



# *The Lyric Letter*

**Volume 23, Issue 10, November 2023**

PO Box 339, Englewood, CO 80151  
[www.DenverLyricOperaGuild.org](http://www.DenverLyricOperaGuild.org)



## *Measure for Measure*

We have noticed the darkness covering our world since the Daylight Savings time switch. We have noticed dark world issues surrounding us: war, genocide, famine, mass shootings. As we approach the Winter Solstice, much about our world appears dark. Romans, Druids, Pagans and others enjoyed holidays involving light during the darkest days of winter. Christians, Hindus and Jews observe holidays that involve light during this time. Diwali is a major Hindu holiday celebrating light over darkness as symbolized with special clay lamps lit for the celebration.

These remind all that inner light overcomes spiritual darkness. The Jewish Festival of Lights, Hanukkah, celebrates the rededication of the 2nd Temple in Jerusalem. The lamp with oil for 1 day burned for 8 days:

“A great miracle happened there”. For Christians, Christmas is a major holiday near the Winter Solstice (we don’t know exactly when Jesus was born...). It still contains pagan symbols as part of traditional celebrations: wreaths on the door, Christmas trees, the Yule Log, and mistletoe! Our family gathers each Christmas Eve in candlelight to hear four stories read by the grandparents, aunts and uncles: Luke 2, Eugene Fields’ Jest ‘Fore Christmas, (Did you know he was from Denver? Do you know where his library is? Can you employ the proper accent and demeanor in reading this portrayal of a 10-year-old boy?),

Virginia O'Hanlon's letter to the editor of the Chicago Sun (a fantastic essay on why belief in Santa Claus is vital), and Clement Moore's 'Twas the Night Before Christmas while we smell Norwegian Julekake rising. What are your special traditions?

For many, the "Christmas Blues" are real. Reminders of grief, suffering, loss, pain, abuse, loneliness and other difficulties that occurred during this season can deeply affect some. Being surrounded by joyous celebrants can be very painful. As the granddaughter, daughter, and sister of recovered alcoholics, I can understand why our church offers a Blue Christmas service to support those who suffer during the holidays. Some people are affected to varying degrees by Seasonal Affective Disorder in which victims suffer depressive symptoms which appear in the months of less sunlight. My friend who suffers from SAD relaxes by the light of special lamps, listening to music. Music is associated with each of the holidays mentioned above; special Diwali classical dance music, the mighty hymn "Maoz Tzur" of Hanukkah, dozens of Christmas Carols. Many memorable classical works are related to Christmas: J. S. Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*, Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, Anderson's *Sleigh Ride*. Two of the most popular Christmas performances in the United States are Handel's *Messiah* and Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*. In other parts of the world, these works are performed any time of year. This year, why not invite music into your holiday realm? Choirs, orchestras, ballet troupes—all have been rehearsing for you! The magic of live performance can do wonders for the soul!

Share a performance with loved ones to brighten their lives, too. Remember with pleasant nostalgia, holidays past: I can clearly recall one Christmas Eve standing in the pew next to me (at age 21) my 82-year-old grandmother's quavering tone—right on pitch—her face full of radiant joy singing her favorite carol: *There's a Song In the Air!* The melodic line of this carol with arpeggios and great leaps is probably too difficult to make it a big hit, sadly—it's gorgeous! Listen to Christmas Carol texts: "And the star spreads its light as the beautiful sing", or "Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light" (*O Little Town of Bethlehem*—now in the Israeli West Bank), and more with the light over darkness themes.

Come, All Ye Faithful! "The people who walk in darkness will see a great light!" (Isiah 9, quoted in *Messiah*). Face the darkness with renewed determination to overcome the darkness with light! Let music lead the way! Enjoy this very MUSICAL SEASON!

Why not start with a visit to our DLOG Opera on Tuesday this December 5 with students from the University of Colorado? Hoping to see you there!

