

## ARSC New York Chapter

### MARCH 2014 Meeting !!NOTE CHANGE OF DATE!!

7 P. M. Thursday, 3/27/14

at the CUNY Sonic Arts Center

West 140<sup>th</sup> Street & Convent Avenue, New York

or, enter at 138th Street off Convent Avenue

Shepard Hall (the Gothic building) – Recital Hall (Room 95, Basement level)

An elevator is located in the center of the building

ARSCNY is again pleased to present

### “The Two Gary’s”

(Galo and Thalheimer, respectively)

...reprising their gala presentations of recordings by Lauritz Melchior  
(*“The Great Dane: Lauritz Melchior – A 40th Anniversary Tribute”*)  
and German singers in Verdi roles.

Both are expanded versions of presentations given at the ARSC national  
conference in Kansas City, MO in May 2013.

Danish tenor **Lauritz Melchior** (1890-1973) was arguably the greatest Wagnerian tenor in the history of that species. Melchior began his career as a baritone, making his operatic debut as Sivlio in Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* at the Royal Opera, Copenhagen in 1913. On the advice of Mme. Charles Cahier, Melchior restudied as a tenor with Vilhelm Herold, and made a second debut in 1918 in the title role of Wagner's *Tannhäuser*. After further studies with Anna Bahr-Mildenburg, Melchior began his international career at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in 1924 as Siegmund in Wagner's *Die Walküre*, followed by a Bayreuth debut later that year, and a Metropolitan Opera debut in 1926. Melchior combined a voice of unrivalled power with a true *bel canto* production, allowing him to remain virtually unchallenged in the *heldentenor* repertoire until his retirement from the stage in 1950. His totals in the Wagner repertoire are staggering, encompassing over 600 performances including over 220 as Tristan. Yet, after all this, his voice remained in remarkable condition. Melchior's career is surveyed through his recorded output, beginning with his first recording as a baritone in 1913, and continuing with samplings of his major recordings in both the Wagner and non-Wagner tenor repertoire, and song literature. In addition to commercial recordings, excerpts from several live performances will also be included. A few Melchior myths and exaggerations will be challenged during this presentation, not the least of which is the view that he was a sloppy musician with little regard for the letter of musical score. The recorded examples will also illustrate the excellence of Melchior's vocal technique, belying the notion that he relied on natural ability alone.

## Wagnerians in Verdi and Vice-Versa

The 2013 bicentennial of Wagner and Verdi seemed a good time to explore artists associated primarily with one of these composers performing the other's music. As we are able to expand time limits at the Chapter meetings, we can hear more examples of artists performing works not normally associated with them.

Prior to the simultaneous 1950s reign of Karajan at La Scala in Milan and the Vienna State Opera performances were in the vernacular. But he intended the same productions and casts in multiple venues. So the new generation of singers had to relearn their roles in the original language, and audiences spend more time looking up or down to see what's going on. As a result, many listeners today seem to think that performing both composers is somehow unsuitable.

Radames and Otello were favorites of several Heldentenors, and we shall hear Melchior, Max Lorenz, Wolfgang Windgassen and Franz Völker. Among the ladies, Maria Callas and Frida Leider overlapped in several roles, while Astrid Varnay was type-cast by the Met for Wagner. Mezzos included Marta Mödl, Margarete Klose and Ebe Stignani.

## OUR NEXT PROGRAM WILL BE ON APRIL 24, 2014

### “Liberace: Entertainer at the Piano”

presented by Dennis D. Rooney

#### DIRECTIONS TO THE SONIC ARTS CENTER

**Subway:** Take the 1 train to 137<sup>th</sup> Street City College and walk north to 140<sup>th</sup> St. & Broadway, then go east to 140<sup>th</sup> St. & Convent Avenue. Take the A, B, C, or D trains to 145th St, go south on St. Nicholas to 141st St, (one long block), then west one block to Convent Avenue and south one more block to 140th & Convent Avenue.

**Bus:** M4 and M5 on Broadway; M 100, 101 on Amsterdam Ave (one block West of Convent Avenue.)



The **Sonic Arts Center** at CCNY offers 4-year Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees in Music with a concentration in Music and Audio Technology. Their program provides an in-depth curriculum emphasizing real-world skills with a project-based approach. Students enjoy a well-rounded program, with emphasis on audio technology, music theory, orchestration, and history to help them compete in a field that today demands an ever-growing and highly diverse skill set.



All ARSC NY Chapter meetings are free and open to the public.  
**Voluntary contributions to help defray our expenses are welcome!**

To join ARSC, visit <http://www.arsc-audio.org>