

Mission Statement

UrbanArias is a new opera company dedicated to producing short, contemporary operas. Our mission is to expose DC-area audiences to engaging, accessible, entertaining operas, and to provide a friendly venue at which both established and emerging composers can present their shorter works.



Our vision is to produce a yearly festival of contemporary opera at the newly-renovated Artisphere in Arlington. Each festival will include three to five pieces; we also intend to begin commissioning works in the 2012 season, and hope to unveil one brand-new short opera each year. UrbanArias will seek to cultivate regular collaborations with both prominent and emerging composers, and our productions will feature both well-known and emerging artists.

As opera companies across the country look for ways to develop new audiences and fill larger theaters, we offer a lean, contemporary, audience-aware approach. UrbanArias will serve as an incubator for new works that are produced in conjunction with other prominent national companies, building a body of short contemporary repertoire that will fill a growing niche in the American operatic scene. But: UrbanArias will **produce** and **stage** the works it commissions yearly, making it more than an organizer of workshops; rather, UrbanArias will be a reliable and regular commissioner of new opera, building audiences with dynamic pieces, interesting stagings, and nationally-known singers.

UrbanArias

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*UrbanArias is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation,
and all contributions are tax-deductible to the
extent permitted by law.*



Opera.
Short.
New.

UrbanArias 2011 Season

March 31 - April 10 at Artisphere

UrbanArias offers three gripping, beautiful, and exciting pieces for its first festival season.

GREEN SNEAKERS

Music and text by Ricky Ian Gordon

Ricky Ian Gordon is a prolific composer of both opera and musical theater. Green Sneakers is an elegy for Gordon's first partner, who died in 1996; it gives us a searing, but also humorous glimpse of the last few months of his life. Written for baritone and string quartet, this lush, introspective yet exuberant piece examines how we say goodbye. UrbanArias is proud to feature American baritone **Ian Greenlaw** in this new production, as well as internationally acclaimed stage director **Kevin Newbury**.

UrbanArias at Artisphere

January 14, 2011

UrbanArias performs twice,
at 7 p.m. and 9 p.m.
in Artisphere's black box
theater.

PROGRAM:

Camera Obscura by Jonathan Sheffer
and other mini-operas

ORPHEUS AND EURIDICE

Music and text by Ricky Ian Gordon

The ancient myth seen through the prism of modern life. In Gordon's version, Orpheus is a clarinetist, Euridice a soprano. They sing together, with and without words; Gordon shows us their domestic bliss before we see them torn asunder. *Orpheus and Euridice* has been produced many times to great acclaim – but never in the Washington, DC area. Opera star **Elizabeth Futral** joins us to reprise the role of Euridice, as well as her OBIE award-winning colleagues clarinetist **Todd Palmer** and pianist **Melvin Chen**. **Kevin Newbury** directs.



GLORY DENIED

Music and text by Tom Cipullo,

Based on the oral history by Tom Philpott

Captain Jim Thompson was captured in Vietnam in 1964. Imprisoned for nine years, Thompson became the longest-held POW in American history. His wife, Alyce, created a new life for herself and their children in his absence... a life that was shattered when he unexpectedly returned. **Tom Cipullo's** masterful 90-minute opera pares this harrowing saga down to its core: the story of a husband and wife, portrayed by four singers in older and younger versions of Jim and Alyce, who try and overcome an unspeakable tragedy and pick up their old lives after a nine-year separation. UrbanArias' production features a stunning cast of prominent interpreters of both traditional and contemporary opera: **Caroline Worra**, **Michael Chioldi** and **Kevin Vortmann**. Off-Broadway veteran **Scott Emblar** directs, and **Robert Wood** conducts.

Our performances at Artisphere on October 10 were so successful that we've added another evening of 10-minute mini-operas in January! UrbanArias will reprise Jonathan Sheffer's *Camera Obscura*, and unveil a new set of operatic tidbits. Tickets are only \$15 –see our website at www.urbanarias.org for details.

Artisphere is located at
1101 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA, 22209
near the Rosslyn metro station.

For more information, visit
www.arlingtonarts.org



Emily Albrink and Michael McGee in *Lucy*

Photo by Karen Redmond