



LAGUARDIA ARTS  
Ms. Kim M. Bruno, Principal  
Ms. Bernice G. Fleischer, AP Music

## NEWS RELEASE FROM THE MUSIC STUDIO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:** Jill S. Gabbe/Jen Midgley, 212-220-4444,  
[jill.gabbe@gabbe.com](mailto:jill.gabbe@gabbe.com)/[jen.midgley@gabbe.com](mailto:jen.midgley@gabbe.com)  
Andrés Andrade, 646-296-0344, [LGAVCAA@aol.com](mailto:LGAVCAA@aol.com)

### The Opera Theater of LaGuardia Arts Music Studio Presents *Orpheus in the Underworld* – May 26 - 28, 2005

**NEW YORK**—Students in the **Opera Theater of Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts**, the only full-time, intra-curricular opera program in the world for high-school students, will present Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*, a lively parody of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, filled with beautiful melodies and light-hearted comedy.

The Opera Theater at LaGuardia Arts— the “Fame” school that has produced scores of professional actors, playwrights and directors over the years – involves 51 singers, five pianists and 30 orchestral instrumentalists – representing students from the school's Music Studio. The construction of the elaborate set design was overseen by teachers and built by students in the school's Technical Theater Studio.

Producer **Andrés Andrade**, a member of the vocal faculty at LaGuardia Arts, oversees the program, which was founded before 1951 and revived in 2002, after a brief hiatus, under Andrade and Assistant Principal of Music, **Bernice G. Fleischer**, following student demand. Since then, the Opera Theater has produced four fully staged operas, with this year's program marking the largest opera production in the school's history.

Tickets are \$15 and may be purchased at the box office on days of performances. Senior citizen discounts for matinees and group rates are also available.

“The Opera Theater gives our students a unique opportunity to perform in professionally directed opera productions,” says Fleischer. “Many of our Music & Art alumni have made lasting marks on the international opera scene.” Among the many alumni who have made a mark in the international opera world are sopranos Catherine Malfitano, Reri Grist, Julia Migenes, Esther Hinds, Grace Hinds, Patricia Brooks and Theresa Santiago, the 1987 Naumberg First Prize winner, not to mention LaGuardia Arts faculty member, Priscilla Baskerville, who won international fame with her triumphant *Porgy and Bess* at the MET; tenor Roderick Dixon; baritone Jan Opalach; and conductors James Conlon and Eve Queller.

Joining Andrade in staging “Orpheus in the Underworld” are stage director Jennifer Griesbach, conductor Joseph Meyers, and choreographer Joey R. Smith

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LaGuardia Arts has launched some of today's most successful performers, directors, designers, musicians and choreographers, among them Academy Award winner Adrien Brody, Al Pacino, Jennifer Aniston, Ellen Barkin, Lonny Price, Richard Benjamin, Dom DeLuise, Priscilla Lopez, Susan Strasburg, Jessica Walter, Lesley Ann Warren, Hal Linden, Keith David, Liza Minelli, Shari Lewis, Ben Vereen, Martin Charnin, Michael Kahn, Peter Yarrow, Wesley Snipes, Omar Epps, and countless others including recent graduates Dagmara Dominczyk, Sarah Paulson, Adrian Grenier, Marlon Wayans, Keith Nobbs, Geoffrey Arend, Alexis Cruz, and Raymond Santiago.

### **About *Orpheus in the Underworld***

In this 1874 version of Offenbach's score with libretto by Hector Crémieux and Ludovic Halévy, an ever-quarreling Orpheus and Eurydice are each carrying on extramarital flirtations. The shrewish Eurydice is bitten by a poisonous snake and carried off by the god Pluto (disguised as a shepherd) to Hades. Orpheus is rejoicing at his newfound freedom when he is commanded by Public Opinion to make his way to Hades immediately and demand his wife's return from Jupiter. Much against his will, he makes the journey. Comic hilarity ensues as Orpheus leads his wife on an unsuccessful journey back to Earth. All ends in a state of revelry as the characters find themselves enjoying the constant festivities in the underworld (including the famous *Can-Can*).

### **THEATER AND TICKET INFORMATION**

#### ***Orpheus in the Underworld***

By Jacques Offenbach, Libretto by Hector Crémieux and Ludovic Halévy

Produced by Andrés Andrade; Staged by Jennifer Griesbach

Conducted by Joseph Meyers; Choreography by Joey Smith

Admission: \$15

Thursday, May 26, 2005 at 7:30 p.m.

Friday, May 27, 2005 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 28, 2005 at 3:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Where: LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts Theater  
100 Amsterdam Avenue (at 65<sup>th</sup> Street)

For more information about this and other performances at LaGuardia High School, including our Virtual Box Office, visit our website at <http://www.laguardiahs.org>.

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