

**FIRST NIGHT FUND**

The Guild’s popular First Night Fund offers individuals and small groups exclusive sponsorship opportunities to host an opening performance cast party during the Festival. Sponsorship contributions to the Fund offset cast party costs, allowing the Guild to allocate funds to other much needed programs and to increase our annual giving to the Festival.

First Night Fund sponsors have their choice of cast party, subject to availability. Sponsorships will be acknowledged in the Festival program, in Guild publications, and on the Guild website. At the cast party, sponsors will be seated at a table reserved in their honor; they will receive special recognition and will be presented with a commemorative poster acknowledging their generous contribution.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of sponsorship, however, is the vital role sponsors play in celebrating the very talented individuals whose dedication and preparation made the performance possible.

Guild members and non-members alike are invited to join the many others who have so generously shown their support of the Guild and the Festival by becoming First Night Fund sponsors.

If you would like more information about hosting a first performance cast party this season or beyond, contact Christine Weiss (607-547-4409; [cweiss1333@gmail.com](mailto:cweiss1333@gmail.com)) or Tom Simpson (646-468-1484; [tlullsimpson@msn.com](mailto:tlullsimpson@msn.com))

TOM SIMPSON

**GUILD COMMITTEES—GET INVOLVED!**

There are many ways you can get involved in Guild work in support of The Glimmerglass Festival. Winter is a great time to do “behind the scenes” planning and organizational activity. Below is a listing of our Guild committees, contact information for the chair of each, and a brief description of what each committee does according to our bylaws. Call or email the chair so that person can discuss with you the needs of the committee and how you can help. Guild membership has its benefits, but chief among them is the chance to work with other like-minded Glimmerglass Festival supporters.

**Communications**

The *Communications Committee* manages communications both within the Guild and with the general public, including handling bulk and special mailings for all standing committees and the Board; organizing electronic and/or telephonic means for rapid communication with members; publishing the Guild newsletter; supporting or maintaining the Guild’s web presence; preparing public announcements, media releases, and advertisements requested by committees or the Board; and otherwise assisting the Board and other committees in communicating with the general membership and general public.

Chair, Fred Johnson  
[jfred212@gmail.com](mailto:jfred212@gmail.com). 607-783-2567

**Fund-Raising**

The Fund-Raising Committee improves and expands established fund-raising activities and develops new fund-raising ideas and activities.

Chair, Christine Weiss  
[cweiss1333@gmail.com](mailto:cweiss1333@gmail.com). 607-547-4409

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**2017 GLIMMERGLASS FESTIVAL: JULY 7 – AUGUST 22, 2017**

**PORGY AND BESS**

*Gershwin/Heyward & Gershwin*

**OKLAHOMA!**

*Rodgers/Hammerstein II*

**XERXES**

*Handel/Minato & Stampiglia*

**THE SIEGE OF CALAIS**

*Donizetti/Cammarano*

The Guild of Glimmerglass Festival  
 P.O. Box 191, Cooperstown, NY 13326  
 www.glimmerglassguild.org

**Officers and Board**

President.....Janet Potter  
 Vice President .....Abby Kreh Gibson  
 Secretary ..... Karin de Waal  
 Treasurer ..... Thomas Simpson

**Committee Chairs**

Communications .....Frederic Johnson  
 Education .....Abby Kreh Gibson  
 Fund-Raising..... Christine Weiss  
 Grounds (ad hoc).....Jean Lyon  
 Hospitality..... Christine McNaughton  
 Membership ..... (vacant)  
 Nominating ..... Karin de Waal  
 Volunteer Services ..... Martha Duke  
 Website Committee (ad hoc)..... Mary Brodzinsky

**Board Members (at large)**

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Walter Ashley	Richard Johnson
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**Guild Liaison to the Board of Trustees**

Thomas Simpson

**Company Representative**

Brittany Lesavoy

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 The Guild of Glimmerglass Festival.

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 2 Walling Boulevard, Oneonta, NY 13820  
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Member of



**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**

Happy New Year, Guild members! It is a time-honored tradition to make resolutions as we begin each new year. I would like to suggest two resolutions that I hope each Guild member will make for 2017.

