

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lyric Opera of Kansas City
2016-17 Season Continues with
Lyric Opera debut co-production of
The Marriage of Figaro
ALL NEW Co-Production with Opera Philadelphia,
San Diego Opera and Palm Beach Opera

Kansas City, MO (October 11, 2016) – Lyric Opera of Kansas City continues its 59th season with the Lyric Opera debut co-production of Mozart's masterpiece ***The Marriage of Figaro*** November 5, 9, 11 and 13 at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. Joining the Lyric Opera as co-producers are Opera Philadelphia, San Diego Opera and Palm Beach Opera. The production will be sung in Italian with English titles. High res production and artists' photos can be downloaded [here](#).

Considered by many to be the most perfect opera ever written, ***The Marriage of Figaro*** is a comedy of class warfare and love, lost and found. After a day of chaos and confusion, love is restored, families are reunited and Figaro finally gets his bride.

Acclaimed director **Stephen Lawless** will make his Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut as he brings his talents to the Muriel Kauffman Theatre stage to direct this opera buffa. **Edward Parks** comes to Kansas City for his Lyric Opera debut to play the philandering husband Count Almaviva and **Katie Van Kooten** returns to Lyric Opera to reprise her acclaimed role as Countess Almaviva. Finally, also making their Lyric Opera of Kansas City debuts are **Adam Lau**, in the role of Figaro, **Margaret Gawrysiak** as Marcellina and **Steven Cole** in the roles of Don Basilio and Don Curzio. Also returning to Lyric Opera of Kansas City is Soprano **Maureen McKay** in the role of Susanna.

General Director and CEO Deborah Sandler said, "This new co-production of Mozart's timeless masterpiece represents a major step forward for the Lyric Opera, as it is the first time in the history of the organization that the Lyric Opera is acting as the lead producer of a new co-production. *The Marriage of Figaro*, with all new gorgeous sets and costumes will premiere here and will later be seen by such prominent companies including Opera Philadelphia, Palm Beach Opera and San Diego Opera, our co-production partners. Furthermore, the Lyric Opera will be credited as the originating company in future stagings of this production, enhancing our ever-growing national prominence."

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About the Artists

Making his Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut in the role of Count Almaviva, Baritone **Edward Parks** has been hailed by *Opera News* for his “warm, velvety baritone” and by *the New York Times* for providing “precision, sensitivity and nuance in abundance” and a “robust, earthy voice”. A graduate of the Metropolitan Opera’s Lindemann Young Artists Development Program, he was awarded 3rd prize in Placido Domingo’s 2015 Operalia Competition and was presented in the organization’s “The Voices of 2015” concert in Hungary. The 2015-2016 season included debuts with Virginia Opera as Marcello in *La bohème* and Des Moines Metro Opera as Ford in *Falstaff*, a return to Atlanta Opera as Mercutio in *Roméo et Juliette*, a performance of the music of composer Ben Moore with The Cliburn, Escamillo in *Carmen* with PortOpera, and his return to the Metropolitan Opera to cover Schaunard in *La bohème*. The 2016-2017 season will see his Mercutio with Opera de Monte Carlo on tour in Oman, Marcello in *La bohème* with Minnesota Opera, Escamillo in *Carmen* with Nashville Opera, the cover of Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with the Metropolitan Opera, and the title role in the world premiere of *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* with Santa Fe Opera.

A native of Indiana, Pennsylvania, Mr. Parks received his bachelor of music degree from Oberlin Conservatory and his master of music degree from Yale University. Mr. Parks has received awards from the George London Foundation, the Marilyn Horne Foundation, the Fritz and Lavinia Jensen Foundation Competition, the Irma M. Cooper Opera Columbus International Vocal Competition, the Connecticut Opera, the Palm Beach Opera Competition and the Music Academy of the West.

Reprising her “impeccable, soulful performance” (*The Kansas City Star*) in the role of Countess Almaviva, Soprano **Katie Van Kooten** returns to Lyric Opera of Kansas City for her third production with the Company. Prior roles have included Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro* in 2011 and Mimi in *La bohème* in 2014. Of her recent role debut as Tatyana in Tchaikovsky’s *Eugene Onegin*, *the Houston Chronicle* wrote, “Her singing is extraordinary in its radiance, power and sheer expressiveness. Her “Letter Scene” alone, would be reason enough to attend.”

