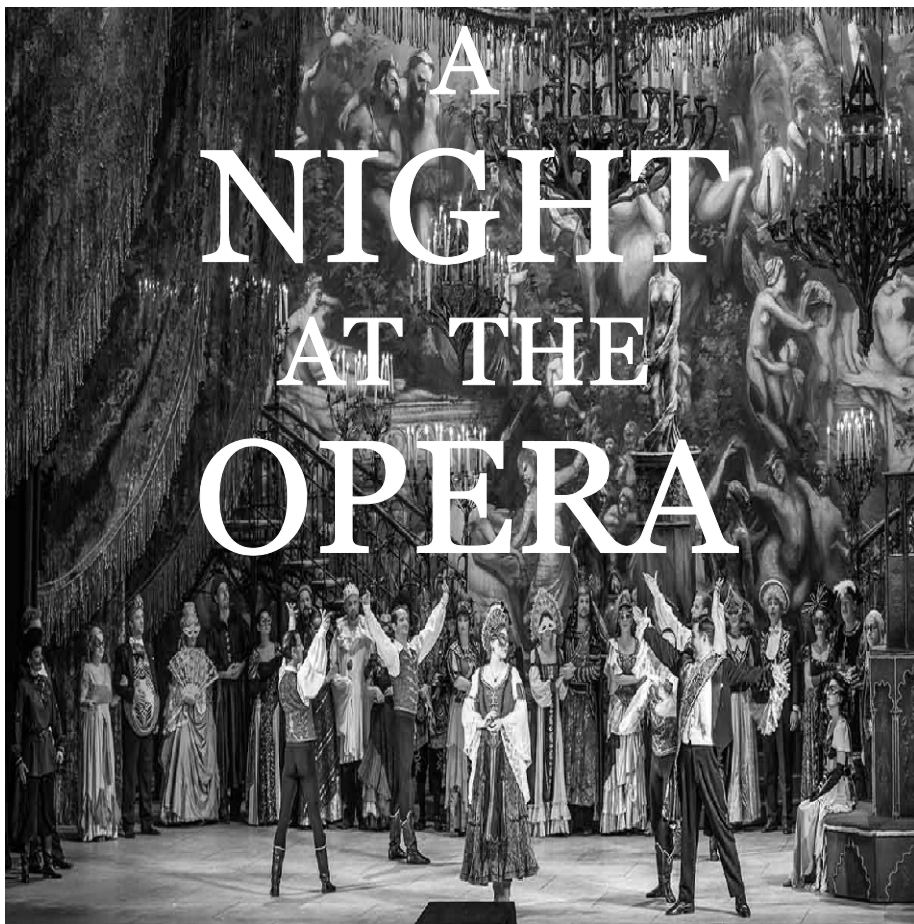




**Luis Biava** *Music Director*

*Season 43*



# A NIGHT AT THE OPERA

Sunday | March 19, 2023 | 7:00 PM

Ascension Lutheran Church | 1479 Morse Rd, Columbus, 43229

Sunday | March 26, 2023 | 5:00 PM

Glenwood United Methodist Church | 2833 Valleyview Dr, Columbus, 43204



The 43rd season of Metropolitan Chamber Orchestra continues in grand style with our winter concert, *A NIGHT AT THE OPERA*. Backing an excellent quartet of soloists, the orchestra takes on a concert rendition of Act II and III from one of the most beloved operas, Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. That could be a complete concert in itself, but we have a wonderful treat to open the festivities, as our principal violist Lois Seward joins the orchestra to solo in Vaughan Williams *Suite for Viola and Orchestra*. Not only does this promise to be an outstanding evening of music, there is more great music to come: Our final outing for the 2022-2023 season will be here at Ascension on May 7th at 7. A prodigious young violinist will join the orchestra for music by Bach, and the program also features the *Slavonic March* by Tchaikovsky and we close the season with *Symphony in d minor* by Cesar Franck. Thanks once again for being part of the MCO family.

Enjoy the concert!



