

• • • • GIANNI SCHICCHI • • • •

Music by Giacomo Puccini
Libretto by Giovacchino Forzano

Gianni Schicchi is Puccini's only comic opera and was the last opera he completed himself. Though short, it is considered by many to be a masterpiece equalling Verdi's final opera, *Falstaff*. The story is drawn from great literature – Dante's *Inferno* – and based on a real incident. Set in Medieval Florence, this tale of greedy relatives of a wealthy noble foiled by the brilliant peasant, Gianni Schicchi, is timeless in its appeal – and is therefore frequently updated to more recent times.



Puccini's best known operas generally end in tragedy, with the soprano and sometimes even the tenor and baritone dead. In *Gianni Schicchi* however, no one dies during the action, although there is a dead body onstage throughout the opera – Buoso Donati, the wealthy noble whose relatives have gathered, more for the purpose of finding his will than mourning his death. When they discover that he has left his fortune to a monastery, they turn to Gianni Schicchi to help them change the will (illegally, of course). He agrees to help if only to preserve the happiness of his daughter who loves one of Donati's hopeful heirs, but can't resist beating the family at their own game.

THE CHARACTERS:

Gianni Schicchi – a quick-witted middle class rogue

Lauretta – his daughter

Buoso Donati (recently dead when the opera begins) – elderly head of an important Florentine family

Buoso's relatives:

Zita – his cousin

Rinuccio – Zita's nephew, in love with Lauretta

Gherardo – Buoso's nephew

Nella – his wife

Gherardino – their son

Betto – Buoso's brother-in-law

Simone – Buoso's cousin

Marco – his son

La Ciesca – Marco's wife

"For the trick I have played, they would see me roast in Dante's Inferno. - But, with all due respect to Dante, there were extenuating circumstances."

- Gianni Schicchi

CAST

Gianni Schicchi: Daniel Belcher
Lauretta: Joanna Mongiardo
Rinuccio: Norman Reinhardt
Zita: Peabody Southwell



Conductor: John Baril
Director: Ken Cazan

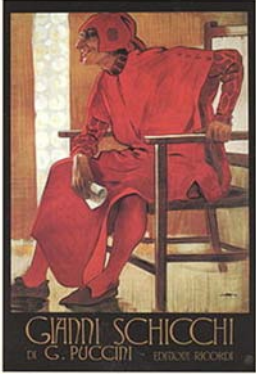
Performed in Italian with English supertitles.

PERFORMANCE DATES:

Matinees at 2:30 pm – July 16, 20, 24; August 3, 5
Evenings at 8:00 pm – July 9, 28, 30

Opera Notes - Free pre-performance preview in Williams Stables at 1:50 and 7:15 pm.

Puccini, Dante and the Real Gianni Schicchi



Poster from 1918-19 by Metlicovitz, probably for the Italian premiere in Rome in 1919.

Inferno (Italian for "Hell") is the first part of Dante Alighieri's 14th-century epic poem *The Divine Comedy*. It is an allegory telling of Dante's journey through Hell, guided by the Roman poet Virgil. This medieval depiction of Hell consists of nine circles of suffering.

Both Gianni Schicchi and Buoso Donati, the wealthy head of a large Florentine family, were historical characters. Dante's verses in Canto XXX of *Inferno*, and Puccini's opera, are based on an actual incident that took place in 13th century Florence. In the Circle of Impersonators (part of the 8th circle of Hell) Dante sees a man savagely attacking another. The attacker is Schicchi, condemned to Hell for changing the will of Buoso Donati while impersonating him. Dante's harsh treatment of Schicchi is based on his own class prejudice. His wife was a Donati and Dante was also of pure Florentine descent; he despised members of the peasant class like Schicchi. While Dante's description of Gianni Schicchi is brief, a more fully realized version of the story (and the basis for the opera) comes from a commentary on Dante's work attributed to an anonymous 14th century Florentine.

Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924) had long thought about composing a set of one-act operas, to be performed in a single evening. The project however, took years to get off the ground. Puccini completed the one-act tragedy *Il tabarro* in 1916, and the next year began work on the religious, all-female opera *Suor Angelica*. *Gianni Schicchi*, a comedy, completed the triptych in 1918. After the premiere at the Metropolitan Opera in 1918, *Schicchi* became an immediate hit and is still the most popular of the three. The score highlights Puccini's modern style of harmonic dissonance with more lyrical passages that bring Rossini to mind.



