tone, timbre, volume, physical gestures and facial expression. A voice teacher will know intimately the vocal repertoire for his or her vocal type (based initially on their own performance experience); a vocal coach must be familiar with a much broader range of repertoire for all vocal types. Because the majority of the vocal music repertoire (opera, song cycles, art songs, etc.) studied and performed by formally trained singers is not written in English, the vocal coach must be prepared to offer expert diction training in Italian, French, Spanish, German, and Latin. Cliff noted that while he is not truly fluent in any of these languages (although he reads all of them well), he is deeply familiar with the particular pronunciation and inflections of each one, and

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Kentucky District Produces Regional Winner

For those who attended the Metropolitan Opera National Council District Auditions on November 8th it should come as no surprise that one of the three district winners went on to win the regional auditions two weeks later. Contralto Meredith Arwady will now have the opportunity to compete in the semi-finals in New York at the Met in the spring of next year. Two years ago, the Kentucky District auditions also produced the regional winner, Corey

Crider. The quality of the singers at this year's event was exceptional and the audience was treated to an afternoon of outstanding talent. Judges Stanford Olsen, Martin Katz and Susan Ashbaker deliberated long and hard before selecting the 3 district winners: Jeremy Kelly, a 25 year old baritone currently enrolled in the Kentucky Young Artist Program at the Kentucky Opera in

Louisville; Audrey Luna, a 25 year old soprano, who holds a Masters in Voice from the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music and is pursuing an Artists Diploma in Opera from that same institution; and Meredith Arwady a 25 year old contralto currently pursuing a Masters in Music

in Opera at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. Kelly's first aria was "È sogno? O realtà" from Verdi's *Falstaff*. The judges then requested "O, du mein holder Abendstern" from *Tannhäuser* by Wagner. Luna chose the well-known "Caro nome" from *Rigoletto* by Verdi in a rich well controlled voice with good clear pitches. The second aria sung by this crowd favorite was "Tournami a vagheggiar" from Handel's *Alcina*. The

her to begin in the middle of "Amour! Viens aider ma faiblesse" from *Samson et Dalila* by Saint-Saëns.

Judges for opera auditions must be familiar with an entire range of music in order to be able to select the second aria from the contestant's list. Sometimes, according to judge Stan Olsen, the second aria is used to give the judges another opportunity to hear "what they thought they heard" or to confirm that they heard a weakness or strength in a certain area. They pick the second song to insure that what they heard – good or bad – was for real. Meredith Arwady and soprano Kay Sherwood, a UK student, were both asked to sing yet a third aria indicating that a tough decision was ahead!

Next year, the Lexington Opera Society will host both the district and regional National Council auditions. For more information about the auditions and the National Council visit our web site at www.lexingtonopera.com.



Audrey Luna (l) and Meredith Arwady (r) were all smiles after their selection as district winners

eventual regional winner, Arwady, commanded the audience's attention with her rendition of Menotti's "I'm not crying for him" from *The Consul* and the judge's selection "Cruda sorte!" from *L'Italiana in Algeri* by Rossini. She was asked to sing a third aria by the judges who asked

Join us next fall for the 2004 District and Regional auditions to be held in Memorial Hall on the UK campus.

In order to continue hosting the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions your help is needed. For information about sponsorship contact Dr. Michael Morrill, President of the Lexington Opera Society or Dr. Clifton Smith, District Chair National Council Auditions

Learn about opera the easy way!

