



The Hugo Kauder Society presents

Merlin: A Fantastical Opera

Composed by Hugo Kauder with a libretto by Rudolf Pannwitz

To be performed in a staged concert at 5 p.m. on June 9 2013
Trinity Lutheran Church . 292 Orange Street . New Haven, CT

Music Direction: Adrian Slywotzky
Stage Direction: Beth Greenberg
Lighting Design: Jamie Burnett

CAST

Merlin — Samuel Levine, tenor
Viviane/Mutter — Emily Marvosh, contralto
Young Merlin — Toby Newman, mezzo-soprano
Pendragon/Uterpendragon — Christopher Herbert, baritone
Blasius/Gavan — Anthony Webb, tenor
Vortigern — Issac Grier, bass-baritone

Tickets and Information: www.hugokauder.org
Contact: Rona Richter, Manager at rona@hugokauder.org

— PRESS MATERIALS —



The Hugo Kauder Society proudly presents *Merlin: A Fantastical Opera*.

Composed by Hugo Kauder with a libretto by Rudolf Pannwitz, completed ca. 1964

To be performed in a staged concert at 5 pm on Sunday, June 9, 2013

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Merlin

The Hugo Kauder Society will mark the 125th anniversary of Kauder's birth by presenting the world premiere of *Merlin*, Kauder's only opera, in New Haven on Sunday, June 9, 2013. *Merlin* is the story of a young man's search for truth and wisdom as he journeys through the fantastical kingdom of King Arthur. Recalling the mythology that inspired Richard Wagner and the magical world of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, *Merlin* is an innovative amalgam of musical styles and theatrical genres.

"*Merlin* wonderfully illustrates Kauder's style," says Norman Dee, a former composition student under Kauder. A collaboration between Kauder and the German writer-philosopher Rudolf Pannwitz (1881-1969), *Merlin* integrates the theater of fantasy into Kauder's distinctive neo-romantic tonality. The opera pays homage to romanticism while summoning the more distant harmonic world of Renaissance composers. Out of this inventive fusion emerges the world of *Merlin*, created through both story and music, which establishes from the beginning a background of times ancient and spectral.

Hugo Kauder

Hugo Kauder (1888-1972) was a prolific chamber music composer who began his career in Vienna and fled to New York when the Nazis rose to power. While working in the United States, he developed a distinctive contrapuntal sound based on a double scale of his own devising. At a time when many believed that Western tonality had run its course, Kauder's more than 200 instrumental works and 100 vocal works helped to expand upon traditional tonality rather than deny its relevance. The Hugo Kauder Society hopes to share Kauder's music with the next generation of musicians and listeners through innovative productions and competitions.

The Hugo Kauder Society's Production of *Merlin*

It is our pleasure to present the world premiere of this recently unearthed and restored opera at Trinity Lutheran Church, one of New Haven's finest examples of High Victorian Gothic. Veteran New York City Opera Stage Director, Beth Greenberg, and Associate Conductor of the Boston Youth Symphony, Adrian Slywotzky, will direct this semi-staged concert production featuring six promising young singers supported by two choruses. Large-scale projections designed by artist Jamie Burnett will contribute to the ethereal atmosphere of the story. Translated elements of the German libretto will be projected as part of the atmosphere.

The premiere of *Merlin* is made possible thanks to the support of the Connecticut Office of the Arts, The Victor Herbert Foundation, the Austrian Cultural Forum, and Friends of the Hugo Kauder Society. The opera is a work of both the past and the future, reimagining the mythical themes and the music of the past in what will be a new and visionary production.



Hugo Kauder (Composer), devoted his life (1888-1972) to composing, teaching, playing, and writing about music. Born June 9, 1888 in Tobitschau, Moravia, now Tovacov, Czech Republic, Kauder took violin lessons with the local teacher, who eventually dismissed him when he had “taught him everything he knew.” These lessons were his only formal training in music.

In 1905, Kauder moved to Vienna to study engineering but often skipped school with classmate Egon Lustgarten to study scores in the Imperial Court Library. Of particular interest to him were several volumes of *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich* (Monuments of Music in Austria), mainly works of Flemish composers of the 15th and 16th centuries. From 1911 to 1917, Kauder played violin in the Wiener Tonkünstler Orchester under such conductors as Ferdinand Loewe, Franz Schalk, Arthur Nikisch, and Richard Strauss. There he began a lifelong friendship with Dutch horn player Willem Valkenier (1887-1986), inspiring his numerous horn compositions.

From 1917 to 1922, Kauder was the violist of the Gottesmann Quartet. In 1919, he met poet and philosopher Rudolf Pannwitz (1881-1969). Though he could not play an instrument, Pannwitz composed settings of classic poems, following his idea — quite unconventional at the time — that composers should find and reveal the music latent in texts, rather than creating the musical setting at will. Kauder adopted and elaborated this approach to vocal music and regarded Pannwitz as a life-long mentor.

For the rest of his life, in Vienna and later in New York, Kauder was self-employed as a composer and teacher of violin, music theory, and composition. As part of his efforts to bring his music to life, he conducted a chorus and a chamber ensemble of students and friends (including his son Otto) who studied and performed the classics as well as his own compositions.



In August 1922, contemporary European composers met in Salzburg, Austria.

Hugo Kauder stands to the far right. The illustrious circle included, from left to right, Karl Weigl, Karl Alwin, Wilhelm Grosz, Arthur Bliss, Paul Hindemith, Rudolf Reti, Ethel Smyth, Paul Amadeus Pisk, Willem Pijper, Egon Lustgarten, Egon Wellesz, Anton Webern, Karl Horwitz, Hugo Kauder.