In the 2016-17 season, Ms. Van Kooten will return to the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra for *Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony* conducted by music director, Marin Alsop and the Oregon Symphony for *Mozart’s Requiem*, conducted by Jean-Marie Zeitouni. The 2015-16 season saw her return to Houston Grand Opera as Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin*, as well as concert appearances with the Minnesota Orchestra for Strauss’ *Four Last Songs* and Mahler’s *Symphony No. 4* under the baton of music director Osmo Vänskä, and *Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony* with the Oregon Symphony.

Operatic highlights from recent seasons include Elisabetta in Donizetti’s *Maria Stuarda* opposite Joyce DiDonato at Houston Grand Opera, where she has also appeared as Antonia in *Les Contes d’Hoffmann*, Mimi in *La bohème*, and Ellen Orford in Britten’s *Peter Grimes* in a new production by Neil Armfield. She has performed Liù in *Turandot* with Opera New Orleans, Elettra in *Idomeneo* and Vitellia in *La Clemenza di Tito* at Oper Frankfurt, Mimi and the Countess at Lyric Opera of Kansas City, the Countess with Atlanta Opera, and Donna Elvira with Opera Grand Rapids. Ms. Van Kooten made her house debuts at the Metropolitan Opera in the acclaimed Nicolas Joël production of *La Rondine* as Magda and at Houston Grand Opera as Helena in Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. A graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in

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London, Ms. Kooten made her debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden as Magda in *La Rondine* and return performances there have included Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* opposite Rolando Villazón and led by Antonio Pappano, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, Mimi in *La bohème*, and Marguerite in *Faust*.

Making his Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut, Bass **Adam Lau**, in the role of Figaro, has been praised as a “bass of real quality, with sonorous low notes” (*Palm Beach ArtsPaper*). A graduate of the Florida Grand Opera young artist residency, bass Adam Lau made his debut this summer with the Minnesota Orchestra singing the role of Lodovico in *Otello*. He also returned to the San Francisco Symphony to sing in *Beethoven's 9th Symphony*, having made his debut with that orchestra in December 2015, singing *Messiah*.

Highlights of his 2016-17 season include his first Wagnerian role, that of Donner in *Das Rheingold*, in his return to North Carolina Opera. He will make his Carnegie Hall debut, singing *Messiah* with The Oratorio Society of New York. In spring 2017, Mr. Lau will sing Mephistopheles in *Damnation of Faust* with Liverpool Philharmonic, conducted by John Nelson, and return to Seattle Opera as The Speaker in *The Magic Flute*.

In the 2015-2016 season, Mr. Lau returned to North Carolina Opera as Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere Di Siviglia*, and also participated in Dallas Opera's World Premiere of Mark Adamo's *Becoming Santa Claus*. Recent credits include Seattle Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Dallas Opera, Opera Naples, North Carolina Opera, and Opera Theatre of St. Louis. He has been recognized in several voice competitions, and most recently is a Top Prize winner of the 2015 George London Foundation Vocal Competition.

Also returning to Lyric Opera of Kansas City in the role of Susanna, Soprano **Maureen McKay** has been hailed by the *Washington Post* as the “undisputed star of the show,” following performances at Washington National Opera. Ms. McKay was Pamina in the 2008 Lyric Opera of Kansas City production of *Die Zauberflöte* *The Washington Post* further exclaimed, “Armed with a silvery, precisely aimed voice, natural stage presence and the kind of beautifully detailed acting you don't see often enough on the operatic stage.” In the 2016-17 season, Ms. McKay also sings Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* in return engagements at Gran Teatre del Liceu and Komische Oper Berlin, as well as debuts with The Bolshoi Theatre in the production where she originated the role in 2012 with Barrie Kosky.