During the Fall 2003 semester, the University of Kentucky Opera Theatre and the Lexington Opera Society teamed up to present a wonderful course for opera-lovers. The non-credit course, "An Introduction to Opera" (quickly nicknamed 'Opera 101'), was taught by UKOT staff member Tedrin Blair Lindsay, who was profiled in the Summer 2003 issue of the *Bravo!* Newsletter ("Spotlight on Tedrin Lindsay", Vol. 2, No. 4, pp 3 & 7). The course outline followed the history of opera from its aristocratic birth in the 15th Century in Florence, Italy, to the creation of 'musical theatre' in the 20th Century. But the course offered so much more than the bare historical details: Tedrin presented essential concepts of musicology and music appreciation - what to listen for and what it means - aimed at increasing the listener's enjoyment and appreciation of this complex and beautiful art form. Most of the class meetings were held on Saturday mornings in the John Jacob Niles Gallery at the Lucille Caudill Little Fine Arts Library on the UK campus. The 25 class members attended four live per-

formances during the semester: UKOT's production of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, 'American Theatre Music: A Recital', the Metropolitan Opera Council District Auditions, and the Lexington Philharmonic & Lexington Singers performance of Handel's *Messiah*. Each class included live or recorded excerpts from operatic works of the period covered that day, and everyone agreed that Tedrin's lectures (delivered with his characteristic verve) managed to pack an amazing wealth of detail into each two-hour session - not just historical details but As one class member remarked, "Tedrin was born to teach this class!"

If you missed this exciting course, don't despair. "Opera 101" was so successful that Tedrin has agreed to teach a second course ("Opera 102") for UKOT and LOS during UK's Spring 2004 semester. The focus this time will be upon special top-



Tedrin Lindsay clarifies a point for one of the Opera 101 participants.
(Photo by P. Trotter)

ics in opera, including in-depth discussions of Wagner, Verdi, and Puccini, "Women and Madness in Bel Canto Opera", "Opera Goes to the Movies", tips on starting your own collection of great opera recordings, and a panel discussion by the Baroque music specialists involved in UKOT's production in March 2004 of the 17th Century Baroque opera, "The Coronation of Poppea" by Claudio Monteverdi. The format will be the same as for "Opera 101", and the class will attend several live performances. For details, dates, and registration, please call the UKOT office (257-9331).

Mary Powell

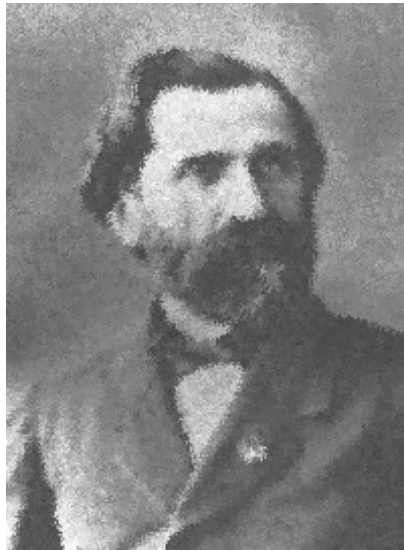
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Satisfy your curiosity about opera!

**Opera 102 Begins in January
See page 10 for a complete list of
lectures and dates**

Othello continued from page 1



"Otello" Composer Giuseppe Verdi

How does a 'concert production' of an opera differ from a staged production?

tre (UKOT), and James R. Cassidy, Music Director of the Kentucky Symphony Orchestra (KSO), based in Newport, Kentucky.

In this joint production, KSO will provide the orchestra and conductor (Dr. Cassidy), the chorus, and the singers for the three principal roles. The Venetian general Otello will be sung by tenor Jeffrey Springer, soprano Nicolle Foland will portray

his devoted wife Desdemona, and baritone Kelly Anderson will sing the role of Iago, Otello's perfidious ensign. UKOT Vocal Music area students will sing the roles of Emilia (Sherri Phelps), Cassio (Nathan Munson), Roderigo (Matthew Campbell), and Montano (Mark Huseh), and new UK School of Music faculty member Dennis Bender will portray Lodovico.

How does a 'concert production' of an opera differ from a staged production? An opera performed 'in concert' does not include costumes, sets, or staged action; the singers are not required to memorize the music but instead will sing from scores, as in a regular concert. The opera will be sung in Italian, but the audience will be able to follow the story line easily with the help of the English supertitles projected above

the stage.