A little background about the first suggested resolution: At a Glimmerglass event this past summer I ushered with a couple of women who commented on how much they loved the Guild’s Talking Opera series. I asked if they were members; one was, the other wasn’t. Her reason surprised me. She said, “I’m not a member because I don’t cook.” It is true that Guild members do a lot of cooking—in 2016 the Guild provided food for events attended by about 2,700 people! But there are so many other ways you can help the Glimmerglass Festival flourish by participating in Guild activities and programs.

As a key part of the Glimmerglass family, each Guild member can provide essential volunteer services filling a variety of the company’s needs, not just hospitality, important as that is! Members have the opportunity to work behind the scenes, meet the Glimmerglass performers and staff, and make a genuine difference by supporting this renowned performing arts company.

Elsewhere in this newsletter an article about Guild committees outlines ways you can get involved. I urge you to make one of your New Year’s resolutions the commitment to contact a Guild committee chair to ask how you can get more involved!

My second suggested New Year’s resolution concerns recruiting new Guild members. We have a loyal core of members, the number of which has remained pretty much stable in recent years. Let’s work this year to increase our membership. So, I am asking for your help. Give the gift this year of recruiting a new member to our wonderful Guild. If each one of us brings in one new member, we will grow our organization and increase what we can accomplish. Please help—sign up at least one new member this year!

Wishing you all  
 a healthy, happy, and prosperous New Year!

JANET

**NEW MEMBERS**

We welcome these new members to the Guild:

Drs. Eric and Laura Dohner  
 Sieglinde “Siggie” Dugan

**RESIGNATION**

Christine Bulson has resigned from the Guild Board and as chair of the Membership Committee. Until her replacement is named, please address all membership concerns to Janet Potter, (janet.potter07@gmail.com).

## PORGY AND BESS

The 2017 Glimmerglass Festival opens Friday, July 7, with a new production of *Porgy and Bess*, music by George Gershwin and book and lyrics by DuBose Heyward and Ira Gershwin. There will be thirteen performances through August 21. Glimmerglass Artistic & General Director Francesca Zambello is director, and John DeMain is conductor. Musa Ngqungwana, who was the Mayor in *The Thieving Magpie* (2016), plays the role of Porgy. Talise Trevigne will be Bess. Ms. Trevigne has a varied schedule this year with *Madame Butterfly* in Kentucky; Jack Heggie's new opera, *It's a Wonderful Life*, in Houston; and *The Pearl Fishers* in North Carolina.

*Porgy and Bess* has its roots in a 1925 novel, *Porgy*, by DuBose Heyward. Heyward, a native South Carolinian, took as his setting a tenement in Charleston, built around a courtyard and called Cabbage Row. He renamed it Catfish Row, and he built the principal character, Porgy, upon a disabled beggar, named Sammy Smalls. His novel was well received, and he and his wife Dorothy next wrote a play based on it, also titled *Porgy*. The Theatre Guild produced it in New York City in 1927 to considerable acclaim. There developed an interest in the play by other show-business types, either for the stage or as a film. Al Jolson wanted to secure the rights to develop a movie or Broadway musical for himself in black face.

Composer George Gershwin was another one interested in stage rights, but his schedule was so full that he needed to put off any action for several years. Happily, Heyward was a patient man, and finally in 1933 they came to an agreement. Gershwin started work, which included weeks in South Carolina so that he could better absorb the actual setting for his music. Gershwin turned down an offer from Otto Kahn to present *Porgy and Bess* (the name for the musical version) at the Metropolitan Opera, believing it more at home on the Broadway stage. Thus try-outs began in Boston with an opening at the Alvin Theatre (now Neil Simon) in New York on October 10, 1935. As a musical, this new show had a very short run, 124 performances on Broadway. It tried

a road tour to re-coup some expenses, but to no avail – because the production had such high operating costs. Thus, *Porgy and Bess* was a failure.

But *Porgy and Bess* was not gone. Over the ensuing years it appeared on the stage numerous times, a production on Broadway by Cheryl Crawford in 1942, followed by a tour. The show had its first performance in Europe in 1943, in German-occupied Denmark, at the Danish Royal Opera. The Nazis did not look with favor on this production and demanded it stop. They threatened to bomb the opera house, and so the run ended. The Danes had a subtle response. When Nazi newscasts broadcast German victories, Danish underground radio would cut in with a recording of “It Ain’t Necessarily So.”

