

The
Florentine
Opera

HURRY! SUBSCRIBE OR RENEW BY JULY 31ST FOR BEST PRICES AND SEATS!

ACTS

OF

REBELLION

THE 2024/25 SEASON

Subscribing brings you closer to the art form, offering the thrill of year-round access to grand opera. Enjoy a multitude of benefits, such as early ticket access and the season's lowest prices, with discounts of up to 20% off the full season!

**DEADLINE FOR RENEWAL
SUBSCRIPTIONS: JULY 31, 2024**

SEASON SUBSCRIPTION BENEFITS INCLUDE:

{NEW} ONE FREE PARKING PASS

Per household for Quartet Subscribers only.

{NEW} EXCLUSIVE SUBSCRIBER EVENTS

One in October for *Madama Butterfly* and one in May for *Carmen*.

PRIORITY SEATING

Get first access to your favorite seats when you renew by July 31, 2024!

COMPLIMENTARY TICKET EXCHANGES

Life happens — attend another performance with ease.

TICKET MAILING ON THE HOUSE

Receive your beloved printed tickets at no additional cost.

**20% OFF DISCOUNT FOR ADDITIONAL
24/25 SEASON TICKETS**

May be applied to any mainstage performance.

**TURN TO THE INSIDE BACK COVER FOR ALL
YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SUBSCRIPTIONS
AND PACKAGES FOR OUR 2024/25 SEASON!**

GET YOUR TISSUES!

THIS SEASON IS LOADED WITH PASSION,
TRAGEDY, HUMOR, AND ACTS OF REBELLION
LARGE AND SMALL.



We step into the shoes of some of the greatest characters ever created: Cio-Cio San (*Madama Butterfly*) and the eponymous *Carmen*. These productions also feature women behind the scenes! We co-created and co-cast these shows with Kentucky Opera and Virginia Opera, both led by women General Director/CEOs. Enjoy the familiar faces of Kathryn Henry (19/20 Baumgartner Studio Artist) in *Carmen*, and new Baumgartner Studio Artist Sara LeMesh as Galatea, the title role in *Acis and Galatea*. Resident Artistic Consultant Jill Anna Ponasik will create the world of Donizetti's *Viva la Mamma* in a new theater for us — the Pitman Theater at Alverno. Additionally, Music Director Francesco Milioto will conduct three of our four mainstage productions!

The Acts of Rebellion referenced as our season theme play out in all of these shows. *Butterfly* is determined to win a life in the West for her son, even if she can't be part of it. Her best friend and traditional community find this choice unfathomable, but she is committed to this path. *Carmen* rebels against the severely restrictive norms in Catholic Spain. As she chooses to follow her heart no matter the consequences, her decision to live free from social norms pales in comparison to the destruction caused by loving who she will. Galatea watches men battle for her, destroying her happiness, only to rediscover her divinity and resolve her own grief. And in *Viva la Mamma*, everyone is rebelling against each other in this hilarious show within a show! As wild as these diva battles become, the ultimate stage mom Mamma Agata saves the day. Don't miss the sly prologue, Cimara's jewel *Il maestro di capella*. Mamma Agata may steal a moment of the show before the show even begins.

As we plumb the depths of some of the most profound and the most interesting stories in the repertoire, we look forward to thrilling you with Baroque to Romantic treasures. **We will laugh, cry, and celebrate this grand art form at its best.**

BEST,

**MAGGEY OPLINGER
GENERAL DIRECTOR & CEO**

SEASON AT A GLANCE

YOU BRING OUT THE BEST IN US, AND WE WANT TO BRING THE BEST OPERA AND MUSICAL OFFERINGS TO YOU. WE INVITE YOU TO SHARE THE MAGIC OF GRAND AND INTIMATE OPERA WITH US.

FlorentineOpera.org

JUNE 21 & 22, 2024	Pasta & Puccini at Lueders Opera Center and La Lune Collection, Riverwest
JULY 19, 2024 (RAIN DATE JULY 20)	Al Fresco with The Summer Studio Ensemble at the home of the Bloch/Christian Family in Fredonia
AUGUST 22, 2024 (RAIN DATE AUGUST 23)	Al Fresco with Deanna Breiwick at the home of Rachel and Adam Arndt on the East Side
SEPTEMBER 20, 2024	Gala: Rebellion & Revelry at Harley Davidson Museum
OCTOBER 18 & 20, 2024	MADAMA BUTTERFLY at Uihlein Hall, Marcus Performing Arts Center (MPAC)
NOVEMBER 14, 2024	Aria Extravaganza with the Baumgartner Studio Artists at the home of Donna and Donald Baumgartner in River Hills
DECEMBER 4, 2024	Celebrating the Season in Song at The Milwaukee Club
DECEMBER 10, 2024	Caroling at the Fireplace at the Sharon Lynne Wilson Center
DECEMBER 12, 2024	Carols & Classics at the St. Paul's Episcopal Church with Milwaukee Children's Choir
FEBRUARY 14 & 16, 2025	ACIS AND GALATEA at Wilson Theater at Vogel Hall, Marcus Performing Arts Center (MPAC)
MARCH 21 & 23, 2025	VIVA LA MAMMA! at Pitman Theater at Alverno College
MAY 16 & 18, 2025	CARMEN at Uihlein Hall, Marcus Performing Arts Center (MPAC)

