

UMRA U NEWSLETTER

A Communication of the University of Minnesota Retirees Association

MARCH 2011

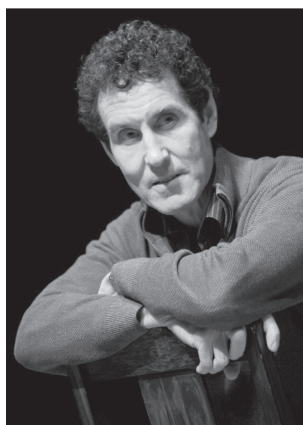
Explore some 'sacred cows' with David Walsh, director, University Opera Theater

Imagine you are directing an opera. You start with wonderful music and great singers, but what do you do next? How do you conceive of the story? Is there only one way to stage each opera?

Some operas seem rooted firmly in a particular time and place. But others are less tied down; they deal with universal themes—love, anger, loyalty, betrayal, courage, deception, flattery, and foolishness.

Sometimes a strictly historical setting can seem antiquated and a more contemporary setting may be more relevant to particular audience members ...but always? ...sometimes? ...never?

Our March speaker, David Walsh, director of the University Opera Theater, in his talk



“Tampering with Opera’s Sacred Cows,” will speak with us about how he approaches these questions as he previews the Opera Theater’s performance of *Die Fledermaus*.

Professor Walsh graduated with honors in political science and economics at the University of Toronto. One might ask: How does one get from political science and economics to opera?

For David Walsh, it all started when he was 13 — when “my dad brought home a recording of *La Boheme*. I knew nothing

about opera, but I virtually wore out the recording. The turning point came when I was an extra in *Turandot*. Strong vocalism and orchestra, sets and costumes, and the backstage action utterly fascinated me. I knew that night: ‘I have to do this! But I can’t sing, so what can I do?’”

After finishing his first degree, Walsh went on to study theater science at the University of Toronto. Thus began a distinguished international career, first as stage manager and ultimately as director at a number of the world’s leading opera houses including the Canadian Opera, the English National Opera, Frankfurt Opera, de Nederlandse Opera, Brussels Opera, the Royal Opera (Covent Garden), the Paris Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Vancouver Opera, the Scottish Opera, Calgary Opera, and L’Opera Francais de New York. He directed *Der Fliegende Hollander* in Shanghai, the first-ever production of Wagner in China.

Since coming to the University of Minnesota, Professor Walsh has directed operas by Strauss, Susa, Britten, Offenbach, Poulenc, Puccini, Mozart, Weill, Monteverdi, Stravinsky, and Aldridge.

Special note might be made of two Opera Theater productions: *La Boheme*, a production staged jointly with the University of Minnesota Duluth Department of Music, and *Elmer Gantry*, a Minnesota premiere, which featured a chorus of talented high school students.

Opera is full of passion—come experience, with David Walsh, a passion for opera.

—Craig Swan, Program Committee

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

MARCH
LUNCHEON MEETING

Tuesday
March 22, 2011
11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Featured Speaker

David Walsh, director of the University Opera Theater, “Tampering with Opera’s Sacred Cows,”

Location

Conference Room ABC
Campus Club, Fourth Floor
Coffman Memorial Union,
East Bank Campus, U of M

Cost

Prepayment: \$12 per person;
\$14 at door for reservations that
are not prepaid.

Reservation Deadline Thursday, March 17

To reserve your place(s) send a check, payable to UMRA, to March UMRA Reservations, c/o Betty Radcliffe, 806 Carla Lane, Little Canada, MN 55109. Contact her at 651-484-5676 or bpradcliffe@comcast.net.

Please honor the March 17 reservation date; if cancellations are necessary, please try to let us know by noon March 17.

Parking

Parking is available in the East River Road Garage at UMRA’s membership discount, \$5.00 for the entire day.

Board Meeting at 10 a.m.

UMRA NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Outdoor ventures at University's Cedar Creek

This month I want to share with you a University site that has been largely under the radar screen for many University faculty and staff. I refer to the Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve, located near East Bethel, about a 45-minute drive north from Minneapolis. Cedar Creek lies at the boundary between prairie and forest. It has uplands dominated by oak savanna, prairie, hardwood forest, pine forests, and abandoned agricultural fields and lowlands of ash and cedar swamps, acid bogs, marshes, and sedge meadows. Established in 1940 as the Cedar Creek Natural History Area, it was designated a National Natural Landmark by the National Park Service in 1975. In 2007 its name was changed to Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve.

