

Sunday, November 4, 3pm, 2007
UMass Fine Arts Center Concert Hall

TOSCA

By Giacomo Puccini
Libretto by G. Giacosa and L. Illica
After the play of the same name by V. Sardou

TEATRO LIRICO D'EUROPA

Stage Director.....Giorgio Lalov
Musical Director.....Krassimir Topolov
Set and Costumes.....Giorgio Lalov
Light Designer.....Giorgio Bajukliev

CAST

Flora Tosca, a famous opera singer	Elena Razgylaeva Olga Chernisheva Adina Aaron Edelina Kanaeva
Mario Cavaradossi, a painter	Orlin Goranov Gabriel Gonzalez Michael Hayes
Baron Scarpia, chief of police	William Powers Vytautas Juozapaitis Valery Ivanov
Cesere Angelotti	Plamen Dimitrov
Spoltetta	Giorgio Dinev
Sacristan	Hristo Sarafov
Sciarrone	Vladimir Hristov

Church chorus, Servers at Mass, Crowd Members
Setting: Rome, June 1800

Sponsored by Lathrop Communities

SYNOPSIS

ACT I. Cesare Angelotti, an escaped political prisoner, rushes into the church of Sant' Andrea della Valle to hide in the Attavanti chapel. As he vanishes, an old Sacristan shuffles in, praying at the sound of the Angelus. Mario Cavaradossi enters to work on his portrait of Mary Magdalene - inspired by the Marchesa Attavanti (Angelotti's sister), whom he has seen but does not know. Taking out a miniature of the singer Floria Tosca, he compares her raven beauty with that of the blonde Magdalene ("Recondita armonia"). The Sacristan grumbles disapproval and leaves. Angelotti ventures out and is recognized by his friend and fellow liberal Mario, who gives him food and hurries him back into the chapel as Tosca is heard calling outside. Forever suspicious, she jealously questions him, then prays, and reminds him of their rendezvous that evening at his villa ("Non la sospiri la nostra casetta?"). Suddenly recognizing the Marchesa Attavanti in the painting, she explodes with renewed suspicions, but he reassures her ("Qual' occhio al mondo"). When she has gone, Mario summons Angelotti from the chapel; a cannon signals that the police have discovered the escape, so the two flee to Mario's villa. Meanwhile, the Sacristan returns with choirboys who are to sing in a Te Deum that day. Their excitement is silenced by the entrance of Baron Scarpia, chief of the secret police, in search of Angelotti. When Tosca comes back to her lover, Scarpia shows her a fan with the Attavanti crest, which he has just found. Thinking Mario faithless, Tosca tearfully vows vengeance and leaves as the church fills with worshipers. Scarpia, sending his men to follow her to Angelotti, schemes to get the diva in his power ("Va, Tosca!").

ACT II. In the Farnese Palace, Scarpia anticipates the sadistic pleasure of bending Tosca to his will ("Ha più forte sapore"). The spy Spoletta arrives, not having found Angelotti; to placate the baron he brings in Mario, who is interrogated while Tosca is heard singing a cantata at a royal gala downstairs. She enters just as her lover is being taken to an adjoining room: his arrogant silence is to be broken under torture. Unnerved by Scarpia's questioning and the sound of Mario's screams, she reveals Angelotti's hiding place. Mario is carried in; realizing what has happened, he turns on Tosca, but the officer Sciarrone rushes in to announce that Napoleon has won the Battle of Marengo, a defeat for Scarpia's side. Mario shouts his defiance of tyranny ("Vittoria!") and is dragged to prison. Scarpia, resuming his supper, suggests that Tosca yield herself to him in exchange for her lover's life. Fighting off his embraces, she protests her fate to God, having dedicated her life to art and love ("Vissi d'arte"). Scarpia again insists, but Spoletta interrupts: faced with capture, Angelotti has killed himself. Tosca, forced to give in or lose her lover, agrees to Scarpia's proposition. The baron pretends to order a mock execution for the prisoner, after which he is to be freed; Spoletta leaves. No sooner has Scarpia written a safe-conduct for the lovers than Tosca snatches a knife from the table and kills him. Wrenching the document from his stiffening fingers and placing candles at his head and a crucifix on his chest, she slips from the room.

