University of Michigan Opera Theatre presents

Susannah

Music and libretto by Carlisle Floyd

Director Joshua Major
Conductor Kenneth Kiesler
Assistant Conductor Andrew George
Scenic and Costume Designer Jeff Bauer
Lighting Designer Gary Decker
Wig and Make-up Designer Guy Beck
Chorus Master Scott Hochstetler
Musical Preparation Eric Melear, Gregory Oh
Square Dance Choreographer John B. Freeman
Stage Manager Wendy J. Dorn

Setting:
New Hope Valley, Tennessee, in mid-July.

There will be one intermission.

Susannah is presented by special arrangement with Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., publisher and copyright owner.

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As a courtesy to others, please set pagers to silent mode. Cellular phones should be deactivated.
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A very special thanks to the Friends of Opera for their support and purchase of the student performers’ vocal scores for these performances.

The School of Music acknowledges the generosity of McKinley Associates, Inc. whose support has helped make this production possible.
Acknowledgments

Special thanks to the Goodman Theatre and Northwestern University for costume rentals.
Synopsis

Act I

Scene 1: While young people square dance, Mrs. McLean, Gleaton, Hayes and Ott discuss the arrival of the traveling preacher, Reverend Olin Blitch. They agree that pretty, young Susannah is a shameless flirt. Blitch notices Susannah, and the women tell him she was brought up by her drunken brother, Sam. The preacher joins her in the square dance.

Scene 2: Little Bat, though not very bright, is in love with Susannah. He walks her home from the dance in spite of his fear of Sam. Susannah wonders what it would be like to live in the valley. Little Bat makes a hasty exit when Sam returns. Brother and sister talk and sing.

Scene 3: The elders search for a creek that Blitch can use for baptisms. They encounter Susannah, bathing nude, and convert their feelings of lust to righteousness indignation. This girl is of the devil, they agree.

Scene 4: The elders have spread their story throughout the valley and when Susannah shows up for the communal picnic she is ostracized.

Scene 5: Little Bat tells Susannah what people are saying. When he admits that they cowed him into swearing that Susannah seduced him, she tells him never to come back. Sam wonders at how hard-hearted people are.

Act II

Scene 1: Susannah asks why God is punishing her when she didn't do anything wrong. Sam, who has to go away for the evening to check his traps, persuades Susannah to go to the preacher's meeting where, he hopes, she will be safe.

Scene 2: In church, Blitch collects the offering and gives an impassioned sermon calling on sinners to repent. He tries to force Susannah to come forward and make public confession, but she will not.

Scene 3: Blitch visits Susannah at home. He first tries to make her repent and then seduces her.

Scene 4: Horrified at what he has done, the preacher prays for himself and Susannah. His attempts to convince the elders that they have sinned against Susannah meet with haughty disbelief. Susannah ignores his own pleas for forgiveness.

Scene 5: Sam returns drunk and when Susannah tells him what has happened, he grabs a shotgun and runs off. A shotgun blast is heard and Susannah falls on her knees to pray. Little Bat runs in with the news that Sam has killed the preacher. When the men come for Susannah, she laughs and chases them away with a gun. Little Bat again approaches and Susannah slaps him.

— from The Da Capo Opera Manual, by Nicholas Ivor Martin, Da Capo Press, 1997
About the Composer

Carlisle Floyd (Music and Libretto) is one of the foremost composers and librettists of opera in the United States today. Born in 1926, Floyd earned degrees in piano and composition at Syracuse University. He holds the prestigious M. D. Anderson Professorship at the University of Houston. In addition, he is co-founder with David Gockley of the Houston Opera Studio. He first achieved national prominence with the New York premiere of his opera, Susannah, by the New York City Opera in 1956 after its world premiere at Florida State University in 1955. In 1957, it won its composer the New York Music Critics Circle Award and subsequently was chosen to be America’s official operatic entry at the 1958 Brussels World’s Fair. Of Mice and Men is Floyd's other most often performed work. Based on the Steinbeck novel, it was commissioned by the Ford Foundation and was given its premiere by the Seattle Opera in 1970. Floyd's more recent operas, Bilby's Doll (1976) and Willie Stark (1981), based on Robert Penn Warren's novel, All the King's Men, were both commissioned and produced by the Houston Grand Opera. A televised version of the world premiere production of Willie Stark opened WNET’s Great Performances Series on the PBS network in 1981. In 1990 he completed a new version of The Passion of Jonathan Wade. Recently, the composer has gained increasing attention for his non-operatic works: an orchestral song cycle Citizen of Paradise, based on poems and letters of Emily Dickinson, and a large-scale work for chorus, bass-baritone soloist, and orchestra entitled A Time to Dance. Floyd has been the recipient of many honors and awards, including a Guggenheim Fellowship (1956) and the National Opera Institute’s Award for Service to American Opera, the highest honor the institute bestows (1983). He served on the Music Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts from 1974-80 and was the first chairman of the Opera/Musical Theater Panel when that program was created by the Endowment in 1976.

