

## VOLUNTEER HOURS REPORT

Volunteers, thank you and congratulations on an amazing 2015 Festival. From what I have gathered, the Guild was engaged, active, and enthusiastic. We had 82 volunteers reporting 4,539 hours. In 2014, we had 82 volunteers reporting 4,827 hours or 288 more than this year.

If work was completed more efficiently, thank you again! Possibly some volunteers didn't report or under-reported their hours. Please know how important these hours are to the company. They are key information in grant applications and donor decisions.

I hope you all felt the amazing reward that comes from being a part of the Glimmerglass experience and will join us again. Without you, the Festival couldn't experience the success for which everyone is so justifiably proud.

MARTHA DUKE, Chair, Volunteer Services Committee

### *Editor's Addendum*

Martha's report includes volunteer hours by Guild members in Guild-sponsored or Guild-related activities. Many Guild members also serve as volunteer ushers at Festival performances.

Ushering is not a Guild activity but a company function under the direction of House Manager Ernie Adams. He reports that for 2015 the company counted 4,604.75 hours contributed by the ushers for the season. This represents a 10% increase over 2014, due to the addition of the youth opera and a few additional performances that required ushers.

Combining the two forms of activities (Guild and company), we can report an overall total of 9,143.75 hours of volunteer service on behalf of The Glimmerglass Festival in 2015.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Some say the month of January is named for Janus, the Roman god of beginnings and endings. Janus is usually depicted with two heads facing in opposite directions, allowing him to see both ways. He was said to open the year, as indicated by his connection with our month of January, because of his gift of being able to see both the future and the past. One head sees back into the past year, the other looks forward into the new year.



Like Janus, many of us take the opportunity as we start the new year to look back at the accomplishments and disappointments of the past year. We make resolutions and look forward to what the new year will bring. It is a great time to celebrate our successes and resolve to do even better in the coming year.

The Guild has much to celebrate as we ring in the new year. It has been a phenomenally successful year for us. Our educational programs included four well-attended Talking Opera programs, educational events at SUNY Oneonta and the Foothills Performing Arts Center, and the "Day at the Opera" program for school-age young people. We fed many people over the season, starting with those attending the Talking Opera series in the spring, and cast and crew over the summer at our Meet and Greet welcome event, our First Night parties, and five changeover dinners. Our very successful fundraising events allowed us to donate a piano for the Pavilion and make a significant contribution to the company. Members enjoyed a bus trip to Great Barrington. The highlight of the season was a wonderful dinner to honor Guild members with 25 or more years of service.

*(continued on page 2)*

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## 2016 GLIMMERGLASS FESTIVAL : JULY 8 – AUGUST 27, 2016

PUCCHINI/ILICA & GIACOSA  
*La bohème*

SONDHEIM/WHEELER  
*Sweeney Todd*

ROSSINI/GHERARDINI  
*The Thieving Magpie*

WARD/MILLER & STAMBLER  
*The Crucible*

Glimmerglass Opera Guild  
P.O. Box 191, Cooperstown, NY 13326  
www.glimmerglassoperaguild.org

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*News & Notes* is the bimonthly newsletter of the Glimmerglass Opera Guild.

Editors: Richard and Harriett Johnson  
2 Walling Boulevard, Oneonta, NY 13820

Member of



## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome these new members to the Guild:

Karen Lee Clements  
James Covey and James Zabawa

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(continued from page 1)

Martha Duke reports on page 1 about the impressive number of volunteers and how many hours they worked. Our members showed their approval for what we accomplished together by this year's 95% Guild membership renewal rate!

It will be tough to improve on the past year, but as we look ahead to this year's exciting Glimmerglass Festival, we can plan to do just that! Happy New Year to you all!

JANET

## GEORGE SMITH

We are saddened to report the death in December of long-time Guild member George Smith. George and his wife Lona were among the early members of the Guild and continued active participation in all Guild activities. Lona was President of the Guild and a co-author of the Guild's first set of bylaws.

George had a particularly wry sense of humor, and we shall miss him. We extend our sympathy

## WILDE TALES

Following the huge success of Glimmerglass' first youth opera, last season's world premiere of Ben Moore and Kelley Rourke's *Odyssey*, the company has commissioned a new youth opera, *Wilde Tales*, by Laura Karpman and Kelley Rourke.

This work weaves together two fairy tales by Oscar Wilde. *The Remarkable Rocket* shows how one fiery fellow's arrogance is tamed; *The Happy Prince* is a story of selfless devotion.

By turns touching and hilarious, *Wilde Tales* is a story of finding beauty where you least expect it. Performed at the Cooperstown Theatre Festival just south of Glimmerglass, it will feature the Glimmerglass Youth Chorus and members of the Young Artists Program.

Performances will take place on August 9, 11, 14, 16 and 18. Tickets are \$20 and \$5 for youths.

The commissioning of Laura Karpman for *Wilde Tales* received funding from OPERA America's Opera Grants for Female Composers program, supported by the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation.

## LA BOHÈME

The 2016 Glimmerglass Festival opens July 8 with a new production of Giacomo Puccini's *La bohème*. The opera's director, E. Loren Meeker, describes the production: "We've chosen the colorful backdrop of Belle Époque Paris, a milieu teeming with artists and throbbing with romance, for our new production of Puccini's beloved masterpiece. The youthful, passionate artists at the center of the story will capture your hearts as they struggle to survive; their pockets may be empty, but they are determined to experience the fullness of the world."