---

## **Luis Biava**    *Music Director*

---

Luis G. Biava serves as principal cellist of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra. After undergraduate studies at University of Michigan, he earned a Masters degree from the Juilliard School, where he studied with Leonard Rose. He is a frequent soloist with many orchestras, and is an avid chamber musician. He has studied conducting with Howard Halgedahl, Michael Jinbo and David Zinman. He has conducted the Columbus Symphony, Doc Severenson Orchestra, the Rochester Philharmonic, and served as cover conductor with the Philadelphia Orchestra. He has regularly conducted the National Symphonies of Colombia and Guatemala. In addition to Metropolitan Chamber Orchestra, Luis is the music director of the New Albany Symphony Orchestra.

This is Maestro Biava's 22nd season with MCO.



Winter Concert 2023

A  
**NIGHT**  
AT THE  
**OPERA**

Ralph Vaughan Williams .....Suite for Viola and Orchestra (1934)

Lois Seward, Viola

- I: *Prelude*
- II: *Carol*
- III: *Christmas Dance*
- IV: *Ballad*
- V: *Galop*

~ **INTERMISSION** ~

Giacomo Puccini.....*Madama Butterfly* (1904)

Selections from Act II and III

- Madama Butterfly*.....Chelsea Hart Melcher
- Suzuki*.....Carolyn Redman
- Pinkerton*.....Andrew Blosser
- Sharpless*.....Robert Kerr
- Sailor*.....Steve Molk

Sunday | March 19, 2023 | 7:00 PM

Ascension Lutheran Church | 1479 Morse Rd, Columbus, 43229

Sunday | March 26, 2023 | 5:00 PM

Glenwood United Methodist Church | 2833 Valleyview Dr, Columbus, 43204

# Soloists

---



**Lois Seward** has been playing viola for 38 years. She graduated from Bowling Green State University with a Bachelors degree in Music Education. After moving to Columbus in 1999, she has served as principal violist for the Greater Columbus Community Orchestra, and is both principal violist and librarian for Metropolitan Chamber Orchestra. She also plays with New Albany Symphony and Via Musica String Quartet.

Nicknamed “Columbus’ Sweetheart Soprano,” internationally acclaimed opera singer **Chelsea Melcher** has been described as “coolly captivating” and “ethereal and sublime” on stage. An Opera Idol National Finalist, she has won numerous awards and performed in a wide variety opera, oratorio and symphonic solos. She serves as Professor of Voice at Siena Heights University, and is the co-founder of the Red School of Music.



**Carolyn Redman**, mezzo-soprano, has performed operatic and musical theater roles in North and South America. A winner of the Opera/Columbus vocal competition, she was also an apprentice artist with both Des Moines Metro Opera and Cincinnati Opera Young Artists programs. In addition to performing, she serves on the voice faculty of Denison University.

---

Tenor **Andrew Blosser** has sung in opera and musical theater throughout the United States and Europe. He has been a featured soloist with numerous orchestras, soloed in Mozart at Salzburg Cathedral, and performed in the recital *Singing our History*, a chronology of American history told through the works of American composers. Blosser currently teaches voice at Ohio State University.



Making the transition from musical theater to opera has led to a long and varied career for baritone **Robert Kerr**. He has performed across the US and in Japan, including appearances with the Philharmonia Orchestra of New York at Lincoln Center, and many roles with Opera Columbus. Of his performance as Falstaff, Anthony Tommasini of the New York Times wrote: "He made words matter..."



# Program Notes

---

**Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872- 1958)** *Suite for Viola and Small Orchestra* (1934). In 1932 Vaughan Williams became president of the English Folk Song and Dance Society. The following year he lectured extensively on the use of folk tunes in his music. This piece shows that influence plainly, and was written for violist Lionel Tertis.

**Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)** *Madama Butterfly* (1904). The inspiration for *Butterfly* stems from an 1871 novel titled *Mme. Chrysanthemum*. The novel was adapted into a play with an entomologic change to the present title. The original two act version failed miserably. Subsequent revisions have yielded one of the most popular and enduring operas in history.

