



# *The Lyric Letter*

**Volume 25, Issue 1, January 2025**

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



Fellow DLOG Members –

It's hard to believe that we are already through the first month of 2025! I hope everyone had a wonderful Holiday Season, and that you have managed to stay warm through our recent weeks of “Stock Show weather”!

After a bit of a lull with the holidays, we are now moving into the busy season for the Denver Lyric Opera Guild. As I'm sure you are all aware, it is the express mission of the Guild to support young Colorado singers in their pursuit of a career in opera. Now is “when the rubber hits the road” in implementing this mission.

We are currently in the process of reviewing and approving this year's grants for Colorado Universities and young artists programs.

These grants are typically used to provide scholarships to promising young singers, or to support young artist and outreach programs. To date, DLOG has awarded over \$1,000,000.00 in grant monies to these programs.

The Guild is also working actively on our upcoming Competition for Colorado Singers. Each year this Competition awards almost \$40,000 in prize monies to talented young Colorado Singers. To date, we have awarded over \$1,000,000.00 in total prize money. This year we have over 40 singers registered for the Competition, including singers from CU, DU, CSU, UNC, Opera Colorado, and Colorado resident singers. Some are singers we have hosted in the past. Others are new to the Competition. Either way, we are very excited to see and hear this year's crop of young opera singers!

Our Judges Chair, Scott Finlay, has put together a truly outstanding stable of judges for this year's Competition (see newsletter announcement). They bring with them a wide range of expertise and professional experience. The feedback that they can offer our singers will be invaluable. Many thanks to Scott for his efforts on our behalf!

Please mark your calendars for March 1 (prelims) and March 15 (finals), and plan on attending this remarkable Competition. Your support and audience participation make all the difference for these young singers, and in the process, you will be experiencing a wonderful two days of song!

Also consider attending the Judges' Dinner following the Finals on March 15th. At the dinner you get a chance to interact with our judges and Competition winners. It is always a fun and lively evening. Watch your email for registration information.

A big thanks to all of you, our members, for helping to make our grant program and Competition possible!

**Karen Bruggenthies**  
**President DLOG 2024-25**

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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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## Announcing the DLOG 2025 Competition for Colorado Singers: March 1 and March 15



PRESENTED BY  
DENVER LYRIC OPERA GUILD

Get ready for the **Competition for Colorado Singers!** You are cordially invited to the **March 1 Prelims** to hear 42 singers vie for the opportunity to sing in the **Finals on March 15**. Both auditions events are free and open to the public. They are held at Calvary Baptist Church, at Hampden and Monaco. Parking is on the east side. You may also stream them online. We began this option during COVID, and continue to provide this service to members, parents, students, and the general public. The March 1 Preliminary event is 9-5, and DLOG is offering the possibility of a delicious Bagel Deli box lunch for purchase. Join us for a chatty and fun evaluation session to choose our favorite artists! Thank you, Noralee Bush for arranging this lunch!

The Competition Finals are March 15 from 1-5. The winners are announced following judges' deliberations at the close of the singing. What an exciting prospect! Thank you, Dr Peter Van Arsdale, for grant writing and kind inquiries to round up prize money! We are grateful to members who donate to the competition to honor and remember opera fans and causes. This is big, important money for these wonderful artists-in-training! They have worked so hard to earn it!

An additional pre-professional contact and network opportunity in Europe is offered to all applicants this year. Former Competition Winner and European star Mark Van Arsdale has been named Artistic Director of the Opéra des Landes Opera Academy Program in SW France. Candidates may apply for the Summer Program in France in advance of the Competition. During the Competition Prelims, Mark will sit with the judges to evaluate singers for the French Opera Academy program as they sing arias for the Competition! Two auditions in one! Those going to France will live on a sandy beach with transportation provided to the Opera des Landes performance hall in Souston; training, French food (!), coaching, participation in a production of a Mozart opera, French culture, language and diction instruction, and a how to get an agent and career in Europe. The charming Opera Academy town of Souston is 35 minutes from Bayonne, and 45 minutes of the glamorous beach resort of Biarritz, 50 minutes from Spain. Applications (fee \$20) are on YAP Tracker and the Opéra des Landes website. The remarkable artistic input provided by judges, their networking possibilities, and the new French Summer Program connection made available to singers add tremendous value to our Competition from the applicants' perspective!

