

LIGHT OPERA OF NEW YORK
PRESENTS

The Student Prince



Music by Sigmund Romberg

At the Landmark on the Park
76th Street and Central Park West
Thursday, May 19, 2011 at 8:00 PM

What Makes Romberg "Romberg"



By Steve Vasta

As you're enjoying tonight's performance of *The Student Prince*, you may well notice -- as you did in our *Desert Song* presentation last fall -- that the music has a distinctive color, the concerted numbers a characteristic pace, that

conjure the unmistakable aura of a Sigmund Romberg score.

But how does that happen, exactly? What are the specific musical elements that, taken together, make Romberg "Romberg"?

The composer's characteristic orchestral sound is grounded in a rich body of strings: the violins carry melodic material, sometimes shadowing the soloists, with the cello adding the occasional *obligato*; the harmonies, no matter how luscious, emerge in the unified timbre of the full string ensemble. In the full score, wind lines provide contrasts of color, enrich the string textures with doublings, or fill out lush sonorities. LOONY doesn't yet field full orchestral resources, but the string quintet, drawn from members of String Collective NYC, effectively simulates the warmth and cushiony depth of Romberg's orchestration.

Instead of using the standard four-part mixed ensemble (soprano-alto-tenor-bass) as the framework for his choruses, Romberg frequently builds complete harmonies into the men's voices, dividing them into three and four parts. In *The Desert Song*, the women's voices -- the score suggesting up to five additional parts -- then contributed to a choral sound of almost organ-like richness. The basic strategy obviously also suits *The Student Prince*, in which much of the plot involves the (male) students of Heidelberg; when the women's voices do join in, the resulting brighter textures are gratifying.

Like other stage composers, Romberg favors certain types of voices. There's no mistaking his principal soprano, for example -- she's the one belting out joyous high Cs that dominate the massed performing forces. The power and thrust so required bespeaks reserves of color, which the

composer puts to good use in more lyrical, reflective moments. In the present show, Kathie's sustained, heartfelt voicing of "Deep in My Heart," for example, serves to flesh out a richer, more interesting persona than a "tweety-bird" soprano can reasonably inhabit.

Turning to the male soloists, Romberg's baritone parts lie high. In *The Desert Song*, the leading man, in the Pierre/Red Shadow role, repeatedly invades tenor territory -- the composer asks him to end the opera on a top A flat! In this show, Romberg's a bit more considerate to Dr. Engel; still, much of the music hovers around the top of the staff, rather than in the comfortable middle voice. Conversely, Karl-Franz, who is unequivocally a tenor -- he caps the "Serenade" and the duets with Kathie with ringing top notes -- must deal with quite a few low phrases, intended to suggest a more *parlando* ("speaking") quality.

Finally -- and this, I'm sure, is the trait to which the audience most readily responds -- Romberg was a marvelous tunesmith. In particular, he knew how to recast the waltz, that infectiously popular Viennese dance form, as a vehicle for long-breathed lyricism, turning the broad, arching melodies to purposes nostalgic ("Golden Days") or romantic (the aforementioned "Deep in My Heart," "Just We Two"), encapsulating the expansive yearning that is a Romberg trademark.

And Romberg sets off those gorgeous waltzes by contrast with a diverse array of characteristic pieces. In *The Desert Song*, there was the sultry, *faux*-Spanish *Song of the Brass Key*, the pure vaudeville of *One Good Boy Gone Wrong*, a couple of military marches, and even another, more playful waltz (*I Want a Kiss*). In *The Student Prince*, there's the first Finale's justly beloved "Serenade"; the hearty, up-tempo waltz that is the "Drinking Song"; and marchlike and "patriotic" passages. To make sure his tunes stick in the mind, Romberg repeats them, not just as appropriate vocal reprises, but as subliminal dialogue underscores between sung passages. Now, sit back and enjoy!