ACT III. The voice of a shepherd boy is heard as church bells toll the dawn. Mario awaits execution at the Castel Sant'Angelo; he bribes the jailer to convey a farewell note to Tosca. Writing it, overcome with memories of love, he gives way to despair ("E lucevan le stelle"). Suddenly Tosca runs in, filled with the story of her recent adventures. Mario caresses the hands that committed murder for his sake ("O dolci mani"), and the two hail their future. As the firing squad appears, the diva coaches Mario on how to fake his death convincingly; the soldiers fire and depart. Tosca urges Mario to hurry, but when he fails to move, she discovers that Scarpia's treachery has transcended the grave: the bullets were real. When Spoletta rushes in to arrest Tosca for Scarpia's murder, she cries to Scarpia to meet her before God, then leaps to her death.

About Teatro Lirico D'Europa

Teatro Lirico D'Europa, the European opera touring company formed in 1988 by Giorgio Lalov, a former Bulgarian opera singer, has completed over 3,000 performances worldwide and 7 seasons of major opera tours in the U.S. covering over 400 performances. The popular company embarks on its 8th consecutive season of American tours in fall 2007/winter/spring 2008 with over 80 performances of several different full-scale operas, including a brand new, traditional version of Puccini's unforgettable opera TOSCA. The operas will travel to the most outstanding venues across the U.S. Soloists for the productions were chosen from the rosters of major opera houses around the world including those in Moscow, Sofia, New York, St. Petersburg, Bratislava, Prague, Vilnius, and Kiev. The principal artists are seasoned professionals in the midst of major operatic careers. Visit the web site of Jenny Kelly Productions for an in-depth history of Teatro Lirico D'Europa including hundreds of U.S. reviews, video clips, and a large photo gallery of all Teatro Lirico's productions: www.jennykellyproductions.com

PROGRAM NOTES

A WOMAN OF COURAGE

Mary Jane Phillips-Matz

Giacomo Puccini's *Tosca*, which had its world premiere at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome in 1900, is a drama of frightening power. Like all Puccini's operas, it shows his genius as a composer and dramatist, for he made the music and the characters quite simply unforgettable.

In *Tosca* Puccini brings three main figures to life. The title role is Tosca. She is a famous opera singer, deeply religious and spiritual, yet passionate and fatally jealous. Her lover is Mario Cavaradossi, a sensitive artist who courageously tries to help a condemned political prisoner. From the very beginning of the opera, Puccini portrays Cavaradossi as an idealist, honest and good-natured, a man who admits to being madly in love with Tosca, although he understands how jealous she is.

Both Tosca and Cavaradossi are caught in the web of the evil Baron Scarpia, the chief of the Roman police. Scarpia, a power-maddened monster, stands as the most fully realized of all Puccini's villains, a brutal and sadistic killer who delights in the psychological and physical torture of his victims. For a long time, Scarpia has been secretly in love with Tosca, and he is determined to possess her physically.

In Act I, Tosca's jealousy is on full display, from the moment she comes onstage. Believing that Cavaradossi is seeing another woman, she sweeps in and demands her rival's name. Here Puccini gives full rein to the imperious diva. But she quickly lets Cavaradossi reassure her. Then the composer brings out the more subtle aspects of Tosca's character. Her tenderness is evident in her love for Cavaradossi. And she is a woman of great piety and unshakeable faith. She believes in God and the Virgin Mary and lays flowers and other gifts on the Virgin's altar in church. But her flaw --- her jealousy --- lets Scarpia trap her and her lover.

In Act II, Tosca and Cavaradossi are Scarpia's prisoners. With terrible guile, he interrogates her in a scene that builds excruciatingly when he has Cavaradossi tortured in an adjacent room. Tosca hears her lover's screams. But Scarpia offers to save Cavaradossi's life --- on one condition: that Tosca have sex with him. That is what he wants. Determined to beg the Queen for help, Tosca starts for the door, but as Scarpia reminds her, not even the Queen can intervene, for he alone has the power of life and death over them. He will have Cavaradossi executed the moment she leaves. In the ferocious physical struggle that follows, Scarpia throws Tosca down.

