

*Even Great love's too frail to bear the weight of shadows*

**Project Opera of Manhattan**  
presents:

**Benjamin Britten**

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**THE RAPE**  
**of LUCRETIA**

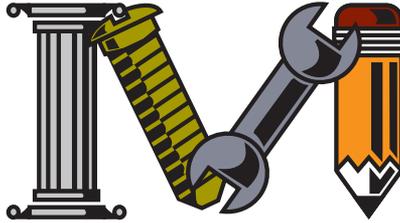
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Conducted by Randall Stewart and Jorge Parodi  
Directed and designed by Heidi Lauren Duke

**September 19, 2008 at 7:30pm**  
**September 21, 2008 at 3:00pm**

at **The Players**  
16 Gramercy Park South

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## **About POM**

*A quixotic exploit founded by young artists for young artists.*

## **Mission**

- To provide a daring creative outlet for young artists and audiences alike.
- To empower the local community by offering affordable and accessible live art, and inviting collaboration.
- To revitalize traditional repertoire through resourceful, non-traditional productions, adhering to the original building blocks of artistic excellence: beauty and simplicity.

Founded in 2006 as a bold response by young artists to the opera industry machine, Project Opera of Manhattan returns opera to its roots: a conversation between artists and their audience. We entertain, provoke and inspire by telling our stories in music.

POM is a registered non-profit organization and a branch of The Baltimore Sinfonietta, Inc.

## **POM Staff**

Founder & Artistic Director: Laura Virella

General Director: Randall Stewart

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**Project Opera of Manhattan**

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## **A Note from Laura Virella**

*Founder & artistic director*

### **From War to Beauty**

Hatred, intolerance and war seem to have shaped the last three generations as much as they shaped the ancient world. Although it is with sadness that I say this, amidst the realization that no one generation can save the others from making the same painful mistakes, I marvel at the facility of expression that man reveals when surrounded by harshness and sorrow. It is under these circumstances, indeed, that the human being seeks relief and resolution through an escape to a world in which even the darkest and most painful moments are ultimately beautiful; and in the epiphany of this juxtaposition, we find redemption.

“From War to Beauty” exposes those crude juxtapositions of life, and celebrates the human ability to see and create beauty during the most horrific of circumstances. *The Rape of Lucretia* is the result of post World War II Europe. A double allegory examining war in the ancient world through modern eyes, it draws parallels between the rape of Lucretia by Tarquinius, the rape of Rome by the Etruscans, and the rape of Europe by war. Our spring 2009 production, Ravel’s *L’enfant et les sortilèges*, conceived during World War I, presents an innocent morality tale that explores the already present pulls of conflict and desire for resolution in a child’s world. Both pieces, although very different in nature, explore the same human conditions that are still the source of tragedy today: selfishness and intolerance, always seen through the lens of our inescapable search for beauty.

### **About us**

Three years ago, I founded Project Opera of Manhattan with three very clear goals: to provide opportunities for young deserving artists in all areas involved in the creation of an opera production, to bring opera to people and communities that otherwise would not be exposed to it, and to return opera to its roots of storytelling through simple and compelling productions.

Since its beginnings, POM has established itself as one of the best operatic hidden jewels in New York City. Running on an incredibly low budget, yet packed with the desire to create and ambition to pursue and persist, we find exceptional young artists and bring them together to make up a full orchestra, full production team and full cast for every single production. In our first two seasons we gained the respect and support of luminaries in our field, and were able to provide a summer workshop for teens and pre-teens from the Bronx to join the adult chorus in one of our productions, presented in Midtown and in the heart of El Barrio. We have accomplished much in a very short amount of time; and with your help, we can continue striving for higher goals. Be part of this revolutionary movement in favor of risking for the sake of beauty. Become a supporter of POM.