Stephen Francis Vasta

The Student Prince

Music by

Sigmund Romberg

Original Book and Lyrics by

Dorothy Donnelly

Adapted for Light Opera of New York by

Alyce Mott

STAGE DIRECTOR:

Gary Slavin

MUSIC DIRECTOR:

Stephen Francis Vasta

STAGE MANAGER:

Carol Davis

ORCHESTRA MANAGER AND
CONCERT MASTER:

Shane Thor Galligan

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Violin I: **Shane Thor Galligan**

Violin II: **Kristin Sawyer Nikaj**

Viola: **Trevor Wadleigh**

Cello: **Maria Jeffers**

Bass: **Joe Higgins**

Piano & Conductor: **Stephen Francis Vasta**

Special Thanks

Phil Bowers (marketing); Nathan Hull (logo design); David Jones (show graphics); Kurt Keller (graphic production); Rick Stanley (graphics & website); Norm Keller (Guild, flyers, program & photos); Gary Kline (lighting); Rick Stanley, Fred Donegan (back stage crew); Ramona Flood, Cynthia Gowan, Daylle Deanna Schwartz, Deborah Thomas Shull (house); Jane Brendler Büchi (box office), Bette Levine, Kathryn L. Bedke (refreshments); Georgia Van Dusen, Nancy Johnson, Barbara Kirby, Sarah Mahr, Suzanne Taylor, Katie Holler and On Tour Theatre Co. at Calhoun High School (costumes); Village Light Opera Group (costumes, props and rehearsal space). For Landmark on the Park: Darius Lang, Events Manager; Ken Galloway, Sexton.

Cast (in order of appearance)

Ambrose, a lackey	Erik Hanson *
Count Von Mark, Prime Minister of Karlsberg	John Greenleaf
Doctor Engel, Educator in charge of Karl Franz	Richard Holmes
Karl Franz, Crown Prince of Karlsberg	Daniel Greenwood
Gretchen, a maid of the Inn of the Golden Apples	Katherine Corle *
Ruder, the Inn Keeper and Uncle to Kathie	John Greenleaf
Lutz, the Crown Prince's Valet	Scott Michael Morales
Hubert, the Valet's Valet	Jeff Horst *
Count Hugo Detlef, a Student and Leader of the Saxon Corp . . .	Matthew Kreger
von Asterberg, a Student and member of the Saxon Corp	Matthew Hughes
Lucas, a Student and Leader of the Rheinisher Corp	David Macaluso
Kathie, a Maid of the Inn and Niece of Herr Ruder.	Elizabeth Hillebrand
Toni, a Waiter at the Inn	Paul Sigrist
The Grand Duchess, Mother of Princess Margaret . . .	Angela Christine Smith *
Princess Margaret, Betrothed to the Crown Prince	Jennifer Dorre *
Captain Tarnitz, Officer attending Princess Margaret	Christian Smythe *
Philipe, a lackey	Jonathan Powers *
Countess Leyden, a Lady of the Court	Katie Hall *
Baron Arnheim, a Gentleman of the Court	David Kelleher-Flight *

* also in the ensemble

Golden Days

In 1860 Crown Prince **Karl Franz**, grandson of the sitting King of Karlsberg, has reached manhood, after an education sprinkled heavily by his tutor, **Dr. Engel**, with romantic images and glorious songs of Heidelberg University. The gloomy castle life is brightened considerably when **Prime Minister von Mark** announces Karl Franz has passed his exams and is to be awarded a year at the famed University. Spring dresses Heidelberg in freshness and roses as Karl Franz arrives on the first day of the new term with Dr. Engel, **Lutz**, personal valet to the Crown Prince, and **Hubert**, the valet's personal valet in tow. Within the first few hours, Karl Franz falls in love at first sight with the lovely **Kathie**, a waitress at a local Inn and joins the ranks of the University's premier Student Corps, the Saxons, led by the confident **Count Detlef**. Together with cohorts, **von Asterberg** and **Lucas**, Detlef guides Karl Franz through the joys of student life with an emphasis on the joys of drinking! By the end of Act I, Heidelberg proves to be everything Dr. Engel has promised Karl Franz — women, camaraderie, song and Beer!