Utterly defeated, she prays to God. As she says in her prayer, she has always lived for Art and love. In her whole life, she has never harmed anyone. She is devout. She prays. As a singer, she offers her voice to God and the heavens. She helps the poor. Why, then, does God repay her like this?

But Scarpia has no pity. Desperate, Tosca agrees to give him his way; but as he prepares to rape her, she sees a carving knife on the dinner table, seizes it and fatally stabs him. In a moment of stunning courage, she stands over him and watches him die. The last thing he hears is her shout of triumph:

"E ucciso da una donna!" --- "And killed by a woman!!" This monster, who has ruled all of Rome by terror, is killed by a woman.

But Scarpia, with his wiles, cheats her even after death by having Cavaradossi shot by a firing squad. Still, Tosca has the last word, committing suicide by jumping off the parapet of the prison. Brave to the very end, she cries: "O Scarpia, we will meet before God!"

ARTISTS BIOS

Soprano, Elena Razgylaeva: Flora Tosca

This young Russian soprano is a principal soloist of Opera Rostov na Dom, Russia, where she performs leading soprano roles in the lyric and spinto fach. She made her U.S. debut in winter 2006 with Teatro Lirico D'Europa as Mimi in LA BOHEME to outstanding critical acclaim and returned to the U.S. in season 2006-2007 with Teatro Lirico D'Europa as Mimi in LA BOHEME, Micaëla in CARMEN, Cio-cio-san in MADAMA BUTTERFLY and Liu in TURANDOT. This season (2007-2008) she performs the title role of both TOSCA and MADAMA BUTTERFLY with Teatro Lirico.

Soprano, Olga Chernisheva: Flora Tosca

Career highlights have included Maria in MAZEPPA, Prilepa in PIQUE DAME, Brigitta in IOLANTA, Anne Trulove in THE RAKE'S PROGRESS, Mlle. Jouvénot in ADRIANA LECOUVREUR, and Ninetta in Prokofiev's THE LOVE FOR THREE ORANGES with the Bolshoi Opera; Mimi in LA BOHÈME with the Kazan Opera Theater, Gold Coast Opera, and Teatro Lirico; Micaëla in CARMEN with the Stanislavsky Opera Theater and Teatro Lirico; Musetta in LA BOHÈME with the Bolshoi Opera, Sweden's Malmo Opera Theater, and San Francisco Opera Center's Merola Opera Program; Tatiana in EUGENE ONEGIN and Persephone in the European premiere of Joel Feigin's opera MYSTERIES OF ELEUSIS with the Moscow Conservatory Opera Studio; the title role in TOSCA with Opera Illinois; Liu in TURANDOT with Opera Hong Kong; the title role in MADAMA BUTTERFLY with Gold Coast Opera and Cedar Rapids Opera Theatre; the title role in MANON LESCAUT with West Bay Opera; LE DONNE DI GIACOMO PUCCINI with Opera Santa Barbara; and First Soprano in the Russian premiere of McNally's MASTER CLASS, produced as an independent theater project. Concert highlights have included the title role in Rachmaninoff's FRANCESCA DA RIMINI with Dicapo Opera Theatre; Bach's MASS IN B-MINOR at the Nizhny Novgorod Concert Hall, at the Grand Hall of the Moscow State Conservatory, and with Russia's Saratov Opera Theater; Bach's EASTER ORATORIO at Moscow's Cathedral Catholic Church; Mahler's FOURTH SYMPHONY at the Grand Hall of the Moscow State Conservatory; and CARMINA BURANA at the Grand Hall of Moscow's Gnessin College.