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# THE RAPE of LUCRETIA

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Music by Benjamin Britten  
Libretto by Ronald Duncan

September 19 & 21, 2008  
at The Players

Randall Stewart  
CONDUCTOR (9/19)

Jorge Parodi  
GUEST CONDUCTOR (9/21)

Heidi Lauren Duke  
STAGE DIRECTOR

SET & COSTUME DESIGN  
Heidi Lauren Duke

STAGE MANAGER  
Megan Hanley

LIGHTING DESIGN  
Tyler Learned

DICTION COACH  
Kathryn LaBouff

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
Nancy Sylbert

COSTUME CONSTRUCTION  
Maggie Edinger

PHOTOGRAPHY  
Ken Howard/Cory Weaver

REHEARSAL PIANIST  
Mila Henry

ILLUSTRATION  
James Harley

PROJECTION DESIGN  
Heidi Lauren Duke, with the support of Art Resource

## CAST

*(in order of vocal appearance)*

*from the Nineteenth Century A.D.*

MALE CHORUS (THE PRIEST)

Carlos Feliciano

FEMALE CHORUS (THE NUN)

Giovanna Z. Reyes-Mir

*from Ancient Rome of 500 B.C.*

LUCIUS COLLATINUS, A ROMAN GENERAL

Scott Elliott

LUCIUS JUNIUS BRUTUS, A ROMAN GENERAL

Adam Cavagnaro

TARQUINIUS SEXTUS, THE ETRUSCAN PRINCE OF ROME

David Krohn

LUCRETIA, WIFE OF COLLATINUS

Sara Fanucchi

BIANCA, LUCRETIA'S OLD NURSE

Laura Virella

LUCIA, A MAID

Nina Riley

*Oh, my God, with what agility does jealousy jump into a small heart, and fit till it fills it, then breaks that heart.*

## Orchestra

VIOLIN I

Marina Fragoulis

OBOE, ENGLISH HORN

Julianne Skones

VIOLIN II

Claire Smith

CLARINET, BASS CLARINET

Robert Walker

VIOLA

Elise Frawley

BASSOON

Dirk Wels

CELLO

Veronica Parrales

HARP

Brittany Hicken

BASS

Mark Wade

HORN

Ben Brody

FLUTE, ALTO FLUTE, PICCOLO

Emma Gerstein

PERCUSSION

Mila Henry

## Director's Note

This could have been a happy story. This could have been the story of a happily married couple thriving in one of the most glorious empires in all of history. But in order to create an empire, something must be destroyed. And the love that binds Collatinus and Lucretia is the same love that curses them with ridicule, attack, and shame. The beautiful heroine of the story kills herself. The jealous villain of the story, Junius Brutus, becomes a hero of republicanism, and his family prospers for five hundred years. The powerful prince, Tarquinius Sextus, disappears like a guilty thief in the night. These contradictions are eternal, and the curses of love and progress are at our sides every time we elect a new leader, or find a loved one breaking our heart.

As we alight the stage at *The Players*, we create the world of Neoclassical Europe looking back, through the dusty tomes of history, at this tragedy from Ancient Rome. The narrators are a humble priest and nun, who live life vicariously through their studious examination of Plutarch and Livy. As they read about the steadfast Romans, who fended off the Greeks to the south while bitterly withstanding the Etruscan occupation from the north, they are swept up by the story of Lucretia, and must experience it for themselves. Just as the characters in Lucretia's story are cursed by love, our narrators are cursed by their love of Christ, and how they must find a way for their faith to bear the weight of all human sorrow.

– Heidi Lauren Duke

## Maestro's Note

How does one draw meaning from the most horrific of human crimes?

*The Rape of Lucretia* was not Britten's first important operatic work, but it was the one that confirmed his rising star in the operatic world. The fact that it is so rarely staged is the result of a couple of factors. First, this is chamber opera, unlike his more familiar works such as *Peter Grimes* and *Billy Budd*. The orchestra requires 13 players, the same minimum requirement for Copland's *Appalachian Spring* composed two years earlier. This economy of means was necessary when the first version of the work was taken on tour in 1946, and is not unusual for this part of the last century. Indeed, the touring nature of the work brings to mind a theater production from after WWI, Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat*. But while the idea of a small piece that could be taken on tour worked well in the late 1940s, it does not lend itself to production at a major opera house today.

