

CHICAGO HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Saturday, December 1st through Wednesday, December 5th



Chicago on Lake Michigan



Anna Netrebko in Recital

"Founded in 1891, the **Chicago Symphony Orchestra** is consistently hailed as one of the greatest orchestras in the world." cso.org

"**Chanticleer** serves as a reminder of what a mesmerizing, haunting and ethereal sound an all-male adult choir can achieve." Chicago Classical Review

Anna Netrebko: "A genuine superstar for the 21st century." Musical America

Tamara Wilson: "A young American who sings Verdi with a passion that surpasses stereotypes." NY Times

"**Alice Coote** has an amazingly supple and dramatic mezzo-soprano, capable of delivering the widest range of emotion in a smoky, powerful timbre." The Globe & Mail

"And what a joy it was to hear the stunning tenor voice of **Russell Thomas** as *Manrico*. His pairing with **Jamie Barton** (as *Azucena*) was believable and magnetic."

Cincinnati Enquirer, review of 'Il Trovatore'.

Siobhan Stagg: "One of the most beautiful voices I've ever heard." Christa Ludwig

For our annual Holiday Season in Chicago, we have expanded our usual long weekend to a **five-night** period encompassing the city's musical highlights. In addition to a pair of melodic operas at the beloved **Lyric Opera**, our program will include the sold-out **Recital** by today's reigning diva **Anna Netrebko** on the stage of the Lyric, an *all-Mozart* holiday program by the revered **Chicago Symphony Orchestra**, and **A Chanticleer Christmas** sung by the Grammy Award-winning San Francisco men's choir in the Fourth Presbyterian Church (on East Chestnut Street). Our two operas will be Giuseppe Verdi's rousing melodrama, **Il Trovatore**, replete with soaring arias, duets and ensembles; and Jules Massenet's 19th century romantic French opera, **Cendrillon** ('Cinderella'). With the Lyric's esteemed Music Director **Sir Andrew Davis** and the Italian maestro **Marco Armiliato** conducting the operas, we



Siobhan Stagg



Alice Coote

are assured of the highest musical standards for these grand but traditional productions. As all **five performances** are not-to-be-missed, we are pleased to offer this longer-than-usual Holiday Tour.

Our accommodations for **five nights** will be at the venerable **Union League Club**, located in the heart of Chicago's 'Loop' within easy access of the Art Institute, Orchestra Hall and the Lyric Opera. Established in 1879, the Union League occupies an elegant downtown building where a major collection

of 800 American artworks is displayed in the spacious public rooms. Dining facilities include the Wigwam Room (for breakfast and informal dinner), the Main Dining Room for formal lunch, the Carvery for informal lunch, and the Rendez-Vous Bar for lunch and light dinner. The Club also features an indoor swimming pool, exercise and massage rooms, and an inviting large library surrounded by important paintings. Your temporary guest card will entitle you to take advantage of the wide range of services offered by this private club.

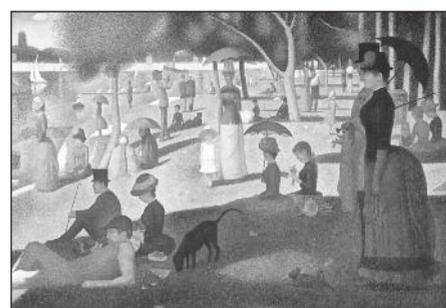
Early Saturday evening, December 1st, a **cocktail reception or pre-theatre dinner** (depending on the number in our group) will be arranged at the Club. This will be an opportunity to meet other members of the Tour.

At 7:30 pm on Saturday, our first performance will be the **Lyric Opera's** *Premiere* of Jules Massenet's **Cendrillon** in a new-to-Chicago production first mounted at the Santa Fe Opera. "An irresistible blend of wit, sensitivity and elegance" (*Lyric Opera*), Massenet's version of 'Cinderella' is not often heard today but has always struck this listener as far more inventive than Rossini's comedy, 'La Cenerentola'. The international cast will feature Australian soprano **Siobhan Stagg** in her U.S. debut as Cinderella, British 'trouser' mezzo-soprano **Alice Coote** repeating her portrayal of Prince Charming from the MET's new production this spring, American mezzo-soprano **Elizabeth Bishop** as the step-mother Mme. De la Haltière, Australian bass-baritone **Derek Walton** as Pandolfe, and Canadian coloratura soprano **Marie-Eve Munger** in the pivotal role of the Fairy Godmother. Music Director **Sir Andrew Davis** will be in charge of Massenet's scintillating score, and the staging is directed by

Laurent Pelly with sets designed by **Barbara de Limburg**. *Sung in French with English titles.*