Act II opens four months later as Karl Franz has happily settled into both the joys of student life and the delights of his first girl friend. Into this reverie descends, **The Grand Duchess Anatasia** and her daughter **Princess Margaret**, betrothed since birth to the Crown Prince whom she has never met. Their arrival coincides with Karl Franz's return from a wild night of social enjoyment. They bear the news that the King may not be well as they have been summoned for a "betrothal" ceremony — major news to Karl Franz. It is Princess Margaret's turn to fall in love at first sight. The only solution, of course, in Karl Franz's eyes is to elope with Kathie to Paris immediately after the ladies leave. The arrival of von Mark with confirmation of the King's illness pulls Karl Franz back into the reality of who and what he is. He leaves Kathie with a promise to return in two weeks — a promise she knows he'll never be able to keep. Over the course of the next two years, we watch each character mature through their own choices into the roles the era has destined for each. This is a tale of coming of age filled with song, friendship, promises, responsibility and some of the most memorable music in post-World War I American operetta history. Drink! Drink! Drink!

Alyce Mott

Musical Numbers

Karlsberg & Heidelberg, Germany—Spring, 1860

Act I Scene 1: Antechamber, Palace at Karlsberg

Overture	Orchestra
Golden Days	Engel/Karl Franz

Act I Scene 2: Courtyard of the Inn, “Three Golden Apples”, near the University of Heidelberg

Garlands Bright	Gretchen/Ruder/Ladies
To The Inn We’re Marching	Students/Kathie
Drinking Song	Students
Entrance of Prince/Engel	Engel, Karl Franz
Gaudeamus Igitur	Students
Golden Days Reprise	Engel
Deep In My Heart	Karl Franz/Kathie
Finale Serenade	Karl Franz/Kathie/Students

Intermission

Act II Scene 1: Karl Franz’s sitting room, four months later

Student Life	Students/Karl Franz/Kathie
Thoughts Come Back To Me	Karl Franz/Kathie/Students

Act II Scene 2: Room of State in Royal Palace, two years later

Just We Two	Margaret/Tarnitz/Men
What Memories, Sweet Rose	Karl Franz/Kathie/Students

Act II Scene 3: Courtyard, “Three Golden Apples,” the next day

Grand Finale	All
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Who's Who in *The Student Prince*

Katherine Corle (*Gretchen / Ensemble*): Credits: Suor Angelica, Trinity Opera, NY; Contessa - *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Mimi (cover) - *La Bohème*, Burgas, Bulgaria; Frasquita and Micaëla (cover) - *Carmen*, Hradec Králové, Czech Republic. Scenes: Cio-Cio-San (*Madama Butterfly*), Suzel (*L'amico Fritz*), and Desdemona (*Otello*). Katherine received a BFA with honors from NYU - Tisch and studies with Dorothy Stone.

Carol Davis (*Stage Manager*): Carol was the founding President of LOONY and is now stage-managing some of her favorite operettas. She has produced and/or directed many of the LOONY concerts and staged productions, as well as other similar productions both here and in England. Currently President of the G&S Society of NY, Carol has also headed the Boards of the Blue Hill Troupe and NYGASP.

Jennifer Dorre (*Princess Margaret / Ensemble*): Recently seen as the Astrology in LOONY's *The Vagabond King* and Josephine in Blue Hill Troupe's *HMS Pinafore*. Favorite roles include Baker's Wife in *Into the Woods*, Fiona in *Brigadoon* and Phoebe in *Yeomen of the Guard*. Off stage, Jennifer is the Director of Design Operations at Victoria's Secret. She'd like to thank Maureen, her parents, Chris, and Glenn, for supporting her performance habit. Jennifer is a voice student of Martha Arnold.

