

The Oberlin Conservatory Opera Theater with the  
support of the Theater and Dance Program presents:

# Coyote Tales

Music by: Henry Mollicone  
Libretto by: Sheldon Harnick

Henry Mollicone - Conductor  
Jonathon Field - Director

8pm, November 15, 17, 18  
2pm, Nov. 19, 2000  
Hall Auditorium





# Coyote Tales

Music by Henry Mollicone  
Libretto by Sheldon Harnick

An Opera in Two Acts.

Produced by permission of E.C. Schirmer Music Company, Boston.

**Henry Mollicone**, Conductor

**Jonathon Field**, Director

**Michael Louis Grube**, Scene Designer

**Chris Flaharty**, Costume Designer

**Jen Groseth**, Lighting Designer/Lighted Props

**Alan Montgomery**, Vocal Coach, Accompanist

**Daniel Michalak**, Vocal Coach, Accompanist

**Michael Slon**, Music Preparation, Chorus Master

**Victoria Vaughan**, Assistant Director/Stage Manager

**Rick Mayfield**, Technical Director

**J.V. Jones**, Assistant Technical Director

**JoEllen Cuthbertson**, Costumer/Costume Shop Manager

**Lesley Witt**, Milliner

This production is made possible in part by a generous  
gift from the Louis C. Sudler Opera Fund.

*No photographic or recording equipment is permitted  
in Hall Auditorium. Thank you.*

## Characters

Coyote . . . . .	Peter Miraldo Tantsits (Nov. 15, 18) Matthew Pittman (Nov. 17, 19)
Duck 1 . . . . .	Rachel Sliker (Nov. 15, 18) Elisabeth Russ (Nov. 17, 19)
Duck 2 . . . . .	Scott Skiba (Nov. 15, 18) Joseph Holmes (Nov. 17, 19)
Fox . . . . .	Rebecca Ringle (Nov. 15, 18) Lauren Harrison (Nov. 17, 19)
Skookum 1 . . . . .	Marcy Stonikas
Skookum 2 . . . . .	Vera Savage
Skookum 3 . . . . .	Charlene Wass
Star . . . . .	Malia Bendi Merad (Nov. 15, 18) Jennifer Spitulnik (Nov. 17, 19)
The Maiden . . . . .	Hannah Waldman (Nov. 15, 18) Alyson Cambridge (Nov. 17, 19)
Pavayoykyasi . . . . .	Jonathan Stinson (Nov. 15, 18) Kevin Moreno (Nov. 17, 19)
Suitor 1 . . . . .	Ian Faleer
Suitor 2 . . . . .	Daniel Holmes
Suitor 3 . . . . .	Eric Einhorn
Suitor 4 . . . . .	Frederick Jackson
The Storyteller . . . . .	Davin Youngs
Storyteller's Son, at age 7 . . . . .	Nick Chmura
Storyteller's Son, at age 14 . . . . .	Matt Chmura
Storyteller's Son, at age 40 . . . . .	John Mullaney
Storyteller's Grandson/Tortoise . . . . .	Aidan Mullaney
Nurse . . . . .	Jane Lycan

## Chorus

Ryan Albrecht, Jason Bayus, Ellie Dehn, Elizabeth De Shong,  
Eric Einhorn, Ian Faleer, Elizabeth Floyd, Edward Geschke,  
Liora Grodnikaite, Adrienne Herman, Daniel Holmes, Joseph Holmes,  
Frederick Jackson, Marie McCarville, Isaiah Musik-Ayala,  
Miriam Osner, Matthew Peña, Jessica Rose Rossi, Elisabeth Russ,  
Rachel Sliker, Scott Skiba, Sarah Stankiewicz, Noranne Toth



## Plot Synopsis

### ACT I:

#### *Old Man Coyote Makes the World - Crow.*

A Storyteller sets the scene for the first tale. Coyote is alone on a rock in a world of water. Bored and lonely, he entreats the Sun to help him create companions. Two Ducks materialize. Coyote wonders whether there is anything in the world besides water. The Ducks dive down and return with a root and a ball of mud. With these objects and the help of the Sun, Coyote creates the world we know and the creatures that inhabit it. The animals and the Humans sing a hymn of thanks to Coyote.

#### *Coyote Keeps His Name (excerpt) - Okanagon.*

Coyote boasts of his cleverness. The Voice of the Great Spirit reminds him that he could not have done what he did unaided, and instructs him that all of the creatures will look to him for guidance. "As you behave, so will they." Finally, the Voice tells him that he has been granted a special power: when he dies, he will always come back to life.

