

# NASHBILL

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23  
24  
THE ANN & FRANK BUMSTEAD SEASON

# PAGLIACCI

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.

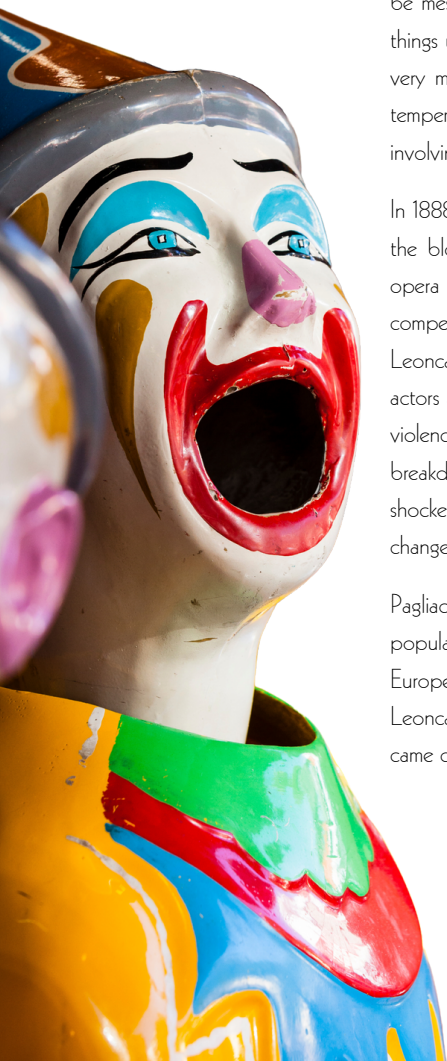
In 1888, Leoncavallo watched as another young rival composer - Mascagni - won great acclaim with the blockbuster short opera, *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Mascagni had written this work as part of an opera competition, and his work drew from the verismo philosophy. Leoncavallo entered the competition a few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

**JOHN HOOMES**  
CEO & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



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Photos: Will Shutes for Nashville Opera

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# PAGLIACCI

23  
24  
THE ANN & FRANK BUMSTEAD SEASON

Music and Libretto by Ruggero Leoncavallo  
Premiere at Teatro Dal Verme, Milan  
May 21, 1892

SEPTEMBER 21 + 23, 2023

Tennessee Performing Arts Center - Jackson Hall

Directed by John Hoomes  
Conducted by Dean Williamson  
Featuring the Nashville Opera Orchestra

## CAST

CANIO Jonathan Burton  
NEDDA Keri Alkema \*  
TONIO Andrew Manea \*  
BEPPE Anthony Ciaramitaro \*  
SILVIO Joseph Lim

\* Nashville Opera Debut

## CREATIVE

Scenic Design David P. Gordon for Sarasota Opera  
Scenery constructed by Center Line Studios, Cornwall, NY  
Scenic Backdrop painted by Michael Hagen, Inc., South Glens Falls, NY  
Lighting Design Barry Steele  
Costume Design Jessica Mueller  
Costume Design Assistant Susie Konstans  
Costume Coordinator Pam Lisenby  
Wig and Makeup Design Sondra Nottingham  
Wig & Makeup Assistant Sarah Ackerman  
Choreographer JaVonté Marquez  
Fight Choreographer Eric Pasto-Crosby  
Chorusmaster Stephen Carey  
Orchestral Reduction Tony Burke © Pocket Publications  
Additional Dance Arrangement Philip A. Kelsey

## PRODUCTION

Technical Director Robert Helvey  
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Assistant Stage Manager Sara Johnson  
Assistant Stage Manager Sarah Weeks  
Master Carpenter Joshua Bennett  
Props Master Lucious Rhoads  
Production Transport Driver Kelly Scheuman  
Rehearsal Pianist Andrew Pham  
Supertitles Hannah Marcoe

Costume Crew  
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Autumn Dudney  
Daniel Hawks  
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# Artists