Gianni Schicchi is Puccini's only comic opera and is the last opera that he completed (his final opera *Turandot* was unfinished at his death in 1924, but was later completed by another composer). According to music scholars, *Schicchi* is his greatest opera, comparable to Verdi's final opera *Falstaff* which was also a comedic masterpiece from a composer more known for tragedies.

Puccini's score is built around a series of motifs which recur through the opera, generally representing characters, situations and moods.

[WATCH ONLINE*](#) – Opening Scene performed by the Metropolitan Opera

The opening motif is a rapid burst of rhythmic music which quickly transforms into a mock-solemn dirge depicting the hypocritical grief of the Donati relatives. Other principal motifs include a theme associated with the lovers Rinuccio and Lauretta, introduced in Rinuccio's first solo "Salvati! Salvati!", and a short, formal woodwind statement which represents Donati's will.

*If you're reading this in printed format, all online links can be found in our Resources on page 37.

FOCUS ON:

Ken Cazan, Director



GIANNI SCHICCHI, THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS AND THE BREASTS OF TIRESIAS

During this summer season you will be directing three one-act operas; do you think the rehearsal period will be long enough?

Lord, no! This is a thrilling and terrifying job! I have no doubt we will get it all done and in some style given the cast and designers involved. I plan to sleep for a month afterwards! Each piece is so unique that I truly relish the opportunity to try to tie them together on some level, to try to find a common physical language that can be a thru-line for the three pieces. And it has always been my experience that in working with "the little company that could," you can accomplish anything you put your mind and heart to (thank you for that, Pat) [Pat Pearce – General and Artistic Director of Central City Opera]. That is the joy of being isolated on a mountain top for four weeks with nothing to distract you from the artistic challenges at hand.

How do you prepare and how do you keep each opera clear in your mind?

The greatest challenge with these three pieces is the language diversity and the drastically different nature of each piece: the broad, music hall comedy of *Schicchi* vs. the stark, alienation theatre of *7DSs* (as we are referring to *The Seven Deadly Sins*) vs. the genuine absurdism and surrealism of *Mamelles* [*The Breasts of Tiresias*]. To tie that all together into one hopefully semi-cohesive evening of theatre that says something to an audience is a unique challenge. As for learning them, one simply studies and studies and studies. Fortunately, I teach at a major university and have access to a rehearsal space on a fairly regular basis and am in there pretty regularly playing with different ideas for the choreography for *7DSs*.

Can you give us a taste for how these operas will work together?

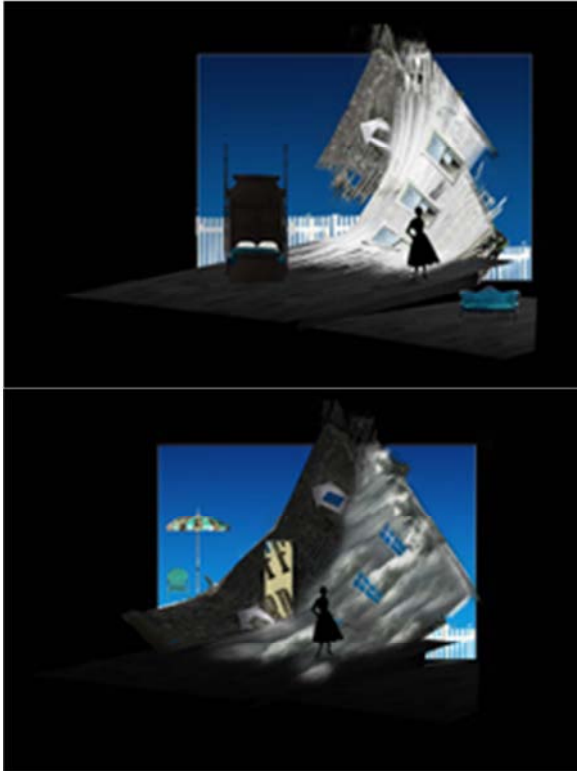
The main theme of the operas is "home and one's place in that home." We have chosen to set the pieces in the period that *Mamelles* was written, 1947-early 1950s, post-WWII. Dadaism had reached its peak as an art form and with the beginning of the recovery of Europe from the devastation of WWII; people had become machines, working ridiculous hours to rebuild their lives and to restore some semblance of normalcy. The Dadaists used endless imagery of peoples' bodies with machines for heads and limbs and torsos. We construct an actual house on stage as the evening progresses.

First, in *Schicchi*, the family is desperate to recover some of their former glory but opportunists like Gianni Schicchi simply have better survival skills and outsmart them. The house begins to come together.

