

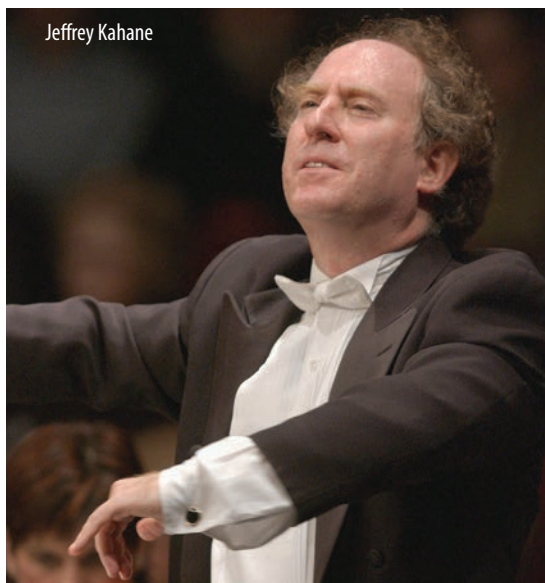
# Wide World of Weill

## Brief Reports on People, Performances, Recordings, and Events

### **Die Dreigroschenoper to End Long Run at the Berliner Ensemble**

After ten successful years and scores of performances, including tours to the U.S., Israel, Hong Kong, Turkey, Australia, and all over Europe, an era will end next spring at the Berliner Ensemble. Robert Wilson's production of *Die Dreigroschenoper*, which opened 27 September 2007, will bow for the last time. Vintage Wilson, the staging, along with the cast, has drawn numerous critical plaudits. Performance dates for 2017 have not yet been announced, but closing night will surely be an event Berlin theatergoers will regret having missed, in the manner of aficionados in 1928 who skipped the world premiere and later claimed to have been in attendance.

The closing marks a changing of the guard at the Berliner Ensemble, as the current artistic administration will leave in July 2017. How fitting that one of their greatest successes will go out with them. *Die Dreigroschenoper* ensures that their term will end on a high note.



### **Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra Presents "Lift Every Voice"**

The Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra performs *Lost in the Stars* as part of a three week-long festival, "Lift Every Voice," inspired by the lives of civil rights champions Kurt Weill, Rabbi Joachim Prinz and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The festival runs 14–29 January 2017 at various venues around Los Angeles, in collaboration with several area institutions including the Inner City Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles, the Salastina Music Society and Villa Aurora, USC, and UCLA.

The festival, curated by LACO Music Director Jeffrey Kahane, includes performances of *The Seven Deadly Sins* with Storm Large and Hudson Shad, and the U.S. premiere of the *Song-Suite for Violin and Orchestra* arranged by Paul Bateman and performed by violinist Daniel Hope. Past Lenya Competition winners Lauren Michelle and Justin Hopkins will take leading roles in *Lost in the Stars*. Ancillary events include a symposium, with presentations by Weill scholars Kim H. Kowalke, Stephen Hinton, and Tamara Levitz, and a chamber concert featuring students of USC's Thornton School of Music.

Kahane's interest in the music of Kurt Weill stems from a personal connection: Weill was a distant cousin of Kahane's grandmother, who also fled Germany in the 1930s to escape the rise of fascism. In addition to his work as an internationally acclaimed conductor and concert pianist, Kahane is a champion of Weill's music both at home and in his guest appearances. In 2014, he led the New York Philharmonic in four performances of Weill's Symphony No. 2, the first performances of the work by that orchestra since its American premiere in 1934.

### **Mahagonny in Buenos Aires and Around the World**

Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires will present *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* 22–27 August 2017. Marcelo Lombardero directs this co-production with the Municipal de Santiago (see review on p. 14).

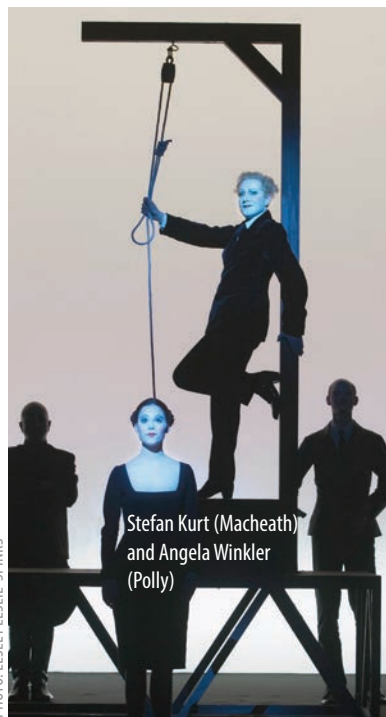
Other productions coming up this year: Graham Vick's staging at the Royal Danish Theatre, in repertory 20 November through 5 March; Oper Halle, directed by Michael von zur Mühlen, in repertory 21 January through 19 May; Salzburger Landestheater with the Mozarteumorchester Salzburg, directed by Jacopo Spirei, in repertory 4 May through 14 June; Theater und Philharmonie Thüringen in Gera, Germany, in repertory 3 March through 7 June; and at the Staatstheater Cottbus, in repertory 11 March through 31 May.