Soprano Adina Aaron: Tosca

Career highlights for the American soprano have included the title role in Franco Zeffirelli's new production of AIDA with the Teatro Giuseppe Verdi di Busseto, the Ravenna Festival, the Nuovo Piccolo Teatro di Milano, the Teatro Comunale di Modena, and on tour in Moscow; the title role in AIDA at Madrid's Palacio Vistalegre, with the National Opera of Korea, and with Opera Columbus; Musetta in LA BOHÈME, Sister Rose in DEAD MAN WALKING, and Clara in PORGY AND BESS with New York City Opera; Gilda in RIGOLETTO with the Teatro Colón de Bogotá and the Teatro Teresa Carreño; Pamina in DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE with the Caramoor Festival and Utah Festival Opera; the title role in SUSANNAH, Donna Anna in DON GIOVANNI, and Micaëla in CARMEN with Bohème Opera New Jersey; Rosalinde in DIE FLEDERMAUS with Dayton Opera; and the title role in TOSCA with Syracuse Opera. Concert highlights have included Mimi in LA BOHÈME with the Newton Symphony Orchestra; the VERDI

REQUIEM for the University of Missouri Concert Series; Barber's KNOXVILLE: SUMMER OF 1915, Beethoven's MASS IN C, and Coleman's THE PAINTED LADY with the Hartford Symphony; MESSIAH with the Phoenix Symphony; Beethoven's NINTH SYMPHONY with the Yakima Symphony; and Mozart's GRAND MASS IN C MINOR with the Dennis Keene Choral Festival. Her discography includes the title role in Zeffirelli's AIDA on the TDK label, and Mrs. McPhail in Richard Owen's RAIN for Albany Records. Ms. Aaron was named the first-place Grand Prize winner of the Monte Carlo Voice Masters Vocal Competition for 2005.

Soprano, Edelina Kanaeva: Tosca

The Bulgarian soprano received her musical education at the National Conservatory of Music in Sofia. She is currently a principal soloist of the Sofia National Opera and has performed as a guest soloist with other opera companies in Eastern Europe and Germany. She has performed the roles of Leonore in Verdi's II TROVATORE and the title role of Puccini's Tosca with Teatro Lirico D'Europa in the US on previous tours and recently performed the role of Donna Anna in DON GIOVANNI at the Summer Music Festival in Varna, Bulgaria.

Tenor, Orlin Goranov: Mario Cavaradossi

A two time GOLDEN ORPHEUS first place winner of the International festival in Bulgaria, Mr. Goranov is a laureate of several international opera festivals, including the Dresden Festival in Germany (1981) BRATISLAVA LYRE International Slovakia Vocal Festival (1982) and the Intertalent festival in Prague (1983). He has been a principal soloist of the State Opera House in Plovdiv, Bulgaria since 1999, and is a regular participant of both the Christmas and New Year's Berliner Symphoniker concerts since 1991. Mr. Goranov has made numerous recordings for both the Bulgarian National Radio and Bulgarian National Television. He made his debut with Teatro Lirico on their fall 2006 US tour as B.F. Pinkerton in Puccini's MADAMA BUTTERFLY and Rodolfo in Puccini's LA BOHEME. He returns to the US with Teatro for the 2007-2008 season as Pinkerton, Cavaradossi and Alfredo.

