

Pearl Fishers: casts

The casts and production team for Dorset Opera's performances of *The Pearl Fishers*, have recently been announced, and feature both newcomers and old friends.



Leonardo Capalbo

Leading the way as one of our Nadirs is the sensational young American tenor Leonardo Capalbo. He has been making a huge impact on audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. You can catch Leonardo singing Roméo in performances of Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* for Opera North. If you can't wait until July, log on to his website www.leonardocapalbo.com and get an idea of the thrilling voice you can expect.

Joining Capalbo as Zurga will be Tasmanian Simon Thorpe. The prize-winning baritone has been seen in countless productions across the UK since leaving the National Opera Studio. His Belcore in *L'elisir d'amore* and Ford in *Falstaff* - both for WNO - have gained plaudits from press and public alike.



Rebecca von Lipinski

Rebecca von Lipinski will partner Capalbo and Thorpe in the role of Leila. She has already captured the attention of artistic directors across Europe. Another Dorset Opera 'find', Rebecca is tall and elegant, and described by her agent as having 'model-like physique!' With a warm lyric soprano voice to match, she truly is the priestess Leila.

Tenor Ashley Catling has appeared with nearly every opera company in the UK. His fine tenor voice is especially suited to the high, sustained tessitura of Nadir. We are delighted that he has chosen to add this role to his extensive repertoire.



Simon Thorpe

Baritone Dimitrie Lazich is of Serbian origin, but now lives in Pittsburgh. He studied in Europe, and has the voice, the looks and the stage presence - in fact, all the ingredients required for a stellar career.

Old friends returning to Dorset this year include super-soprano, Janis Kelly - one of our heart-rending Liüs in *Turandot* last year. Currently, she can be seen at her glorious-sounding best in Offenbach's *Bluebeard* alongside Philip Langridge at Grange Park

Opera. And French bass Bernard Deletré - whose dignified Phanael in *Hérodiade* was much admired by audiences and critics alike - will be singing the role of Brahmin priest Nourabad.

Jeremy Carnall conducts; Jamie Henderson is again in charge of our chorus, and William Relton, Cordelia Chisholm and Paul Need return as director, designer and lighting designer respectively.

Casts are listed on page 2 and are unfortunately subject to change.

Turandot – the final stunning review

The remaining review for *Turandot* has now appeared in the industry favourite, *Opera Now*. Roderic Dunnett's critique was so incredibly impressive, that we cannot do other than reproduce it in full on page 8 of your 12-page DONews!



Bryanston

Carnall's Capers...



Jeremy Carnall

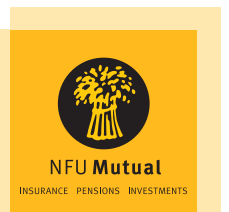
It has been announced that Dorset Opera's music director, Jeremy Carnall, has been invited to become First Kapelmeister at the opera house of St Gallen, Switzerland. He takes up the post in September 2008.

The exciting young maestro wowed the St Gallen orchestra and management alike when he was called in to conduct a performance of *Carmen* at very short notice.

DO Artistic Director, Roderick Kennedy commented: "Jeremy will be taking on the St Gallen post alongside his duties with DO. The connection bodes well for both organisations. The Board and I are delighted that Jeremy is determined to continue to develop his relationship with DO for the foreseeable future."

Productions he will conduct in St Gallen next season include *The Merry Widow*, *La traviata*, *Die Stumme Serenade* (a comedy by Korngold), *Pique Dame* (Tchaikovsky's *The Queen of Spades*), several orchestral concerts, and a major dance project that is yet to be announced.

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Pearl Fishers' Synopsis

Set in Sri Lanka in days of yore, *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* is a classic opera plot: Tenor (Nadir - hunter) loves Soprano (Leila - priestess), as does Baritone (Zurga - chief of the pearl fishers). Soprano loves Tenor and it all ends at least partially in tears.

