

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

Please note that late entry or reentry of the East Building after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

For the convenience of concertgoers, the Garden Café remains open for light refreshments until 6:00 pm on Sundays.

Music Department
National Gallery of Art
Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC

www.nga.gov

Concerts are made possible in part through the generosity of donors to the National Gallery of Art through The Circle. Reserved seating is available in recognition of their support. Please contact the development office at (202) 842-6450 or circle@nga.gov for more information.

COVER: Grant Tyson Reynard, *A Modern Opera*, 1940, etching, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Reba and Dave Williams Collection, Gift of Reba and Dave Williams



The Seventy-second Season of
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lammot Belin
Concerts

National Gallery of Art
2,971st Concert

New York Opera Society
performing
Max and Moritz
A Cartoon Opera in Seven Pranks
and
Supersize Girl
A Plastic Opera in Five Operations

December 15, 2013
Sunday, 6:30 pm
East Building Auditorium

Admission free

Max and Moritz:

A Cartoon Opera in Seven Pranks

Commissioned by New York Opera Society

Music: Gisle Kverndokk

Libretto: Øystein Wiik

CAST

Trouble John Tiranno

Max Carlos Feliciano

Moritz Gustavo Ahualli

Mrs. Cackle Juliana Rambaldi

Henny the Hen, Baguette Lady, Heli-Mom Sarah Pillow

Henriette the Hen, Mr. Guru, Mr. Cervello,

Belinda the Thai Tarantula Victor Benedetti

SYNOPSIS

Prologue: Max and Moritz meet up with Trouble

First Prank: Max and Moritz play a trick on Mrs. Cackle and her hens

Aria (Mrs. Cackle): “Oh, figlie! Morte, morte, finire così?”

Second Prank: Max and Moritz play a trick on the local guru

Aria (Max and Moritz and Mr. Guru): “Guruaria with Avalalah”

Third Prank: Max and Moritz meet up with Heli-Mom and are

accused of killing Mrs. Cackle’s hens

Aria (Heli-Mom): “My Boys”

Fourth Prank: Max and Moritz meet Mr. Cervello, the shrink

Fifth Prank: Max and Moritz play a trick on the shrink

Duet: “Gunpowderduet with ‘Okeydoke Snoring”

Sixth Prank: Max and Moritz meet up with Belinda, the Thai Tarantula

Seventh Prank: Guilty or not?

Aria (Trouble): “Troublesome Defense”

Aria and chorus: “The Rolls Royce Type of Boys”

INTERMISSION

**Supersize Girl:
A Plastic Opera in Five Operations**

World Premiere Performance

Commissioned by New York Opera Society

Music: Gisle Kverndokk

Libretto: Øystein Wiik

CAST

Amanda (a fourteen-year-old girl) Sarah Pillow

Albert (her Facebook friend) Carlos Feliciano

The Man in the Mirror John Tiranno

Merlin (a plastic surgeon) Victor Benedetti

The mother Juliana Rambaldi

The father Gustavo Ahualli

The three girlfriends (The good, the bad, and the ugly)

Gustavo Ahualli, Victor Benedetti, Carlos Feliciano

SYNOPSIS

Prologue: A chat between Amanda and her Facebook friend, Albert

Scene 1: Amanda talks to the Man in the Mirror

Scene 2: Amanda talks to her parents

Aria: "The Girl You Told Me I Would Be"

Scene 3: Walking along a street in New York, Amanda encounters
an old man in a dustbin (Merlin)

Aria (Merlin): "My One and Only Love"

Scene 4: Merlin makes Amanda taller

Scene 5: Amanda meets the Three Little Queens

Scene 6: Merlin changes Amanda's nose

Scene 7: Merlin, the Three Little Queens, and Amanda's
parents review Amanda's results

Scene 8: Merlin changes Amanda's bottom

Scene 9: Albert and Amanda finally meet

Aria (Amanda): What have I done?

Scene 10: Amanda meets Merlin one more time

Duet and chorus: "My One and Only Love"

INSTRUMENTALISTS

(for both operas)

Elizabeth Young, conductor

Andrew Rehrig, flute

Kevin Gebo, trumpet

Danielle Cho, cello

Danielle Hahn, piano

STAFF

(for both operas)

Joachim Schamberger, director

Marcus Doshi, lighting designer for *Max and Moritz*

Robert Denton, lighting designer for *Supersize Girl*

Camille Assaf Doshi, costume designer

Alice Tavener, associate costume designer

Kerry Gibbons, assistant costume designer

Amanda Spooner, production stage manager

Jennifer Cho, executive director, New York Opera Society

*This concert is made possible by generous grants from the
Royal Norwegian Embassy*

The Musicians

NEW YORK OPERA SOCIETY

Benefiting singers and audiences alike through timely productions that offer fresh, often provocative interpretations of contemporary and classical works, New York Opera Society (NYOS) annually tours a new production of an extant work in international festivals abroad and features a contemporary opera or new commission in the United States. In addition, it hosts a salon series and an international artist-in-residence program, supports outreach in underserved communities, and runs a training program, Les Jeunes Solistes.

