

## TALKING OPERA 2011

“Talking Opera,” the Guild’s educational programs related to the upcoming season, will begin its 10th year on Monday, May 9, 2011. These seminars, offered to the community free of charge, will once again be held at Christ Episcopal Church, 69 Fair Street, Cooperstown, beginning at 7:00 pm with refreshments and informal discussion before and after the programs as part of the evening.

Monday, May 9: Charlotte Greenspan, musicologist and author of *Pick Yourself Up: Dorothy Fields and the American Musical*.

Monday, May 16: An in-depth look at *Medea*, the legend and the music, with SUNY Oneonta Theatre and Music Department faculty.

Monday, May 23: The many faces and facets of *Carmen*.

Monday, June 6: David Angus: “The Glimmerglass Orchestra – the Music Director’s View.”

Monday, June 13: Creating Operas, a focus on the Double Bill, *A Blizzard On Marblehead Neck* and *Later the Same Evening*, with dramaturg, editor, and librettist Kelley Rourke.

Friday, June 17: A special Guild program.

We hope that you will put these dates on your calendar now and be able to attend all of these very exciting programs and will bring your friends as well. If you have any questions about “Talking Opera,” please contact me at 607-263-2617 or [abbykreh@frontiernet.net](mailto:abbykreh@frontiernet.net).

ABBY KREH GIBSON

## SUNDAY AFTERNOON WITH 'CESCA

On Sunday, March 27, Artistic & General Director Francesca Zambello will meet with Guild members and their friends for a special program, “How to Get Ready for the Season.” Place: Christ Episcopal Church, 69 Fair Street, Cooperstown, time 4:00 – 6:00 pm. See her note on page 2. She also furnishes a reading list (see page 3) to help assure a better enjoyment of the 2011 Festival.

## FIRST NIGHT FUND

The First Night Fund offers contributors an opportunity to sponsor one of the Guild’s popular first performance parties for cast, crew, orchestra, and patrons to celebrate each of Glimmerglass’s four opening performances during the Festival. Sponsorship confers several benefits, including choice of sponsored cast party and public and event recognition.

Exclusive sponsorship of a first performance cast party is available to individuals, small groups, and businesses for \$1,500. Contributions to the fund are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Guild President Ed Brodzinsky noted, “I’m so pleased that because of this First Night Fund we should be able to significantly increase our support of the company in these difficult financial times.”

If you would like to be a 2011 First Performance Cast Party sponsor or know more about the Fund, please call the Guild’s First Night Fund Administrator, Robert Schlather, at Schlather & Birch, 607-547-5253, or Corinne Plummer, 607-965-6326.

CORINNE PLUMMER

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## GLIMMERGLASS FESTIVAL 2011, JULY 2 - AUGUST 23

BIZET/MEILHAC & HALÉVY  
*CARMEN*

CHERUBINI/HOFFMANN  
*MEDEA*

BERLIN/FIELDS  
*ANNIE GET YOUR GUN*

MUSTO/CAMPBELL  
*LATER THE SAME EVENING*

&

TESORI/KUSHNER  
*A BLIZZARD ON MARBLEHEAD NECK*

**GLIMMERGLASS OPERA GUILD**

P.O. Box 191, Cooperstown, NY 13326

www.glimmerglass.org

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

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Member of



**HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION**

Dianne Ciano continues to welcome furnishings for the summer residences for Glimmerglass artists. She also welcomes Guild members who will be able to assist with transportation for the summer staff. Give her a call at Glimmerglass (607-547-0700).



**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

As I sit here writing this column in the cold and snow of winter, it is a bit hard to believe that in just a few short months the exciting and long-awaited 2011 Glimmerglass Festival will be coming together at last.

While many people think of the season's productions as beginning and ending in the summer, in reality these productions involve months and even years of planning, design, and execution in order to bring them to our Glimmerglass stage. Much work on the part of many talented and diverse people comes together in order for us to experience the magic from our seats in the house. And speaking of our seats, even the upholstery on the seats throughout the house has been redone in time for the 2011 Festival.

A few days ago, I got a call from Francesca, who asked me to arrange a time and place for her to meet with the Guild membership to talk about the coming season. She has titled this talk, "How to Get Ready for the Season." It will take place at Christ Church in Cooperstown on Sunday, March 27, at 4:00 pm. Her message is below.