Productions in the immediate postwar years centered on the achievements of Robert Breen in the 1950s with performances throughout the United States and Canada and then into Europe and behind the Iron Curtain, and finally into South America.

With international acclaim achieved, attention turned to a film. Samuel Goldwyn won the rights, and the 1959 motion picture featured Sidney Poitier and Dorothy Dandridge as the leads. (Robert McFerrin and Adele Addison dubbed their voices.) Sammy Davis, Jr., had the part of Sportin’ Life. (Because of contractual obligations, he did not appear on the sound track recording, with Cab Calloway doing the honors there.) Pearl Bailey was Serena.

The current attention to *Porgy and Bess* began with the efforts of an attorney, Sherwin M. Goldman, who admired Gershwin’s work. He was able to secure a production of *Porgy and Bess* at the Houston Grand Opera in 1976. Conducting the performances was the company’s young music director, John DeMain, who will again be in the pit at Glimmerglass. Goldman then led the transfer of this production to a successful run on Broadway. This production subsequently toured the United States and Europe. In 1982 the Radio City Music Hall approached Goldman

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Musa Ngqungwana



Talise Trevigne

**GUILD COMMITTEES—GET INVOLVED!***(continued from page 1)***Education**

The Education Committee develops, in cooperation with the company, educational projects in the regional schools, colleges and school communities; opera educational and promotional programs for adults; and such other educational programs as the company may request.

Chair, Abby Kreh Gibson  
 abbykreh@frontiernet.net. 607-263-2617

**Hospitality**

The Hospitality Committee plans and hosts parties, receptions, and working suppers for the company, guest artists, and seasonal staff; hosts guests of the company and Guild; and organizes such other programs as the company may request.

Chair, Chris McNaughton  
 cgmcn@clarityconnect.com. 607-547-2380

**Membership**

The Membership Committee conducts the annual membership renewal drive, organizes efforts to recruit new members, maintains membership records, and issues the membership directory.

Chair, Vacant. Contact Janet Potter  
 janet.potter07@gmail.com. 607-432-1146

**Volunteer Services**

The Volunteer Services Committee coordinates the volunteer activities of Guild members, maintains volunteer records, and continuously reviews volunteer resources.

Chair, Martha Duke  
 marthajo31201@yahoo.com. 478-808-6957

**Grounds**

The Ad hoc Grounds Committee works with the company to improve Glimmerglass landscaping and grounds.

Chair, Jean Lyon  
 jeanlyoncher@gmail.com. 606-547-2709

JANET POTTER

**OPERAS IN HD**

Please remember the following Metropolitan Opera productions in HD this season. In addition to the Foothills Performing Arts & Civic Center in Oneonta (607-431-2080), we also can see the productions this season at the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute in Utica (315-797-0000).

*Roméo et Juliette*, January 21, 2017  
*Rusalka*, February 25, 2017  
*La Traviata*, March 11, 2017  
*Idomeneo*, March 25, 2017

THE GUILD OF  
**Glimmerglass**  
 FESTIVAL 

**News & Notes**

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**PORGY AND BESS***(continued from page 3)*

for a production of *Porgy and Bess* on its stage. Again it was successful and also went on tour at major theaters in the United States. (Incidentally, Mr. Goldman is Chairman of the Board of The Glimmerglass Festival.)

In 1985, fifty years after its premiere, *Porgy and Bess* entered the repertoire of the Metropolitan Opera.

Wherever *Porgy and Bess* goes, it stimulates discussion and questions: Is it an opera or a musical? Gershwin called it a “folk opera.” Should the dialogue between musical numbers be sung as recitatives or spoken? Is the work too long? What cuts, if any, are justified? And, the lingering question: Does *Porgy and Bess* perpetuate racial stereotypes in its depiction of life on Catfish Row?

Even Stephen Sondheim got into the act when he very publicly disputed the changes that were made in the 2012 Broadway production. It just seems that *Porgy and Bess* thrives on these continuing concerns as it remains a leading work in the American musical theater.

RICHARD JOHNSON