



SLOC Spotlight

The Newsletter of the
Schenectady Light Opera Company
Volume 39-1
September 2005

Songs For A New World Sets Cast and Crew

Co-Producers Michael Mc Dermott and Ferne Dutkin, along with Director Michael Mensching and Musical Director Val Lord, are pleased to announce the six-member cast for SLOC's season-opening show, *Songs For A New World*. The cast members are as follows: Anne Dugan, Donell Foreman, Shawn Hahn, Eric Nelson, Angela Ryan, and Linda Zurlo.

Rounding out the Production Team are Choreographer Christina Marcella, Set Designer Dale Conklin, Lighting Designer Ken Zarnoch, Sound Designer Eric Bello, Stage Manager Regina Baker, Props Master Jodi Gilman, Make Up Designer Marcia Lenehan, and Hair Designer John Fowler.

Songs For A New World will be performed cabaret style (see President's Note if you are interested in helping with set-up). All of the songs in the show center around a theme of transition. This marks the area premiere of this show by Jason Robert Brown. Jason is a multi-talented, exciting new presence on the Broadway scene. The show promises to provide a wonderful evening's entertainment and one you surely won't want to miss! Performances are October 14, 15, 16, and 20, 21, 22, and 23. Evening performances are at 8:00 and matinees begin at 2:00. For tickets, call Paige Gauvreau (377-5101).

Nuncrackers Sets Audition Dates

Director Alan Angelo and Musical Director Andrea Merrill announce audition dates for SLOC's second show of the season, *Nuncrackers*. Auditions will be held Wednesday, September 7 and Thursday, September 8 at the Opera House. Callbacks, if needed, will be Friday, September 9. Sign-in begins at 7:00 and the audition begins at 7:30. Children will be heard first and excused as early as possible.

Auditioners are asked to prepare one verse from a song, preferably from the show, but musical selections from other Broadway shows will be accepted. An accompanist will be provided; a cappella singing will not be heard. Auditioners are also asked to wear appropriate clothing for the movement/dance phase of the audition.

The cast consists of 7 adults and 4 children. Characters are as follows:

Adults

Sister Mary Regina (Reverend Mother) – grew up in a circus family, her "showbiz" background and sense of humor always shine through her attempt at creating a tough exterior. mezzo or soprano with good low notes, G to C

Sister Mary Hubert (second in command to Mother Superior) – very practical, enjoys a healthy and humorous rivalry with Mother Superior. mezzo belter (Gospel style) B flat to F

Sister Robert Anne (streetwise nun from Brooklyn) – feels her theatrical potential is not appreciated by Mother Superior, who refuses to let her "star" in the show. mezzo (Broadway belter) A to D#

(continued on page 3)

Spotlight on...

*Open Meeting to
discuss Master Plan*

Thursday, September 15
(see pages 3 & 4 for details)

826 State St.
Schenectady, NY 12307
393-5732

Web Site:
www.sloctheater.com



2005-2006 Season
Songs for a New World
October 14-16, 20-23
Nuncrackers
December 2-4, 8-11
Sullivan and Gilbert
March 3-5, 9-12
Nine
May 5-7, 11-14



Bonnie Williams
President

Board of Directors
Peter Codella
Marlene Counterline
Jennifer S. Depew
Jodi Gilman
Richard Lenehan
Michelle Sausa-Gatta
Ross Snyder
Bonnie Williams
Ken Zarnoch



Next Newsletter
Deadline:
September 8



President's Notes...by Bonnie Williams



🎵 Welcome to my first "Page 2" column. I feel very honored to be elected as SLOC's President. I will try my best to do things that are in the best interest of this great Company. We have a fine Board with a lot of knowledge and experience. I know I will continually need their guidance and support. Thanks to outgoing President Mike Mensching for his service as President last year. Mike hasn't gone far-he's directing our first show of the season, *Songs For A New World* which is already in rehearsal!

🎵 Come to the Cabaret

We are presenting *Songs For A New World* cabaret style. This is our first cabaret venture in several years, and we will need help to create the intimate atmosphere that will enhance this production. Bartending, serving, food prep, set up and clean up are but a few tasks that must be accomplished for each performance! If anyone is interested in helping make this a success, please contact Jodi Gilman, cabaret coordinator, at 869-4074 or idoj325@aol.com.

🎵 Buy a Sub

This 79th season presents four shows that are all SLOC premieres. As an audience member, I look forward to seeing new and exciting productions. *Songs For A New World*, *Sullivan and Gilbert*, and *Nine* are making Capital District debuts at SLOC. *Nuncrackers*, the fourth installment in the *Nunsense* franchise, is also making its SLOC debut. We have a challenging, diverse and entertaining season ahead. Please consider buying a season subscription, if not for yourself, how about for a friend? As they say in advertising, "It makes a lovely gift"!