Then in *7DSs*, the two Annas sell everything they can, including their bodies, to work to build a home for their rather lazy, judgmental family in rural Louisiana, the little tract home so popular after WWII. The Annas literally become furniture for the family to walk over and sit on and abuse. The house is even more complete.

Finally, in *Mamelles*, a society that has experienced the devastation of war first-hand cries out to have more children, to repopulate. What is a woman's place in this society? What is a husband's place in this society? Everyone is working so hard to rebuild their lives, that they have lost their humanity and become the cafe table they are waiting on, the messengers become their bicycle, the idea of babies being created in test tubes is given full-throttle exposure in this piece. There is a loss of humanity and people have become the things they covet.

This is the thrust of the Dadaist message and Cameron Anderson, our set designer, and Alice



Set renderings for Central City Opera's 2011 productions of *Gianni Schicchi* (above) and *The Breasts of Tiresias* (below) by designer Cameron Anderson.

Bristow, our costume designer, have brilliantly recreated the Dadaist style. The house onstage is finally completed when husband and wife in *Mamelles* agree that it takes both of them to conceive and produce a child. I wish there was a fourth opera in this cycle that moved us forward and challenged the classic notion of "husband and wife" as the ultimate family, a hot burner issue for the world today and for me personally, as a gay man. But that's for another summer....

After an accident that ended the dancing portion of your career, your roommate, a vocal coach, asked you to give his singers dramatic training because they were not required to take acting courses. Do you find that singers are receiving this training these days, and what are some basic acting principles you impart to young singers?

I do believe that singers are receiving better acting training. People like Chuck Hudson, Ann Baltz, and Stephen Wadsworth are training people in a more

realistic approach to performing opera. I teach at the University of Southern California Flora Thornton School of Music and I stress a realistic approach to acting. I was trained by members of the Actors Studio at Syracuse University and they stressed an extremely organic approach to performing.

Now, opera is of its very nature an over-the-top art form, heightened dramatically by the spectacular music used to express emotion. Consequently, one often has to stretch the limits of reality to a certain extent. That, to my mind, simply heightens the visceral and sensorial thrill of opera. There is a certain ecstasy that can be achieved when all of the stars align and a performance is absolutely in the groove and the audience gets swept up in that. I also heartily believe that ALL singer actors should take movement and dance classes! One has to understand how their body works and be able to adapt to any physical challenge onstage. We do two to three dance classes a year during the acting classes at USC. I wish there was time in the schedule to do more.

What has been your favorite opera to direct? What was one thing about the production that made it work?

I get asked this question all of the time and it is literally impossible to answer. There have been several favorite productions for me and not all were operas. Near the top would be *Waiting for Godot* with the Milwaukee Chamber Theatre many years ago. A brilliant cast, a five week rehearsal period, digging for the truth in the absurdity: it all came together for a devastating evening. *Salome* in Santa Fe in the mid-'90s was a thrill, primarily thanks to the late and truly great Inga Nielsen. She was an amazing colleague and anything I asked her to try, she did. Last summer's *Three Decembers* here in Central City was a tremendously fulfilling experience. Joyce [Castle], Emily [Pulley], and Keith [Phares] were amazing and the rehearsal period was much more like doing a play thanks to [music director] John Baril's dedication to the drama. Then there were *Dialogues of the Carmelites* and *Gloriana* at CCO which were great not only for my career but also for the opportunity to work with Joyce Castle so intimately.



Central City Opera's THREE DECEMBERS (2010). Pictured (L to R): Emily Pulley (Beatrice), Joyce Castle (Madeline) and Keith Phares (Charlie). Photo by Mark Kiryluk.

Last year, I had the honor to direct the West Coast premiere of Wagner's *Das Liebesverbot* at USC. Who would have believed that students could pull off Wagner with such artistry, integrity, and guts? I don't think I have ever been so proud of a cast. I would have to say the number one on my list is *Death in Venice* which I had the privilege of doing for Chicago Opera Theatre. The elegance and simplicity of the designs, Danny Pelzig's [director and choreographer of Central City Opera's *Carmen this summer*] brilliant choreography, and Robin Leggate's other-worldly performance as Ascenbach made an evening that, when the final blackout happened long after the music had died, created a silence that thrilled all of us on the production team. The response from everyone was overwhelming. For once, I felt that maybe we had fulfilled a bit of what Britten was looking for in the piece. I know that that sounds tremendously egotistical but those moments are few and far between in our careers and when they do very rarely happen, you savor it.

You are one of America's most sought-after directors and have directed more than 140 productions for more than 40 companies; what have been your greatest achievements and what are the reasons for your successes?

