

# New England Opera Club



*New England Opera Club Newsletter*

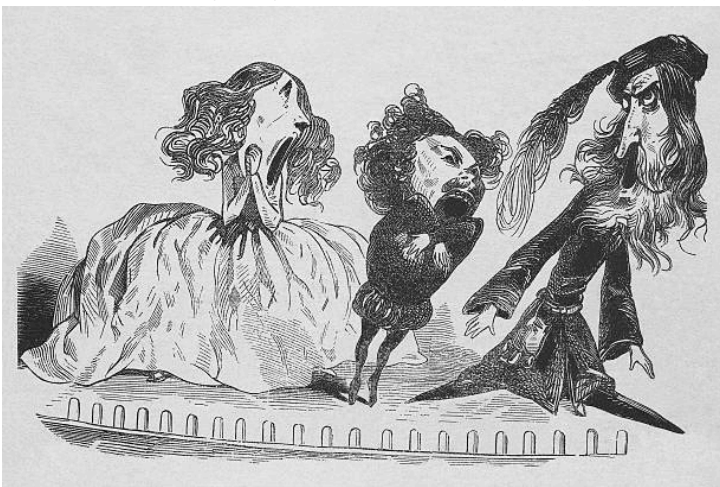
*Logo by Barbara Winston*

**Date: May 12, 2019**  
**Time: 2:00 - 4:30**

**Place: Watertown Free Public Library**  
123 Main St, Watertown, Massachusetts

## *Pirate Treasures*

It has been nearly 25 years since Ed Tapper opened *Orpheus*, one of the country's only stores devoted to opera and classical music. Among the many collections he has purchased for the Commonwealth Avenue shop, Ed came into a vast library of live opera performances on cassette in his first few years of business. The collector who amassed them corresponded and traded with opera and vocal enthusiasts from throughout the U.S. and the world, amassing roughly 20,000 tapes in total. Given the volume of the collection, and the limited space of *Orpheus*, several thousand tapes remained boxed in storage for decades. Recently, Ed completed the Herculean task of going through the tapes, and separating the operatic wheat from the chaff. Having culled some of the most tantalizing morsels for our edification, he will return to the New England Opera Club as our May speaker, presenting a program of these hand-picked "pirate treasures."



His presentation will include a sampling of this diverse, monumental collection, which included live, in-house opera and gala performances from houses throughout the globe, American and European radio broadcasts, and compilations of some wonderful, but lesser known artists, as well as several famous singers performing roles and repertoire they seldom sang or recorded commercially. Almost all the selections have never been made available, either on record---or even on Youtube. They will feature singers of every vocal range, spanning the 78 RPM era to some of the great singers of today; and, as always, we will be treated to a number of pleasant surprises.

### **Directions and parking:**

- *From the West:* Take Route 20 East (Main Street) to Watertown Square. WFPL is at 123 Main Street.
- *From the East:* Take Rte. 16 (Mt. Auburn St.) west. Turn right on Main Street. WFPL is at 123 Main Street.
- *Parking:* Limited metered parking is in back of the library and on the street. All parking is metered - Sundays are free.
- *Public Transportation:* The library is accessible via MBTA Bus routes Express 502, Express 504, 52, 57, 59, 70, 70A, and 71. It is less than a five minute walk to the library from the buses that arrive at Watertown Yard.

***The Library is fully handicap-accessible.***

*The library features an elevator to get us to the lower floor, where the lecture will take place.*

**President**

Peter McNamara

**Vice-president**

Wendy Mandel

[info@neoperaclub.org](mailto:info@neoperaclub.org)

**Treasurer**

Mima Leivi

617-983-0310

[mleivi@msn.com](mailto:mleivi@msn.com)

**Webmaster and  
Newsletter Assistant**

Marion Leeds Carroll

[marion@leedscarroll.com](mailto:marion@leedscarroll.com)

**Board**

Andrew Altenbach

Maria-Pia Antonelli

617-527-1372

Felice Kahn

617-332-7230

Angelo Mammano

781-777-2178

[operangelo@comcast.net](mailto:operangelo@comcast.net)