The Classical subject comes at the end of a period in music and the arts that embraced neoclassicism, an extraordinarily vague term that most specifically is applied to Stravinsky, but whose manifestations were prominent in many composers between the World Wars. The invocation of Greek and Roman history, literature, and myth with more traditional musical structures was a reaction against Romanticism and war, and by 1950 most composers would be looking for other answers. The aesthetic of neoclassicism waned; its most immediate and visible expression in the arts is left in the monumental buildings of the period, whose character is often more triumphant than restrained, with life lessons being limited to the uplift of commerce and good government.

The quest for triumph, or just some kind of resolution, is the other problem of staging this work. It is not simply that the story is tragic; it is utterly hopeless. In the first few minutes, Britten paints a picture of a cruel world devoid of conscience. Dissonance and rhythm as the men sing lends an atmosphere of chaos, and the overwhelming atmosphere of the women's scene is one of waste. Time and life itself are "thrown in the grave," a valuable commodity discarded by the powerful few on a whim. Lucretia's suicide is almost a relief; she, at least, no longer has to suffer.

Lucretia's motif is transformed in many ways: envy, love, longing, lust and, when finally sung by her, spiteful despair. The fact that the notes outline a C minor triad could not be coincidental, and in many ways demonstrates the duality of the work, given the key of C Major at the end. Britten's attempt to transform her death as a metaphor for the Christian faith remains controversial. The question of "Is this it all?" was not simply one for Britten, but a universal question in 1946. Tyranny had been defeated, at an excruciating cost, but the specter of a new tyrannical order was already on the horizon. "This *IS* all" was a legitimate answer to the question in many minds.

Although Roman history at this point should be read with some skepticism, Lucretia's death legendarily brought an end to the era of Etruscan tyrants. Britten turns this to a metaphor for Christ's death, defeating all tyranny in the end. Britten's

*All tyrants fall though tyranny persists...for violence is the fear within us all, and tragedy is the measurement of man, and hope his brief view of God.*

final answer to the question—“*He* is all”—seems confident, but the music tells us there is always doubt: rather than the key of C, it is centered on B, leading to the answer but perhaps not reaching it. The ending key of C Major was often used in another era as a key of redemption, but all we are certain of here is that “we try to harness song to human tragedy.”

Britten, who was renting from poet and sometime Christian apologist W.H. Auden around this period, could probably make that leap of faith. But he was also writing at a time when the depravity of the human condition had been on full display, and seems to have struggled to make sense of what was happening in the world around him. And whether or not the opera is frequently staged, its theme and all its ambiguity are like much Classical literature: timeless.

– Randall Stewart



**RANDALL STEWART** is a doctoral candidate in Orchestral Conducting at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He is the founder and music director of The Baltimore Sinfonietta, a chamber orchestra devoted to the performance of rarely-heard repertoire for small orchestra. Under the Sinfonietta, he helped to establish Project Opera of Manhattan, where he has conducted productions of *Il barbiere di siviglia*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, and *Die Zauberflöte*. His conducting teachers have included David Searle, Ken Kiesler, Gustav Meier, Marin Alsop, Harold Farberman, and Kimo Furumoto, with whom he studied while a graduate student at Ohio University. Randall taught music in Maryland public schools for 10 years as a high school band, orchestra, and choir director. He lives in Baltimore with his wife Sara, an operatic soprano, and their four-year-old cat Giulietta.



**LAURA VIRELLA** (Artistic Director and Bianca): Mezzo-soprano *sanjuanera* Laura Virella began her musical studies at the age of five with the Coro de Niños de San Juan, and 20 years later proceeded to take NYC by storm while becoming, as she likes to say, “Mistress of Music” (Manhattan School of Music, MM 2007).

