Department of Music
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
UNLV Opera Theatre
College of Fine Arts

presents

**A Salute to American Opera**
Luana DeVol, director
Cherié Roe, piano

**PROGRAM**

George Gershwin  
(1898 - 1937)

Douglas Moore  
(1893 - 1969)

Carlisle Floyd  
(b.1926)

Jack Beeson  
(1921 - 2010)

Aaron Copland  
(1900 - 1990)

Gian Carlo Menotti  
(1911 - 2007)

John Corigliano  
(b. 1938)

Mark Adamo  
(b.1968)

Thomas Pasatieri  
(b.1945)

Leonard Bernstein  
(1918 - 1990)

**INTERMISSION**

**Porgy and Bess**
Song Selections

**Ballad of Baby Doe**
Act I, Scene 2

**Susannah**
Act II, Scene 3

**Of Mice and Men**
Act II, Trio
“You fellas buyin’ a farm?”

**Lizzie Borden**
Act I, Scene 2

**The Tender Land**
Scene from Act 2,  
“Try makin’ peace”

**The Old Maid and the Thief**
Scenes XI and XII

**The Ghosts of Versailles**
Act I, Scene 3  
“Come now my darling”

**Little Women**
Act II, Scene 3  
“She’s asked for you”

**The Seagull**
Act I  
“Alas, the stage”

**Candide**
Finale  
“Make our Garden Grow”

November 12-13, 2010 7:30 p.m.
Dr. Arturo Rando-Grillot Recital Hall
Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center
PROGRAM NOTES

**Porgy and Bess (1935)**
Librettist by Dubose Heyward and Sara Gersten

- Clara: Cecilia Lopez
- Jake: Brian Myer
- Serena: Martha Banks

Adapted from John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (1937) and George Michael Elliot's *Lennie John Mancheni*.

**Ballet of Baby Doe (1956)**
Libretto by John Latschke

- Sarah: Ossie Gardner
- Effie: Erin Kennedy
- Sam: Erikson Franco
- Barney: Michael Elliot
- Kate: Nicole Harris
- Augusta Tabor: Linda Jackley
- Horace Tabor: Jonathan Napier Morales
- Baby Doe: Sheridan McKee

The Ballet of Baby Doe is loosely based on the life of Elizabeth McCourt (1854 - 1895) and premiered with the Central City Opera in Colorado in 1956. Horace Tabor, after years of struggling in the Colorado silver mines, has struck it rich in Leadville. He seems to have all that life could offer, until his marriage to Augusta, is threatened. She's been a pretty young woman, newly arrived in Leadville, and he is entranced by her. After that evening's performance of the opera, the Tolos are taken by their guests. Augusta goes ahead to rent to the hotel, where Horace lingers behind. Two "ladies of the night" from the Cheriton Hotel are gossiping about the newcomer, Baby Doe. The strains of an old folk song are heard as Baby Doe sings the "Willow Song," and Horace is drawn closer. He tells Baby Doe that her singing makes him recall old dreams and longings of things he once desired. Augusta calls for Horace interrupts their swaking love.

**Susannah (1955)**
Sahnashe Pulk by Cecilas Lopez

- Ossie Blitch: Genesis L. Brown

While a member of the piano faculty at Florida State University, Floyd adapted the apocryphal tale of Susannah and the Elders into his third opera, Susannah. The opera received its world premiere at the University in 1955. Susannah lives alone in the mountains of Appalachia with her brother Sam. By chance, the young and beautiful girl was seen bathing in a secret creek by the Elders of the community church. The sight of the innocent Susannah has aroused them and they condemn her as a harlot. At the revival meeting that evening, Reverend Blitch, a travelling preacher, has been influenced by the Elders and their ways, and leads the community in demanding that Susannah repent. Knowing that she is innocent, Susannah refuses and flees to the safety and comfort of her cabin. She sings an old folk song taught to her by her dead Mother. Blitch arrives and, intent on saving her soul emotionally exhausts Susannah.

**Floyd's fifth opera was composed in 1969 and first performed in 1970 by the Seattle Opera Company. George, a seasoned ranch hand and farm worker, has befriended Lennie, a mentally retarded young man of great strength. They are working and saving toward settling down on their own farm one day. Candy, another itinerant farm hand, overhears them discussing their venture, wants to join them, and puts up his savings with the others. Together, they believe they just might have enough money to "swing her!"

**Lizzie Borden (1965)**
Libretto by Kemward Elmslie

- Margaret: Charlie Rollison
- Abigail (offstage): Stephanie Redman

Lizzie Based on the real-life case of Lizzie Borden and the double-axe murder of her parents, Beeson called his opera a "Family Portrait." The opera was commissioned by the Ford Foundation and was premiered on March 25, 1965 by the New York City Opera. The Borden sisters, Lizzie and Margaret, have a dominating father and a new young stepmother, Abigail, who is continually tormenting the sisters. Margaret is a sister, a young sea captain named Jason. Lizzie is glad for her sister's happiness, but is suspicious of pending interference from a jealous and vengeful Abigail. Margaret fears Lizzie's increasing hatred for their father and stepmother. Yet, this hatred propels Lizzie out of the house to help Margaret escape.