🎵 Recent Board Action

At the July meeting, the Board approved several VPs. A complete listing will appear in the next issue of *Spotlight*. The VPs are now in the process of finding committee chairs and volunteers. If someone contacts you, please don't say no! SLOC needs help behind the scenes all year long to keep the Company humming. Give it a try!

Due to scheduling conflicts, Joe Phillips was unable to continue his duties as a Board member. The Board accepted his resignation. In keeping with the by-laws, the Board asked Rich Lenehan to fill the one-year term created by Joe's resignation. He agreed to serve.

🎵 Bequest Received

SLOC recently received a most generous gift from the late Marion Foster. In her will she made a bequest to SLOC in the amount of \$8,830.00. This amount is to be matched by GE. We also received many donations from Marion's friends in her memory. We will keep you posted as to how we may use these funds to further enhance the Opera House facility.

🎵 Policy Change

Following the contractual agreements from the licensing houses, SLOC will no longer maintain a video archive of its productions. The Board will determine how to best document our shows through still photographs and other memorabilia.

🎵 Many Hands Make Light Work!

On Wednesday June 22, an energetic staff of faithful SLOC-ers got together to prepare the season brochure for mailing. Our eager volunteers talked, laughed and reminisced, while labeling 6000 brochures. Many thanks to the those who helped: Dale Atwell, Jean and Varro Clarke, Peter and Madeline Codella, Rita and Paul Croteau, Dave Dixon, Sally Farrell, Al and Lois Foster, Gwen Fraser, Paige and Art Gauvreau, Della Gilman, Rich Lenehan, Chris and Larry Pedersen and yours truly.

🎵 New Subcommittee

In upcoming newsletters, I hope to have the VPs provide updates and news. In this issue, it's VP Facilities, Ross Snyder's, turn. Please read his article on page three regarding the formation of the Opera House Improvement Planning Subcommittee.

SLOC Spotlight

SLOC Spotlight is a newsletter of the Schenectady Light Opera Company, P. O. Box 1006, Schenectady, NY 12301. SLOC is a community volunteer musical and theatre arts incorporated, nonprofit organization. Governed by a Board of Directors elected by the membership, SLOC's purpose is to foster light opera and related arts for the people in and around Schenectady County, NY.

Newsletter Staff: Jill Coloney, Tom Heckert, and Greg Rucinski.

Subscription Rates: \$5 per year, check payable to SLOC. Send subscription inquiries and address changes to the address listed above.

DEADLINE for submissions to **Vol. 39 Issue No. 2** of the SLOC SPOTLIGHT is **Thursday, September 8, 2005**. Issue No. 2 will be mailed by September 23.

Please submit articles to Jill Coloney at jac12661@aol.com or 92 Cooks Court, Waterford, NY 12188.

Nuncrackers Auditions continued

Sister Mary Paul (aka Amnesia) – was hit on the head with a crucifix and for a long time, didn't remember who she was; now, with her memory restored, she is known as a country singer and the first nun to appear at the Grand Ole Opry; still seems a "little vacant", but is innocently endearing. mezzo belter (Country style) F# to C

Sister Mary Leo (also serves as the voice of the Nun Puppet, Sister Mary Annette) – has dedicated her life to becoming the first famous nun ballerina so is very excited to be in the Christmas show. mezzo belter A to D#

Father Virgil Manly Trott ("real-life" brother to Sister Mary Leo) – now has his own radio show and is being asked to join the nun's show so he can offer them pointers on presentation. tenor or high baritone C to E

Stage Manager (can also serve as the Production Stage Manager) male or female, on stage throughout the play, operates camera, lines in Act 1

General Notes on the Vocal Ranges – Most of the songs lie in the low part of each range, though there is one harmony part for the women that calls for an A above the staff. The C's indicated are only third space C's. The nuns have to do Andrews Sisters' style swing. Each character has to be able to hold his/her own part for harmony.

Children

Mount Saint Helen's Students (two boys and two girls) ages 10 – 16. moderate range A flat to F, also calls for whistling.

Production dates are December 2,3,4 and 8,9,10, 11. For further information, please contact Alan Angelo (377-1421) or Andrea Merrill (235-7650).

Board Approves Developing Master Plan

The Board has approved the establishment of a standing "Opera House Improvement Planning Subcommittee" to oversee the development of a Master Plan for long-term improvements to the Opera House. The six-person subcommittee will be comprised of the VP Technical, VP Artistic, and three at-large seats, with the VP Facilities acting as chair.