Stage Director

## JOHN HOOMES

Nashville Opera CEO & Artistic Director

1995-Present

### Nashville Opera

*The Lighthouse, Samson and Delilah, Elmer Gantry, Aida, Don Giovanni, Andrea Chénier, The Fall of the House of Usher, The Girl of the Golden West, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat, Romulus Hunt, Florencia en el Amazonas, Hydrogen Jukebox, Così fan tutte, Glory Denied, Three Way, María de Buenos Aires, Tales of Hoffmann, The Cradle Will Rock, Beach Party Cinderella, Favorite Son, Rigoletto Noir, Das Rheingold, La Bohème, The Medium, Stuck Elevator, The Pirates of Penzance*

### Recent

*Florencia en el Amazonas – New York City Opera and Pensacola Opera*  
*Elmer Gantry, Don Giovanni – Florentine Opera*  
*Three Way – American Opera Projects, Brooklyn Academy of Music*

### Upcoming

*La Traviata - Opera North Carolina*  
*Die Fledermaus - Opera Pensacola*

Hometown

Mobile, Alabama

Residence

Nashville, Tennessee



Conductor

## DEAN WILLIAMSON

Nashville Opera Music Director

2015-Present

### Nashville Opera

*Romeo and Juliet, Samson and Delilah, The Girl of the Golden West, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, Cinderella, The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat, The Barber of Seville, Romulus Hunt, Florencia en el Amazonas, Hydrogen Jukebox, Three Way, María de Buenos Aires, Madame Butterfly, Beach Party Cinderella, Rigoletto Noir, Das Rheingold, La Bohème, The Medium, Stuck Elevator, The Pirates of Penzance*

### Recent

*Florencia en el Amazonas – New York City Opera*  
*La Cenerentola – Arizona Opera*  
*Three Way – American Opera Projects, Brooklyn Academy of Music Merola Grand Finales Concert – San Francisco Opera*  
*Madama Butterfly – Opera Idaho*  
*Le Nozze di Figaro – Arizona Opera*  
*Il barbiere di Siviglia – Opera Saratoga*  
*Don Giovanni – Inland Opera Northwest*

Hometown

Taipei, Taiwan

Residence

Seattle, Washington



Canio

## JONATHAN BURTON

Tenor

Nashville Opera

*Turandot* 2015

### Recent

The Prince in *Rusalka* - Pittsburgh Opera

B.F. Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* - Palm Beach Opera

Paul in *Die tote Stadt* - Opera Colorado

### Upcoming

Canio in *Pagliacci* - Austin Opera

B.F. Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* - Virginia Opera

Calaf in *Turandot* - Washington National Opera

Hometown/Residence: Portsmouth, OH



Nedda

## KERI ALKEMA \*

Soprano

Nashville Opera

*Debut*

### Recent

Tosca in *Tosca* - Canadian Opera Company

Mimi in *La Bohème* - Seattle Opera

Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* - Washington National Opera

Hometown: Palm Beach Gardens, FL

Residence: Smithville, TN



Tonio

## ANDREW MANEA

Baritone

Nashville Opera

*Debut*

### Recent

Ford in *Falstaff* - Palm Beach Opera

Escamillo in *Carmen* - Arizona Opera

Carlo in *Ernani* - Lyric Opera of Chicago

### Upcoming

Germont in *La Traviata* - North Carolina Opera

Escamillo in *Carmen* - Sarasota Opera

Tonio in *Pagliacci* - Washington National Opera

Hometown: Detroit, MI

Residence: Durham, NC



Silvio

## JOSEPH LIM

Baritone

Nashville Opera  
*Stuck Elevator* 2023

### Recent

Flemish Deputy in *Don Carlos* - Metropolitan Opera  
Schaunard in *La Bohème* - Deutsche Oper am Rhein  
Harlekin (cover) in *Ariadne auf Naxos* - Metropolitan Opera

### Upcoming

Marcello in *La Bohème* - Lotte Concert Hall  
Tiger / Rooster in *Big Swim (World Premiere)* - Houston Grand Opera  
Le Dancaire (cover) in *Carmen* - Metropolitan Opera

