

# 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

Robert Wood, Executive and Artistic Director

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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 at Artisphere

October 10, 2010

UrbanArias is thrilled to be invited to participate in Artisphere's opening celebrations on October 10.

UrbanArias performs twice, at 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. in the black box theater.

**PROGRAM:** Two mini-operas:  
*Lucy* and *Camera Obscura*

+ arias from other contemporary operas

## UrbanArias 2011 Season

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.

### LUCY: A mini-opera

*Music and text by Tom Cipullo*

Join us for a reprise of our Kennedy Center smash hit: *Lucy*, the mini-opera about an elderly lady who sees a handsome young man visiting her each evening; he sits on her television and sings to her. A whimsical and sweet look at the joys of living in your imagination. Starring **Edrie Means Weekly** as Lucy and **Ethan Watermeier** as the Young Man.



Emily Albrink and Michael McGee in *Lucy*

Photo by Karen Redmond



### CAMERA OBSCURA: A mini-opera

*Music by Jonathan Sheffer; Text by Robert Patrick*

Remember the early days of virtual communication? The video phone...webcams...and now there's Skype. *Camera Obscura* is an amusing look at how a time lag wreaks havoc on a young couple's attempt to connect in the ether. Starring **Colleen Daly** and **VaShawn McIlwain**.

Plus, arias from contemporary operas, including the confession scene from *Dead Man Walking*, **Jake Heggie's** famous opera which premiered in 2000 at the San Francisco Opera.

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

For more information, visit  
[www.arlingtonarts.org](http://www.arlingtonarts.org)

### 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.

### 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. UrbanArias' production features the 2006 OBIE award-winning cast!