Jussi Björling Society – USA at Symphony Center
Chicago Conference Rescheduled!

JBS-USA is happy to announce that plans for the much-anticipated Chicago Conference, postponed from spring of 2021, are now being finalized for the weekend of March 24 to 28, 2022. We are accepting advance registrations with the enclosed form, or online, through the JBS web site. As before, the Conference will include nine distinguished speakers, group tickets to performances by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Lyric Opera of Chicago, and group discounted hotel rooms.

The Conference venue will be the 9th floor Thomas Club at Symphony Center, and the hotel is the Silversmith, located just four blocks away.

Following is the order of events as currently planned:

**THURSDAY, MARCH 24:**
The Conference will open with a 5:00 pm dinner at Opus Restaurant in Symphony Center, followed by a 7:30 pm concert by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. JBS will have a block of discounted seats in beautiful Orchestra Hall. As of this writing, the CSO has not completed planning their season, nor have they announced repertoire for the spring concerts. You can check our website (or that of CSO) for the latest news; we will also reach out to you with updates. We can say that the short list of likely conductors, unofficially shared with us, is exciting!

**FRIDAY, MARCH 25:**
Conference sessions will be held from 9 am to 12 noon, and from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm, in the 9th Floor Thomas Club in Symphony Center. You may take a virtual tour of the venue by visiting the CSO website at https://cso.org/about/facility-rentals/virtual-tour/ and selecting the 9th Floor Club.

During the lunch break, attendees may opt for boxed lunches in the venue, or may choose to have lunch in a neighboring café or restaurant. (Please sign up for boxed lunches in advance.)

Friday evening is free, but we will soon provide you with a list of performances, concerts and events occurring that night, including Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Auditorium Theatre, Chicago Opera Theatre, Harris Theatre and others. This will give you plenty of time to make your own plans and purchase your own advance tickets.
SATURDAY, MARCH 26:
Conference sessions resume at 9 am and conclude at 1 pm. Saturday afternoon is free for you to have a leisurely lunch, or do some glamorous shopping in the Loop or on Michigan Avenue’s Magnificent Mile. Saturday evening JBS will have a block of discounted main floor seats for the 7:30 pm performance of *Tosca* at Lyric Opera of Chicago. A description of this production follows.

SUNDAY, MARCH 27:
This can be a free day for you in Chicago. However, we will be organizing some optional activities, such as a tour and lunch at the Chicago Art Institute, a matinee performance, a Sunday concert: there will be much to choose from as we get closer to the date. Our Jussi-weekend will conclude with a Gala Farewell Dinner in a favorite restaurant, soon to be selected as more restaurants re-open.

**THE HOTEL:**
JBS has a block of generously-discounted hotel rooms at the Silversmith Hotel. Located at 10 South Wabash, the hotel is only four blocks away from Symphony Center, and offers room service, fitness center and free WiFi among its amenities. Rooms include large walk-in showers, coffee makers, safes, and small refrigerators. Breakfast and dinner are available on premises at the Adamus Restaurant.

**WE RECOMMEND** that you make your Conference reservations soon!
The Thomas Club has a seating capacity of 95, and the Conference will be open to the public, so the potential for selling out is likely. Please send the enclosed registration form along with your check. For payment with credit card, please visit our website to fill out the online registration form, at www.jussibjorlingsociety.org.

If you already made payment last year for reservations at the postponed 2021 conference, we will be in touch with you individually about any cost adjustments.

**LYRIC OPERA’S PRODUCTION OF**
*TOSCA* will star Michelle Bradley in the title role, with Russell Thomas as Cavaradossi, and Fabián Veloz as Scarpia. Conducted by Eun Sun Kim, the traditional production is designed by Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, and directed by Louisa Muller.

The American soprano Michelle Bradley, a 2018 graduate of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program, is beginning to garner great acclaim as one of today’s most promising Verdi sopranos. Last season she debuted with the Vienna State Opera as Leonora/*Il trovatore* (role debut), with San Francisco Opera as Elvira/*Ernani* (virtual performance, role debut), with San Diego Opera in the title role*/Aida*, while also returning to the Metropolitan Opera for their New Year’s Eve Gala as Liù*/Turandot* (Act Two).

Tenor Russell Thomas starred earlier this season in *Vanished*, a three-part indie art film produced by The Dallas Opera. Thomas’s 2019/20 season included his first Don Alvaro/*La forza del destino* (Deutsche Oper Berlin, new production), Radames*/Aida* (Houston Grand Opera, new production — Thomas later reprised the role at Canadian Opera Company), and his return to the title role*/Otello* (Washington National Opera), after successes at the Canadian Opera Company, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and the Atlanta Symphony.

Argentine baritone Fabián Veloz’s recent performances include the title role*/Rigoletto* to open the season at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, as well as appearances there in *La bohème, La traviata*, and *Andrea Chénier, La traviata* in Beijing, Naples, and Atlanta; *Tosca* at Opera’s Teatro dell’Opera and the Baths of Caracalla; and *Cavalleria rusticana/Pagliacci* in Bologna.