John Greenleaf (*Von Mark / Ruder*): Regional: Four years with John Houseman's The Acting Company. Four years with Great Lakes Shakespeare Festival, productions with Steppenwolf Theatre, South Coast Rep., The Northlight Rep. and Players Theatre Columbus. First American production of *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby* at the Blackstone theatre, Chicago. PBS theatre in America: Christy in *Playboy of the Western World*. In New York: Doc in *Small Craft Warnings*, directed by Austin Pendleton on Theatre Row, New York Fringe: *Alternative Methods*. Four shows

with Boomerang Theatre. My love to Jack and Theresa. www.johngreenleaf.net.

Daniel Greenwood (*Prince Karl-Franz*) is a New Jersey-born, Cape Cod-raised, New York-based tenor. While his background is in musical theater, he currently performs in both comic operetta and bel canto opera. Commended by the New York Times for his performances in the New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players' City Center production of *Ruddigore* ("robust voice and agile dancing") as well as NYGASP's *The Mikado* ("[a] lovely sound and good comic instincts"), he continues to perform in parts that call for strong acting as well as singing. Roles include Frederic (*Pirates of Penzance*), Ralph (*HMS Pinafore*), Nankipoo (*The Mikado*), Fairfax (*Yeoman of the Guard*), and Dauntless (*Ruddigore*) with New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players, as well as Paul (*The Desert Song*, Light Opera of New York), Damon (*Acis and Galatea*), and Belfiore (*La Finta Giardiniera*). Upcoming engagements include Almaviva in Rossini's *Barber of Seville* as well as Ramiro in *La Cenerentola*.

Katie Hall (*Countess Leyden / Ensemble*): recently made her LOONY debut as Lady Mary in *The Vagabond King*. She can frequently be seen on stage with NYGASP and has also sung with the National Chorale and the G&S Society of New York. Katie received her musical training at Mannes College of Music and has a B.A. in Art from Yale.

Erik Hanson (*Lackey / Ensemble*) is pleased to be making his first appearance with LOONY in its production of the *Student Prince*. He is an avid fan of Gilbert & Sullivan light opera, and has most recently played the role of Dick Deadeye in the Blue Hill Troupe's production of *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Other operettas in which he has performed include *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Mikado*, *Patience*, *Iolanthe*, *The Grand Duke*, and *Princess Ida*.

Elizabeth Hillebrand (*Kathie*): Acclaimed as a "feisty romantic lead, with a voice that

Who's Who in *The Student Prince*

soars," Elizabeth Hillebrand is thrilled and honored to return to LOONY! Roles include: Susanna, Despina, Josephine, Micaela, and Lauretta; with wonderful regional NY companies including: Bronx Opera and NY Gilbert and Sullivan Players. Concert engagements have brought Elizabeth to: Carnegie Hall, Avery Fischer Hall, Italy, Switzerland, England, and performances with Zubin Mehta in Israel.
www.ElizabethH.com

Richard Holmes (*Dr. Engel*) Previously with LOONY: *Naughty Marietta*, *Mlle. Modiste*, *The Red Mill*. Principal baritone, Opera Saratoga (formerly Lake George Opera), Glimmerglass, Virginia, El Paso, San Antonio, Columbus, Dayton, New York Grand Operas. Guest artist, Metropolitan

Opera. 30 happy seasons with NYGASP in 22 roles. Concerts with Amor Artis and many other orchestras in Paris, St. Petersburg, Amsterdam, Prague, London, Budapest. Recordings on Vox, Albany, Kleos, Naxos.

Jeff Horst (*Hubert / Ensemble*): Regional credits: *A Christmas Carol*, *Titanic*, *The Miracle Worker*, *Beauty and the Beast*. NY credits: *I'd Rather Be Right*, *Theodore & CO.* (Musicals Tonight!), *Halloween Hullabaloo* (Laurie Beechman), *Passchendaele* (Fringe 2010) *Dear Brutus* (Wings Theatre) and *HINT: A Murderous Musical* (Minetta Lane). Next: *Vignettes of the Apocalypse*, June 9 – July 2 at Kraine Theater. Thanks to Alyce, family and friends. www.jeffhorst.com →

University of Heidelberg

The Ruprecht Karl University of Heidelberg (or simply Heidelberg) is a public research university located in Baden-Württemberg, Germany. Founded in 1386 (with 185 students) by Rupert I, Elector Palatine when Heidelberg was the capital of the Palatinate, it is the oldest university in Germany and was the fourth university established in the Holy Roman Empire.