### **"Kurt Weill's America" at DePauw University and the Brevard Festival**

Last spring, the *Newsletter* reported that the National Endowment for the Humanities has awarded a \$300,000 grant for a curated concert series of Kurt Weill's music, "Kurt Weill's America," conceived and hosted by musicologist Joseph Horowitz.

DePauw University in Greencastle, IN, will be the first institution to present the series, beginning this fall and extending into next spring. The series of interdisciplinary events includes a scholarly symposium entitled "Kurt Weill and the Search for the Great American Opera," vocal master classes with Lisa Vroman and William Sharp, an all-Weill cabaret, and a fully staged production of *Street Scene*, 9–12 February.

In the summer of 2017, the Brevard Festival will follow with a summer-long exploration of the music of Weill. Works on the bill include *Street Scene*, *Seven Deadly Sins*, and other chamber and concert works appearing throughout their summer-long festival of over 80 concerts.



Stefan Kurt (Macheath)  
and Angela Winkler  
(Polly)

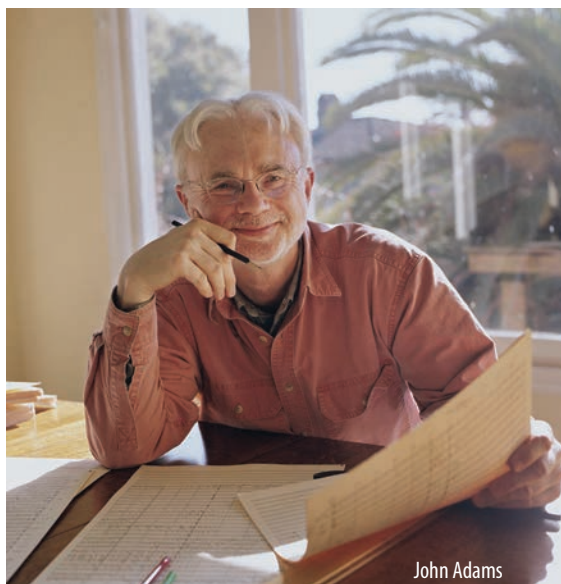
PHOTO: LESLEY LESLIE-SPINKS

## John Adams's New Opera Inspired by *Mahagonny*

American composer John Adams is hard at work on a new opera. *Girls of the Golden West* is set to premiere at San Francisco Opera in November 2017.

In a recent interview with journalist Rebecca Schmid, Adams pointed to *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* as a key influence on this new work. "I think it will come out sounding very much like Weill," he told Schmid.

Weill's influence on Adams's career has deep roots. In his 2008 memoir, *Hallelujah Junction*, Adams credits his first experience conducting Weill (*Mahagonny Songspiel* with St. Paul Chamber Orchestra in 1993), as sparking his interest in writing dramatic musical works. He viewed the Weill/Brecht collaborations as a model of the musical theater he hoped to create, and soon they served as inspiration for *I Was Looking at the Ceiling and Then I Saw the Sky*.



John Adams

PHOTO: DEBORAH O'GRADY

## Jim Palmer on "September Song"

In a recent contribution to the *Wall Street Journal's* "Playlist" feature, Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher Jim Palmer gave an alternate interpretation of Weill and Anderson's "September Song."

Palmer recalls hearing Frank Sinatra's recording of the song during his rookie season in 1965 and the powerful effect the song had on him: "Baseball, like a relationship, is about longevity and endurance. You have to be as good in September as you were in May."

## Bob Dylan Wins Nobel Prize in Literature

Bob Dylan made history this year as the first musician to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. The Swedish Academy honored Dylan for "having created new poetic expressions within the great American song tradition."