In the 2015-16 season, Ms. McKay made her mainstage debut with Seattle Opera in her role debut as Léïla in Bizet's *Les pêcheurs de perles*. She also joined The Danish National Symphony Orchestra for performances of Händel's *Messiah* and the Choir and Orchestra of Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa for Mahler's *Symphony No. 2*, both under the baton of Fabio Luisi. She also joined the Colorado Springs Philharmonic for Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* and Barber's *Prayers of Kierkegaard*. Other engagements included performances of Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* with Gran Teatre del Liceu and returns to both The Atlanta Opera for Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance* and Portland Opera for Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*. Ms. McKay is a former member of Seattle Opera's Young Artists Program and was a Filene Young Artist with Wolf Trap Opera Company. She earned her Bachelor of Music at Columbus State University in Georgia (summa cum laude) and her Master of Music at The Ohio State University.

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Bass **Arthur Woodley** returns to the Lyric Opera of Kansas City for *The Marriage of Figaro* after his acclaimed performance as Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville* in 2012. Later this season, he makes his debut at the Washington National Opera with his acclaimed performance of Emile Griffith in Terrence Blanchard's *Champion*, a role he created in the world premiere at Opera Theatre of St. Louis in 2013.

Mr. Woodley has appeared with prestigious opera companies all over the U.S. including the San Francisco Opera, Seattle Opera, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Dallas Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, New Orleans Opera, and the Opera Theatre of St. Louis. His many roles have included Varlaam in *Boris Godunov*, Bartolo in *Le nozze di Figaro*, the Four Villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffman*, Kuno in *Die Freischütz*, Banquo in *Macbeth*, Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress*, Sulpice in *La Fille du Régiment*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Rocco in *Fidelio*, Publio in *La Clemenza di Tito*, Angelotti in *Tosca*, Achilles in *Giulio Cesare*, and Dansker in *Billy Budd*. He also recently created the role of Dick Hallorann in the world premiere of Paul Moravec's *The Shining* at the Minnesota Opera.

Margaret Gawrysiak, mezzo-soprano, will be making her Lyric Opera debut in the role of Marcellina. She has recently performed Mistress Hibbons in the world premiere of Lori Laitman's *The Scarlet Letter* with Opera Colorado; Mrs. Lovett in *Sweeney Todd* with Townsend Opera; Public Opinion in *Orpheus in the Underworld*, and Little Buttercup in *H.M.S. Pinafore* with Virginia Opera; Marquise in *La fille du Régiment* with Arizona Opera; Mrs. De Rocher in *Dead Man Walking* with Dayton Opera; Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Vera Boronel in *The Consul* with Seattle Opera; Zia Principessa in *Suor Angelica* with Crested Butte Music Festival; Dame Quickly in *Falstaff*, Baba the Turk and Mother Goose in *The Rake's Progress*, and La Mère d'Antonia in *Les contes d'Hoffmann* with Wolf Trap Opera; and Zita in *Gianni Schicchi* at the Castleton Festival.

Current engagements for the 2016-17 season include the Old Lady in *Candide* with Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra. She will return to the Lyric Opera of Kansas City as Ruth in *The Pirates of Penzance* in the spring of 2017.

Making his Lyric Opera debut, Tenor **Steven Cole** made his professional debut singing Monsieur Triquet in *Eugene Onegin* with the Boston Symphony under Seiji Ozawa at Tanglewood. Specializing in character tenor roles, he has a remarkably varied repertoire with more than 70 roles from composers such as Monteverdi and Ligeti. Mr. Cole's recent seasons exemplify his extraordinary versatility: Don Buscone in *Veremonda* with the Spoleto Festival USA, performances as the narrator in a world premiere of Chris Theofanidis's *Creation/Creator* with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Goro in *Madama Butterfly*, Nick in *La Fanciulla del West* with the San Francisco Opera, the four valets in *The Tales of Hoffman* with Edmonton Opera and the Canadian Opera Company, the three tenor roles in *L'enfant et les Sortilèges* with Théâtre de Caen, Sportin' Life in *Porgy and Bess* with the Cincinnati Opera, and Monostatos in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Théâtre Champs Elysées in Paris.

