



NASHVILLE OPERA

NO CLOWNING MATTER

PAGLIACCI LEADS OFF THE
23.24 SEASON AT TPAC

**ANY PLACE I HANG MY
HAT IS HOME**

NYMAN OPERA IS FIRST NOAH
LIFF OPERA CENTER STUDIO
SHOW TO BE GIVEN
ENCORE PRODUCTION

A look at PAGLIACCI

FROM JOHN HOOMES

I want to welcome you to an exciting new season of opera. Nashville Opera is proud to present a season of diverse programming that includes a Mozart masterpiece, a story of the wondrous workings of the human brain, and a fable of lost love that delves into the sphere of magical realism.

But to open our season, we begin with one of the biggest crowd-pleasers in the operatic repertory, *Pagliacci* by Leoncavallo.

Ruggero Leoncavallo (1858-1919) is best known for his opera *Pagliacci*, a brilliant, sexy, passionate, and ferocious piece, which explores the dark side of human emotion and behavior. *Pagliacci* has been described by various critics as "an intense, thrill ride of an opera" and as "a slice of life." One critic wrote that, if *Pagliacci* is presented properly, the audience's reaction at its conclusion should be as if they had just received "a violent blow to the solar plexus."

Is that good, you may ask? Well, apparently so.

Pagliacci has always remained in the repertory since its premiere in the late 1800's. It is an especially good introduction for first time operagoers who may have a preconceived notion that operas are slow moving, formal, and polite. *Pagliacci* is a lot of things, but polite is not one of them. This opera, however, is a work that can touch one's soul deeply as we are challenged (as Tonio states in the famous prologue) to watch the characters of the opera "live, love, laugh, cry tears of rage... all while breathing the same air as the audience."

Leoncavallo studied in Milan, Italy, and became one of the main composers identified with the emerging Italian operatic movement called "verismo." The verismo movement was started by a group of young opera composers as a reaction to old fashioned, romantic operas dealing with fantasy plots, or stories of kings, queens, and magic.

This new style of opera was direct, passionate, violent, and was based on real life... which can often be messy. Very messy. The young composers who championed the verismo style wanted to shake things up in what they felt was an art form that had become safe, bland, and stale. Leoncavallo was very much at home in this radical new style. In his everyday dealings, he was known for his hot temper and passion in life. Early in his career, he was fired from a university post over a controversy involving art and his own personal aesthetic.

In 1888, Leoncavallo watched as another young rival composer - Mascagni - won great acclaim with the blockbuster short opera, *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Mascagni had written this work as part of an opera competition, and his work drew from the verismo philosophy. Leoncavallo entered the competition a few years later with *Pagliacci*. He won the top prize, and the rest is history.

Leoncavallo's winning opera was inspired by an 1889 court case that involved a troupe of traveling actors and clowns in the town of Montalto. In the plot, a husband's jealousy and betrayal ended in violence and revenge. Leoncavallo felt it was perfect verismo opera material, as the plots showed the breakdown of comic fantasy into stark, hot-blooded realism. Although some in the audience were shocked by the show's real emotion and violent theatrics, *Pagliacci* was an instant success and changed Leoncavallo's life forever.

Pagliacci opened in 1892 (five years before Puccini's *La Bohème*) and quickly gained immense popularity throughout Europe and America. Within two years it had been translated into all major European languages, as well as Swedish, Serbo-Croatian, and Hebrew. During his long career, Leoncavallo wrote 21 other operas and operettas. Unfortunately, none of these other works ever came close to matching the popularity of *Pagliacci*.

I invite you to sit back and experience this powerful work that has been thrilling audiences for well over a century, Leoncavallo's masterpiece of mayhem, *Pagliacci*.

Just what is it about clowns?

On the surface, a clown is nothing more a veneer of white makeup, a wig, a big smile often executed in fire engine red, and a costume that may or may not include comically large shoes or nose.

But is there another character more divisive than a clown? The mix of laughs and terror that various clowns can deliver is, frankly, breathtaking. Let's consider the following:

There are good clowns: the ones ruefully sung of by the world-weary Desiree Armfeldt "Send in the Clowns" from Stephen Sondheim's *A Little Night Music*. The culturally significant American clowns include the eternally cheerful Ronald McDonald and *The Simpsons*' sardonic Krusty the Clown. Commedia dell'arte's Arlecchino has historically bumbled and tumbled about.

However, we all know the evil ones... Stephen King's Pennywise from *IT* and Batman's *The Joker* rank among fiction and film's most enduring, menacing, and violent clowns. In real life, serial killer John Wayne Gacy embodied the cheery creations, Pogo and Patches, all while murdering at least 33 people. It's a lot to consider.

