

PITTSBURGH OPERA

For Immediate Release

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A Spring Fling in Erie, PA
Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artists to solo in *Carmina Burana*
with the Erie Philharmonic, the Erie Philharmonic Chorus and
the Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh

*Experience is
Everything
2008-2009
Season*

Pittsburgh, PA... Three of [Pittsburgh Opera's](#) Resident Artists – [Deborah Selig](#) (soprano), [Dean Kokanos](#) (tenor), and [Jonathan Beyer](#) (baritone) – will be joining the Erie Philharmonic, the Erie Philharmonic Chorus, and the Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh, under the direction of Daniel Meyer, on Saturday, March 7 at 8:00 PM ET at the Warner Theatre in Erie, PA for a performance of Carl Orff's powerfully energetic *Carmina Burana*.

This 1936 masterpiece celebrates the timeless themes of the amorous joys of spring's first love, the fickle behavior of wealth and fortune, and the fleeting nature of life. A combination of powerful orchestrations, extraordinary singing and the bawdy humor of medieval monks, *Carmina Burana* is the perfect musical accompaniment to the coming of spring.

"I am delighted that three of our Resident Artists are performing this excellent piece," says [Christopher Hahn](#), General Director of the Pittsburgh Opera. "This is a superb opportunity for Pittsburgh Opera to share the delightful talents of our Resident Artists with more people in the region."

The Resident Artists participate in many of the company's mainstage productions, as well as perform the title roles in the now-annual Pittsburgh Opera production in cooperation with Pittsburgh CAPA (Creative and Performing Arts) magnet school, which provides an intimate space for opera works chosen especially for the current group of Resident Artists. This year's cooperative Pittsburgh CAPA production was Donizetti's [Don Pasquale](#), which ran from February 7-15.

(more)

PITTSBURGH OPERA

Tickets for the performance of *Carmina Burana* on Saturday, March 7 range from \$16-\$48 and are available through the Erie Philharmonic online at <http://www.eriephil.org>, at the Erie Philharmonic Box Office located at 609 Walnut Street, Erie, PA 16502 Monday through Friday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, and by phone at 814-455-1375. This Scott Enterprises Symphonic concert is presented by Edinboro University, WQLN and Jet Radio 1400. Guest artists presented in part thanks to Erie Sheraton Bayfront Hotel.

Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artists' Biographies

Deborah Selig, soprano

Soprano Deborah Selig joined Pittsburgh Opera in 2007-08 as a Resident Artist, making her mainstage debut as Giannetta/ *The Elixir of Love*. She also sang Tina/ *Flight* and the High Priestess/ *Aida*. After a summer that included Rose/ *Street Scene* with Chautauqua Opera and Nannetta/ *Falstaff* with Opera Roanoke, she returned to Pittsburgh Opera for Norina/ *Don Pasquale*, Musetta/ *La bohème* Student Matinee, and Elvira/ *The Italian Girl in Algiers*. She was also the soloist in Ricky Ian Gordon's staged song cycle, *Orpheus and Euridice* at Pittsburgh Opera and a soloist in *Carmina Burana* with the Erie Philharmonic. Ms. Selig was educated at the University of Michigan and the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. She trained as a young artist with Santa Fe Opera, Chautauqua Opera, and the Tanglewood Music Center. She has appeared with Central City Opera (*Zerlina/ Don Giovanni*), Mobile Opera (*Valencienne/ The Merry Widow*), Connecticut Lyric Opera (*Susanna/ The Marriage of Figaro*), Dayton Opera (*Adele/ Die Fledermaus; Amy/ Little Women*), and Chautauqua Opera (*Mary Warren/ The Crucible*). Her concert appearances include *Messiah* with the Dayton Philharmonic and Cincinnati Baroque, *Carmina Burana* with Greater Bridgeport Symphony, *Górecki's Symphony #3* with Kentucky Symphony, Haydn's "Lord Nelson" Mass with Harvard Pro Musica, and selections from *The Merry Widow* with Cincinnati Symphony. She received the Richard F. Gold Career Grant of the Shoshana Foundation, was a winner of the Southern Ohio district Metropolitan Opera Competition, and won 2nd place in the National Opera Association Competition. Ms. Selig is represented by Wolverton Artists Management.

The Filstrup Foundation generously sponsors Ms. Selig's residency.