ED BRODZINSKY

Dear Guild Members:

I thought everyone would enjoy having a deeper look into the summer season. What are the literary or historical sources for each work? What about the performance traditions? Also, I will discuss how our preparations are coming along during the long winter and how things get done.

This will be a two-hour talk, including time for questions and a visit.

Warmly,  
 CESCA

[Photos in this issue: Ed Brodzinsky]

## THE HOUSE MANAGER

By Kerryanne Kennedy

“What is a House Manager?” You may be asking yourself the very same question I did almost six years ago. As I sit down to write this article, I begin to reflect on the seven non-consecutive seasons that I have spent with Glimmerglass. Maybe it’s the diva in me that wants to share a little bit about myself, or maybe it’s just that after seeing so many of you year after year I want you to know who I am. Either way, here’s my story and eventually the answer to the above question.

### Getting Acquainted with Glimmerglass

In 1987 my grandmother took me to my first opera in the newly built Glimmerglass Opera theater. As I sat on house left in the orchestra and watched the tale of Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* unfold with the sides of the theater open under a starry, hot July night, I dreamt that I, too, would one day be on that stage. As often happens with our dreams, my dream came true but somehow less grandiose than I had imagined.

In 1989 I was asked to come and audition for a child’s part in *Albert Herring*, but as luck would have it I was thrust into the world of show biz disappointment. They offered me the opportunity to intern in the box office and sing in the chorus of *La Traviata*. Little did I know that this would be the start of a long relationship with an opera company that I have grown to love.

In 1990 I was asked to be the Assistant Box Office Manager, and after some personnel changes I finished the season as the manager. Life happens, and for me I was graduating from college and looking forward to a career in music education. Life did happen, and I spent many wonderful years in the Baltimore-Washington area teaching music before I returned home to the Cooperstown area.

In 2005 I was blessed with the birth of my triplets, and life as I knew it would change forever. Summers without work are sacred to teachers! Upon the birth of the triplets it became clear to me that I would need to spend summers gainfully employed. So, on a whim, I walked into Jeri Dropp’s office [former Managing Director] to ask what might be available for employment in the upcoming season. I will never forget her words: “I have the perfect job for you! You can be our new House Manager!”

### New House Manager!

This brings us to the question at hand, “What is a House Manager?” The answer is not as simple as you may think. The simple answer is customer service because that’s the part of the job that the public sees and expects. A more accurate description might be that the House Manager serves as a liaison between patrons and the company during a performance.

At Glimmerglass, the job of House Manager starts in March or April when an intern is hired and our annual volunteer usher letter is drafted. This letter is sent out to our volunteer usher database around May 1, and potential ushers are asked to choose dates, performances and an area inside the venue where they would like to volunteer. These preferences are then sent back to House Management in order to schedule the work force for each performance.

A typical date would include 20-22 ushers per performance. All of this happens before the end of June. Once all requests are made and the schedule has been set, confirmation letters are printed along with our usher handbook and orientations for all ushers are scheduled. This is a tedious process!

(Continued on page 4)

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## READING FOR THE FESTIVAL

Francesca Zambello recommends the following volumes to help you prepare for the 2011 Glimmerglass Festival:

Euripides. *Medea*. Dover Thrift Editions, 1993.

Mérimée, Prosper. *Carmen and Other Stories*. Oxford World Classics. Oxford University Press, 2008.

Gelb, Arthur, and Barbara Gelb. *O’Neill: Life with Monte Cristo*. Applause Theatre and Cinema Books, 2000.

Krensky, Stephen. *Shooting for the Moon: The Amazing Life and Times of Annie Oakley*. Illus. by Bernie Fuchs. Melanie Kroupa Books, 2001.

Levin, Gail. *Edward Hopper: The Art and the Artist*. Whitney Museum of American Art, 1980.



## THE HOUSE MANAGER

*(Continued from page 3 )*

### Getting Ready for the Festival

Attempts are made throughout the season to make sure all usher stations are filled for each performance, and the schedule is ever changing with the challenging schedules of our volunteers. This is just one facet of the job but it requires some knowledge of the current ushers and their areas of expertise. During this process House Management is also completing training in first aid, CPR [cardiopulmonary resuscitation], AED [automated external defibrillator], and fire safety, and attending meetings on procedures for handling emergencies.

