

BEL CANTO

Newsletter of the Manatee Opera Guild

November 2024

<https://manateeoperaguild.org>

MEMBERSHIP MEETING
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 14, 2024
PALM AIRE COUNTRY CLUB

Coffee and Conversation at 10 a.m.
Business Meeting at 10:30 a.m.
Speakers at 11 a.m.
Singers from the Fall Outreach Program of
Sarasota Opera

Followed by an optional luncheon.

November Luncheon Menu:

Poached Salmon with broccoli and risotto

Vegetarian Choice -- Vegetable Napoleon - layered mixed vegetables

Dessert -- Fig and pear tart

Checks made out to: Manatee Opera Guild (MOG)

Reservations to: Cathy Knobel

787 Benjamin Franklin Drive
Sarasota, FL 34236
Telephone: 941-666-3253
email: knobelwd@aol.com

Luncheon is \$35 per person. Please indicate your choice of entrée when making your reservation.

Reservations must be received by November 8.

This meeting is on Thursday, not Wednesday!

A MESSAGE FROM JEANNE

What a shame it was to miss our October meeting! It was the first cancellation that I can remember in the 22 years I have been a member of the Guild. Apart from our disappointment, I hope that everyone made it through Milton (and Helene, and Debby) with a minimum of stress and damage.

Syble DiGirolamo did a terrific job with the October 22 *On the Stage Concert*. This year, she fought her way through the last minute disappearance of the entertainer, and provided a delightful Spanish program by Jesse Martins, Nadine Trudel and Milene Moreira, and special entertainer, tenor Alejandro Luévanos, a Fall Outreach singer. She called on many MOG members as her assistants with food (guests were very impressed with the variety of delicious offerings, many made by Guild), and engaged the Opera staff to do publicity and ticketing. The beautiful publicity card was fashioned by Valerie Giuliani. Syble's efforts soliciting donations as well as her meticulous planning led to a delightful evening for all attendees *and* a sizable profit.

Thank you Syble and all your helpers

Maryanne Hazen and **Syble DiGirolamo** are hosting a holiday party on December 8. Our own Valerie Giuliani, a retired opera singer, and member of the Choral Artists of Sarasota will entertain. There will be lots of good food and drink, and plenty of holiday cheer. This is a Guild-only event, and an opportunity to get to know each other better while celebrating the season. More information is later in this issue. (continued next page)

Thank you to **Maestro Victor DiRenzi** for a very spirited and elucidating interview with **Elizabeth Aversa** at our October Prelude focusing of the life and works of Giuseppe Verdi. Having conducted every known and published work of composer Verdi, and having walked in Verdi's footsteps on numerous trips to Italy, he is an expert with the ability to make it understandable and fun. We are looking forward to the Verdi Concert at the Opera House on November 15 at 7:30 p.m. and November 17 at 3 p.m.!

Our November 16 meeting will again feature singers from Sarasota Opera. I'd love to see you there. In case you missed the large print at the top of the first How to Learn More About Opera

WHAT'S THE WEATHER (IN THE OPERA)

By Elizabeth Aversa

Last month we saw two furious hurricanes here. Helene and Milton did us few favors, though the sparing of the lobby, theatre, and orchestra pit at the Opera House was welcome news. Maestro Victor De Renzi and I discussed storms and operas that feature them, and that conversation led me to think about bad weather and its role in opera.

Storms, with lightning and thunder, provide by far the most prevalent "weather events" for music. Thunder, in particular, is a frequent feature as it can be imitated by drums and other orchestral instruments. Clever lighting adds the accompanying on-stage lightning.

The Met Opera's Notes tells us "Storms ... have a long pedigree in literature, theater, and opera."

And a long list of popular songs – from Ethel Waters' 1933 "Stormy Weather" to Rihanna's 2007 hit "Umbrella" – focus on rainy, stormy weather. Operas, both the frequently performed and more obscure, feature storms. Here are some examples with links to the music.

The Barber of Seville by Gioacchino Rossini.

Orchestral interludes portraying thunderstorms have been employed by several composers. Such an interlude, in Act II of the *Barber of Seville*, denotes the passage of time between two distinct

encounters among the characters Rosina, Almaviva, and Figaro. Here is a clever depiction of the storm interlude from Sugar Creek Opera (2018) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9blp-wGOUU>

Filumena by John Estacio. This Canadian opera, based on actual events, is the story of Filumena, an Italian immigrant in Canada, who becomes involved in a bootlegging operation, an illicit love affair, and a murder. The storm that occurs on Filumena's wedding day in Alberta serves as a foreshadowing of a difficult future for the heroine. Here, from the first act, is the "Storm Aria" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T88GGQdss7Q>

The Flying Dutchman by Richard Wagner. This opera is said to have been inspired by a storm at sea that the composer experienced. It also features "stormy" music as well as a piece about conditions at sea and his wish to be home from a steersman's perspective. Here is "Through Storm and Sea" from the Pittsburgh Opera. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H31p4fRKsIM>

Otello by Giuseppe Verdi. Otello, based on the Shakespearean play *Othello*, opens with a violent storm in which the Moor governor and naval commander guides his ship to port after victory over the Turks. Here is "Una vela, Una vela Esultate" from Act I of Otello <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3WJbSThnSaA>.