## Synopsis

---

### Act I

#### **The Setting: Nagasaki, Japan, 1904**

Benjamin Franklin Pinkerton, an officer in the U. S. Navy, is engaged to a fifteen year old girl called “Butterfly.” Although he has rented a house for the two of them to live in, he intends to enter in to a marriage that will be purely for his convenience. Fully aware of fairly lax divorce laws in Japan, he plans to be wed to her only until he can find “a proper American wife.” In contrast, Butterfly firmly believes she is entering a lifelong relationship. She is so enamored of her betrothed that she even converts to Christianity- without telling her family. The wedding takes place at the house, but the reception ends up as anything but a celebration. Butterfly’s uncle arrives and announces her religious “betrayal” to the guests, and declares. “As she has renounced us, we must renounce her.” The guests do leave, but only after cursing Butterfly on the way out of the door. Alone at last, Pinkerton consoles Butterfly, and they sing a love duet as they begin their first night of marriage.

Three years pass...

## Act II

**Background:** Pinkerton has been gone since shortly after the wedding. Butterfly has since given birth to their son.

**Prayer-** Butterfly's maid Suzuki prays the Butterfly may find happiness.

**The House-** Butterfly dismisses Suzuki's prayers to Buddha, declaring "An American God will answer our prayers, if he knows where we live."

**Poor-** Suzuki is worried that their money is running out, and if Pinkerton does not return- SOON- they will suffer.

**Hope-** Butterfly remains convinced that Pinkerton will return, since he has arranged for their care up to this point.

**Robins nesting-** Suzuki tells Butterfly that foreign husbands never return to their Japanese wives, and Butterfly angrily responds that on their last morning together, Pinkerton had assured her that he would return "...when the robins make their nest."

**Un Bel Di (One Fine Day)-** Butterfly extolls the many magical moments that will occur when her husband returns, assuring Suzuki "**He WILL return.**"

**The letter-** Sharpless, the American consul, arrives with a letter from Pinkerton. Sharpless knows of Pinkerton's less than honorable intentions toward Butterfly. He tells Butterfly that Pinkerton is well, and she is ecstatic at the news.

**Yamadori the scoundrel-** In the absence of her husband, a local marriage broker, Goro, has tried to convince Butterfly to marry Yamadori, a wealthy businessman who has been married many times. Yamadori and his entourage arrive.

**Butterfly as Magistrate -** Unhappy at seeing Yamadori, Butterfly says she is aware of how easy it is to divorce in Japan, but the laws of America are much different. Sharpless agrees that she is correct.

# Synopsis

---

**Pinkerton not returning-** In the face of Butterfly's blind loyalty, and unable and unwilling to deliver the news that Pinkerton has married an American woman, Sharpless asks Butterfly what she would do if Pinkerton was not returning. She replies that she could entertain people with her singing, or, better yet- she could die.

**The child-** Butterfly almost throws Sharpless out, but instead apologizes and shows him her son. Sharpless asks if Pinkerton knows of the child. Butterfly says he does not. She asks Sharpless to break the news of the child to Pinkerton.

**The marriage broker-** Goro arrives and tells Butterfly that a cursed child such as hers will be rejected by all in America. Butterfly threatens Goro with a knife and throws him out.

**The ship arrives-** A cannon shot is heard, and Butterfly and Suzuki see an American ship in the harbor.

**Cherry blossoms-** Elated at the prospect of Pinkerton's return, Butterfly insists that Suzuki fill the house with flowers to welcome her husband back home.

**Waiting-** Butterfly dons her wedding dress, and she and Suzuki and the child keep vigil as a wordless tune is hummed offstage.

## **Act III:**

**The harbor-** A sailor sings "Oh-he, oh-he" ("Heave ho!") as Suzuki and the baby sleep, but Butterfly has been up all night.

**Morning-** Suzuki awakes, and Butterfly tells her "He will come." Butterfly takes her child and goes to sleep.

**Butterfly asleep-** Pinkerton and Sharpless arrive. Pinkerton soon realizes that Butterfly has indeed been patiently, faithfully and anxiously awaiting him. Suzuki sees a strange woman in the garden. Sharpless tells her it is Pinkerton's American wife, and Suzuki collapses.

**I know her pain-** Sharpless tells Suzuki there is nothing that they can do for Butterfly, but that they must help her child. Sharpless tells her that Pinkerton's new wife, Kate, wants to care for the child.

**A coward's repentance-** Sharpless tells Pinkerton that he should have known the sham marriage could only end badly. Pinkerton admits he was wrong, but still leaves Sharpless to tell Butterfly the news.