Significant early research at Cedar Creek was that of Raymond Lindeman (Ph.D. in zoology, 1942) who studied the energy and nutrient balance of Cedar Bog Lake. Though he lived only to age 27, his work on the linkages among nutrient cycling, productivity, energy flow, and nutritional efficiency laid the foundation for modern ecosystem ecology. A new building, which officially opened in 2008, is named for him. The Raymond Lindeman Research and Discovery Center provides a

reception and meeting hall and laboratories to support current research activities.

Pivotal research currently ongoing at Cedar Creek is guided by Regents Professors David Tilman and Peter Reich. Tilman's studies have shown how ecosystems containing multiple species of plants thrive and survive adversities such as drought much better than those with only one or a few species. He has also documented the potential of prairie grasses as sources of renewable fuels. Reich studies how rising carbon dioxide levels affect plant growth, a process that stores carbon and works against greenhouse warming. More than 900 undergraduates have gained research experience as summer interns here, collecting data for these massive long-term research projects. An annual in-house symposium provides opportunities for sharing project hypotheses and results.

Avid bird watchers should be alert for birding tours at Cedar Creek where a broad variety of species can be seen. Of special interest is the oak savanna that hosts the largest known colony of red-headed woodpeckers in Minnesota.

To learn more about Cedar Creek, visit the website at www.cedarcreek.umn.edu/

— John Anderson, UMRA President
ander049@umn.edu or 651-489-4330

CCLRT construction under way! Expect detours when coming to campus

Construction work on the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit through campus is in progress. Recently work has begun on the Washington Avenue Bridge, and traffic is restricted to one lane in each direction. Traffic delays are to be expected.

If possible use alternate routes and allow extra time to arrive at campus destinations. For more detailed information about the project, see www.lightrail.umn.edu/ from which you can consult "Construction Information" for specifics about the impact on automobile traffic, bus routes, and pedestrian traffic. Check back periodically to keep abreast of traffic changes. And, take a look at the website's Construction Update (PDF) if you are curious about the projected appearance of the completed project.

Summertime fun!

When the snow finally relinquishes its hold on Minnesota, we can look forward to a special reception that UMRA is planning for early summer in conjunction with the opening of a special exhibit at the Goldstein Gallery. The exhibit features handcrafted textiles of India and its neighbors with artisan samples collected by UMRA member Donald Clay Johnson. Supported by an UMRA Professional Development Grant, Johnson traveled to India for his research. At the reception he will give a talk and offer comments as members and guests tour the exhibit. Light refreshments will be served.

We hope that you will not only attend, but also that you will invite fellow retirees and soon-to-retire U faculty and staff. Perhaps exposure to our activities will prompt them to look forward to their retirement when they become eligible to join UMRA!

Watch for news of the date for this reception.

U Opera Theatre tickets, April 7–10, two-for-one for UMRA members

U of M School of Music invites you to enjoy a breezy presentation of Johann Strauss Jr.'s effervescent operetta *Die Fledermaus (The Bat)*, updated to the Hollywood glitz and glamour of the late 1920s with hilarious results!

Performances in Ted Mann Concert Hall begin at 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, and at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday. David Walsh, University Opera Theatre director and School of Music professor, will direct; Mark Russell Smith, School of Music professor and artistic director of orchestral studies, will conduct. Pre-opera lobby discussion with the director begins 45 minutes before each performance.

General admission tickets are \$22, but the two-for-one tickets offered to University students, faculty, and staff, are also available to retirees and alumni. Call 612-624-2345 or visit www.opera.umn.edu for tickets.

Coming events for your UMRA calendar

UMRA has a full schedule ahead right into summer. Please take note of these events and mark your calendars.

April 26

Our luncheon speaker in April will be Tom Stinson talking about the Minnesota Economy. Professor Stinson is the person responsible for making periodic forecasts for Minnesota Tax Revenue, so he is highly qualified to tell us about whether our economy is making progress toward recovery!

Also April 26

Following the April luncheon, at approximately 2 p.m., plan to attend a special review of recent tax law changes and how they affect retirement investments and estate planning. The speaker will be provided by the University of Minnesota Foundation. UMRA members are encouraged to invite active University faculty and staff who are anticipating retirement to attend this review. They, too, may be interested in learning how they might shape their retirement investments and learn more about UMRA as well.

