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# Gianni Schicchi, February 11-13, 1998

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*The Boston University School for the Arts  
Music Division*

—presents—

A MID-WINTER FRINGE FESTIVAL

# Gianni Schicchi

Music by Giacomo Puccini

DAVID GATELY, *Guest Stage Director*

JEFFREY STEVENS, *Musical Director*

XX

February 11, 12, and 13, 1998, at 8:00 P.M.  
Room 171, School for the Arts  
855 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, Massachusetts

**THE OPERA PROGRAMS AT  
BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS**

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Rich Maloney, *Festival Intern*

The Mid-Winter Festival is dedicated to the memory of Richard Cassilly,  
beloved teacher, respected colleague.

**A MID-WINTER FRINGE FESTIVAL**

**Gianni Schicchi**

Music by Giacomo Puccini

Jeffrey Stevens, *Music Director*

David Gately, *Guest Stage Director*

*Musical Preparation*  
*Rehearsal Pianist*  
*Stage Manager*  
*Assistant Stage Manager*  
*Props*  
*Set Designer*  
*Set Construction*  
*Lighting*

Jeffrey Stevens  
Robert Mills  
Melanie Muradian  
Deborah van Rentergehm  
Jason McStoots  
Dan Sullivan  
Dan Sullivan, Alan Schneider  
Alan Schneider

## CAST

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Gianni Schicchi	Daniel Gurvich
Lauretta, his daughter	Kelly Kaduce
Zita, Buoso's cousin	Ruthann Manley * Myeong Sook Park (cover)
Buoso	Michael Lockhart
Rinuccio, Zita's nephew	Tom Oesterling Alan Schneider (cover)
Gherardo, Buoso's nephew	Lawrence Bianco Jason McStoots (cover)
Nella, his wife	Jodi Frisbie
Gherardino, their son	Kirsty Chan
Betto, Buoso's brother-in-law	Wojciech Bukalski
Simone, Buoso's cousin	Ephraim Kurszewski
Marco, his son	Wayne Tigges
La Ciesca, Marco's Wife	Krista Wozniak
Master Spinelloccio, Physician	Wonyong Cho
Amantio di Nicolao, Notary	Aaron Engebretth

\*Guest Artist

## PROGRAM NOTES

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The relatives of the deceased Buoso Donati have gathered at his bedside. Their outbursts of grief are obviously forced. Betto, the lowliest and most despised of the relatives, mentions a rumor he has heard that Buoso has left all his possessions to the monks. The family turns to Simone for advice. (He is the oldest and at one time was a mayor). Simone tells them that if the will is in the hands of the town clerk they are lost. He tells them their only hope is to find the will and see what is in it. There is a mad scramble as the relatives ransack the house.

Rinuccio, who is in love with Gianni Schicchi's daughter, finds the will. He asks Zita, his aunt, to allow him to marry Lauretta if Buoso has made him rich. He holds the will captive until Zita agrees. He sends the boy, Gherardino, to get Gianni Schicchi and Lauretta.

The relatives gather to read the will and are horrified to find that it is true that the money was left to the monks. They angrily dismiss Rinuccio's assurances that Gianni Schicchi will be able to help them. They forbid him to marry Lauretta.

The relatives give Schicchi and Lauretta a cold reception but the lovers convince Schicchi to help. So that she will not see what a scoundrel he can be, Schicchi sends Lauretta out to the terrace to feed Buoso's pet bird.

Hearing that nobody but the relatives know of Donati's death, he tells them to hide the body. As they are putting this plan into action, the near-sighted Dr. Spinelloccio arrives for his daily examination of Buoso. Schicchi hides in the bed and successfully pretends to be Buoso. They convince the doctor that Buoso is feeling better, and the doctor leaves.

Schicchi tells the relatives that this is the answer to their problem. He will impersonate Buoso and draft a new will. Rinuccio runs to get the notary. The relatives agree on the disposition of the lands, but fight over Donati's mule, his house, and his sawmills. They collectively decide to leave this decision to Schicchi, but they each individually try to bribe him.

Schicchi reminds everyone of the punishment for forgery—the cutting off of a hand and exile.

The notary arrives with two witnesses from the town. After some preliminaries—keeping the cost of his funeral to a minimum and leaving the monks a meager five lire - Schicchi leaves each relative the land they asked for. But when it comes to the mule, the house, and the sawmills, he leaves them to himself. Lauretta now has the dowry which will enable her and Rinuccio to get married. The relatives are furious. When the notary leaves, Schicchi throws them out of the house. He asks the audience if he has done well.

### DIRECTOR'S NOTES

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The opera *Gianni Schicchi* is based on a story from Dante's "Divine Comedy", and the character of Gianni Schicchi himself is modeled on an actual historical figure who lived in Florence at the end of the 13th century. His escapades made him famous.

For me, the opera is a masterpiece equal to that of Verdi's *Falstaff* and greater than any of the comedies of Rossini and Donizetti. To tell such an intricate tale, to detail the lives of this bizarre little Donati family, to paint such vivid characters, to take us on the journey of their emotional highs and lows and frustrations, and to do it all in less than an hour is an amazing accomplishment.