#### *How Coyote Brought Fire to the People - Karok.*

Winter comes. The Humans beg Coyote to keep them from freezing. Coyote turns to Fox for help. She describes a substance called "fire" which can keep the Humans warm. It is guarded by three crones, the Skookums. Coyote steals a burning branch from their bonfire. They give chase; the branch is handed from Coyote to Fox to Cougar to Antelope to Squirrel and to a Duck. Trapped, he jumps into a stream, where the branch is extinguished. Inconsolable, the Skookums leave, vowing vengeance. Coyote then shows the Humans how to make fire. They thank him for the gift of fire and exit, each taking a burning branch from the fire he has made.

#### *Coyote in Love with a Star - Klamath.*

Night falls; stars appear. Coyote is enthralled with one unusually beautiful star. He climbs to a mountain top, stretches out his paw and is drawn up into the sky by his "star of stars." They dance. But Coyote cannot bear the intense cold. He pleads with the star to come down with him to a warmer place, but she cannot leave the sky. Rather than see him freeze, she

lets go of him and he falls to his death. The Storyteller returns and describes the Coyote's epic fall to earth. Fox enters, calls on the Great Spirit, then leaps over Coyote's body four times, ritualistically. Coyote comes back to life, only to flee in panic as the Skookums reappear seeking vengeance.

Intermission: 15 minutes

### ACT II:

#### *Coyote and Pavayoykyasi - Hopi.*

Fleeing the Skookums, Coyote arrives at the village of Oraibi. He watches as four Chiefs court a beautiful maiden. She rejects them and they depart. Infatuated, Coyote vows to possess her himself. A new suitor appears. He identifies himself as Pavayoykyasi, the "moisture bearer," the one who brings life-giving dew to the plants and flowers. The Maiden falls in love with this dashing figure and accepts his proposal. He leaves, promising to return in four days to marry her.

Coyote follows him and steals his clothing, then passes himself off as Pavayoykyasi and seduces the maiden in his stead. When she realizes that she has been tricked, she calls on the villagers of Oraibi to avenge her. They and Pavayoykyasi go off in search of Coyote who has fled.

Exhausted and fearful of being killed, Coyote examines his life. He concludes that he must be true to his nature and survive as best he can. Pavayoykyasi arrives and calls upon his kinsmen, the Storm Clouds, to annihilate Coyote. They bombard him with thunder, lightning and rain. Again Coyote dies and again Fox brings him back to life. As he slowly returns to consciousness, Coyote relives parts of his encounters with the stars, the Skookums, and the creatures he has created.

Accepting his own nature, Coyote rises, ready for new adventures. As the story draws to a close, the animals thank Coyote for giving them life. The son of the original Storyteller, now a grown man himself, reminds us: "As you behave, we shall too. Old Man Coyote, we are you."



**HENRY MOLLICONE** (Composer/Conductor) is a graduate of the New England Conservatory and has studied composition with Donald Martino and Seymour Schifrin, among others. His one-act operas, *Emperor Norton*, *Starbird*, *The Face on the Barroom Floor*, and *The Mask of Evil*, have been performed extensively both in this country and in Europe. His full-length opera *Coyote Tales* (with libretto by Sheldon Harnick) was commissioned by the Lyric Opera of Kansas City and premiered there in March 1998. Another full-length opera, *Hotel Eden*, premiered at Opera San José in 1989 and has been produced in New York and in Baltimore. In 1999, Mollicone was the composer-in-residence at the Brevard Music Festival. Since 1985, he has been music director and conductor of the Santa Clara University Orchestra. In addition to opera, Henry Mollicone has written works for orchestra, voice, chorus, ballet, and various chamber combinations. Orchestral works include *Celestial Dance* (commissioned by the Long Beach Symphony), *Inner Light* (composed for the Eastman School Orchestra), the overture *Kathy's White Night Revisited* (commissioned by the Santa Cruz Symphony and the Fremont Symphony), and *A Rat's Tale: The Pied Piper Revisited* in collaboration with the playwright William Luce (commissioned by the El Camino Youth Symphony).