May 24

Our annual meeting and celebratory event in May is an opportunity for UMRA members to honor and celebrate with Dr. Susan Hagstrum and President Robert Bruininks as they enter a new phase of their lives. You won't want to miss this occasion! Save the date. Details will follow in the April and May UMRA Newsletters.

You are invited to attend a traditional English tea and Centennial fashion review

The University Women's Club and the Campus Club celebrate their 100th birthdays together this year with a Centennial Tea and Historical Fashion Show.

Tuesday, March 15 at 3 p.m. the Campus Club will serve a traditional English tea with a selection of finger sandwiches, scones, cake, and pastries, and of course, tea. The program will include a fashion show of dresses, suits, coats, and accessories from each decade that the Campus Club and the University Women's Club have been operating, from 1911 to the present day. All members of the University community are welcome. \$18 per person. **Reservations are required by March 11**, with payment in advance. Please call 612-626-7788 to reserve your place.

— Phil Platt, Marketing and Membership Director

URVC seeks participants for research study: the effects of aspirin on aging

University research studies are one of the most worthwhile projects the University Retirees Volunteer Center supports. By providing participant subjects, URVC has served both graduate students and faculty in their research. The results of many of these studies benefit all of us as well. Now we have a national study that will surely benefit each of us: ASPREE (Aspirin for Reducing Events in the Elderly).

ASPREE will study "healthy" individuals, age 70 and over, to determine whether low dose aspirin can prevent dementia and physical disability. Participants will be seen annually for a series of cognitive and physical assessments (for approximately 1 hour) with follow-up phone contacts between visits. The appointments will take place at the Phalen Village Clinic in St. Paul and is conducted by University of Minnesota physicians and Medical School residents.

To apply, contact the University Retirees Volunteer Center (651-457-6586) or urvc@umn.edu; or for further information, contact project directors: Alan Kagan kagan001@umn.edu or Sally Schakel sschakel1@comcast.net.

— Alan L. Kagan, Project Director,
University Retirees Volunteer Center

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McNamara Alumni Center
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200 Oak Street S.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55455-2002

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**Have you changed your
address, e-mail, or phone?**

1. Print new information below.
2. Cut out this form **and address label**.
3. Mail both to the address above.

Name _____
Address _____
City, State _____
Zip _____ Phone _____
E-mail _____
Other Info _____

Forthcoming: Events around campus to note and attend

Great Conversations:

Law as an Instrument for Social Change

April 7, 7:30 p.m., Great Hall, Coffman Union

Tickets: \$20 (\$15 for faculty, staff, students, and members of UMRA, UMAA, and MPR)

Speaker: Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland and international human rights activist, will be interviewed by U of M Law School dean, David Wippman, noted expert in human rights law.

For more information about Great Conversations, visit the College of Continuing Education website: cce.umn.edu/LearningLife. Click on 'Listen to past events' to hear audios of previous Great Conversations.

University Theater, theatre.umn.edu/events

March 31–April 3, *All's Well That Ends Well*

Kilburn Arena Theatre, Rarig Center

April 1–3, *Merchant of Venice*

Kilburn Arena Theatre, Rarig Center

April 8–16, *Oil and the Jungle*

Stoll Thrust Theatre, Rarig Center

University Libraries — andersen.lib.umn.edu/fridays

First Fridays (Presentations based on materials from the University Libraries' special collections and archives)

April 1, noon, Room 120, Andersen Library

“Censorship and Silence in Early Maps and Atlases and Secrecy and Censure in the History of Health Care” from James Ford Bell Library and Wangensteen Historical Library of Biology and Medicine.

—Events compiled by Craig Swan, UMRA member

Reminder — you can invite friends to March lunch

Add to the fun by encouraging a fellow retiree or an about-to-retire colleague to join you for an upcoming program and let them sample UMRA's collegial luncheons as a prospective member. It's UMRA's treat! Just call in to alert us when you make your reservation; give us their names for the name tags, and help us welcome them that day.

See the latest photos in UMRA's web album;
keep current on UMRA news, programs, and discounts
with a visit to the association's new and ever-improving
web site: www.umn.edu/umra
