

Robert Swedberg

Director



Robert Swedberg was the General Director of Orlando Opera in Orlando, Florida, from 1990 to April, 2007. Prior to that, he held positions as General Director of Syracuse Opera in New York, Manager and Artistic Director of North Carolina Opera in Charlotte, North Carolina, and Director of Special Educational Projects for Seattle opera. He has also been the director of opera studio programs at both the University of Central Florida and Syracuse University.

Mr. Swedberg became active as a stage director while on the staff of the prestigious Pacific Northwest Wagner Festival in Seattle, Washington, where he was Assistant Director for Wagner's Ring Cycle from 1978 to 1982. Since then, he has produced or directed more than 125 productions, and especially enjoys the challenge of the more unusual operatic repertoire, which has included new

productions of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *Don Pasquale*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, *La Clemenza di Tito*, *HMS Pinafore*, *Trial by Jury*, and *Gianni Schicchi* for several companies in the United States. He also produced and directed the double bill presentation of *I Pagliacci* and *Carmina Burana* for Orlando Opera in 2003, featuring choreographer Debra Brown and her troupe of *Cirque du Soleil* performers. That same year, he began to direct international productions, including *Die Zauberflöte* for both the Macau Music Festival and Beijing Music Festivals in China, *La Sonnambula* in Mallorca, Spain, and *La Bohème* in Hof, Bamberg and Bayreuth, Germany. He directs two new productions this fall: *Le Nozze di Figaro* in September for Theater Pforzheim, Germany; and *Don Giovanni* for Orlando Opera.

Mr. Swedberg was on the Board of Directors of OPERA America, the service organization for all opera companies in North America, from 2002- 2007; and he also hosts a weekly program: *Opera with Robert Swedberg* at 6:00 p.m. (Eastern) on 90.7 WMFE-FM, audio streamed at www.wmfe.org. Mr. Swedberg also enjoys presenting workshops for emerging artists, which can include: singing-actor development, audition techniques, career development, mentoring opera stage managers and directors, and Yoga for Performers. (He is a certified yoga instructor, see: www.yogaforperformers.com.)

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Repertoire

Opera and Operetta

Beethoven	<i>Fidelio</i>	Producer
Bellini	<i>La Sonnambula</i>	Director
Bernstein	<i>Candide</i>	Producer
	<i>Trouble In Tahiti</i>	Producer
Bizet	<i>Carmen</i>	Producer
Britten	<i>Albert Herring</i>	Producer
Donizetti	<i>Don Pasquale</i>	Producer/Director
	<i>L'Elisir d'Amore</i>	Producer
	<i>La Fille du Régiment</i>	Producer
	<i>Lucia di Lammermoor</i>	Producer
Floyd	<i>Susannah</i>	Producer
Gilbert and Sullivan	<i>HMS Pinafore</i>	Producer/Director
	<i>Pirates Of Penzance</i>	Producer
	<i>The Mikado</i>	Producer
	<i>Trial By Jury</i>	Director/Producer
Gounod	<i>Faust</i>	Producer
	<i>Roméo et Juliette</i>	Producer
Humperdinck	<i>Hansel und Gretel</i>	Producer

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Robert Swedberg, Repertoire, cont'd.

Lehar	<i>The Merry Widow</i>	Producer
Leoncavallo	<i>I Pagliacci</i>	Producer/Director
Menotti	<i>Amahl and the Night Visitors</i>	Producer/Director
	<i>The Medium</i>	Director/Designer
Monteverdi	<i>L'incoronazione di Poppea</i>	Producer/Director
Moreno-Torroba	<i>Luisa Fernanda (Zarzuela)</i>	Producer
Mozart	<i>Così fan tutte</i>	Producer/Director
	<i>Die Entführung aus dem Serail</i>	Producer/Director
	<i>Die Zauberflöte</i>	Producer/Director
	<i>Don Giovanni</i>	Producer/Director
	<i>La Clemenza Di Tito</i>	Producer/Director
	<i>Le Nozze Di Figaro</i>	Producer/Director
	Offenbach	<i>Les Contes d'Hoffmann</i>
Orff	<i>Carmina Burana</i>	Producer/Director
Porter	<i>Porgy and Bess</i>	Producer
Puccini	<i>Gianni Schicchi</i>	Producer/Director
	<i>La Bohème</i>	Producer/Director
	<i>Madama Butterfly</i>	Producer/Director
	<i>Tosca</i>	Producer
	<i>Turandot</i>	Producer
J. Strauss	<i>Die Fledermaus</i>	Producer/Director

Brian P. Jauhiainen, Manager
brian@belcantoglobal.com
718.772.4024

Amy D. Stuemky, Business Manager
amy@belcantoglobal.com
303.594.6649

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R. Strauss	<i>Salome</i>	Producer/Director
Ravel	<i>L'Enfant et les Sortilèges</i>	Producer/Director
Rossini	<i>Il Barbiere di Siviglia</i>	Producer
	<i>La Cenerentola</i>	Producer/Director
Saint-Saëns	<i>Samson et Dalila</i>	Producer/Director
Tchaikovsky	<i>Pique Dame</i>	Producer
Verdi	<i>Aida</i>	Producer
	<i>Falstaff</i>	Producer
	<i>Il Trovatore</i>	Producer
	<i>La Traviata</i>	Producer
	<i>Macbeth</i>	Producer
	<i>Otello</i>	Producer
	<i>Rigoletto</i>	Producer
Wagner	<i>Der Fliegende Holländer</i>	Producer

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Press Reviews

Tosca

(Tulsa Opera, October 2007)

"Stage director Robert Swedberg has guided the action and helped craft the performances with an appealingly light and naturalistic touch. No emotion is overplayed; no character allowed to devolve into mere caricature."