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## **Our Mission**

**Denver Lyric Opera Guild's mission is to support and encourage young opera singers through grants to University Opera Programs and Young Artist Programs; to provide continuing education for members' appreciation and knowledge of opera; and by sponsoring an annual Competition for Colorado Opera Singers.**

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## **November 2023 Opera on Tuesday with the DU Lamont Opera Theatre**

On November 7, 2023, DLOG held another successful Opera on Tuesday hosting the fabulous DU Lamont Opera Theatre directed by DLOG judge and master class instructor Matthew Plenk. Check out the photos below for highlights!

All photos courtesy of DLOG Photographer **Linda Young**. For more photos from this event, check out the [DLOG Gallery](#).



DU Lamont Opera Theatre: Beth Nielsen(pianist), Matthew Plenk (ArtisticDirector), Megan Pryor, Regan Lewis, Natacha Condor, Sibö Msibi, Claudia Diaz, Mason O'Brien



Gary Landis, Jim Stookesberry, Jenene Stookesberry, Betty Natelson, Robert Natelson, Thora Aarvig, Jim Aarvig





Marcia Hoehler, Aida Souviron, Deanna Leino, Doug Barnert, Claudia Diaz, BJ Ellison, Sue Ellison



Phyllis Wicklund, Charlotte Bowlds, Gene Young, Dominic Donato (sitting), Ian Goyman, Veda Rogers, Carolyn Harrison

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## **Calling all volunteers! DLOG Headshot Day**

If you have a free hour or two this Sunday (December 3, 2023), we could use your help with Denver Lyric Opera Guild's first ever Headshot Day. Nothing strenuous or difficult would be involved. We just need a

few folks to help greet singers at the door on arrival and to check them in. If you would like to help, please contact either Karen Bruggenthies (303/550-1863) or Gayle Landis (303/810-8712). Event hours are 10:30 AM thru 4:30 PM.

Just let us know what hour(s) you might be available. It is not necessary to stay for the whole event. More information on the event is listed below. As of today, we have 22 talented young singers who will be participating, many of whom you might recognize from past Competitions.

This should be a fun time, so we hope you will consider helping out!

Thank you for your consideration! Happy Holidays!



Presents

# HEADSHOT DAY!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2023 – 10:00 AM to 4:30 PM

Gary & Gayle Landis  
1 Wilder Lane  
Littleton, CO 80123

Denver Lyric Opera Guild is a non-profit membership organization that provides financial support for young Colorado opera singers. Traditionally our support has come through grants to area colleges and universities and opera company young artist programs, and through prize monies awarded through our annual Competition for Colorado Singers. This year we are expanding our reach by providing a day for aspiring young Colorado opera singers to have access to a professionally done headshot at a greatly reduced price. As an organization, we understand that pursuing a career in opera comes with many financial challenges. While a professionally done headshot is a must for applications and websites, it can be a strain on a young artist's budget. This is where Denver Lyric Opera Guild comes in.

For a signup fee of just \$20, we are offering up to 25 young area opera singers the opportunity to receive a headshot taken by Jamie Kraus. Ms. Kraus is one of Colorado's leading headshot and arts photographers. Each singer will get one 15-minute studio session, with one outfit. Sessions come with one fully retouched photo included, with the option for the singer to purchase more at the session.

Visit [www.denverlyricoperaguild.org](http://www.denverlyricoperaguild.org) to register. Registration done on a first come first served basis.



**Jamie Kraus Photography**  
DENVER BRANDING AND HEADSHOT PHOTOGRAPHER  
COLORADO PERFORMING ARTS PHOTOGRAPHER





I strive to bring out my client's true essence, character, and humanity.

Whether you are an individual looking for a relaxed, stress-free photo session or a performing arts organization who wants to excite your audience, I can help tell your story. From choreographers to small business owners to theater companies, I love to work with creatives who want to get their message out to the world in a powerful way.

