



NEWS ABOUT NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL WINNERS 1998-99 Edition

Winners from the past ...

Both of our most recent New England Regional winners, **Jane Shivick** and **Keith Phares**, went on to win the National Auditions last April at the MET. Since then, **Jane Shivick (1998)** has been busy expanding her repertoire, giving recitals and teaching. She looks forward to doing an encore performance of the recital she gave as part of the Great Music Series in Provincetown this past summer, this time in her own hometown of Worcester at Assumption College.

Meanwhile **Keith Phares (1998)** reports back from the Juilliard Opera Center that he, too, has been busy with recitals, in Hilton Head and in an ensemble program at the Opera Theater of Saint Louis. In addition to performing the role of Emilio in the *Italian Straw Hat* at Juilliard, he will be featured in a recital honoring Judith Raskin in New York before returning to his old haunts in Boston in the guise of Paris for Boston Lyric's *Roméo et Juliette*.

Steven Salters (1996), continuing at the Bastille's young artists program, is scheduled to sing in productions of *Andrea Chénier* (Strasbourg), *Tristan und Isolde* (Nice) and notably Robert Wilson's staging of *Madame Butterfly* (Bastille) and a rare performance of Fauré's *Pénélope*. He has also been invited to participate in the first-ever Art Song Festival in Pretoria, South Africa, where he will give a recital and a master class. Closer to home, you can hear him this fall with the Greater Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra in a program of songs by Ravel and Mahler.

Canada is the base of operations for mezzo-soprano **Danièle LeBlanc (1996)**. A highlight of this past season was her last-minute replacement for the ailing Tracy Dahl in Vancouver Opera's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Danièle has also taken on the role of Musetta for Manitoba Opera and will repeat that success for Edmonton Opera. Also planned is a return to Dijon, this time to sing Adalgisa in *Norma*. Stephano will be the role of choice for Kentucky Opera, and audiences in Hamilton will get a chance to hear her interpret Isabella in Rossini's *L'italiana in Algeri*.

For the 1998-99 season, **Jean-Pierre Trevisani (1995)**, also in Paris at the Bastille's development program, will be participating in that opera's productions of *Die Zauberflöte*, *Parsifal*, *Macbeth*, *Die Lustige Witwe*, *Rigoletto* and *Don Carlo*. He has already made a splash in the role of Don José in the *Carmen* presented by Septembre Musical de l'Orme. Also planned are performances as Torquemada in Ravel's *L'heure espagnole*.

Among **Jami Rogers'**(1994 finalist) recent and upcoming engagements are Sophie in *Werther* for both the Los Angeles Opera and Boston Lyric Opera, Olympia for Houston Grand Opera's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute* for New York City Opera and Santa Fe, and the role of Fido in the New York City Opera production of *Paul Bunyan*, recently telecast as part of the PBS Live from Lincoln Center series.

To mark her European debut at the Welsh National Opera, mezzo-soprano **Jill Grove (1993)** has chosen the role of Ulrica in *Un ballo in maschera*, her first traversal of that role. In the spirit of her past world-premiere portrayals, Jill sings in Tobias Picker's *The Fabulous Mr. Fox*, which will also be her debut performance with Los Angeles Opera. She makes a much-anticipated debut with the Houston Symphony under Christoph Eschenbach in Mahler's Third and joins the maestro in Beethoven's Ninth, his last concert as principal conductor of the Houston Symphony.

The golden age of mezzo-sopranos is certainly upon us. Our New England mezzos are the preeminent Carmens, Rosinas and Delilahs of the world stages today. **Pamela Dillard**, a 1992 finalist, followed her celebrated performances this past season as Carmen with the Atlanta Symphony by singing on the soundtrack of Steven Spielberg's epic film, *Amistad*. Next season Pam will be heard in San Francisco as Rosette in *Manon* and as Waltraute in *Die Walküre*. For Opera/Columbus Pam will essay the role of Siebel in *Faust*.

News from one of our 1992 winners, **Bo Song**: Among recent and forthcoming engagements are performances with the Orchestra of St. Luke's at Carnegie Hall in Verdi's *Nabucco*, the tenor solo in Verdi's *Requiem* with the Brooklyn Philharmonic, Albany Symphony, Mid-America Productions and at California Polytechnical University. After joining the New York City national tour of *La bohème* as Rodolfo, he returned last year to New York City Opera for the same production. This season he has been engaged to portray Remendado in *Carmen* for the Concert Association of Florida.

More and more, our singers are breaking new ground by singing in premieres and rare performances of works by American composers. **Diane Alexander (1991)** joins the ranks by singing the role of Curley's wife in *Of Mice and Men* with Utah Opera and San Diego Opera. Before singing Gilda for Chattanooga Opera this fall, Diane sang the role for the first time ever in Ocean State

Opera's inaugural performance as a grand opera company. Also slated for the 1998-99 season are Sophie for Nashville Opera and Musetta for Opera Grand Rapids.

