

35th Anniversary Opera Gala to honor legendary singers James Morris and Susan Quittmeyer on October 15th

MADISON, NJ (9/9/2017) - Opera at Florham celebrates its 35th Anniversary this season with an all-star gala at Lenfell Hall, The Mansion at Farleigh Dickinson University in Madison, New Jersey on Sunday October 15th at 2 pm. Special honorees for this event are NJ residents, Bass-Baritone, Met Opera Star, James Morris and Mezzo-Soprano, Faculty at Rutgers Opera Institute, Susan Quittmeyer. The hostess for the event will be PBS/WQXR commentator, Midge Woolsey.

The company will celebrate its illustrious history with a glorious concert, reception, dinner, wine and dessert. The program will include operatic favorites performed by distinguished singers, soprano Maria Natale, tenor Fanyong Du, baritone Ricardo Rivera and will be led by Mary Pinto on the piano. The repertoire, carefully chosen for the occasion, will consist of arias and ensembles from *La Bohème*, *I Puritani*, *Faust*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Simon Boccanegra* and *Le Nozze di Figaro*, all operas our honorees have sung throughout their career.

The venue, Lenfell Hall (located in Hennessy Hall), was the drawing room of the Vanderbilt-Twombly family's gilded-age estate when they lived in the 100-room mansion. Lenfell Hall is handicap accessible and free van shuttle service from parking lots will be available to our attendees.

Legendary American Bass-Baritone James Morris is world famous for his performances in opera, concert, recital, and recording. With a repertoire including works by Wagner, Verdi, Puccini, Offenbach, Stravinsky, Mussorgsky, Mozart, Gounod and Britten, Mr. Morris has performed in virtually every international opera house and has appeared with the major orchestras of Europe and the United States. Considered one of the greatest interpreters of the role of Wotan in Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, Mr. Morris has appeared in this role at the Metropolitan Opera, Vienna State Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Munich, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera and many others. He is also considered the world's leading interpreter of the title role in Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer* and has appeared as Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* in the major houses of the United States and Europe.

American Mezzo-Soprano, Susan Quittmeyer, has performed in America, Europe, Japan and more. She has performed in operas, with orchestras and at recitals, and she has in appeared regularly with the Metropolitan Opera and San Francisco Opera companies. Quittmeyer also sang with the Los Angeles Opera, Los Angeles Opera Theater, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Canadian Opera Company, Opéra de Montréal, San Diego Opera, Portland Opera, Dallas Opera, Denver Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Miami Opera, and Santa Fe Opera. She has also performed with numerous symphonies including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Arena di Verona Symphony, and the Oakland Symphony. Quittmeyer can be heard on recordings of Verdi's *Falstaff* with Sir Colin Davis

conducting, on the BMG label, and Wagner's *Das Rheingold* with Bernard Haitink conducting, from EMI.

Midge Woolsey will serve as hostess during the event and ceremony. For over thirty years, Midge Woolsey enjoyed a surprising and remarkable career as broadcaster for the nation's flagship PBS station, Thirteen/WNET in New York and the city's premier classical radio station, WQXR. She worked on-air with some of the most talented and fascinating people in the world and had a solid track record in her behind-the-scenes work life as a production executive, administrator and writer. Midge recently retired as a broadcaster and is now actively involved in development work for the concert series at Saint Thomas Church Fifth Avenue. She is a longtime member of the Advisory Boards of the Martina Arroyo Foundation, Opera Index and the Interschool Orchestras of New York.

Funding has been made possible in part by funds from Morris Arts Council thru the New Jersey State Council of The Arts Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

Please join us as we celebrate our company's history and our illustrious honorees. Tickets for this event are \$50 and can now be reserved sending a check payable to Opera at Florham, P.O. Box 343, Convent Station, NJ 07961, by telephone (973)-443-8620 or online at www.OperaatFlorham.org.