Eugene Onegin
by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Performed at Neal S. Blaisdell Concert Hall
January 31; February 2 & 4, 2003

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Dear HOT Patron,

In a world wracked with fear and uncertainty, the arts fulfill a necessary purpose. Nowhere else can we so readily explore the depth and breadth of conscience and emotion. The arts are a gateway to our inner beings in these uneasy times. Through example, persuasion and exaggeration, the arts teach us to be better humans. Above all, the arts offer us a safe haven and a moment’s respite from the cares of the world.

Opera is, perhaps, the most emotionally complex of all art forms. For it is here alone that theater and music combine most sublimely to express the full range of human triumph and human shortcomings. This grand exploration of the human experience is what makes opera truly Big Entertainment!

Each of the operas you will experience this season deals with coming of age. It is a time when, for better or worse, the protagonists realize that they carry the responsibility of their own destiny and that their behavior dictates the paths they follow through life.

Some come of age late in life. It is not until he has spurned the love of a young girl and shot his best friend in a duel that Eugene Onegin can truly know that he has come of age and in the process sacrificed any claim he had on love.

Tamino and Pamina find each other in trials by fire and water... but only after a confusing series of confrontations with Pamina’s mother, the Queen of the Night, and the stern admonitions of her father, the ruler of the Temple Sarastro, who believes in the power of light. In the end, the young couple needs to rise above the conflicts of these formidable parent figures and make their own way in the world, following a path shown them by the mystical Magic Flute.

In 19th century Bohemian Paris, several young people of various temperaments are thrown together by fate. Some fall in love, others fall out of it; their world is a cavalcade of passion and art until mortality intrudes. Mimi loves the poet Rodolfo and, wishing to shield him from the cares her fate will bring, she leaves him for a wealthy lover, only to return to him just before leaving this world. In one of the most poignant classics of the opera stage, Puccini magnifies the glory and despair of coming of age.

Like the experience of coming of age, opera is always an adventure. Come with us and enjoy HOT’s 2003 season!

Henry G. Akina
General and Artistic Director
Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) composed some of the world’s most popular symphonies, the most instantly recognizable piano concerto (three chords are enough), the most performed violin concerto, a string quartet widely considered the most beautiful ever written, and, of course, the three ballet scores that dwarf all the rest, The Nutcracker, Sleeping Beauty and Swan Lake.

In fact, during the heyday of Tin Pan Alley, so many of Tchaikovsky’s melodies were “borrowed” for tunes that topped the Hit Parade that one songwriter cranked out a ditty called: “Everybody’s Making Money But Tchaikovsky.” It was the only one that wasn’t a hit, probably because it didn’t use the master’s music.

Yet, despite this catalogue of imperishable musical achievements, it was in opera that Tchaikovsky dearly wanted to succeed. (He frequently wrote friends that he found the lure of opera irresistible.) And it was in opera that he had his least success.

Tchaikovsky wrote eight operas, and tinkered with half a dozen more. But, except for an occasional appearance of his Queen of Spades, it is only with Eugene Onegin that Tchaikovsky achieved his lifelong ambition. Of course, Eugene Onegin is quite an accomplishment: melodic, moving, dramatic, intensely emotional, with an extraordinary insight into human character, it has rightly conquered the world’s operatic stages.

As well as being a musical masterpiece, Eugene Onegin has become a symbol of social progress. The story of a young girl infatuated with a sophisticated older man, who pours out her love for him in a letter only to be coldly spurned, then in turn rejects his ardent advances, has joined such landmark dramatic works as Ibsen’s A Doll’s House — another tale of a woman slamming the door on a man who has treated her as an object of no importance — as sign posts on the road to the advancement of women. In addition to marvelous music and a meaningful message, Eugene Onegin also contains a double dose of life imitating art, both times tragically.