Mary Ann McCormick (1990) plans an American tour this fall with the Sydney Symphony and Edo de Waart in which she will sing Beethoven's Ninth. Later in the season she returns to the Metropolitan Opera for Schoenberg's *Moses und Aaron* and Handel's *Giulio Cesare*. Some memorable engagements from last season include the roles of Olga in *Eugene Onegin* and of Giulietta in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* for Opera Ireland.

Guiping Deng, one of our **1990** finalists, continues to be invited to show off her portrayal of Madama Butterfly with opera companies across the country. Her next engagement in that role will be with Santa Barbara Opera. This fall Guiping treated Boston audiences to a solo recital at the Museum of Fine Arts, and in the upcoming season looks forward to her performances in Colorado Symphony's Opera Night Gala.

Fall is a particularly busy time for soprano **Dominique Labelle (1989)**, who will be singing Micaëla for Berkshire Opera's *Carmen*, the soprano solo in Fauré's *Requiem* with Houston Symphony and Violetta in Boston Lyric's *Traviata*. Mozart and Haydn concerts follow in the winter, with performances under Nicolas McGegan and the Philharmonia Baroque, the St. Paul Orchestra with Bobby McFerrin, the Orchestra of St. Luke's with Roger Norrington and the Atlanta Symphony with Robert Shaw. In the spring, Dominique turns her attention to Ravel and features in both the Cleveland (Boulez) and San Francisco (Tilson Thomas) concerts of *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*.

Reviving a tradition oft-neglected, **Denyce Graves (1987-88)** brings back the solo aria recital to stages across this country, including Orlando Opera, Madison Symphony Orchestra and Palm Beach Opera. She joins fellow Met Auditions alumna Dominique Labelle for gala concerts of *Carmen* for Berkshire Opera in the early fall and revisits the role for the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and Zürich Opera later in the year. In the meantime, solo recitals take her from Opelika, Alaska to St. Thomas in U. S. Virgin Islands and everywhere in between, with notable stops at Carnegie Hall as soloist with the Orpheus Orchestra and the MET for the Pension Fund Gala, opposite Plácido Domingo.

Baritone **Haijing Fu's (1987-88)** concert season keeps him steadily at the MET throughout the year. Italian repertoire is his main staple there with productions of *La traviata*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Il trovatore* and, the one exception, a foray into the Russian repertoire for *Queen of Spades*. Still at the MET, he joins Plácido Domingo and Denyce Graves for the Pension Fund Gala, and also manages to work into his schedule concert performances of Verdi's *Luisa Miller* for the Liceu in

Barcelona.

Lorraine Hunt (1985-86) continues her noted collaborations with director Peter Sellars this year with a program of staged Bach cantatas that travels to London, Paris and New York. Also in New York Lorraine joins the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center for performances of *Das Lied von der Erde* before returning to Boston for concerts with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Devotees of the famed Art of Song series at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall will be delighted to hear her at that venue in a February recital.

After being featured as a soloist for an opera cruise on the *QE II*, **Victoria Livengood (1985)** returned to dry land for performances of Verdi's *Requiem* at Carnegie Hall and Connecticut Grand Opera last season. Some highlights to look forward to are a return engagement in Santiago, Chile as Prince Orlovsky, and debuts in Italy at the Spoleto Festival (*Menotti's The Consul*) and the Washington Opera (*Marina in Boris Godunov*). Recording plans include Mascagni's *Zanetto*.

Glimmerglass Opera was the site of the first run of a new production of Handel's *Partenope* that was clamorously received at New York City Opera early this season, both featuring our **1984** winner, **Lisa Saffer**. For her Washington Opera debut later next year Lisa will perform in Robert Ward's *The Crucible*. Audiences at the Opéra de Lausanne will get the chance to hear her interpretation of Zerbinetta in Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

Tenor **Marcus Haddock (1984)** will be featured in many European productions this year, including a turn as Alfredo in Netherlands Opera's *Traviata*, the Duke of Mantua for Vlaamse, Pinkerton in Geneva and Avito in Montemezzi's *L'amore dei tre re* at the Bregenz festival. Back in the States, Marcus has been engaged for the role of Ruggero in Puccini's *La rondine* for Washington Opera's February and March performances.

So far this year **Marquita Lister (1983)** has sung *Aïda* to great acclaim for Michigan Opera, followed by the title role in *Tosca* for both Stuttgart and Orlando Opera. Bess, too, has become a calling card for the soprano who most recently sang that role for Connecticut and Michigan Operas as well as for the Bregenz Festival. Future engagements include *Aïda* in Berlin, Houston, and Charlotte, *Tosca* in Vancouver, *Bohème* in Pittsburgh and *Salome* for the Austin Lyric Opera and Pretoria, South Africa.

Being asked to serve as a trustee of the Boston Conservatory was a real feather in the cap of **Sondra Kelly (1982)**, who is the first alumna to be so honored. Among Sondra's upcoming engagements are performances as Azucena in *Il trovatore* in Puerto

Rico, as Maddalena in *Rigoletto* in Vietnam and as Fricka in *Die Walküre* in Geneva.