NYOS has been heard on several previous occasions at the National Gallery of Art, including a showcase for young Norwegian singers (2008), a Gershwin songfest in honor of *From Impressionism to Modernism: The Chester Dale Collection* (2009), and the world premiere of *Max and Moritz* (2010). Other notable NYOS performances have taken place at the Chicago Cultural Center, the Embassy of Italy, and New York's World Financial Center.

In its most recent seasons, NYOS presented new productions of *Falstaff* and *Madama Butterfly* for its annual festival in southern France and the United States premiere of a contemporary Spanish opera, *Las Horas vacias*, by Guggenheim fellow and Juilliard faculty member Ricardo Llorca. Since the beginning of the current season, NYOS has been favorably reviewed in *GQ* and *TIME* magazines, *Opera News*, and the *Washington Post*, and has been the subject of a PBS special report and a feature article in the *Wall Street Journal*. Led by Executive Director Jennifer Cho and a board of directors led by philanthropist A.T. Nguyen, NYOS offers special thanks to Det Norske Komponistfond, the Norwegian Composer's Union, Music Norway, and the Dan and Gloria Bohan Foundation for their support in this production.

GISLE KVERNDOKK

One of Norway's leading opera composers, Gisle Kverndokk wrote his first opera when he was fifteen years old, a radio opera commissioned by the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation. Shortly thereafter he studied composition, conducting, flute, and piano at the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo, where he received a master of music degree in 1995, before continuing his studies at the Juilliard School in New York. Kverndokk has been commissioned by a number of opera houses in Norway and Germany, and has had notable success with two operas at the Norwegian National Opera—*The Fourth Watch of the Night* (2005) and *Around the World in Eighty Days* (2010), commissioned for the opening of the new opera house in Oslo.

ØYSTEIN WIİK

In addition to his considerable output as a librettist, Øystein Wiik is a singer, actor, and writer. A graduate of the State Academy of Theater in Oslo, he was employed at the Norwegian Theater from 1980 to 1988, where he played lead roles in several major musical productions, including Tony in *West Side Story*, the title role in *Sweeney Todd*, Rum Tum Tugger in *Cats*, and Theo in *Piaf*. His 1988 performances of Jean Valjean in *Les Misérables* led to international acclaim when he repeated the role in London and Vienna. In 1991 Wiik released a solo album entitled *Too Many Mornings: Songs by Sondheim*. More recent albums include *Det er jul*, *Pavane*, *Stage*, and *West End Favoritter*. Wiik has acted in as well as written the lyrics for two of his four collaborations with composer Gisle Kverndokk. He played the male lead (Alberto Knox) in *Sophie's World* and the title role in *Vincent van Gogh*.

JOACHIM SCHAMBERGER

A graduate of the Musikhochschule in Würzburg, Germany, and the Merola Opera Program of the San Francisco Opera, Joachim Schamberger works internationally as a stage director and virtual theater designer. His training also includes studies in digital film production and 3-D animation at the New York Film Academy. He has worked with young artists at the Brooklyn College Conservatory, the International Institute of Vocal Arts in Italy, the Juilliard

School of Music in New York, and VOICEexperience in Florida. This past season he also served as the artistic director for Indianapolis Opera's young artist program. Recent productions include *La Bohème* for Connecticut Grand Opera; *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Das Rheingold*, and *Tosca* for Indianapolis Opera; *Rigoletto* and *Sweeney Todd* for Shreveport Opera; *Martha* and *The Wizard of Oz* for the Landestheater Coburg in Germany; *Falstaff* for the Théâtre Municipal in Castres, France; *Die Zauberflöte*, *Idomeneo*, and *The Rake's Progress* for the International Vocal Arts Institute in Tel Aviv, Israel; *Angelica/Schicchi*, *La Rondine*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor* for Opera Tampa; and *Così fan tutte* for the Conservatory in Stony Brook, New York. Schamberger maintains a web site at www.joachimschamberger.com.

