Beverly helped the work to win the convention’s chamber opera competition.

UNLV Opera travels to National Opera Association Convention

On January 3, UNLV Opera made its debut at the National Opera Association convention in Portland, Oregon. Senior voice performance major Casey Gardner performed excerpts from Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*. A student of Dr. Alfonse Anderson, Casey said of the conference, “It was a great way to network and get people acquainted with the fact that UNLV has a wonderful music program with a great staff. I loved the location and the type of people that were present. It is always a wonderful thing to be surrounded by fellow musicians. Portland was a beautiful place full of artistic inspiration, and of course, fabulous coffee.”

Casey’s performance received positive feedback from a number of convention attendees, as did UNLV Opera. NOA President-Elect David Holley, Director of UNCG Opera Theatre, said, “I admire UNLV Opera’s Facebook presence” and Paul Houghtaling of University of Alabama Opera Theatre gave a thumbs-up to our upcoming Vegas-themed Elixir production concept.

The conference also featured a UNLV Opera alumna. Beverly Taflinger (MM 2012) performed in the premiere of a one-act opera entitled *An Embarrassing Position*. Singing with the University of Oregon Opera Ensemble, Beverly helped the work to win the convention’s chamber opera competition.

Opera Tidbit: Opera in Pop Culture

If you thought opera was only heard in opera houses or on a university campus, think again. You’ve heard it but may not have realized it was opera. Tunes from the opera house often turn up in places you never expected. There may be no other classical tune that turns up in more places than the Flower Duet from *Lakmé* by Delibes. Remember the British Airways ads with its jetliner floating through calm skies and fluffy clouds? After the ads aired, everyone started humming it. You may remember it more from the Ghirardelli chocolate ads (my favorite). But of course, you have heard opera in countless movies across all genres. See if you can recognize some of these examples: *Apocalypse Now—Die Walküre* by Wagner, *Driving Miss Daisy—Rusalka* by Dvořák, *Godfather I—La Traviata* by Verdi, James Bond: *Quantum of Solace—Tosca* by Puccini, *Match Point—L’elisir d’amore* by Donizetti, *Titanic, Les contes d’Hoffmann* by Offenbach and *Thais* by Massenet. For 400 years, opera has remained strong in pop culture and it doesn’t show signs of stopping. •SS
On December 6–7, nine singers from UNLV Opera traveled to California to perform for students in Inyo County. Sponsored by the Inyo County Council for the Arts, the trip included four performances at Death Valley Academy and Bishop High School. In addition to singing excerpts from The Old Maid and the Thief, La clemenza di Tito, Il barbiere di Siviglia, Don Pasquale and Don Giovanni, the UNLV Opera performers improvised scenes on the spot with input from the student audiences. The improvisations featured a variety of characters from an Native American chief to pop star Nicki Minaj. The singers performed primarily for young people who have never seen opera before, and for some who don’t have access to music classes at their schools due to budget cuts. Richelle Janushan said the trip was a chance “to change the lives of those who don’t have the opportunity to see a live opera performance. It was definitely an experience that impacted my own life.” Xavier Brown also shared his thoughts on the young audience: “Watching the excitement and appreciation on their faces really assured me that I am in the right profession. I feel honored and privileged that my fellow colleagues and I were able to share such beauty and a part of ourselves with such willing people.”
**Diva in Training: Lindsay Cunningham**

Master of Music candidate Lindsay Cunningham will make her UNLV Opera debut this spring as Adina in *L’elisir d’amore*. A student of Dr. Michelle Latour, Lindsay is a graduate of Vanderbilt University and she has also studied in both Salzburg and Vienna, Austria. Her previous operatic roles include Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro* and GIANNETTA, the other female role in *L’elisir d’amore*.

Lindsay already has some interesting insights into her character: “I love that Adina is the smartest girl in town, knows how to be in charge, but is still adored by everyone. Despite her endless teasing and flirtation, she’s really not as capricious as she claims to be.” We look forward to seeing how Lindsay brings this lyric coloratura role to life in March when UNLV Opera’s *L’elisir d’amore* opens on the Ham Hall stage.

**Opera Quiz**

I. Which Donizetti opera features the famous tenor aria “Ah! mes amis” with its nine high Cs?

a. *L’elisir d’amore*  

b. *Guillaume Tell*  

c. *Linda di Chamounix*  

d. *La fille du régiment*

II. Which of the following operas was not written by Henry Purcell?

a. *Dido and Aeneas*  

b. *Acis and Galatea*  

c. *The Fairy Queen*  

d. *King Arthur*

Answers:

q ˙ıı  

p ˙ı

**I Feel Pretty: Featuring a Number of Firsts**

The 2012-13 UNLV Opera season closes with a scenes program showcasing excerpts from opera and musical theatre about beauty and vanity. Familiar selections from *Faust, La bohème, West Side Story, HMS Pinfore* and *Sweeney Todd* will be presented, as well as some lesser known pieces from Previn’s *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Herbert’s *Sweethearts*, John Blow’s *Venus and Adonis*, Offenbach’s *La Belle Hélène* and Massenet’s *Thaïs* and *Cendrillon*.

The scenes program also provides the opportunity for student directors to experiment with their craft. Master of Music student Nathan Van Arsdale and senior Daniella Toscano will go from singing in *L’elisir d’amore* to directing their first scenes for UNLV Opera. Another first will be the world premiere of a scene adapted by Linda Lister from Robert Harling’s play and film, *Steel Magnolias*. It features Southern beautician Truvy, played by Dolly Parton in the movie, explaining why “There is No Such Thing as a Natural Beauty.” It’s a perfect thematic tie-in to the program, which is certain to include some beautiful singing.

**OTHER UNLV DIVAS:**

Sheronda McKee won the Audience Choice Award at the 2013 Metropolitan Opera National Council Utah District Auditions. A DMA candidate at UNLV, Sheronda is a student of Dr. Alfonse Anderson.

Carrie Wachsberger and Isabella Ivy (students of Dr. Latour and Dr. Anderson) sang at the Nevada Opera Theatre Guild holiday luncheon.

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UNLV Opera Theater

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UNLV OPERA THEATER

Opera Rebels

Save the dates!

UNLV OPERA THEATER

Spring 2013 Performances

March 15-17  UNLV Opera Theater:
              L'elisir d'amore (The Elixir of Love) Ham Hall

April 26     UNLV Opera Workshop:
              I Feel Pretty   Rando Recital Hall

UNLV Opera singers after three assemblies at Bishop High School

From left to right:

Carolina Gamazo, Eliysheba Anderson, Casey Gardner,
Nathan Van Arsdale, Xavier Brown, David Casey,
Daniella Toscano, Richelle Janushan, Hye Youn Joo Sin