



PO BOX 277 ~ OLD CHELSEA STATION  
NEW YORK NY 10113-0277

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: LYNNE HAYDEN-FINDLAY  
212-260-1796  
917-912-3778  
CHELSEAOPERA@AOL.COM  
WWW.CHELSEAOPERA.ORG

**CHELSEA OPERA PRESENTS...MUSICAL PORTRAITS: SONGS OF  
COMPOSERS ANNE PHILLIPS, TOM CIPULLO AND BEN MOORE  
FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 2014 AT 8PM**

Chelsea Opera presents [Musical Portraits](#), an evening of contemporary songs by composers [Anne Phillips](#), [Tom Cipullo](#) and [Ben Moore](#) on Friday, March 14, 2014 at 8:00 pm at Christ & St. Stephen's Church (120 West 69<sup>th</sup> Street, between Broadway and Columbus). Soprano Carol Wilson is the featured artist and will be joined by sopranos Alexandra LoBianco and Kate Oberjat, mezzo-soprano Leonarda Priore, tenor Eapen Leubner, bass-baritone Peter Becker and cellist Jameson Platte, all accompanied by pianist Lidiya Yankovskaya. Tickets are \$25 preferred seating, \$20 general admission, and \$15 students/seniors purchased in advance (or \$30, \$25 and \$20 at the door) and are available on-line (link through [www.ChelseaOpera.org](http://www.ChelseaOpera.org)) or by calling 1-866-811-4111. For more information, call 212-260-1796 or visit [www.ChelseaOpera.org](http://www.ChelseaOpera.org).

A proponent of contemporary chamber opera, Chelsea Opera has developed a relationship with these three composers that continues to grow. Its production in 2010 of Cipullo's [Glory Denied](#) brought the company's name to the forefront as a leader among small opera companies. The company is very pleased to present another side of these three composers who have been directly involved in selecting the repertoire being presented, and all three will be attending the concert.

Hailed by the American Academy of Arts & Letters for music that displays "inexhaustible imagination, wit, expressive range and originality," composer Tom Cipullo's works are performed regularly throughout the United States and with increasing frequency internationally. The winner of a 2012 Guggenheim Fellowship, the 2013 Sylvia Goldstein Award from Copland House, and the 2013 Arts & Letters Award from the American Academy, Mr. Cipullo has received commissions from the Mirror Visions Ensemble, SongFest at Pepperdine, the Joy in Singing, Sequitur, Cantori New York,

tenor Paul Sperry, mezzo-soprano Mary Ann Hart, the Five Boroughs Music Festival, pianist Jeanne Golan, soprano Martha Guth, the Walt Whitman Project, and many, many others. Recent events include the premiere of *Excelsior*, a new song cycle composed for baritone Jesse Blumberg and pianist Martin Katz, *Something About Autumn* written for soprano Martha Guth, and *Passionate Sacrament* for violin and piano, premiered at the Montale Auditorium of Genoa's Teatro Carlo Felice as part of the festivities surrounding the Paganini Violin Competition. On this program, Cipullo's songs will include "Desire", "The Pocketbook", and "Entr'Act" for solo cello and piano, taken from the entr'act of *Glory Denied* and arranged by the composer for cellist Jameson Platte who will record it later this spring.

Anne Phillips' career has covered almost every area of the music business. In addition to recording several solo albums, from the classic [Born To Be Blue](#), to her most recent release, [Ballet Time](#) on which she sings with such old friends as Dave Brubeck and Marian McPartland, she has worked as a singer, choral arranger and conductor with many of the music world's leading artists and is widely known in the industry as the writer/arranger/producer of many national commercials. In the classical area this year, her ten-minute opera *Tempo Fuori del Tempo* was presented at Weill Recital Hall as a part of an evening of Opera Shorts, and her Easter Cantata, *Sing, For The Lord Has Risen* was presented in concert by the Remarkable Theater Brigade at Jan Hus Church. Ms. Phillips has been on the faculty of the Jazz Department at NYU, music Director for the 9AM service at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church and was a National Trustee of NARAS, the Recording Academy. Among her songs being presented on this concert are "To Make Them Like Me" and "After All These Years".