Dylan has acknowledged the formative power of Weill's score for *The Threepenny Opera*, which left him feeling "like I hadn't slept or tasted food for about thirty hours, I was so into it." In particular, he was struck by "Pirate Jenny" and became obsessed with it—the story takes up four full pages in his memoir, *Chronicles!* Here's a taste:

"This heavy song was a new stimulant for my senses, indeed very much like a folk song but a folk song from a different gallon jug in a different backyard. I felt like I wanted to snatch up a bunch of keys and go see about that place, see what else was there. I took the song apart and unzipped it—it was the form, the free verse association, the structure and disregard for the known certainty of melodic patterns to make it seriously matter, give it its cutting edge. It also had the ideal chorus for the lyrics. I wanted to figure out how to manipulate and control this particular structure and form which I knew was the key that gave 'Pirate Jenny' its resilience and outrageous power."

## Barry Humphries Takes His Weimar Cabaret on Tour

Australian comedian Barry Humphries (who won audiences for years with his alter ego, Dame Edna), has long been an ardent admirer of the music of Kurt Weill and his Weimar contemporaries.

Growing up in Melbourne, Humphries haunted local bookstores, and one day he came across a stack of scores published by Universal Music in Vienna. He knew nothing of the music or the composers, but he bought the lot. The collection included music by Ernst Krenek, Erich Korngold, Franz Schreker, and Weill. Humphries never forgot his early find, and it has influenced his musical explorations ever since.

He has parlayed this lifelong interest in the music of the Weimar Republic into *Barry Humphries' Weimar Cabaret*, a curated evening of song and storytelling. Featured among the many favorites and rarities are Weill's "Surabaya-Johnny," "Pirate-Jenny," and "Youkali." In 2013, Humphries, together with the Australian Chamber Orchestra and performance artist Meow Meow, toured the cabaret for the first time in Australia. Last summer, the troupe made their first venture outside of Australia, performing in front of sold-out audiences in London, Edinburgh, and at Tanglewood. With international success under his belt, Humphries has enlarged his scope, envisioning a tour to Berlin, Vienna, Tel Aviv, and New York.



PHOTO: ESTER SEGARRA

Barry Humphries



### Eric Owens Named *Musical America* Vocalist of the Year

*Musical America* has named bass-baritone Eric Owens Vocalist of the Year for 2017 in their annual awards. Owens, known for a rich, powerful sound and a wide range of roles, wowed opera lovers as Stephen Kumalo in *Lost in the Stars* at Glimmerglass in 2012 and at Washington National Opera in 2016, bringing the work to a whole new set of audiences.



PHOTO: DARIO ACOSTA

adians of Greek descent or Philhellenes who have made an outstanding contribution to Canadian society and to [the] Greek-Canadian community.” The awards ceremony was held on 17 November at the Palais Royale in Toronto.

### Yannick Nézet-Séguin to Receive 2017 Opera News Award

Conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin is among the recipients of the 2017 Opera News Awards. Last season, Nézet-Séguin, a self-proclaimed Weill fan, led the Philadelphia

Orchestra in three performances of Weill’s *Symphony No. 2*, the first by that orchestra. He will assume the title of Music Director Designate of the Metropolitan Opera next season. Nézet-Séguin has expressed in past interviews his wish to “be a voice” for Weill, whose work has not been staged at the Met since 1995.

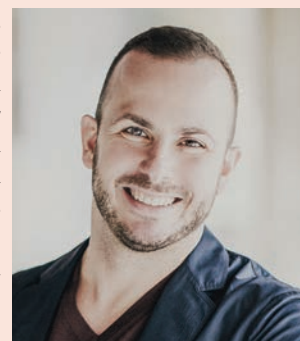


PHOTO: HANS VAN DER WOUDE

### Teresa Stratas Receives Hellenic Heritage Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award

International operatic legend and inimitable Weill interpreter Teresa Stratas has received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Hellenic Heritage Foundation in Toronto. Established in 2012, the award recognizes “distinguished Can-



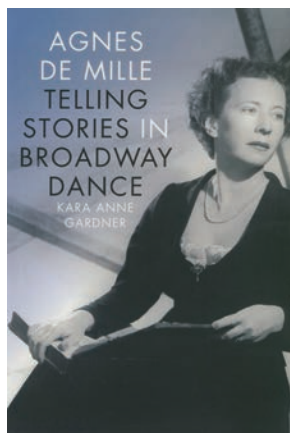
PHOTO: NONESUCH RECORDS

### Silent Shows: Broadway Shows that Never Got a Cast Recording

A recent article on Playbill.com listed eleven notable musicals which, despite successful runs or distinguished pedigrees, were never immortalized on a Broadway cast recording. Two Kurt Weill scores made the cut, *Happy End* and *Love Life*. Of *Happy End*, the article notes that the 1929 show did not make it to Broadway until 1977, and in spite of a star-studded cast (Christopher Lloyd and Meryl Streep) and three Tony nominations, the short-lived Broadway run did not get a cast recording. As for *Love Life*, which ran for 252 performances in 1948–49, a musicians’ strike in 1948 disrupted plans for a recording.