I got my start earning a photography degree and interning at some amazing performing arts festivals in the Northeast. After moving to Denver, I embarked on my own business and began to photograph dance, opera, and theater. I soon expanded to photographing passionate people who want quality headshots or personal branding sessions that tell their story in a meaningful way.

Karen Bruggenthies

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**Art Song Colorado Invites You to the December Performances  
of Always Something Sings**



Art Song Colorado invites DLOG members to their December performances of Always Something Sings featuring DLOG Competition multi-year finalists Gabrielle Razafinjatovo, Margaret Ozaki Graves, and Sabina Balsamo. Performances are December 3, 7 and 9 in Highlands Ranch, Colorado Springs, and Denver, respectively.

#### Always Something Sings: Songs and Poems of Hope and Inspiration

As we enter winter, in a challenging world, join Art Song Colorado for a journey from challenges and pain and experience our artists songs that bring comfort and hope for the future.

We believe that "Always Something Sings" will offer a more profound and meaningful experience for our audience in these difficult times. Executive Director Eapen Leubner's message sheds light on the inspiration and intent behind this evolution, and we hope it deepens your connection to the upcoming concert. "Always Something Sings" represents the idea that even in the darkest times, there is light. The small joys, beauty, and kindness in this world matter. We hope to uplift and bring joyful moments to you, our wonderful audience, at this time.

Your understanding and support mean the world to us, and we invite you to join us in embracing this new chapter. [Click here to see Eapen's video message.](#) We welcome any questions or discussion about this change.

#### Starring

Dr. Margaret Ozaki Graves, soprano  
Gabrielle Razafinjatovo, mezzo soprano  
Eapen Leubner, tenor  
Mallory Bernstein, piano

Curated by the artists and Sabina Balsamo

[For Details Click Here!](#)

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## Opera on Tuesday Notes...





Thank you to all who have attended our first three Opera on Tuesday presentations of the year!

We are very pleased to have the always dynamic Jeremy Reger present our **December 5 Holiday Opera on Tuesday** featuring singers from the CU Eklund Opera, it will be festive, and Jeremy promises a bit of spice too. [Click Here to Register Now!](#) Registration Closes Dec. 1!

December is the perfect time to bring a friend to enjoy a delicious lunch along with the sights and beautiful sounds of the season. Many of our new members have joined following an invitation to Opera on Tuesday and we ask each member to bring a guest and see first-hand what we do and the Opera programs we support through our Competition for Colorado Singers.

Early registrations are always appreciated as we must give final guest counts immediately after registration closes. The new 'click on the link' feature is gaining in popularity it's quick, easy and produces a receipt. Checks are welcome as well. *Per policy, please note we cannot offer refunds for cancellations after the registration deadline.*

We look forward to wassailing with you on December 5!

**Gayle Landis**

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## Marlis Smith

Longtime supporter of the DLOG Competition and of the operatic arts, Marlis Smith, passed away on September 10. Marlis and his wife Shirley were passionate supporters of arts organizations. Opera Colorado, The Santa Fe Opera, the Central City Opera, the Denver Symphony, the Denver Art Museum, the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, and the University of Denver's Lamont School of Music were some of his favorites. He also loved the art of collecting. He was proud to be a part of the Denver community and a long-time resident of Cherry Hills Village.

[Click Here to Read the Complete Marlis Smith Obituary](#)



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## DLOG Directory

To access Denver Lyric Opera Guild's current online directory, simply go the DLOG website at:  
[denverlyricoperaguild.org/directory](http://denverlyricoperaguild.org/directory).

Please note this is a password protected area of the site so as to only be accessed by DLOG members. Please do not share the password or use the directory for any business or marketing purposes. The password is "Opera!". That's capital O, "Opera" followed by an exclamation point.

To inform us of corrections to the directory, please email [admin@denverlyricoperaguild.org](mailto:admin@denverlyricoperaguild.org) .