The music of American composer Ben Moore has been performed by many leading singers including soprano Deborah Voigt, mezzo-sopranos Susan Graham and Frederica von Stade, tenors Lawrence Brownlee and Robert White, baritone Nathan Gunn and five-time Tony winner Audra McDonald. His work has been called "brilliant" and "gorgeously lyrical" by [The New York Times](#) while Opera News has praised the "easy tunefulness" and "romantic sweep" of his songs. In February 2015 Moore's first opera, *Enemies, a Love Story*, will receive its world premiere at Palm Beach Opera directed by Sam Helfrich and starring bass baritone Daniel Okulitch. A recipient of an Opera America development grant, *Enemies* is based on the novel by Isaac Bashevis Singer and is set to a libretto by Nahma Sandrow. Among his many songs being presented are "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" and "I'm Glad I'm Not a Tenor".

Soprano [Carol Wilson](#) has performed on the stages of some of the world's major opera houses and concert halls including Frankfurt, Stockholm, Dresden, Vancouver, Amsterdam, Taipei, Stuttgart, San Francisco, Bonn, Hannover, and Manitoba. She made her international opera debut with Deutsche Oper am Rhein in 1999, and as one of their principal soloists performed over 25 major roles including Eva (*Die Meistersinger*), Kaiserin (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*), Desdemona (*Otello*), Tatyana (*Eugene*

*Onegin*), Elisabeth (*Tannhäuser*), Alice (*Falstaff*), Contessa (*Capriccio*), Senta (*Der fliegende Holländer*), Leonore (*Fidelio*), Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), Contessa (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Poppea (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*), and the Marschallin (*Der Rosenkavalier*), a role for which she has earned critical acclaim. Ms. Wilson has been praised for her versatility as a concert artist and recitalist, performing works from the Baroque to contemporary with such distinguished ensembles as Orchestra of St. Luke's with Maestro Julius Rudel, the American Symphony Orchestra with Maestro Leon Botstein, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, the Contemporary Chamber Ensemble, the Schoenberg Ensemble, the Boston Masterworks, the Düsseldorf Symphony, at the Caramoor Festival, the Bayreuth Festival, the Connecticut Early Music Festival, and many more.

Soprano [Alexandra LoBianco](#) has been hailed as possessing "a true Verdian voice of velvet-covered steel," (St. Louis Post-Dispatch). She was a first prize-winner of the Liederkrantz Competition and the Irene Dalis Competition for which she was also named "Audience Favorite". [San Francisco Classical Voice](#) noted she had "the ease and magnetism of a young Montserrat Caballe." In 2012-13 she made her European debut in a Verdi concert in Zürich, sang Amelia (*Un Ballo in Maschera*/Madison Opera), and was soprano soloist in Rachmaninoff's *The Bells* with both Madison Symphony and Madison Opera's summer "Opera in the Park" concert. Her 2013-14 engagements include her Opera Santa Barbara debut as Magda Sorel (*The Consul*/Menotti). "It is an absolute thrill to make music with such an up and coming composer." She sang The Mother in Chelsea Opera's [Amahl and the Night Visitors](#) in 2009.

With Chelsea Opera, soprano [Kate Oberjat](#) sang Younger Alyce (*Glory Denied*) about which [The New York Times](#) wrote she sang with "velvety smoothness" and Monica (*The Medium*) for which [OperaPulse.com](#) stated: "I would be surprised to learn that Kate Oberjat was a day over fifteen, so well did she embody Monica's youth and naïvete." and The Snake (*The Mark of Cain*, world premiere). Other recent engagements include Isabelle (*The Secret Agent*) in its world and European premieres and high soprano in the world premiere of *Oration*, both for Center for Contemporary Opera, Josephine (*H.M.S. Pinafore*/Nashville Opera), Gretel (*Hänsel & Gretel*/Lyric Opera San Diego), Marie (*La Fille du Regiment*/Taconic Opera), and Gilda (*Rigoletto*/Queens Symphony Orchestra).