### Summer Management Issues

Once the season is under way, the job takes a complete turn from being hidden in an office to being a very sought after employee at the opera. That's usually not a good omen! While the obvious job is to get patrons to their seats in a timely fashion and resolve any seating issues that may arise, there is also an element of anxiousness that arises out of the need to keep the show running smoothly and within its time limits.

The House Manager's job is to get patrons seated via the volunteer ushers and "hand over the house" to stage management in order to have time for any extraneous announcements and the orchestra tune. That's right: time is of the essence!

In addition, the House Manager is responsible for any front-of-house medical emergencies or evacuations that may occur as well as weather announcements. The House Manager keeps track of any pending severe weather, and during a performance discussions may ensue between concessions, facilities, production, and administration as to the plan of action for the severe weather or emergency.

House management along with stage management is also responsible for the safety of singers when the stage blocking requires them to be inside the house.

At the end of each production a report is filed with any pertinent information regarding weather, maintenance

concerns, statements regarding emergencies that may have risen, actual ticket counts, and the timing of each act. This report is produced and sent to the various departments for review and filed.

### Questions

So? Did you know all of this information? Perhaps you did because many of you serve as volunteer ushers. Here are some questions that you may find interesting.

What time does an 8 o'clock performance actually start? Answer: Tune is usually 8:02 and the first downbeat from the conductor's hand is at 8:05

If the production doesn't actually start until 8:05 then I can come late – right? Answer: Yes, you can come late, but if there is no overture, you may not get seated until the end of the first act. Seating is always at the discretion of the House Manager.

At what temperature do the theater walls remain closed and why? Answer: House Management always leaves the walls closed if the outside temperature is colder than 68 degrees because cooler temperatures can cause orchestral instruments to change pitch and become out of tune.

Can I move my seat to a better seat? Answer: NO! Not unless you would like to pay the correct price.

I am starting my eighth season with Glimmerglass, and I'm so excited about all the changes this year. One thing that won't change will be our great volunteer ushers and the excellent relationship we have with our audience members. I can't thank our volunteer ushers enough for their hard work.

Managing a 900-seat theater is daunting, and I will be the first to admit that I had no idea what I was in for six years ago. Now, I just can't imagine not being at Glimmerglass for the summer. House Management is gearing up for another great season! We look forward to seeing you soon!

***Once the season is under way,  
the job takes a complete turn  
from being hidden in an office  
to being a very sought after  
employee at the opera.***

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**VOLUNTEER SERVICES**

The Guild continues to increase its volunteer support for the company through service, by donating 3,483 hours in 2010. This was an increase of 645 hours over the prior year's total of 2,838. This is truly an amazing accomplishment and is greatly appreciated.

The company generously awards one complimentary ticket for 16 hours service, up to a maximum of four per season. Letters confirming your reported hours for 2010, and the procedure for redeeming your tickets, have been mailed. If you have not yet received yours, or have a question, please call or e-mail me.

As we move into the 2011 season with new activities and events, there will be many more opportunities for us to contribute our time, creativity, and enthusiasm. This will require that we broaden our base of volunteers. Let's be thinking of ways to invite and include others, as we plan for what promises to be an unprecedented level of activity and accomplishment.

This year we had 43 volunteers reporting, and the prior year, 44. Let's shoot for 55 this year. You know, you just can't tell someone how wonderful it is to be a part of the Glimmerglass Experience – you just have to share it!

MARTHA DUKE  
478-808-6957  
marthajo31201@yahoo.com

**NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS**

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), with its grants to organizations and state arts agencies, helps to maximize the economic and social contributions the arts make in communities nationwide. The nonprofit arts industry generates \$166.2 billion annually in economic activity, supports 5.7 million full-time equivalent jobs, and returns \$12.6 billion to the federal government in income taxes.

The above information from the Performing Arts Alliance gives a capsule statement of the value of NEA to the economic well-being of the nation as well the arts. Concern at this time for the continuation, indeed survival, of NEA is real.

On February 17 an amendment to reduce FY2011 funding to NEA by \$20.6 million was approved by the House of Representatives. This amendment was on top of the \$22.5 million funding reduction already recommended by the House Appropriations Committee. The House FY2011 continuing budget resolution now includes a \$43.1 million funding decrease to the NEA, which represents a 25% cut from current funding.