I think the above answer addresses a lot of that. Success to me means working regularly and steadily in a very fickle business. I will say that the primary reason for any success I may have achieved is that I have an insane and wonderful family who constantly challenge and inspire me and encourage my life in the arts. The other thing that keeps me going is that I have never shied away from a risk, theatrically. One has to hurl oneself in to a project up to ones eyeballs. If you fail, you fail; at the least you had a mentality and a reason for saying and doing what you did. Our job is first to entertain but further to move, to edify, and to educate. We in the living arts are the historians of the present and the torch bearers of the past. We must always take a risk and stretch an audience's mentality and emotions, whether it is tickling their funny bones or moving them to tears. This risk-taking is the measure of any artist's success.



Central City Opera's GLORIANA (2001). Pictured (L to R): Joyce Castle (Queen Elizabeth I). Photo by Mark Kiryluk.

•••• DIE SIEBEN TODSÜNDEN •••• (THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS)

Music by Kurt Weill
Libretto by Bertolt Brecht

Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht created the famous *Threepenny Opera* and several other works together in Berlin in the 1920's. They went their separate ways after disputes arose over politics. In 1933 they reunited one last time in Paris to create a **ballet chanté** ("sung ballet") for George Balanchine's dance troupe.

Sisters Anna I and Anna II journey to seven cities to make money to send home to Louisiana for the purpose of building a house for their family. In each city they experience one of the seven deadly sins.



THE CHARACTERS:

Anna I – a singer who does most of the “talking”

Anna II – a dancer, mostly silent

Father, Mother, 2 Brothers – an all-male quartet

*"My sister is beautiful, I'm practical.
She's a little mad, my head is on straight."
- Anna*

CAST

Anna I: Peabody Southwell

Anna II: Sarah Tallwell

Tenor I: Norman Reinhardt

Baritone: Robert Gardner



Conductor: John Baril

Director: Ken Cazan

Performed in German with English supertitles.

PERFORMANCE DATES:

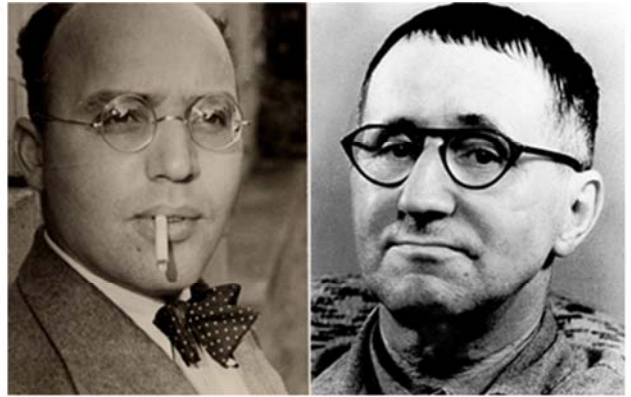
Matinees at 7:00 p.m. – July 16, 24; August 3

Evenings at 9:15 p.m. – July 9, 30

Evening at 9:30 p.m. – July 22

Opera Notes - Free pre-performance preview in
Williams Stables at 1:50 and 7:15 pm.

Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht



Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht

Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht were from different backgrounds but both became champions of social change – their Marxist philosophies eventually caused them to be blacklisted by the Nazi regime. Weill was Jewish, the son of a Cantor, who began the study of music at an early age. He enjoyed the tutelage of Engelbert Humperdinck and Ferruccio Busoni and the respect of Alban Berg, Stravinsky and Darius Milhaud, all famous composers of the time. Brecht was born to devout Christian parents, studied drama in college and wrote his first play at age 20. His first **produced** play received this review from a prominent Berlin critic, "At 24 the writer Bert Brecht has changed Germany's literary complexion overnight"—"[he] has given our time a new tone, a new melody, a new vision. It is a language you can feel on your tongue, in your gums, your ear, your spinal column."

Brecht named his new style "epic theatre" – he believed that a play should not cause the audience to identify emotionally with the characters or action on stage, but should instead provoke self-reflection and a critical view of the action on the stage. He wanted audiences to use **critical perspective** to recognize social injustice and exploitation and to be moved to effect change in the world outside. For this purpose, he used techniques that remind the audience that the play is a representation of reality and **not** reality itself. These techniques include the actor's direct address to the audience, harsh and bright stage lighting, the use of songs to interrupt the action, explanatory placards, and, in rehearsals, the transposition of text to the third person or past tense, and speaking the stage directions out loud. By highlighting the **constructed** nature of the play, Brecht hoped to communicate that the audience's reality was equally constructed and thus, was changeable.