The first performance takes place on Friday, January 16, at 8:00 p.m. at Greaves Concert Hall on the campus of Northern Kentucky University. The second performance will be the following Sunday (January 18) at 3:00 p.m. in the Concert Hall at Singletary Center for the Arts on the University of Kentucky campus in Lexington. Bravo Committee members, remember to present your new "Bravo 2004" membership cards at the Singletary Center Box Office to obtain your regular discount: when you purchase one ticket at full price for a UKOT/LOS event, you may purchase a second ticket for that same event at half price!

Mary Powell

UK Opera Theatre Calendar 2004

"Otello" by Verdi

Sunday, January 18, 2004 3:00 PM, Singletary Center for the Arts
see story page 1

Stars of Tomorrow Opera Gala

Friday, February 27, 2004 8:00 PM Singletary Center for the Arts

"The Coronation of Poppea" by Monteverdi

Thursday March 25, Saturday, March 27 & Monday, March 29, 2004 at 8:00 PM
Singletary Center for the Arts Recital Hall

It's a Grand Night for Singing

Friday and Saturday, June 11 & 12, 2004 at 8:00 PM and Sunday, June 13th at 2:00 PM
Singletary Center for the Arts

The Stars of Tomorrow Shine at UK in February

The UK Vocal Music program presents its annual "Stars of Tomorrow Gala" in the Concert Hall at Singletary Center for the Arts on Friday, February 27, 2004, at 8:00 p.m. Professor Gail Robinson (Head of the Vocal Music area and Recipient of the Endowed Chair of Vocal Performers, UK School of Music) is the Music Director, and Maestro Julian Shew conducts the University Orchestra.

Act I begins with the aria "Si Puo" from Mascagni's *I Pagliacci* (sung by Mark Huseh), followed by the comical "Trio" of Ping, Pang, and Pong (Adam Gobel, Chuck Chandler, and Chris Conley) from Puccini's *Turandot*, the ethereal "Presentation of the Rose" from R. Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* (sung by Jeanne Anne Aukofer and Kay Sherwood), the first act "Quintet"

from Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* (sung by Justin Ballard, Chuck Chandler, Adrienne Schram, Melissa Snow-Graves, and Carolina Fernandez), and the beautiful duet "Mira, O Norma" from Bellini's *Norma* (sung by Jeryl Cunningham and Mandy Rockwell). Lexington Philharmonic Concertmaster/First Violinist Daniel Mason plays an instrumental interlude, the "Meditation" from

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An Introduction to Opera – Tedrin Blair Lindsay, Instructor

Spring 2004 Schedule (Subject to change)

Lecture Series

January 24	*Special Event: Opera in the Movies	Guest Speaker: Thomson Smiley
January 31	Opera on Record (Great Recordings and Starting a Collection)	
February 21	The Classification of Male Voices (Tenors, Baritones, and Bases)	
February 28	The Classification of Female Voices (Sopranos, Mezzos, and Contraltos)	
March 6	Women and Madness in Bel Canto Opera	
March 20	Preparing a Production of Monteverdi's <i>The Coronation of Poppea</i> Guest Speakers: Early Music Specialists leading UK's production	
March 27	In Depth with Wagner	Guest Speaker: Dr. Ben Arnold
April 17	In Depth with Verdi	
April 24	In Depth with Puccini	

Performances

February 27	Stars of Tomorrow Opera Gala
March 25, 27, 29	* <i>The Coronation of Poppea</i> (Monteverdi)
TBA	<i>The Three Billy Goats Gruff</i> (Music by Rossini and others)

*Not included in Course Tuition

For information on tuition and registration contact the UK Opera Theatre at (859) 257-9331 or e-mail opera@uky.edu

Opera 102 is sure to be a crowd pleaser! Register for this fun, exciting and informative series right away!

Cliff Jackson cont'd

can readily provide his students with examples of how each language should sound when sung. "To teach diction," explains Cliff, "you must be a good mimic - you must be able to 'catch the sounds in your ear' and then reproduce them with your mouth. Learning Russian is my next challenge!"