SHOW EVENT DESCRIPTIONS

VERSED

Get ready for the show! For each mainstage production, we offer a Versed experience for the Milwaukee community (and beyond) to learn about composer histories, the first audience's response, historical contexts, culture, and the intentions behind a show.

Join us for Versed where you can become a Know-It-All! These are FREE and open to the public at the Lueders Opera Center.

Contact events@florentineopera.org with questions.

PRE-OPERA TALKS

One hour ahead of each Mainstage production, hear from artistic and production insiders to learn about the literary context of the show and what to listen for. Pre-opera talks are only available to ticket holders.

OPENING NIGHT DINNER

For every opening night, enhance your experience with a curated dinner and an inside scoop from the General Director. If you are interested in purchasing dinner tickets before an opening night performance please email events@florentineopera.org.

OPENING NIGHT POST-SHOW PARTY

We invite all patrons who attended opening night to celebrate with us at a post-show party! If you have questions about the post-show party please email events@florentineopera.org.

OUR SEASON IS MADE POSSIBLE WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM THESE ORGANIZATIONS

Proud Cornerstone Member of



The Florentine Opera is a professional company member of



OCTOBER 18, 2024
AT 7:30PM

OCTOBER 20, 2024
AT 2:30PM

UIHLEIN HALL,
MARCUS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Run time 2h 45m, with one intermission
Performed in Italian with English supertitles
Rated PG 13 — adult themes, suicide

Indulge in the timeless allure of Puccini's masterpiece, *Madama Butterfly*, where Japanese traditions meet American dreams. As the exquisite melodies of Puccini's iconic score unfold, experience an exploration of love, sacrifice, and cultural collision. Delve into a world brimming with raw emotion as Cio-Cio San faces heartbreak, and her unwavering devotion leads to a devastating sacrifice for the future of her child.



CONDUCTOR
FRANCESCO MILIOTO



DIRECTOR
MO ZHOU



CIO-CIO-SAN
KAREN CHIA-LING HO



LT. PINKERTON
ADAM DIEGEL

CREDITS

COMPOSED BY
GIACOMO PUCCINI

STAGE DIRECTED BY
MO ZHOU

CONDUCTED BY
FRANCESCO MILIOTO

WITH THE MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
FEATURING THE FLORENTINE OPERA CHORUS,
DR. BENJAMIN RIVERA, CHORUS MASTER

VERSED

Wednesday,
October 9, 2024
At 5:30pm

OPENING NIGHT DINNER

October 18 at 5:30pm
Saint Kate
Arc Theater

PRE-OPERA TALK

October 18 at 6:30pm &
October 20 at 1:30pm
Anello Atrium
(MPAC)

OPENING NIGHT
POST-SHOW PARTY

October 18
after the show
Saint Kate Hotel
(Cash bar)

PRODUCTION SPONSORS

DONALD AND DONNA BAUMGARTNER



**FEBRUARY 14, 2025
AT 7:30PM**

**FEBRUARY 16, 2025
AT 2:30PM**

**WILSON THEATER AT VOGEL HALL,
MARCUS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

Run time 90m, no intermission

Performed in English with English supertitles

Rated PG — murder

Handel's charming and most performed opera since its creation, *Acis & Galatea*, tells a tale of love, jealousy, and mythological mischief. Director Meeker describes this production as "visual poetry". Imagine a shepherd falling for a sea nymph, only for a mythical cyclops to crash their love story. Fountains sprout from a lover's tragic murder, adding a splash of resolution to heartbreak.