### Recent Recordings and Publications

- Kara Anne Gardner, *Agnes De Mille: Telling Stories in Broadway Dance*, Oxford, 2016. Includes a chapter on the first production of *One Touch of Venus*.
- Mitch Albom, *The Magic Strings of Frankie Presto*, paperback edition, HarperCollins, 2016. Albom’s latest novel—about a legendary guitarist who works with many of the twentieth century’s greatest musicians—includes an encounter with Tony Bennett, who shares his deep love for “Lost in the Stars.” As Albom wrote in the Acknowledgments, “If anyone could inspire a return to music, it would be Tony Bennett. Just listen to him sing ‘Lost in the Stars’ and you’ll know what I mean” (p. 493). A companion CD (Republic Records DW31348) includes Bennett’s rendition of the Weill-Anderson classic.
- Jürgen Schebera, *Kurt Weill: Konzis*. Schott, 2016. A revised and updated edition of his short biography of Weill, originally



### Next from the Kurt Weill Edition: *Lady in the Dark*

The forthcoming critical edition of *Lady in the Dark* is due out in 2017. The edition will present the complete full score in two volumes with critical commentary; it will also make available for the first time a reconstruction of the original performing script, about thirty minutes shorter than the currently licensed version, which restores the text as refined by the authors during rehearsals for the Broadway premiere in 1941. The new edition—already tried out at Lyric Stage in Arlington, TX and at the University of Minnesota—will offer producers an orchestral score, set of instrumental parts, vocal score, and script, all fully consistent and cross-cued.

published in 2000. Issued in the “Serie: Musik.”

- *Manhattan Serenade*, Celia Berk, vocalist; Alex Ryback, arranger and conductor. Gramercy Nightingale Music B01EDA9JCW. Includes “Lonely House” and “The Romance of a Lifetime.”
- *Songs of Life*, Scott Morgan, vocalist, with Fred Hersch (piano), et al. Miranda Music MMCD1024. Includes “Lost in the Stars.”
- *Die Dreigroschenoper*, collector’s re-issue on 180-gram vinyl of the first complete recording, originally released by Columbia in 1958. Artistic supervision by Lotte Lenya, who also sang Jenny. Music on Vinyl MOVCL021.
- *Geheime Sender: Der Rundfunk im Widerstand gegen Hitler* (Der Hörverlag, 2016). 8-CD set of anti-Nazi World War II propaganda compiled by Hans Sarkowicz. Includes Lotte Lenya’s recording of “Lied einer deutschen Mutter” by Paul Dessau and Bertolt Brecht.

Hans Sarkowicz. Includes Lotte Lenya’s recording of “Lied einer deutschen Mutter” by Paul Dessau and Bertolt Brecht.

## 2016–2017 Julius Rudel/Kurt Weill Conducting Fellowship

American conductor Jonathon Heyward has received the second Julius Rudel/Kurt Weill Conducting Fellowship. Established in 2015, this annual award honors the exceptional career of conductor Julius Rudel, a leading advocate for Weill's music. The fellowship carries a stipend of \$10,000, and offers a conductor in the early stages of a career an opportunity to assist a master conductor in the preparation and performance of a work by Kurt Weill or Marc Blitzstein and acquire deeper knowledge of their catalogues.

In 2015, at the age of 23, Heyward won the Grand Prize of the 54th International Competition for Young Conductors in Besançon. He got his first taste of conducting while pursuing a bachelor's degree in cello performance at the Boston Conservatory of Music, where he served as Assistant Conductor for the conservatory's opera department. He went on to earn a Master of Music in orchestral conducting at the Royal Academy of Music in London. For the 2016–17 season, he has been appointed Assistant Conductor at the Hallé Orchestra in Manchester, where he will assist Music Director Mark Elder. Under the fellowship, Heyward will serve as assistant conductor to Fellowship Mentor Jeffrey Kahane for the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra's production of *Lost in the Stars*.