Tenor, Gabriel Gonzalez: Mario Cavaradossi

Gabriel González was born in Monterrey, México where he made his operatic debut as Normanno in Donizetti's LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR. Since then, he has sung in PAGLIACCI, TOSCA, RIGOLETTO and LA BOHEME for Opera de Monterrey. For Palm Beach Opera has participated in their productions of LA BOHEME, IL TROVATORE, THE MAGIC FLUTE, LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR, Rossini's PETITE MESSE SOLENNELLE and this past December 2005 he sang Radames in AIDA there. Mr. Gonzalez made his Houston Grand Opera debut as The Italian Singer in R. Strauss's DER ROSENKAVALIER opposite Reneé Fleming, after which he performed in Verdi's ATTILA with Samuel Ramey in the title role. He has successfully portrayed French heroes for Houston Grand Opera where he sang Roméo in Gounod's ROMEO ET JULIETTE and the title role in Gounod's FAUST. For Aspen Music Festival, Rice University, Teatro Lirico D'Europa and Opera 2001 in Spain he appeared as B.F. Pinkerton in Puccini's MADAMA BUTTERFLY and for Sarasota Opera he portrayed Federico in Cilea's L'ARLESIANA in its American Première, Don José in Bizet's CARMEN and Corrado in Verdi's IL CORSARO, for Connecticut Grand Opera and Teatro Lirico D'Europa, he appeared as Duca di Mantova in Verdi's RIGOLETTO and for Opera Tampa, Gars Festival in Austria, Connecticut Opera, Edmonton Opera and for Cy-Fair College he was Alfredo in Verdi's LA TRAVIATA. Mr. González had a wonderful debut at the Los Angeles Music Center Opera as Rodolfo in Puccini's LA BOHEME followed by performances of LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR and a repeat of LA BOHEME. His European debut took place in Spain where he sang Verdi's MESSA DA REQUIEM with the Barcelona Symphony. He sang it again for his debut with the Mexican National Symphony. He also portrayed B.F. Pinkerton in Puccini's MADAMA BUTTERFLY for Opera de Bellas Artes in Mexico City. In Houston, he recently portrayed Don Alvaro in Verdi's LA FORZA DEL DESTINO, Manrico in Verdi's IL TROVATORE and Rodolfo in Verdi's LUISA MILLER. He has won many vocal competitions and awards, among them the SULLIVAN FOUNDATION and FONCA México Grant, Palm Beach Opera and Houston Grand Opera Voice Competition. Some of his upcoming engagements include Don Ottavio in Mozart's DON GIOVANNI for Opera de Zapopan in Mexico, Don Jose in Bizet's CARMEN, Rodolfo in Puccini's LA BOHEME, B.F. Pinkerton in Puccini's MADAMA BUTTERFLY and Calaf in Puccini's TURANDOT for Teatro Lirico d'Europa in USA. He will also sing concerts in Houston, Texas and Tijuana, Mexicali, Cabo San Lucas and Monterrey, Mexico.

Tenor, Michael Hayes: Mario Cavaradossi

Career highlights have included Don José in CARMEN with New York City Opera, Florida Grand Opera, and Portland Opera; Cavaradossi in TOSCA with Florida Grand Opera, Fort Worth Opera, Kentucky Opera, and Opera Santa Barbara; Radames in AIDA with Manitoba Opera and Portland Opera; title role in OTELLO with Opéra de Nantes; title role in LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN and Erik in DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER with Fort Worth Opera; title roles in FAUST, LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN, and WERTHER with Portland Opera; title roles in LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN and FAUST with Cleveland Opera; Calaf in TURANDOT with Knoxville Opera, Edmonton Opera, Virginia Opera, Calgary Opera, and Opera Grand Rapids; Rodolfo in LA BOHÈME with New York City Opera, Portland Opera, and Austria's Kamptal Festival; Schwalb in MATHIS DER MAHLER and Danilo in THE MERRY WIDOW with New York City Opera; fully-staged DAS LIED VON DER ERDE with L'Opéra de Rouen; Turridu in CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA with Opera Delaware; the Duke in RIGOLETTO with Cleveland Opera, Dayton Opera, and Manitoba Opera; Tichon in KATYA KABANOVA with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis; title role in OTELLO and Canio in PAGLIACCI with Washington D.C.'s Summer Opera Theatre; Steva in JENUFA with Sarasota Opera; title role in FAUST with Nashville Opera; and Pinkerton in MADAMA BUTTERFLY with the Princeton Festival. Concert highlights have included Radames in AIDA with L'Orchestre National de Lyon; Steva in JENUFA with Washington Concert Opera; Samson in SAMSON ET DALILA with Boston's Chorus pro Musica; title role in SIEGFRIED (final scene) with the Nashville Symphony; title role in Weill's THE PROTAGONIST with the American Symphony Orchestra; DAS LIED VON DER ERDE with the Peabody Symphony Orchestra at Alice Tully Hall; and the VERDI REQUIEM with Connecticut Grand Opera.