Throughout the 19th Century the German Student's Association exerted great influence, at first patriotic and later political. In 1880, Mark Twain described the influence these associations exerted on the whole of Heidelberg student life in *A Tramp Abroad*. He painted a picture of the university as a school for aristocrats, whose students pursued a dandy-like lifestyle.

A popular tradition in the student's associations, including at Heidelberg, was the "Salamander," a traditional drinking ritual dating back to the 17th Century in which the students downed their beers and then rubbed their steins on the table in a "salamander." It was something like a toast.

The university as a whole became the role model for the transformation of American



liberal arts colleges into research universities. Heidelberg's professors were important supporters of the Vormärz revolution and many of them were members of the first freely elected German parliament in 1848. During the late 19th century, the university housed a very liberal and open-minded spirit, which was deliberately fostered by Max Weber, Ernst Troeltsch and others.

Today's alumni and faculty of the university include many founders and pioneers of academic disciplines and internationally acclaimed philosophers, jurists, poets, theologians and natural and social scientists, 30 Nobel Laureates and two "Oscar" winners. Today about 28,000 students are enrolled at the university, with a faculty of more than 4,000.

NK

Who's Who in *The Student Prince*

Matthew Hughes (*Von Asterberg*) has been featured with the Blue Hill Troupe in roles including Charlie Dalrymple (*Brigadoon*), Cyril (*Princess Ida*), Fairfax (*Yeomen of the Guard*), Frederic (*Pirates*), Notary (*Grand Duke*), and Marco (*Gondoliers*) in April 2010. Matt also played Ernest in *Grand Duke* in Buxton, England, last summer. Last seen as René in LOONY's recent production of *The Vagabond King*.

David T. Jones (*Stage Designer*) teaches theatre history and scenic design/ decoration at York College, CUNY. He is Resident Scenic Designer for the Village Light Opera Group and Northern Highlands HS in Allendale, NJ. He also provides the promotional art for his friends at LOONY.

Canadian baritone **David Kelleher-Flight** (*Baron Arnheim/Ensemble*) has been seen in *Naughty Marietta*, *Mlle Modiste*, *The Red Mill* and *The Vagabond King* with LOONY. David will return to the Ohio Light Opera for his fifth season this summer in the roles of Samuel in *Pirates of Penzance*, the Council for Plaintiff in *Trial by Jury*, and Sandor in *The Fortune Teller*. David holds a BM from Memorial University of Newfoundland, MM from the Manhattan School of Music and will confer his DMA from SUNY-Stony Brook on May 24, 2011. Oxford Lieder Festival, Banff Centre, Aspen Music Festival, Natchez Festival, Ash Lawn Opera, Ohio Light Opera.

Matthew Kreger (*Count Hugo Detlef*) is excited to bring his talents to this production of *The Student Prince*. He has been a part of opera as well as musical theatre performances over the past 20 years. Working with such greats as Robert Goulet, James Earl Jones, Samuel Ramey, Renea Flemming, Luciano Pavarotti, Marilyn Horne, and Sir Paul McCartney. He has performed in many of the great venues around the world. He has upcoming engagements with the NY Philharmonic, and The Mostly Mozart Festival at Lincoln Center.

David Macaluso (*Lucas*): recently toured nationally as Ko-Ko in *The Mikado* and Samuel in *Pirates*. He sang both Sir Joe &

Buttercup in the Drama Desk nominated *Pinafore*. David has directed, choreographed and performed internationally and Off Broadway. Some credits: *Vagabond King* (Taberie), *Ruddigore* (Robin), *Fledermaus* (Falke), *Patience* (Grosvenor), *Evita* (Che), *Little Shop* (Seymour). He is a graduate of Manhattan School of Music and a member of AEA.