Mr. Cole made his Metropolitan Opera debut as the Tanzmeister in *Ariadne auf Naxos* under James Levine. He has sung with the Cleveland Orchestra and the Chicago Symphony and performed Janacek's *From the House of the Dead* with Rafael Kubelik conducting the New York Philharmonic. During the course of his career, he has returned many times to the San Francisco

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Opera (*Die Zauberflöte*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Boris Godunov*, *Khovanshchina* and *La fanciulla del West*), and has performed with Canadian Opera Company, Houston Grand Opera, Washington National Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera, and Seattle Opera.

Two of our newly appointed Resident Artists will perform: **Samantha Gossard** will perform the role of Cherubino and **April Martin** will perform the role of Barbarina.

Making his Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut, director **Stephen Lawless** was Director of Production for the Glyndebourne Touring Opera from 1986 to 1991, where his work culminated in an immensely successful production of 'Death in Venice', which was subsequently recorded by the BBC for television and video release. He has directed for many of the world's opera houses including Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Mariinsky Theatre St. Petersburg, Vienna State Opera, Berlin State Opera, Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco, Chicago, Theater an der Wien, Graz, Gothenburg, Strasburg, Erfurt, Nurnberg, Houston, Dallas, Canadian Opera Company, Portland, Wiener Volksooper, La Fenice, Venice, Korean National Opera, New York City Opera, The Beijing Opera, Genoa, Turin, Geneva, Madrid, Bolshoi Opera, LA Opera and Washington National Opera. He has also worked for the Festivals in Glyndebourne, Santa Fe, St. Louis, Buxton, Halle, Hong Kong, Innsbruck and New Zealand.

Recent work has included *Romeo et Juliette* in Santa Fe, *Guillaume Tell* in Graz, *The Flying Dutchman* in Washington and *Elisir D'Amore* in Philadelphia. Future engagements include *Romeo et Juliette* in Barcelona, *Der Freischutz* for Virginia Opera, *Rusalka* in Magdeburg, and *Roberto Devereux* in San Francisco.

Conductor **Ryan McAdams** is making his Lyric Opera debut. He is considered one of the most exciting and versatile conductors of his generation. "Ryan McAdams was simply astounding; look out for his name to appear much more often in the future." - *lonarts.com*

Equally prized as a symphonic, operatic, and contemporary music conductor, he made a highly successful subscription European debut in February, 2010 with the orchestra of the Maggio Musicale in Florence, where he has returned three times in the past three years. He made his Eastern European debut with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Julian Rachlin, and Mischa Maisky in Dubrovnik in September, 2010. His subscription debut with the Israel Philharmonic, replacing an indisposed Raphael Fruhbeck de Burgos, was hailed as "extraordinary," "masterful," and "immense[ly] dramatic" by *the Jerusalem Post*. A Fulbright scholar, he previously served as Apprentice Conductor of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, assisting then-Chief Conductor Alan Gilbert. Mr. McAdams is the first-ever recipient of the Sir Georg Solti Emerging Conductor Award.

His appearances in 2015-16 included a concert performance of Bizet's *Les pêcheurs de perles* with the Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI, Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with Opera Theatre of St. Louis, multiple international performances with the Wordless Music Orchestra, a concert performance of *Carmen* with Teatro Regio Torino in the Piazza San Carlo for an audience of 25,000, *Don Giovanni* with New York's Venture Opera, and a collaboration with Lincoln Center Jazz and the Phoenix Symphony. Recent highlights include appearances with the Israel Philharmonic, Vancouver Symphony, Santa Fe Symphony, Louisville Orchestra, Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Orchestre symphonique et lyrique de

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Nancy, Columbus Symphony, Princeton Symphony, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, L'Orchestra de Chambre de Geneve, Juilliard Opera Center, Westchester Philharmonic, New York City Opera, Talea Ensemble, New York City Ballet, Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI, Indianapolis Symphony, CityMusic Cleveland, Tanglewood Music Festival, Aspen Music Festival, the Wordless Music Series, New Jersey Symphony, Glimmerglass Opera, and the Juilliard FOCUS! Festival. He received his M.M. in Orchestral Conducting from the Juilliard School in 2006, and a B.M. in Piano Performance from Indiana University in 2004.