CONDUCTOR
FRANCESCO MILIOTO



DIRECTOR
E. LOREN MEEKER



ACIS
PATRICK BESSENBACHER



GALATEA
SARA LEMESH

CREDITS

COMPOSED BY
GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

CONDUCTED AND PLAYED BY
FRANCESCO MILIOTO

STAGE DIRECTED BY
E. LOREN MEEKER

FEATURING ENSEMBLE CURATED BY
THE MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

VERSED

Tuesday,
January 28, 2025
At 5:30pm

OPENING NIGHT DINNER

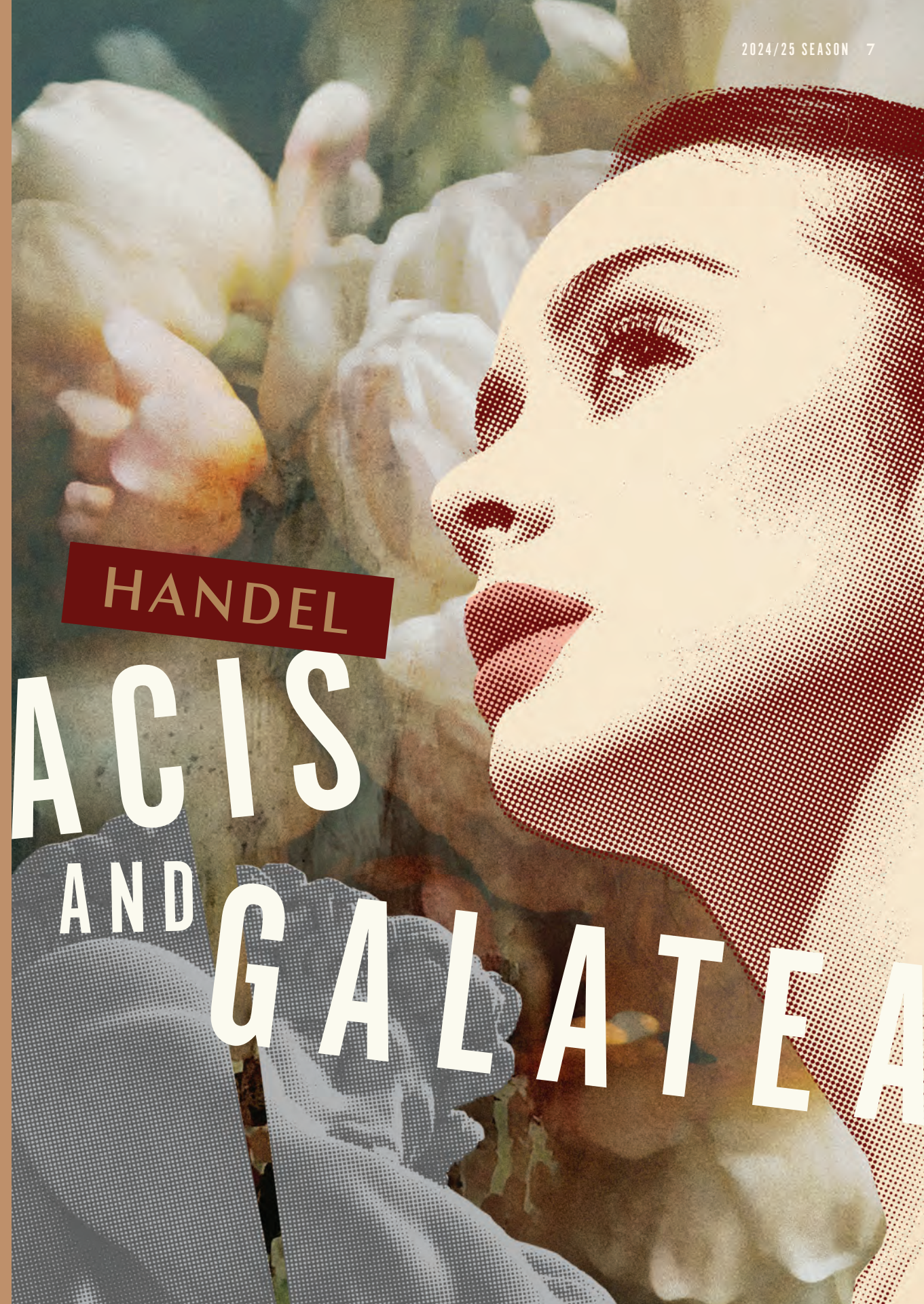
February 14 at 5:30pm
Saint Kate
Arc Theater

PRE-OPERA TALK

February 14 at 6:30pm &
February 16 at 1:30pm
Wilson Theater
at Vogel Hall (MPAC)

**OPENING NIGHT
POST-SHOW PARTY**

February 14
after the show
Saint Kate Hotel
(Cash bar)



MARCH 21, 2025
AT 7:30PM

MARCH 23, 2025
AT 2:30PM

NEW VENUE:
PITMAN THEATER AT ALVERNO COLLEGE

Run time 1h and 55m, with one short intermission between performances

Performed in Italian with English supertitles

Rated PG

Donizetti's *Viva la Mamma!* hilariously portrays a theatrical company struggling with a stage mother who insists on controlling every aspect of her son's career, much to the director's dismay. Dueling divas, a meddling maestro and grocer/poet complicate the production woes. Amidst chaos and comedic mishaps, the opera satirizes operatic stereotypes, showcasing the absurdities and egos within the world of theater — all with glorious bel canto melodies and some terrific singing.