**The Tender Land (1954)**
Libretto Horace Evens (aka Erik Johns)

- Grandpa: Jonathan Napier Morales
- Horace: John Mancheni
- Ma: Nicole Harris
- Lizzie: Amanda Mura
- Laura: Stephanie Redman

Copland's numerous and influential works encompass the Pulitzer Prize winning ballet score for Martha Graham's *Appalachian Spring* (1944) and the Academy Award winning film score for "The Heiress." (1949). Copland's second opera, *The Tender Land*, was commissioned by Rogers and Hammerstein. It was originally planned for the NBC Television Opera Workshop, however the opera was rejected by the television producers. At its premiere with the New York City Opera in 1954 the opera was criticized for a weak libretto. The party to celebrate Laura's graduation from High School is on-going. Laura thanks the guests, and casts a fond eye in the direction of Martin, one of two itinerant workers hired for the harvest. Ma, Lizzie's mother, provides a distraction by challenging everyone to a dance. Stan Margulies

**The Old Maid and the Thief (1939)**
Libretto by John Latschke

- Bob: Michael Elliot
- Miss Pinkerton: Amanda Mura
- Lizzie: Brian Myer

Based on T. S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," Beeson composed his opera specifically for a radio broadcast in 1939. It was first staged by the Philadelphia Opera Company in 1951. Miss Todd, a small town spinster, and her maid Lastitia, have vonsequently taken a young and handsome drifter, Bob, into their household under the guise that he is Miss Todd's ill cousin. They hear from the town gossip, Miss Pinkerton, that a thief has broken out of jail and is in their area. Both women suspect Bob is the thief, but they've become infatuated with him. In order to convince him to stay they provide him not only with food and lodging, but also with money they've stolen from Miss Todd's neighbors. Bob is restless and makes plans to leave. The two women run a store and shop to convince Bob to stay. The next morning, Miss Pinkerton arrives, breathless with the latest news of the liquor store crime, surely done by the thief who is still at large. She also says that the police are going to search every house. Suddenly, a raucous song is heard from Miss Todd's "cousin." Miss Pinkerton leaves to spread this newest bit of gossip, and Miss Todd makes plans to run away from the police. Lastitia and Miss Todd confess to Bob saying they knew he was the thief all along and that they must make their escape. Bob, however, proclaims his innocence and refuses to run away. The women confuses their mistake on his behalf and Bob says they should be the ones going to jail. Miss Todd suggests that Bob is being very ungrateful and inconsiderate of the love he has for her. When Bob retorts, "I don't love you at all," Miss Todd flies into a rage and determines to bring the police to arrest him.
The Ghosts of Versailles (1991)
Rosina: Casey Gardner
Cherubino: Cady Marshall
Marie Antoinette: Wendy Moss

Beaumarchais: Jonathan Napier Morales
King Louis XVI: Erikson Franco
Ghosts: Students of the Opera Workshop

The Metropolitan Opera Company commissioned the opera for its 100th Anniversary. After missing the planned premiere, it was finally produced on December 19, 1991. The ghosts of the court of Louis XVI have been haunting the palace of Versailles since their demise by guillotine during the French Revolution. Marie Antoinette is a sad ghost, and Beaumarchais has a plan to cheer and beguile the queen. He presents a flashback of the mutual seduction of Rosina and Cherubino in the gardens of Aguas Frescas in Seville, twenty years before the French Revolution. As Rosina and Cherubino move closer and closer together, Beaumarchais draws nearer to the queen. Rosina and Cherubino consummate the quartet with a kiss but the jealous husband and King Louis interrupts Beaumarchais and Marie Antoinette.

Little Women (1998)
Adapted from Louisa May Alcott
Gideon: Genesis L. Brown
Jo: Belinda Jackley
Beth: Beverly Taflinger

Family Members and
Chorus: Students of the Opera Workshop

The Houston Grand Opera commissioned Mark Adamo to compose an opera for its young artist program. The studio performances were so successful that the opera appeared as part of the Houston Grand Opera’s regular season in 2000. In his composer’s notes to the HGO program, Adamo describes his music as reflecting his love of “fioratura” vocal writing, pan-chromatic harmony, and American theater-song forms. And also, “for those scenes driven by language and story, rather than music and psychology, I concocted a variant of 18th-century recitative... crisply minimal, but made from a twelve-tone melody...” These he used extensively for the role of Jo. In this scene, Jo has been called home to the bedside of the seriously ill Beth.

The Seagull (1974)
Anton Chekhov, adapted by Kenward Elmslie

Constantin: Brian Myer
Nina: Sarah Fulco
Arkadina: Amanda Mura
Shemryeff: Jonathan Napier Morales

Sorin: Genesis L. Brown
Dr. Dora: Erikson Franco
Pauline: Nicole Harris

The Seagull had its world premiere at the Houston Grand Opera on March 5, 1974. Pasatieri made revisions for a production at the San Francisco Opera Center on April 23, 2004. In this scene, we are on the country estate of Sorin, whose sister, Arkadina is a former actress. Arkadina’s son, Constantin, has written and directed an unconventional play that is being presented to guests staying at the estate. The play stars Nina, a young girl from a neighboring estate, as the “soul of the world.” Arkadina laughs at his attempt to find a new theatrical form, finding it ridiculous and incomprehensible, while Constantin storms off in disgrace.

Candide (1957)
Adapted from Voltaire
Candide: Jahmaul Bakare
Cunegonde: Wendy Moss
Pacquette: Isabella Ivy
Old Lady: Belinda Jackley
Governor: Erikson Franco

Maximilian: Michael Elliot
Pangloss: Brian Myer
Chorus: Students of the Opera Workshop
UNLV Chamber Chorale

After surviving a series of misadventures, Candide and his cousin Cunegonde decide to settle down and buy a farm. Dr. Pangloss, their tutor, has convinced them that everything turns out for the best in the best of all possible worlds.

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Randy Hughes - Stage Manager
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Danielle Toscano - Poster Design
Cady Marshall and Librarians Cheryl and Kathleen - Music Material
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