Erika Reitshamer

508-485-1214

[erika@reitshamer.com](mailto:erika@reitshamer.com)

Noel and Deborah Rose

617-383-5045

**To contact NEOC:**

[operainfo@neoperaclub.org](mailto:operainfo@neoperaclub.org)

**Letters or Articles to  
the Editor:**

NEOC

Mima Leivi

80 Paul Gore St., #1

Jamaica Plain, MA

02130

**Annual Membership:**

\$40 for each individual

/ \$45 for a couple at

same address

\$15 student with valid

ID

Mail check, payable to

NEOC, to

Mima Leivi, Treasurer

(see address above)

**2019 NEOC Programs**

(listings are subject to change)

June 2, Speaker Erika Retshamer

July: no presentation

♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪

**The Best Usher at the Met**

*Das Rheingold* was out of reach. But what was that wink?

**By Kathleen O'Brien**

April 27, 2019

*Ms. O'Brien, a retired journalist, is an amateur cellist*

He was the kind of usher one encountered at the world's finest opera houses: London, Vienna, Milan, New York.

A grown-up, a professional. This wasn't a gig, or his "side hustle," or his day job. This was his job-job, and he took it seriously.

So when I arrived, breathless, at his post mere seconds after the start of the Metropolitan Opera's production of *Das Rheingold* three decades ago, his edict was unwavering.

"*Das Rheingold* is a one-act opera," he said. "There is no intermission. There is no late seating."

I begged: The tickets were a pricey Christmas gift to my husband. This was our first "date" since the baby had arrived two months before. Even though it was January, the old Volvo's radiator hose had cracked somewhere in Weehawken, N.J. A quick combination of duct tape and antifreeze got us back on our way, but by then it was too late. My husband alighted outside the Met with minutes to spare, then I took the wheel, parked the car and ran as fast as my new-mom body would allow.

As I spoke, the basses and cellos were still rumbling the evocative arpeggios of Wagner's first 136 bars. The Rhine Maidens hadn't even started to sing.

Yet he was unmoved. Clearly he'd heard it all over the years.

I went to the people in the box office to plead my case. I doomed it, however, with the utterance of a single word: "car." "Bridge and tunnel crowd," read the bored thought bubbles over their heads.

They patiently walked me through History of Opera 101: *Das Rheingold* is a one-act opera. There is no intermission, and yep, you got it, no late seating.

In defeat, I returned to the lobby. And proceeded to cry. We're talking postpartum, shoulder-racking, snot-leaking, untempered sobs of despair.

No one paid the slightest attention. No one offered a tissue, a glass of water or a nearby seat. No one asked if I was O.K. or if there was someone they could call.

I was overreacting, of course, but they didn't know that. For all they knew, I might have just been jilted, received a horrid diagnosis or learned of a loved one's death.

When people talk about the underlying kindness of New Yorkers, I always think about my lobby tears. Apparently the average New Yorker encounters a sobbing woman three, maybe four times a day? So that explains the indifference?

The box office had offered me a seat in the adjoining auditorium. I dried my tears and peeked in: A dozen people were contentedly watching a static feed of the stage. No, thank you.

That left me with more than two hours to kill. *Rheingold* is indeed a one-act opera, but that single act is a doozy. I decided to see a movie or visit a friend who lived nearby. Then I realized that fairly soon, my husband would become so worried he'd leave the theater to find me, and *Gotterdammerung*! The ban on late seating would snag him too!

So I returned to my usher with a request: Could he let my husband know I was

**Past Presidents**

William Miranda

NEOC (Founder & President Emeritus)

Jack Fiddler

Maria Iantosca

Charlotte Wolfe

John M. Tischio

*The mission of this nonprofit association is educational: To promote appreciation of the art of opera; to support performances of quality opera in New England; to encourage talented students in their pursuit of operatic careers.*

To subscribe to our newsletter or to join our mailing list, please send your name and email address to [neoperaclub@gmail.com](mailto:neoperaclub@gmail.com)

**Jacopo Peri Award**

The NEOC

frequently honors a person who has made a significant contribution to the local opera scene.

