

## **The Majesty of Bel Canto Opera**

The objective of this course is to bring to light the beauty of bel canto opera. Bel canto, meaning "beautiful singing", was the dominant style of Italian opera during the first third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Over an 8-week period the course will focus on three main areas:

1) Viewing and critiquing 7 operas of the bel canto era and comparing various interpretations of scenes and arias by different performers. For example, we will compare the performances of Joan Sutherland and Anna Netrebko as they do the mad scene from *Lucia di Lammermoor*. The 7 operas selected are: *I Puritani*, *Norma*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Don Pasquale*, *La Fille du Regiment*, *La Favorite*, and *L'Elisir d' Amore*.

2) Exploring the nature of bel canto opera and the reasons for its eventual decline. This would involve focusing on the contributions of the three main proponents of this style --Gioachino Rossini, Vincenzo Bellini, and Gaetano Donizetti.

3) Discussing various opera-related topics.

I will edit the DVD presentation to fit into the allotted time frame and will expect the class participants to prepare for each session by having read the story line of the opera presented. There will be some handouts.

**Leader:** Irwin Rosenblum has a BS in accounting, an MBA in finance, a BA in music, and a BA in history.

**Tuesdays:** 10:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., 8 weeks: September 25 through November 20 (no class on October 9)

**Location:** PSRC