Mezzo-soprano [Leonarda Priore](#) (mezzo-soprano) has sung several roles for Chelsea Opera, including Augusta (*Ballad of Baby Doe*) La Zia Principessa (*Suor Angelica*), Santuzza (*Cavalleria Rusticana*), Zita (*Gianni Schicchi*). In addition, she has sung Witch (*Hänsel & Gretel*), Katisha (*Mikado*), Lady Jane (*Patience*), Dame Quickly (*Falstaff*), Maddalena (*Rigoletto*), Marcellina (*Le nozze di Figaro*), and the title role in *Carmen*. She has performed throughout the United States with regional companies and with area companies including Rockland Opera, Regina Opera, American Singers' Opera Project, Empire Opera, New Rochelle Opera, Central Florida Lyric Opera, Prelude to Performance and

Chelsea Opera. Her numerous concert appearances include performances of the Berlioz song cycle *Les Nuits d'été* with the Five Towns Symphony, Respighi's *Il Tramonto* with the New Amsterdam Symphony, mezzo soloist in *Elijah* with the Hamilton College Oratorio Society and orchestra, Joseph Canteloube's *Chants D'Avergne* and *Dalilà (Samson et Dalilà)* with Centre Symphony, mezzo soloist in Beethoven's *9<sup>th</sup> Symphony* with Staten Island Philharmonic, and this summer sang in Italy with Central Florida Lyric Opera. In addition to an active performing career, she is actively performing while forging ahead as the co-founder and co-producer of Chelsea Opera.

Tenor [Eapen Leubner](#) made his NYC opera debut with Chelsea Opera as King Kaspar (*Amahl and the Night Visitors*) and returned to perform Younger Thompson (*Glory Denied*), Beppe (*Pagliacci*) and Abraham (Britten's *Canticle II, Opus 51 - Abraham and Isaac*). For Opera Fairbanks, he has performed Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*) and Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) and the title role in *The Astronaut's Tale* and Samuel (Rorem's *Three Sisters who are not Sisters*) with Encompass New Opera Theater. Other roles include Don Gaston (*Die Drei Pintos*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*). His solo oratorio credits include Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solonnelle* and Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*.

Bass-baritone Peter Becker has performed throughout the USA, Europe, Asia, and South America in repertoire ranging from medieval to contemporary. He has made guest appearances with Tafelmusik, Smithsonian Chamber Players, Magnificat, the Newberry Consort, Folger Consort, Portland Baroque, Artek, and at a number of festivals including Spoleto (Italy and USA), Caramoor, Ravinia, Aldeburgh, Utrecht, Hong Kong, Ravenna, Jerusalem, Macao, Miyazaki, and Saratoga. As a member of the male vocal quintet Hudson Shad, he has performed with such distinguished conductors as Kurt Masur (New York Philharmonic), Zubin Mehta (Los Angeles Philharmonic), Michael Tilson Thomas (San Francisco Symphony), Charles Dutoit (Philadelphia Orchestra), Dennis Russell Davies (Austrian Radio Orchestra, and the Bruckner Orchester Linz), Bruno Bartoletti (Orchestra Regionale Toscana), and Ingo Metzmacher (Orchestra Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia). Contemporary music credits include Tan Dun's *Marco Polo*, Peter Maxwell Davies' *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, Heinz Karl Gruber's *Frankenstein*, William Walton's *Façade*, Stravinsky's *Renard*, Oliver Knussen's *Where the Wild Things Are*, Mark Kuss' *The Show*, and Kurt Weill's *Seven Deadly Sins*.