Nadir and Zurga once both loved a beautiful priestess but renounced her for the sake of their friendship. Nadir appears as the pearl fishers are about to welcome the 'unknown' priestess who will pray in chaste solitude for their safety at sea. He and Leila recognise each other from their previous fleeting encounter.

Surprised by the outraged high priest, Nourabad, the lovers are captured and brought before Zurga. He is inclined to mercy until he too recognises Leila. Seized by jealousy, he condemns them both to death, but before the execution he learns that it was Leila, when a little girl, who had saved him from danger many years before. He creates a diversion to enable the lovers to escape, at the same time condemning himself to death at the hands of the high priest.

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Who sings when...



Ashley Catling



Janis Kelly



Dimitrie Lazich

24 July at 7.30pm

26 July matinée at 2.30pm

Leila: Rebecca von Lipinski

Nadir: Leonardo Capalbo

Zurga: Simon Thorpe

Nourabad: Bernard Deletré

25 July at 7.30pm

26 July at 7.30pm

Leila: Janis Kelly

Nadir: Ashley Catling

Zurga: Dimitrie Lazich

Nourabad: Bernard Deletré

Casts and appearance dates are subject to change.

Live from the Met

Many Dorset Opera supporters have enjoyed the *Live from the Met* experiences in HD format at cinemas around the region. Next season's broadcasts have now been announced. These can be seen in cinemas/arts centres in Bath, Christchurch, Southampton and Yeovil. See *For your 2008 Diary* for the operas and broadcast times.

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Where are they now?

No.6 Michael Lewis

Australian baritone Michael Lewis appeared in Dorset Opera's production of Puccini's *Edgar* back in 1980. [We famously pipped a disgruntled Wexford Festival to the post in presenting this rarity. Dutch tenor Nico Boer and our own Roderick Kennedy were common to both productions, but when Wexford's choice for the soprano role proved 'unsuitable', ours (Iris dell'Acqua), was called in.]



Michael Lewis

He made his European debut in Wexford in 1976 and went on to sing at Glyndebourne and all the British opera companies. He is famed for his portrayal of the title role in *Rigoletto*, a work he has sung all over the world including at La Fenice, Venice, the famous ENO production by Sir Jonathan Miller, and Elijah Moshinsky's production for Opera Australia. He was Rigoletto to Dame Joan Sutherland's final (concert) appearance as Gilda.

Michael has since sung under the baton of many of the major conductors of the day, and has recently been singing the role of

Zurga in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*. He is married to mezzo-soprano Patricia Price, and their son Alexander has followed in his parents footsteps (he is currently singing Raoul in the Australian production of *Phantom of the Opera*!)

Storey sings Tristan again

Ian Storey and Waltraut Meier have again been singing *Tristan und Isolde* together under the baton of Daniel Barenboim in May.



Ian Storey

This time they were appearing at the Berlin Staatsoper (Unter den Linden) where the maestro is Music Director. Interestingly, both singers replaced the advertised cast.

Dorset Opera

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For your 2008 Diary

6 July: *Bach Cello Suites I & VI* – Recital by Tim Walden principal cellist of the BSO in aid of the BSO Endowment Trust. The Tithe Barn, The Manor House, Hinton St Mary, Sturminster Newton, DT10 1NA. 6.15pm. Ticket £25 to include champagne and light supper. Tel: 01202 644704, e-mail: jmale@bsorchestra.co.uk

8 July: *Dorset Opera at the Print Room*. Soloists perform during an Italian-themed dinner at Bournemouth's latest restaurant sensation. The Print Room is housed in the Bournemouth Echo building on Richmond Hill. It is a classic brasserie in the *grand café* tradition, and provides a superb setting for opera. Tickets £55 Tel: 01202 789669 www.theprintroom-bournemouth.co.uk See advert on page 2

24-26 July: *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* – Dorset Opera at The Coade Theatre, Bryanston. Performances July 24, 25, 26 (evenings), 26 (matinée). Evenings at 7.30pm; matinée at 2.30pm. Tickets from £20. Box Office: 01935 816332 www.dorsetopera.com