About the Cast

Gerald Aben (Ensemble) senior, BM Vocal Perf., East Lansing, MI
Donna Bareket (Ensemble) junior, BM Vocal Perf./BA English, Saratoga, CA
Brian Bennett (Ensemble) junior, BM A Perf./BSE Computer Engineering, Fairmont, WV
Megan Besley (M rs. Ott) graduate student, MM Vocal Perf., Freeport, IL
Jesse Blumberg (Ensemble) junior, BM Vocal Perf./AB History, Westfield, NJ
Julia Broxholm (Susannah) doctoral student, DMA Vocal Perf., Ann Arbor, MI
Bryan Buser (Elder Ott) graduate student, MM Vocal Perf., La Crosse, WI
Matthew Carroll (Olin Blitch) graduate student, Specialist Vocal Perf., Butler, PA
Jeremy Chesman (Ensemble) senior, BM Organ Perf./Music Theory, Monroe, MI
Bella Decker (Ensemble) fourth grade, Angell Elem., Ann Arbor, MI
Leah Dexter (Ensemble) soph., BM Vocal Perf., Southfield, MI
Kathryn Drake (Ensemble) freshman, BM Vocal Perf., Big Rapids, MI
Megan Duffy (Ensemble) senior, BM A Vocal Perf., Bloomfield Hills, MI
Christine Field (Mrs. Ott) graduate student, MM Vocal Perf., Burlington, MA
Andrew Foster (Little Bat) graduate student, MM Vocal Perf., Richmond, MI
Michael Gallant (Ensemble) senior, BM A Perf., Rindge, NH
Andrew George (Assistant Conductor) doctoral student, DMA Conducting, Madison, WI
Thomas Glenn (Elder Hayes) graduate student, M M Perf., Calgary, Canada
David Gordon (Elder Gleaton) senior, BM Vocal Perf., Kalamazoo, MI
Matthew Heck (Ensemble) senior, BM Vocal Perf., Franksville, WI
Carolyn Kahl (Mrs. McLean) senior, BM Vocal Perf., Saginaw, MI
Phillip Kitchell (Ensemble) soph., BM Vocal Perf., Lansing, MI
Anders Larson (Ensemble) second grade, Northside Elem., Ann Arbor, MI
Jennifer Larson (Susannah) doctoral student, DMA Vocal Perf., Salt Lake City, UT
Caitlin Lynch (Ensemble) soph., BM Vocal Perf., Bloomfield Village, MI
Natasha Major (Ensemble) kindergarten, Bach Elem., Ann Arbor, MI
Sonya Major (Ensemble) third grade, Rudolf Steiner School, Ann Arbor, MI
About the Cast

Jeremy Mastrangelo (Fiddler) graduate student, M M Violin Perf., Liverpool, NY
Gary Moss (Olin Blitch) doctoral student, DMA Vocal Perf., Salt Lake City, UT
Paul Mow (Little Bat) senior, DMA Vocal Perf./BM Communications, Coloma, MI
Dave Neely (Ensemble) soph., BM Vocal Perf., Lambertville, MI
Rebekah Nye (Mrs. Hayes) doctoral student, DMA Vocal Perf., Los Angeles, CA
Tyler T. Oliphant (Elder McLean) graduate student, MM Vocal Perf., Salt Lake City, UT
Juliet Petrus (Mrs. Hayes) junior, BM Vocal Perf., Farmington, MI
Lindsey Pettitt (Ensemble) soph., BM Vocal Perf., Grosse Pointe, MI
Brian Pfaltzgraff (Sam) doctoral student, DMA Vocal Perf., Indiana, IA
Nicholas Phan (Sam) junior, BM Vocal Perf., Ann Arbor, MI
Christina Rohm (Mrs. Gleaton) graduate student, MM Vocal Perf., South Holland, IL

Bevery Schneider (Ensemble) senior, BM Vocal Perf., Spring, TX
Deborah Selig (Ensemble) junior, BM Vocal Perf./BA English, Washington, DC
Christine Shay (Ensemble) junior, BM Vocal Perf./BA Math, Bloomfield Hills, MI
Kira Slovacek (Mrs. Gleaton) graduate student, MM Vocal Perf., Woodstock, VT
Cassie Stansler (Ensemble) third grade, Bach Elem., Ann Arbor, MI
Michael Steelman (Ensemble) soph., BM Vocal Perf., Baltimore, MD
Ryan Steinman (Ensemble) soph., BM Vocal Perf., Haslett, MI
Jim Territo (Ensemble) junior, BM Vocal Composition, Clarkston, MI
Kimberly Walton (Ensemble) soph., BM Choral Music Educ., Holland, MI
Betsy Williams (Mrs. McLean) junior, BM Vocal Perf., Southlake, TX

About the Artists

Jeff Bauer (Scenic and Costume Designer) Regional Theatre: Court Theatre (Sleuth, Gross Indecency); Victory Gardens Theatre (Winter); Wisdom Bridge; Northlight; Candlelight (Cabaret); The Remains; The Forum; Chicago Opera Theatre (M adama Butterfly, The Turn of the Screw, Albert Herring); The Lyric Opera Center, Hubbard Street Dance Theatre, Ballet Chicago (The Gift of the Magi, In a Nutshell, H ansel and Gretel); Anchorage Opera. Awards: Emmy Nomination for Gesualdo, PBS; Joseph Jefferson Award for Best Scenery, Pygmalion, Court Theatre. Other: Artistic Associate of RPM Productions, Design Faculty at The Theatre School at DePaul Univ.


