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**SOPRANO MARJORIE OWENS AND BARITONE QUINN KELSEY
PERFORM IN RECITAL ON THE GEORGE LONDON FOUNDATION SERIES
AT THE MORGAN ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2017**

**“None But the Lonely Heart,” “Simple Gifts,” and Verdi and Wagner
Duets Highlight the Sunday Afternoon Program**



Marjorie Owens ([photo](#) by Simon Pauly) and Quinn Kelsey ([photo](#) by Ken Howard)

The 2009 winner of the George London-Leonie Rysanek Award and American opera’s latest Rigoletto: **Marjorie Owens**, soprano, and **Quinn Kelsey**, baritone, with Myra Huang, piano, will offer the second event in the season’s George London Foundation Recital Series at The Morgan Library & Museum on Sunday, December 10, 2017, at 4:00 pm.

The George London Foundation for Singers, named for the great American bass-baritone, has been honoring, supporting, and presenting the finest young American and Canadian opera singers since 1971. The foundation’s annual recital series, which celebrated its 20th anniversary with a star-studded gala in 2016, presents pairs of outstanding singers, many of whom were winners of a George London Award, the prize of the foundation’s annual vocal competition.

Marjorie Owens will perform songs by Tchaikovsky and “Es gibt ein Reich” from Strauss’s *Ariadne auf Naxos*, the title role of which she performed to acclaim last year with Opera Theater of St. Louis. Quinn Kelsey will sing songs by Copland and Yeletsky’s aria, “Ya vas lyublyu,” from Tchaikovsky’s *Pique Dame*. Together, the singers will perform the duets “Ciel! Mio padre!” from Verdi’s *Aida* and “Wie aus der Ferne” from Wagner’s *Die fliegende Holländer*. (The complete program follows below.)

Recent praise for Owens and Kelsey

When Marjorie Owens sang the title role of *Leonore* with Washington Concert Opera this past spring, Washington Classical Review said, “In the title role she was intense and refined, an aristocratic presence with a voice of silken softness as well as laser-focused volume that sailed over the massed instruments and chorus.” And of her performance last year in the title role of *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Opera Theater of St. Louis, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch said, “Soprano Marjorie Owens is a force of nature, with a rich voice of wide range and a dramatic sense that handled both the comedy and the serious drama.” [Watch](#) Marjorie Owens sing “Casta Diva” from Bellini’s *Norma*.

In its June 2017 cover story, Opera News said, “Quinn Kelsey waited to sing the great Verdi baritone roles until the time was right. This month he’s San Francisco Opera’s *Rigoletto*.” Of that performance, The San Francisco Chronicle said, “Kelsey delivered an austere but movingly nuanced title performance that gave this ‘Rigoletto’ its strongest sense of urgency and fresh invention.” Of performances presented in October by the Lyric Opera of Chicago, The Chicago Sun-Times said, “Kelsey, the formidable baritone ... is also is a superb dramatic actor,” and Parterre Box said, “Quinn Kelsey was superb.... The Hawaiian baritone brought an almost noble quality to the jester, and allowed us to see the depth of his loathing for his job.... Kelsey sang with real elegance and surprising tonal beauty, always avoiding the ‘snarl and bark,’ always playing the emotion through the music.”

The George London Foundation’s 2017-18 season continues with two more events:

- The 47th annual **George London Foundation Awards Competition** begins with three days of preliminary auditions and culminates with the final round and award ceremony open to the public. The 2018 competition takes place February 12-16, and the public is invited to attend the competition finals and awards announcement on *Friday, February 16, 2018, at 4:00 PM.*
- **Heidi Melton**, soprano, and **Kyle van Schoonhoven**, tenor, with Craig Rutenberg, piano. Heidi Melton won the 2009 George London-Kirsten Flagstad Award for a potential Wagnerian singer; the following year, Montreal’s La Presse was moved to say, “This could perhaps be the Wagnerian voice we have been waiting for since Flagstad and Nilsson.” Kyle van Schoonhoven won the Nicolai Gedda Memorial Award at the 2017 George London competition, singing the mad scene from Peter Grimes “with riveting directness” (New York Classical Review) – *Sunday, March 4, 2017, at 4:00 pm*

The **2017 George London Award winners** were sopranos Michelle Bradley and Lara Secord-Haid; tenors Aaron Blake and Errin Duane Brooks; and baritone Will Liverman. At the awards' announcement at the February event, London's widow and the foundation's president, Nora London, said, "Even after so many years of listening at our competitions, I am so deeply moved by all of your great performances. This year, I feel it is more important than ever for us to applaud beautiful art, and for you to take your talent and share it with the world."