It's interesting to note that despite the Nazis' suppression of Brecht's work, by the 1970's his plays were more frequently produced in Germany than Shakespeare's.

Brecht and Weill first collaborated in the mid-1920s on a project that would eventually become *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, employing Brecht's epic theatre model. Next came both Brecht AND Weill's arguably most famous piece, *The Threepenny Opera*. They adapted John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (which, by the way, was a 1728 English satire on **Händel's** operas), with Brecht's lyrics set to music by Kurt Weill. Retitled *Die Dreigroschenoper (The Threepenny Opera)* it was Berlin's biggest hit in the 1920s, a complete reinvention of the operetta and a huge influence on musical theatre worldwide – 40 years later Kander and Ebb created a true homage with the musical *Cabaret*. Brecht and Weill collaborated on another couple of projects, but without the success of *Threepenny*.

Both men had to flee Germany in 1933 as the Nazis took complete power. Weill never returned but settled eventually in America where he continued to influence the development of American musical theatre. Weill and Brecht had earlier severed their relationship; Weill commented to his wife Lotte Lenya that he was unable to "set the entire communist party manifesto to music" – his reaction to Brecht's constant push to the left. However, they reunited one more time in Paris in 1933 to create *The Seven Deadly Sins* for George Balanchine's dance troupe.

GETTING IN TOUCH WITH YOUR INNER SINNER:

ORIGIN OF THE 7 DEADLY SINS

People have grappled with sin since the birth of mankind— all kinds of sin; from the deepest and darkest sort to the sin which seems to dangle before us with temptation and even delight. Greek monastic theologian Evagrius of Pontus was the first to create a list of eight sins - on a sliding scale from the least to the worst: gluttony, lust, avarice, sadness, anger, acedia (spiritual sloth), vainglory and pride. In early Christian times church leaders sought to categorize and define the sins to make it easy for people to understand their faulty ways. The Deadly Sins (aka the Capital Vices or Cardinal Sins) are considered the sources of all other sin. Pope Gregory the Great revised Evagrius' list in 590 A.D., combining acedia and sadness, vainglory and pride, and adding the ever-torturous sin of envy. He also chose to rank the sins (starting with the least): pride, envy, anger, sadness (replaced in the 7th century by "sloth"), avarice (greed), gluttony, and lust. They became part of the traditional Catholic devotions.

The sins can be defined in the following manner:

- [Pride](#) is excessive belief in one's own abilities that interferes with the individual's recognition of the grace of God. It has been called the sin from which all others arise. Pride is also known as Vanity.
- [Envy](#) is the desire for others' traits, status, abilities, or situation.
- [Anger](#) is manifested in the individual who spurns love and opts instead for fury. It is also known as Wrath.
- [Sloth](#) is the avoidance of physical or spiritual work.
- [Greed](#) is the desire for material wealth or gain, ignoring the realm of the spiritual. It is also called Avarice or Covetousness.
- [Gluttony](#) is an inordinate desire to consume more than that which one requires.
- [Lust](#) is an inordinate craving for the pleasures of the body.

By the Middle Ages the church had defined seven Heavenly Virtues meant to counteract each sin: humility (vs. pride), kindness (vs. envy), patience (vs. anger), diligence (vs. sloth), charity (vs. greed), temperance (vs. gluttony) and chastity (vs. lust). The Virtues provided an alternative for people, defining the battle of good virtues versus evil vices.



Close-ups of Hieronymus Bosch's depiction of "gluttony" (left) and "anger" (right) in his painting *The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*.

*If you're reading this in printed format, all online links can be found in our Resources on page 37.

A set of 16th-century engravings by Georg Pencz used animals to depict the punishments in hell resulting from the Seven Deadly Sins:



Pride
Animal: Horse
Punishment in hell:
broken on the wheel



Envy
Animal: Dog
Punishment in hell:
put in freezing water



Anger
Animal: Bear
Punishment in hell:
dismembered alive



Sloth
Animal: Goat
Punishment in hell:
thrown in snake pits



Greed
Animal: Frog
Punishment in hell:
put in cauldrons of
boiling oil



Gluttony
Animal: Pig
Punishment in hell:
forced to eat rats,
toads, and snakes



Lust
Animal: Cow
Punishment in hell:
smothered in fire
and brimstone

•••• **LES MAMELLES DE TIRÉSIAS** •••• (THE BREASTS OF TIRESIAS)

Music by Francis Poulenc
Libretto by Guillaume Apollinaire

After World War II, composer Francis Poulenc re-read a play from 1917 by Guillaume Apollinaire and decided to turn it into a comic opera. The play was an early example of **surrealist** literature (see *Poulenc, Apollinaire and Surrealism* on page 29).