Following the Competition Finals, you may join the winners, our remarkable judges, and Mark at our delightful annual **Judges' Dinner** at Maggiano's restaurant (I-25 at Dry Creek Rd.) Maggiano's is well known for delicious Italian food in copious amounts. Gayle Landis has graciously organized this event! Thank you, Scott Finlay for arranging such outstanding judges! We can't wait to talk to them!

We are grateful to the Calvary Baptist Church and their terrific staff for their efforts to support our DLOG work. Many thanks to the 15 Competition Committee members and dozen backstage volunteers corralled by Jackie Writz for making this wonderful event happen!

Our April Fool's Day, our Opera On Tuesday, organized by Rebecca McAlister, provides our entire membership with an opportunity to hear our Winners perform in person. We hope you are able to join us then for an outstanding program! Please watch our website for information on signing up for the box lunch, judges' dinner, and April OOT.

See you soon! Come! Partake! Feed your Soul!

## 2025 Competition Committee

Kathy Van Arsdale	Competition VP
Karen Bruggenthies	President, DLOG
Gayle Landis	President-Elect, DLOG
Tom Conroy	Finance VP
BJ Ellison	Public Relations VP
Karen Bruggenthies	Candidate Chair
Jackie Writz	Candidate Check-In
Marleen Diamond	Facilities Manager
Norelee Bush	Hospitality Chair

Linda Bjelland	Judges Books
Scott Finlay	Judges Selection
Peter Van Arsdale	Development
Gayle Landis	Judges Event
Rebecca McAlister	April Luncheon
Ian Caiozzi	Communication

**Kath Van Arsdale**  
**Competition VP**

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## **Opera on Tuesday Recap Tuesday January 21st with Opera Colorado Artists in Residence**

The January 21st Opera on Tuesday featured the Opera Colorado Artists in Residence. Thank you wonderful singers and our Opera on Tuesday Committee for putting on this wonderful event!

All photos are courtesy of **Linda Young**. As always, to see more photos from DLOG events, make sure to check out the [DLOG Gallery](#).



Cherity Koepke (Opera Colorado Artists in Residence Director), James Eder, Daniel Miller, Melanie Dubil, Hallie Schmidt, Alex Granito, Oleg Bellini, Oliver Poveda Zavada



Diane Graham, Eapen Leubner (Director of Art Song Colorado), Jeanie Davis, Jennifer Heglin



Row1- Mary Bahde, Phyllis Wicklund, Kathy Hammer Row2- Barbara Berryman, Julie Johnston

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## Opera on Tuesday Notes



### *OPERA ON TUESDAY NOTES....*

The 2024-2025 Opera on Tuesday season has entered its "hibernation phase" which means it's time for the Competition for Colorado Singers to commence. Opera on Tuesday will start again this April 1st and will feature the finalists of the 2025 Competition. Toi toi toi to all 2025 competitors!

Make sure to mark your calendar with the

### **2024-2025 Opera on Tuesday dates:**

**September 10, 2024**

**October 1, 2024**

**November 5, 2024**

**December 10, 2024**

**January 21, 2025**



April 1, 2025

May 13, 2025

All luncheons will be held at Columbine Country Club who continues to be a welcoming venue with staff who graciously works within our budget, reserves our advance dates and cheerfully responds to special requests.