Having traveled the world because of her music from a very early age, she has a passion for exploration, languages, and pushing boundaries. These are only surpassed by her passion for the stage, where her performances have inspired reviews as diverse as “Laura Virella’s *Carmen* could not be more sensual without inviting a police raid” (*The Baltimore Sun*, 2002), “Virella, at a very early age, already communicates, with transparent sincerity, the

fervor of this marvelous text of the Trinity Doxology;” (Luis Enrique Juliá, *El Nuevo Día*, San Juan, PR, 2001) and “All, especially the rich mezzo-soprano Laura Virella, are gifted singers” (*Washington Times*, 2005).

In 1997, when she was 16, Laura’s choir announced it would cancel a trip to Russia due to lack of funding. She resolved to write, conduct, direct and produce a fund-raising musical. With mom put to work on costumes, and a few calls to local radio stations, her grand idea was not only a crash course in business (and counterpoint!)—it laid the foundation for what POM is today. And, of course, a group of young Puerto Ricans got to witness the famous white nights.

POM roles: Rosina, Cherubino, Bianca.



**MIRIAM BROWNING-NANCE** (Managing Director): Soprano Miriam Browning-Nance can sing and organize. Not necessarily in that order. She received a degree in music, theatre and religion and then went on to do a graduate performance diploma in classical voice. Her only problem with the arts is deciding whether to be onstage or in the wings.

With many years of experience in managing adults and children alike, making dinner while explaining periodic tables, all the while telling patrons that yes, they must bring in their unused tickets before they can exchange them, and keeping track of Desdemona’s handkerchief after recording the Willow Song for her, Miriam is just the right person to keep Laura’s visions reined in and organized just enough (lest they end up like Don Quixote’s).

Last season, having seen Miriam both running the box office and singing Pamina on the same night, a baffled patron said, “That was you? At the box office *and* on stage?! That deserves another donation!!” (It did.)

POM roles: Berta, Contessa Almaviva, Pamina. Other roles: Naiade and Echo in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Greta Fiorentino in *Street Scene*, Natalie/Valencienne in *The Merry Widow*.



**HEIDI LAUREN DUKE** (Director) wrote and directed her first play at the age of seven, and since then has found a home in the performing arts that encompasses music, literature, dance, and visual design. She has served for four seasons as Artistic Associate at Les Azuriales Opera Festival, which produces events in the Rothschild Villa near Nice, France. There she has helped develop the Ozone Program for Young Artists and directed the annual Concert des Solistes, which features singers from around the globe performing scenes and arias in the intimate 200-seat house. Other opera credits include *La rondine* in Torre del Lago, Italy; Walton's *The Bear*; and Handel's *Alcina* for Opera North. In New York, Ms. Duke's productions have included Meredith Willson's *The Music Man*, Shakespeare's *Richard III*, Ronnie Cohen's new musical *The Street*, and an adaptation of *La bohème/Rent* with One World Symphony. Her training as a director included mentoring on Sir Jonathan Miller, Sandra Bernhard, and Ron Luchsinger, while apprenticeships included Wolf Trap Opera, San Francisco Opera's Merola Program, Bronx Opera, and Maestro Lorin Maazel's young artist program in Castleton, Virginia, which led to the acclaimed production of Britten's *Turn of the Screw* at the Kennedy Center. In June, Ms. Duke was one of five artists invited by OPERA America to attend the National Performing Arts Convention. She is a member of the Lincoln Center Directors Lab, and is currently developing a lab for opera directors. Thanks to Nancy, and Will. [www.heidilaurenduke.com](http://www.heidilaurenduke.com)



**JORGE PARODI** (Guest Conductor): Reviewed as having "the most expressive conducting hands since Stokowski's" in the New York Daily News, prizewinner of the Bienal de Arte de Buenos Aires, Argentinean conductor and pianist Jorge Parodi has worked at Teatro Colón, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Connecticut Grand Opera, Opera Tampa, Lake George Opera Festival, the SIVAM (Mexico) and Orchestra of St. Luke's. He has collaborated with artists such as Aprile Millo, Shirley Verrett, Julius Rudel and Rufus Wainwright and can be heard in the complete edition of music for piano by Muzio Clementi with the German label Aurophon, and in recordings with Albany Records and MSR Classics. Mr. Parodi is the vocal coach at the

