

# New England Opera Club



*New England Opera Club Newsletter*

*Logo by Barbara Winston*

**Date: December 17, 2017**  
**Time: 2:00 - 4:00 PM**

**Place: Watertown Free Public Library**  
*Lucia Mastrangelo Meeting Room, second floor*  
123 Main Street, Watertown, MA (617) 972-6421

*December 2017 Presentation*

## *Verdi at the Ballet*



Giuseppe Verdi was not only the supreme opera composer without whom there would be insufficient repertory for opera companies even to exist, according to Metropolitan Opera conductor George Schick. He was also a ballet composer of exceptional ability whose endeavors in that field, particularly those works written for the Paris Opéra on demand, are remarkable for their variety and inventiveness. To be truthful of course, his ballets are mere interpolations in the context of existing operas and not complete works in and of themselves like Adam's *Giselle* or Delibes's *Sylvia*. Even though solely *divertissements*, they are unquestionably such of the highest quality.

For French adaptations of his Italian operas, like *Le Trouvère* (*Il Trovatore*) and *Jérusalem* (*I Lombardi alla prima crociata*) and for original works commissioned for the Salle Garnier like *Don Carlos* and *Les Vêpres siciliennes*, he composed some of the most delightful and fascinating music ever written for the ballet genre. In particular, *Ballo della Regina* from *Don Carlos* and *The Four Seasons* from *Vêpres* are minor masterpieces that invite repeat hearings.

For all the closet balletomanes out there, and you know who you are, here is your chance to discover a side to Giuseppe Verdi that you quite possibly never knew existed. *Soyez les bienvenues!*

- Angelo Mammano

### *Directions and parking:*

**From the West:** Take Route 20 East (Main Street) to Watertown Square.

**From the East:** Take Route 16 West (Mt. Auburn Street). Turn right on Main Street.

**Parking:** There are plenty of metered (free on Sunday) parking spaces at the rear of the library, from which you can access the library through the back door. Drive in on the passage just before the Fire House.

Please note: For this month only, NEOC Presentation will be held in the second floor *Lucia Mastrangelo Meeting Room* of Watertown Library. **Since seating is limited, admission will be restricted to paying members of NEOC only.**

*The Library is fully handicap-accessible*



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**Annual Membership Dues:**

\$40 for each individual  
\$15 student with valid ID

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**Past Presidents**

William Miranda (NEOC Co-  
Founder & President Emeritus)  
Jack Fiddler  
Maria Iantosca  
Charlotte Wolfe  
John M. Tischio

**2017 NEOC Programs**  
*(listings are subject to change)*

January 21, 2018: *By popular demand, Ed Tapper returns with Part 2 of his Great Singers Around Boston series.*

**November Presentation: Eleanor Steber, America's Most Neglected Diva**  
Jack Jarzavek entertained NEOC members with a lively and informative afternoon of operatic morsels as sung by what he describes as America's most neglected diva: Eleanor Steber. Those present heard selections from some of her most acclaimed Metropolitan Opera roles, like Donna Anna, Constanze, Fiordiligi, Sophie, the Marschallin, Arabella, Marie, Tosca and Vanessa, as well as from her Carnegie Hall *Cassandre* and *Vienna Kaiserin*.

That a singer could attempt such a variety of roles and succeed in them so persuasively is a testament to her supreme vocal command and interpretive skills. I myself saw her many times at Jordan Hall, at the Met, at the New York City Center and at Lewisohn Stadium. The last time I saw her she was Mother Superior in *The Sound of Music*. If any singer could be considered to have "climbed every mountain", that would be Eleanor Steber. Thank you, Eleanor, and thank you, Jack.

*Angelo Mammano*

The new year is almost here!  
**Membership fees are due in January.**

Note a change in fees for 2018:  
\$40 Single, \$45 Double (Two persons at the same address)  
\$15 student with valid ID.  
Thank you for your support!



**Baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky, 1962-2017**

Hvorostovsky died on 22 November 2017 in London after a two-and-a-half-year battle with brain cancer.