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## Announcing Judges for the 2025 DLOG Competition for Colorado Singers

DENVER LYRIC OPERA GUILD  
2025 COMPETITION FOR YOUNG SINGERS

### Judges for the Preliminary Round



Erin C. Lippard, D.M.A. Dr. Erin Lippard is a distinguished mezzo-soprano and educator, serving as an Assistant Professor of Music and Director of Vocal Studies at York College of Pennsylvania. She holds degrees from James Madison University, Indiana University School of Music, and a Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Colorado. Dr. Lippard's research focuses on musical theater pedagogy and the concept-to-construction process of Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hansel und Gretel*. Her honors include being a finalist in the Denver Lyric Opera Guild Competition in Colorado and a 2nd Place Winner in the Austrian American Society Competition in Wilmington, Delaware. As a performer, she has appeared in recitals and concerts, including with the Flatiron Trio at the Lower Brandywine Presbyterian Church Concert Series and

faculty recitals at York College. In addition to her academic and performance work, she directed York College's production of *On The Town* in 2023. Her dedication to vocal arts and education continues to inspire students and audiences alike.



Lyndon Meyer is a Tulsa-based pianist and conductor. Mr. Meyer currently serves as Chorus Director, Assistant Conductor, Principal Pianist, and Vocal Coach for Tulsa Opera. He has held vocal coaching positions at the University of Oklahoma, Michigan State University, the Eastman School of Music, and Florida Grand Opera. In February 2019, Meyer made his professional conducting debut with Heartland Opera's production of *La bohème*. He also serves as a staff accompanist for the annual Lotte Lenya Competition and appears as a recitalist and chamber musician throughout the region. He holds degrees from the University of Arkansas (BM) and the Eastman School of Music (MM). Meyer's contributions to Tulsa Opera include conducting the Tulsa Opera Chorus and Orchestra in concerts such as "Grand Voices,"

featuring excerpts from *Carmen*, *Roméo et Juliette*, and *Les Misérables*. He has also collaborated with soprano Sarah Coburn in benefit concerts for Tulsa Opera.



Alex Richardson, Tenor. Mr. Richardson is an American tenor acclaimed for his powerful stage presence and versatile vocal artistry. A native of Las Cruces, New Mexico, he holds degrees from the University of Colorado at Boulder and the Manhattan School of Music. Richardson made his Metropolitan Opera debut as the Shepherd in *Tristan und Isolde* in 2016 and has since returned for roles in *Salome*. He has also covered significant roles at the Met from productions of Brett Dean's *Hamlet*, Wagner's *Das Rheingold*, and Alban Berg's *Lulu*. His diverse repertoire includes leading roles such as Werther in *Werther* with Boston Lyric Opera, Peter Grimes in *Peter Grimes* at the Princeton Festival, and Cavaradossi in *Tosca* at Opera Southwest. On the concert stage, Richardson has been a tenor soloist in works like Mahler's *Das*

*Lied von der Erde* with the Orlando Philharmonic and Handel's *Messiah* with the Santa Fe Symphony. Richardson's performances have been praised for their emotional depth and technical proficiency, making him a sought-after artist in both operatic and concert settings.

## Judges for the Final Round



Ksenia Leletkina, currently Vocal Coach at the Metropolitan Opera and former Head of Young Artists Program at Palm Beach Opera Ms. Leletkina is a Russian-born pianist renowned for her expertise as a vocal coach, recitalist, and conductor. She serves as Principal Coach and Assistant Conductor at Palm Beach Opera, where her "brilliant" playing has been lauded by critics. A specialist in Russian diction and repertoire, Dr. Leletkina is on the faculty at The Juilliard School, teaching Russian diction and vocal literature. She has also been a guest faculty member at the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Program and the Eastman School of Music. Her publications include the Anthology of Russian Songs and the second volume of

Libretti of Russian Operas for Leyerle Publications. Dr. Leletkina earned her Doctor of Musical Arts in Accompanying and Chamber Music from the Eastman School of Music and her Master's degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music, majoring in Piano Performance and Collaborative Piano. Throughout her career, she has collaborated with esteemed artists, including Karita Mattila, Michael Fabiano, and Nicole Cabell, and has performed internationally across Asia, Europe, and the Americas.



