



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Academy of Vocal Arts' Popular Giargiari Bel Canto Competition returns to Kimmel Center October 6th

Tuesday, October 6, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

Perelman Theater at the Kimmel Center, Philadelphia

Call 215-735-1685 or 215-893-1999 for tickets or more info.

WRTI 90.1 FM broadcast and online voting October 11

Philadelphia: The Academy of Vocal Arts kicks off its 75th Anniversary Season with the return of the **Oreste A. Giargiari and Son Arturo Bel Canto Competition**. AVA's talented young opera singers will compete for cash prizes in what has become one of the Delaware Valley's most eagerly anticipated musical events. In addition to hearing some of the world's most promising operatic voices, the audience votes for its favorite and the winner is announced live.

AVA master vocal coach **Danielle Orlando** prepares and accompanies the singers. Among her many professional credits, Ms. Orlando has collaborated with the late Luciano Pavarotti as judge, accompanist, and music coordinator for the Luciano Pavarotti International Voice Competition, and as a guest judge for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. She has accompanied internationally recognized artists such as Marcello Giordani, Alessandra Marc, Kallen Esperian, and Aprile Millo. She has been seen on *Good Morning America*, *Live with Regis and Kathie Lee*, *Live by Request* on A&E, and the *Rosie O'Donnell Show* accompanying such artists as Luciano Pavarotti, Andrea Bocelli, and Michael Bolton.

The Oreste A. Giargiari and son Arturo Bel Canto Competition was founded in 1985 by Raymond F. Giargiari in memory of his father and brother, both opera fans and AVA devotees. An endowment is earmarked for the event, which gives AVA's young artists valuable competition experience. Bel canto – literally, "beautiful song" – refers to a vocal style characterized by a beauty of tone, purity of texture, facility of singing, agility in ornamental passages, and the lyrical quality of the piece. This year's competition is sponsored by **Dr. and Mrs. Irvin M. Gerson**.

An expert panel of judges from the world of opera will choose the winners. Past judges have included opera legends Rose Bampton, Frank Guarerra, and Enrico Di Giuseppe; *Opera News* critic, Robert Baxter; and author and arts consultant, Thor Eckert, familiar to opera audiences through the intermission features of the Metropolitan Opera radio broadcasts.

On **Sunday, October 11, at 3:00 p.m., WRTI 90.1 FM**, an AVA major sponsor, will broadcast the competition. Opera fans may listen to the competition and, at its completion, **vote online** for their favorite singer at **www.wrti.org**. Host **Jim Cotter** will interview last year's winner, soprano **Jessica Julin**. The winner of the online voting will be announced live on the air following the broadcast.

THE ACADEMY OF VOCAL ARTS

The mission of The Academy of Vocal Arts, founded in 1934 by Helen Corning Warden, is to provide tuition-free vocal and opera training of the highest quality, and financial support during training, to exceptionally talented and committed young singers who have the potential for international stature, and to present them in professional performances that are accessible to a wide community.

Gifted singers come from throughout the world to seek the exceptional guidance and training that The Academy of Vocal Arts offers. AVA's four-year program is unique, not only because it is a fully tuition-free institution that focuses solely on operatic training, but also because it has established a niche as an organization that produces opera. Admission is determined by competitive annual auditions, with an average of 8 to 10 singers admitted each year. The total roster of resident artists is purposely kept low and averages 25-30 in total. Those who are accepted receive training equivalent to more than \$70,000 per year. A faculty of individuals who are among the finest in their fields provides intensive training in voice, acting, stage combat, repertoire, languages, and other related subjects necessary for an operatic career.

Over the past seven decades, outstanding singers of international stature have attended AVA, including David Adams, Lando Bartolini, Gwendolyn Bradley, Thomas Carson, Elizabeth Carter, Richard Clark, Dominic Cossa, John Darrenkamp, Joyce DiDonato, Harry Dworchak, Ryan Edwards, Wilhelmina Fernandez, Allan Glassman, Vernon Hartman, Nancy Herrera, Luis Ledesma, James Morris, Stuart Neill, John Packard, James Pease, David Poleri, Julien Robbins, Valerian Ruminski, Jane Shaulis, Hugh Smith, Ruth Ann Swenson, Indra Thomas, Richard Troxell, Victoria Vergara, Stephen West, Beverly Wolff, and currently making their mark in the opera world, recent graduates Burak Bilgili, Stephen Costello, Ellie Dehn, Othalie Graham, Eglise Gutierrez, Tracie Luck, Ailyn Perez, Dongwon Shin, and James Valenti.

FACT SHEET

The Academy of Vocal Arts

Oreste A. Giargiari & Son Arturo Bel Canto Competition

Resident artists of The Academy of Vocal Arts
Panel of esteemed judges TBA

Danielle Orlando, master vocal coach and pianist

PERFORMANCE DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION

Tuesday, October 6, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

Perelman Theater, Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts
Broad & Spruce Streets, Philadelphia

Tickets are \$30/\$25 seniors/\$15 students

**For more info, contact 215-735-1685 or 215-893-1999,
or visit www.kimmelcenter.org.**

Broadcast

WRTI 90.1 FM

Sunday, October 11, 2009, 3 p.m.

Online voting at wrti.org

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