Joshua Major (Director) is the director of the Opera Workshop. UM: The Magic Flute, L'Enfant et les Sorciles/Le Rossignol, L'Elisir d'Amore, Gianni Schicchi/I Campanello, Hansel and Gretel. Regional Opera: Idomeneo, Wolf Trap Opera; Don Giovanni, O pera Carolina, Fort Worth Opera; Romeo and Juliet, Madama Butterfly, New Orleans Opera; Un Ballo in Maschera, Edmonton Opera; La Tragédie d'Albert, Werther, Eugene onegin, Tales of Hoffmann, Israel Vocal Arts Institute; The Pearl Fishers, Minnesota Opera; The Fall of the House of Usher, Opera Grand Rapids; La Cenerentola, The Kaisser from Atlantis, Yale Univ.
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EMERGENCY PROCEDURE
In the event of fire or severe storm, you will be instructed by an announcement from the stage indicating the best method of exit. Please notice the multipled exit signs in the theatre. For your safety, please exit in a calm and orderly manner.

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The use of cameras — with or without a flash — recorders, or other electronic devices inside the theatre is strictly prohibited.

FOOD AND DRINK
No eating or drinking is allowed in the theatre.

CHILDREN
As a courtesy to our audience and the performers, children under the age of three will not be admitted to performances. All children must have a ticket. If your child proves disruptive or excessively restless, you may be asked to leave by House Management.

TICKET SALES AND INFORMATION
Hours: Monday – Friday 10 am – 6 pm
Evening of Performance 7 pm – 8:30 pm
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SOUND ENHANCEMENT
The theatre is equipped with an infrared listening system for listening enhancement. Lightweight, wireless headsets are available free of charge from House Management.

RENTALS
The Power Center, Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre, Hill Auditorium and Rackham Auditorium are available for seminars, meetings and private parties. For more information contact the Scheduling Office at 647-3327.

PARKING
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Comments on the production or our service? Write us at:
University Productions, Attn.: J. Kuras, 911 N. University, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1265

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Production Stage Manager ..................... Nancy Uffner
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Technical Director (Power) ......... John Hugh Minor
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Assistant Stage Manager .......... Heather Chockley, James Frounfelter
Costume Designer Assistant .......... Lisa Parkel
Scenery .......... James Auler, Jenny Boyer, Sarah Burger
Scenery .......... Elizabeth Majewski, Andrew Mazurek, Spencer Milion
Paint ................. Kate Armstrong, Margaret Dingwall
Susannah Palmer, Brooke Sinclair, Connie Shea, Jamie Treacy, Chia Ling Yu, students of Theatre 250
Props .................. Anathela Alberda, Julie Brown,
Todd Buonopane, Monique French, Jeff Eyer,
Megan Reinking, Aaron Ziegler,
students of Theatre 250, 251, and 252

Costumes .................. Jennifer Langel, Rachel Laritz,
Jennifer Levin, Celia Keenan-Bolger, Laurie Kantor,
Erlin McEvoy, Sean McNight, Matt Mitchell, Jessica Murphy,
Lisa Parkel (GA), Caroline Peacock, Monica Prince,
Diane Tuel, Eliza Wamsler, students of Theatre 250

Lighting ............... Harold Burgess (GA), Justin Burleson,
Damian Caza-Cleypool, Paul Malek, Kevin Raliegh,
Timothy Reynolds, Daniel Rutz, Joel Silver,
Melissa Spengler, Beth Tyskiewicz, Nathan Winner,
Angela Zuck, students of Theatre 250

Sound .................. David Byrne, Chris Konovalev

**RUNNING CREW**

Scenery .......... Daniel Rechard, Ginger Thorne
Props .................. Tiffany Heland, Samuel Kirk
Light Board Operator .......... David Garcia
Electrics .................. Jessica Gordon
Wardrobe .......... Sean MacNeil, Jennifer Alexander,
Makeup .................. Crystal Nix

‡ supplied by IATSE local 395  * denotes crew chief
This is our 25th year of providing support and encouragement to the opera program at the University of Michigan School of Music. Our primary function is to finance annual scholarships for voice majors at Michigan; we also provide funding for special needs such as opera scores and vocal diction coaching. Bass-baritone Matthew Carroll and baritone Gary Moss are recipients of our 1999-2000 scholarship awards totaling $6000.

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