The George London Foundation Awards and Recital Series

The George London Foundation Awards competition is one of the oldest vocal competitions in the United States and Canada, and it offers among the most substantial awards.

Through the annual juried competition for outstanding young American and Canadian opera singers (under the age of 35 who must have performed at least one professional engagement), awards are given to the most promising performers: at the 2017 competition, a total of \$75,000 was given in the form of five George London Awards of \$10,000, three awards of \$5,000, and 10 awards of \$1,000.

The recital series began at the Morgan in 1995 as a way to give grantees exposure and experience, and, in many cases, a New York debut. Each season consists of three recitals featuring recent award winners sometimes paired with a well-known international artist – often a past George London Award winner – that have in recent years included Joyce DiDonato, Eric Owens, Stephen Costello, Ailyn Perez, Matthew Polenzani, Christine Brewer, Renée Fleming, Thomas Hampson, Ben Heppner, René Pape, Samuel Ramey, Frederica von Stade, Bryn Terfel, and Dawn Upshaw.

Marjorie Owens, soprano (2009 George London-Leonie Rysanek Award), who hails from Portsmouth, Virginia, is a former member of the Sächsische Staatsoper in Dresden and a Grand Finals Winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. This season she makes her Hong Kong debut in the title role of *Aida* with Opera Hong Kong, returns to the Semperoper as Senta in *The Flying Dutchman*, and returns to the roster of the Metropolitan Opera. Future projects include a debut with the Canadian Opera Company. Last season she appeared at the Semperoper Dresden as Dorothea in *Schwanda*, and as Senta in *The Flying Dutchman* with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and David Robertson. [Marjorie Owens's management page](#)

Quinn Kelsey, baritone, a native of Hawaii, was the Metropolitan Opera's 2015 Beverly Sills Award recipient. In 2017-18 at the Metropolitan Opera he sings the roles of Peter in *Hansel and Gretel*, di Luna in *Il Trovatore* and Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. He received unanimous critical praise for his performances in the title role of a new production of *Rigoletto* at Frankfurt Oper in March of this year, and in August he appeared with Anita Rachvelishvili, Sondra Radvanovsky, and Marcelo Alvarez in concert performances of *Aida* with the Chorégies d'Orange. Later that month, the baritone made his first visit to Australia for a concert of *Thaïs* with the Melbourne Symphony under the baton of its music director Sir Andrew Davis. www.quinnkelsey.com

Sunday, December 10, 2017, at 4:00 pm

***Gilder Lehrman Hall at The Morgan Library & Museum
225 Madison Avenue at 36th Street, New York City***

**The George London Foundation Recital Series presents
MARJORIE OWENS, Soprano
QUINN KELSEY, Baritone
Myra Huang, Piano**

Program order to be announced

- TCHAIKOVSKY** **“None But the Lonely Heart”
“Once Again, Alone”
“Was I Not a Blade of Grass”
Marjorie Owens and Myra Huang**
- COPLAND** **“The Boatman’s Dance”
“The Dodger”
“Simple Gifts “
“Long Time Ago”
Quinn Kelsey and Myra Huang**
- VERDI** **“Ciel! Mio padre!” from *Aida*
Marjorie Owens, Quinn Kelsey, and Myra Huang**
- TCHAIKOVSKY** **“Ya vas lyublyu” (Yeletsky’s aria) from *Pique Dame*
Quinn Kelsey and Myra Huang**
- R. STRAUSS** **“Es gibt ein Reich” from *Ariadne auf Naxos*
Marjorie Owens and Myra Huang**
- WAGNER** **“Wie aus der Ferne” from *Die fliegende Holländer*
Marjorie Owens, Quinn Kelsey, and Myra Huang**

Tickets: \$50

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Updated November 8, 2017