

Modern Vintage Opera
Presents

Riders to the Sea

and

Featured Irish Melodies

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**Nov 11 2022, 7:30 pm
Nov 13 2022, 3:00 pm**

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Modern Vintage Opera

Presents

Riders to the Sea

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Featured Irish Melodies

Opera by
Ralph Vaughan Williams

Based on the play by
John Millington Synge

November 11, 13 2022

Litchfield Intermediate School

Litchfield, CT

Directors

Artistic Director
Music Director & Accompanist

Rebecca McFarland
Nathaniel Baker

Note From the Director

Modern Vintage Opera is pleased to be producing *Riders to the Sea* on the 150th anniversary year of composer Ralph Vaughan Williams's birth. It seemed to be the most fitting time to be staging this opera. The opera is based on a play by Irish playwright John Millington Synge. He visited the Aran Islands in the summers for several years and based it on stories that he collected in his travels.

Riders to the Sea takes place on Inishmaan, the middle of the three main islands in the Aran Islands off the west coast of Ireland. As it is in many coastal towns and on many islands, fishing has always been a big part of people's livelihood. Especially around the turn of the twentieth century, when the play was written, life is harsh on a Northern Atlantic island and fraught with danger. The ocean is mercurial and people being lost at sea is part of everyday life.

When the play opens, Maurya has already lost her husband and five sons to the sea, and one has gone missing. Her daughters, Cathleen and Nora, are trying to figure out if a sock washed up on the shore belonged to Michael, the missing brother. Meanwhile, the remaining son, Bartley, is taking a horse to sell in Connemara. He too is lost to the sea when he falls off his horse and drowns. In Maurya's grief she no longer needs to fear the sea, because she has no more men to lose.

Like the ocean, this opera is haunting and beautiful. We hope that you will enjoy this production.



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The Cast and Crew

Cathleen	Kate Norigian
Maurya	Julie Rumbold
Nora	Sierra Manning
Bartley	Michael McAvoy
Woman	Rebecca McFarland
Chorus	Rebecca McFarland, Joanne Scattergood, Meera Mennillo, Haley Stoliker
Set Design/Building	Peter Hoople
Props /Costumes	Rebecca McFarland
Backstage	Ray Lewis III
Audio	Michael Goldberg
Promotion	Cathy Rumbold, Jan Sherlock
Program Book	Cathy Rumbold

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Featured Irish Melodies

Enjoy some lesser-known Irish Melodies composed primarily by women composers concluding with the well-known Danny Boy.

Riders to the Sea is a short one-act opera by Ralph Vaughan Williams. It is a tragedy set in the Aran Islands off the coast of Ireland. The plot is based not on the traditional conflict of human wills but on the hopeless struggle of a people against the impersonal but relentless cruelty of the sea.

Maurya's daughters Nora and Cathleen receive word that a body that may be their brother Michael has washed up on shore far to the north. When her sixth and final son, Bartley, is planning to go to sell horses, Maurya is fearful of the sea winds and pleads with Bartley to stay. Bartley insists on going and will ride "on the red mare with the grey pony behind him". Maurya predicts that by nightfall she will have no living sons and her daughters chide her for sending Bartley off with an ill word. Maurya goes after Bartley to bless his voyage. Nora and Cathleen receive clothing from the drowned corpse that confirms it as Michael. Maurya returns home, claiming to have seen the ghost of Michael riding behind Bartley and begins lamenting the loss of the men in her family to the sea. Nora then sees villagers carrying a load, which turns out to be the corpse of Bartley, who has fallen and been taken by the sea. Maurya laments the loss of her last son.



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Meet our Performers

Kate Norigian (Cathleen) Kate's voice has been described by Grammy nominated mezzo-soprano Margaret Lattimore as sounding, "Old school and throwback", and similarly was described as "Sounding like a Golden Age singer" by the Internationally acclaimed bass-baritone, John Relyea. She has a bachelor's degree in Voice Performance from Rhode Island College and has participated in such programs as the Crittenden Program in Boston, MA, the V.O.I.C. Experience Program in Tampa FL and the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome. Kate has been seen performing around New England with Opera Providence, Corsara Artists in Peabody MA, Contemporary Theater in RI and Encore Opera. Roles performed include Nedda (*I Pagliacci*), Kate Chase Sprague in the World Premiere of *William Sprague and His Women*, Mrs. Gobineau (*The Medium*), Pamina (*The Magic Flute*), Cathleen (*Riders to the Sea*). She has also covered the roles of both Carmen and Micaëla in *Carmen*. Kate has sung many concerts within the Armenian community, including for the Armenian Ambassador to the U.N where she was credited for 'thrilling the audience with two lyrical renditions of Armenian folk melodies. Kate received a second-place award in the Annamaria Saritelli- Di Panni Bel Canto Competition and in the MCO International Competition organized by Opus Artis Paris. She was also a Finalist in the Talents of the World Competition in Newton, MA and in the recent Music International Grand Prix Competition.