Pagliacci's star, Canio, is... well... hmm. I guess you'll have to find out for yourself in a few weeks' time, dear friends.



RECOMMENDED RECORDING

John's favorite recording of *PAGLIACCI* dates from a 1982 Franco Zeffirelli film of the opera. He says, "It's pretty over the top. Domingo in his vocal prime and Teresa Stratas chewing every piece of scenery she can find (in a good way). What's not to love?"

If you're going to go, go big, right?

Georges Prêtre conducts the Teatro alla Scala Orchestra and Chorus on Decca. Singers include Placido Domingo, Teresa Stratas, Juan Pons, Alberto Rinaldi, Florindo Andreolli.

NOW THERE'S SOME SAD THINGS KNOWN TO MAN, BUT AIN'T TOO MUCH SADDER THAN **THE TEARS OF A CLOWN.**

PAGLIACCI RETURNS TO THE TPAC STAGE AFTER 12 YEARS.

Over the summer, as we met thousands of new friends at Opera on Wheels engagements, we found ourselves describing the upcoming season to a lot of people. When it came to telling them about Pagliacci, we landed on the fact that it is, perhaps, the definition of classic Italian opera, to wit: *No one ends up happy... or alive.*

The action unfolds in the square of a small Italian village, where a group of traveling players are to perform a clown show that evening. The intensely jealous Canio, head of the clown troupe, discovers that his wife Nedda, also an actor, has taken a lover. He also discovers that she plans to run off with this lover after the performance. Vowing revenge, he declares that the guilty man will somehow reveal himself at that evening's performance.

During the clown show, Nedda, in her role as Columbine, flirts with Harlequin, her stage lover, played by Beppe. In a fit of rage, Canio (dressed as Pagliaccio the clown) breaks character and forces his wife to reveal her real lover's name. Terrified, Nedda flees the stage.

As you may imagine, it doesn't go so well after that.

Pagliacci was first performed in Milan at the Teatro Dal Verme on May 21, 1892. While it was an immediate success, today it is the only work by Leoncavallo in the standard operatic repertory. The composer also created his version of *La bohème*, which was performed in 1897 in Venice. However, it was outshone by Puccini's opera of the same name and on the same subject, which was premiered in 1896. The Metropolitan Opera first staged *Pagliacci* on December 11, 1893, and has performed it an astonishing 738 times.

Along the way, *Pagliacci* has accrued an astonishing list of firsts:

- In 1907, *Pagliacci* became the first opera to be recorded in its entirety. In fact, Leoncavallo personally supervised the recording session with the La Scala orchestra and chorus.
- In 1931, it became the first complete opera to be filmed with sound. It premiered in New York in February of that year.
- The famous aria "Vesti la giubba" was recorded by Enrico Caruso and laid claim to being the world's first recording to sell a million copies. Not just of an opera... The first record. Period.

Pagliacci first appeared at TPAC in Nashville Opera's fourth season, alongside Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*, in 1985. It returned in the 2003.04 Season and came back to terrorize TPAC last in the 2011.12 Season. We're looking forward to the work's fourth staging this year with a fabulous cast of young, upcoming stars both joining and returning to the Nashville Opera family.



The cast



Jonathan Burton

CANIO

Voice: Tenor
Past Nashville Opera Engagements: Turandot (2015)
Hometown: Portsmouth, Ohio
Dream Role: Scarpia in Puccini's Tosca



Keri Alkema

NEDDA

Voice: Soprano
Past Nashville Opera Engagements: Company Debut
Hometown: Palm Beach Gardens, Florida
Dream Role: Manon Lescaut in Puccini's Manon Lescaut



Andrew Manca

TONIO

Voice: Baritone
Past Nashville Opera Engagements: Company Debut
Hometown: Troy, Michigan
Dream Role: Conte di Luna in Verdi's Il Trovatore



Joseph Lim

SILVIO

Voice: Baritone
Past Nashville Opera Engagements: Stuck Elevator (2023)
Hometown: Seoul, South Korea
Dream Role: Rodrigo in Verdi's Don Carlo



Anthony Ciaramitaro

BEPPE

Voice: Tenor
Past Nashville Opera Engagements: Company Debut
Hometown: Coral Springs, Florida
Dream Role: Otello in Verdi's Otello



NASHVILLE PERA ON THE Mountain

HARVEST MOON EDITION

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30
VANDERBILT DYER OBSERVATORY

We all know everyone loves Opera on the Mountain. That's why it's sold out every single year since its inception. Along the way, we figured that it's so nice, this year we'll do it twice!