CONDUCTOR
ANTHONY BARRESE



DIRECTOR
JILL ANNA PONASIK



MAMMA AGATA
PATRICK CARFIZZI



DARIA, PRIMA DONNA
ALISA JORDHEIM

CREDITS

COMPOSED BY
GAETANO DONIZETTI

CONDUCTED BY
ANTHONY BARRESE

STAGE DIRECTED BY
JILL ANNA PONASIK

ENSEMBLE CURATED BY
THE MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
FEATURING THE FLORENTINE OPERA CHORUS

VERSED

Monday,
March 3, 2025
At 5:30pm

PRE-OPERA TALK

March 21 at 6:30pm and
March 23 at 1:30pm

Pitman Theater

MORE INFORMATION TO COME
ON OPENING NIGHT DINNER
AND POST-SHOW PARTY!

PROLOGUE

OPERATIC
INTERMEZZO
BY DOMENICO
CIMAROSA

IL MAESTRO
DI CAPELLA



DONIZETTI

VIVA
LA MAMMA!

ROLE SPONSOR OF MAMMA AGATA
NITA SOREF ESTATE

MAY 16, 2025
AT 7:30PM

MAY 18, 2025
AT 2:30PM

**UIHLEIN HALL,
MARCUS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

Run time 3h and 15m, with one intermission

Performed in French with English subtitles

Rated PG-13 — adult themes, seduction,
murder, cheating

Celebrated worldwide, *Carmen* remains an unmissable opera that inspired a legend. Bizet's *Carmen* is centered on the passionate and free-spirited Carmen, a seductive cigarette factory worker who lives by her own rules. Her love triangle with soldier Don José and bullfighter Escamillo leads to jealousy, betrayal, and tragedy. Carmen's fierce independence and tragic end make it a compelling tale of love, obsession, and fate.



CONDUCTOR
FRANCESCO MILIOTO



DIRECTOR
KYLE LANG



CARMEN
LISA MARIE ROGALI



DON JOSÉ
ZACH BORICHEVSKY

CREDITS

COMPOSED BY
GEORGES BIZET

STAGE DIRECTED BY
KYLE LANG

CONDUCTED BY FRANCESCO MILIOTO

**WITH THE MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
FEATURING THE FLORENTINE OPERA CHORUS,
DR. BENJAMIN RIVERA, CHORUS MASTER**

SCHOOLS ON STAGE LA ESCUELA FRATNEY

VERSED

Wednesday,
May 7, 2025
At 5:30pm

OPENING NIGHT DINNER

May 16 at 5:30pm
Saint Kate
Arc Theater

PRE-OPERA TALK

May 16 at 6:30pm &
May 18 at 1:30pm
Anello Atrium
(MPAC)

**OPENING NIGHT
POST-SHOW PARTY**

May 16
after the show
Saint Kate Hotel
(Cash bar)

BIZET
CARMEN

ROLE SPONSOR OF DON JOSE

MARY ANN AND CHARLES LABAHN

ROLE SPONSOR OF MICAELA

**DRS. KARIN AND PETER DRESCHER;
DR. RICH GRUNKE AND BILL GRASCH**

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2024

THE GARAGE @ HARLEY DAVIDSON MUSEUM
400 W CANAL ST, MILWAUKEE, WI 53201

CO-CHAIRS RAE THUOT AND JAN WADE

Join us for a night of leather and lace in a space created for rebels!
Celebrate and support the Florentine's education programming that
serves 8,000 Milwaukee Public School students and others.

Join us for cocktail hour and dinner with a special performance
by the Baumgartner Studio Artists!

THE FLORENTINE OPERA 2024 GALA

REBELLION

& REVELRY

florentineopera.org/gala

Al Fresco

Prepare for an unforgettable summer soirée at the highly sought-after Al Fresco series, nestled in enchanting gardens and beautiful homes of Southeastern Wisconsin. Join us for captivating performances by some of opera's finest talents.

AND YES, DINNER AND BAR OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE
OR BRING YOUR OWN PICNIC FOR A TRULY PICTURESQUE EXPERIENCE!