Eunice Alberts

John Balme

Scott Brumit

Sarah Caldwell

Schuyler Chapin

Carole Charnow

Richard Conrad

Federico Cortese

Patricia Craig and

Richard Cassilly

Phyllis Curtin

Jan Curtis

Sharon Daniels

Janice Mancini Del Sesto

Ron Della Chiesa

D'Anna Fortunato

Randolph J. Fuller

Boris Goldovsky

Donald Gramm

Roland Hayes

Robert Honeysucker

Norman Kelley

Stephen Lord

William Miranda

John Moriarty

Esther Nelson

Martin Pearlman

Bradley Pennington

Jeffrey Rink

Eleanor Steber

Susan Stone

John M. Tischio

Ernest Triplett

fine and would meet him after the show? I held out my ticket to show him the seat number.

“Why, these are aisle seats!” he said with a touch of wonder.

Suddenly he switched gears.

“Ma’am, I can’t let you in,” he said in a voice that was noticeably louder than before. He lifted his chin slightly to the right, glancing over his shoulder. Approaching was a group of men in suits, wearing badges. “There is no late seating,” he continued, loud enough for their benefit.

And then, ladies and gentlemen, he winked.

Best wink of my life.

It was the conspiratorial wink of one working stiff to another, and I knew immediately what I had to do: Walk a few feet away, pretending to be disconsolate.

The group of suits passed, and when the coast was clear, he motioned me into the darkened auditorium, his flashlight quickly locating my husband’s row. I scooted into my seat, my husband squeezed my hand, and I whispered, “Tell you later.”

I’d like to say we slipped him a nice tip after the final curtain, but by then he was gone. His shift must have been over.

Three decades later, the Met is once more staging the “Ring” cycle and there are two more performances of *Rheingold*. I won’t be there. Whenever I hear the prelude’s rolling arpeggios, they summon the memory of standing in that lobby, wearing my little crimson knit suit with the elastic waist to accommodate the baby weight, and sobbing my heart out. That’s hardly the opera’s fault. It’s a wonderful work, of course, and if you can get tickets, you should go. Just make sure you’re on time, even if you have to sleep in the lobby the night before. I have it on very good authority it’s a one-act opera, it has no intermission and, now that my favorite usher has surely retired, no late seating.

♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ **Opera Diary** ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

**Local Opera and Classical Music, March 2019**

For up-to-date activities, visit FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/NEoperaevents/>  
Join NEOC! Visit [operaclub.org/membership.html](http://operaclub.org/membership.html)

May 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17 - 8 PM; May 12, 18 - 2 PM

**Longwood Players** | *The Pirates of Penzance*, Gilbert & Sullivan  
Chelsea Theatre Works, 189 Winnisimmet Street, Chelsea | [longwoodplayers.org/](http://longwoodplayers.org/)

May 3, 7:30 PM; May 5, 3 PM

**Handel + Haydn Society** | *Mozart Requiem* | <https://handelandhaydn.org/concerts/beethoven-symphony-no-5>  
Symphony Hall, 301 Mass. Ave., Boston

May 4, 8 PM

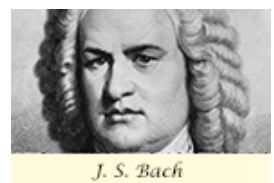
**Boston Opera Collaborative** | *Beyond the Guarded Gate: A Benefit Concert for the Joyful Heart Foundation - an evening celebrating women of classical and contemporary music*  
First Congregational Church, 495 Canton Ave, Milton

May 4, 8 PM

**Longwood Symphony Orchestra** | *Scherzo à la Russe* (Stravinsky), *Piano Concerto* (Z. Wadsworth), *Symphony No. 8* (Dvořák) (Benefitting Community Partners *Bridges to Malawi* and *EqualHealth*)  
Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory of Music, 30 Gainsborough Street, Boston

May 4, 7:30 PM; May 5, 4 PM

**Cantilena** | *Carrying the Torch: Songs That Celebrate Remarkable Women*  
Eliot Church of Newton  
474 Centre Street, Newton, MA