Eun Sun Kim, conductor, is Music Director Designate of San Francisco Opera and Principal Guest Conductor of Houston Grand Opera. The much-acclaimed Korean conductor opened the 2020/21 season leading the famed Concert de Paris at the Eiffel Tower, televised worldwide. In North America, Kim has enjoyed recent successes at San Francisco Opera, LA Opera, Wash-
ington National Opera, and Houston Grand Opera. She has conducted at all the major German houses, and maintains particularly close relationships with the Berlin State Opera and Oper Frankfurt.

THE CONFERENCE SPEAKERS:
Lars Björling, Jussi’s youngest son, was present at his father’s last performances at the Metropolitan Opera in the fall of 1959, and provides a detailed and warmly personal account of those performances in the recently released Immortal Performances CD set.

Andrew Farkas is co-author with Anna-Lisa Björling of the acclaimed Björling biography, *Jussi*. He is the co-author or editor of three other opera biographies and a bio-bibliography. He has contributed book chapters, articles, bibliographies and reviews to a number of international publications, anthologies, encyclopedias and music magazines. He developed and directed the library of the newly established University of North Florida (1970-2003). He was awarded the 1991 Distinguished Professor Award, and upon his retirement he was given the Library Director Emeritus title.

Henry Fogel is Producer/Host of *Collectors’ Corner with Henry Fogel* for WFMT Radio Network, a series featuring a broad range of orchestral, vocal, chamber and solo-instrumental music. Recently retired as the dean of Roosevelt University’s Chicago College of Performing Arts, he was also for many years president and CEO of the Chicago Symphony, and has held many important positions in music administration over the past 55 years.

Stephen Hastings has been the Milan correspondent of *Opera News* since 1991, and is the author of the masterful 2012 book, *The Björling Sound, A Recorded Legacy*. Born in London and educated in Oxford, he was editor of the Italian monthly *Musica* for many years. He is a frequent contributor to JBS publications, and has spoken at almost all JBS conferences, both in the United States and in Sweden.

Harald Henrysson is Founding Curator of the Jussi Björling Museum in Borlänge, Sweden, and an ultimate resource on the life and career of the artist. He is the author of a new book, *David Björling and His Sons in America*, as well as three published editions of *A Jussi Björling Phonography*. Co-founder of the Jussi Björling Society in Sweden, he has contributed notes for some 40 LP/CD recordings, and co-authored a JB Chronology on the web. In 2006, Henrysson received the Jussi Björling Award (Jussi Björlingstipendiet) from the Stockholm Royal Opera Soloists Foundation; in 2011 the Scandinavian Jussi Björling Society Prize (Jussi Björlingsällskapets Pris).

Nils-Göran Olve is a former chairman of the Friends of the Royal Opera in Stockholm, and contributes regularly to the Swedish Jussi Björling Society as interviewer, lecturer, and writer. He also regularly provides articles on historic singers for the UK magazine *The Record Collector*. With a doctorate from the Stockholm School of Economics, he has written more than twenty books on management control.

Conrad L. Osborne, renowned critic, author, voice teacher and performer, is the author of the definitive book on the subject, *Opera as Opera: The State of the Art*. He also posts the extensive blog “Osborne on Opera.” As an international music critic, he has written for *High Fidelity/Musical America, The New York Times,* and *Opera News,* among many others. He also serves as an Administrative Consultant, with affiliations over the years with Affiliate Artists, National Opera Institute, and the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music.

Roger Pines recently completed his 26-year tenure at Lyric Opera of Chicago as dramaturg, program editor, and co-host / co-producer for the company’s live opening-night broadcasts. An annual panelist on the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts’ “Opera Quiz” since 2006, Roger writes regularly for *Opera News,* *Opera* (U.K.), opera company programs nationally and internationally, and CD and DVD releases by major companies.

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Jussi Björling: We Remember (Jussi Björling en Minnesbok)

Now Published in English Translation by JBS-USA

Short weeks after Jussi Björling’s death in September of 1960, Bertil Hagman launched himself on an ambitious project: to record reminiscences of the great tenor while those memories were still fresh. Hagman interviewed several dozen friends and colleagues who knew Jussi and had performed with him, and by the end of 1960 had published Jussi Björling en Minnesbok (JB A Memory Book).

Due to the haste with which the original was published, a number of errors of fact crept into the text. The decision was made early in 2021 to produce a corrected, complete and richly illustrated edition of this unique book. Gail Campain (translator of the original US version) sought out Harald Henrysson’s help and the two of them have worked together to remove those errors, and provide illuminating footnotes as well as short biographies of all the contributors.

Janel Lundgren has shepherded the book through every phase of its publication, and has provided a remarkable number of entertaining and significant photographs as well as insuring that this book is both tremendously attractive and professionally produced in every way.

Translator Gail Campain was born in Melbourne, Australia and is a graduate of RMIT University. Her career has been chiefly in the Victoria State Public Service. She undertook private study of the Swedish language after falling under the spell of the voice and artistry of Jussi Björling, and has been a member of JBS-USA since 1999. Her translation of the Minnesbok was previously published episodically in the JBS-USA Journal. This is the first publication of this remarkable book in its entirety in English.

Jussi Björling: We Remember is available only to current members of the three JB Societies. The postpaid cost is US $35 (for delivery within the Continental United States. There will be additional shipping charges, as incurred, for other shipments). An order form is enclosed in this Newsletter. You may also order using the link on our web site at jussibjorlingsociety.org

— Sue Flaster