July 19, 2024
(RAIN DATE JULY 20)

6:30PM COCKTAIL HOUR
7:30PM PERFORMANCE

1H, NO INTERMISSION

August 22, 2024
(RAIN DATE AUGUST 23)

6:30PM COCKTAIL HOUR
7:30PM PERFORMANCE

1H, NO INTERMISSION

The Florentine Opera's
Summer Studio Ensemble

HOSTED BY
THE BLOCH/CHRISTIAN FAMILY
IN FREDONIA

Join us for an evening of opera featuring the
Florentine Opera's Summer Studio Ensemble.
These emerging voices bring classics
to a gorgeous garden in Fredonia!

Deanna Breiwick

HOSTED BY
ADAM AND RACHEL ARNDT
ON THE EAST SIDE

Deanna Breiwick, acclaimed soprano praised
by The New York Times as a "vocal trapeze
artist," enjoys a dynamic career.

Notable for her roles with San Francisco
Opera, the Metropolitan Opera, and
Bayerische Staatsoper, she continues to
captivate audiences worldwide in opera
premieres and concert performances.

THE FLORENTINE OPERA'S SUMMER
STUDIO ENSEMBLE PRESENTS THE NEXT
ITERATION OF OUR COVERS SERIES.

Find us in parks around the city, with opera like you've never heard before!
In collaboration with Milwaukee's own Phe, The Summer Studio Ensemble will bring
a soul pop and R&B spin on opera as part of Milwaukee's outdoor performance
tradition. Look for us at Washington Park, Summerfest, and more!

COVERS

S U M M E R T O U R 2 0 2 4



SOPRANO
THEODORA COTTARELL



MEZZO-SOPRANO
ZARA ZEMMELS



TENOR
RIVER GUARD



BARITONE
EVAN FLEMING



PHE



PIANIST
LARA BOLTON



June 21 & 22, 2024

LUEDERS OPERA CENTER
AND LA LUNE COLLECTION
926 E BURLEIGH ST., MILWAUKEE

Delight in a rustic Italian dinner by
Chef Shully served under the stars
at La Lune's charming Riverwest
location, followed by a sunset
serenade of your Italian favorites
from our own opera stars.

Email events@florentineopera.org
to reserve your spot!

OPERA
IN
SCHOOLS

CINDERELLA

A Florentine Opera original
adaptation of the classic fairy tale
that's magical in every language!

The Florentine's Cinderella includes music from Viardot,
Massenet and Rossini and is performed in French,
Italian and English. The Baumgartner Studio Artists tour
this silly, giddy masterpiece at schools and community
centers throughout the school year. This bite-sized
opera is sure to delight even the youngest audiences.

30 minute run time. Contact Renata Herrera at
rherrera@florentineopera.org to book your school!



BAUMGARTNER STUDIO ARTISTS

Powerful and unforgettable, the talent of outstanding singers/actors makes each opera experience grand.

The Donald and Donna Baumgartner Studio Artist professional residency is designed to ensure the future of opera by providing emerging artists from around the country with comprehensive training, advanced instruction, and professional performance opportunities.



SOPRANO
SARA LEMESH



MEZZO-SOPRANO
LAURYN NELSON



TENOR
JEREK FERNÁNDEZ



BARITONE
BRANDAN SANCHEZ



PIANO
DANIEL WEBER

THE BAUMGARTNER STUDIO ARTISTS AN ARIA EXTRAVAGANZA

November 14, 2024, 5:30pm
AT THE HOME OF DONNA AND DONALD BAUMGARTNER

Immerse yourself in the captivating melodies of opera's rising stars in a breathtaking aria extravaganza! Join us for an unforgettable evening with the Baumgartner Studio Artists, showcasing their extraordinary vocal talents.

Tickets available for \$85.

CELEBRATING THE SEASON IN SONG



The
Milwaukee
Club

December 4, 2024
at 5:30pm

CELEBRATE THE
Holidays

Join us for a joyful and reflective celebration
of the season through timeless Christmas and
holiday music from around the world featuring
the Baumgartner Studio Artists.

CAROLING AT THE FIREPLACE



Sharon Lynne Wilson
Center for the Arts,
Brookfield

December 10, 2024
at 7:30pm

CAROLS & CLASSICS



St. Paul's Episcopal Church,
Milwaukee's East Side

December 12, 2024
at 7:30pm

WITH SPECIAL PERFORMANCE FROM MILWAUKEE CHILDREN'S CHOIR



Milwaukee
Children's Choir
Building Noteworthy Character