



For Immediate Release
October 26, 2009

Media Contact: Rex Fuller
303.778.0214
rfuller@operacolorado.org

OPERA COLORADO CELEBRATES WITH 2009 GALA
Concert stars Julian Gavin and Pamela Armstrong
and features a tempting silent auction
Special Guest Host: Lee Meriwether

Opera Colorado presents
Obsession: the 2009 Gala

Ellie Caulkins Opera House,
Denver Performing Arts Complex,
14th and Curtis, downtown Denver

Sat., November 20
6:00 pm Cocktails
7:30 pm Concert
8:30 pm Dinner & Dancing

Prices:

\$150 Cocktails & Concert
\$350 Full Evening Package
\$2500 Duet Patron Package
\$5000+ Table Sponsorships

Tickets online:
OperaColorado.org

Tickets by phone:
303.778.7086

The 2009 Gala supports the education and community programs of Opera Colorado, which serve more than 30,000 youth and adults throughout the state of Colorado.

Opera Colorado's 2009-2010 Season is sponsored by Boettcher Foundation
Ellie Caulkins
Susan and Jeremy Shamos

DENVER, CO— Opera Colorado will celebrate an evening of opera and obsession with the 2009 Gala. The Gala takes place at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House on Friday, November 20 beginning at 6 pm.

The evening includes cocktails, a silent auction, a private concert hosted by Lee Meriwether featuring the stars of *The Tales of Hoffmann*, soprano Pamela Armstrong and tenor Julian Gavin, along with the Opera Colorado Young Artists. The evening concludes with dinner prepared by Kevin Taylor's at the Opera House followed by dancing accompanied by the eight-piece ensemble, Sure Thing.

The "Indulge Your Obsession Silent Auction" will feature more than two dozen items such as travel opportunities, fashion accessories and other special indulgences, according to Gala Event Chair Merrill Shields. Items up for auction include a week's stay at a *pied-à-terre* in Paris' 15th *arrondissement*, a beautiful Hermès cashmere and silk shawl, a weekend at The Ritz-Carlton, Bachelor Gulch, beautiful designer jewelry and many other handpicked unique items and experiences. Auction items are currently available for viewing, bidding and advance purchase online at OperaColorado.org.

Cocktails and concert-only packages are available for \$150. Tickets for full Gala packages start at \$350 per person and include the entire evening's entertainment. Sales Committee Chair Robert Swift notes that table packages are available starting at \$5,000. Purchasing a table for the Gala offers many benefits and makes an excellent corporate entertaining opportunity. At the \$10,000 level and above, guests are also welcomed to the exclusive Gala Patron Party. Complete information about Gala tickets is available at the website, OperaColorado.org/get-involved/gala, or by calling 303.778.7086.

Proceeds from the Opera Colorado Gala benefit Opera Colorado's Education and Community Programs that annually serve more than 30,000 school children and adults throughout Colorado. "We are extremely grateful to the dedicated members of the Gala Committee who work so hard on this special event every year," said Greg Carpenter, General Director of Opera Colorado. "The support provided by this event is vital to our mission of bringing opera and music education programs to schools and new audiences throughout our state and region. We appreciate everyone who supports this event."

The Performers

Pamela Armstrong

American soprano Pamela Armstrong returns to Opera Colorado after successful engagements as Violetta in *La traviata* and Mimi in *La bohème*. Miss Armstrong is a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music, where she sang the title role in a production of *Iphigenie en Tauride* in 1993. She has appeared in many leading roles in European opera houses and cities, performing roles such as the Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, the title role in *Susannah*, Mimi in *La bohème* and Micaela in *Carmen*. Miss Armstrong has sung major roles at the Metropolitan Opera, Hamburg State Opera, Opera de la Bastille in Paris, Teatro Regio in Turin, Grand Theatre de Bordeaux, Houston Grand Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Utah Opera, Portland (Maine) Opera Theater and Michigan Opera Theater. In 1997-98, Miss Armstrong sang the Countess with the Vienna State Opera in Beijing, China.

Julian Gavin

Australian born tenor Julian Gavin graduated from the University of Melbourne and undertook postgraduate studies in conducting at the Victorian College of the Arts before coming to London where he studied at the National Opera Studio. He has portrayed the roles of Alvaro in *La Forza del Destino* (English National Opera), Pollione in *Norma* (Lucerne, Michigan) Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller* (Essen, Bordeaux), Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* (Deutsche Oper Berlin, Opera North), Des Grieux in *Manon Lescaut* (Israel Philharmonic Orchestra), Cavaradossi in *Tosca* (Opera Colorado, ENO), and Don José in *Carmen* (Opera Colorado, Opera Australia, Kansas Symphony Orchestra, Stockholm, Zürich, Teatro Real, Madrid, Vienna State Opera ENO).

The Opera Colorado Young Artists

A group of talented professional singers, the Young Artists are a group of five singers and one coach accompanist who bring opera directly to schools and other community venues throughout Colorado and surrounding states. These young professionals come to Denver for a period of approximately seven months to perform in education programs, touring operas, and a student matinee of a main stage production. The singers receive training and coaching from Opera Colorado staff and guest artists and will perform roles in the three main stage productions.

Lee Meriwether, Host

Lee Meriwether is proud to have been Miss America; she'll let you do the math for the year! Currently, she appears on the ABC soap opera *All My Children* as Ruth Martin. She co-starred with Buddy Ebsen on the *Barnaby Jones* series, and was nominated for the Golden Globe and the Emmy. Her career in TV began as the first "on air" women's editor for Dave Garroway's *Today Show*. She remains popular with the fans of one of her favorite roles: Catwoman in the original *Batman* movie. She also appeared in *Time Tunnel*, as "Lily" on *The Munsters Today* and in a *Star Trek* episode. Special film roles include: *Angel in My Pocket*, *The Undefeated*, *Namu, the Killer Whale* and *The Legend of Lylah Clare*. Live theatre is Lee's first love, and she has starred in: *Hello Dolly*, *Mame*, *The King and I*, *A Little Night Music*, *Gilligan's Island*, and *I Do I Do*. Lee has appeared with her husband, Marshall Borden, in 11 productions, and both of her daughters are accomplished performers.

#####