

The Lyric Letter



Volume 20, Issue 1. January, 2020

**Mary Jo Weiker**

2019-2020

DLOG President

I hope your holidays were filled with peace and harmony. In 2019 we enjoyed listening to multitudes of talented young singers whose wonderful music filled our ears and our hearts. I know 2020 will be a year of musical blessings for all of us.

The Louise Conter Master Class and auditions will be an incredible start of our year. I encourage all of you to attend!

Thank you to Marleen Diamond, Becky Gantner and Wendy Cogdal for a great New Member Party in December. Wendy's table decorations were absolutely gorgeous.

Thank you to Mary Sharon Wells for taking reservations for our luncheons, and to Wendy Cogdal for graciously stepping in to manage the luncheons while her Mother is recovering from an illness.

Please be sure to check your calendars for the Opera on Tuesdays and get your checks in early. We have had several members come to lunches without having sent in their reservations or checks. The Country Clubs cannot properly plan food for this. I hope we can

be better as an organization with this.

Thank you to all of the DLOG volunteers who make our events so enjoyable and to our Board of Directors who make sure we are on the right track.

Please be sure to bring guests and potential new members to our events. What we do is certainly worth sharing! I'm looking forward to a great 2020. May it be a year of fabulous singing and wonderful friendships.



Welcome, New Members!

DLOG continues to grow! Since July, we have added 40 new members, including the 11 members who have joined since the last newsletter! Our new members and their sponsors enjoyed getting to know one another at the New Member Reception held just prior to the December 3rd Opera on Tuesday. Sharing mimosas and each other's interest in opera created a lovely social event.

We need YOUR help to continue to grow the membership from the current 205 members to 225 by June. Our One Member, One New Voice for Opera membership drive continues through May. Please help us by sponsoring one new member and adding one new voice for opera!



Our Signature Event!

COMPETITION *for* COLORADO SINGERS

PRESENTED BY
DENVER LYRIC OPERA GUILD

The ***Competition for Colorado Singers***, DLOG's signature event, debuted in 1984 to support singers ages 23-32 in pursuing their operatic careers. Cash awards are given to the top 15 winners. Since 1984, the Guild has awarded over **\$800,000 to *Competition* winners!**

Two separate sets of three judges—all of them opera professionals from across the United States—judge the *Competition*. The first set of judges chooses the fifteen candidates to compete in the Finals, and the second set of judges selects the winners.

2019 Competition Singers



Matthew Peterson, Griffin Hogan Tracy, Erin Hodgson, Kira Dills-DeSurra, Kyrie Laybourn, Eric McConnell, Katheryne Baker, Amy Maples, Daisha Togawa, Jovahna Borboa

Come Watch the Competition!

Louise C. Conter Master Class

Feb. 15, 2020, 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Preliminary Competition

March 7, 2020, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Competition Finals

March 21, 2020, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

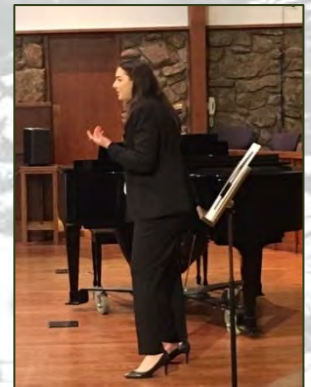
At Calvary Baptist Church

6800 E. Girard, Denver 90024

Box lunches can be ordered for the Master Class and the preliminaries.



2019 1st Place winner baritone
Matthew Peterson



2019 3rd Place winner mezzo
Kira Dills-DeSurra

The Competition is **FREE** *and open to the public!*

Please plan to attend and bring a friend or two!

Louise C. Conter Master Class

February 15: 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

The Master Class will be taught by **Cherity Koepke**, Director of Education and Community Engagement at Opera Colorado.

All singers accepted for the *Competition* have an opportunity to participate in the Master Class, free of charge.

The Master Class is free and open to all! Plan to attend to experience the inner working of singing and performing opera.

Cherity Koepke



Did You Know?

Louise Conter (1924-1998) had a lifelong love of opera and the desire to help aspiring young singers. Upon her death in 1998, the Denver Lyric Opera Guild received an extraordinary bequest that laid the foundation for the Guild's endowment. In gratitude, DLOG honored Louise C. Conter by naming the Master Class after her.

Louise was an only child and grew up in Brighton. She graduated from Cathedral High School and embarked on a career in nursing. She trained and worked at Mercy Hospital in Denver before moving to the Colorado Springs Penrose Hospital. Louise returned to Denver in 1956 and served as a surgical nurse at St. Anthony's Hospital for 25 years.

Louise played the piano and was a strong supporter of local musical organizations. Although Louise was a member of the Denver Lyric Opera Guild, she was often unable to attend many Guild events due to her career. But she seldom missed the annual meeting or the opera bus tours to Central City. After retiring and until her death, Louise lived at the Commerce City dairy farm owned by her grandparents.

Through Louise's kindness and generosity, the Guild has the means to support young singers through the *Competition for Colorado Singers*, plus our grants to area opera companies' apprentice and collegiate voice programs. Her legacy gift ensures that the Guild will fulfill its mission of supporting young singers for many years to come.