3 August: *Night of Opera Arias and Duets* in aid of the BSO Endowment trust. Larmer Tree Gardens, Tollard Royal. 6.15pm Tickets £50 including dinner with champagne and wines. Dress: Black Tie Tel: 01202 644704, e-mail: jmale@bsorchestra.co.uk

9 September: *More Dorset Opera at the Print Room*. Tel: 01202 789669 www.theprintroom-bournemouth.co.uk

11 October: Live from the Met – *Salomé* (Strauss) Karita Mattila stars. 6.00pm at a venue in Bath, Christchurch, Exeter, Southampton and Yeovil. www.metopera.org or see local press.

18 October: Fine wine tasting by candlelight – in aid of the BSO Endowment trust. The Great Hall, Canford School, Wimborne. Tickets £40 from 01202 644704, e-mail: jmale@bsorchestra.co.uk

25 & 26 October: *Spem in Alium* - Port Regis School, Shaftesbury. Take part in the famous Tallis 40-part motet, or just go along to hear the result! The non-residential course starts at 1.30pm on the Saturday. The public concert is at 4.00pm on the Sunday. www.singspem.org.uk

8 November: Live from the Met – *Dr Atomic* (Adams) featuring British baritone Gerald Finley. 6.00pm at a venue in Bath, Christchurch, Exeter, Southampton and Yeovil. www.metopera.org or see local press.

11 November: *Even More Dorset Opera at the Print Room*. Tel: 01202 789669 www.theprintroom-bournemouth.co.uk

15 November: Piano Recital – by the leading young pianist and recording artist, Leon McCawley. In aid of the BSO Endowment Trust. The Great Hall, Trigon House, Nr Wareham. Tickets £75 including champagne reception, supper and wines from 01202 644704, e-mail: jmale@bsorchestra.co.uk

22 November: Live from the Met – *La Damnation de Faust* (Berlioz) Marcello Giordani and Susan Graham star. 6.00pm at a venue in Bath, Christchurch, Exeter, Southampton and Yeovil. www.metopera.org or see local press.

18 December: Celebration Carol Concert – BSO Chorus with readings and musical surprises by celebrity guests. In aid of BSO Endowment Trust. Wimborne Minster, 7.00pm. Tickets: £15 for concert; £25 to include post-concert reception with the guests from 01202 644704, e-mail: jmale@bsorchestra.co.uk

20 December: Live from the Met – *Thaïs* (Massenet) with Renée Fleming and Thomas Hampson. 5.00pm (please note earlier start time) at a venue in Bath, Christchurch, Exeter, Southampton and Yeovil. www.metopera.org or see local press.

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The Opera Now review for Turandot

Dorset Opera's 30-odd productions since 1974 include a rare staging of Puccini's *Edgar*, they mounted the British first staging of *Salvator Rosa* by Carlos Gomes (the Brazilian Verdi), the world première of Donizetti's *Gabriella di Vergy* and the British premières of his *Maria Padilla* and of *Hunyadi Laszlo* by Hungary's home-grown Donizetti, Ferenc Erkel. Its landmark stagings include Boito's *Mefistofele*, Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* and Glinka's *Ruslan and Ludmila*. Few else have such a track record; at its best, Dorset can rival WNO or Opera North,

Earlier this season, Dorset pulled off a Puccini 'first', winning the right from publishers Ricordi to mount the UK stage première of *Turandot* in the dramatically different revised ending by Luciano Berio.

William Relton has won Dorset performers' adulation and audience admiration alike for his cogent, involving, clear direction, not least their 2006 *Hérodiade*. This *Turandot* (Dorset daringly alternated the Berio version with the Alfano, starring Lisa Livingston and Luis Rodríguez) was a production oozing with dramatic strength and relevant ideas: tense and straining at the leash, thanks mainly to the strikingly athletic, forceful Shanghai-born Wei-long Tao as a superbly unyielding Calaf, and Christine Groeneveld's awkwardly moving, yet stately and almost childlike princess.