Morris Robinson, Bass-Baritone. Mr. Robinson is a celebrated bass-baritone renowned for his commanding stage presence and deeply resonant voice. A graduate of The Citadel and the Boston University Opera Institute, Robinson has established himself as a leading artist in opera and concert performances worldwide. He is a frequent presence on the stages of prestigious opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and San Francisco Opera, where he has performed roles such as Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*, Porgy in *Porgy and Bess*, and the title role in *Attila*. Equally at home on the concert stage, Robinson has appeared with major orchestras such as the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and Los Angeles Philharmonic, performing works ranging from Verdi's Requiem

to Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. Known for his compelling artistry and powerful interpretations, he continues to captivate audiences and critics alike.

Jennifer Rowley, Soprano. Ms. Rowley is an internationally acclaimed soprano celebrated for her unforgettable voice, remarkable stage presence, and deeply expressive artistry. Known for her compelling portrayals of opera's greatest heroines, Ms. Rowley has graced leading opera stages around the globe, including the Metropolitan Opera, Staatsoper Berlin, Teatro Regio Torino, and




Opernhaus Zürich. Her diverse repertoire spans Verdi, Puccini, and French grand opera, with standout roles such as Tosca, Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra*, and Minnie in *La Fanciulla del West*. Critics praise her “intensity of expression” and “splendid soaring instrument.” Beyond the stage, Ms. Rowley is a passionate mentor, dedicated to nurturing the next generation of opera talent. Founder of Jennifer Rowley’s Aria Bootcamp and a frequent masterclass clinician, she works with young artists worldwide, inspiring them with her artistry and expertise. A decorated soprano, Ms. Rowley holds accolades such as the Richard Tucker Career Grant and is a recommended judge for the Metropolitan

Opera Laffont Competition.

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**Ryan Speedo Green at DU**





Internationally renowned bass-baritone, Ryan Speedo Green recently gave a wonderful presentation at Hamilton Hall on the campus of University of Denver, accompanied by pianist, Adam Nielsen. It was sponsored by Opera Colorado patrons where Ryan had been an Artist in Residence many years ago. Visiting with attendees after the performance, Ryan was introduced to our DLOG member Anne Kotch. He was immediately delighted by his conversation with her and fascinated to learn that she is 102 years old! Beaming broadly, he stated to her that he had “never met anyone of 100 years of age”. He grabbed his phone for a personal picture that he wanted take home “to show his children”. As with Ryan, it was a treat for all of Anne’s DLOG friends so see her! Thanks to Anne’s daughter, Jennifer, for the photo.

**Becky Gantner**

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## **An Opportunity to Donate**

Is your mailbox beginning to accumulate piles of appeals for end-of-the-year donations? Ours certainly is! They must assume we want to deplete our resources during the Fourth Quarter of the calendar year! Or take the amount in our Donor Advised Fund to the bottom of the barrel! (Don’t have a DAF? You NEED one and can set it up for free with several financial firms, such as Fidelity.) Do they think we develop a soft spot in our hearts for all of humankind and its animals and its institutions between Halloween and the New Year? THEY have a plan to beg. WE need a plan to respond!

How about considering something already important to you? How about something educational, noble, entertaining, artsy, and completely worthy! Something transparent and well-run! Full of fun people! How about the Denver Lyric Opera Guild??

You don't need to be asked to give. You don't need to be named in the program (if you choose). You don't need to labor to stand up to be recognized at OOT. You can act with agency and independence and give the amount you want, when you want! You can choose a general gift, or label it for a specific cause, such as the Summer Party or Competition for Colorado Singers Candidate Headshots. As your Competition Chair, I'm here to tell you that there are a number of behind-the-scenes expenses involved in running the Competition: rental, tech crew, hospitality, judges fees, judges event dinner—and many more. These are available for your donation largesse! So don't limit your generous donations to pleas from outsiders! If you are so moved, please consider underwriting a cause you clearly value: **DLOG**.

Thank you for caring about the Vocal Arts and the development of young singers.