Jonathon Heyward

### 2016 Midyear Grant Recipients

Since its inception in 1983, the Foundation Grant Program has awarded more than 500 grants and over \$3,700,000 to performing organizations and scholars worldwide. 2016 Midyear grants have been awarded to:

- St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, for two performances of *Der Lindberghflug/Der Ozeanflug*, 16–17 September (review on p. 15);
- The Orchestra Now, a program of Bard College, for one performance of Blitzstein's *Orchestra Variations*, 6 November;
- George Mason University School of Theater, for ten performances of *The Threepenny Opera*, 27 October – 5 November;
- University of Arizona Fred Fox School of Music, Music + Festival, featuring the music of Kurt Weill, 14–16 October;
- University of Nebraska Kearney Department of Music and Performing Arts, for five performances of *The Threepenny Opera*, 19–23 October.

## Dramatic Blitzstein Find

A previously unknown Marc Blitzstein holograph manuscript has come to light, and a very generous donor has given it to the Kurt Weill Foundation: a 115-page “piano transcription” score of the ballet *Cain*.

In 1930, in response to a League of Composers competition, Blitzstein conceived a ballet with some sung text based on the Biblical story of the first murder and its aftermath. The work runs to twelve movements and has a duration of approximately half an hour. The ballet music has never been performed in full, only in part, despite interest from Stokowski and others.

A holograph full score and piano score of the work already reside in the Blitzstein Papers at the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theatre Research. The newly surfaced manuscript is quite similar, but not identical to, the piano score that has reposed in the Blitzstein papers for over fifty years.



## Artistic Policies

In an attempt to explicate the Foundation's longstanding policies in administering the legacy of Kurt Weill, the Board of Trustees has ratified a “Summary of Artistic Policies.” The goal is to avoid misunderstandings and to assist performers and producers with clear guidelines. Please see the complete statement at <http://www.kwf.org/pages/summary-of-artistic-policies.html>.



## Twentieth Annual Lotte Lenya Competition

Many exciting new developments are in store for next year's Competition. To keep pace with the level and breadth of contestants' talent, prize amounts will increase. Total prizes will exceed \$75,000. 1st Prize will be worth \$20,000; 2nd Prize, \$15,000; and 3rd Prize, \$10,000. The creation of a new discretionary award, the Kurt Weill Award, for the outstanding performance of two contrasting numbers by Kurt Weill encourages contestants to dig deeper into Weill's extensive catalogue. This year the Competition boasts a new website ([www.kwf.org/llc](http://www.kwf.org/llc)) which offers prospective contestants an expanded Suggested Repertoire list, clearer guidelines, more Tips for Contestants, and answers to all their Frequently Asked Questions.

**Lotte Lenya**  
**LOTTE LENYA COMPETITION**  
 A Program of The Kurt Weill Foundation for Music

First Prize \$20,000  
 Total Prizes \$75,000+

20TH ANNUAL

"No vocal contest better targets today's total-package talents."  
 — Opera News, 2014

### Past Lenya Competition Winners in the Spotlight

Past winners continue to burnish their reputations and advance their careers on stages around the world.

Rising international opera star Lauren Michelle (1st Prize, 2015) made her network television debut in October with a guest appearance on Fox's runaway hit *Empire*. She is currently appearing as Jessica in André Tchaikowsky's *The Merchant of Venice* at Welsh National Opera. She will follow that with an appearance in Weill's *Lost in the Stars* with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, 28–29 January 2017, singing Irina, the same role in which she triumphed at Washington National Opera last winter.

Several Lenya winners are slated to appear at this year's Kurt Weill Fest in Dessau. The MDR's 3 March performance of *Die Verheißung* will feature Lauren Michelle, Matthew Grills (1st Prize,

2012), and Justin Hopkins (2nd Prize, 2012).

Other past winners are making company and role debuts across the U.S. and Europe. Justin Hopkins joins Michelle in *Lost in the Stars* as Stephen Kumalo. Allison Arnopp (3rd Prize, 2013) makes her Royal Shakespeare Company debut as a Spirit in *The Tempest*, opening 8 November and running through 21 January 2017. Zachary James (3rd Prize, 2009) performs for the first time with Los Angeles Opera as the Scribe in Philip Glass's *Akhnaten*. Two past winners sing Weill in concert: Tora Augestad (Lys Symonette Award, 2008) offers selections from *Der Silbersee*, *Die Dreigroschenoper*, and *One Touch of Venus* with the Bamberger Symphoniker in a New Year's Eve concert conducted by HK Gruber. Later she performs *Die sieben Todsünden* with the Oslo Philharmonic (4 May 2017), conducted by Joshua Weilerstein. Rebecca Jo Loeb (1st Prize, 2008) performs *Die sieben Todsünden* with the Sinfonieorchester Aachen 23 April 2017. She will make her Metropolitan Opera debut in March as Flora Bervoix in *La traviata*.



