The University of Michigan, School of Music, Theatre & Dance
University Opera Theatre

presents

ALBERT HERRING

A comic opera in three acts

Music by Benjamin Britten • Libretto by Eric Crozier
Adapted from Le Rosier de Madame Husson by Guy de Maupassant
First performed at Glyndebourne, England, 1947, by the English Opera Group

Director
Conductor
Assistant Conductor
Scenic Designer
Costume Designer
Lighting Designer
Wig Designer
Diction Coach
Repripteurs
Stage Manager

Robert Swedberg
Israel Gursky
Yaniv Dinur‡
Peter Harrison
Taran Muller
Rob Murphy
Dawn Rivard
Timothy Cheek
Ashley Anderson,
Matthew Thompson
Brett Finley

Setting:
Loxford, a small market-town in East Suffolk, England,
during April and May at the turn of the twentieth century

There will be two intermissions.

‡ Mr. Dinur will conduct the performance on Saturday, March 21, 2009
Produced by arrangement with Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., publisher and copyright owner
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silent mode. Cellular phones and electronic watch alarms should be turned off so that will not interrupt
the performance. Photography, audio recording, and videotaping of any kind are not permitted due to
copyright restrictions. Flash photography endangers performers by causing momentary blindness.

A very special thanks to the Friends of Opera for their support and purchase of the
student performer’s vocal scores for these performances.

The School of Music, Theatre & Dance acknowledges the generosity of
McKinley Associates, Inc. whose support has helped make this production possible.
CAST OF CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

March 19 & 21, 2009
Lady Billows, an autocrat ............................................. Cari McAskill ................................................. Jody Doktor
Florence Pike, her housekeeper ................................. Kristin Eder .................................................. Monique Holmes
Miss Wordsworth, a schoolmistress... Jennifer Rossetti .................................................... Elizabeth Stoner
Vicar Gedge, the vicar ................................................. Branden C. S. Hood ......................................... Joseph Roberts
Mayor Upfold, the mayor .......................... Juan Héctor Pereira ............................................. Brian Tanner
Superintendent Budd ........................................... Edward Hanlon ................................................ Jonathan Christopher
Sid, a butcher’s assistant ...................................... Jesse Enderle .............................................. Wes Mason
Albert Herring .................................................. Steven Tompkins ................................................. Willis Berne D. Bote
Nancy, from the bakery ......................................... Courtney Miller .................................................. Priscilla Jane Smith
Mrs. Herring, Albert’s mother ................................ Cynthia Brundage ............................................... Amanda Cantu
Emmy .................................................................. Jung Hee Koo .................................................. Catherine Wethington
Cis .................................................................... Audrey Kline ........................................................ Mary Martin
Harry ................................................................... Charles Berofsky ............................................ John Bradford

March 20 & 22, 2009

UNIVERSITY PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA

Violin ....................................................................................... Dina Neglia‡, Nasul Lee
Viola ......................................................................................... Julie Michael
Violoncello ............................................................................. Jacob Saunders
Double Bass ............................................................................ Jonathan Hammonds
Flute ......................................................................................... Emlyn Johnson
Oboe ....................................................................................... John Spears
Clarinet ...................................................................................... Lewis Gilmore
Bassoon ....................................................................................... Randal Dennler
Horn ......................................................................................... Beth Deering
Piano ........................................................................... Ashley Anderson (3/19 & 3/21), Matthew Thompson (3/20 & 3/22)
Harp ........................................................................................ Brittany DeYoung
Timpani/Percussion ........................................................ Alexander Sikorski

PRODUCTION STAFF
Director of Orchestras ............................................................. Kenneth Kiesler
Managing Director ................................................................ David Aderente
Personnel Manager ................................................................ Erin Nelson
Equipment ........................................................................... Rainer Eudeikis, Julie Michael

‡ Concertmaster
SYNOPSIS

In a small English market town, Vicar Gedge, Police Superintendent Budd, Mayor Upfold, and the local head teacher Miss Wordsworth meet at the home of Lady Billows to appoint, at her behest, a May Queen as an encouragement to local chastity. As they review the list of possible choices, Lady Billows’s housekeeper Florence Pike, armed with reports of unworthy behavior, condemns each and every girl. Eventually none is left, and instead a May King is proposed. Albert Herring — blameless son of a widowed shopkeeper — is chosen. The group informs Albert and his mother at their shop — though the shy young man tries unsuccessfully to refuse. At the ceremony in the vicarage garden, the butcher’s assistant Sid laces Albert’s lemonade with rum, so that his contribution to the occasion consists largely of hiccups and silence. Later, back in the shop, Albert casts envious glances at the affectionate relationship between Sid and his girlfriend Nancy and, armed with his prize money, sets off in search of a little adventure of his own. By the following afternoon, concern is growing at his disappearance. The police are called in. Eventually the hasty villagers decide that he must have come to a bad end, and begin to mourn him. Up turns Albert, however, to face a telling off for going absent without leave and shocked reactions from all when his carousing in public houses is revealed. Albert, of course, is unashamed, and celebrates his new-found independence by inviting three local kids into the greengrocers to share some peaches, tossing his May King’s orange blossom wreath away as a final gesture.