GUSTAVO AHUALLI

Baritone Gustavo Ahualli made his operatic debut in 1996 as Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Teatro San Martin in Tucuman, Argentina. Since then, he has sung leading baritone roles in *Carmen*, *Così fan tutte*, *Don Carlo*, *Don Pasquale*, *Eugene Onegin*, *La Bohème*, *La Favorita*, *La Traviata*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Pagliacci*, and *Turandot*. Ahualli has recently performed at Argentina's Teatro Argentino de la Plata and Teatro San Martin, Italy's Teatro Lauro Rossi, Peru's Teatro Segura, and Saint Louis's Union Avenue Opera Theatre as well as with the New Jersey Association of Verismo Opera, Palm Beach Opera, and Wichita Grand Opera.

In demand as an oratorio soloist, Ahualli has sung Johann Sebastian Bach's *Magnificat* at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires; Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* at Yankee Stadium; and Verdi's *Requiem* at the Sacred Heart Basilica in Newark, New Jersey. Now a resident of the United States, Ahualli was born in San Miguel de Tucuman, Argentina. He began his musical training at age seven with Hilda Deniflee, a student of Kodály and Bartók. In 1998 Ahualli obtained the *maestria de canto* from the Instituto Superior de Arte del Teatro Colón. A bilingual cantor for the Sacred Heart Cathedral Basilica in Newark and Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, Ahualli won first prize in the New Jersey Association of Verismo Opera Competition in 2006.

VICTOR BENEDETTI

Winner of New York City Opera's Debut Artist of the Year award for his performance of the title role in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Victor Benedetti has also sung the title role in *Wozzeck* with the Astoria Music Festival, Ford in *Falstaff* with Toledo Opera, Alfonso in *La Favorita* with Stadttheater Giessen, and two roles — Scarpia in *Tosca* and Peter in *Hansel und Gretel* — with Indianapolis Opera. With Washington National Opera at the Kennedy Center, he has appeared as Nardo in *La Finta Giardiniera*, Slim in *Of Mice and Men*, John Proctor in *The Crucible*, and John Sorel in *The Consul*. He received his bachelor and master of music degrees from Northwestern University and launched his professional singing career with the Lyric Opera Center for American Artists of Lyric Opera of Chicago. More information about Victor Benedetti is available at www.victorbenedetti.com

CARLOS FELICIANO

A native of Puerto Rico, tenor Carlos Feliciano completed a two-year resident artist program with the Pittsburgh Opera and made his debut with the company as Messaggero in *Aida*. Other roles Feliciano has sung in Pittsburgh include the Philistine Messenger in *Samson et Dalila* and Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* as well as Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*. He performed with the Project Opera of Manhattan in *The Rape of Lucretia* as well as *Die Zauberflöte*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Making his European debut in March 2007 with New York Opera Society in Castres, France, he returned to Castres the following year to perform Fenton in Verdi's *Falstaff*. Feliciano received a bachelor of music degree from the Manhattan School of Music and completed his graduate work at the Juilliard School. He received first place at the Five Towns Music and Arts Foundation Competition in 2006, was a finalist for the Violetta DuPont Voice Competition in 2007, and has also received a full-tuition scholarship from the Juilliard School as well as scholarships from the Manhattan School of Music, the Assisi Music Festival, and the Musical Arts Corporation of Puerto Rico.

SARAH PILLOW

Soprano Sarah Pillow has built a unique career by drawing on her equal expertise in jazz, classical, and early music. Her performance credits include avant-garde projects at the Kitchen in New York City, *The Marian Vespers of 1610* with the New York Collegium, and the Montreux Jazz Festival. Pillow has toured more than thirty cities in the United States with both her jazz quartet and her crossover project, Nuove Musiche. She is also the director of her own group, Galileo's Daughters, and has eight recordings available of both jazz and early music repertoire. Recent performances have taken her to British Columbia; Madison and Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Mumbai, India; and New York City. More information about Sarah Pillow can be found at www.galileosdaughters.com and www.buckyballmusic.com.

JULIANA RAMBALDI

A national finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, soprano Juliana Rambaldi has also won an ARIA Award and the George London Award. Beginning her career at the Lyric Opera Chicago Center for American Artists, she has performed many roles at Lyric Opera Chicago, including Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, Marguerite in *Faust*, and Musetta in *La Bohème*. In 2000 she received critical acclaim for creating the role of Catherine in the world premiere of William Bolcom's *A View from the Bridge*. Her leading roles with other American opera companies include her New York debut as the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with New York City Opera; Sandrina in Mozart's *La Finta Giardiniera* with Glimmerglass Opera; and Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffman* and Violetta in *La Traviata* with Houston Grand Opera. Her extensive concert repertoire includes Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Mozart's *Exultate Jubilate* and *Mass in C Minor*, and Ferko's *Stabat Mater*. In addition to her operatic and concert work, Rambaldi is an accomplished actress, currently to be seen as La Diva with Teatro ZinZanni, a circus/cabaret in Seattle.