Baritone, William Powers: Scarpia

Since the mid-seventies, internationally known American bass-baritone William Powers has assembled a repertoire of over 100 operatic roles with major opera companies in the United States, Europe and South America, including the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, San Francisco Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera, and the major opera houses in Paris, Cologne, Lisbon, Trieste, Amsterdam, Athens, Strasbourg, Spoleto, and Buenos Aires, to name a few. Very nearly all his assignments are evildoers, devils, villains and rogues. Powers has, in addition, been privileged to be part of many world-premieres or important recreations: the 50th anniversary revival of Prokofiev's TLOVE FOR THREE ORANGES, and the premiere of Penderecki's PARADISE LOST for Chicago; Petrassi's OPUS EIGHTY for Spoleto, Italy; the French revival of Donizetti's LA FAVORITE for the Opéra Comique and the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris; Bernard Herrmann's WUTHERING HEIGHTS for Portland; Pasatieri's THE SEAGULL for Washington, D.C. and Harbison's THE GREAT GATSBY for the Metropolitan Opera of New York. William Powers's recent seasons have seen him as "Death" in DER EMPEROR VON ATLANTIS, and the "Four Villains" in The TALES OF HOFFMANN in Chicago; "Le Bailly" in WERTHER in Vienna; "Capulet" in ROMEO AND JULIETTE for Cleveland Opera, and "George Benton" in DEAD MAN WALKING for Cincinnati. Mr. Powers has been heard in dozens of recordings and broadcasts; his work has been released on the Telder, CRI, and RCA labels. His most recent release – a solo album entitled ROGUES AND VILLAINS is available on the CENTAUR label with the Janacek Philharmonic orchestra under the direction of Dennis Burich. This CD is soon to be followed by another collection of wicked arias entitled THE WORKS OF WILLIAM POWERS, to be released at the end of 2007.

Baritone, Vytautas Juozapaitis: Scarpia

A graduate of the Lithuanian Academy of Music in 1989, the multi dimensional baritone has been a principal soloist with the Lithuanian National Opera and Ballet Theatre since 1990. In 1992-1993 he studied at the European Centre for Opera and Voice Art in Belgium and with Marlena Malas in New York. He became a laureate of the Competition of Young Singers of Lithuania (1992) and a finalist at the International Luciano Pavarotti Competition in the USA (1992). His other artistic distinctions include the Christopher Prize; awarded by Lithuanian Theatre Association in 1999, "Beacons of Opera" prize for the Best Opera Soloist of the Year in 2002; Public's Favorite Prize in 2003; the Officers Cross of the Order "For Merits to Lithuania"(2003) and Lithuanian National Award. That same year he was also awarded the "Golden disk" Prize of the Lithuanian Musicians Association and was also awarded the "Kipras " Prize as The Best Singer Of the Year 2003 in Lithuania. In 2006 Mr. Juozapaitis was awarded the "Golden Cross of the stage" by the Lithuanian ministry of culture. His repertoire includes all of the principal baritone roles in operas by Verdi, Puccini, Mozart and Tchaikovsky and the other major opera composers. His festival

credits include the Schleswig-Holstein Festival (1992), the Savonlinna opera Festival (1993), the Festival of Oratory Music in Wroclaw (1993), the Salzburg Festival (1994), the New and Old Ways to India Festival in Spain (1992) and the Vilnius International Music Festival (1998, 1999, 2000, 2001), the Dalhalla Opera Festival in Sweden; and the Festival for Music and Arts "Pro baltica" in Torun, Poland (2003). His significant collaborations with other opera companies include Kaunas State Musical Theatre, Klaipeda State Musical Theatre, Czech National Opera, Opera Vielka in Warsaw, Poland and Teatro Lirico D'Europa, with which he has made notable appearances as Don Giovanni, Germont and Rigoletto in the United States. He has made guest appearances in operas in Poland, Germany, Spain, Latvia, Estonia, Russia, India, Italy, Finland, Norway, Belgium, France, Japan, Taiwan, Sweden and the United States.

Baritone, Valery Ivanov: Scarpia

The Russian Baritone born in Chuvashia, is currently a soloist of the Kazan Theatre of Opera and Ballet. He was the first prize winner the the opera competition, 'People's Artist of Chuvash Republic', the first and still the only singer in the history of Chuvashia who managed to conquer the higher laureate places at the prestigious International, All-Union and All-Russian competitions.