Leslie Travers is an international designer for opera and theatre, who trained at the Wimbledon School of Art. His opera designs include: *Don Carlos* (Grange Park Opera); *I Puritani* (Welsh National Opera/Den Jyske Opera); *Elysium* (Den Norske Opera); *The Haunted Manor* (Polish National Opera, Teatr Wielki); *Salome* (Santa Fe Opera); *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Opera Holland Park @ The Linbury, ROH); *Grimes on the Beach* (Aldeburgh Music); *Pleasure, Albert Herring, Giulio Cesare* (Opera North); *Tannhäuser* (Estonian National Opera); *Otello* (Scottish Opera/Opera North); *Don Giovanni* (Garsington Opera); *The Merry Widow* (Opera Australia/Opera North); *La Bohème, Jenufa, Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (Malmö Opera, Sweden); *Roméo et Juliette* (Opera Ireland); *L'arbore di Diana* (Palau de les Arts Reina Sophia, Valencia); *The Children's Crusade* (Luminato Festival, Toronto); *Véronique* (Buxton); *I Capuleti e I Montecchi* (Opera North/Opera Australia); *The Fortunes of King Croesus* (Opera North/Minnesota Opera); *Iolanta/Gianni Schicchi* (RAM); *Le Nozze de Figaro* (Graz Opera – Ring Award 2005); *Hans Heiling* (Opéra du Rhin – European Opera Prize).

Principal Cast

Count Almaviva: Edward Parks*
Countess Almaviva: Katie Van Kooten
Figaro: Adam Lau*
Susanna: Maureen McKay
Cherubino: Samantha Gossard +@
Doctor Bartolo: Arthur Woodley
Marcellina: Margaret Gawrysiak *
Don Basilio/Don Curzio: Steven Cole*
Barbarina: April Martin +@
Antonio: Rhys Lloyd Talbot~

Artistic Staff

Director: Stephen Lawless*
Conductor: Ryan McAdams*
Set Designer: Leslie Travers*
Costume Designer: Leslie Travers*
Lighting Designer: Thomas C. Hase
Wig and Make-up Designer: Alison Hanks
Chorus Master: Mark Ferrell
Stage Manager: Kathleen Smith Belcher

~ UMKC Apprentice

+ Resident Artist

@ former Lyric Opera Apprentice

* Lyric Opera Debut

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Ticket availability varies by performance. To purchase tickets, call Ticketing & Patron Services (816) 471-7344 or 1-800-OPERA KC (673-7252). Patrons can select their own seat and print their tickets at home by visiting www.kcopera.org. Limited student rush tickets are available for \$15, cash only, one hour before the performances, with a valid student ID.

First Friday, Nov. 4, from 5 to 8 p.m. Presented by Lyric Opera of Kansas City at the Beth Ingram Administration Building (17125 Holmes, KCMO) – November 4th: It's the wedding of the season! Lyric Opera of Kansas City cordially invites you to *The Marriage of Figaro* First Friday reception on November 4th, 2016 from 5 to 8 p.m. Enjoy free food and drink and preview performances of Lyric Opera's all new production of Mozart's classic, *The Marriage of Figaro*. More information available [here](#).

Lyric Opera Book Club

Interested in reading literature that covers the stories, history, theme or other related things about the operas we produce? **Join the Lyric Opera of Kansas City Book Club!** To join, simply contact Linda Ade Brand, Director of Education and Community Engagement, at lbrand@kcopera.org, 816.471.4933 or via our [online contact us form](#).

Book Club will be meeting on October 13th at 6:30 p.m. at Lyric Opera of Kansas City's Michael and Ginger Frost Production Arts Building (17125 Holmes, KCMO). Members need to provide their own book. The meeting will include a sneak peek of preparations at the rehearsal hall, followed by beverages and a discussion of the book.