JOHN TIRANNO

Versatile American tenor John Tiranno's recent opera engagements include Alfredo in *La Traviata* with Granite State Opera, Arturo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Connecticut Grand Opera, and Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* with Concert Opera of Philadelphia. As a concert soloist, he has appeared in performances of Mahler's *Symphony no. 8* (National Academy Orchestra of Canada), Beethoven's *Symphony no. 9* and Haydn's *Creation* (Vermont Mozart Festival), and Handel's *Messiah* with the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra. He has sung with the American Symphony Orchestra, Bohème Opera, the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra, the Discovery Orchestra, Lake George Opera, Light Opera of New York, Sarasota Opera, and Teatro Grattacielo in New York City.

Program Notes

In 1865 the German author Wilhelm Busch wrote and illustrated a book for children titled *Max und Moritz — Eine Bubengeschichte in sieben Streichen* (Max and Moritz—A Story of Seven Boyish Pranks). The German title satirizes the custom, prevalent since the eighteenth century, of giving a subtitle to novels and dramas by way of a didactic explanation for the existence of the work. The darkly humorous tale in rhymed couplets exaggerates the pranks and punishments that are a universal feature of the life of active children. It was a popular bedtime story in German-speaking households throughout the rest of the nineteenth century and on into the twentieth century, when it was eventually translated into all of the European languages and became a pan-European favorite. *Max und Moritz* has become a benchmark of German culture and even today it is as well known in German-speaking countries as the fairy tales of the brothers Grimm. Students of the history of comic strips consider *Max und Moritz* to have been the direct inspiration for the world's longest-running comic strip *Katzenjammer Kids*, which ran in American newspapers from 1912 to 1949 and is still in syndication.

The opera *Max and Moritz: A Cartoon Opera in Seven Pranks* is an adaptation of the mid-nineteenth-century story for modern times, developed by librettist Øystein Wiik and composer Gisle Kverndokk. The composer writes:

I discussed Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* with an opera director once, and he said he always felt that Stravinsky had two influences in this work—the Mozart opera and the Broadway musical of the 1940s. I think this is a very good way of seeing it, and ever since I have been thinking of this as a very interesting point of view when I have worked on my operas. The playfulness held together in a strong dramaturgy is very present in these two forms, and that is what I value the most in music theatre.

I see *Max and Moritz* as an absurd piece of musical entertainment. The Stravinsky influence is there—the chamber music aspect, [as in] *The Soldier's Tale*; the musical connotations of military trumpet, piccolo blasting, [and] romantic cello solos; the arias and duets in classical forms. Then there is the Broadway

showmanship that I feel is necessary to highlight the humorous aspect. The feeling of bursting into song is always a wonderful thing to do. This is also a sort of Marx-Brothers way of developing the music, to suddenly delve into another kind of piece, another kind of music that came from nowhere but is acted out as the most natural thing—a game of associating.

Cartoon music is historically linked to opera. The Hollywood film music tradition came from European romantic composers who had written big operas in Vienna and Berlin, and created in Hollywood, as Korngold said, “little hidden operas.” The way the music described the action and the emotions was very operatic. This is developed to the extreme in cartoon music, and following up the action to the split second—“mickey mousing”—is a fun way to create a musical structure that, [if] isolated, can seem very complex. I use this technique in *Max and Moritz*. The music follows the characters step by step with all sorts of surprises—bumps, crashes, horror warnings, yoga chanting, ballet music, and lush romantic outbursts. I use a great variety of styles—marches, waltzes, tarantella, coloratura aria, Jerry Herman-like songs, swing, Charleston, and a few quotes from Tchaikovsky, Mozart, and Verdi.

In collaboration with the Royal Norwegian Embassy, the New York Opera Society commissioned *Supersize Girl* as part of its new “Music with a Message” project to reach out to adolescent girls. A comedic representation of a girl’s journey through the travails of plastic surgery, the opera is intended to counter the negative media assault against their body image and self-esteem. Documentary filmmaker Greg Vander Veer, (recently selected by the Film Society of Lincoln Center as one of the top twelve emerging documentary filmmakers of 2012) has been selected to document this journey in classrooms and theaters.