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KSU OPERA THEATRE presents

Thomas Pasatieri’s

THE HOTEL CASABLANCA

with the KSU Symphony Orchestra

Friday and Saturday, November 14 and 15, 2014 at 8:00 p.m.
Dr. Bobbie Bailey & Family Performance Center, Morgan Hall
Thirty-sixth Concert of the 2014-15 Concert Season
Act I

Intermission

Act II

Performance on Friday, November 14

Tallulah Carter
Siobhan Rodriguez
Timothy Marshall

Tom Carter
Forrest Starr

Charles Carter
Camille Hathaway

Lucy Perez
Danny Crowe

Raul Perez
Joseph McBrayer

Burton
Sean Eliason

Tobias
Elena Prestwood

Miss Pooder
Victoria Caracci

Veronique

Performance on Saturday, November 15

Tallulah Carter
Emily Crisp

Tom Carter
Timothy Marshall

Charles Carter
Forrest Starr

Lucy Perez
Julie Mitchell

Raul Perez
Terrell Flemings

Burton
Joseph McBrayer

Tobias
Sean Eliason

Miss Pooder
Karen Martin

Veronique
Amy Hebel

Understudies

Tallulah Carter
Rachel Stein

Lucy Perez
Leah Sexton

Miss Pooder
Christina Vehar

Veronique
Ashley Naffziger

The KSU Symphony Orchestra will divide in half and each group will play for one of the performances.
Welcome to this production of Thomas Pasatieri’s, The Hotel Casablanca. This opera was originally commissioned by the San Francisco Opera’s Merola Program and dually premiered there and at the University of Kentucky in August 2007. Inspired by Georges Feydeau’s French farcical play, “A Flea in Her Ear,” Pasatieri set his comic opera in 1940’s Texas. The action transpires at the Double-T Ranch and a seedy hotel, The Hotel Casablanca, where an enchanting array of assorted and eccentric guests add to the mayhem. For added interest, he references great classic operas within the music and storyline: The Marriage of Figaro, Carmen, Tosca, Madame Butterfly, and Otello.

The composer/librettist Thomas Pasatieri began composing at age 10 and while a teenager, he studied with Nadia Boulanger. He entered the Julliard School of Music at age 16 and eventually became the school’s first recipient of a doctoral degree. Pasatieri has taught composition at the Julliard School, the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and the Manhattan School of Music. From 1980 through 1984, he held the post of Artistic Director at the Atlanta Opera. He has composed 24 operas, the best known, The Seagull, was composed in 1972. In 1984, Pasatieri moved to Los Angeles where he formed his film music production company, Topaz Productions. His film orchestrations can be heard in American Beauty, Angels in America, Billy Bathgate, Fried Green Tomatoes, Legends of the Fall, The Little Mermaid, Road to Perdition, Scent of a Woman and The Shawshank Redemption among many others. In 2003, Pasatieri returned to New York to continue his concert and opera career. Two of his operas were premiered in 2007: Frau Margot by the Fort Worth Opera and The Hotel Casablanca in San Francisco and Kentucky.

Set in Texas in 1948 on the Double T Ranch, the story opens the morning after a Texas-sized barbecue given by Tom and Tallulah to welcome three guests to the ranch: Charles, Tom’s nephew from New York; Lucy Perez, Tallulah’s former vaudeville partner, and Lucy’s husband, Raul Perez, a very successful breeder of prize bulls. We see Charles in silk pajamas nursing a hangover while the helpful butler, Burton, explains why everything is bigger in Texas. The two leave to find coffee for Charles.

Tallulah enters carrying a package containing the red, white, and blue suspenders she had given to Tom. They have been returned from the notorious Hotel Casablanca - Tallulah assumes the worst. Lucy bounds in, blubbering about the party last night, only to find her friend distraught with marital doubt. Lucy suggests that Tallulah write an anonymous letter to Tom inviting him to a tryst at the Hotel Casablanca. Lucy writes the letter on Lucy’s behalf and seals it with a kiss. The ladies then decide to go to the hotel together in disguises.

Tom Carter enters telling Burton to set out brandy and cigars for a meeting with Raul Perez about the purchase of a new bull. Tom notices the suspenders, which he had lent to his nephew Charles, and is furious that the young man would be so careless as to leave them lying around. Tom is concerned with Charles in his ”city” ways and wonders whether his nephew likes women. After a talk with the young man, he sends his nephew off to change into more “manly” clothes for horseback riding.

The letter arrives just as Tom, Raul, and the ranch manager, Tobias, begin their meeting. Tom reads it aloud and decides the letter must be for Tobias, since no one would dare to write such a letter to a married man. Tom sends Tobias off in his own Cadillac to meet the passionate stranger at the hotel.

While Tom and Tobias fetch the keys to the car, Raul looks at the letter and recognizes Lucy’s lipstick and handwriting. He assumes the worst and vows vengeance by shooting the lovers with one bullet: “Goes in his back, comes out hers.” Tom enters and tells Raul where the hotel is. When Raul rushes out, Tom
realizes that there is trouble brewing. He calls for Charles and Burton to get in the jeep and they all rush off to the hotel. Charles turns as the act closes to tell us that he is going to the Hotel Casablanca, again...

act II

The Hotel Casablanca has seen better times, but its new owner, Miss Pooder, envisions it as a grand hotel. She has fired all the former employees and explains her plan to her new employee, Daisy. Daisy has her own dreams of Hollywood and has renamed herself Veronique. Miss Pooder steps out to search for more help, and Veronique begins her new job by answering the phone. In that call, we learn that Muffy, her predecessor, was not so much a desk clerk as a lady of the evening or - more aptly - of the afternoon.

Tallulah and Lucy enter the hotel. Veronique, thinking this is a costume party, points them to the executive suite. Tobias arrives, flowers in hand and, as Veronique ushers him to the room, Tallulah and Lucy hide behind the bed. Raul enters the hotel, and Veronique, seeing him disguised in mask and cape, sends him to the executive suite as Miss Pooder returns to the front desk with her arms full of flowers.

When Raul enters the executive suite, he rushes to the bed and, mistaking Tobias for Lucy, kisses him on the back of the head. Lucy and Tallulah are discovered and a chase ensues, Raul still hungry for revenge against the confused Tobias. As they rush from the room they run into Miss Pooder. Veronique hides while Tom, Burton, and Charles arrive to save the day.
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Unless otherwise noted, all events are held in Morgan Concert Hall and begin at 8 p.m.

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Michael Alexander
Interim Director, KSU School of Music

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