[Jameson Platte](#), a member of the Chelsea Opera Chamber Orchestra, maintains an active career both as a performer and a teacher. He is currently a member of the critically acclaimed Axis Quintet, the Conservatory Quartet, Duo 92 with pianist/composer Matthew Quayle, principal cellist of the Glens Falls Symphony, principal of the Orchestra of Northern New York and assistant principal of the Allentown Symphony. Mr. Platte works extensively as a clinician, guest conductor and cello coach, performs as a soloist and maintains a large private studio. He is in constant demand as a guest principal

cellist throughout the Northeast. A frequent recitalist in New York City, he has been featured in Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Lincoln Center and the 92<sup>nd</sup> St. Y, among others. His recitals have been heard throughout North America, South America, Europe, Asia and Australia. Mr. Platte is Artist/Faculty at New England Music Camp.

[Lidiya Yankovskaya](#), a native of St. Petersburg, Russia, currently serves as Music Director of Juventas New Music Ensemble, a professional instrumental ensemble in residency at The Boston Conservatory; with Harvard University's Lowell House Opera; and with the Center for Contemporary Opera's Development Series in NYC. She served as the Assistant Conductor for Gotham Chamber Opera's *BadenBaden* performance and as Assistant Conductor/Chorus Master for productions of Hindemith's *Cardillac* and Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédict* with Opera Boston. In addition to her work as a conductor, Ms. Yankovskaya is active as a pianist and vocal coach, and serves as the Russian Diction Coach for the Boston Symphony and Tanglewood Festival Chorus. She recently stepped in to lead the Bloomingdale School of Music Chamber Orchestra performing a 20-minute excerpt from Benjamin Perry Wenzelberg's work-in-progress, *The Sleeping Beauty* after the untimely passing of the school's executive director and conductor, Lawrence Davis.

Chelsea Opera is a professional company presenting fully staged operas with chamber orchestra. The company provides a nationally recognized venue for professional singers to advance their careers while making opera affordable and accessible to a broad spectrum of the community. The fine acoustics of the space provides excellent hearing, and the intimacy of the space allows the audience to feel involved in the opera's story. Of Chelsea Opera's sustainability, Anthony Tommasini of *The New York Times* noted in June 2009: "With American opera companies large and small struggling financially and a few going under, [Chelsea Opera is] a patch of encouraging news..."

Formed in 2004 by two singers, Lynne Hayden-Findlay and Leonarda Priore, Chelsea Opera was launched with an all-volunteer production of *Suor Angelica*. Initially, Ms. Priore and Ms. Hayden-Findlay had only intended to produce this one opera. However, artist and audience response was so compelling that they agreed to move forward, incorporating the company and obtaining their IRS non-profit designation in a record eight days. They have since produced an extensive range of standard and contemporary operas including *Madama Butterfly*, of which Opera News said, "it was a committed and ultimately moving performance. Modest in scale, the production gave us *Butterfly* in full." Their November 2010 production of Tom Cipullo's *Glory Denied* garnered rave reviews from both [The New York Times](#) and [Opera News](#). Last fall, they presented their first world premiere, *The Mark of Cain* by Matthew Harris and Terry Quinn, followed by a Manhattan premiere this past June of *A Distant Love: Songs of John and Abigail Adams* by Gary S. Fagin and Terry Quinn. This past fall, they presented the

New York premiere of Richard Wargo's *Ballymore – Part One: Winners* along with Seymour Barab's *La Pizza con Funghi*.

Chelsea Opera, was a 2011 WQXR Media sponsor recipient and a WNYC-FM \*STAR\* Incentive recipient. Support has been received from The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation, The Banfi Vintners Foundation, The Bettina Baruch Foundation, The Barbara Bell Cumming Foundation, The Tow Foundation, Meet the Composer – MetLife Creative Connections, The Joyce Dutka Foundation for the Arts, The Amphion Foundation, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA). In-kind support has been provided by JetBlue Airways, the official airline of Chelsea Opera.

For further information, visit [www.ChelseaOpera.org](http://www.ChelseaOpera.org) or write to [ChelseaOpera@aol.com](mailto:ChelseaOpera@aol.com).

# # # #