Relton has worked wonders with Dorset's large young chorus, trained up in just a few weeks and still one of the most impressive in the country. He works partly by striking stage blocks: fluent and fixed by turns (their beautifully attentive, candle-bearing Act III was superlative), and peppered with youthful panache, they added a lot, making Helpmann-like scapegoats, at one point, of the doomed hopefuls. The singing (the second chorus, for instance, with its flavour of pentatonic orientalism) was never less than first-rate under conductor Jeremy Carnall. At one point, the chorus literally formed a parade of singing (rather than talking) heads.



Ping, Pang and Pong confront Calaf

Designer Cordelia Chisholm has a gift for sensing what works theatrically; with spare visual detail she can conjure an atmosphere (here pinks and greys, picked out by the indigo-whites of Paul Need's lighting; and ultimately yielding to pure blues). All was icy, apt and relevant - and enhanced by Dorset's beautifully conceived, stylishly fashioned costuming.

Hovering above a steeply raked stage, Groeneveld's *Turandot*, a portly Lady of Shalott, was a vocal treat (though Livingston is the suppler performer). The big scena at her second entry was fabulously delivered; when she finally descended, Relton unmasked a sensational blocking, like some Caravaggio or Velazquez pietà. The episode where Berio's more artful version permits Puccini to delineate *Turandot*'s emotional and spiritual change proved its point, lending sense to the opera in a way the brusque Alfano denouement surely doesn't.

Dorset Opera

DO can rival WNO and Opera North

(Opera Now)

Most gripping was Tao's Calaf: it's a stupendous voice (just twice he belted), with staggering reserves in high tessitura. He's clearly Emperor material (so no wonder *Turandot* melts) - a figure of epic authority, countered by the enjoyable bowler-hatted trio of Ping, Pang and Pong, all variable-height buffoons: bass Nathaniel Webster (the nattiest) plus the incisive Colin Judson and Andrew Dickinson. Christine Arand took on Liù (Janis Kelly doubled), both full of touching pathos and lyric poignancy. Carnall managed the aching long build ups - notably the suspense before the abrupt striking of the gong - handsomely. Dorset's orchestra was stupendous and the final dying strains of Berio's concluding fix, utterly bewitching.

Roderic Dunnett



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New National Opera House for Manchester?

It has been proposed that Manchester could become the home of a £250 million national opera house (in partnership with the Royal Opera House) It is part of the ongoing scheme to regenerate the East Manchester district – the area where the country's first super-casino is to be built. Unlike the casino, the opera house would be built using public funds!

It is thought that the new theatre would become the centre for all skills and training covering many aspects of opera and ballet. The new house would be large enough to house productions from ROH and other major companies around the world, and the productions would feature internationally renowned singers (similar to DO!)

No time scale has been announced, but talks between the ROH and Manchester City Council are ongoing.

Goodbye Garsington?

The directors of Garsington Opera – the company set up by the late Leonard Ingrams at his home in Oxfordshire – have announced that it will close in 2010. It is hoped that another venue might be found, but the name will no doubt have to change.

La Scala calling - again!

Readers will recall from the last issue of DONews that Ian Storey (*Hérodiade* 2006) had been chosen by Daniel Barenboim to be his Tristan in the opening production of the La Scala season last December. Well, now another Dorset Opera tenor has had the call from the great Italian institution.



Wei-long Tao

Wei-long Tao, our stunning Calaf from the performances of the Berio completion of *Turandot* last July, has also been at La Scala! The opera house was celebrating 200 years of the music publishing house, Ricordi. The special concert – conducted by Riccardo Chailly – included Act III of *Turandot*.

Dorset Opera Artistic Director, Roderick Kennedy, received a call from James Vaughan, (Head of Music at La Scala) enquiring about Tao, and within 24 hours the tenor was rehearsing at the world-famous opera house.

