



Press Release

**Opera51 Presents Mozart's *The Magic Flute*
August 14 and 15, 2021 in Concord, MA**

Mozart's perennial favorite and sparkling gem *The Magic Flute* will be presented in two concert-version performances by Opera51's talented group of volunteer musicians in fundraiser performances in Concord on August 14 and 15, 2021. After a long pandemic hiatus, the company is thrilled to be able to perform live again! Past attendees have consistently praised the high artistic quality of Opera51 productions, with full orchestra and projected English titles, and these performances are sure to please. Diligent precautions are being taken to minimize COVID-19 risks for audience and performers alike, and we hope many will decide the risks of attending are minimal enough to permit venturing out to enjoy this delightful music.

Bowing to pandemic and summer weather constraints, these performances depart from Opera51 tradition and are presented in concert version with minimal costumes and no sets or staging, but the cast still physically interacts to help convey the story and the musical quality shines through as always. Performers are having a wonderful time working together in rehearsals to get this down!

For COVID-19 protection, all company participants have been fully vaccinated and will also be masked when possible; the hall has good air handling and purification facilities; children under 12 are not allowed to attend; and there will be no food service or close gathering in the lobby. Other details and latest information about our pandemic-related policies are posted on www.opera51.org.

Set in ancient Egypt, the plot opens with prince Tamino nearly being done in by a dragon but saved by a trio of ladies in waiting to the Queen of the Night. He meets Papageno, a bird man with pan pipes and a familiar tune, and comic relief abounds. The queen comes to see the prince, and taken by his handsomeness entices him to undertake freeing her beautiful daughter Pamina, held captive by the nefarious priest Sarastro. Tamino and Papageno set out to confront the evil priest, guided by three young spirits, only to learn that the story is twisted and he in fact leads a group of high-minded souls (think the Masons, ascendant when Mozart wrote this in 1791) and is protecting Pamina from the (actually) evil queen. A ritual test of resolve nearly breaks the bond between the two young lovers, but they prevail and joyfully are admitted to the temple group. Papageno finally finds his true love Papagena and all ends in bliss - except for the vanquished queen of course!

Conducted by Alan Yost, *The Magic Flute* will be sung in German with projected English titles. Company members are all from the greater Boston area, many from metro-west. In addition to seasoned principal singers, the company has been able to give valuable performing opportunities to numerous talented young artists in the early years of their singing careers as well as many amateur singers and players who just love performing great operas with kindred souls.

Begun in 2007, this is Opera51's fourteenth annual major fundraiser production benefitting operation of The Performing Arts Center at 51 Walden in Concord, MA. This facility is a mainstay of community arts programs in Concord and environs, and is worthy of support!

Magic Flute performances are Saturday evening August 14 at 8:00 PM and Sunday afternoon August 15 at 2:00 PM. Advance general admission tickets are \$25 and available on-line at www.opera51.org or by calling 978-369-7911.

For further information, see the websites www.opera51.org and www.51walden.org, or contact Carole Wayland at 978-369-7911 or director@51walden.org.