Where Are They Now?

Tenor Mark Van Arsdale was the 2010 *Competition for Colorado Singers* 2nd Place Winner. According to his mother Kathy Van Arsdale (a new DLOG member), this provided him with a marvelous financial boost at just the right time in his career! He used his winnings to audition in France, gaining 2 agents, several exciting European contracts, and an apprenticeship with Opéra National du Rhin in Strasbourg, France. His wonderful sponsor, Hilja Herfurth, a member of DLOG, remained a family friend until her recent death. He was also a winner of the Metropolitan Opera Rocky Mountain Auditions in 2009.

Mark is now a full time professional, earning many contracts. He performs primarily in France and speaks 5 languages. Last year he sang in Ecuador, Hungary, France, and Morocco. He remains forever grateful for the opportunities offered to him via Denver Lyric Opera Guild's *Competition* auditions. These propelled his career forward into professionalism!

For more information: <https://www.blg-paris.com/van-arsdale-english>



Mark Van Arsdale

January's Opera on Tuesday – Including a Mini Master Class!

For the January 7 *Opera on Tuesday*, the Opera Colorado Artists in Residence presented a delightful program featuring arias and ensemble pieces from opera, musical theatre and more. Pieces were performed as if on stage, but without sets and costumes, creating an intimate and engaging experience. A brief description of each piece was given before the performance.

In addition, just for DLOG, Cherity Koepke, Director of the Artist in Residence Program, conducted a *mini Master Class*, giving our members and guests a glimpse into the inner working of singing and performing opera.



News about *Opera on Tuesday*!

Our committee has decided to use a Table Number seating format, as was used at the Summer Party, for upcoming *Opera on Tuesday* gatherings. We think this will simplify the search for a place to sit at our luncheons. When you make your reservation, include the name(s) if there are attendees with whom you'd like to be seated. You can even reserve the full table for yourself and friends!!

For those who do not know, Maradith Wilkins —our V.P. of Education (responsible for *Opera on Tuesday*) — has been recovering from a fall and is doing well. Her daughter, Wendy Cogdal, has very generously stepped in to fill the position. *Kudos and thank you to Wendy!!*

Arias and Jewels

Mark your calendars for our major fundraiser of the year, Arias and Jewels, an evening cocktail party with entertaining performances by our young singers, partnered with our jewelry and fine treasures sale on Thursday, June 4th, 6:00 to 9:00 pm. The sale will then be open to the public on Friday, the 5th, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. All events will be held at Mile Hi Church Community Center, NE corner of West Alameda and Garrison, with plenty of parking, including over 20 handicapped spaces.



To schedule a pickup, contact Lisa Curtis at 720-289-2719, LLCurt@comcast.net

And don't forget to start donating bottles of wine (over \$20 value) for the Cork Pull fundraiser at the Arias Gala!

We have received many lovely and valuable items for the sale, but will continue to collect the following items through the May 5th Annual Meeting:

Treasures to Donate:

- Fine gold, silver and gemstone jewelry
- Native American silver & turquoise jewelry
- Vintage Mexican silver jewelry
- Costume jewelry – vintage & new
- Sterling entertaining and serving pieces (no silver plate please)
- Designer purses
- Vintage evening/opera purses
- Opera fashions

An Invitation to Get Involved

We are happy to announce that we have secured experienced and enthusiastic candidates for most Board of Directors positions for the June 2020 – May 2021 term. You are invited to join our dynamic team by submitting your interest in the following openings.

Membership Vice President – Serves on the Board of Directors. Receives new and renewing membership applications and maintains the membership database. Compiles the membership listings and other information for the annual Membership Directory.

Recording Secretary – Serves on the Board of Directors. Records and maintains minutes of all Executive Committee, Board and Annual Meetings. Maintains official and other records of the organization. Receives annual reports from all officers two weeks prior to the May annual meeting and provides copies to the membership at the annual meeting.

Treasurer - Serves on the Board of Directors, the Executive, Finance and Competition committees. Receives, deposits and disburses all monies. Presents a consolidated financial report at every board meeting consisting of a balance sheet and income statement. Reconciles monthly bank statements, and reports that information to the DLOG accounting service for preparation of monthly report. Arranges for filing of Federal Income Tax Return by the CPA. Assists and advises the president on insurance matters.

For more information,
contact Lisa Curtis, Nominating Committee Chair
720-289-2719, LLCurt@comcast.net.

In Memoriam

We are sorry to say that several longtime
Denver Lyric Opera Guild members have passed away.

Jeanette Thrower
passed on Sept. 26,
2019. She was a
longtime member of
DLOG, served on many
committees, and was
President in 2004-
2005. Jeanette's family
requested that any
memorial donations be
given in her name to
Denver Lyric Opera
Guild.

Carol Koclanes
passed Oct. 10,
2019. She was a
Denver Lyric Opera
Guild member for many
years. Carol's family
requested that any
memorial donations be
given in her name to
Denver Lyric Opera
Guild.

Robert Graham
passed away on
Dec. 7. He was a
very longtime member
of Denver Lyric Opera
Guild.

Designed and formatted by Deborah Natelson



DENVER LYRIC OPERA GUILD
P.O. Box 339
Englewood, CO 80151