**Farewell-** As he flees the house, Pinkerton says "Farewell flowery refuge of happiness and love, her gentle face will always haunt me." He admits he is a coward and cannot face her, and quickly leaves.

**Kate-** Kate tells Suzuki to assure Butterfly that she will care for the child.

**Facing the truth-** Butterfly awakes, and asks Suzuki if Pinkerton is alive. The answer is yes, and Butterfly now knows the reality of this "relationship" that never really was. She tells Kate that she will only surrender her child to Pinkerton.

**Sadness-** Butterfly reads the inscription on her father's knife: "Who cannot live with honor must die with honor." Her child joins her, and she gently blindfolds him. She bids the child farewell, and asks him to remember her. She gives him an American flag to wave to his father. She steps behind a screen, stabs herself, and kisses her son as she collapses. "Butterfly!" cries Pinkerton from offstage. He rushes in, but it is too late- Butterfly is dead.

---

## TUBA

Steve Hainen

## TIMPANI/PERCUSSION

Ryan Kilgore

## HARP

Abigail Bachelor

---



**Metropolitan Chamber Orchestra** was founded in February 1979. It offers playing opportunities to an array of musicians whose expertise ranges from beginner to semi-professional. Funded primarily through dues from members, the orchestra gratefully accepts donations.

### ***BOARD OF DIRECTORS***

Nancy Winebrenner, *President*

Dan Thyng, *Vice President*

Kathy Isern, *Treasurer*

Gordon Shecket, *Secretary*

Lois Seward, *Librarian*

Ralph Hickok, *Webmaster*

Jan Dahlstrom

Mary Rieder

Ann Elliot

Jan Sally

# Personnel

---

## VIOLIN

Tom Pettenski, *concertmaster*  
David Harris, *principal second*  
Pat Clous  
Katie Frame  
Megan Graham  
Ginger Haack  
Kathy Isern  
Jack Kamper  
Mackenzie Kondas  
Mary Rieder  
Martha Rhea  
Candace Sellers  
Gordon Shecket  
Mikana Tam  
Justin Willis  
Anne Zavaglia

## VIOLA

Lois Seward\*  
Ann Elliot  
Kim Gerckens  
Mariana Webster  
Breanne Ziegler

## CELLO

Ian Wei \*  
Kadie Hollyfield  
Matt Moritz  
Bruce Posey  
Simon Pusarti  
Glen Sejko  
Marci Shots  
Dana Thompson  
Stephanie Williams  
Nancy Winebrener  
Tiffany Zamborski

## BASS

Dan Thyng \*  
Shelley Engler  
Doug Frank

## FLUTE

Sarah Luckay \*  
Chip Wendell  
Celine Admiraal

## OBOE

Jan Dahlstrom \*  
Madelyn Reed  
Becky Sigler, *Oboe/English Horn*

## CLARINET

Jesse Rogers \*  
Marilyn Boyd  
Joy Norris *Bass Clarinet*

## BASSOON

Warren Leslie \*  
Glen Sigler

## FRENCH HORN

Steve Molk \*  
Steve Burkey  
Gary Davis  
Martin Young

## TRUMPET

Kevin Wu \*  
Mitch Deboth  
Nick Stevens

## TROMBONE

Paul Young \*  
Travis Borkosky  
Jan Sally

\* Principal

---

# ***Acknowledgements***

MCO is more than grateful to Ascension Lutheran Church for the privilege of rehearsing and performing in its Sanctuary, and for providing a space for our library and equipment. We thank the church staff and community for their support.

MCO's endeavors are made possible by many orchestra members who have been generous with their time and efforts, or with extra financial help- or both. We give our sincere thanks to all those involved.

## **In particular we thank:**

Mike Swinger, *trombonist and art historian, Mike's generous bequest has provided major funding for tonight's concert*

Steve Molk, *who not only anchors the Horn section, he's a great singer as well*

Lois Seward, *violinist and librarian extraordinaire, for her work in arranging the concert at Glenwood United Methodist church*

---

***THIS CONCERT IS FREE  
BUT WE APPRECIATE YOUR DONATIONS***



The QR code can be used to make a gift to the orchestra, and there is a plate by the door to receive donations.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
GENEROSITY!**

---