— Courtesy Boosey & Hawkes

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Composer Benjamin Britten lived under the controlling hand of his mum until her death when he was 24, and he identified very much with the title character as he joyfully penned Albert Herring, a work that celebrates liberation and “finding” oneself. But while this unusual comedy may need to be set in the Victorian era to support the premise of celebrating virginal virtue, we do have recent instances of what happens when a committee, or even an entire people, apply possibly hypocritical expectations too rigidly to an anointed individual. Is the committee that selected Sarah Palin (when no male seemed virtuous enough) much different from Albert’s selection committee? She also appeared to need to find her way to liberation… And how much might Michael Phelps’ oppressive regimen, expectations of his committee of sponsors and controlling mum had to do with his need to break out? Reaction from some today to his “debauchery” may be similar to the committee’s reaction to Albert’s night of sin.

The best drama is timeless, and there are many characters and situations in Albert Herring that touch us as amusing today, seen as they are through knowing tears of recognition.

It is a joyful pleasure to be able to share this gem, so skillfully produced by these wonderful students, as my first offering to the community here at University of Michigan. Cheers!

— Robert Swedberg
**About the Author**

**Benjamin Britten (Composer)** was born in 1913 in Lowestoft, England. In the 1930s, he composed music for more than a dozen movies produced by the G.P.O. Film Unity. This experience introduced him to poet W.H. Auden, and led to collaborations on social and political commentaries like *Our Hunting Fathers* and *Ballad of Heroes*. During World War II, Britten declared himself a conscientious objector and moved to the U.S. Upon returning to England, Britten composed his first great opera, *Peter Grimes*, which received its première at the re-opening of Sadler’s Wells Theatre in 1945. Britten's other operas include *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Billy Budd*, *The Turn of the Screw*, and *Death in Venice*. His compositions for children include *The Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra*, *Noyes Fludde*, *Let’s Make an Opera*, and *Saint Nicolas*. Britten remained a prolific composer until his death in 1976.

**Eric Crozier (Librettist)** (1914 - 1994) Crozier’s literary gifts, sensitivity to words and musical acumen made him an outstanding librettist. Following World War II he worked as a stage director with Tyrone Guthrie at the Old Vic and then with Sadler’s Wells. His first production for the company, *The Bartered Bride* (1943), was followed by *Peter Grimes*. His success with his first libretto, *Albert Herring* (1947), led to *Let’s Make an Opera* (1948), *Billy Budd* (1951), and Lennox Berkeley’s *Ruth* (1956). He directed the premières of *Peter Grimes* and *The Rape of Lucretia*. Crozier also wrote books for children and was an accomplished broadcaster. He was appointed an Officer of the British Empire in 1991. — J. M. Thomson, Grove Music Online

**About the Cast**

**Charles Berofsky‡ (Harry)** third grade, Martin Luther King, Jr. Elem., Ann Arbor, MI

**Willis Berne D. Bote (Albert)** grad student, MM Vocal Perf., Toronto, Ontario, Canada

**John Bradford‡ (Harry)** sixth grade, Tappan Middle School, Ann Arbor, MI

**Cynthia Bradugard (Mrs. Herring)** grad student, MM Vocal Perf., Annandale, VA

**Amanda Cantu (Mrs. Herring)** grad student, MM Vocal Perf., Rowlett, TX

**Jonathan Christopher (Superintendent Budd)** senior, BM Vocal Perf./junior, BFA Perf., Winchester, MA/Bermuda

**Jody Doktor (Lady Billows)** grad student, DMA Vocal Perf., Ypsilanti, MI

**Kristin Eder (Florence Pike)** grad student, DMA Vocal Perf., Ypsilanti, MI

**Jesse Enderle (Sid)** grad student, MM Vocal Perf., Fargo, ND

**Edward Hanlon (Superintendent Budd)** grad student, Specialist Vocal Perf., Port Washington, NY

**Monique Holmes (Florence Pike)** grad student DMA Vocal Perf., Buffalo, NY

**Branden C. S. Hood (Vicar Gedge)** grad student, Specialist Vocal Perf., Philadelphia, PA

**Audrey Kline (Cis)** senior, BM Vocal Performance, Royal Oak, MI

**Jung Hee Koo (Emmie)** grad student, DMA Vocal Perf., Seoul, Korea

**Mary Martin (Cis)** senior, BM Vocal Perf., Plymouth, MI

**Wes Mason (Sid)** senior, BM Vocal Perf., Norfolk, VA

**Cari McAskull (Lady Billows)** grad student, DMA Vocal Per., Sunnyvale, CA
About the Artists

Yaniv Dinur (Assistant Conductor) was born in Jerusalem, Israel, in 1981. He is a second year DMA student in orchestral conducting with Prof. Kenneth Kiesler. Guest Conductor: National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, Symphony Orchestra of Portugal, Orchestra di Padova e del Veneto, Torino Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra Giovanile Italiana, Sofia Festival Orchestra (Bulgaria), State Orchestra of St. Petersburg, Pomeriggi Musicali (Milan), Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, Israel Camerata. Awards: Winner of the Yuri Ahronovitch Conducting Competition (Tel Aviv 2005). Mentors: Michael Tilson Thomas, Pinchas Zukerman.