## New England Opera Club Newsletter

May 5, 10 AM

**Emmanuel Music** | Bach Cantata Series: BWV 28 *Gottlob! nun geht das Jahr zu Ende*  
| 617.536.3356 x 5, [emmanuelmusic.org/calendar\\_tickets/18-19season/caltix18-19\\_cantatas.html](http://emmanuelmusic.org/calendar_tickets/18-19season/caltix18-19_cantatas.html)  
Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, Boston

May 5, 3 PM

**Park Avenue Congregational Church** | *Dances with Words* - arias by Bizet, Offenbach, Menotti, others  
Park Avenue Congregational Church, 50 Paul Revere Rd, Arlington | [pacc-ucc.org/events/concertseries/](http://pacc-ucc.org/events/concertseries/)

May 5, 4 PM

**New England Classical Singers** | *Chichester Psalms*, Bernstein  
Corpus Christi Parish, 35 Essex Street, Lawrence | [newenglandclassical.org/concert-season-tickets/](http://newenglandclassical.org/concert-season-tickets/)

May 5, 9:30 PM

**WCRB 99.5 FM: Voices with Chris Voss** | *Cinderella*, Massenet  
**May 12: WCRB 99.5 FM: Voices with Chris Voss** | *Wagner and Mahler in Song*  
**May 19: WCRB 99.5 FM: Voices with Chris Voss** | *Monteverdi's Songs of Love and War*  
**June 2: WCRB 99.5 FM: Voices with Chris Voss** | *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Gluck  
<https://www.classicalwcrb.org/programs/voices-chris-voss#stream/0> )



May 5 & 12, 3:00 PM; May 8 & 10, 7:30 PM

**Boston Lyric Opera** | *The Handmaid's Tale*, Ruders | [blo.org/handmaids/](http://blo.org/handmaids/)  
Lavietes Pavilion at Harvard Athletics Complex, 65 North Harvard Street, Boston

May 11, 7pm

**Boston Opera Collaborative** | *To Hell and Back*, Heggie  
Arlington Street Church, 351 Boylston St, Boston | 617.536.7050, [office@ascboston.org](mailto:office@ascboston.org)

May 11, 12 PM

**Metropolitan Opera Live in HD** | *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Poulenc | [metopera.org/Season/In-Cinemas/](http://metopera.org/Season/In-Cinemas/)

May 11, 8 PM; May 12, 7:00 PM

**Cambridge Chamber Singers** | *Music, When Soft Voices Die: Renaissance, Romantic and Contemporary Gems*  
May 11: Lindsey Chapel at Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, Boston  
May 12: Pilgrim Congregational Church, 55 Coolidge Avenue Lexington  
| <https://www.ticketpeak.com/res/cambridgechambersingers>

May 11, 7:30 PM, May 12, 3:00 PM

**Pernambuco Piano Quartet** | *Reflections on Bach??* (To benefit: \*Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, \*Framingham Adult ESL Plus | Pilgrim Church, 55 Coolidge Ave., Lexington | [jglixon@verizon.net](mailto:jglixon@verizon.net)

May 12, 10 AM

**Emmanuel Music** | BWV 112 *Der Herr ist mein getreuer Hirt*  
| 617.536.3356 x 5, [emmanuelmusic.org/calendar\\_tickets/18-19season/caltix18-19\\_cantatas.html](http://emmanuelmusic.org/calendar_tickets/18-19season/caltix18-19_cantatas.html)  
Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, Boston

May 17, 7:30 PM; May 19, 10:30 PM

**Cambridge Chamber Ensemble** | *Silla*, Handel  
WXL, Union Sq, Somerville | <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4081996>

May 18, 2-4 PM

**Opera on Tap** | *Queens and Rivals: The Birth of the Diva*, featuring Barbara Quintiliani, Caitlin Felsman, & Kathryn McKellar | 617.536.0966, <https://www.facebook.com/events/302553840423647/>  
The Napoleon Room, Club Cafe, 209 Columbus Ave, Boston

May 18, 7:30 PM

**Munroe Saturday Nights performing arts series** | *One Cello, One Planet*, Judith Glixon, cellist, benefitting Mass Audubon | [jglixon@verizon.net](mailto:jglixon@verizon.net)  
First Parish in Lexington, 7 Harrington Rd., Lexington