He has performed at the stages of: The Mariinsky Theatre St. Petersburg, Theatre in Monte Carlo (Monaco), "La Fenice" (Venice), "Santa Cecilia, Rome, Bonn, Germany Athens, Greece, an in the USA with Teatro Lirico on its 2004 US tour where he had a huge success as Scarpia in TOCSA and Rigoletto. He has worked with famous Russian and foreign conductors, among them Yury Temirkanov, G. Rozhdestvenski, V. Gergiev, as well as with outstanding opera soloists and well-known foreign directors. Valery Ivanov was invited to participate in the world premiers like "Tosca" Puccini (Bonn), "Carmen" Bizet (Athens), "Iolanta" Chaikovski (Monte Carlo), "The Cunning Little Vixen" Janáček (Lyon, France), "Bells" Rahmaninov (Detroit, USA), "Messiah" Handel (USA), etc. In France were recorded two CD's with Valery Ivanov.

Baritone, Plamen Dimitrov: Angelotti

The baritone has performed various roles with Teatro Lirico on tour in the US for the last 5 seasons including Schaunard in LA BOHEME, Morales in CARMEN, and PING in TURANDOT. He debuts the role of Sharpless with Teatro on its 8th season of US tours.

Basso, Vladimir Hristov: Sciarrone

Bulgarian bass Vladimir Hristov graduated from the National Academy of Music in Sofia. He has been a soloist with Teatro Lirico D'Europa on its U.S. tours since winter 2003. Mr. Hristov is also a soloist with Sofia National Opera and is a frequent guest soloist with other regional opera companies throughout Bulgaria and Eastern Europe.

Baritone, Hristo Sarafov: Sacristan

Mr. Sarafov has been active on the stage for his entire adult life as a soloist in operetta, opera and as an actor. He is a talented baritone who graduated from the National Academy of Music in Sofia and was immediately engaged by the Sofia National Opera for the role of Bartolo in Rossini's IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA. He has performed numerous roles for Teatro Lirico D'Europa on tour in Europe and the USA since 1990.

Conductor: Krassimir Topolov

The young Bulgarian maestro was educated in Vienna, Austria. In addition to conducting hundreds of performances for Teatro Lirico D'Europa on tour in central Europe and the USA since 1995, he is a guest conductor with opera companies in Bulgaria and other Eastern European countries.

Stage Director: Giorgio Lalov

Co Founder of Teatro Lirico D'Europa and current General Manager/Artistic Director, Gueorgui Lalov (Giorgio) was born in Telesh, Bulgaria, in June 1958. His father, a doctor, and his mother, an elementary school teacher and Bulgarian folk singer, were educated patrons of the arts. When Lalov senior died, Giorgio was only 9 years old but because he was an excellent student, he had the good fortune to be accepted at an elite boarding school in the capital city of Bulgaria where all the lessons were taught in French. When he graduated from high school in 1976 he was fluent in French and English. That fall he entered the Bulgarian National Academy of Music and went on tour throughout Italy with a choir from the

University. While in Milan, he auditioned for the famous International School for Young Opera Singers at La Scala. He was accepted, and went on to make his operatic debut at La Scala at the age of 25. After living in Italy for a short time, Lalov, became fluent in Italian. In 1986, while on tour with an opera company in France, he met his future business partner, Yves Josse, a former ballet dancer who was booking opera and ballet tours. The two hit it off. Giorgio had many resources. He spoke several languages, he was able to organize the creation of sets and costumes in Bulgaria and he put together an excellent orchestra and chorus. He also knew many fine opera singers in Bulgaria, central Europe, and the USA. By 1988 Josse and Lalov were collaborating on what was to become the most successful opera touring company in Europe. At the time of Josse's death in 1995, Teatro Lirico was engaged for over 250 performances a season on tour throughout France, Spain, Belgium, Portugal, Germany and the Netherlands. In 1990 Lalov established the Sofia Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. Winter 2000 marked Teatro's first major American tour. The 2007-2008 is the 8th season of US touring for the company and holds over 80 performances of five different operas: TOSCA, MADAMA BUTTERFLY, LA TRAVIATA, the BARBER OF SEVILLE and a co production of MERRY WIDOW with Czech Opera Prague.

"I'm not alone in hoping that Giorgio Lalov, the talented opera singer turned creator of Teatro Lirico D'Europa stays happy and healthy and continues to bring us such magnificent productions. We can only hope to see more from this company in years to come." ILLINOIS TIMES - Ann Kerr