***The Figaro Murders* by Laura Lebow**

In 1786 Vienna, Lorenzo Da Ponte is the court librettist for the Italian Theatre during the height of the enlightened reign of Emperor Joseph II. This exalted position doesn't mean he's particularly well paid, or even out of reach of the endless intrigues of the opera world. In fact, far from it. One morning, Da Ponte stops off at his barber, only to find the man being taken away to debtor's prison. Da Ponte impetuously agrees to carry a message to his barber's fiancée and try to help her set him free, even though he's facing pressures of his own. He's got one week to finish the libretto for *The Marriage of Figaro* for Mozart before the opera is premiered for the Emperor himself. Da Ponte visits the house where the barber's fiancée works—the home of a nobleman, high in the Vienna's diplomatic circles—and then returns to his own apartments, only to be dragged from his rooms in the middle of the night. It seems the young protégé of the diplomat was killed right about the time Da Ponte was visiting, and he happens to be their main suspect. Now he's given a choice—go undercover into the household and uncover the murderer, or be hanged for the crime himself. Brilliantly recreating the cultural world of late 18th century Vienna, the epicenter of the Enlightenment, Lebow brings to life some of the most famous figures of music, theatre, and politics.

Lyric Opera of Kansas City Presents Figaro's Family Tree. Fri., Oct. 28 at 6:30 p.m. at the Nelson-Atkins Museum (4525 Oak St., KCMO 64111), Atkins Auditorium FREE: Before *Downton Abbey*, before *Upstairs Downstairs*, there was the mother of all family/servant sagas, *The Marriage of Figaro*. The Lyric Opera of Kansas City is the lead producer of a gorgeous new production of *Figaro* by the creative team of director Stephen Lawless and set and costume designer Leslie Travers. An enormous family tree is a major element in the set design, with cameos inserted into the branches to represent the Count and Countess' aristocratic

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ancestors. But when their servants, Susanna and Figaro, fall in love, unexpected winds of change begin rustling through this family tree. We'll tell the complicated and delicious back story based on the three Pierre Beaumarchais plays, *Barber of Seville*, *Marriage of Figaro* and *The Guilty Mother*, interspersed with vocal excerpts provided by Lyric Opera of Kansas City Resident and Apprentice artists. Afterwards, study the faces in the Nelson-Atkins Starr miniature portrait collection and imagine what stories they might tell.

Pre-Opera Talks

Audience members are invited and encouraged to attend a FREE opera preview, presented by the Lyric Opera Guild, in the Muriel Kauffman Theatre within the Kauffman Center one hour before curtain. Lyric Opera Guild presenter Martin Nedbal will lead the 25-minute talks.

The Lyric Opera Guild also presents a series of free "At Ease with Opera" presentations prior to the performance dates.

***The Marriage of Figaro* "At Ease with Opera" Presentations:**

Monday, October 17 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation (4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO 64110). **Free to the public. Beaumarchais: The Man Who Was the Real Figaro.** Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* is based upon a revolutionary play by the Frenchman Beaumarchais, who himself led a life worthy of an opera and who modeled the title character after his own career. He also wrote the play behind *The Barber of Seville* and was a French diplomat and businessman and helped finance the American Revolution and was jailed by Louis XV and...well, you'll just have to come to find out the rest. Our speaker is Don Dagenais of the Lyric Opera Guild.

Monday, October 24 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation (4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO 64110). **Free to the public. Meet Designer Leslie Travers.** Celebrated British designer Leslie Travers gives us a personal design presentation of the set and costumes for our new co-production of *The Marriage of Figaro*. Travers' international credits include work at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Welsh National Opera, Australian National Opera and the Santa Fe Opera. The Lyric Opera is the lead producer of this new production, with the sets and costumes built right here in Kansas City. Simultaneously traditional and highly imaginative, this new production of *The Marriage of Figaro* will refresh and delight, and the opportunity to meet this lauded designer is not to be missed.

Monday, October 31 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation (4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO 64110). **Free to the public. Revolutionizing Opera in *Le nozze di Figaro*.** This talk addresses the culture of Italian opera in Vienna during the reign of Emperor Joseph II (1780-90) in connection to *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786). Mozart and his librettist Da Ponte based their work on the highly controversial French play *Le mariage de Figaro* by Beaumarchais, but in various ways they sanitized the original work under the pressure of the Vienna court opera administration and censorship. Although the resulting work closely follows many conventions of Viennese opera buffa, certain musical and textual aspects of *Le nozze di Figaro* retained, and to some extent also enhanced, the socially

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critical, perhaps even revolutionary, aspects of the French play. Dr. Martin Nedbal of the University of Kansas will be our lecturer.