Puccini and his librettist Giovacchino Forzano take what could be a morbid little tale and transform it into fifty of the funniest minutes in opera. The family greed (which, granted, is in this cast excessive) is familiar to us, and yet fresh and funny. The small details that emerge from the score about each character continue to amaze me on this, my 6th production of *Gianni Schicchi*. That said, I think it is also difficult for an audience to take in all its glories in one viewing. For that reason, I hope your lives are blessed with the opportunity to cross paths with this wonderful opera many times.

—David Gately

## David Gately, stage director

Known for his fresh, creative productions, Stage Director David Gately spent the 1994-95 season mounting *Otello* for Lyric Opera of Kansas, *Don Pasquale* with Canadian Opera, *Samson et Dalila* with Fort Worth Opera, *Madama Butterfly* with Seattle Opera, *Falstaff* at Philadelphia's Academy of Vocal Arts, productions of *Pirates of Penzance* with The Vancouver Opera as and Florentine Opera; and *The Magic Flute* and *The Three Penny Opera* with Central City Opera. During the 1993-94 season Mr. Gately was engaged by Lyric Opera of Kansas City for *Madama Butterfly*, the Academy of Vocal Arts for *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Dayton Opera for *Don Pasquale*, The Vancouver Opera for *Die Fledermaus*, by both Utah Opera and Chautauqua Opera for *L'Italiana in Algeri* and by Central City Opera for *Vagabond King*. Other recent productions for the Oregon native include productions of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* for Seattle Opera, the world premiere of Greenwood's *Under the Arbor* in conjunction with the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, *Tosca* for New Orleans Opera, *Don Pasquale* for Virginia Opera, *Le Nozze di Figaro* for Opera Pacific, Florentine Opera and Fort Lauderdale Opera; *Aida* for Michigan Opera, *Carmen* with Opera Festival of New Jersey, *The Mikado* for Chautauqua Opera, *The Count Ory* for Chautauqua Opera and Chicago Opera Theater; *Turandot* with the opera companies of Columbus, Mobile, Baltimore and Opera Carolina; *L'Italiana in Algeri* for Central City Opera, *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* with Opera Pacific and *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Kansas City. Mr. Gately's European debut occurred in 1983 with *La Traviata* at the Opera Comique in Paris. A graduate of Oberlin, Mr. Gately has served as Staff Stage Director of Houston Grand Opera and Texas Opera Theater. His credits also include productions with such companies as Opera Omaha, Glimmerglass Opera, Tulsa Opera, Portland Opera and Syracuse Opera as well as numerous theatre and musical comedy productions of *Oliver*, *A Little Night Music*, *Kismet*, *My Fair Lady*, *Ruddigore*, *Most Happy Fella*, *Carnival*, *Where's Charley?*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Brigadoon* and *Girl Crazy*. In 1995-'96 David Gately directed *Un Ballo in Maschera* for Knoxville Opera, *La Traviata* with Greensboro Opera, *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Palm Beach Opera, *Don Giovanni* at Philadelphia's Academy of Vocal Arts, *Candide* with The Vancouver Opera, *New Moon* at Central City Opera and *Don Pasquale* with Utah Festival Opera. During the 1996-'97 season Mr. Gately directed *Le Nozze di Figaro* with The Vancouver Opera, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* for Florentine Opera (which was telecast), Barab's *Rumpelstiltskin* at Philadelphia's Academy of Vocal Arts, *L'Elisir D'Amore* with The Dallas Opera, the double bill of *Pagliacci* and *Gianni Schicchi* for Sacramento Opera, *Rigoletto* with New Orleans Opera, and *The Merry Widow* for Tulsa Opera which he also produced at Central City Opera. Future engagements include productions of *Don Pasquale* and *La Cenerentola* with Opera Omaha, *The Rape of Lucretia* at the Academy of Vocal Arts, *H.M.S. Pinafore* with The Edmonton Opera, and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with The Vancouver Opera and New Orleans Opera.

## Jeffrey Stevens, Musical Director

Musical Coach Jeffrey Stevens began his affiliation with the Opera Programs at Boston University Opera shortly after receiving his Master's Degree from the School for the Arts in Piano Performance in 1974. A recipient of two Boston Symphony Orchestra Tanglewood Fellowships in Vocal Accompanying, Mr. Stevens has worked for the Central City Opera Association (Colorado), the Wolf Trap Opera Company (Washington, D.C.), and the Boston Lyric Opera. He has been a vocal coach for the Opera Departments of the Boston and New England Conservatories, Associate Music Director of Boston Conservatory Opera Department, and Director of Opera at the Southeastern Music Center (Columbus, Georgia). As a collaborative pianist he is active in the New England area, having performed in Jordan Hall, the Huntington Theater, and on public radio. This year marks Mr. Steven's return to the staff at Boston University.

## UPCOMING OPERA PRODUCTIONS

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March 3-6  
8:00 p.m.

**Mid-Winter Fringe Festival**  
**Bizet/Brook: *La Tragédie de Carmen***  
Joshua Major, *guest stage director*  
Allison Voth, *musical director*  
Boston University Theater, Studio 210  
264 Huntington Avenue

April 16-18  
7 p.m.  
April 19  
2:00 p.m.

Boston University Opera Institute  
**Mainstage Production**  
**Poulenc: *Dialogues of the Carmelites***  
Sharon Daniels, *stage director*  
Paulette Haupt, *conductor/musical director*  
Boston University Theater  
264 Huntington Avenue



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