

Opera tailgating at Dunham Tavern Museum

by Mike Telin



Whether you're an opera aficionado, a casual listener, or opera-curious, Cleveland Opera Theater's [Free Summer Concert Series](#) is the way to experience all that the art form has to offer. On Sunday, August 26, gather your friends and

family, pack up your blankets and lawn chairs, and head to Cleveland's MidTown area for an evening of opera favorites at the Dunham Tavern Museum.



The grounds will open at 5:00 pm, and while picnics are welcome, [Scott's Fire and Ice](#) Food Truck will be on hand with wood-fired pizzas and gelato available for purchase. Cleveland Opera Theater will be selling wine, the proceeds of which will benefit the free summer concerts. "It's opera tailgating at its best," Scott Skiba, the company's executive artistic director (no relation to the food truck), said during a recent telephone conversation. "These concerts provide a family-friendly gateway to discover and experience opera. We see that people who have come will often return for a main stage production or our Opera UpClose series."

At 6:30 pm you can settle in for a program of arias and duets performed by soprano Marian Vogel, tenor Benjamin Werley, baritone Young Kwang Yoo, and pianist Tatiana Loisha. The program will feature Verdi's "La donna è mobile"

from *Rigoletto* and “Libiamo” from *La Traviata*. Music by Italian composers also includes Rossini’s “Largo al factotum” from *Barber of Seville* and Donizetti’s “Bella si come un angelo” and “Pronta io son” from *Don Pasquale* as well as “Una furtiva lagrima” from *L’elisir d’amore*.



The dynamic duo of Mozart and Da Ponte will be represented by “Aprite un po” from *Le nozze di Figaro* and “Là ci darem la mano” from *Don Giovanni*, while the French contingent comes by way of Bizet’s “Parle-moi de ma mère!” and “Votre toast” from *Carmen* and “Au fond du temple saint” from *Pearl Fishers*, and Gounod’s “Ah! Je ris” from *Faust*.



The slightly lighter side of opera will include “Adele’s Laughing Song” from *Die Fledermaus*, “Vilia” from *The Merry Widow*, “Lonely House” from *Street Scene*, and “Tonight” from *West Side Story*. The concert’s expansive playlist also offers Art Song with Schumann’s *Widmung* and Schubert’s *Du bist die Ruh*.

Skiba noted that Sunday’s concert also provides an opportunity for people to learn more about all of Cleveland Opera Theater’s activities. A sneak preview of the upcoming season will be offered at a 5:00 pm VIP reception with wine, food, and private performance. Tickets are available [online](#).

The company's 2018-19 season includes productions of [The Barber of Seville](#) (October 6 and 7) and [La Traviata](#) (April 26 and 28) at the Maltz Performing Arts Center, and the annual [New Opera Works Festival](#) will be held from February 6 through 10 and will feature composer Jake Heggie.

“We’re adding a new partner to our [Opera UpClose](#) venues this year,” Skiba said. “In addition to the Bop Stop, Nighttown, and Music Box Supper Club, we’ll be working with the Zack Bruell Restaurant Group at Chinato on East 4th street on September 25. The performance will feature the *Barber* cast.”

Rounding out the season will be the annual free performances of [Amahl and the Night Visitors](#). “We’ll be collaborating with The City Mission again this year, and in addition to Holy Rosary Church, we’re also performing at Old Stone Church in Public Square. This is a nice counterbalance to the free Summer Series.”

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