

# Note Worthy

A publication of the Wednesday Morning Music Club (Austin)

April 15, 2015

## Opera in the Ozarks

Written by: Lee Meyer

Inspiration Point Fine Arts Colony is located on Rock Candy Mountain overlooking the White River at Eureka Springs, Arkansas in the beautiful Ozark Mountains. It has been poetically described as "a mountaineous place not too far from heaven." The opera training center began in 1950 under high professional standards conducted by Dr. Henry Hobart, Dean of Fine Arts, Phillips University, Enid, OK. He was soon joined by Dr. Isaac Van Grove, renowned composer, conductor and accompanist, who was the Artistic Director for 25 years. His wife, Joan Woodruff, taught advanced ballet and stage action. Other eminent artists have provided leadership through the years. The present Artistic Director is Dr. Tom Cockrell who will serve his 8th summer this year. At the University of Arizona, he directs the Opera Theatre and orchestral activities and is a music professor.

Now called "Opera in the Ozarks," the center offers 8 weeks of training. It provides 45 singers and 25 orchestra members a month of public performances of 3 main stage operas in the original languages. There are 18 on the artistic staff, 12 on administrative staff with master classes given by 3 teachers. This training is highly valued for launching young singers' careers, bridging the gap between university and professional experience. Singers vie for places there and often return several times.

Auditions are held live by Dr. Cockrell across the nation or by CD. Hundreds audition nationwide. Texas Federated Music Club hosts auditions in Houston, Dallas and Austin, where Lee Meyer assists in the coordination. The majority of singers have advanced degrees and most come on partial work scholarships.

"The students are the Stars" has been the theme from the beginning. No outside artists are brought in to perform. Other U.S. summer programs allow young singers to understudy leading roles or perform only a few secondary roles. Here professional coaches and staff train the singers to perform all the roles multiple times with orchestra. Leading roles are most often double or triple cast.

The primary sponsors and supporters of Opera in the Ozarks are N.F.M.C. members of the South Central Region, composed of

## President's Message

Carolyn McColloch



The fund raising campaign [Arkansasgives.org](http://Arkansasgives.org), held April 2<sup>nd</sup> from 8 AM to 8 PM, raised \$23, 276 for Opera in the Ozarks. 82 donations were made with OIO ranking 3<sup>rd</sup> most money raised in the northwest region and 16<sup>th</sup> most money raised on the large nonprofit leaderboard. Congratulations to Opera in the Ozarks and many thanks to the donors.

Are you aware the National Federation of Music Clubs offers **more than three quarters of a million dollars in state and national competitions**, including four \$15,000 biennial Young Artist awards, and the \$15,000 Ellis Award for Duo-Pianists? Each of these awards includes two years of performance bookings. TFMC Convention attendees in Brownwood were thrilled to hear Young Artist pianist Olga Klayterman perform a beautiful program of Bach, Scriabin, Chopin and Liszt. Last year Young Artist baritone Mark Gardner performed for the TFMC Convention in Corpus Christi. Currently, Young Artist winners are being selected for the next two years. All of the awards and competitions are listed on the NFMC website [nfmc-music.org](http://nfmc-music.org).

We look forward to the WMMC Opera Program on April 15.

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Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri and Texas Federations. Texas joined in 1989 and gives 2 half scholarships to singers annually. This July the new N.F.M.C. President, Mr. Michael Edwards, will be attending as the national guest and banquet speaker.

A dozen alumni are currently artists at the Metropolitan Opera, such as Mark Delavan, William Johns, Maria Kanovya, and Louis Otey. More than 2 dozen alumni perform at regional opera companies. In late April, tenor Jason Slaydon sings in Austin Opera's *Don Giovanni*. He is a graduate of Texas State University. In May and June, Austin's own tenor Casey Finnigan sings two leading roles in *Turandot* and *Carmen* at Naples Opera and St. Petersburg Opera in Florida.

In mid July many Texas Federation members attend the final performances, as well as the Regional Conference and the Governing Board and Trustees meetings in Eureka Springs. Opera tickets are \$15 or \$20 each. The main stage operas this summer will be *La Traviata* – Verdi, *Tales of Hoffman* – Offenbach and *Cinderella* – Rossini. A free matinee performance is offered of *Cinderella*, the touring children's version.