Scott Michael Morales (*Lutz*) is pleased to be making is LOONY debut. NEW YORK: *Twelfth Night*, *Arms and the Man*, *The Tempest* (Theater 1010); *Twilight of the Gods*, *Carl the Second*, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* (Phare Play Productions); *Into the Woods*, *The Music Man* (The Heights Players); REGIONAL: *A Day in Hollywood*, *A Night in the Ukraine*, *State Fair* (Brookhaven Summer Musicals). FILM: *Expiration* (Selection: Los Angeles Short Film Festival, Palm Springs Short Film Festival). Scott would like to thank the cast and crew for welcoming him into the LOONY family with open arms, his friends and family for supporting him, and the Lord for the continued opportunity to do what he loves to do.

The Student Prince is **Alyce Mott's** second operetta libretto adaptation for a composer other than Victor Herbert (*The Vagabond King* was her first). She is a playwright, stage director, internet entrepreneur and co-founder of the *Victor Herbert Renaissance Project* with Dino Anagnost. Author of eight new Herbert librettos, she has enjoyed productions with The Little Orchestra Society at New York's Lincoln Center with such stars as Patrice Munsel, Estelle Parsons and Lynn Redgrave. Ms. Mott has maintained a Herbert web presence since 1999, and in 2007 launched an on-line digital publishing business specializing in the music of Victor Herbert. A member of DG, SDC, SAG and AEA, visit her at www.vhsources.com.

Jonathan Powers (*Student / Ensemble*) came to New York City in 2009 upon

Who's Who in *The Student Prince*

earning his BA in music from SUNY Oswego. He quickly found a home at Amore Opera as Papageno, Ko-Ko, and Dr. Falke. *The Student Prince* is his first production with LOONY. He is also currently appearing as Le Dancaire and Morales in Amore's *Carmen*.

Paul Sigrist (*Toni*): Operetta roles include the Major-General (*The Pirates of Penzance*), Dr. Blind (*Die Fledermaus*), Earl Tolloller (*Iolanthe*), The Boatswain (Drama Desk Award nominated Vortex Theater *H.M.S. Pinafore*), Tristan (*The Vagabond King*) and The Physician-In-Chief (*The Rose of Persia*). He plays Grateful Dead keyboardist Brent Mydland in the recent feature film *The Music Never Stopped*. In July, he will co-direct *The Gondoliers* with the students of Opera Saratoga.

Gary Slavin (*Stage Director*) has been directing since he first discovered the theater at age 16. His work has been seen Off- and Off-off Broadway, at the NY Fringe Festival and the New York Musical Theater Festival, and in countless regional and stock houses across the US and in Europe as well as on television. He directs and choreographs for the Blue Hill Troupe, New York's only musical charity, and this Summer will be directing and choreographing *The Pirates of Penzance* for the Gettysburg Gilbert & Sullivan Festival. He will then travel to Buxton, England to stage *Pirates* for the acclaimed G&S Opera Company at the International G&S Festival.

Angela Christine Smith (*Grand Duchess Anastasia / Ensemble*), Soprano, most recently covered the role of Countess Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with the New York Lyric Opera Theatre, and is currently a 2011 Artist with the Opera Singers Initiative in NY. Other credits include performances with the Martha Cardona Theater, Vocal Arts Symposium in Colorado Springs, Lake George Opera, St. Bonaventure Quick Center for the Arts, Pine Mountain Music Festival, South Carolina Opera, Delaware Opera, Caramoor Opera,

NY Vocal Artists and Liederkranz Opera.

Ms. Smith has performed as a principal artist for many seasons with the New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players (NYGASP) at New York City Center, Wolf Trap and on extensive tours from coast to coast and Canada. Ms. Smith has also appeared at the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival in Buxton, England, and is a recipient of the Isaac Asimov Award for Outstanding Artistic Achievement.