Explorations 2016-2017

This NEW initiative in the 2016-2017 season features an eclectic array of works to be performed in The Lyric's Michael and Ginger Frost Production Arts Building in the Crossroads District and Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral. Explorations will feature adventurous programming that crosses musical borders, experiments with a wider range of genres, and illuminates the intersection of classical music with various streams of popular music. The intimacy of the Explorations performances will create a new kind of experience for audiences. This new series will also showcase the extremely talented singers in the Resident Artist Program, along with other guest artists.

Explorations is underwritten by Virginia and Charles Clark, the Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation and the Thomas and Sally Wood Family Foundation.

In-event hospitality for all Explorations performances provided by Young Friends of the Lyric.

Elvis Costello's The Juliet Letters

Lyric Opera's Michael and Ginger Frost Production Arts Building
712 E. 18th Street, East Crossroads, Kansas City, MO
Saturday, January 28, 8 p.m. and Sunday, January 29, 2 p.m.
Reception following concert
\$30 for subscribers/ \$35 for non-subscribers

Elvis Costello's *The Juliet Letters* were written in 1992 and recorded by the artist himself, together with the Brodsky Quartet. A set of 17 songs for voice and string quartet, with a few quartet-only interludes, they had an unusual inspiration: Costello heard that the lovelorn actually write letters to Shakespeare's Juliet and leave them at her supposed 'balcony' in Verona, Italy. Costello came up with his own stylized "letters" and set them to music, using the idea as a platform for the exploration of young love. The program will be sung by the Lyric Opera Resident Artists accompanied by a String Quartet within a special scenic environment created for this concert.

Art Songs Series: American Voices

Lyric Opera Michael and Ginger Frost Production Arts Building
Sunday, March 26, 2 p.m.
Reception following concert
\$15 for subscribers/ \$20 for non-subscribers

Lyric Opera resident artists perform song cycles by contemporary American composers, with selections from among the compositions of Jake Heggie (composer of the opera *Dead Man Walking*, one of the productions in the Lyric Opera's 2016-17 season), Lori Laitman, Robert Paterson, Gabriel Kahane, and others.

The Lyric Opera Resident Artists Program

The Lyric Opera of Kansas City recently announced the selection of the inaugural class of the Resident Artists Program. They include: soprano **April Martin**, mezzo-soprano **Samantha Gossard**, tenor **Casey Candebat**, baritone **John Viscardi**, and pianist **Kyle Naig**.

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They will perform in various roles throughout the 2016-17 season on the mainstage at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts as well as at community outreach and education events. The artists were selected after a rigorous national audition of hundreds of singers. The Resident Artists Program is led by **Vinson Cole**, UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance faculty member and one of the leading artists of his generation.

Reservations are required for all Explorations performances. To purchase tickets, visit kcopera.org or call Ticketing & Patron Services (816) 471-7344 or 1-800-OPERA KC (673-7252). For more information, please visit www.kcopera.org.

About the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts is a major center for music, opera, theater, and dance designed by Moshe Safdie opened September 2011. The Kauffman Center presents vibrant performances and advances the role of the performing arts as a catalyst for Kansas City's civic, economic, and educational vitality.

Three of the region's leading performing arts organizations—Kansas City Ballet, Kansas City Symphony, and Lyric Opera of Kansas City—are in residence at the Kauffman Center. The Kauffman Center's two performance venues, the 1,800-seat Muriel Kauffman Theatre and the 1,600-seat Helzberg Hall, offer audiences engaging and intimate experiences, while at the same time providing resident companies with dramatically enhanced performance capabilities.

Serving as a cultural cornerstone for Kansas City's dynamic downtown, the Kauffman Center brings a new spotlight to the region's performing arts community while simultaneously attracting some of the world's most talented performers and entertainers, further establishing Kansas City as a major cultural destination.

More information on the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts is available at kauffmancenter.org.

The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts is fully accessible and provides assistive listening devices plus Braille and large print programs. Service animals are welcome with advance notice. All dates, operas and artists are subject to change.