Thérèse is a feminist who goes to extremes to escape her life as housewife and mother – she becomes a man! As General Tiresias, she begins a successful campaign against childbearing while her husband explores his “feminine” side.



THE CHARACTERS:

Theatre Director – Informs the audience that a dramatist creates his own universe in his play

Thérèse/Tirésias – a French wife who prefers to be a soldier, actress, congressman, lawyer, doctor, etc.

Husband – Alarmed that there will be no children (other women have followed Thérèse’s lead), he determines to have children without a woman.

Paper-seller, Gendarme, Journalist, Babies, other Townspeople

"I want to make war, not children."

- Thérèse

CAST

Thérèse: Joanna Mongiardo
Le Mari: Daniel Belcher
General Directeur: Robert Gardner



Conductor: John Baril
Director: Ken Cazan

Performed in French with English supertitles.

PERFORMANCE DATES:

Saturday, July 9 – 10:15 p.m.

Wednesday, July 20 – 4:00 p.m.

Friday, July 22 – 8:00 p.m.

Thursday, July 28 – 9:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 30 – 10:15 p.m.

Friday, August 5 – 4:00 p.m.

Opera Notes - Free pre-performance preview in
Williams Stables at 1:50 and 7:15 pm.

Poulenc, Apollinaire and Surrealism

Guillaume Apollinaire, poet and playwright, was born in 1880 of murky heritage but must have had a massive intellect. He spoke multiple languages including Walloon (spoken in parts of Belgium) and ultimately landed in Paris living in Montparnasse among some of the greatest artists of the early 20th century – Picasso, Gertrude Stein, Marc Chagall, Erik Satie, Jean Cocteau – to name but a few. He coined the term “**surrealism**” in program notes for Cocteau and Satie’s ballet *Parade*.



The Persistence of Memory by Salvador Dali

Surrealism is defined as a style of art and literature that tries to represent the subconscious mind by creating fantastic imagery and juxtaposing ideas that seem to contradict each other. Apollinaire’s writing was often concerned with the clash between the modern and the traditional, and juxtaposed drastically different stylistic elements (for example gritty modern imagery in traditional poetic forms). He fought for the French in World War I in order to gain French citizenship, was wounded and sent home to Paris in 1916. During his recovery, he wrote *Les Mamelles de Tiresias*, the first literary example of surrealism. He died shortly after in the worldwide flu epidemic of 1918.

Francis Poulenc was born in 1899 to wealthy parents in Paris and became quite a musical prodigy, working with other composers and artists in Montparnasse before he ever got formal musical training. At age 19 he was named one of **Les Six** – a group of six young composers whose work was seen as a reaction against Richard Wagner and Impressionist music. His work is tonally based and generally melodic, but incorporating many musical innovations that came into use during his career.

According to one source (the Opéra Comique’s website, so let’s hope it’s accurate) Poulenc met Apollinaire, whom he admired very much, in 1917 at the premiere of the play *Les Mamelles de Tiresias*. He set many of Apollinaire’s poems to music and regretted that they were never able to collaborate together. Much later, at the end of another war, reading the play again, he found that it would be suitable for the composition of a true **opéra bouffe**, with its satire of feminism, its scathing social purpose and its trivial characters transfigured by the extravagance of the subject-matter – i.e. Thérèse deciding to change sex in order to become a General. “I think I prefer this work to all those I have written,” said Poulenc. “If one wants to get some idea of my complex musical personality, one will find me exactly as I am in *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*.”

It is intriguing to think that Poulenc hooked up with the German gents Weill and Brecht (see page 24) when they were in Paris, although research turned up no such connection. They certainly would have had a lot in common, including the fact that they were all born within a year of each other.

WATCH ONLINE - You can watch Poulenc himself playing piano (and “singing”) for this aria from *The Breasts of Tiresias*.

*If you’re reading this in printed format, all online links can be found in our Resources on page 37.

Character Spotlight:

THE BREASTS OF TIRESIAS'S THÉRÈSE *AND GIANNI SCHICCHI'S* LAURETTA

Joanna Mongiardo

We're so glad you are returning to Central City Opera to play exciting roles in two of our one-act operas this summer. We've seen you on our stage before as the beautiful Baby Doe in 2006 and the charming Eurydice in 2010's *Orpheus in the Underworld*. We remember that you were also a Central City Opera apprentice artist a few years ago.



Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi* is a somewhat typical soprano ingénue role. How do you approach creating a young, naïve character to make her interesting?

Well, it helps that I get to sing one of the most beloved arias of all time, "O mio babbino caro". I enjoy singing the young ingénue. I think there is something refreshing in portraying a young woman who is newly in love, passionately so, who will stop at nothing to be married to her beloved. And, keep in mind that "ingénue" doesn't necessarily mean "unintelligent". Lauretta is, after all, the daughter of the clever Gianni Schicchi.

Thérèse/Tiresias in *The Breasts of Tiresias* is NOT a typical soprano role. She's a woman who becomes a man in a very surreal story. What appeals to you about this role?

I love that Thérèse doesn't want to be confined by traditional convention. She has a fire in her belly, wants to try new things, wants to see the world and be what she wants to be. In refusing to be beholden to traditional convention, she turns convention on its head! She assumes the male role and grows a beard, while her husband in turn assumes the female role and starts having babies.

It's wonderfully improbable and totally enchanting at the same time. What I love most though, is that Thérèse, after taking her freedom, ends up right back in the arms of her husband. But, this time, as a more "complete" woman who is happy to be there.

Your career took you to Germany for a time. What are the differences between being an opera artist in Europe vs. the United States?

Surprisingly little difference! The same standards of preparation and artistry apply in both the U.S. and Europe. The main difference, especially in Germany, is the luxury of longevity. Here in the States, we are often on a gig for three weeks, have a limited number of performances and then are off to the next opera somewhere else. Being a *Fest* singer gives you the opportunity to really sink your teeth into a role, because you may sing it 7-10 times a season, year after year. Central City also provides that rare opportunity to repeat a role with up to 18 performances a summer.

Please comment on your experience as an apprentice artist at Central City Opera. What did you learn or practice in the artist training program that helped you in your career development?

I believe that Central City has been the single most influential company in my development as an artist from the very beginning of my career. I first came to CCO as a Studio Artist right out of college and benefited greatly from the structure of the young artist program. John Moriarty and the rest of the CCO staff taught me essential tools for becoming a professional – proper audition techniques, diction, stage craft, the challenge of learning a lot of repertoire in a short period of time. You name it, they taught it. I am still putting that knowledge to use every time I get on stage.

Take advantage of the many

FRINGE FESTIVAL

attractions during the Summer Festival!

Opera Notes – Free previews before every performance at 1:50 p.m. or 7:15 p.m. in Williams Stables

Après Opera – After the show, share cocktails and enjoy impromptu performances by 2011 company performers, or pianist Jerry Weiss and solo guitarist Grant Gordy at the Teller House. No cover charge!

Lunch & A Song – Lunch and a 30-minute performance to whet your opera appetite at the relaxed Teller House. Tickets just \$30

Short Works – Staged scenes from beloved operas performed by members of the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation Artists Training Program. Select dates at 1:15 p.m. in Williams Stables, prior to matinees. Tickets \$12 (\$8 for season subscribers)

Signor Deluso – Based on Moliere's play *Sganarelle*, the comic opera *Signor Deluso* by Thomas Pasatieri follows two couples who suspect their true loves are having affairs. Directed by Central City Opera Artistic Director Emeritus, John Moriarty. Select dates at 1:15 p.m. Tickets \$12 (\$8 for subscribers)

Jazz Brunches – Pop up for a finger-snappin' great time at our Jazz Brunches, featuring fine food and hot jazz. Just \$35 for brunch buffet and jazz, select dates at 11:45 a.m. in the Teller House.

SinFest – Get in touch with your inner sinner at this progressively sinful experience. See the one-hour Kurt Weill opera *The Seven Deadly Sins*, followed by a sinful evening of dance, slam poetry, experiential art, swing dance, and an indulgence of food and wine. Tickets just \$50...if you dare.

For tickets to these events visit
www.centralcityopera.org
or call the Central City Opera
Box Office at 303.292.6700

Sundays at St. James – A unique opportunity to experience exquisite instrumental and vocal works performed by company members and the popular group New York Polyphony, in one of Colorado's oldest churches, St. James Methodist, across from the Opera House. Tickets \$32 each or all three for \$68.

The Nina Odescalchi Kelly Family Matinees – Opera lovers of all ages will enjoy these full-length productions with "what-to-listen-for" introductions and post-performance autograph sessions. Tickets \$15 for children ages 6-18, \$20 for adults

Carmen – Tuesday, July 28 at 2:30 p.m.