Puccini based *La bohème* on Henri Murger's autobiographical work "Scenes de la vie de bohème." Perhaps Murger's "loosely linked scenes of autobiographical episodes" appealed to Puccini because the composer saw in these stories his own early days as a poor student in Milan struggling to make ends meet. Whatever the reason for his choice, Puccini successfully created a musical language which imbued his opera with the boisterousness of youth and the urgency and pain of love.

*La bohème* debuted in 1896 and, despite a less than promising opening night (one critic wrote "Poor Puccini, his opera won't last"), Puccini's work has become one of the most performed operas today.

Why does *La bohème* continue to endure? I think, in part, it is because audiences connect immediately with the struggling occupants of the cold, drafty garret in Paris. We may not have walked in their shoes, but we are not unfamiliar with the joys and problems they face: no kings or queens, gods or goddesses, palaces or castles here, just real people in a real world. The friends revel in their lives with the optimism and enthusiasm of youth until, faced with tragedy, they look to one another, desperately and hopefully, for strength.

In keeping with the youthful nature of *La bohème*, Glimmerglass has assembled an exceptionally talented cast of young singers. Tenor Michael Brandenburg will return to sing Rodolfo. As a member of last summer's Young Artists Program, Brandenburg sang Macduff

in Verdi's *Macbeth*. He is currently a member of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program at Washington National Opera (WNO) where he appeared as the Steersman in *The Flying Dutchman* and as Don Jose in *Carmen*.

Soprano Raquel González will sing Mimi. Also a member of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, she appeared with WNO as Mimi in a young artist performance of *La bohème* and as Micaela in *Carmen*. Recently, she sang The First Lady in *The Magic Flute* with Opera Theatre of St. Louis and in last summer's production at Glimmerglass.



"the colorful backdrop of Belle Époque Paris"

Director E. Loren Meeker choreographed *Orpheus in the Underworld* for Glimmerglass in 2007 and last summer was the Associate Director for *Candide*. This fall she directed *Carmen* at WNO. Glimmerglass Festival Music Director Joseph Colaneri will conduct. Performances will be in Italian with English titles by Glimmerglass Dramaturg Kelley Rourke. There will be 13 performances of this opera, July 8 – August 27.

TOM SIMPSON

## BOHEMIANS ONSTAGE

ShowTalk is the company's series dedicated to exploring topics related to the mainstage productions through performances paired with discussions by eminent scholars. The first program in the 2016 series, 10:00 am at The Otesaga Resort Hotel in Cooperstown, is *Bohemians Onstage. Bohème(s) to Rent*. Music Director Joseph

Colaneri will host the program. Like Puccini, Ruggero Leoncavallo was inspired to write an opera based on Henri Murger's portrait of the artistic life. This program will present excerpts from Leoncavallo's opera, along with other musical and literary selections that feature working artists. Admission: \$25/\$10 youth.

## GUILD FINANCIAL REPORT Fiscal 2015

(October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015)

We began the Guild's fiscal year with a balance of \$13,112. During the year, receipts from dues, voluntary contributions, member activities, and fund-raising events (such as the Otesaga Gala and Silent Auction) totaled \$51,347.

Expenses in support of Guild activities were \$28,633. This total includes costs for opening performance parties, company receptions, the Guild honoree dinner, our bi-monthly newsletter, other membership mailings, and all other activities in support of the Guild and the Festival. Also included in the total are funds expended for our successful fund-raising activities. Reported expenses for the year do not include unreimbursed or in-kind contributions made by Guild members.

Our cash balance at year-end, excluding contributions to The Glimmerglass Festival, was \$35,826. During fiscal 2015, the Guild made the following contributions to the Festival: a gift of opera libretti to the Festival library (\$1,457), a donation to the Front of House Fund (\$1,000), and a year-end cash gift of \$25,000 (which included our ongoing support of the Doris P. Shields Intern) for a total contribution during the year of \$27,457. We began fiscal 2016 with a balance of \$8,369.

The Guild also undertook a targeted fund-raising project to raise money for the purchase of a baby grand piano to honor the company's 40th year celebration. This highly successful campaign began with a special benefit concert in June and ended with a matching grant appeal in September. In all, we raised \$9,570 during the fiscal year, allowing us to purchase the piano at a cost of \$7,900 with sufficient cash remaining to fund the maintenance of the piano during the upcoming Festival season.

Thanks to the entire Guild for making 2015 a very successful year.

TOM SIMPSON, Treasurer

### NOTORIOUS RBG

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg is considered a good friend by Glimmerglass Festival audiences, who see her at the Festival each season both in the audience and more recently as a speaker. This summer we welcome her back on August 26 for a new program.

We can get better acquainted with Justice Ginsburg through the recent delightful biography, *Notorious*

**Glimmerglass**  
OPERA GUILD

News & Notes

P. O. Box 191

Cooperstown, NY 13326

www.glimmerglassoperaguild.org

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*RBG: The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg*, by Irin Carmon and Shana Knizhnik (Morrow, 2015) (cover illustration below). The title serves as an homage to deceased rapper Notorious B.I.G.

The volume gives an intimate view of Justice Ginsburg's personal life and professional career, accompanied by many illustrations. The Justice's devotion to opera is highlighted as shown in a photo of her and Justice Antonin Scalia in costume as supers in a Washington National Opera production of *Ariadne auf Naxos*. The book also features passages from Derrick Wang's recent opera, *Scalia/Ginsburg*. This excerpt is from Justice Ginsburg's operatic response to Justice Scalia:



You are searching for a bright-line solution  
To a problem that isn't easy to solve—  
But the beautiful thing about our Constitution  
Is that, like our society, it can evolve.