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Connecticut Lyric Opera to Perform Donizetti's "Elixir of Love" Throughout Connecticut

New London, CT – Oct. 20, 2009 – Connecticut Lyric Opera (CLO) is pleased to announce the first production of its 2009-2010 Performance Season, a fully staged touring production of G. Donizetti's comic masterpiece, *L'elisir d'Amore (The Elixir of Love)* to be performed on Nov. 28 at 7:30 pm at the Garde Arts Center in New London, and also performed in New Britain, Middletown and Waterbury.

One of the most performed *bel canto* operas, *Elisir* is a celebration of innocence and true love triumphing amid chicanery and bluster. Set in a nineteenth century Italian village, it is the story of the bumbling Nemorino, who is madly in love with Adina, a beautiful landowner, who gets engaged to the self-absorbed sergeant Belcore to spite him. When Dulcamara, a traveling charlatan, comes to town, Nemorino purchases a love potion, convinced it will make Adina fall in love with him, when in reality it is a simple bottle of wine. The elixir is not successful in winning Adina, so Nemorino joins the army and uses his signing bonus to purchase even more. When Adina discovers the sacrifice he made for her, she confesses her love for him, breaks off her engagement with Belcore and agrees to marry Nemorino. In composing *Elisir*, Donizetti displayed his flair for tuneful melodies and for molding his music into humorous characterizations, and Nemorino's aria "Una furtive lagrima" has long been a favorite of many famous tenors, including the great Enrico Caruso, Luciano Pavarotti and Placido Domingo.

Returning to star as Nemorino is lyric tenor, Sean Fallen, a veteran of New York City Opera and other leading companies, who last appeared with CLO as Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*. Following her critically acclaimed Violetta in CLO's *La Traviata* this spring, radiant Lithuanian soprano Jurate Svedaite shows her comedic side as Adina. Last season's Eugene Onegin, dynamic Russian baritone, Maksim Ivanov, stars as the pompous Belcore, while rounding out this stellar cast is crowd-favorite bass, Laurentiu Rotaru, who most recently delighted CLO audiences as Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*. This production will be directed by nationally recognized stage director, Michael Philip Davis, and will be conducted by CLO's General and Artistic Director, Adrian Sylveen Mackiewicz. The opera will be fully staged with orchestra, 24-voice chorus and English supertitles above the stage.

L'elisir d'Amore will be performed at Trinity-on-Main Arts Center, New Britain on November 20 at 8 p.m., at the Garde Arts Center, New London on November 28 at 7:30 p.m., at Middletown High School on December 5 at 7:30 p.m., and at the Palace Theater, Waterbury, on December 12 at 8 p.m.

About Connecticut Lyric Opera

Founded in 2003, CLO is SE CT's only full season opera company and is a 501(c)(3) non-profit cultural and educational organization whose mission is: **Inspire:** to contribute to the cultural life of Southeastern Connecticut and beyond with the highest quality operas and concerts from the traditional and contemporary repertoires; **Involve:** to encourage the development of Connecticut based singers, musicians and theatrical artisans through their participation in professional opera productions; **Instill:** to present opera to people of all ages in such a way as to foster a love and appreciation of the form in particular, and classical and vocal music in general. CLO is grateful to The Frank Loomis Palmer Fund, The Bodenwein Public Benevolent Trust, The State of Connecticut's Dept. of Culture and Tourism, Pfizer, the New London Day, and the many contributors who have helped make this season possible. For tickets to the New London performance of *L'elisir d'Amore* call The Garde's box office at (860) 444-7373 or visit GardeArts.org; for additional information call (860) 440-3594 or visit CtLyricOpera.org.

About the Artists

Tenor **Sean Fallen** arrived in New York City during the fall of 2002 after making his European debut as Borsa (*Rigoletto*) with Festival Lyrique en Belle Ile en Mer, making his New York City Opera debut as 2nd Nazarene (*Salome*) and also covered five cover roles with NYCO that season. Since that time he has been a soloist at nearly every major venue in NYC, from Avery Fischer and Alice Tully Halls at Lincoln Center, to numerous appearances at Carnegie Hall. Mr. Fallen has sung a variety of roles including Ferrando (*Così fan tutti*), Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflaute*), Nemorino (*L'elisir d'Amore*), Ernesto (*Don Pasquale*), and Count Almaviva (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*) with companies including Minnesota Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Fresno Grand Opera, New Jersey State Opera, Athena Grand Opera and Opera in the Ozarks. In addition to Ottavio and Almaviva with CLO, Mr. Fallen also sang Bach *Christmas Oratorio* with Mystic River Chorale. A native of Jefferson City, MO, he currently studies with Gene Bullard in NYC and earned his MM in voice from Indiana University.