Macbeth by Giuseppe Verdi. The arrival of the three witches in Act I of the opera occurs during a storm. In the opera, the three witches in the original play are portrayed by a chorus that puts the singers in three distinct groupings. Here is the Witches' Chorus by the Royal Ballet and Opera Chorus <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BdyrDMVTeAg> For contrast, here is the same piece in which the witches are portrayed by three individuals. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7b4tKhV5mcg> [This appears to be a film version, but the production and singers are not identified by the person who posted the video.]

Peter Grimes by Benjamin Britten. In Act I of this opera a furious storm comes in from the sea and Peter Grimes, a fisherman who has been acquitted

of the accidental death of his young assistant, rides out the storm while most of the borough's citizens take cover in a pub. This opera features four distinct orchestral interludes. Here is "Interlude II – The Storm" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uz8C2Biff2M>

Rigoletto by Giuseppe Verdi. In Act III, Rigoletto's daughter Gilda unwittingly enters the home of Sparafucile and his sister who have planned to kill the first person who enters in order to spare the life of the Duke of Mantua. This happens during a fierce thunderstorm. Here is the Act III Storm Trio from Opera at Florham, 2010: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKdqewquCi8&t=34s>

The Valkyrie by Richard Wagner. In Act I of the second opera in Wagner's Ring Cycle, Siegmund, lost and wounded, finds shelter from a storm at the home of Sieglinde and her husband, Hunding. During the course of the Act, they fall in love and discover that they are siblings. Here is Act 1 of Wagner's The Valkyrie (concert version) from Opera North: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-VxmmncvfOE>.

Storms make appearances in several other operas. Look for them in *The Pearl Fishers* by Georges Bizet, *Les Troyens* by Hector Belioz, and *Der Freischütz* by Carl Maria von Weber.

Here's hoping future storms here will be limited to those in the opera repertoire, not the weather forecast. Regardless, fair weather or not, we'll see you at the opera!

MANATEE OPERA GUILD 2024-2025 SCHEDULE

Board Meetings: Second Wednesday at 10 a.m., location tba

November 13

December 4 (First Wednesday)

January 15

February 12

March 12

April 9

General Membership Meetings: Coffee and conversation at 10 a.m.; meeting 10:30 a.m., Singers/speakers at 11 a.m., luncheon at 11:30 a.m.

November 14 (Thursday)

December: 11 (Wed) —Courtyard picnic at Opera House

January 16 (Thurs)

February 19: (Wed) Sweetheart Luncheon

March 14: (Fri) Spring Fling — HJD Award and Deane Allyn Award

April 16: (Wed) New Member Recognition

Preludes: Coffee and conversation at 9:30, speaker at 10 to 11:30 Westminster Point Pleasant Towers Building Auditorium.

November 22: *Cavalleria rusticana, Pagliacci*, featuring Stage Director Martha Collins.

December 13 ** (not 3rd Friday): *Barber of Seville*

January 17: *Marriage of Figaro*

February 21: *Stiffelio*

Special Events:

Holiday Party, Sunday, December 8, 4 p.m. - 8 p.m. At the home of Maryanne Hazen. Co-hosted by Syble Di Girolamo.

Festive Holiday Party featuring plentiful hors d'oeuvres, wine and desserts.

This year's entertainer will be our own Valerie Giuliani, soprano. Valerie has sung professionally with several opera companies, and now is a member of the Choral Artists of Sarasota.

**Contemporary Opera Film Showing
Thursday, January 2, 2025 Westminster Towers Auditorium, Bradenton.**

Enjoy a showing of a *The Ghosts of Versailles*, composed by John Corigliano, commissioned by

the Metropolitan Opera, having its debut there in 1991. You will recognize some of the characters in this modern opera -- Figaro, Susanna, Count Almaviva, Cherubino -- who have roles in both *The Marriage of Figaro* and *The Barber of Seville* during the 2025 Winter Season at the Sarasota Opera. In this opera, the ghosts of the Versailles court of Louis XVI, especially Marie Antoinette, are being consoled and entertained by Pierre Beaumarchais, the author of both the Figaro plays that were turned into the operas mentioned above.

Stay tuned for more exciting events.



Sandy Rath and Richard DeGennaro at OnStage Event

A close-up, textured portrait of Giuseppe Verdi, showing his face and a large, dark top hat. The background is a solid blue color.

THE MUSIC OF GIUSEPPE VERDI

November 15 at 7:30 pm | November 17 at 3:00 pm



Annual Membership Application

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City, State and Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

New Member

Renewing Member

I (we) can help the Manatee Opera Guild in these ways (please check all appropriate boxes)

Literature design

Publicity

Event planning

Refreshments

Fundraising

Serving on the Board

Greeting

Soliciting advertising and gifts

Developing membership

Telephoning

Photography

Editing (newsletters, brochures, letters)

Writing

Setting up/cleaning up

Hosting parties

Modeling at fashion show

Hospitality

Other talent

Membership Level:

- Single Regular** Membership \$40
- Single Sustaining** Membership \$50
- Couple Regular** Membership \$60
- Couple Sustaining** Membership \$70

Make checks payable to **Manatee Opera Guild,** or **MOG**

Send application and payment to:

Jeanne Yeagle
1700 3rd Avenue West, Apt 111
Bradenton, FL 34205

or bring to membership meeting