Since appearing with Dorset Opera, Wei-long has been home to Shanghai for the first time in many years, to sing the title role in Verdi's *Otello*. It was the first time that a wholly Chinese cast had performed the opera.

Shall we speculate as to which will be the next Dorset Opera tenor to get the call from La Scala?

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Giuseppe di Stefano

1921-2008



Started to sing under the name Nino Florio and fled to Switzerland when Italy was defeated in WWII. After his debut as Des Grieux in *Manon* at Reggio Emilia in 1946, he was snapped up by EMI and was soon a regular fixture at the Met and La Scala.

He first sang with Maria Callas in 1951, thus beginning a series of outstanding collaborations both on stage and in the recording studio. Notably, *Lucia di Lammermoor* under von Karajan, and the La Scala production of *La traviata* showed the pair at the height of their powers.

Di Stefano, a famous smoker, became the most sought-after lyric tenor of the post-war era. He will be remembered as a flamboyant and charismatic presence on and off stage. His career was cut short by the onset of vocal problems as he undertook the heavier roles of the repertoire. He rarely appeared in London, and only managed one of a series of performances of *La bohème* at the Royal Opera House in 1963. The young Luciano Pavarotti was called in to replace him.

He and his wife were sadly attacked on holiday in Kenya in 2004 – assailants tried to steal her necklace. He was struck on the head and required two operations from which he never really recovered.

He turned up at Scottish Opera for a fundraising concert for the victims of an Italian earthquake in the 1980's. He didn't sing, but it was alleged that he owed money to certain 'organisations', so his 'minders' were famously framed in silhouette in the arches at the rear of the Theatre Royal throughout the evening.

Robert Glen

Producer, Dorset Opera from 1974-1989



In February a group of long-standing Dorset Opera personnel joined the large congregation at Castleton Church, Sherborne, for the funeral of one of the main characters in the history of the company. Robert Glen was one of the 'troika' without whom Dorset Opera would never have got off the ground (the others being Patrick Shelley, founder, conductor and artistic director, and Augusta Miller, chorus master par excellence.)

Robert taught Classics at Sherborne School. He was also immensely keen on opera and had taken a sabbatical from his teaching career order to work at Glyndebourne for a year. When in 1974 Patrick had the idea of performing *The Bartered Bride* at the School, with professional soloists and orchestra but with the

chorus drawn from pupils, staff and local amateurs, Robert was the ideal producer, a role he filled with great success for the next 14 productions.

Principals from the Glen era have emphasised his detailed preparation and his sensitivity to singers' requirements. His rehearsal schedules were always miracles of time-tabling and his preparation for each production was immaculate. He was equally meticulous in real life - Jenny Coultas, Senior Repetiteur for many years, recalls that dropping in for tea with Robert always involved the silver teapot - and that an opera recording was always playing. He had to deploy very large numbers on a very small stage (on occasion 100 or more choristers, and usually about 80) and he had a great eye for grouping. Mass movement of necessity had to be kept to a minimum, but he achieved memorable stage pictures on some very effective sets.

When DO moved to Bryanston in 2005 Robert was fortunately still able to enjoy *Nabucco* and even more so *Hérodiade* the following year - he had directed the former in 1983. On both occasions he wrote to say how delighted he was not just about the quality of the production but also the survival of the company he had helped to found.

Christopher Gosland

1932-2008



Chris joined Dorset Opera for *The Pearl Fishers* in 1987. His son Daniel was at Sherborne School and had sung in the previous year's opera. Chris was fired up by this and for three years they both made their mark in the chorus. In all, Chris took part in 18 productions.