**Kathy Van Arsdale**  
Competition Chair, DLOG

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## **A Message From Gayle Landis**

My family and I want to express  
Our deepest appreciation for  
the many kind expressions of  
caring and sympathy extended  
to us during this difficult time.  
Gary thoroughly enjoyed being  
part of DLOG with the many  
friends he made.

With our gratitude,

The Landis Family

## Art Song Colorado: All About Love



Art Song Colorado in conjunction with the Chamber Orchestra of the Springs is putting on "All About Love" in Colorado Springs on February 22, 2025 at Broadmoor Community Church.

From Art Song Colorado's Eapen Leubner:

*"I'm excited to share that Art Song Colorado and Chamber Orchestra of the Springs have committed to 5 years of producing new chamber opera. "All About Love" is our first event of the year!*

*I'd love to have you join us for what is sure to be a memorable night and also for an Opera 2030 kickoff on Friday, February 21, 2025 at the Carter Payne in the Springs."*

"All about Love: A Flight of Operas"- Part of the Opera 2030 Initiative  
Saturday, February 22nd, 2025 - 7:00 PM • Broadmoor Community Church

La Voix Humaine by Poulenc (new English translation by Eapen Leubner); The Telephone by Menotti and A Hand of Bridge by Barber.

Lucy is a woman looking for love.

All About Love tells Lucy's story as she navigates three different decades of her life, and three different stages of her relationships.

We start in a college dorm room in 1984, where Lucy is struggling with the ups and downs of young love. Then, happiness abounds in 1994, with an upbeat comedy that ends in a successful marriage proposal. Finally, we check into Elle's marriage a decade later, in 2004, to see that not all has ended exactly as expected.

Joining Lucy along her journey is the omnipresent telephone...bringing her both closer to and further from true love.

Each of these stories takes the form of a different short opera, selected by our music director, Thomas Wilson. These three bite-sized opera samples - this flight of operas, if you will - is the perfect way to introduce opera to newcomers. All three operas will be sung in English, including a



new English translation of La Voix Humaine by Eapen Leubner.

Stephanie Ann Ball (Blind Injustice, Voices of the African Diaspora) returns to the Pikes Peak opera scene, starring as Lucy in all three operas.

For more details and tickets:

<https://www.chamberorchestraofthesprings.org/all-about-love>

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## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

Denver Lyric Opera Guild relies on volunteers to run the organization. A Nominating Committee is formed in the Fall to identify candidates for Board and Committee positions for the following year. Volunteers are needed to fill Board positions, to assist with the Competition for Colorado Singers, the Summer Party and Special Events such as Head Shot Day and the recent Cynthia Lawrence Concert. Volunteering provides the opportunity to forge new friendships, become familiar with the governance of the organization and most importantly to learn and appreciate the value of our mission to support aspiring professional singers through our collegiate grants, the annual Louise Conter Masterclass, and the Competition for Colorado Singers.

If you have a particular area of interest, please email Gayle Landis, [gjple@comcast.net](mailto:gjple@comcast.net)  
The Nominating Committee members will soon begin making calls, please consider volunteering!

**Gayle Landis**

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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



**Renée Fleming, soprano: Voice of Nature: the Anthropocen**

Jan 31, Macky Auditorium, Boulder

Kennedy Center honoree and five-time Grammy Award winner Renée Fleming is one of the most celebrated sopranos of our time. The only classical artist ever to sing the national anthem at the Super Bowl, she performs regularly in the world's greatest opera houses and concert halls. This exceptional performance—inspired by her 2023 album, "Voice of Nature: the Anthropocene"—spans classical, romantic and contemporary music, exploring nature as both inspiration and casualty of humanity. An original National Geographic Society film complements the musical selections in the concert's first half.

with Howard Watkins, piano

[Tickets Here](#)



**Puccini's Double Bill: *Gianni Schicchi* and *Il Tabarro***

Feb 7, 8, 9 Dairy Arts Center, Boulder

A double bill featuring MANY of our wonderful DLOG Competition singers past and present!