Join us on September 30th for Harvest Moon Opera on the Mountain. Gates will open at 5:30 and the concert will begin promptly at 7:00.

Tickets are available now!
Details at nashvilleopera.org/mountain

NASHVILLE PERA On Wheels

THE AUTUMN TOUR

Opera on Wheels hits the road again beginning October 1st. Over the summer, we reached 24,080 people with free Nashville Opera concerts!

Public performances will include appearances at oneCITY in Midtown, Monthaven Arts & Cultural Center in Hendersonville, Westhaven in Franklin, and the Palace Theatre in Gallatin.

See all of the public dates at nashvilleopera.org/wheels



Bravo

MAJOR SUPPORTERS

23
24
THE ANN & FRANK BUMSTEAD SEASON

GUARDIAN

\$100,000+



MIDDLE TENNESSEE
OPERA SUPPORT FUND
of the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee



THE JUDY & NOAH LIFF
FOUNDATION

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FOUNDATION



This project is supported in whole or in part by federal award number SLFRP5534, awarded to the State of Tennessee by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

PRODUCER

\$50,000 - \$99,999



HAYS FOUNDATION
Established by Marlene & Spencer Hays



DIRECTOR

\$25,000 - \$49,999

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\$10,000 - \$14,999



WASHINGTON FOUNDATION



REVISITING THE HAT: 10 YEARS ON

Somewhere along the way, someone has to have said, "An opera about neurology... really?"

In November 2013, we definitively showed Nashville the beauty of an opera about neurology as *THE MAN WHO MISTOOK HIS WIFE FOR A HAT* had its company premiere in the Noah Liff Opera Center Studio. This fall, the return of *Man/Hat* marks the first time that an intimate Studio show will be re-mounted.

When asked why he wanted to reassess *Man/Hat* a decade on, John said, "It was one of the first operas we programmed in our studio space. I had wanted to stage this work for a long time, but never felt we had the proper venue available to capture the opera's intimate and emotional core. That is, until the creation of The Noah Liff Opera Center. This opera proved to be a huge success with our audience, and every season someone asks me if we would ever consider programming the show again. *Man/Hat* is an important work. If Nashville Opera doesn't do it, it would never be staged here in Nashville, and our new audiences would be deprived of experiencing this masterwork by a brilliant contemporary composer."

Man/Hat, which premiered in October 1986 at London's Institute of Contemporary Arts, comes with definitive artistic and scientific

bona fides. Based on the writings of Oliver Sacks, best known for his 1973 *AWAKENINGS* (and the subsequent 1992 feature film, starring Robert DeNiro and Robin Williams), the dedication to the minutiae and various facets of neurological disorders presents a touching, yet sometimes comedic look at a man living with the very real condition visual agnosia.

Composer Michael Nyman is best known for his score to the 1993 Academy Award winning film *THE PIANO*, which was nominated for the Golden Globe, BAFTA, and American Film Institute awards. However, his compositions range from film to operas and string quartets to choral works and gamelan ensembles in a career that has spanned seven decades (and counting!).

The Nashville Opera recording of *THE MAN WHO MISTOOK HIS WIFE FOR A HAT*, which was recorded in November, 2015 at Nashville's Ocean Way Studios and released by Naxos Records, is available to be streamed on Amazon Music, Apple Music, Pandora, Spotify, and YouTube Music. CDs are available for purchase at \$20 through the Nashville Opera's box office.



The cast



Matt Treviño

DR. P

Voice: Bass

Past Nashville Opera Engagements: Tosca (2009), Andrea Chenier (2010), La Traviata (2011), Man/Hat (2013), Romulus Hunt (2014), Three Way (2017)

Hometown: Harlingen, Texas

Dream Role: Caiaphas in Jesus Christ Superstar (A dream since he was 8 years old!)