In addition to teaching classes, working individually with vocal music students at UK, providing piano accompaniment for visiting singers in Master Classes and performances, and serving as vocal coach for the UK Opera Theatre productions, Cliff has also worked closely with the UK Theatre Department since he arrived on campus in 1992. He was Music Director for UKTD's productions of *Hair* (1993), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1995), and *Kiss Me Kate* (1997), playing and conducting a small instrumental ensemble made up of UK students. He served as vocal coach and rehearsal accompanist for *The Pirates of Penzance* (1999). He has performed with the Lexington Philharmonic on several occasions, and frequently appears as accompanist for UK vocal music students at recitals and auditions, including the annual District and triennial Regional Auditions held in Lexington by the Metropolitan Opera National Council since 2000. In keeping with his appointment as Professor at a major research university, Cliff's performing schedule often takes him away from campus on national and international tours with well-known singers, like Kathleen Battle, Edda Moser, and Marietta Simpson, who regard him very highly for his musical sensitivity and warm personality.

Another enjoyable role in Cliff's broad 'repertoire' as Vocal

Coach is his participation in the annual Opera Workshop at UK, sponsored by the Lexington Opera Society. Each year, 10-15 young singers from Kentucky and other states spend 10 days on the UK campus, working on assigned arias, duets, and ensembles presented in a free public performance on the last night of the Workshop. Asked to characterize his most important contributions to the Workshop, Cliff said, "My technical duties are to teach diction and stylistic interpretation and to rehearse the students in their roles, but my main professional responsibility is mentoring: encouraging them as young singers and helping to teach them the requirements and possibilities for a professional career in music. Each year, the Workshop faculty designs the program of pieces for the public performance to accommodate the specific vocal types and personalities of the students who take part in the Workshop, and each student is assigned one or more pieces to learn before the Workshop actually begins. This is a good opportunity for them to learn how to memorize roles quickly and how to develop a musical rapport with their co-performers in a few days of rehearsal. These are very important skills in today's often fast-paced operatic world."

He continues, "Many of these young students come to the Workshop with a fairly narrow vision of who they are and what they can do - I try to open up their horizons in a practical way, to help them find their own individual strengths and interests, and to discuss the wide variety of satisfying careers in music that exist. Performing at the Metropolitan Opera is wonderful, of

course, but it's not the only job in the world that can make you happy in your life as a musician." He noted that the Workshop is an excellent recruitment tool for the UK Vocal Music area, drawing non-regional students such as Patricia Andress and Jenny Meggitt who decided to stay on as UK students.

Cliff clearly enjoys the opportunity for daily one-on-one interactions with the students during the Workshop, and he expresses a slight regret that the UK Vocal Music area now includes so many students that mentoring time is more limited. "When I first came to UK, I had more time to spend with individual students, and mentoring is an invaluable part of helping them grow as professionals. For example, when Gregory Turay first entered the Vocal Music program, he thought he wanted a career in musical theatre, but after a year or so, he realized that opera was his forte and he went on to win the Metropolitan Opera auditions, and to enter the Met's Young Singers' Program. Then when his brother Michael came to UK, he thought that he had to be an opera singer like Greg, but then he gradually discovered his own particular enthusiasm and talent for musical theatre. Both brothers changed course from their initial choices, and both in directions that were right for them."

Just as this interview was ending, Cliff revealed a delightful surprise: he is planning a solo piano recital at Singletary Center in the Fall of 2004, as part of the Faculty Recital Series. The recital will be free to the public. Cliff added, "This recital will be a celebration of my 50th birthday - God willing!" I can hardly wait!

Mary Powell

Asked about his own formal training in languages, Cliff laughed and said, "I have been working with vocal music in all of these languages for many years, listening to recordings and learning from singers, teachers, and other vocal coaches who were fluent in them, and I have picked up the details along the way."

