

# CRESTED BUTTE MUSIC FESTIVAL



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## **Crested Butte Music Festival Unveils 2014 Opera Season** *Opera In Paradise is a feast for opera lovers from July 12 - 27*

CRESTED BUTTE, Colo. (April 29, 2014) – The 18<sup>th</sup> annual Crested Butte Music Festival (CBMF) announces a superb lineup of performances and world-class artists for Opera In Paradise, running from July 12 – 27, 2014. Opera lovers will experience the power and passion of opera in intimate settings from Home Soirées in beautiful mountain residences to fully staged productions of Puccini's *Suor Angelica* and Verdi's *Rigoletto* at Center for the Arts Crested Butte.

Acclaimed Maestro Hermann Bäumer, world-renowned tenor and artist-in-residence Barry Banks, and up-and-coming opera stars taking part in CBMF's Marcello Giordani Young Artist Program (MGYAP) are among the many featured musicians.

“Over the past 10 years, the festival has gone from being a small fish in the big opera sea to being a well-respected program that is landing top-notch talent. During Opera In Paradise, opera lovers can feast on 16 performances, master classes, and meet-the-artists events,” says Festival Director Alexander Scheirle.

### **Main Stage Operas**

For the first time, CBMF will present two main stage operas during Opera In Paradise. Giacomo Puccini's exquisite one-act opera ***Suor Angelica*** will be presented on July 12 and 13. *Suor Angelica* is the story of a noble-born woman who has been forced to abandon her illegitimate son and enter a convent after being disowned by her family. There, she undergoes a miraculous transition into a state of grace, movingly depicted by Puccini's soaring score.

Soprano Kerri Marcinko makes her CBMF debut in the title role, along with rising mezzo-soprano Margaret Gawrysiak as her aunt. The women of the Marcello Giordani Young Artists Program, led by soprano Boya Wei as Sister Genovieffa, portray the convent sisters. Joshua Borths, a graduate of the festival's training program, directs this poignant meditation on what can both enslave and free us.

Next on stage is Giuseppe Verdi's masterpiece **Rigoletto**, which portrays the tragic downfall of a court jester whose beloved daughter, Gilda, has fallen for the lecherous Duke of Mantua. Presented on July 23, 25 and 27, *Rigoletto* is set to a musical score that is both beautifully melodic and intensely dramatic. The cast, all from the roster of the Metropolitan Opera, includes baritone Hyung Yun as Rigoletto, Jennifer Zetlan as his loving daughter Gilda, Gregory Schmidt as the Duke of Mantua, and Matthew Burns as the paid assassin, Sparafucile. Director Beth Greenberg makes her CBMF debut in this gripping, intensely human drama.

On July 11, CBMF is hosting a free talk, "Everything You Wanted To Know About Puccini and Verdi But Were Afraid To Ask." Maestro Hermann Bäumer, Directors Joshua Borths and Beth Greenberg and CBMF Director of Artistic Administration Mark Moorman will provide an entertaining insider view into the life and influences of the talented composers. Following the talk, the audience can join the speakers for dinner at a local restaurant to continue the discussion.

### **Talented Leadership**

**Hermann Bäumer** is this year's opera conductor. Since 2011, Bäumer has been chief conductor of Philharmonic State Orchestra of Mainz and general music director of Mainz State Theater in Germany. Prior to this, he became known for his innovative work with the Osnabrück Orchestra, including performances in Tehran, Iran, making it the first Western orchestra to perform there since 1979.

**Barry Banks**, one of the world's leading tenors is this year's CBMF opera artist-in-residence. Banks is known for his magnificent voice and exuberant personality and has starred on stages across the world such as the Metropolitan Opera, Teatro Alla Scala, Milan, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera and the Paris Opera, among others.

Director/writer **Joshua Borths** is known for his innovative and thought-provoking productions. As a member of the directing staff at CBMF, he has directed productions of *Der Kaiser von Atlantis*, *Brundibár*, *The Pirates of Penzance* and *The Musicians of Bremen*. As an assistant director, Borths has worked with several important opera companies, including Wolf Trap Opera, Michigan Opera Theater, Opera Memphis and Festival della Valle d'Itria.

Director **Beth Greenberg** is renowned for her work with the New York City Opera and other companies around the country. For the Lincoln Center Company, she directed main-stage productions of *The Tales of Hoffmann* and *Turandot*, as well as revivals including *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Tosca*, *La Traviata*, *Intermezzo* and *La bohème*. Recently she has directed *Rigoletto* at the Phoenicia Festival and is currently directing the world premiere of Stella Sung's *The Red Silk Thread: An Epic Tale of Marco Polo* at the University of Florida.

### **Home Soirées**

Between the performances of *Suor Angelica* and *Rigoletto*, two Home Soirées are planned so opera fans can experience performances in intimate mountain home settings and enjoy an array of wines and appetizers.

On July 15, artist-in-residence **Barry Banks** will perform a concert of beloved arias and duets, joined by his wife, the talented mezzo-soprano Toby Newman and pianist Lynn Baker.

On July 21, stars of the *Rigoletto* cast present a special performance of great moments from opera at the **Opera Gala Home Soirée**, always one of the most popular concerts of the entire festival.

### **Training Opera's Next Stars**

More than 400 young singers from across the country auditioned for 13 coveted spots in CBMF's nationally-acclaimed **Marcello Giordani Young Artist Program**, which offers custom-designed musical, dramatic and fitness training to help young professionals succeed in today's competitive opera world.

MGYAP participants begin training in late June on the campus of Western State Colorado University (WSCU) in nearby Gunnison. Under the leadership of the program's new Artistic Director Lynn Baker, this year's intensive curriculum will showcase the young artists in three public appearances, in addition to their work with the main-stage operas. On June 29, the young artists will present *Cabaret Bleu*, an adventurous evening of American songs performed in the cabaret tradition with guest baritone Ron Earl. On July 3, they will present *Opera Scenes in Paradise*, which will feature scenes from great operas across four centuries. Both these events will take place on the campus of WSCU. The Young Artist Opera Gala on July 17 in Crested Butte will feature arias and ensembles performed with the Festival Symphony Orchestra, hosted by artist-in-residence Barry Banks and conducted by Maestro Hermann Bäumer.

Artist-in-residence Barry Banks will give a special public master class on July 14 that is open to the public and can be observed at no cost.

Now in its fifth year, the **Opera Children's Chorus** is a three-week program designed for children ages 7 to 17. Participants from across the country, including participants from New York Metropolitan Opera Children's Chorus, receive instruction in voice, dance and drama by world-class professionals. In addition to joining in the production of Puccini's *Suor Angelica*, the young performers will present two special programs: the Opera Children's Chorus Showcase, a concert of opera and concert music on July 16, and a children's version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma* on July 26.

### **Schedule & Tickets**

For a full schedule of festival events from Jun 29 – Aug. 10, tickets and more information call (970) 349-0619 or visit [www.crestedbuttemusicfestival.org](http://www.crestedbuttemusicfestival.org).

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