We invite you to join with local club friends and other Texans who are going, July 14-19. Speak to Lee Meyer, Trustee's President, or Sue Breuer, Vice President of the Governing Board, if you are interested in going.

An additional attraction is the new Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in nearby Bentonville, the most important new museum in the U.S. Alice Walton, Wall-Mart heiress, used her fortune to build and stock its many galleries with paintings and sculptures from Colonial times to the present. There is no entry fee. There is a nice café called Eleven for lunch.

### About the Performers for April 15, 2015

#### **Katharine Shields, soprano**

Katharine Shields has performed recitals, opera, and Gilbert and Sullivan in Boston and Austin. In addition to WMCC she volunteers for Austin Opera and the Settlement Club.

#### **Mary Parse, piano**

Mary Parse began playing hymns for Sunday school in the fourth grade, and she was full-time organist at her church from eighth grade through high school. During undergraduate school at Austin College, she was the pianist for the vocal studio and the college choir. She has continued to play for churches, singers and instrumentalists ever since, and she loves collaborative music-making.

#### **Juan Carlos Rodriguez, tenor**

D.M.A. candidate at UT-Austin from Puerto Rico, a student of David Small.

#### **Dr. Charles Dillard, piano**

UT -Austin in Collaborative Piano

#### **Andy Eaton, bass-baritone**

Senior at Baylor University from Flower Mound, studying with Robert Best, Andy attended Opera in the Ozarks in 2013 and will be attending in 2015 singing leading roles in two operas.

#### **Dr. Maxine Gomes, piano**

Maxine Gomes earned piano performance degrees from the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston and New York University where she received her Ph.D. She pursued a dual career in New York for many years as a music teacher and solo pianist giving numerous recitals and FM radio broadcasts on Long Island and New York City. After earning a Professional Diploma in Administration, Maxine took a hiatus from music and had a career in school administration on Long Island, New York. Maxine, again, is enjoying performing in the metropolitan Austin area.

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### Welcome New Associate Member

Dr. Greg Shields, violin,  
2001 Big Canyon Drive. 78746 , 512 327-2488

## Calendar of Events

### WMMC

**April 15 10 AM TX Federation of Women's Club bldg., 2312 San Gabriel**

### Artisan Quartet

**April 16 8 PM Riverbend Smith Family Chapel, \$20**

**April 18 8 PM Blackerby Violin Shop, \$20**

<http://artisanquartet.com>

### Chorus Austin

**April 17 8 PM – 11 PM Sacred Classics, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 8134 Mesa Drive, \$15 & \$20**

**April 19 4 PM – 7 PM Sacred Classics, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church**

Sacred Classics *Requiem*, Mozart and *Dixit Dominus*, Handel.

### Conspirare Choirs

**April 18 8 PM Bass Hall, 2350 Robert Dedman Drive, Mico Muhly's *How Little You Are With Texas* Performing Arts and Austin Classical Guitar, tickets \$10 - \$45**

### Balcones Community Orchestra

**April 19 4 PM St. Martin's Lutheran Church, 606 W. 15<sup>th</sup> St. (at Rio Grande)**

Dr. Robert Radmer, Music Director, Haydn: *Symphony No. 50 in C Major*, Prokofiev: *Classical Symphony*

Mozart: *Violin Concerto No. 3 in G Major*, Pasha Sabouri, Violin.

### Austin Chamber Music

**April 25 7:30 PM First Unitarian Church, 4700 Grover Avenue, *Song to the Moon*, Mela Dailey, soprano & Charles Wetherbee, violin; Korine Fujiwara, viola; Gregory Sauer, cello; Michelle Schumann, piano. Tickets \$40 & \$25, box office open 6:30 PM**

**April 29 6:30 PM Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*/ Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci***

<http://www.metopera.org/metopera/liveinhd/live-in-hd-2014-15-season>

### WMMC Chorus Practice

**April 29 12:30 PM Armstrong Music School.**

**Apologies and correction** Our Sincere apology to Katharine Shields for the incorrect spelling of her name in the April 1<sup>st</sup> issue of Noteworthy.

**Thank You** Our sincere thanks go to all who participated in the April 1st program. We also wish to acknowledge the volunteers from the Courtesy Committee: Nan Hampton, Sarah Harriman, Ken Takvam, Mary Takvam and Marie White. Thanks for all your work.