**SHELDON HARNICK** (Librettist) brings a rich and diverse background in American musical theater to his work on *Coyote Tales*. Born in Chicago, Sheldon Harnick began taking violin lessons while in grammar school and later earned a bachelor of music from Northwestern University, following service in World War II. In 1950, he moved to New York City to become a theatrical composer-lyricist. Harnick's first song for a Broadway show was the hilarious "Boston Beguine" from *New Faces of 1952*. His collaboration with composer Jerry Bock produced such Broadway classics as *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Fiorello*, *She Loves Me*, and *The Rothschilds*. During his career, Harnick has provided many operatic translations. Among those most frequently performed are Bizet's *Carmen*, Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat*, Mozart's *The Goose From Cairo* and Léhar's *The Merry Widow*. He has also written libretti for *Dr. Heidegger's Fountain of Youth*, *Cyrano* and *Love in Two Countries*. In recognition of his talents, Sheldon Harnick has won two Tony Awards, two Grammy Awards and two New York Drama Critics Circle Awards, and earned three gold records as well as a platinum record. He is a longtime member of both the Dramatists Guild and the Songwriters Guild of America.

**JONATHON FIELD** (Director) has directed over eighty productions throughout the United States and is becoming one of America's most sought-after stage directors. He has directed touring productions for the Lyric Opera of Chicago of *Trouble in Tahiti*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *The Old Maid and the Thief*, and *The Spanish Hour*. For San Francisco Opera's Western Opera Theatre he directed *La Cenerentola* and *Die Fledermaus*, and for Seattle Opera, an updated version of *La Bohème*. In San Francisco he has also directed Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* and Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* in the original Russian. Over the past ten years, he has also directed ten productions for the Arizona Opera, being deemed by the press "their most perceptive stage-director." Mr. Field's range extends from the avant-garde to musical comedy. He has successfully introduced computer-generated scenery to opera production in *Candide*, and he has pioneered the use of video-projected scenery in productions of *Tales of Hoffmann* and *Der Freischütz*. In the realm of operetta and musicals, he has staged *H.M.S. Pinafore* for Opera Omaha, *Trial by Jury* for Lake George Opera, Bernstein's *Wonderful Town* in Chicago, and *Merry Widow* and *Countess Maritza* in San Francisco. Mr. Field recently assumed the position of Artistic Director with Lyric Opera Cleveland.

## Oberlin Opera Theater Production Staff

Jonathon Field, Producer/Stage Director  
 Robert Spano, Music Director  
 Victoria Vaughan, Assistant Director/Stage Manager  
 Alan Montgomery, Assistant Music Director/Coach  
 Daniel Michalak, Vocal Coach, Accompanist  
 Michael Slon, Music Preparation, Chorus Master  
 Michael Louis Grube, Production Manager/Scene Designer  
 Chris Flaharty, Costume Designer  
 Jen Groseth, Lighting Designer  
 JoEllen Cuthbertson, Costumer/Costume Shop Manager  
 Lesley Witt, Milliner  
 Rick Mayfield, Technical Director  
 J.V. Jones, Assistant Technical Director  
 Alice Iseminger, Marketing and Publicity Director  
 Barbara Sloane, Central Ticket Service Manager  
 Marj Abraham, Bookkeeper

## Coyote Tales Student Production Staff

Abe Kruger, Jane Lycan, Nan Wang, Assistant Stage Managers  
 Sarah Bendix,\* Scene Painter  
 Jeremy Cooper, Light Board Operator  
 Keith Friedlander, Sound Board Operator  
 Holly Matyas, Follow Spot #1  
 Ben Shirley-Quirk+, Follow Spot #2  
 Brandon Phillips\*, Follow Spot #3  
 Rhiannon Giddens, Poster Design

## Costumes

**Construction\*** —Molly Benson, Robin Detterman, Margaret Dorman, Arielle Halpern, Georgia Hollister Isman, Sara Olds, Lily M. Rosenman  
**Run Crew** — Jill Donnelly+, Amy Flanagan+, Amanda Joshi+, Aubri O'Connor+, Deborah Rosenstein\*, Melissa Threadgill+

## Lighting, Scenery, and Stage Crew\*

Steven Freed, Keith Friedlander, Andrea Fritsch, Sarah Kendall, Alec Longstreth, Jane Lycan, Meg Morley, Aaron Mucciolo, Charlotte Phillips, Caitlin Roush, Kathryn Waimey, Mark Williams, Carolyn Wong

## Theater 172: Production Scenery

Cheryl Chow, Ivan Dejesus, Rosa Hyde, Nate Lee, Francesca Lichauco, Christina McNamee, Ann Schapira, Daniel Sokoloff, Matthew Van Winkle, Samuel Whittington

\* Student Technical Assistants +Theater 199 Students



## Central Ticket Service and Publicity\*

Miranda Balkin, Margo Buescher, Allison Curseen, Michael Dedeo, Laura Farrell, Kert Heinecke, Lisa Katona, Megan LePere-Schloop, Evan Lovett-Harris, Jennifer Poore, Deborah Rosenstein, Jenny Rushlow, Jean Squires, Jason Thompkins, Nika Zlataric

\* Student Technical Assistants

### Special Thanks To:

*Voice Faculty—Oberlin Conservatory of Music,  
Kay Edwards, Office of College Relations, Marci Janas, Sue Kropp,  
Linda Grashoff, Rhiannon Giddens*

## Upcoming Events

Lucia Mad by Don Nigro Gabe Carleton-Barnes, '01, director.