At 3:00 pm on Sunday, December 2nd, we are among the fortunate ticket-holders for **Anna Netrebko's Recital** at the **Lyric Opera**. The glamorous Russian soprano has conquered audiences at the MET and throughout Europe's major houses with her portrayals of roles ranging from Verdi's Violetta, Lady Macbeth and Aida to Puccini's Mimi, Tosca and Manon Lescaut; the 'verismo' challenges of Giordano's Maddalena, Cilea's Adriana Lecouvreur; and now Wagner's Elsa. She is also a consummate interpreter of her native Russian songs – especially the romantic literature of Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov. Her piano accompanist will be **Malcolm Martineau**. (*Our top-price tickets have been confirmed. Program TBA*)

Monday morning, December 3rd, we have planned a visit to the **Art Institute of Chicago**, which contains priceless galleries of American and European masters. The Art Institute is the home of Georges Seurat's celebrated *La Grande Jatte*, Marc Chagall's soaring stained-glass windows, and a wealth of canvases by Monet, Renoir and Gauguin. Not to be missed are the world-renowned **68 Thorne Miniature Rooms** depicting European and American furnishings from their earliest periods up to the 1930's. The museum's gift shop is also exceptionally interesting. You will be free to enjoy your own leisure time at the Museum.



Seurat's La Grande Jatte at the Chicago Institute of Art

such celebrated passages as the Gypsies' Anvil Chorus and the 'Miserere' ensemble contrasting Leonora and Manrico's farewell to each other above the solemn incantation of the prisoners.



Tamara Wilson



Jamie Barton



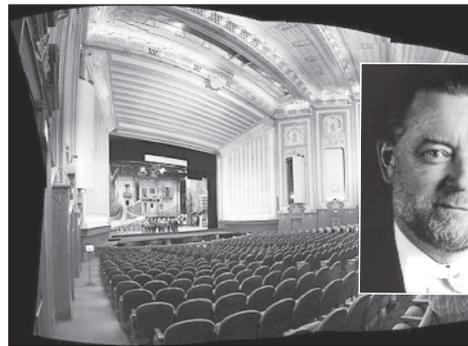
Russell Thomas

Verdi gave Leonora two of his most mellifluous arias – the opening act 'Tacea la notte placida' and especially the final act 'D'amor sull'ali rosee'. Chicago's cast of Verdi interpreters will include American soprano **Tamara Wilson** in her Lyric debut as Leonora, the MET's acclaimed mezzo-soprano **Jamie Barton** as Azucena, the dramatic American tenor **Russell Thomas** as Manrico, and Romanian baritone **George Petean** also debuting as the Count di Luna. Italian bass **Roberto Tagliavini** completes the principals as Ferrando. The conductor is **Marco Armiliato**, and the highly praised co-production with the MET and the San Francisco Opera is by the team of directors **Sir David**



A Chanticleer Christmas

Noble's biggest bookstores, and Nordstrom Rack on State Street. Wednesday afternoon, you may wish to attend a matinee at one of Chicago's outstanding repertory theatres (the Goodman, the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, and Steppenwolf).



Lyric Opera of Chicago; Sir Andrew Davis, Music Director

Early Tuesday evening, we will enjoy a pre-concert **dinner** at one of the restaurants between the Union League Club and Orchestra Hall – the **Russian Tea Room**, the **Berghoff** German restaurant, or the Italian **Tesori Trattoria**.

Tuesday evening, December 4th, we look forward to the 7:30 pm concert by the **Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO)** in **Orchestra Hall**. "CSO Concertmaster **Robert Chen** leads his fellow Orchestra members in a delightful *all-Mozart* program featuring some of the composer's most popular music: *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, *Violin Concerto No. 3*, *Flute Concerto No. 2*, and *Symphony No. 25*." Chen will be the violin soloist, and **Stefan Ragnar Höskuldsson** is the flautist.

At 7:30 pm on Wednesday evening, December 5th, our final performance will be **A Chanticleer Christmas**, an 'a capella' concert of carefully curated Christmas rarities by the extraordinary San Francisco men's choir, **Chanticleer**. We are thrilled to include this event in the intimate venue of the **Fourth Presbyterian Church** on Chicago's Magnificent Mile, as New Yorkers are well aware that the annual performance at the Metropolitan Museum is always sold out months in advance. Selections range from Renaissance composers Byrd, Praetorius and Gabrielli to arrangements of popular carols and songs. (*Chanticleer's concert last year proved to be a revelatory and favorite evening for all of our Tour members.*)

Independent departures should be on Thursday morning, December 6th.

Chicago

Price per person, based on double occupancy	\$ 3,480*
Single room supplement	\$ 685

**Our higher-than-usual price includes 5 nights and 5 performances, plus the very expensive Netrebko Recital.*