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## **The Academy of Vocal Arts Celebrates National Opera Week Friday, October 28 – Sunday, November 6**

**Philadelphia, PA** — The Academy of Vocal Arts is proud to join dozens of other opera organizations nationwide to celebrate **National Opera Week (October 28 – November 6)**, coordinated by OPERA America, the national service organization for opera, with support of the National Endowment for the Arts.

National Opera Week celebrates the vibrancy of opera in America today, and brings the inventiveness and excitement of opera to a national audience. The strength and diversity of established opera companies, community opera ensembles and opera training programs across the United States will be shared through free, dynamic activities designed to engage novices, opera lovers and everyone in between.

“From behind-the-scenes tours to enlightening performance talks to Twitter contests and more, there is something for everyone during National Opera Week,” states Marc A. Scorca, president & CEO of OPERA America. “National Opera Week draws attention to the creativity and dynamism that propels our field today. We are proud to highlight this depth of opera activity across the United States.”

**The Academy of Vocal Arts** will present a preview of its upcoming production of Jacques Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (The Tales of Hoffmann) on Wednesday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> at 5:30 p.m. in AVA's Warden Theater. Special guest speaker is musicologist **Michael Kaye**, who has done groundbreaking research on this opera. Offenbach never finished *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, and died four months before its premiere at the Opera Comique in 1881. Over the years, several versions of the opera emerged. Mr. Kaye's exhaustive research has resulted in what is considered to be the definitive edition of the opera, and the version AVA will perform. In addition to Mr. Kaye, AVA music director and conductor **Christofer Macatsoris** and stage director **David Gately** will share their thoughts on the piece, and the cast will perform excerpts.

**The preview begins at 5:30 p.m. and is free and open to the public. Participants are asked to call (215 735-1685) The Academy of Vocal Arts for a reservation. Availability is on a "first come, first served" basis and limited to 130 spaces.**

*Les Contes d'Hoffmann* opens for three performances in the Warden Theater on Saturday, November 12<sup>th</sup>. The production can also be seen at Central Bucks South High School on November 19<sup>th</sup> and at Centennial Hall, the Haverford School on November 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. Tickets are available by calling 215 735-1685 or at [www.avaopera.org](http://www.avaopera.org).

Launching National Opera Week will be the **NEA Opera Honors** award ceremony on Thursday, October 27 at 7:30 p.m. in Washington, D.C. For the first time, this event will be available worldwide through a [live webcast](#) that also will be archived after the event and accessible at [neaoperahonors.org](http://neaoperahonors.org). The NEA Opera Honors is the nation's highest award in opera and recognizes outstanding artists for their lifetime achievements and contributions to the excellence and perpetuation of opera in America. This year's honorees are stage designer **John Conklin**, general director **Speight Jenkins**, mezzo-soprano **Risë Stevens** and composer **Robert Ward**. The October 27 award ceremony and live webcast will feature video tributes, guest performances from artists such as tenor Lawrence Brownlee and mezzo-soprano Heather Johnson, and an onstage conversation with the honorees. For additional information, visit [neaoperahonors.org](http://neaoperahonors.org).

For more information about National Opera Week events around the country, please visit [www.operaamerica.org/operaweek](http://www.operaamerica.org/operaweek). Join the National Opera Week conversation on Twitter with #OperaWeek.

### **Event Details**

#### **Academy of Vocal Arts Preview of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann***

Warden Theater, 1920 Spruce St. Philadelphia

Wednesday, November 2, 2011 at 5:30 p.m.

Influential musicologist Michael Kaye speaks about his definitive new edition of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. Conductor Christofer Macatsoris and stage director David Gately speak of their interpretation, the cast perform excerpts from the opera. This event is free and open to the public. Call 215 735-1685 for reservations.

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