Juilliard School Pre-College Division and has recently been engaged as music director of undergraduate opera at the Manhattan School of Music. In addition, he is an adjunct professor at New York University and the vocal coach/assistant conductor of the Brooklyn College Opera Theater. A faculty member at the International Vocal Arts Institute (Tel Aviv, San Juan, Nagano and Beijing), one of the world's foremost summer opera training programs, Mr. Parodi also spends his summers at opera training programs in Italy at IIVA and in Tampa at V.O.I.C. Experience, which is directed by Sherrill Milnes. After completing his studies in piano performance and conducting at the Conservatorio Nacional de Música de Buenos Aires, Mr. Parodi received his Masters Degree in accompanying and chamber music from the University of Michigan.



**ADAM CAVAGNARO** (Junius): Baritone Adam Cavagnaro is currently studying with Mark Oswald in his first year of graduate studies at Manhattan School of Music. A native of New Jersey, Adam received a Bachelors of Music from Montclair State University, where he studied with Stephen Oosting. Adam recently appeared in a self-produced musical theatre cabaret at The Duplex. Previous roles with Project Opera Manhattan include: Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and Don Basilio (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*); at MSU: John Sorrel (*The Consul*), David (*A Hand of Bridge*) and The Baker (*Into the Woods*). This season, Adam can be seen in the premier of *Later the Same Evening* by John Musto at Manhattan School of Music.



**SCOTT ELLIOTT** (Collatinus): Bass-baritone Scott Elliott holds a Masters Degree in voice and trombone from the Peabody Conservatory. He was seen in POM last year as Sarastro and the Sprecher in *Die Zauberflöte*. During the 2006-2007 season he was a resident artist at Connecticut Opera, performing Morales and El Remendado in their mainstage production of *Carmen*, and more than two hundred other performances of outreach programs, opera previews, and gala events. He recently worked with Harbor Opera in their Newark, NJ production of Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédict* as Somarone. He has also worked with the Baltimore Opera, Chautauqua Opera, American Opera Theater, Bay Area Summer Opera Theater Institute, Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival, the Bethesda Summer Music Festival, Canton Symphony, and the Peabody Opera Department.



**SARA FANUCCHI** (Lucretia): Mezzo-soprano Sara Fanucchi holds a Masters Degree from Manhattan School of Music and a Bachelors Degree from Oberlin Conservatory. This production of *The Rape of Lucretia* marks her debut with POM. Recently, she was a member of Opera New Jersey's Young Artist Program, where she portrayed Gertrude in *Roméo et Juliette* and was praised in *Opera News Online* as "a refreshingly uncaricatured Nurse, attractive in sound and person." She also performed Carmen in ONJ's touring outreach production of *Carmen for Children*. Other operas include *Così fan tutte* (Dorabella), *Die Zauberflöte* (2nd Lady cover), *Hänsel und Gretel* (Hänsel), *Alcina* (Bradamante), *Albert Herring* (Mrs. Herring), *Orpheus in the Underworld* (Public Opinion), *The Village Singer*

(Jenny Carr), and *A Game of Chance* (Third Knitter), as well as the world premier of Seymour Barab's *Everyone Has to be Free* (Second Sister). She has been the recipient of the Atlanta Music Club Scholarship and the Manhattan School of Music President's Scholarship.



