UNLV Opera presents Midsummer in March

UNLV Opera proudly presents Benjamin Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in the Judy Bayley Theatre March 16-18 with the UNLV Symphony Orchestra. Rabuel Aviles and Maia Thielen play Oberon, King of the Fairies, with Bonita Bunt and Joan Sobel as his Queen Tytania. Austin Champion plays Puck, while Lacy Burchfield, Casey Dakus, Nichole Jarlson, and Ashlee Ruder round out the band of fairies along with singers from Greenspun Middle School. The partner-swapping lovers are Erin Gonzalez, Karin Hochman, Michael Parham, and Aldo Perrelli. The troupe of rustic actors, who perform the play-within-the-play "Pyramus and Thisbe," is comprised of Christopher Garcia, Christophe Kennedy, Alex Price, Kurt Sedlmeir, Andrew Williams-Liberato, and Tianci Zheng. Manny Gamazo and Celeste Dixon are the Athenians Theseus and Hippolyta. Dr. Linda Lister directs the production, with vocal coach Dr. Christina Wright-Ivanova preparing the music and coaching the British dialects. Taras Krysa conducts. The staff also includes Michael Genova (scenic designer and technical director), Daniella Toscano (costume designer), Andrew Killion and John Wampler (lighting designers), Hunter Rose Turner (Stage Manager) and Kathryn Omune (Assistant Director). Join us in March for this Shakespearean classic in Britten’s striking realization.
The Shakespearean semester continues with UNLV Opera’s Hamlet Festival May 1-6. This interdisciplinary event will explore *Hamlet* from musical, theatrical, and literary angles. Here is the schedule for the festival:

**UNLV OPERA HAMLET FESTIVAL**

**Monday May 1**
Lecture: **Dr. Evelyn Gajowski**, Professor of English
“Frailty, thy name is woman”

**Tuesday May 2**
Lecture Recital: **Bonita Bunt**, DMA candidate
“Finding the Shakespeare in Ambroise Thomas’s *Hamlet***

**Wednesday May 3**
Lecture: **Dr. Lezlie Cross**, Assistant Professor of Theatre
“Edwin Booth’s Quest to Solve the *Hamlet* Problem”

**Friday May 5**
Art song recital: Hamlet-inspired art songs performed by UNLV students under the direction of **Dr. Christina Wright-Ivanova**, UNLV Opera vocal coach and collaborative pianist

**Saturday May 6**
Opera: Ambroise Thomas’s *Hamlet*, the world premiere of a new English translation by **Bonita Bunt**

UNLV Opera Theater’s *Hamlet* will be presented Saturday May 6 at 7:30 pm in Dr. Arturo Rando-Grillot Recital Hall. Directed by **Bonita Bunt**, the production features **Richard Hodges** as Hamlet and **Casey Dakus** as Ophelia, with **Michael Parham** and **Dominique Williams** as the Hamlet and Ophelia covers. **Christophe Kennedy** plays King Claudius and **Mariah Wilcox** is Queen Gertrude. **Keri Rusthoi** and **Breanna Leasure** are the grave-diggers. **Daveon Bolden** sings Laertes with **Andrew Williams-Liberato** as Polonius, while **Ranon Pador** and **Kurt Sedlmeir** play Hamlet’s friends Marcellus and Horatio. The company is rounded out by the players **Dawn McCollum**, **Hunter Rose Turner**, **Tianci Zheng** and ensemble members **Rabuel Aviles**, **Celeste Dixon**, **Jaime Resser**, **Ashlee Ruder**, and **Maia Thielen**. The production staff includes **Dr. Linda Lister** as Music Director, **Kelly Hawes** as Assistant Director, and **Jae Ahn-Benton** as Assistant Music Director and Pianist. For more detailed info on UNLV’s *Hamlet* world premiere and Hamlet Festival, follow UNLV Opera on Facebook and/or Twitter for schedule updates, locations, and other details.
Christophe Kennedy, Alex Price, Nichole Jarlson, and Phillip Harris with second graders at Claude Perkins Elementary School in North Las Vegas on December 9. In thank you notes to the UNLV singers, the second graders wrote: “I loved how you performed. How did you guys raise your voice? The music was awesome.” “I liked your acting and the music. Your high pitch voices were great!” “I wish you can come back any time. Just ask the principal.” (Principal, we presume.) “I like your singing, your different languages, and impromptu acting of Rudolph and Elsa.” “I have a great voice, I might go to UNLV some day.” “You inspired me, now when I grow up I want to do opera.”

**Opera Outreach at Claude Perkins Elementary**

On April 27 at 7:30 pm in Dr. Arturo Rando-Grillot Recital Hall, Opera Workshop I will present a program of scenes celebrating strong female characters. The program will include some familiar pieces, such as “Sull’aria” from Le nozze di Figaro, the Sorceress scene from Dido and Aeneas, “We are Women” from Candide, and arias by Despina and Don Alfonso from Così fan tutte. Lesser known but great examples of works celebrating women will complete the program.

**Opera Workshop feels Girl Power**

These highlights include excerpts from Princess Ida, The Red Mill, Little Women, La serva padrona, Les mamelles de Tirésias, and Die Csárdásfürstin. Don’t miss opera full of Girl Power when Op Shop performs on April 27!

**AWARDS and ACTIVITIES**

Kathryn Omune was named a winner in the 2016 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Las Vegas District. Encouragement Awards went to Phillip Harris, Christophe Kennedy, and Dominique Williams.

Erin Gonzalez played Hansel in the Pacific Symphony’s Hansel and Gretel.

**ALUMNI ACTIVITIES**

Bethany Smith was cast as Anne Page in The Merry Wives of Windsor with Love-land Opera Theatre.

Nicole Thomas, who is currently attending the Juilliard School of Music, was accepted as a studio artist with Wolf Trap Opera.
UNLV OPERA THEATER

Opera Rebels

UNLV

Editor: Linda Lister

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Spring 2017 Performances

March 16-18  UNLV Opera Theater:
Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*

April 27  UNLV Opera Workshop:
*Girl Power: Women in Opera*

May 1-6  UNLV Opera Theater:
Hamlet Festival

Photo by Richard Poppino:

NOA President-Elect Paul Houghtaling awards Ranon Pador and Nichole Jarlson 2nd place in the 2017 NOA Collegiate Opera Scenes Competition held at the national conference in Santa Barbara.