The purpose of the Master Plan is to assist SLOC's Board in setting a course of action for the Opera House. The Master Plan will:

- Provide guidance for improvements
- Serve as a basis for seeking financial support
- Facilitate decision regarding staying at the Opera House

Architects Jodi Smits Anderson and Thomas Nickel of Collins & Scoville Architects, PC have graciously agreed to donate their time and expertise to assist in developing the Master Plan for the Opera House. Their expertise and experience will be invaluable in developing a comprehensive and detailed master plan. We are thrilled to have them working with us.



In Memoriam

SLOC veteran Peter Stewart passed away on June 17 after a long illness. Throughout his life Peter was involved with the theatre-as actor, director, designer and writer. In addition to SLOC, he worked locally with Schenectady Civic, RPI and the First Unitarian Society. Born and raised in England, Peter moved to Canada in 1945 and to the US in 1960, but he never lost his gentlemanly British demeanor and charming lilt in his speech. His many SLOC endeavors included both on stage roles and behind the scenes. President Bonnie Williams shares a personal memory of Peter when he directed SLOC's *HMS Pin-afore* in 1986; she was lucky to be cast as Buttercup. Peter infused the show with his love of everything Gilbert and Sullivan. Our condolences go to his wife Jane and his children and grandchildren.

SLOC also sends its condolences to former Artistic VP Laurie Larson on the untimely death of her husband, Mark. Mark passed away on June 14 after being stricken 10 days earlier. Mark was active in public service activities including Cub Scouts, Juvenile Diabetes and GE Elfins. He was supportive of Laurie's theatre and musical work here at SLOC as well as at school. Our thoughts are with Laurie, Forrest and Olivia during this difficult time.

SLOC mourns the passing of Andy Shelton, who lost his battle with diabetes on August 3. Andy was a talented musician and performer. He was in the casts of *City of Angels* and *Edwin Drood* and most recently played in the pit for *Jekyll and Hyde*. Andy was a second generation SLOC-er. His parents, Jerry and Ruth Shelton, are long time SLOC supporters and performers. Our condolences go out to them and Andy's wife, Kathryn, and children Karissa and Haley.



Opera House Subcommittee to Hold Open Meeting Sept. 15th

Reserve Thursday, September 15th, at 7:00 p.m. to attend an open meeting of the Opera House Improvement Planning Subcommittee at SLOC. This subcommittee meeting is to solicit ideas for improving the Opera House to better support the functioning of the Company. The meeting is open to all current SLOC members and refreshments will be provided. If you are not a member or your membership has lapsed, you can pay your dues at the meeting. All current SLOC members are strongly encouraged to attend this brainstorming session and give voice to your ideas for improving the Opera House.



P.O. Box 1006
Schenectady, NY 12301-1006

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Songs for a New World

October 14-16 and 20-23

Thursday, Friday, and
Saturday at 8:00 PM
Sunday at 2:00 PM

TICKETS: 377-5101

Adults: \$18; Children under 13: \$9
Group rates available! Call for information.

Non-Profit Org.
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Parking Lot Clean Up Day, Sept 17th – Your Help Needed

It's time once again for our autumnal ritual of cleaning up the Opera House parking lot. This fall classic will begin at 10:00 AM on Saturday September 17th. This production is best suited for a large cast and there will be roles for all ages and gender. Ross Snyder will direct the show and he guarantees that everyone who shows up will be cast! A noon pizza fest will be provided for all participants. RSVP to GOODNOTE@nycap.rr.com

NYC: Here We Come Again!

The overwhelming success of previous bus trips has lead the Board of Directors to let us "ease on down the road" to NYC again this fall! The next SLOC sponsored bus trip is scheduled for Saturday, November 5, 2005. The cost remains the same: \$25 for members and \$30 for nonmembers. With gas prices constantly escalating, this becomes an even better value!! The bus will depart from Crossgates Mall in Albany at 7:30 AM and leave New York City that evening at 7:30 PM, with an anticipated return time to Albany by 11:00 PM.

Activities in NYC are on your own with plenty of time for dinner and a show. Many fall Broadway offerings will be opening about then, so you can see an old favorite or venture out to see something new. Two highly anticipated shows that are scheduled to be running at that time are Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Woman in White* and the revival of Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* with Patti LuPone as Nellie Lovett.

We are trying a different bus company this time, L&S Journeys. You can visit their website at www.lsjourneys.com. The buses are specialized touring buses manufactured in Belgium and claim to be the ultimate in comfort! Come try them out and give us your feedback.

If you are interested in going, please contact Tom Heckert at 877-6777 or by email at tomh823@aol.com to reserve a spot on the trip. Payment is due by October 15, 2005. It is sure to be a fun time!

♪ Keep in Touch

If you have any comments or questions regarding anything "SLOC-related", please feel free to email the President at willia7@nycap.rr.com. Bonnie will forward to the appropriate VP or committee, or to the Board if so required.