**CARLOS FELICIANO** (Male Chorus): A native of Puerto Rico, tenor Carlos Feliciano is in his second year of residency with the Pittsburgh Opera. He made his debut with the company last season as the Messenger/*Aida* and also covered Pinkerton/*Madama Butterfly*. His professional credits include Don Ottavio/*Don Giovanni* in the New York Opera Society's tour to Castres, France, as well as performing with Project Opera of Manhattan the roles of Tamino/*Die Zauberflöte*, Don Curzio/*Le nozze di Figaro* and Conte Almaviva/*Il barbiere di Siviglia*, the last a role he also performed with the Little Opera Company of New Jersey. With the Assisi Music Festival in Italy he sang the role of St. Francis in the world premiere of *Il poverello* by F. Santelli. Educated at the Manhattan School of Music (BM) with some studies at the Juilliard School, Mr. Feliciano won the Herbert Gold Award of the Five Towns Music & Art Foundation and was a finalist in the Violetta Dupont Competition. While at Juilliard he sang Satirino/*La Calisto*. This season Mr. Feliciano will be seen as the Philistine Messenger/*Samson et Dalila* and Ernesto/*Don Pasquale* with Pittsburgh Opera, and as Fenton/*Falstaff* with the New York Opera Society.



**DAVID KROHN** (Tarquinius): Baritone David Krohn resides in New York City, where he is pursuing a Master's degree from The Juilliard School with celebrated teacher Marlena Malas. This summer, he performed the roles of Morales in *Carmen* and Elder McLean in *Susannah*. With the Baltimore Opera, Mr. Krohn performed the roles of the Notary in *La sonnambula*, Prison Inmate in Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*, and Flora's Servant in *La traviata*. Mr. Krohn recently performed the roles of Tarquinius in *The Rape of Lucretia* with Peabody Opera and Count Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro* with Bel Cantanti Opera. Other roles include Carl-Magnus Malcom in *A Little Night Music*, Sid in *Albert Herring* and Le Roi

in *Cendrillon*, The Vicar in *Albert Herring*, Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, and Le Fauteuil and Un arbre in *L'enfant et les sortilèges*. Recent concert engagements included singing with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in a Cole Porter concert, Canadian National Arts Centre Orchestra in "Music on the Air—Music from the 1940s," and Mendelssohn Orchestra and Choir as the baritone soloist in Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater* in Philadelphia. Mr. Krohn can be heard at Juilliard in upcoming recitals this fall performing Schubert's *Schwanengesang* and the complete Duparc song output.



**GIOVANNA Z. REYES-MIR** (Female Chorus): Soprano  
Giovanna Reyes-Mir made her POM debut in last summer's *Die Zauberflöte*. Ms. Reyes-Mir recently won First Place in the National Society of Arts & Letters' Regional Voice Competition. Operatic roles include: *La bohème* (Mimi), *La traviata* (Violetta), *L'amico Fritz* (Suzel), *Così fan tutte* (Despina), *Die Zauberflöte* (Second Lady), *Carmen* (Frasquita), *Gianni Schicchi* (Lauretta), *Les dialogues des carmelites* (Mere Marie), *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (Mother). Opera companies include: Orlando Opera Company, Spoleto Vocal Arts Symposium, International Institute of Vocal Arts, CIM Opera Theatre. Oratorio soloist with: San Juan Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Heights Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Institute of Music

Symphony Orchestra. Master classes with: Elly Ameling, Dalton Baldwin, Will Crutchfield, Warren Jones, Martin Katz, Bruno Rigacci. Education: Cleveland Institute of Music (B.M., M.M. in Vocal Performance).



**NINA RILEY** (Lucia): Heralded as “the kind of Despina one hopes for: diminutive, agile and with just the right clear, slender soprano voice” (Bernard Holland, *New York Times* 2007), Nina Riley participated with the Martina Arroyo Foundation, where she sang the above role in *Così fan tutte* (2007), and Oscar in *Un ballo in maschera* (2008). Nina made her debut with POM as Papagena in the 2007 production of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. In March 2008, she was heard in scenes from *Falstaff*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *L'elisir d'amore* and *Hänsel und Gretel* with the Minato Mirai Opera Project's Co-repertory workshop at the Minato Mirai Hall in Yokohama, Japan. Her voice can be heard in the film “Cherry Bloom” (2006, UVphactory, dir. Alexandre Moors), which was shown in film

festivals across the U.S. Nina was an Apprentice Artist with the Center City Opera Theater this past year, and holds Bachelors and Masters degrees from the Manhattan School of Music, where she studied with Joan Patenaude-Yarnell.