Photo courtesy of The Lahr von Leititz Academy & Archive

MERLIN CAST

Merlin — Samuel Levine

Viviane/Mutter — Emily Marvosh

Young Merlin — Toby Newman

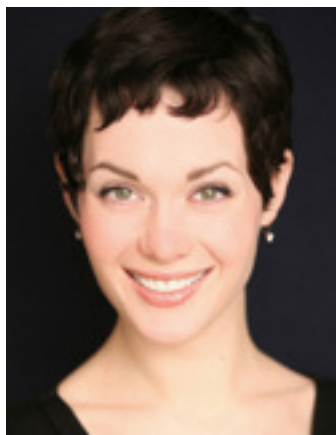
Pendragon/Uterpendragon — Christopher Herbert

Blasius/Gavan — Anthony Webb

Vortigern — Issac Grier



Samuel Levine (Merlin) — American tenor Samuel Levine, acclaimed for his “powerful and fluid” singing, thrilling dramatic presentation, and outstanding musical intelligence, is a recent graduate of the Yale Opera Studio. Samuel has been recognized by many prestigious competitions, including Opera Index., Inc., The Licia-Albanese Puccini Foundation, Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Southeast Region, Career Bridges Foundation, Anna Sosenko Assist Trust, and the Irma M. Cooper Opera Columbus Competition, and the 2012 winner of the St. Bonaventure Performance Prize from the Liederkrantz Foundation.



Emily Marvosh (Viviane/Mutter) — Emily Marvosh, contralto, has been gaining recognition as a skilled performer of oratorio and opera. Possessed of a “flexible technique and ripe color,” and demonstrating “smooth, apparently effortless vocal display,” she has recently been heard as a soloist with the Handel and Haydn Society, Boston Lyric Opera (Rusalka), Longwood Opera (The Barber of Seville), and Intermezzo Chamber Opera (world premiere of James Yannatos’s Rocket’s Red Blare). She holds degrees from Central Michigan University and Boston University.



Toby Newman (Young Merlin) — Toby Newman is a versatile artist whose work spans the operatic, concert and new music repertoire. In the world of new music, Ms. Newman works regularly with Meredith Monk and has sung with Ms. Monk on multiple recordings and concerts at Carnegie Hall among many other settings.



Christopher Herbert (Pendragon/Uterpendragon) — Christopher Dylan Herbert is a musician based in New York City. A classical baritone, he performs concerts and opera throughout the United States and Europe, principally with his ensemble, New York Polyphony. Hailed by Opera News for his “exceptional” singing, Christopher has also received acclaim for his “smooth baritone voice,” his “consistently warm sound” and his “versatile dramatic abilities.” He holds a B.A. in Music and Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations from Yale University and an M.A. in Middle Eastern Studies from Harvard University.



Anthony Webb (Blasius/Gavan) — Anthony Webb is quickly distinguishing himself as a young tenor to watch. Opera News lauded his Pirelli (Sweeney Todd) with Opera Theatre of St. Louis, declaring that he “showed fine comic flair and a well-schooled voice as the Irish-Italian huckster Pirelli.” Mr. Webb is a 2010 District Winner of the Metropolitan National Council Auditions.



Isaac Grier (Vortigern) — Young American bass-baritone Isaac Grier is rapidly making a name for himself in the world of opera. His uniquely rich voice has the depth, color and easy low notes of a bass combined with the ring and upper extension of a baritone. A native of Flint, Michigan, Grier received his Bachelor of Music degree from Xavier University in New Orleans and his Master of Music at the Manhattan School of Music in New York City.



Beth Greenberg (Stage Director), is renowned for her work with the New York City Opera. For the Lincoln Center company she has directed original mainstage productions of *Tales of Hoffmann* and *Turandot*, as well as revivals including *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Tosca*, *La Traviata*, *Intermezzo* and *La Boheme*. Across the river, aboard an oil tanker moored in Red Hook, Brooklyn, she recently directed the site-specific *Il Tabarro*.

Beth Greenberg has earned a solid reputation for her collaborations with contemporary composers. She works on all phases of a new show's development, from early libretto and workshop readings to fully-staged productions.



Adrian Slywotzky (Musical Director), was the founding conductor of the Yale Medical Symphony Orchestra, and served as Music Director of the New Haven Chamber Orchestra from 2007 to 2010. He holds a Master's degree in Orchestral Conducting from the Yale School of Music, where he studied with Shinik Hahm

Adrian holds a BA in Architecture from Yale College, where he studied violin with Kyung Yu, and an MM in Violin Performance from the Yale School of Music, where he studied with Wendy Sharp.



Jamie Burnett (Lighting Designer, Master electrician, Technical consultant) is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University in Theater Production Design. His Connecticut resume includes tenure as Master Electrician at Long Wharf Theater followed by Technical Director/Lighting Designer for the Educational Center for the Arts in the 80s and 90s, designing 100s of productions in the Arts Hall and the Little Theater. He is a consultant, designer, special events planner, and film/video Gaffer as well as a licensed electrical contractor.

In 2005 he was recipient of the New Haven Arts Award. Jamie is a licensed Electrical Contractor and owns his own electrical contracting and special event business, Luminous Environments LLC, specializing in consulting, design, renovation and installation of theater and studio lighting and rigging systems.