Christian Smythe (*Captain Tarnitz / Ensemble*) keeps busy teaching choir, song repertoire, and piano at Talent Unlimited High School. In the local choral scene he has appeared with C4, Cerddorion, and St. Bartholomew's Choir. An active woodwind player, he recently appeared as soloist for Copland's *Quiet City*. Recent and favorite roles include Giuseppe (*The Gondoliers*), Boatswain (*H.M.S. Pinafore*), The Boy/Matt (*The Fantasticks*) and Herr Schultz (*Cabaret*).

Stephen Francis Vasta (*Music Director & Conductor*), a veteran conductor, vocal coach and keyboardist, was music director for LOONY's Victor Herbert season last year. He has previously conducted operettas for Opera Northeast, Opera Naples (FL), and as Assistant Professor of Theatre at Ball State University (IN). On the concert platform, he has guest conducted the Filharmonie Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic. Mr. Vasta's extensive musical theatre credits include "Oh! Coward" off-Broadway in New York, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and the 1992-3 international tour of "Peter Pan" which played throughout the U.S., Canada, and East Asia. Since 1993, he has been on the faculty of the American Musical and Dramatic Academy (AMDA), where he currently is music director for the American Opera Lab. Mr. Vasta has been reviewing professionally since 1993, and is currently he is a regular contributor to "Opera News" as well as several websites.



Gaudeamus Igitur, Jubenēs Dum Sumus

“Let us rejoice, therefore, while we are young.” These opening words of this ancient beer-drinking song go right to the heart of the story of *The Student Prince*, a bittersweet story of a young love that, ultimately, could never be. Dating back to a Latin manuscript from 1287, the song has remained the hymn of many ancient European universities and fraternities.

Based on Wilhelm Meyer-Förster’s 1903 play *Alt Heidelberg*, *The Student Prince* opened on December 2, 1924 at Jolson’s 59th Street Theatre on Broadway, starring Howard Marsh (right) and Roberta Beatty. It was the most successful of Romberg’s works, running for 608 performances, the longest-running Broadway show of the 1920s, even longer than the classic *Show Boat*. The “Drinking Song,” with its rousing chorus of “Drink! Drink! Drink!” was especially popular with theatergoers in 1924, as the United States was in the midst of Prohibition. The operetta contains some of the most beautiful, yet grueling, tenor arias in the operetta repertoire, most notably “Serenade” (“Overhead the moon is beaming”).



In 1927 M G M and Ernst Lubitsch made a silent film titled *The*



Student Prince in Old Heidelberg, starring Ramon Novarro and Norma Shearer, with a beautiful orchestral score totally unrelated to the operetta’s music, except for “Gaudeamus Igitur.”

The operetta was revived on Broadway in 1931, again in 1943 and by New York City Opera in 1988.

Then along came Hollywood, again! In 1954 *The Student Prince* became a Cinemascope color film musical featuring, as the credits read, “the singing voice of Mario Lanza.” The popular singer had become embroiled in a bitter dispute with MGM during production and the studio dismissed him. Under the terms of the settlement with Lanza, MGM retained the film rights to the soundtrack that Lanza had already recorded. The songs from this film (including “Beloved” - written especially for the movie - and the well-remembered “Serenade”, from the original show) would



become some of those most identified with Lanza, even though they were lip-synced in the film by Edmund Purdom, who took over the role of Prince Karl. Ann Blyth starred as Kathie. Blyth had played opposite Lanza in the 1951 blockbuster *The Great Caruso*.

Lanza’s 1954 recording was a genuine film soundtrack recording, but in mono. Many of Dorothy Donnelly’s original stage lyrics were changed for the film, and for this recording. In 1959 RCA issued a brand new Lanza recording in stereo, with Donnelly’s original lyrics restored. Both albums, however, included three additional songs written especially for the film, and omitted Kathie’s solo, “Come Boys, Lets All Be Gay Boys.”