Amadigi di Gaula – Tuesday, August 4 at 2:30 p.m. This performance includes a costume contest and magic show. Add the **Take a Child to the Opera** option for an extra \$10, for inside information about the opera accompanied by pre-performance family fun activities, theatre games, and a post-opera talkback. Sponsored by the Central City Opera House Association Guild.

Central City Days (July 30-31) – This uncommon weekend takes modern fun to historic heights with a gold mine of Central City adventures that celebrates all that's good and great about our state.

Summer Performing Arts Intensive (July 16-31) - Central City Opera and the Colorado Springs Conservatory partner to offer a two-week intensive for students ages 14-19 that includes immersion studies in drama, opera and musical theater. Students are in residence for 10 days in Colorado Springs and then move to Central City where they will attend Festival productions, participate in coachings and classes, and perform their own scenes program for **public performances July 30th at 2:30 p.m. & 31st at 10:00 a.m. Tickets \$5.**

RESOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CARMEN

Media Links:

- Overture - <http://www.loc.gov/jukebox/recordings/detail/id/6782>
- En vain pour eviter – <http://www.loc.gov/jukebox/recordings/detail/id/1776>
- Carmen quintet - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_1mnk77Of0
- Flower Aria - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hy8-QGmMeO8>

GIANNI SCHICCHI

Media Link:

- Opening Scene – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMwx9H7Eftk>

SEVEN DEADLY SINS

Media Links:

- Pride - <http://www.deadlysins.com/sins/pride.html>
- Envy - <http://www.deadlysins.com/sins/envy.html>
- Anger - <http://www.deadlysins.com/sins/anger.html>
- Sloth - <http://www.deadlysins.com/sins/sloth.html>
- Greed - <http://www.deadlysins.com/sins/greed.html>
- Gluttony - <http://www.deadlysins.com/sins/gluttony.html>
- Lust - <http://www.deadlysins.com/sins/lust.html>

THE BREASTS OF TIRESIAS

Media Link:

- Poulenc on Piano - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCg-x_bO820

MISCELLANY

- Schedule to 2011 Festival - <http://www.centralcityopera.org/2011Festival>

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Christopher Ainslie
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Brian Cook
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Joanna Mongiardo

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

Check out the Central City Opera Education and Community Programs available during the REST of the year!

Mozart & Company, for **elementary** students, introduces the basics of opera – song, story, costumes and props – in arias and short vignettes. Study guide provided in advance.



Build an Opera! for **3rd through 12th grades**, provides extended artist residencies for students to engage in performing and creating musical stories.



The Great Opera Mix-Up, also for **elementary** students, invites student participation in a mini-opera to provide a deeper acquaintance with story and character. Study guide provided in advance.



Build an Opera workshop, a 5-day workshop for **K-12 teachers** intending to enroll their schools in *Opera Alive!*, prepares teachers for incorporating opera music and stories into curriculum. Free to teachers. Graduate or Continuing Education Credits available.



How the West Was Sung, for **upper elementary and middle school** students, establishes the historical contexts for opera as popular entertainment in the days before iPod and DVD and brings Colorado historical characters to life. Study guide provided in advance.



Performing Arts Intensive, a two-week summer program in collaboration with the Colorado Springs Conservatory. The Conservatory provides two weeks of instruction and preparation of opera and theatrical scenes for students **ages 14-19**. The group comes to Central City for an intensive four-day experience including attendance at festival operas, workshops and master classes taught by Festival artists and staff, tours and a culminating performance of the students' scenes program in Williams Stables.



En Mis Palabras (In My Own Words), for **middle and high school** students. A bilingual Spanish and English opera follows a 15-year-old girl trying to balance the conflicting influences of her Mexican family cultural traditions and her peer community. Bilingual study guides provided in advance.



Opera on the Go, for **all ages** features arias and scenes from operas and musical theater staged with costumes, props, and musical accompaniment.



Family Matinees, for children **ages 6 to 18** and their companion adults, are special performances of Festival repertoire operas (performed by participants in the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation Artist Training Program) with tickets at significantly discounted prices.



Opera in the Rockies, touring program, presents community performances and in-school programs in communities throughout the Rocky Mountain region.



Concerts for family audiences – Smooth OPERAtor and Love Notes are available for booking by area concert venues and recreation districts.



Visit www.centralcityopera.org/education for more information. To schedule an event or program contact the Education and Community Programs office: 303-331-7026 or education@centralcityopera.org