

Pittsburgh OPERA NEWS RELEASE

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Pittsburgh Opera Center Artist Wins Major Award

Pittsburgh, PA (11/8/2007) . . . Baritone **Jonathan Beyer**, a first-year Resident Artist with the Pittsburgh Opera Center, won the prestigious Marian Anderson Prize for Emerging Classical Artists on November 3, 2007. The competition was held at the Boyer College of Music and Dance, Temple University.

In addition to receiving the top prize of \$6,000, the 26-year old baritone will be featured in the Winners' Prize Recital, presented as part of Astral Artistic Services' Philadelphia Concert Series on December 7 in the Perelman Theater at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts.

In the same weekend, Beyer also received a \$2,000 study grant from the Metropolitan Opera.

Beyer, a National Finalist in the 2006 Metropolitan Opera National Council Competition and recent graduate of the Curtis School of Music, recently played the handsome and lovelorn Prince Yamadori in Pittsburgh Opera's *Madama Butterfly*. He also appears as Sergeant Belcore in *The Elixir of Love* "Behind the Curtain" on November 15 and later this season as the Steward in Jonathan Dove's *Flight* and Lorenzo in Bellini's *The Capulets & the Montagues*.

Beyer has also performed with Chicago Opera Theater, Fort Worth Opera, Opera Santa Barbara, the Chautauqua Institution, Accademia Verdiana, and Teatro di Verdi, and has appeared with the Indianapolis Symphony, Lorin Maazel's Châteaueville Foundation, and the Mozart Academie at Aix-en-Provence. Mr. Beyer was the 2005 winner of both the American Opera Society Competition and the Union League Civic and Arts Foundation Competition. In 2004, he received the Grand Prize from the Bel Canto Foundation. He has also received awards from the Anna Sosenko Foundation, the Mario Lanza Foundation, the Irma M. Cooper, Chicago National Association of Teachers of Singing, Palm Beach Opera, and the Neue Stimmen competitions. An avid recitalist, Mr. Beyer has performed with Craig Rutenberg, Mikael Eliassen, and Brian Zeger, and has given recitals under the auspices of the

Chicago Cultural Center and the Judith Raskin Foundation. Mr. Beyer holds both a Bachelor and a Master of Music degree from the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University.

Jonathan Beyer was studying composition and piano at Boston Conservatory when, by chance, famed soprano and voice teacher **Sheri Greenawald** heard him singing through a practice room door. Greenawald, now director of the San Francisco Opera Center, told the young jazz pianist that his real future was in opera. He took her advice but still continues to play what he calls “lounge piano” with great enthusiasm and will accompany soprano Sylvia McNair on a set of jazz songs at a concert in his native Chicago.

Beyer has made Slavic opera and song repertoire a specialty and won the Anderson competition with songs and arias by Rachmaninoff, Dvorak, and Tchaikovsky, as well as standard repertoire classics “Ah, per sempre” from *I puritani* and Count Almaviva’s aria from *Le nozze di Figaro*. The biennial Anderson prize was created to support significantly talented, classically trained singers who are beginning their professional careers. It was inspired by the example of the many people who provided vital assistance to contralto Marian Anderson at the beginning of her career.

The Pittsburgh Opera Center is one of America’s premier training centers for young opera singers. Competitively selected from over 500 applicants each year, these young artists are among the nation’s most sought-after emerging opera singers. Through performance opportunities, community outreach, and coaching with the opera industry’s most distinguished professionals, graduates of Pittsburgh Opera’s resident artist program perform on the world’s greatest stages.

Pittsburgh Opera, celebrating 69 years of opera in southwestern Pennsylvania, is a member of OPERA America, the national organization for opera companies, and the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council. Pittsburgh Opera’s performances are supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the PA Department of Community and Economic Development, and Allegheny Regional Asset District. KDKA is the season media sponsor.

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