Hometown: Seoul, South Korea

Residence: Old Tappan, NJ



Beppe

## ANTHONY CIARAMITARO \*

Tenor

Nashville Opera  
*Debut*

### Recent

Alfredo in *La Traviata* - Macerata Opera Festival  
Cassio in *Otello* - Los Angeles Opera  
Fenton in *Falstaff* - Palm Beach Opera

### Upcoming

Faust in *Mefistofele* - Teatro dell'opera di Roma  
Rodolfo in *La Bohème* - Opéra de Tours, France  
Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* - Opera Philadelphia

Hometown: Coral Springs, FL

Residence: Coconut Creek, FL



Set Designer

## DAVID P. GORDON

Rutgers University  
*Academic Director of Design & Production, Mason Gross School of the Arts  
Rutgers University*

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FOR THE USE OF EXCERPTS FROM HIS  
*CIRCUS INTERLUDE FROM MUSIC OF LEONCAVALLO*



Lighting and Video Designer

## BARRY STEELE

Nashville Opera

*Der Rosenkavalier, Salome, The Lighthouse, La Voix Humaine, Lucia di Lammermoor, Faust, Surrender Road, Turandot (2006, 2015), Romeo and Juliet, Madame Butterfly, Samson and Delilah, The Fall of the House of Usher, Andrea Chénier, The Girl of the Golden West, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat, Otello, La Bohème (2014), Romulus Hunt, Florencia en el Amazonas, Hydrogen Jukebox, Don Giovanni, Glory Denied, Three Way, Carmen, María de Buenos Aires, Susannah, Tales of Hoffmann, The Cradle Will Rock, Rigoletto Noir, Das Rheingold, La Bohème, The Medium, Stuck Elevator, The Pirates of Penzance*

Upcoming

*Don Giovanni* – Edmonton Opera  
*Die Fledermaus, Flight* – Des Moines Metro Opera  
*Ring of Fire* – Capital Repertory Theatre

Hometown/Residence: St. Petersburg, FL



Costume Designer

## JESSICA MUELLER

Nashville Opera

*Stuck Elevator* 2023

Recent

Head of the BFA Production Design Program, Resident Costume Designer, and Costume Shop Manager – Belmont University  
*Peter and the Starcatcher* - Belmont University  
*Antony and Cleopatra* - Nashville Shakespeare Festival

Hometown: Custer, SD

Residence: Nashville, TN



Wig & Makeup Designer

## SONDRA NOTTINGHAM

Nashville Opera

*La Bohème, Beach Party Cinderella, Florencia en el Amazonas, Salome, Elmer Gantry, Il Trovatore, The Student Prince, The Fall of the House of Usher, Rigoletto, The Girl of the Golden West, Madame Butterfly, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat, Romulus Hunt, Glory Denied, Tales of Hoffmann, The Cradle Will Rock, Madame Butterfly, Pepito, Amahl and the Night Visitors, Turn of the Screw, Cinderella, One Vote Won, Favorite Son, Rigoletto Noir, Das Rheingold, La Bohème, The Medium, Stuck Elevator, The Pirates of Penzance*

Recent

*Abduction from the Seraglio, Ariadne auf Naxos* – St. Petersburg Opera  
*Das Rheingold, La Traviata* – North Carolina Opera  
*Turandot, Dead Man Walking* – Shreveport Opera  
*Witches of Venice, Il Postino, Figaro, The Long Walk* – Opera Saratoga  
*Carmen, Un Ballo in Maschera* – Opera Tampa  
*Three Way* – American Opera Projects, Brooklyn Academy of Music

Hometown: Hardinsburg, KY

Residence: Nashville, TN



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Chris Hayden

Don Holmes

Susan Holt

JaVonte' Marquez

Cyrus Pittman

Chelsea Pittman

Theresa Puckett

Angelo Tate

Joi Ware

## DANCERS

JaVonte' Marquez - Choreographer

Joi Ware

## THE DONKEY

Crooked Creek's Going Rogue

Handler: Theresa Puckett