PHOTO: RICHARD HUBERT SMITH



PHOTO: JOHAN PERSSON

For more information about past winners, please visit <http://www.kwf.org/pages/updates-on-previous-llc-winners.html>

**THE KURT WEILL FOUNDATION FOR MUSIC, INC.**

7 East 20th Street  
New York, NY 10003-1106  
USA

**UPCOMING PERFORMANCES**

**Die Dreigroschenoper**

Theater Pforzheim  
Thomas Münstermann, director; Markus Huber, conductor  
1 December 2016 – 29 January 2017 (in repertory)

**The Seven Deadly Sins**

Detroit Symphony Orchestra  
Leonard Slatkin, conductor; Storm Large, Anna I  
2–3 December

**Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt  
Mahagonny**

The Royal Danish Theatre, Copenhagen  
Graham Vick, director; Julien Salemkour, Robert Houssart, conductors  
2 December 2016 – 5 March 2017 (in repertory)

**“The World According to Kurt Weill”**

Revue at Urban Stages, New York (world premiere)  
William V. Madison, writer-producer; Eric Sedgwick, music director  
6 December

**Mahagonny Songspiel**

Ensemble Metropolis, Lucerne  
Jiří Menzel, director; Beni Santora, conductor  
10 December

**The Cradle Will Rock (Blitzstein)**

Boston University  
Emily Ranii, director; Catherine Stornetta, conductor  
13–18 December

**Weill Songs**

Bamberger Symphoniker  
HK Gruber, conductor; Tora Augestad, mezzo-soprano  
31 December

**Kleine Dreigroschenmusik**

The New York Philharmonic  
Alan Gilbert, conductor  
5–7 January

**Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt  
Mahagonny**

Oper Halle  
Michael von zur Mühlen, director; Christopher Sprenger, conductor  
1 February – 19 May (in repertory)

**Street Scene**

DePauw Opera, Greencastle, IN  
Joachim Schamberger, director; Orcenith Smith, conductor  
9–12 February (part of “Music Unwound: Kurt Weill’s America”)

**Symphony No. 2**

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra  
Lahav Shani, conductor  
24–26 February

**Suite panaméenne**

Ensemble Modern, Alte Oper Frankfurt  
David Philip Hefti, conductor  
16 March

**LoveMusik**

Oper Leipzig  
Cusch Jung, director; Christoph-Johannes Eichhorn, conductor  
18–19 March

**Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt  
Mahagonny**

Salzburger Landestheater with Mozarteumorchester Salzburg  
Jacopo Spirei, director; Adrian Kelly, conductor  
30 April – 14 June (in repertory)

**Die sieben Todsünden**

Sinfonieorchester Aachen  
Kazem Abdullah, conductor; Rebecca Jo Loeb, Anna I  
23–24 April

**Die sieben Todsünden**

Oslo Philharmonic  
Joshua Weilerstein, conductor; Tora Augestad, Anna I  
4 May

**Lift Every Voice Festival  
Los Angeles and environs, 14–29  
January 2017**

**String Quartet No. 1, Op. 8**

The Salastina Music Society, Pacific Palisades  
15 January

**Song-Suite for Violin and Orchestra  
The Seven Deadly Sins**

Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra  
Jeffrey Kahane, conductor; Daniel Hope, violin;  
Storm Large, Anna I  
Alex Theatre, Glendale, 21 January  
Repeated at UCLA, Royce Hall, 22 January

**“Championing Civil Rights and  
Resisting Injustice: Rabbi Joachim  
Prinz and Kurt Weill”**

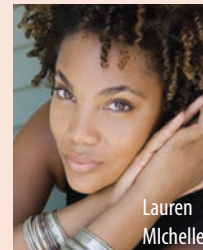
Symposium at UCLA, Herb Alpert School of Music  
22 January

**Lost in the Stars**

Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and CAP UCLA  
Anne Bogart, director; Jeffrey Kahane, conductor;  
Lauren Michelle as Irina; Justin Hopkins as Stephen  
Kumalo  
28–29 January



Justin  
Hopkins



Lauren  
Michelle