Caroline Worra

MRS. P

Voice: Soprano

Past Nashville Opera Engagements: Company Debut

Hometown: Onalaska, Wisconsin

Dream Role: Norma in Bellini's Norma



Tyler Nelson

DR. S

Voice: Tenor

Past Nashville Opera Engagements: Das Rheingold (2022)

Hometown: Salt Lake City, Utah

Dream Role: Tom Rakewell in Stravinsky's The Rake's Progress

SYNOPSIS

i. Prologue: The neurologist, Dr. S, delivers an address concerning his approach to neurology and introduces the case of Dr. P

ii. The First Examination: Dr. and Mrs. P arrive at Dr. S' neurological clinic, having been referred by an ophthalmologist. A series of routine neurological tests is performed, answering next to nothing. As the couple prepare to leave, Dr. P makes mistakes that alarm Dr. S, who resolves to see him again.

iii. The House Call: Baffled by his first meeting with Dr. P, Dr. S decides to the patient's home may be the most effective observational environment. A variety of visual exercises are engaged in, designed to reveal the true nature of Dr. P's condition.

iv. Testing Visual Memory: Dr. S asks Dr. P to describe, from one end to the other, the layout and buildings of a local street both know well.

v. Paintings as Pathology? An Argument: Dr. S discovers that Dr. P is a talented amateur painter. While examining a portfolio of Dr. P's works, he concludes that Dr. P's illness is evident throughout his paintings, which have evolved from figurative to wholly abstract. This conclusion angers Mrs. P, who insists the change in her husband's painting style is an expression of his artistic development, not his deepening illness.

vi. The Prescription: As Dr. P enjoys his tea, Mrs. P explains to Dr. S how her husband manages, through music, to cope with his daily life in spite of his problems of perception.

vii. Epilogue: Dr. S delivers his concluding remarks on the case.

Friends of **NASHVILLE OPERA** Leadership

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La Bella Notte

SEASON IS COMING SOON!

Friends of Nashville Opera is thrilled to announce the calendar of events surrounding their thirtieth annual La Bella Notte gala in support of Nashville Opera's education programs.

The kickoff party will be held at Gucci in The Mall at Green Hills on October 5 beginning at 6:00 p.m.

The gala, which is themed THE GILDED AGE OF OPERA, will be the first ever black tie gala in support of an arts organization to be held at Belmont University's Fisher Center for the Performing Arts on February 10, 2024.

Keep your eyes on labellanotte.org for all the details!



Friends of Nashville Opera
announce the
thirtieth annual

*La
Bella Notte*

❁ THE GILDED AGE OF OPERA ❁

Saturday, the tenth of February
Twenty twenty-four
The Fisher Center for the Performing Arts

Julie and John Schneider
Chairmen

THE 2024 NASHVILLE OPERA EDUCATION TOUR IS ALREADY **SOLD OUT!**

Launching in January 2024, Nashville Opera on Tour's in-person performances sold out their entire run within four hours of becoming available on August 1. That is, without a doubt, a new record!

We're taking John Davies' THE THREE LITTLE PIGS back out on the road after a virtual staging in 2021. A perennial favorite, the opera teaches children about the power of teamwork and the timeless value of reading.

There is still opportunity to be a part of the tour with a virtual performance. If you know of an interested school, please have them contact Education Manager Hannah Marcoe at hmarcoe@nashvilleopera.org

Please visit nashvilleopera.org/tour for more details!



If you think art is only for your walls, it's time to **reframe** your perspective!

Whether you're driving to the Noah Liff Opera Center, TPAC, or Belmont University's Fisher Center, you have the chance to show your support for Nashville Opera with a beautiful selection of Tennessee Arts Commission (TAC) specialty license plates.

TAC provides funds to Nashville Opera and a great many other arts companies, museums, and institutions across the state. Your purchase of an Arts License Plate ensures that every Tennessean gains access the performing, visual, and musical arts wherever they live.

For more details, visit nashvilleopera.org/donate

BY THE NUMBERS: *The 22.23 Season*



25,343

TENNESSEE STUDENTS ATTENDED A FREE NASHVILLE OPERA PERFORMANCE OF **LITTLE RED'S MOST UNUSUAL DAY**



42%

OF NASHVILLE OPERA AUDIENCE MEMBERS FOR THE 22.23 SEASON WERE **FIRST-TIME TICKET BUYERS**



24,080

PEOPLE ACROSS DAVIDSON, WILLIAMSON, CHEATHAM, MAURY, MONTGOMERY, ROBERTSON, AND WILSON COUNTIES CAME TO A FREE **OPERA ON WHEELS** PERFORMANCE



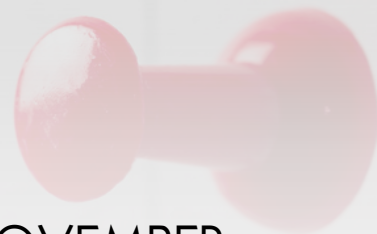
BYRON HARVEY TO LEAD CASI

Byron Harvey, who serves as Community Engagement Manager with the National Museum of African American Music in Downtown Nashville, has joined the Nashville Opera Board of Directors and has been tapped to become the third leader of the Committee for Artistic and Social Impact (CASI).