Lithuanian soprano, **Jūratė Švedaitė**, is establishing herself as a stage performer of remarkable artistry and sensitivity capable of "transfixing audiences with moments of opera magic," and has performed throughout Europe and the US with the Lithuanian National Chamber Orchestra, the European Baroque Festival Opera, Kaunas Chamber Orchestra, Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra, among others. Having last season performed Violetta in *La Traviata* and Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*, her previous roles with CLO include Mimi in *La Bohème*, Contessa in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Marguerite in *Faust* and Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Ms. Švedaitė attended the Lithuanian Music Academy where she earned Bachelors and Masters and Degrees in Opera and Vocal Instruction. She now resides in SE CT where she is on the faculty of Conn. College and Thames Valley Music School.

Baritone **Maksim Ivanov** is making a name for himself in the roles of Marcello and Schaunard in *La Bohème*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Dandini in *La Cenerentola*, Onegin in *Eugene Onegin*, Malatesta in *Don Pasquale*, Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Robert in Tchaikovsky's *Iolanta*, and Ford in

Falstaff. He has performed with such companies as Glimmerglass Opera, the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Connecticut Grand Opera, Opera Theatre of Connecticut, Opera Providence, Boheme Opera of New Jersey, Sanibel Music Festival, Ash-Lawn Highland Festival, among others. Recent engagements have included Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* with the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Dandini in *La Cenerentola* with Opera Providence, Marcello in *La Boheme* with Boheme Opera, Marullo in *Rigoletto* with the Opera Theater of Connecticut, and Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* with Salt Marsh Opera. Mr. Ivanov received his BA and MMA from Yale University and recently completed his Doctoral program at SUNY Stony Brook.

Conductor and virtuoso violinist **Adrian Sylveen Mackiewicz** is a graduate of Paderewski Music Academy in Poznan, Poland and of the Yale University School of Music. His awards include First Prize at the International Chamber Music Competition in Lodz, Poland, the President of the Republic of Poland's Award For Outstanding Achievement "Primus Inter Pares" and the Polish Department of Education National Scholarship. Mr. Mackiewicz has performed extensively in Poland, former USSR, Germany, and the US, where he has resided since 1992. In 1997 Maestro Mackiewicz founded the Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra, a New Britain based orchestra dedicated to presenting and preserving the traditions of chamber music, both traditional and contemporary, that is also CLO's resident orchestra. In addition to his duties with CLO and the Virtuosi, Mr. Mackiewicz is Artistic Director of the New Britain Chorale and Artistic Director of the Eastern CT Symphony Youth Orchestra.

Michael Philip Davis is active as a stage director, author/librettist and educator, following more than 20 years as a leading tenor in opera and concert. This fall, Mr. Davis will direct the world premiere of *La Coupe et les Lèvres*, a transformation of Puccini's *Edgar* by Anton Coppola, based on the original drama by Alfred de Musset. This continues a 35 year association with Maestro Coppola, for whom Mr. Davis recently directed Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* with Inter-Cities Performing Arts, Inc. Earlier this year, Mr. Davis directed *Yours Anne*, a musical drama based on *The Diary of Anne Frank*, for the New York State Theater Institute (NYSTI) in Troy, NY; his association with this work dates to 1979, when he originated the role of Peter van Daan. Other directing credits include: Bizet's and Peter Brook's *The Tragedy of Carmen* and Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* at the TodiMusicFest, Portsmouth, VA; Bach's *Coffee Cantata*, Weill's *Down in the Valley*, Puccini's *Il Tabarro*, *Gianni Schicchi* and *Madama Butterfly* at the California Opera Association; *Kurt Weill in Berlin* in Graz, Austria; *Madama Butterfly* and *The Merry Widow* at Opera in the Ozarks; and Menotti's *The Medium* and *The Telephone* at the Bay Area Summer Opera Theater Institute, San Francisco.