Visit www.kcopera.org for more information about Lyric Opera of Kansas City 2015-2016 season and www.kauffmancenter.org for a downloadable media kit about the Kauffman Center.

2016-2017 Season at a Glance:

Hansel and Gretel

Engelbert Humperdinck 1893

Sung in German with English subtitles

Saturday, September 17, 2016	7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, September 21, 2016	7:30 p.m.
Friday, September 23, 2016	7:30 p.m.
Sunday, September 25, 2016	2:00 p.m.

Director/Choreographer: Doug Varone

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Conductor: John Keenan
Hansel: Megan Marino
Gretel: Rachele Gilmore
Witch/Mother: Victoria Livengood
Peter: Troy Cook
Sandman: Laurel Weir
Dew Fairy: April Martin

The Marriage of Figaro

CO-PRODUCTION with Opera Philadelphia, San Diego Opera and Palm Beach Opera

Debut at Lyric Opera of Kansas City

Wolfgang A. Mozart 1784

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

Saturday, November 5, 2016 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 9, 2016 7:30 p.m.

Friday, November 11, 2016 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, November 13, 2016 2:00 p.m.

Director: Stephen Lawless
Conductor: Ryan McAdams
Costume Designer: Leslie Travers
Lighting Designer: Thomas C. Hase
Count Almaviva: Edward Parks
Countess Almaviva: Katie Van Kooten
Figaro: Adam Lau
Susanna: Maureen McKay
Dr. Bartolo: Arthur Woodley
Marcellina: Margaret Gawrysiak
Don Basilio/Don Curzio: Steven Cole
Cherubino: Samantha Gossard
Babarina: April Martin
Antonio: Rhys Lloyd Talbot

Lyric Opera of Kansas City PREMIERE

Dead Man Walking

Music by Jake Heggie

Libretto by Terence McNally 2000

Based on the novel by Sister Helen Prejean

Sung in English with English subtitles

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

Saturday, March 4, 2017 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, March 8, 2017 7:30 p.m.
Friday, March 10, 2017 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 12, 2017 2:00 p.m.

Director: Kristine McIntyre
Conductor: Steven Osgood
Sister Helen Prejean: Kate Aldrich
Joseph de Rocher: David Adam Moore
Mrs. Patrick de Rocher: Maria Zifchak
Sister Rose: Karen Slack
Owen Hart: Daniel Belcher
Father Grenville: Casey Candebat
Jade Boucher: Samantha Gossard
Kitty Hart: April Martin
Motorcycle Cop: John Viscardi
George Benton: Jeffrey Beruan
Prison Guard #1: Rhys Lloyd Talbot
Prison Guard #2: Armando Contreras

The Pirates of Penzance
Gilbert & Sullivan 1879
Sung in English with English subtitles

Saturday, April 22, 2017 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, April 26, 2017 7:30 p.m.
Friday, April 28, 2017 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, April 29, 2017 2:00 p.m.
Sunday, April 30, 2017 2:00 p.m.

Director: James Alexander
Conductor: Hal France
Mabel: Anya Matanovic
Frederic: Jonathan Johnson
The Pirate King: Kevin Burdette
Major-General Stanley: Robert Gibby Brand
Ruth: Margaret Gawrysiak
Sergeant of Police: Ben Wager
Edith: April Martin
Kate: Samantha Gossard
Samuel: Rhys Lloyd Talbot

About Lyric Opera of Kansas City

The Lyric Opera of Kansas City was founded in 1958; it is one of the nation's premier regional opera companies and brings high quality live operatic performances to the people of the Kansas City area and a five-state region. Repertoire choices encompass original language performances of standard repertory as well as contemporary and American operas. The Company mounts productions that enrich the community it serves, as well as reflect the highest artistic standards of the profession. The Lyric Opera offers innovative and award-winning programs designed to further music and arts education both in schools and in the community and serves more than 18,000 students and educators each year.

Opera lovers can be fans of the Lyric Opera of Kansas City on Facebook or follow us on Twitter at @kcopera.

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

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Please direct all media inquiries to Ellen McDonald, 816.444.0052 or 816.213.4355.

For Tickets: kcopera.org or 816.471.7344