This story of Tatyana, a country girl spurned by Onegin, who then kills his best friend in a foolish duel sparked by a frivolous flirtation, and returns from his travels to discover he loves the woman Tatyana has become, is based on a story by Alexander Pushkin, Russia’s national poet, who finished it at the age of 32. Ironically, six years later (1838) Pushkin himself was killed in a duel with a French nobleman accused of flirting with Pushkin’s wife. Tchaikovsky, while in the process of creating the wonderful “letter scene” in which Tatyana expresses her love for Onegin, received several similar letters from a love-struck former music pupil. Perhaps moved by both the letters and the coincidence, Tchaikovsky, despite his sexual orientation, decided to marry the young woman. It was a disaster. They parted after nine weeks and never saw each other again.

Jim Becker has written and lectured about opera in Hawaii and all over the world for more years than he cares to remember (he heard Rachmaninoff play). Contributing editor of Aria, he also is a critic for major musical magazines, and annually previews the operas for HOT audiences.
Hawaii Opera Theatre presents

Eugene Onegin

by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

In Russian with English Supertitles
Premiered at the Malyi Theatre, Moscow, Russia on March 17, 1879

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This production of Eugene Onegin is a co-production of Hawaii Opera Theatre and The Atlanta Opera.

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Eugene Onegin .................... David Templeton
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Olga .............................. Elena Bocharova
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**Opera for Everyone intern
ACT I, Scene 1. In the garden of a Russian country estate, the widowed Madame Larina sits with her loyal servant Filipevna and listens as her two daughters, Olga and Tatiana, sing a love song that reminds the older women of their youth. Peasants enter singing and dancing to celebrate the harvest. But the shy Tatiana finds no pleasure in their festivities. She prefers the fantasy world of romantic novels. Her interest is piqued, however, by the arrival of Olga’s suitor, the poet Lenski, and his worldly friend, Eugene Onegin. After a bit of initial awkwardness, Lenski professes his love for Olga. A bored Onegin takes Tatiana for a stroll and inquires if she doesn’t find life in the country tiresome. The romantic young woman is flustered and upset by the handsome Onegin and finds it difficult to respond to his questions. As night falls, the young people go inside.

ACT I, Scene 2. Later that night, Tatiana urges the servant Filipevna to tell her about love and marriage. True, she possesses all the qualities one might want in a wife, but the best he can offer is a brotherly affection. He also advises her to exhibit more control in the future; the next fellow may not be as respectful of her virtue as Onegin. Shattered and humiliated, Tatiana flees.

ACT II, Scene 1. It is many months later and a party in honor of Tatiana’s name day is being held at Madame Larina’s home. The older guests gossip while the young couples dance. Onegin dances with Tatiana, but it is clear that he is bored with country people and rural life. Peevishly, to punish his friend Lenski for dragging him to this tiresome party, he dances and flirts with Olga, who responds to his advances. A jealous Lenski confronts Onegin. Onegin challenges his friend to a duel and the enraged Lenski accepts.

ACT II, Scene 2. Lenski and his second, Zaretsky, await Onegin at dawn. As the young poet reflects sadly on his brief life and the course it has taken, Onegin arrives with his second. Standing apart, each of the young men admits privately that he has been rash and would rather not fight. But impulsive pride prevails, the duel is fought, and Lenski is fatally wounded.

ACT III, Scene 1. Onegin has spent years in exile, traveling the world seeking meaning for his life, when he meets him again at a palace ball in St. Petersburg. Bitterly, he admits that all his searching has brought him to yet another empty social function. But then he sees a beautiful woman, graceful and dignified. Who is she, he asks his cousin, Prince Gremin. The older man explains that it is Tatiana, whom Gremin married two years earlier. The prince introduces Onegin to his wife. Maintaining her poise, Tatiana excuses herself after a few polite words. Enchanted, Onegin hurries away from the ball.