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## Opera Around Colorado

### **LOT Celebrates the Holidays: Dreaming of a White Christmas**

Dec 16, TPC Country Club Ballroom, Berthoud

Nothing makes the holiday season more magical than a backdrop of snow and songs from and inspired by favorite Christmas songs. Celebrate the holidays with Loveland Opera Theatre and be part of a new Holiday tradition as we sing in the season at the beautiful Country Club Ballroom at TPC in Berthoud. This



concert features some of Loveland Opera Theatre's favorite singers from its mainstage.

[Click Here for Tickets](#)



### **Opera on Tap at LUKI Brewery - On-Demand Holiday Special**

Dec 16, LUKI Brewery, Arvada

You know it, you love it, the annual Opera on Tap Colorado Holiday Extravaganza is coming to LUKI Brewery 6:00 p.m. December 16. Mark your calendars. We at Opera on Tap know it's the most wonderful time of the year because you, the audience, get to author this zany holiday special in real time by voting what should happen next!

This year, featuring a special, small batch beer, brewed just for this event! You won't want to miss it! Seating will be German Beer Hall Style! We want to make the most of the space we have, so make some friends

[Register Here!](#)



### **Zachary Nelson and Megan Marino**

Dec 22, Creede, CO

As part of the Creede Musical Arts Collective 2023 Holiday Season, Baritone Zachary Nelson and Mezzo Soprano Megan Marino will be performing a holiday recital at the Creede Community Church.

[Click for Info](#)

### ***Amahl and the Night Visitors***

Dec 23, 24, Central Presbyterian Church, Denver

CENTRAL CITY  
**OPERA**

*Amahl and the Night Visitors* is a family-friendly opera and has been enduringly popular since its premier in 1951. Commissioned by NBC as the first opera written for television, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* debuted on December 24, 1951 becoming the first network television Christmas special to become an annual tradition. Composer Gian Carlo Menotti drew inspiration for the opera from Hieronymus Bosch's *The Adoration of the Magi*, which hangs in the Metropolitan

Museum of Art, and from his childhood in Italy where gifts were brought at Christmas by the Three Kings instead of Santa Claus.

[Click for Info and Tickets](#)



**Winter Song**

Jan 14, Fort Collins

Opera Fort Collins presents "Winter Song", a sparkling gala of song and celebration to launch our 44th annual opera season.

The event will feature an evening of fine foods, a cash bar, fanciful auction items, mystery boxes, and a spectacular live performance of opera arias and art songs by guest artist,

dramatic baritone Dr. John Seesholtz.

[Click to RSVP](#)



***Elixir of Love* Final Dress Rehearsal**

Jan 24, Opera Colorado Opera Center

This abridged, hour-long performance set in old-West Colorado is sure to delight audiences of all ages with its mix of romance and comedy.

Nemorino loves the town's brainy beauty, Adina. But the dashing sergeant Belcore arrives and sets his sights upon Adina, too. Desperate, Nemorino asks a traveling salesman, Dr. Dulcamara, to sell him a powerful elixir of love that will convince Adina that he is the only one for her.

[Tickets Here](#)





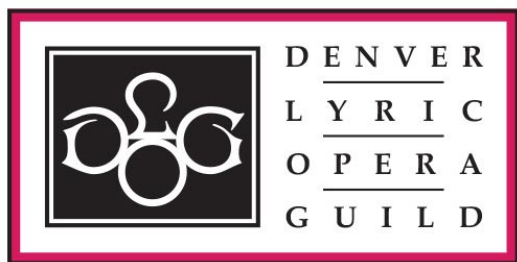
## Painting with a Twist: Dutchman Edition

Jan 29, Painting With a Twist - Lakewood

Create art inspired by the sets and costumes for *The Flying Dutchman* created by EMMY-nominated designer Alan E. Muraoka.

With a drink in hand, you will be guided by an artist to paint your own nautical masterpiece!

[Tickets Here](#)



DENVER LYRIC OPERA  
GUILD

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