For more information and action that citizens can take to support NEA, please consult the Web site:  
[www.performingartsalliance.org](http://www.performingartsalliance.org).

**TREASURER'S REPORT, 2010**

**Balance, Jan. 1, 2010:** \$4,621.96

	Income	Expense		Income	Expense
<b>Membership</b>	\$4,960.00		<b>Mailings (newsletter, postage)</b>		1,926.67
<b>Gifts</b>			<b>Glimmerglass Opera</b>		
Gifts & Honoraria	1,162.80		Doris Shields Music Intern	1,655.00	
			Gift to Opera		21,000.00
<b>Fund-Raisers</b>			<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
Otesaga Gala	5,775.00	\$2,164.20	Picnic Distribution	1,150.00	
Otesaga Gala Auction	6,155.00		Carry over	719.75	359.09
First Night Fund	4,505.00		OVI Dues		100.00
Opera Putanesca	1,400.00				
Bump Tavern Dine-A-Round	7,008.00	2,100.00	<b>Totals</b>	\$34,615.55	\$35,202.92
<b>Guild Projects</b>			<b>Balance, Jan. 1, 2011:</b> \$4,034.59		
Receptions	125.00	6,229.40			
Supplies, changeover exp., etc.		1,323.56			

DONALD FENNER, Treasurer

# Glimmerglass

OPERA GUILD

News & Notes  
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## MEDEA

Luigi Cherubini's 1797 opera, *Medea*, recounts the final days in the life of the sorceress Medea. Abandoned and betrayed by her husband Jason, Medea desperately tries to prevent his marriage to Glauce, the daughter of King Creon. Medea pleads, threatens, and eventually murders in an attempt to regain Jason's affection. When all this fails, Medea, consumed with fury, commits one final, unthinkable act of vengeance.

An ensemble of international operatic talent has been assembled to bring this rarely performed masterpiece to Glimmerglass.

The demanding role of Medea will be sung by Canadian soprano Alexandra Deshorties. Ms. Deshorties has sung many leading roles at the Met under the baton of Music Director James Levine. *Medea* marks her Glimmerglass debut.

American tenor Jason Collins will sing Jason. Mr. Collins appeared at Glimmerglass in 2002 as the Chevalier de la Force in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. Audiences in Seattle and San Francisco have seen him in Wagner's Ring Cycle, the latter directed by Francesca Zambello. He has also appeared as Narraboth to Deborah Voigt's *Salome* and last spring was *Idomeneo* for Boston Lyric Opera.

Soprano Wendy Bryn Harmer will sing Glauce. Critics applauded her "endearing, yet powerful soprano," as Freia in the Met's new production of *Das Rheingold* this past fall. This spring she will be Ortlinde in the Met's new *Die Walküre*.

King Creon will be sung by Glimmerglass alum, David Pittsinger. Mr. Pittsinger last appeared here in 2005 in Benjamin Britten's *Death in Venice*. Met HD audiences have seen him in *Hamlet*, *Don Carlo*, *Giulio Cesare*, and *The Magic Flute*. Recently, he appeared in New York as Emile de Becque in Lincoln Center's acclaimed revival of *South Pacific*.



Italian conductor Daniele Rustioni will be on the podium. He made his Italian operatic debut in 2007 at the Teatro Regio in Torino. In 2009, he debuted at La Fenice in Venice. This season, he will debut at La Scala, Milan, and at Covent Garden, London.

Michael Barker-Caven, founder of the Theaterworks Company, Dublin, will direct. Mr. Barker-Caven won the *Irish Times* Irish Theater Best Director Award for his production of *The Mines of Sulphur* at the Wexford Festival.

Joe Vanek will design the sets and costumes. He has served as Director of Design for the Abbey Theater, Dublin, and has had a long association with the Gate Theater, also in Dublin. Closely associated with the plays of Brian Friel, Mr. Vanek received Tony nominations for costume and scenic design for the Broadway production of Friel's *Dancing at Lughnasa*.

*Medea* marks the Glimmerglass debuts for Messrs. Rustioni, Barker-Caven, and Vanek. There will be nine performances of *Medea*, beginning July 8.

THOMAS SIMPSON