ACT III, Scene 2. The Wheel of Fate has turned. It is Onegin who has written an impassioned letter begging to meet with Tatiana. She receives him at her husband’s town house, where he falls at her feet declaring his love and begging her to run away with him. How can he ask her to bring shame on her husband and herself, she asks? Although they might once have found happiness together, that is behind them. In the face of Onegin’s ardent pleas, Tatiana prays for strength and finds it. She exits, leaving the distraught Onegin alone.
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Peter Dean Beck
Set & Lighting Designer

Peter Dean Beck has designed scenery and/or lighting for close to two hundred productions around the country. During his seventeen previous seasons with Hawaii Opera Theatre, he has designed the sets for thirty productions and the lighting for forty-six, among them: The Tales of Hoffmann, Tristan und Isolde, Elektra, Macbeth, L’Italiana in Algeri, Don Giovanni, and Samson and Delilah. Among his other opera credits are Falstaff, Turandot, Manon, Madama Butterfly, Hansel and Gretel, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and Roméo et Juliette for such companies as Atlanta Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Virginia Opera, and Chautauqua Opera. His musical theater credits include West Side Story, Gyspy and Dolls, Candida, The King and I, and Fiddler on the Roof. For Eugene Ballet, he designed Firebird, Petrushka, and Swan Lake. He recently did a double bill of Le Rossignol and Cavalleria rusticana for Sakai City Opera in Japan (built and painted by HOT Scene Shop) and The Indigo Girls Project for Atlanta Ballet.

Elena Bocharova
Mezzo-Soprano (Olga)

Russian-born mezzo-soprano Elena Bocharova made her San Francisco Opera debut in 1999 during the Ring Festival, as Flosshilde in Das Rheingold and Göttterdammerung. With SF Opera she has also sung in productions of Louise, Lucia, Wozzeck, The Tsar’s Bride, Rigoletto, Parsifal, and Simon Boccanegra. With Western Opera Theater she sang in La Traviata, and as Dorabella in Così Fan Tutte, and with the San Francisco Opera Centre she sang Endimione in La Calisto and the Third Lady in The Magic Flute. In addition, she is an active concert singer and last season made her debut on the distinguished Schwabacher Recital Series of the San Francisco Opera Center. Upcoming engagements include Seattle Opera’s Carmen as Mercedes and her New York City Opera debut as Carmen.

Dorothy Byrne
Mezzo-Soprano (Filipievna)

Dorothy Byrne is equally comfortable on the opera, oratorio, and musical comedy stages. She has appeared with the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Mrs. MacLean in Susannah, Mrs. Olsen in Street Scene, the Mayor’s Wife in Jenůfa, Gertrude in Roméo et Juliette, The Monitor in Suor Angelica, and the Baroness in Candide. With Opera Theatre of St. Louis she has performed Gertrude in Hamlet, Emilia in Otello, and the roles of Venere and Dorilla in Goehr’s Arianna. She has appeared with Minnesota Opera as Cecilia in Little Women; with Boston Lyric Opera as the Marquise in Daughter of the Regiment; with Lyric Opera of Kansas City as Katsia in The Mikado; with Hawaii Opera Theatre as the Page in Salome, and Nicklausse and the Mother’s Voice in Les Contes d’Hoffmann; with Des Moines Metro Opera as the Secretary in The Consul, and Public Opinion in Orpheus in the Underworld; and with Kentucky Opera as Mrs. Ot in Susannah. Upcoming engagements include Clementine in Bluebeard with Glimmerglass Opera.

Judith Christin
Mezzo-Soprano (Madame Larina)

Judith Christin has performed over one hundred roles with leading opera companies throughout the United States, including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, Santa Fe Opera and others. Ms. Christin began the 2002-2003 season by singing her premiere performances of Mrs. Lovett in Sweeney Todd at the Lyric Opera of Chicago opposite Bryn Terfel. She also continues her relationship with Seiji Ozawa’s Saito Kinen Festival for performances of Zita in Gianni Schicchi in Japan in the spring. Later in the season, she returns to San Francisco Opera for performances of Mamma Lucia in Cavalleria rusticana, Gertrude Stein in The Mother of Us All, and The Forester’s Wife in The Cunning Little Vixen.