A service was held in Moscow on Nov. 27. The artist is to be buried at Novodevichy Cemetery.

- Wikipedia



## *The Pilgrim's Progress* in Orleans

From its first performance in 1951, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, an opera by Ralph Vaughan Williams, has suffered from a checkered history on stage. Its Covent Garden premiere was criticized for its lack of "theatricality," and the attempt at a revival the following year was a failure.

Those of us who greatly admired recordings of the opera have wondered if a concert performance was the best way to hear this masterpiece. The performances held on October 27 and 28 at the Church of the Transfiguration in Orleans, Massachusetts, prove that *The Pilgrim's Progress* is indeed an opera, and a very good one.

The internationally known choir Gloriam Dei Cantores and the Elements Theatre Company combined with invited soloists and members of the Community of Jesus to mount this production with 40 in the cast, 60 in the chorus, and a full orchestra.

Read the complete review by Dr. Deal W. Hudson: <https://www.newsmax.com/DealWHudson/ralph-vaughan-williams-pilgrims-progress-opera-review/2017/10/30/id/822981/>

♪♪♪♪♪ **Opera Diary** ♪♪♪♪♪

### *Local Opera and Classical Music, November 2017*

For up-to-date activities, visit FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/NEoperaevents/>

Don't miss Erika Reitshamer's programs: December 6 and 17!

December 1, 8 PM

**Odyssey Opera** | *The Trial at Rouen*, Norman Dello Joio

NEC's Jordan Hall, 30 Gainsborough St., Boston | 617.826.1626, [odysseyopera.org/2017-dello-joio-trial-at-rouen/](http://odysseyopera.org/2017-dello-joio-trial-at-rouen/)

December 1, 7:30 PM; December 2-3, 3 PM

**Handel & Haydn Society** | *The Messiah*, Handel

Symphony Hall, 301 Massachusetts Ave., Boston | 617.262.1815, [cart.handelandhaydn.org/single/PSDetail.aspx?psn=12](http://cart.handelandhaydn.org/single/PSDetail.aspx?psn=12)

December 1 & 2, 8 PM; December 3, 2 PM

**Boston College** | *Christmas on the Heights*, University Chorale

<https://ev9.venue.net/cgi-bin/ncommerce3/SEGetEventList?groupCode=CH&linkID=bcpa>

December 1 & 2, 8 PM; December 3, 3 PM

**Boston Camerata** | *A Mediterranean Christmas*

December 1 at 8:00 pm: Follen Church, 755 Massachusetts Ave, Lexington, MA

December 2 at 8:00 pm: First Lutheran Church, 299 Berkeley Street, Boston S

December 3 at 3:00 pm: First Parish Church of Newbury, 20 High Rd., Newbury, MA

617.262.2092, [bostoncamerata.org/the-programs/#program-11](http://bostoncamerata.org/the-programs/#program-11)

December 1-24, varied times

**New Repertory Theatre** | *Man of La Mancha*, Mitch Leigh

Mosesian Center for the Arts, 321 Arsenal Street, Watertown, MA 02472 | 617.923.8487, [newrep.org/productions/man-la-mancha/](http://newrep.org/productions/man-la-mancha/)

December 2, 7:30 PM

**Cantilena - A Women's Chorale** | *Double Delight: Enchanting Music for Women's Chorus and Piano 4-Hands and Duos* |

First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church, 630 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, MA |

[http://www.cantilena.org/current\\_season.htm](http://www.cantilena.org/current_season.htm)

December 2-9, varied times

**Weston Friendly Society** | *Miracle on 34th Street*, Meredith Wilson | Weston Town Hall, 1 Townhouse Road, Weston

December 2-10:

**Cantemus** | *Psalmists and Seers: Chichester Psalms*, Bernstein; *The Midwife's Tale*, Woodman |

888.246.7871, [cantemus.org/concerts/](http://cantemus.org/concerts/)