- James D. Watts Jr., *Tulsa World*, 10/8/2007

Le Nozze di Figaro

(Pforzheim, Germany, September 2007)

"Man kann in dieser Oper ja ein trügerisches Idyll am Vorabend der Revolution sehen (die arglose Marie Antoinette soll selbst bei einer höfischen Aufführung des Beaumarchais-Stücks mitgespielt haben), genauso aber ein leichtes und amüsantes Spiel frivoler Verwicklungen, das von irgendwelchen Zeitumständen völlig unabhängig ist. Robert Swedberg, schwedischer Kalifornier und der Regisseur in Pforzheim, hat sich bei vielen solcher Varianten gütlich bedient und damit eine fröhliche Mixtur der Zeiten, Stile und Launen erzielt. Spuren feudaler Etikette kommen in seiner kapriziös-beliebigen Inszenierung ebenso vor wie solche derber Folklore und poppiger Gegenwart. Im Tuch der Kostüme kann man grobe Jeans ebenso erkennen wie altmodische Spitzen, die Gräfin findet sogar den vestimentären Anschluss ans E-Mail-Zeitalter, weil man ihr drollige Smileys in die pomösen Rokokofalten genäht hat."

- *Pforzheim Kurier*

(One can see in this opera a deceptive idyll on the eve of the revolution (the innocent Marie Antoinette even played along with a performance of the Beaumarchais work at Court), a simple and amusing play with frivolous twists, completely independent on any point in time. Robert Swedberg, Swedish-Californian and the stage director in Pforzheim, availed himself in a friendly way with many of these variants and thereby created a joyful mixture taken from several times, styles and moods. Traces of the feudal aristocracy present themselves in his capriciously mixed production along with the more folksy pop culture of the present day. In the fabric of the costumes one can recognize rough jeans and at the same time, old-fashioned details, the countess even finds a clothes-related connection to the E-Mail age, as she has ludicrous Smiley-faces sewn into her pompous Rococo gown.)

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Robert Swedberg, Press Reviews, cont'd.

"Robert Swedberg inszeniert die Opera buffa als heiteren Spass, fernab jeglicher Provokation. Schnörkellos erzählt der die verwirrende Geschichte... Swedberg führt unaufgeregt Regie, lässt vieles an der Rampe stattfinden, schlägt ein gemächliches Tempo an."

- Pforzheim Zeitung

(Robert Swedberg directed the Opera buffa as cheerful fun, far from any provocative approach. Without frills, he tells the confusing story... Swedberg leads an unaffected staging, letting much take place on the forestage, striking a leisurely tempo.)

"Die Eröffnungspremiere war für alle Beteiligte ein grosser Erfolg. Als Regisseur konnte Robert Swedberg, früher selber Sänger, gewonnen werden.

Gekonnt setzt der Regisseur die Drehbühne ein: Was den grossen Reiz dieser Inszenierung ausmacht, ist die Mischung aus traditionellen und modernen Elementen vor dem zeitlosen blauen Hintergrund.

Die Personenregie war durchweg kurzweilig, lebendig und oft erheiternd, vernachlässigte aber auch die nachdenklich machenden Elemente nicht. Köstlich anzusehen war insbesondere die Umziehszene von Cherubino im zweiten Akt. Ein guter Regieeinfall war es auch, im dritten Akt das Publikum mit einzubeziehen Während seiner Arie tritt Figaro von der Bühne in den Zuschauerraum. Insgesamt ist Swedberg eine recht vergnügliche Inszenierung gelungen, die anzusehen lohnt.

- Orpheus International

(The opening premiere was for the most part a huge success, with the winning direction of Robert Swedberg, in former times a singer.

Skillfully the director uses the revolving stage: This constitutes the main attraction of this production, with the mixture of traditional and modern elements before a timeless blue background.

The direction of the performers was amusing throughout, lively and often exhilarating, not neglecting any thoughtfully made elements. In particular, a delicious one to remember was the moving scene of Cherubino in the second act. It was also a good idea of the director to include the public in the third act: during his aria Figaro steps off the stage into the auditorium. Altogether Swedberg succeeded in making a quite enjoyable production, very much worth seeing.

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Der Regisseur Robert Swedberg zielte nicht auf die revolutionäre Situation des Entstehungsjahres 1780. Er wollte auch nicht sozialpolitische Gehehsätze hervorkehren, sondern die wunderliche Kraft der Liebe, bei den jeweils nōch dem Libretto agierenden Personen verfolgen, um die verwickelten Fäden der Handlung schliesslich für jeden zu einem erfreulichen Ende zuführen. Liebe, Glück und Bejahung der gegebenen Verhältnisse, keine echte Gefährdung menschlicher Beziehungen, und die Welt scheint wieder schnell in Ordnung zu sein nach dem diffusen Spiel mit dem Feuer aufbrechender Leidenschaften.

- Mühlacker Tagblatt

(The director Robert Swedberg did not aim at the revolutionary aspect of the period of the first production: 1780. He wanted also not to emphasize the sociopolitical extremes, but instead, the fickle power of love, which every character in the libretto pursues, and around which all the complicated threads of the action finally supply a happy ending for everyone. Love, happiness, and affirmation of given circumstances, no real endangerment of human relations, and the world seems quickly to be in order again after playing with, and breaking apart fiery passions.)

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Cirque du Soleil soloists and Orlando Opera Chorus in Carmina Burana, Orlando Opera
(Directed by Robert Swedberg)