Philip Cokorinos
Bass-Baritone (Prince Gremin)

Philip Cokorinos is currently in his thirteenth season with the Metropolitan Opera. Highlights of his Met career include his appearance as Masetto in the 1990 “Live from the Met” telecast of Don Giovanni and his participation in the world premiere of John Corigliano’s The Ghosts of Versailles. As Leporello in Don Giovanni, he has appeared with Opera Pacific, Michigan Opera, Atlanta Opera and others. He has sung Basilio at Michigan Opera and at Sacramento Opera,
Osmin in *The Abduction from the Seraglio* and Mustafa in *L’Italiana in Algeri* with Syracuse Opera and Raimbaud in *Le Comte Ory* with L’Opéra Française de New York. Mr. Cokorinos made his Carnegie Hall debut with the Manhattan Philharmonic and appeared there in numerous diverse roles with The Opera Orchestra of New York. Most recently, he made his first appearance in Japan as soloist in Berlioz’s *L’Enfant du Christ*.

**Vera Danchenko-Stern**

**Russian Diction Coach**

Vera Danchenko-Stern was born into a family of professional musicians and started her musical education at the age of 5. She graduated from the prestigious Gnessin Institute of Music in Moscow as a solo pianist, teacher, accompanist and vocal coach. Her career in Russia, the United States, Canada and worldwide as accompanist and chamber pianist has spanned thirty-five years. After moving to Washington, D.C. in 1990 she participated in the production of several operas with the Washington Opera as a Russian diction coach, including *The Tsar’s Bride* by Rimsy-Korsakov (1994), *Boris Godunov* by Musorgsky (1998) and *The Queen of Spades* by Tchaikovsky (2002). She also worked with maestro Yuri Temirkanov and the chorus of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra for the U.S. premiere of *Ivan the Terrible* by Prokofiev. Ms. Danchenko-Stern currently serves on the faculty of the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore and the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

**George Dyer**

**Tenor (Lenksi)**

George Dyer is a regular guest of opera companies throughout North America. Recent engagements include Tamino in Die Zauberflöte for Opera Carolina, Alfredo in *La Traviata* for Opera Columbus and Piedmont Opera, Lenski in *Eugene Onegin*, Tybalt in *Romeo et Juliette* for the Utah Opera and Edmonton Opera, Ralph Rakestraw for New York City Opera, Edmonton Opera and Piedmont Opera, the title role in *Faust* for the Harrisburg Symphony, and a notable debut in Chicago at the Auditorium Theater in Noel Coward’s opera *After the Ball*. Future engagements include a return to Utah Opera as Cassio in *Otello*, Opera Columbus as Tamino, and Piedmont Opera as Nanki-Poo. He has appeared in concert and opera throughout the state of Utah, including appearances as tenor soloist in performances of Handel’s *Messiah* and a program of works by Rogers and Hammerstein with the Utah Symphony. Mr. Dyer is a graduate of Utah Opera’s Young Artists Program, and has been a national finalist in the San Francisco Opera’s Merola Program auditions and district finalist in the Metropolitan Opera auditions.

**Beebe Freitas**

**HOT Associate Artistic Director**

A graduate of Oberlin College, Ms. Freitas received her Master’s Degree from Boston University and studied at Juilliard where she was choral accompanist. Ms. Freitas has performed with such renowned soloists as Yo Yo Ma, bass virtuoso Edgar Meyer and with the Tokyo String Quartet. She has recorded with clarinetist David Shifrin. Ms. Freitas is currently a member of the faculty at the University of Hawai’i and has been with HOT since 1966, from 1984-89 as Artistic Director. She is also organist at Punahou School and First Presbyterian Church. In 2002, she was named the National Society of Arts and Letters Honororee of the Year.