The pity is that sin has so much grace, it moves like virtue.



**MEGAN HANLEY** (Stage Manager) is an actor, director, and stage manager. She recently graduated from Scripps College in California with a B.A. in Theatre Performance and Humanities. In the past two years, she worked as the General Manager of Bottom Line Theatre, the student theatre company of the Claremont colleges; stage managed *Love Letters* and *Stop Kiss* with BLT; designed costumes and led the fundraising effort for *If Yes, Please Explain* with the Claremont Institute for Social Justice; worked backstage on two productions with Nicu's Spoon; and led a cast of eight to collaboratively direct Sarah Daniels' *Masterpieces*. In addition, Megan's recent acting credits include Tardy in the off-Broadway

production of *Elizabeth Rex* with Nicu's Spoon, Edmee in Edward Albee's *Finding the Sun*, and Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing* with BLT. Megan is thrilled to join Project Opera of Manhattan and would like to thank Heidi Lauren for inviting her on, Miriam and Laura for their incredible energy, Nancy for covering for her, and Rachel for unpacking. Enjoy the performance.



**NANCY SYLBERT** (Assistant Director) has worked for several opera companies, including three seasons as the graphic designer for San Diego Opera. She was assistant stage manager for *The Ballad of Baby Doe* with Chelsea Opera in May 2008 and for Opera Noire of New York's 2007 gala concert. Working with opera photographer Ken Howard, she has been closely involved in the rehearsal process at more than 20 opera companies in the U.S., Europe, and Japan, including the Paris Opera, Royal Opera Covent Garden, Santa Fe Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, and the Metropolitan Opera. She also studies voice and is a trained musician.

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Kathleen Reynolds  
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Nancy Sylbert  
The Vidal Partnership  
Cory Weaver

*If men were honest, they would all admit that all their life was one long search, a pilgrimage to a pair of eyes, in which there lies a reflection greater than the image, a perfection which is love's brief mirage.*

## Become a POM Supporter

Project Opera runs on an average production budget of \$20,000. This is loose change for big companies like The Metropolitan Opera and New York City Opera. But even when compared to more limited-budget school productions such as those at Manhattan School of Music and Mannes School, anyone can agree that we do miracles with what we are given.

POM employs a full orchestra of young artists for every production. In 2007, we held a summer workshop for teen and pre-teen voice students from the Bronx, who learned the basics of the International Phonetic Alphabet and German diction and later joined the adult chorus in our production of *The Magic Flute*. Those performances were produced not only in Midtown (at St. Bartholomew's Church), but also in the heart of El Barrio (Iglesia San Pablo), where 200 people of all generations, races, genders and beliefs, many of whom had never seen an opera before, came together to laugh and cry in our modest hall.

We are young and relentless; we are of a generation that sees something wrong with a career, any career, in which one can graduate with Masters and Doctoral degrees from the top schools in the country, and still have to beg to share our passion and do what we are trained to do, or at the very best, must subsidize our passion with another job. We have decided to take our musical careers into our own hands. Opportunities are out there to be taken by those who take risks and chances, so we are taking a chance.

A donation that may not be much to others may cover the world for us:

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- \$1,000 Production staff compensation
- \$750 Costumes, sets & props
- \$700 Rights (orchestra part rentals/rights)

As you can see, just under \$13,000 covers our major expenses for *The Rape of Lucretia*. In the not-so-distant future, with your help, we hope to be able to compensate our singers and other staff members for their dedicated work.

We hope you decide to share our vision by providing financial or in-kind support. Thank you!

Laura Virella  
*Founder & Artistic Director*

**YES!** I want to help POM provide professional performance opportunities for young artists. Enclosed is my contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (please make checks payable to Project Opera of Manhattan)

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