Chris was one of the all-time highlights of the Dorset Opera Chorus. He was a stalwart member of the basses, and a very competent singer who was always happy to throw himself into any necessary stage action, whether carousing energetically in a drinking scene, suffering deeply as a refugee or surging forward threateningly as a peeved priest. He shone in various cameo acting roles, notably an exasperated innkeeper in the 1992 *Carmen* and a wonderfully be-hatted chef in the fully-staffed mansion of *Un giorno di regno* (1994). He had a splendid sense of humour, and was an indispensable part of the annual cabaret, particularly famed for his renditions of the works of Flanders and Swann.

At his packed Memorial Service in Bath Abbey in February, it became clear how much he had achieved and in what deep affection he was held (and how much his cabaret skills were appreciated by every group he was involved with!). A student of archaeology, he switched to the Law and was a highly respected barrister. He had been a member of the City of Bath Bach Choir for 43 years and served as its Chairman - cue a wonderful appreciation from Nigel Perrin. He had also been closely involved in the running of the Bath *Mozartfest*, and, most movingly, he had worked tirelessly for the charity Disability Snowsport UK. He died while accompanying his son Sam on a skiing trip to Sweden.

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Chicago: Muti stars...



Riccardo Muti

No, not the musical: the Chicago Symphony Orchestra! It has been announced that Riccardo Muti, will take over as music director from the 2010-11 season. The post has been vacant since Barenboim stepped down in 2006.

The brilliant and charismatic musician was music director of La Scala for two decades but resigned in 2005 after becoming embroiled in a bitter dispute with workers and musicians.

In the 1970's the renowned perfectionist famously made the then general director of the Royal Opera House climb a tall stepladder with a can of oil. His mission was to prevent the rings on the tableau curtain clinking together as they closed during the pianissimo ending of *Aida*. Had Sir John Tooley (for it was he) not succeeded in his task, Maestro Muti would have allegedly headed for Heathrow!

Dorset Opera

...nothing short of phenomenal!

(Opera Magazine)

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The 2008 DO experience

Are you making the most of your visit to Dorset Opera this year?

Don't forget you can order our promotional 4/5 course dinner with a champagne reception, to accompany the opera on the evenings of Friday 25 and Saturday 26 July. The first two courses are taken before the performance in one of the grand staterooms of Bryanston House. You and your guests then return to the House for the remainder of your meal in the Long Interval.

For those patrons preferring to dine outdoors, our exquisite picnic boxes are available to pre-order using the on-line form. Collect your picnic from the marquee upon arrival or during the Long Interval.

Afternoon tea was introduced for the matinée last year. It proved so successful that we are again offering afternoon tea mini-hampers on Saturday 26 July. As with the picnic boxes, these must be pre-ordered and will be available for collection from the marquee either upon arrival or during the interval.

Some cold food, alcoholic and soft drinks, beverages, tea and coffee, are available in the Marquee Bar prior to performances and during the interval.

The grounds of Bryanston will be open 2½ hours before the commencement of evening performances, and 1½ hours prior to the matinée.

When travelling by car, please ensure that you drive with care on the Bryanston campus. You are requested to park where designated by personnel on duty. We would ask you to take extra care when driving on grass in the car park areas – especially if it is wet.

Should you require any of the above services but not have access to the Internet, please call Dorset Opera on 01258 840000.

Come into the Garden...

Dorset Opera's summer Garden Party has become a firm and favoured fixture in supporters' diaries. These events have contributed an astounding £8,000 to Dorset Opera production costs over the last few years.

Patrons and Friends of Dorset Opera will have already received invitations to this year's event which is being held on Sunday 22 June.

Organised by fervent Dorset Opera supporters Augusta Miller and Marigold Verity, the Garden Party will be held at Cumnor House, The Green, Sherborne, starting at 6.00pm.

We're promised some surprise guests and entertainment, plus the opportunity to acquire 'A Day at the Races', cases of wine and some interesting artefacts, along with holidays in cottages at home and abroad – all offered under the watchful eye of expert auctioneer Anthony du Boulay.

You are most welcome to bring guests. For their tickets, please contact Marigold Verity on 01935 815799.

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