**Matthew Lau**

**Bass (Zaretski)**

Last season Matthew Lau’s busy schedule included singing Basilio in *The Barber of Seville* with Nashville Opera, Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola* with Providence Opera, Nourabad in *The Pearl Fishers* with Portland Opera, and Rambaldo in *La Ronde* with Atlanta. He recently sang the title role in *The Marriage of Figaro* with Des Moines Metro Opera, Lt. Ratcliff in *Billy Budd* with Seattle Opera, and Sulpice in *Daughter of the Regiment* with Arizona Opera. Mr. Lau has sung over twenty roles with New York City Opera and has appeared in the last three seasons with Lyric Opera of Chicago. His career includes engagements with Sarasota Opera, Philadelphia Opera, Denver Opera, Kentucky Opera, Opera Omaha, Austin Lyric Opera, Nashville Opera and Minnesota Opera.

**Gregg Lizenbery**

**Choreographer**

Gregg Lizenbery’s distinguished career began with the original Utah Repertory Dance Theatre. He...
later was co-founder, co-director and principal dancer with the Bill Evans Dance Company. He is a Certified Movement Analyst (CMA) and participated in the National Endowment for the Arts' Artists-in-Education program for several years. He continues to perform with the mainland company, Dr. Schaffer and Mr. Stern Dance Ensemble, and Honolulu's Tau Dance Theatre. The Hawaii State Dance Council recognized him with the 1999 Excellence in Performance Award. He is currently a Professor, Director and Graduate Chair of the dance program in the Department of Theatre and Dance at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa. His video documentary, "HeartBeats of a DanceMaker," about the renowned African American choreographer Donald McKayle, will premiere on Hawaii Public Television, Wednesday, February 5, at 8:00 pm.

**Dejan Miladinovic**
Director

Dejan Miladinovic is Director of Opera at the University of Southern California. He was, until recently, Artistic Director of the National Theater of Belgrade, where he has realized over ninety productions including standard repertory and extensive work in repertory theater. In addition, he also composes music for theater productions, writes librettos, and creates stage designs. In North America, he has earned critical and popular acclaim directing productions for The Dallas Opera, Seattle Opera, San Diego Opera, New York City Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, Opera Pacific, Opera Festival of New Jersey, and other leading opera companies. This season, he will direct Le Nozze di Figaro for Atlanta Opera and Rigoletto for the Florentine Opera of Milwaukee, and his new production of Il Trovatore for Michigan Opera Theater and Opera Pacific. This new production of Eugene Onegin for Hawaii Opera Theatre will be presented by Atlanta Opera in 2004, where he will also direct Aida. He was born into a family of artists: his father was Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the National Opera in Belgrade and his mother was a leading mezzo-soprano. He is a graduate of the Academy for Theatre in Belgrade, and also served as Artistic Director of the National Opera in Novi Sad, Yugoslavia.

**Gretchen Mueller**
Stage Manager

Ms. Mueller has stage managed for San Francisco Opera, Seattle Opera, Banff School of Fine Arts, and fourteen seasons at Hawaii Opera Theatre. Her production stage management credits include Washington Opera, Dallas Opera, Skylight Opera Theatre, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Wolf Trap, Tanglewood and a variety of other small opera companies. During her career, she has worked on two productions of War and Peace, two productions of The King Cycle, as well as several Russian works such as Boris and Kishwanka. She served as Company Manager, Stage Manager and Technical Liaison for International Attractions' tours of The Rustavi Company of Tbilisi, Georgia and of The Peking Opera Company of Chongqing, China. Ms. Mueller is a graduate of Harvard with a Bachelor's in Fine Arts and a minor in Physics.

Nola A. Nāhulu
Choral Director

This is Ms. Nāhulu's twelfth season as Choral Director with HOT and her 17th season with Hawaii Youth Opera Chorus as Executive and Artistic Director. A native of Waiʻanae, Oahu, she serves as Choral Director for the Pearl Harbor Hawaiian Civic Club and the Kawaihaʻo Church. She is a lecturer at the University of Hawaii's Mānoa in Hawaiian Choral Music and Director of Kawaiolanaupukaiko, an a capella vocal ensemble whose goal is to perpetuate Hawaiian Choral Music. She is past-president of the Executive Board of the Hawai'i Chapter of the American Choral Directors' Association.