Norman Keller

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Our productions have been made possible, in part, by a generous gift from the **Victor Herbert Foundation, Inc.** in recognition of our very successful Victor Herbert season.

Jack Behonek—A Celebration



For an inveterate performer, our John W. Behonek was a remarkably modest, self-effacing man. It's taken considerable research to tote up his achievements, perhaps because he seldom bragged of them. And few would never have

guessed, to look at him, how *adventurous* his life had been.

After a summer of working as a lumberjack in a West Coast state, Jack *rode a horse* all the way back to his family home in Minnesota.

Once he'd moved east—he lived in Yorktown Heights, in northern Westchester County, for many years—he took on the restoration of a classic automobile, a 1958 Borgward Coupé.

Perhaps in conjunction with his career as a biology teacher, Jack for years pursued an avocation as a *beekeeper*. Sara-Ann Noll remembers once nearly passing out before a performance, suffering from a severe low blood sugar attack, when Jack produced a jar of honey from "Mr. B's Bees," to save the day.

He ventured into business once, as a restaurateur! He had a "gourmet seafood restaurant" in Provincetown on Cape Cod. How the restaurant fared, I'm not sure, but everyone who ever ate anything Jack produced in a kitchen surely enjoyed it!

Jack gamely volunteered, with no prior experience, to join my father and me on our 1984 Atlantic sailboat crossing. At great personal expense, he crewed on the long middle leg, from the Azores to Bermuda—a fifteen-and-a-half day passage that Jack managed with his customary imperturbable cheerfulness. And he was a regular traveler too.

He participated in four of the British/American Light Opera excursions to London. I remember his intense preoccupation on one of those trips with finding the one obscure firm that could properly restore his antique gold pocket watch, which he often wore with a three-piece suit, his Phi Beta Kappa key dangling from the watch chain. He made at least one tour of the Far East, plus many other excursions to Europe,

including operetta-themed visits to central Europe. He returned from Austria and regaled Phil Bowers with stories of how alive and well operetta remains there—tickets for performances in 5,000 seat amphitheatres being *scalped*, and so forth! In a recent G&S production in Buxton, Derbyshire, England, Jack was hailed as the most senior person ever to appear in a Savoynet show.

Jack applied his keen mind to his catholic interests in people, science, music, show business, and organization. It appears that he never joined a performing company without volunteering to help manage it. Over the decades he contributed managerial support to the (since renamed) New York State Community Theater Association; the Hudson Valley Arts Council; Village Light Opera Group (where he was president for two years and honored as a Life Member); the New England Light Opera; the Blue Hill Troupe; and the New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players.

How is it possible that a man who was so quintessentially an organization man, a mover-and-shaker, a backstage wheeler-dealer and impresario, was also a grand and memorable performer? His theatrical résumé boasted roles in opera, operetta, musical comedy, drama, television, and voice-overs. I once thought he'd been stuck, typecast forever as the bumbling, clueless father-of-the-bride—except in *The Sorcerer*, where he essayed the bumbling, clueless father-of-the-bridegroom. Carol Davis vividly recalls his "wildly hilarious," poker-faced rendition of "I've got a tiny little dinghy," from *Something's Afoot*. He often came off as "an English squire with his ascot and tweeds," as one admirer recalls, and his signature concert number summed up many aspects of his life: Noel Coward's tongue-in-cheek "*Don't Put Your Daughter on the Stage, Mrs. Worthington!*"

Five years ago, a full decade after most Americans retire to well-deserved sunsets, Jack astounded his friends by embarking on his LOONY-est project ever. With Carol Davis and Rich Miller, he decided that, if others weren't producing enough classic European and American light opera, *he would!* Wherefore we are all gathered tonight! Perhaps, as for the hero of *Die Fledermaus*, it was "all the champagne's fault. **Jon Carriel**

Jack passed away on April 2, 2011.