December 2 at 7:30 pm: First Church Wenham, 1 Arbor St., Wenham

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December 3 at 4:00 pm: Central Congregational Church, 14 Titcomb St., Newburyport  
December 10 at 4:00 pm First Church in Swampscott, 40 Monument Ave., Swampscott

December 3, 9:00 PM

**WCRB 99.5: Voices with Chris Vos** | *Missa Solemnis*, Beethoven

December 6, 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

**Erika Reitshamer** | *A Tribute to Greek-American Opera Legend Maria Callas*  
Town of Sharon Adult Center, 219 Massapoag Avenue | 781.784.8000

December 7, 7:00 PM; December 8 4:00 PM & 9:00 PM

**Harvard-Radcliffe Dramatic Club** | *Sweeney Todd*, Sondheim  
The Oberon, 2 Arrow Street, Cambridge, MA | 617-547-8300, [hrdctheater.com/sweeney-todd/](http://hrdctheater.com/sweeney-todd/)

December 8, 2017 | 8PM

**Boston Early Music Festival** | *Celebrating Heinrich Isaac*, The Tallis Scholars  
St Paul Church, 29 Mt Auburn Street, Cambridge | <http://www.bemf.org/pages/concerts/nextseason.htm>

December 8, 8 PM

**Boston Cecilia** | *A Rose Has Sprung*  
Church of the Advent, 30 Brimmer Street, Boston | [bostoncecilia.org/christmas-concert-2017/](http://bostoncecilia.org/christmas-concert-2017/)

December 8 & 9, 7:30 PM

**Boston Baroque** | *The Messiah*, Handel  
NEC's Jordan Hall, 30 Gainsborough St., Boston | 617.987.8600, [www.bostonbaroque.org/concerts/all-shows](http://www.bostonbaroque.org/concerts/all-shows)

December 8-27, varied times

**The Christmas Revels** | *A Venetian Celebration of the Winter Solstice*  
Harvard University's Sanders Theatre, Cambridge | [revels.org/shows-events/christmas-revels/event-details/](http://revels.org/shows-events/christmas-revels/event-details/)

December 9, 12:55 pm

**Metropolitan Opera Live in HD** | *Hansel and Gretel*, Humperdinck

December 9 & 10

**Cantata Singers** | *Seasonal music by Schütz, Harbison, Holst, Vaughan Williams, and others*  
December 9, 8 PM: 11 Garden Street, Cambridge  
December 10, 3 PM: 1471 Highland Avenue, Needham  
617.868.5885, [cantatasingers.org/December-2017](http://cantatasingers.org/December-2017)

December 10, 3:00 pm

**Boston Cecilia** | *A Rose Has Sprung*  
All Saints Church, 1773 Beacon Street, Brookline | [bostoncecilia.org/christmas-concert-2017/](http://bostoncecilia.org/christmas-concert-2017/)

December 10, 10:00 PM

**WCRB 99.5: Voices with Chris Vos** | *Hansel and Gretel*, Humperdinck

December 13, 8 PM

**Celebrity Series of Boston** | *Jamie Barton, mezzo-soprano*  
Longy School's Pickman Hall, 27 Garden St, Cambridge | 617.482.6661, [celebrityseries.org/barton/index.htm](http://celebrityseries.org/barton/index.htm)

December 15, 8pm

**Chorus Pro Musica** | *Candlelight Christmas at Old South*  
Old South Church, 645 Boylston Street, Boston | 617.267.7442, [choruspromusica.org/concert/candlelight-christmas-old-south/](http://choruspromusica.org/concert/candlelight-christmas-old-south/)

December 17, 2:00-3:30 PM

**Erika Reitshamer** | *Verdi's Falstaff - Opera for Everyone* at Lincoln Library  
Lincoln Public Library, 3 Bedford Road, Lincoln | 781.259.8465, [lincolnpl.org/events/featured-events](http://lincolnpl.org/events/featured-events)

December 17, 9:00 PM

**WCRB 99.5: Voices with Chris Vos** | *La Bohème*, Puccini; *Winterreise*, Schubert