James Price
Tenor (Tríquet)

James Price is a second-year member of HOT's Mae Z. Orvis Opera Studio. His past roles with Hawaii Opera Theatre include Ein Sklave in Salome, as well as King Kaspar in Amahl and the Night Visitors, and Le Chat in L'Enfant et les Sortilèges with the Orvis Opera Studio. He has sung in the opera chorus since 2001. In last year's Hawaii NATS Competition, he placed First in Class II and Second in Class IV. This past fall, he sang in the Hawaii Public Radio/Lotte Lehmann Foundation Art Song Contest Winner's Recital, and performed a comprimario role in DePaul Opera's Un'innocenza di Peppea. Mr. Price is currently pursuing a Master's of Music Degree in Vocal Performance at DePaul University on scholarship.
Helen E. Rodgers
Costumer

Ms. Rodgers is happy to return to HOT for her second season as Resident Costumer. Recent work includes costume design for the Wild West version of Don Pasquale for the San Diego Opera, directed by David Cately. Her work at Chautauqua Opera has encompassed over 30 designs including the world premiere of Wagner's A Cloakroom Trilogy. Formerly resident costume designer for Sarasota Opera, her designs there include the American premieres of La Fille de Perle, Mekhanka, La Wally, and Halka. Other projects include Tsar Saltan at Opera Festival of New Jersey, the world premiere of Stephen Paulus' Summer for the Berkshire Opera, and associate costume design for Carmen and My Fair Lady at Paper Mill Playhouse. Other credits include New York City Opera, Canadian Opera, New Orleans Opera, Utah Festival Opera, Opera Delaware, Virginia Opera, Opera Memphis, Wolf Trap Opera, Miami City Ballet, Florida Studio Theatre, and Coconut Grove Playhouse.

William Fred Scott
Conductor

Under the artistic leadership of William Fred Scott, The Atlanta Opera has become one of the most respected regional companies in the country. Performing to capacity audiences in Atlanta's 4500-seat Fox Theatre, the company has not only produced the masterworks of Mozart, Verdi, Puccini and Strauss, but also Gershwin's Of The I Sing and Britten's

Albert Horrige. Mr. Scott has also continued a more than twenty-year association with The Atlanta Symphony, as conductor of the annual series of Christmas concerts begun by the late Robert Shaw. He is a much sought-after lecturer in the Atlanta musical community and a frequent guest conductor in opera companies across the country. His European conducting debut was made at the Theatre of the Estates in Prague, conducting Mozart's Marriage of Figaro. Scott divides his time between a home near Atlanta and a cottage in Maine.

Richard Stead
Wig & Make-up Designer

Mr. Stead has been Wigmaster at The San Francisco Opera where he won an Emmy Nomination. His credits include Minnesota Opera, Netherlands Opera, Royal Shakespeare Company, Central City Opera, Utah Opera, Boston Opera, American Conservatory Theatre, Spoleto Festival USA, Bolshoi Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Ballet Hawaii, film and television. He was on the faculty of San Francisco State University and University of California. Mr. Stead operates his own wig and make-up company in San Francisco. This season, he celebrates his 21st consecutive season with HOT.

Aimee Willis
Soprano (Tatyana)

Most recently, Ms. Willis sang the role of the Countess in Le Nozze di Figaro at Hawaii Opera Theatre, Elisabetta in Don Carlo at the Arizona Opera and Leonora in Il Trovatore with the Nashville Opera. She will be following her appearance at Hawaii Opera Theatre in Eugene Onegin with her debut in the title role in Salome at the The Atlanta Opera. During the next season, Ms. Willis is scheduled for returns to Arizona Opera as Leonora in Il Trovatore and The Atlanta Opera as Tatyana in their production of Eugene Onegin.

David Templeton
Baritone (Eugene Onegin)

David Templeton has attracted considerable attention in roles ranging from the title role in Don Giovanni...
Bravo

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