8pm, Fri. & Sat., Dec. 1 and 2; 2pm, Sat. & Sun., Dec. 2 and 3

Little Theater ~ General Admission Tickets

This dark and comic drama investigates the relationship of creation to love and madness through Lucia, James Joyce's daughter, and her doomed love for the young Samuel Beckett.

Media Medea written and directed by Jessie Marshall

8pm, Friday and Saturday, December 8 and 9

Hall Auditorium ~ General Admission Tickets

Based on the Greek myth, *Medea*, the story is retold through the guise of modern entertainment and pop culture, exploring the media frenzy that surrounds public scandal.

### ARTIST RECITAL SERIES SPRING SEASON

Moses Hogan Singers with Marietta Simpson, mezzo-soprano

8pm, Tuesday, February 6 ~Free, non-ticketed event

This concert is part of the 2000-2001 Convocation Series sponsored by the President's Office. Moses Hogan (OC '79).

Apollo's Fire with John Gibbons, fortepiano

8pm, Tuesday, February 13, Finney Chapel —*Reserved Seating*

The finest period instrument wind players from across North America return to Finney Chapel for a stunning Mozart celebration. Jeannette Sorrell (OC '92), music director.

Steven Isserlis, cello, with Ian Brown, piano

8pm, Saturday, February 17, Finney Chapel —*Reserved Seating*

Steven Isserlis' (OC 1976-80) artistic profile is characterized by a uniquely beautiful sound, diverse choice of repertoire, and above all, commitment to the music he plays.

### Lanier Trio

William Preucil, violin \* Dorothy Lewis, cello \* Cary Lewis, piano

8pm, Sunday, March 11, Finney Chapel —*Reserved Seating*

The Lanier Trio—named in honor of Georgia poet and musician Sidney Lanier—has performed throughout the United States and across Europe since 1979. This outstanding ensemble has been together since 1986 and continues to electrify audiences and critics alike.

Stephen Kovacevich, piano

8pm, Tuesday, April 10, Finney Chapel —*Reserved Seating*

American pianist Steven Kovacevich has had a long and distinguished career as a concert pianist and is particularly noted for his radical interpretations of the classical repertoire.

## CENTRAL TICKET SERVICE

*Located in the lobby of Hall Auditorium*

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Monday-Friday, 12-5 pm ♦ 24-hour reservations (440) 775-8169

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[www.oberlin.edu/events](http://www.oberlin.edu/events)

## OPERA SCENES PROGRAM

Saturday ♦ December 16 ♦ Kulas Hall

Part I 4:00 p.m.

Part II 8:00 p.m.

The two different programs are free

### The program includes scenes from

*Der Rosenkavalier* —R. Strauss

*Griselda* —A. Scarlatti

*Rodelinda* —Handel

*The Rake's Progress* —Stavinsky

*The Marriage of Figaro* —Mozart

*The Magic Flute* —Mozart

*Pagliacci* —Leoncavallo

*Tartuffe* —Meecham

*The Barber of Seville*—Rossini

*Die Fledermaus* —J. Strauss, Jr.

*Don Pasquale* —Donizetti

### featuring directors

Eric Einhorn, Jonathon Field,

Jennifer Spitulnik, Victoria Vaughan

### with accompaniment by

Kristen Ditlow, Daniel Michalak, Alan Montgomery

## Presenting the Spring 2001 Opera:

**La Cenerentola** by *Gioacchino Rossini*

March 14, 16, 17 & 18

Hall Auditorium —*Reserved Seating*

*The well-loved Cinderella fairy tale comes to life under Rossini's talented pen.*

A two-act comedy by the same composer who brought us *The Barber of Seville*, *La Cenerentola* tells the Cinderella story, complete with step-sisters and a Prince Charming. There are a few twists—the Fairy Godmother is now the Godfather, but the central idea of the title character's mercy and ability to forgive her tormentors in the end remains the same. Written in 1817, this opera has been popular since its inception, playing most recently at the Metropolitan Opera with Cecilia Bartoli in the lead.