Israel Gursky (Conductor) has been an assistant conductor with the Washington National Opera since 2001. He made his debut there in the fall of 2007 conducting Don Giovanni. Regional Opera: Conductor — Howard Shore’s The Fly, LA Opera; Roméo et Juliette, PORT Opera (Portland, Maine); Shanghai Opera orchestra; Washington National Opera Orchestra; Werther, University of Maryland; Transformations, Manhattan School of Music. Assistant
About the Artists

conductor and chorus master, Wolf Trap Opera, 2000-06. A frequent recital collaborator, he has performed with such singers as Anna Tomowa-Sintow, Bejun Mehta, Kate Aldrich, Laquita Mitchell, Paul Sperry, and Eric Cutler. **Awards:** George Solti Foundation.

**Peter Harrison** *(Scenic Designer)* **Opera:** NY City Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Opera Nordfjord (Norway), Kentucky Opera, Long Beach Opera, Central City Opera, Juilliard Opera. **Off-Broadway:** Manhattan Theatre Club, Roundabout Theatre, The Women’s Project, Lambs’ Theatre, Naked Angels, La Mama Theatre Club. **Regional Theatre:** Williamstown Theatre Festival, McCarter Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse, Cleveland Playhouse, Indiana Repertory, Pioneer Theatre Co., George Street Playhouse. **Television:** John Leguizamo’s *Mambo Mouth*, HBO; *Sizwe Bansi is Dead*, PBS. **Other:** Two American Theatre Wing Design Award nominations.


**Dawn Rivard** *(Wig Designer)* **World Premieres:** *Ragtime, Sunset Boulevard, Showboat. International Theatre:* Award winning productions of *Cats,* and *Beauty and the Beast* in Germany, Austria & Switzerland. **Currently:** Florentine Opera Company. **TV/Film:** Emmy Award for Hair and Makeup, *Feast of All Saints,* wig builder for *Hairspray, Skinwalkers,* and Mike Myers’ *The Love Guru.* Clients have included Sir Peter Ustinov, Donald Sutherland, Neve Campbell, Stockard Channing, Shawn Ashmore, and Louis Gossett Jr.

**Robert Swedberg** *(Director)* **Regional Opera:** General Director, Orlando Opera, 1990-2007; General Director, Syracuse Opera; Manager and Artistic Director, North Carolina Opera; Director of special educational projects, Seattle Opera. Stage direction — *Pagliacci and Carmina Burana* with Cirque du Soleil, *Abduction from the Seraglio, The Tales of Hoffmann, The Coronation of Poppea, Don Pasquale, The Magic Flute, L’Enfant et les Sortilèges, La Clemenza di Tito, Tosca, Don Giovanni, Nozze di Figaro, Nabucco, H.M.S. Pinafore, Trial by Jury,* and Gianni Schicchi. **International Opera:** *The Magic Flute,* Macau Music Festival & Beijing Music Festivals, China; *La Sonnambula,* Spain; *La Bohème,* Germany; Walton’s *The Bear,* Italy. **Other:** Board of Directors, OPERA America, 2002-07.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Supertitles by Robert Swedberg. Special thanks to the Boychoir of Ann Arbor.

STAFF FOR ALBERT HERRING

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Carpenter (Power)........................................Brandon Carruth
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Asst. Properties Master............................Patrick Drone
Properties Artisan........................................Michelle Bisbee
Master Electrician.......................................Mark Allen Berg
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Porscha Kazmierczak*, Adam Moskal,
Laura Przybysz, Carolyn Reich, Laura Riggins,
Angela Sarb, Meredith Stempien,
Laura Stowe, Nicholas Ward, students of Theatre 250
Props........................................Rachael Albert, Michelle Bryan,
Kelsy Durkin*, Kathleen Eber, Erik Heitz, Tyler Jones,
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Carolyn Reich*, Emily Stromberg*, students of Theatre 250
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Lighting............................................Alyce Basak, Mary Clare Black-Booth,
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Props....................................................Nyla Holland, Stephanie Williams
Light Board Operator.........................Kelly Hedgespeth
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Wigs....................................................Lana McKinnon*, Sarah Hucl
Supertitles..............................................Caitlin O’Rourke

* Practicum student δ Crew Head
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