Boulder Opera invites you to experience the drama and intensity of Puccini's masterpieces, *Gianni Schicchi* and *Il Tabarro*. This compelling double bill showcases an ensemble orchestra conducted by the acclaimed Brandon Matthews with riveting stage direction by Gene Roberts. *Gianni Schicchi* offers a delightful tale of cunning and humor, while *Il Tabarro* unfolds a gripping story of love and betrayal on the Seine. Together, these operas provide a rich, emotional contrast that captures the essence of Puccini's genius. Join us for an evening of unforgettable

opera contrasting tragedy and comedy with extraordinary melodies.

[Click for Details](#)



### **Opera on Tap at LUKI Brewing - Love at LUKI**

Feb 8, LUKI Brewing, Arvada

Mahatma Gandhi said famously "Where there is love, there is life." It is a driving force behind some of history's greatest stories... it is said love of Helen's face caused men to go to war, love of an ideal caused a country to go to war when that ideal was attacked. There is nothing like it. It is not explainable and yet it is the simplest thing in the world. Come listen to how love spins its way through opera stories, musical theater and art song... all you need is love, paired with some really

delicious beer and great food.

FREE Event! Please Register in advance! Ticket link in Bio!

[Click to Register](#)

COLORADO *Bach* ENSEMBLE

### **St. Matthew Passion, BWV 244**

Feb 21, Central Presbyterian, Denver

Feb 23, Parsons Theatre, Northglenn

Composed in 1727, *Matthäus-Passion* ("St. Matthew Passion"), BWV 244, stands as one of the greatest achievements in Western classical music. Performed several times in Bach's lifetime, it has endured as a testament to Bach's compositional genius. This sacred oratorio, written for soloists, double choir, and double orchestra, vividly depicts the Passion of Christ according to the Gospel of Matthew. Six soloists tell the story: a tenor singing the role of the Evangelist, a bass depicting the role of Jesus, and 4 additional soloists singing the solo arias. A small ripieno chorus sings the chorale melody in the first and the last movement of the first half of the piece.

[Get Tickets](#)



## La Bohème

Feb 22, 25, 27, 28, March 2, Ellie Caulkins Opera House

In an attic in the Parisian Latin Quarter, the chateau is petite, but the personalities are grand. A group of artists live the bohemian lifestyle full of complicated relationships and nights at the café on a starving artist's budget. Through the tumultuous relationships between Mimì and Rodolfo, and Marcello and Musetta, Puccini's best-known opera encourages you to fully appreciate the fragility of life and love.

Enjoy gaining exclusive behind the scenes insight into the process of bringing this delightful story to the stage!. Free Event!

[Performance Details Here!](#)



## Don Pasquale

March 7, Lincoln Center, Fort Collins

Gaetano Donizetti's opera buffa sung in Italian with English supertitles.

[Click for Details](#)



**Lamont School of Music**  
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* and *Sour Angelica*  
April 24-27, Gates Concert Hall Newman Center

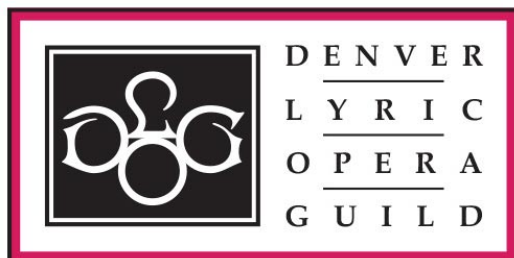
Lamont Opera Theatre presents two of Giacomo Puccini's one-act operas, *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi*. Set in a serene convent, *Suor Angelica* tells the story of the secret heartbreak of Sister Angelica as she confronts devastating news about her past. Delight in the comic brilliance of *Gianni Schicchi*, filled with wit, charm, and unforgettable music. This hilarious tale of family scheming and deception unfolds as a crafty outsider turns the

tables on a greedy inheritance plot.

The production team includes Artistic Director Matthew Plenk and Music Director Sahar Nouri. Matthew S. Crane is the Set Designer and Emily Maddox is the Lighting Designer.

[Details and Tickets Here](#)

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DENVER LYRIC OPERA  
GUILD

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