Julie Rumbold (Maurya) has been described, by artistic and music directors, as enthusiastic and extremely talented with a solid vocal technique. Her smooth mezzo-soprano voice is captivating. She has been seen featured in Operas, Operettas and Concerts throughout Southern New England. Julie has performed with Modern Vintage Opera, Berkshire Opera Festival, CT Lyric Opera, Madison Lyric Stage, The Whitney Center for the Arts MA, Lollipop Opera, Greylock Opera MA, Contemporary Theater Company RI, Simsbury Light Opera Company and CT Gilbert and Sullivan Society. She has studied and performed with New England Opera Intensive in Boston and at the International Music Festival in Vols am Schlern, Italy. In 2016 she was a finalist for American Opera Idol with Opera Connecticut. She has made debut performances with Greylock Opera where she portrayed Marie-Thérèse in the premier of the opera *The Weeping Woman* and with Madison Lyric Stage as La Zia Principessa in *Suor Angelica*. A few other notable roles include Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Eboli (*Don Carlo*), Elle (*La voix humaine*), Cornelia (*Giulio Cesare*), Hansel (*Hansel and Gretel*), Prince Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*), the title role in *Princess Ida* and Phoebe (*Yeoman of the Guard*).



Meet our Performers

Sierra Manning (Nora) has performed in numerous operas, operettas, musicals, and concerts with such theater companies as Connecticut Gilbert and Sullivan Society, Connecticut Lyric Opera, Connecticut Theater Company, Madison Lyric Stage, Modern Vintage Opera, Opera Theater of Connecticut, and Simsbury Light Opera Company. Some of her favorite roles include Patience (*Patience*), Casilda (*The Gondoliers*), and The Plaintiff (*Trial by Jury*). Ms. Manning studied Voice and Music Education at Central Connecticut State University. During her time at CCSU, she participated in the Connecticut Chapter of the NATS competition where she earned honorable mention in the Upper College Category (2016). Ms. Manning was also the Soprano Soloist for Franz Schubert's Mass in G with the CCSU Chorale. Apart from solo singing, Ms. Manning is a proud member of Voce Inc., New England's Chamber Choir. Ms. Manning is thrilled to be a part of Modern Vintage Opera Company's debut opera and is grateful to be working amongst such wonderful colleagues!



Michael McAvoy (Bartley) is acclaimed as demonstrating “range, resonance and interpretive skill.” A Madison CT native, he has performed with Opera Theater of Connecticut, Connecticut Concert Opera and Hartford Opera Theater. Mr. McAvoy was the New York Classical Music Society's Gold Prize Winner in their international vocal competition, first prize winner of the Amici Vocal Competition, a Grand Finalist in the International Talents of the World Competition and first prize winner in the oratorio division of the Lyra New York International Vocal Competition. His most notable operatic roles include Figaro from *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Top from *The Tenderland*, Papageno from *Die Zauberflöte*, Thomas Putnam from *The Crucible*, Belcore from *L'elisir d'amore* and the title role in *Don Giovanni*. Recently, he was seen singing in Josh Groban's backup quartet at Radio City Music Hall, the Nassau Coliseum, Madison Square Garden, *The Tonight Show* with Jimmy Fallon and *Good Morning America*. He also appeared in concert with The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey in *A Surprise Wassail*, performing some of Handel's most challenging oratorio arias. Having graduated with his degree in Vocal Performance from The University of Connecticut, Mr. McAvoy continues to study voice with UConn's Dr. Constance Rock.



Meet our Performers

Nathaniel Baker (Music Director /Accompanist) is the music director at Choate Rosemary School and Peace Dale Congregational Church where he offers



music and vocal lessons for members of the public at the church. He has also served as Music Director for Madison Lyric Stage and Connecticut Theatre Company, among other groups. He was the Chorus Master for Connecticut Lyric Opera, and a past Music Director of the Choral Club of Hartford. Nathaniel has performed as a concert pianist throughout the United States, Europe and South America.

He has a master's degree in Piano Performance from the University of Connecticut; He has a bachelor's degree in piano performance and music theory is from the Hartt School.

Rebecca McFarland (Director/Woman/Chorus) Hails from Connecticut and



has studied music and engineering at University of Massachusetts. She has performed with Modern Vintage Opera, Simsbury Light Opera Company, Connecticut Gilbert & Sullivan Society, Opera Theater Connecticut, and Connecticut Lyric Opera. She sings with the St. James Episcopal Church choir in Farmington and is a member of the Hartford Chorale.

Joanne Scattergood (Chorus Lead) received her Bachelor of Music degree, summa cum laude, from the Hartt School of Music, University of Hartford and has



received a Certificate of Study from the Fontainebleau School of Music in France. She has been a voice teacher for over 45 years and centers her teaching on the freedom and health of the larynx. Presently, Ms. Scattergood teaches at Central Connecticut State University, Westminster School, and in her home studio in Simsbury, CT. She has sung oratorio for Robert Shaw, Paul Halley, Michael Korn, Michael Lankester, John Rutter, James Sinclair, and Sir Michael Tippett. In addition, she has sung with several professional choral groups, including CONCORA, Arcadia Players, The

Woodland Scholars, and VOCE. A finalist in the Pro musicis Competition in NYC, Ms. Scattergood continues to sing recitals regularly and finds this to be her preferred way to express herself musically. Ms. Scattergood served as the Artistic Director for the Ensign-Darling Vocal Fellowship, sponsored by the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts. She also composes and arranges music, a necessity as the Artistic Director of the EDVF. She is available for master classes for choral groups, school systems, and colleges nationwide.

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I would like to dedicate this performance to the memory of my grandmother, Chris Miller, who we lost last year at the amazing age of 97.



She dedicated her life to the care of others and was always extremely supportive of all my efforts. We had a common bond as we shared a passion for the opera.

She was one of my biggest fans and attended near all of my performances.

I know you will be watching from the best seat in the house.

Miss you, love *Julie*



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