Dean Kokanos, tenor

Pittsburgh native Dean Kokanos joined the Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artists in 2007-08 as Nemorino/ *The Elixir of Love* Behind the Curtain, Bill/ *Flight*, and Tebaldo/ *The Capulets & the Montagues* Student Matinee. In 2008-09, he was the First Philistine/ *Samson & Dalila*, Ernesto/ *Don Pasquale*, and will cover Lindoro/ *The Italian Girl in Algiers*. He was also a soloist with the Erie Philharmonic in *Carmina Burana*. Previously he has appeared with Mercury Opera of Edmonton (*Beppe/ I Pagliacci*), the Opera Theatre of Lucca (the title role

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in *L'amico Fritz*), Opera Memphis (Remendado/*Carmen*), Opera Theatre of St. Louis (Dr. Wilson/*Street Scene* and covered Devereux/*Gloriana*), Cleveland Opera on Tour (Almaviva/*The Barber of Seville*), and Sarasota Opera (Hadji/*Lakmé*). His concert repertoire includes Rossini's *Stabat mater*, Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's St. John Passion, Haydn's "Lord Nelson" Mass, Mozart's *Vesperae solenne de confessore*, and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. An alumnus of the young artist training programs of Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Sarasota Opera, and Opera Memphis, Mr. Kokanos earned degrees at Duquesne University (BM) and Carnegie Mellon University (MM). In 2006 he received an encouragement award from the Metropolitan Opera National Council District Competition and was a finalist in the 2004 Palm Beach Opera Competition. Earlier in 2008 he won 1st Prize in the National Society of Arts & Letters Competition for Pennsylvania.

Dr. and Mrs. George White generously sponsor Mr. Kokanos's residency.

Jonathan Beyer, baritone

Baritone Jonathan Beyer is a first-year resident artist with Pittsburgh Opera, he sang Prince Yamadori/*Madama Butterfly*, Belcore/*The Elixir of Love* Behind the Curtain, the Steward/*Flight*, and Lorenzo/*The Capulets & the Montagues*. For 2008-09 he appears as Dr. Malatesta/*Don Pasquale*, Schaunard/*La bohème*, and Ali/*The Italian Girl in Algiers*. He was also Chou-en-Lai in Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra's *Nixon in China* concert and a soloist in *Carmina Burana* with Erie Philharmonic. He has performed with Opera Santa Barbara, Chicago Opera Theater, Chautauqua Opera, Fort Worth Opera, and the Teatro Verdi. He has also appeared with the Indianapolis Symphony, Baton Rouge Symphony, Festival d'Aix en Provence, and the Châteauville Foundation with Lorin Maazel. In 2007 Mr. Beyer won the Marian Anderson Prize for Emerging Classical Artists. He was a national finalist in the 2006 Metropolitan Opera National Council Competition and has taken first prize in the American Opera Society, the Union Civic League Competition, and the grand prize of the Bel Canto Foundation. He has also been awarded prizes through the Jensen Foundation, Anna Sosenko Foundation, Mario Lanza Foundation, Irma M. Cooper, Palm Beach Opera, and Neue Stimmen competitions. In 2007 he sang in Kurt Weill's *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* at the Tanglewood Music Center. He completed his studies at the Curtis Institute of Music and earned his Bachelor's and Master's at the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. He is represented by Columbia Artists Management.

Mrs. J. William Futrell, Dr. Michael White and Mr. Rick LeBeau generously sponsor Mr. Beyer's residency.

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[Pittsburgh Opera](#), now celebrating its 70th season, is one of America's leading opera companies. It produces a range of programs, from mainstage productions to free community concerts to intimate cabarets. Pittsburgh Opera's internationally renowned resident artist program is among the country's top five training centers for rising opera stars. More than 20,000 students, families and educators participate in Pittsburgh Opera educational events annually. The company's newly designed administrative and rehearsal space is housed in a 140-year-old air brake factory in the city's Strip District.

2008-2009 Season

[Samson & Dalila](#) by Camille Saint-Saëns – October 18, 21, 24, 26, 2008

[The Grapes of Wrath](#) by Ricky Ian Gordon – November 15, 18, 21, 23, 2008

[Don Pasquale](#) by Gaetano Donizetti – February 7, 10, 13, 15, 2009

[La Bohème](#) by Giacomo Puccini – March 28, 31, April 3, 5, 2009

[The Italian Girl in Algiers](#) (L'italiana in Algeri) by Gioachino Rossini – May 2, 5, 8, 10, 2009

Subscriptions for as little as \$41. Single tickets for as little as \$16. For ticket information visit our website www.pittsburghopera.org or call (412) 281-0912

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