The Committee's mission is "addressing racism, discrimination, exclusion, and inequity in our art form both on and off the stage to facilitate transformational artistic and social impact in Nashville and across the globe." As chair of CASI, Byron's goal is to continue the committee's work of making opera accessible and open to all by supporting equality, creativity, and inclusivity.

A native of Nashville, Byron is a 2014 graduate of Tennessee State University and is no stranger to Nashville Opera. He performed with the company in past productions of *THE DIFFICULTY OF CROSSING A FIELD* (2012), *THE PEARL FISHERS* (2013), *LA BOHÈME* (2014), and *TURANDOT* (2015).

DATES OF NOTE



SEPTEMBER

- TUE, SEPT 12 TPAC LOOK IN: PAGLIACCI*
6:30 PM, NOAH LIFF OPERA CENTER
- THU, SEPT 21 OPENING NIGHT: PAGLIACCI
7:30 PM, TPAC JACKSON HALL
- SAT, SEPT 23 FRIENDS' PREMIERE DINNER
5:15 PM, ELMINGTON'S, FAIRLANE HOTEL
- SAT, SEPT 23 PAGLIACCI
7:30 PM, TPAC JACKSON HALL
- SAT, SEPT 30 OPERA ON THE MOUNTAIN
7:30 PM, VANDERBILT DYER OBSERVATORY

OCTOBER

- SUN, OCT 1 OPERA ON WHEELS
4:00 PM, MONTHAVEN ARTS CENTER
- THU, OCT 5 LA BELLA NOTTE KICKOFF PARTY
6:00 PM, GUCCI - GREEN HILLS MALL
- THU, OCT 12 OPERA ON WHEELS
6:30 PM, oneCITY NASHVILLE
- SUN, OCT 15 OPERA ON WHEELS
2:00 PM, WESTHAVEN
- SAT, OCT 21 OPERA ON WHEELS
4:00 PM, PALACE THEATER GALLATIN
- TUE, OCT 24 HBCU FELLOWSHIP MASTERCLASS
2:00 PM, NOAH LIFF OPERA CENTER

NOVEMBER

- TUE, NOV 2 TPAC LOOK IN: MAN/HAT*
6:30 PM, NOAH LIFF OPERA CENTER
- FRI, NOV 10 OPENING NIGHT: MAN/HAT
8:00 PM, NOAH LIFF OPERA CENTER
- SAT, NOV 11 MAN/HAT
8:00 PM, NOAH LIFF OPERA CENTER
- SUN, NOV 12 MAN/HAT
3:00 PM, NOAH LIFF OPERA CENTER

FARTHER AFIELD IN 2024

- FRI, JAN 26 OPENING NIGHT: FLORENCIA
7:30 PM, TPAC POLK THEATER
- SAT, JAN 27 FLORENCIA
7:30 PM, TPAC POLK THEATER
- SUN, JAN 28 FLORENCIA
3:00 PM, TPAC POLK THEATER
- THU, FEB 1 LBN PATRON PARTY
BY INVITATION
- SAT, FEB 10 LA BELLA NOTTE
FISHER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

*REGISTER FOR TPAC LOOK IN EVENTS AT
<https://www.tpac.org/education-community/insideout/look-in/>



Steven McCoy,

Nashville Opera's Patron Services Manager

The phrase "Sing Bravely" evokes a powerful image of courage and vulnerability, of standing up to our fears and boldly expressing the most genuine version of ourselves to the world. It is a call to action, an invitation to share our deepest thoughts and emotions through the medium of music, to **cast aside our doubts and insecurities and let our voices ring out with the fullness of our humanity.**

Singing bravely means to approach each note with intention, each lyric with conviction, knowing that our message will resonate with those around us who may be feeling the same pains or joys that we are expressing. It means to **embrace our own unique voice, flaws and all,** and to use it as a means of connection and inspiration for ourselves and others.

Whether we are singing in a choir, performing on stage, or singing alone in our living room, when we "Sing Bravely" we are using our voices to break down barriers and **create something beautiful and transformative.**

Steven McCoy joined Nashville Opera as Patron Services Manager in September, 2022. He hails from Knoxville, Tennessee and holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from The University of Memphis. His dream role is to sing George in Sondheim's SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE.

**SING
BRAVELY.**

NASHVILLE OPERA MAGAZINE

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THE HIGH NOTES

PAGLIACCI

TPAC Jackson Hall
September 21 + 23

OPERA ON WHEELS

All across Nashville
Rolling out October 1

MAN / HAT

Noah Liff Opera Center
November 10, 11, 12