

Special Event: An Evening with Nathan and Julie Gunn

Nathan and Julie Gunn, co-directors of Lyric Theatre @ Illinois, will share their musical journey through all kinds of singing: songs, opera, musical theatre, new works, and film. They'll talk about how music and theatre shaped their thoughts as artists and teachers. There will be a lot more singing than talking! Twenty-five years of videos in about an hour.

Julie Gunn is a pianist, educator, and music director. She has performed on many of the world's most prestigious recital series, including the Aspen Festival, Auckland's Aotea Centre, Boston's Celebrity Series, Brussel's La Monnaie, Cal Performances, the Carnegie Hall Pure Voice Series, the Cincinnati Chamber Music Society, the Cliburn Foundation, the Dallas Opera, Melbourne's Hamer Hall, the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center Great Performers, Manhattan's Café Carlyle, the McCallum Theater for the Performing Arts, the Metropolitan Opera Summerstage, Notre Dame's DeBartolo Center, the Queensland Performing Arts Centre, the Ravinia Festival, St. Paul's Schubert Club, San Francisco Performances, the Sydney Opera House, Toronto's Roy Thomson Hall, University of Chicago Presents, Bravo Vail!, Washington's Vocal Arts Society, the Wallis Annenberg Center in Beverly Hills, Washington National Opera, London's Wigmore Hall, the 92nd Street Y, and the United States Supreme Court.

She has been heard with William Burden, Richard Croft, Michelle De Young, Elizabeth Futral, Isabel Leonard, Stefan Milenkovich, Kelli O'Hara, Mandy Patinkin, Patti LuPone, Yvonne Gonzales Redman, Alek Shrader, the Pacifica and Jupiter Quartets, and her husband and artistic partner Nathan Gunn.

Co-Director of LyricTheatre@Illinois at the University of Illinois, she produces three mainstage operas or musical theatre works a

Nathan Gunn is widely acclaimed for his diverse performing career bridging the genres of opera, musical theatre, and recital. Gunn grew up in South Bend, Indiana doing what most Midwestern boys do: playing sports, working hard at school, and spending time with his family. His interest in music became a passion during his junior year of high school when he was introduced to Mozart's opera, *Die Zauberflöte*. Consumed by a desire to learn more, Nathan attended the University of Illinois (the third generation in his family to attend the school) to study music.

As a performer, Nathan is respected as an artist, musician, and singing actor. He has performed many of opera and musical theater's greatest roles on the world's most prestigious stages. Nathan has also been seen and heard on television, radio, video, and live simulcast performances, including the first ever Met in HD broadcast (*The Magic Flute*), in which he sang Papageno, one of his signature roles. In addition to Papageno, Nathan has reinterpreted classic roles such as Billy Budd, Figaro, and Don Giovanni, garnering many awards, including the Grammy Award for Best Opera Recording (*Billy Budd*) and the Metropolitan Opera's first ever Beverly Sills Award. Additionally, Nathan has been widely acclaimed for his ability to crossover into musical theater, including performances with the New York Philharmonic in *Carousel* and *Camelot*, as well as a televised celebration of Stephen Sondheim's 80th birthday. Nathan has frequently collaborated with many stars of musical theater, including Mandy Patinkin, Kelli O'Hara, Audra McDonald, and Kristin Chenoweth.

year at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. A faculty member at the School of Music, she enjoys teaching singers, pianists, chamber musicians and songwriters, and conducting new works and musical theatre. She has given master classes at universities and young artists' programs all over the United States and Canada, including the Aspen Festival, the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, Florida State University, the Glimmerglass Festival, Highlands Opera Studio, the Houston Grand Opera Studio, the Interlochen Center for the Arts, the Metropolitan Opera Guild, Opera Theatre St. Louis, the Ryan Young Artists' Program, the Santa Fe Opera, Ravinia's Steans Institute, and Vanderbilt University. She is the founder of the Illinois School of Music Academy, a program for talented pre-college chamber musicians and composers.

Dr. Gunn enjoys working at the intersection of different disciplines and collaborates with artists in the fields of theatre, dance, and design whenever possible. She has served as a coach or conductor at Chicago Opera Theater, Highlands Opera Studio, the Metropolitan Opera Young Artist Program, Opera North, Opera Theater St. Louis, Southern Methodist University, Theaterworks!, and Wolf Trap Opera. She is committed to new works and in recent seasons has been part of several world premieres, as a co-producer, a pianist, or as a conductor: concert works by Augusta Read Thomas, Jennifer Higdon, and Harold Meltzer; staged works like *Polly Peachum* (Scheer/Van Horn), *Letters from Quebec to Providence in the Rain* (Gill,) *Black Square* (Demutsky), *PRISM* (Reid), *The Surrogate* (Macklay), *Sensorium Ex* (Prestini), *Take Flight!* (Maultby and Shire) and *Bhutto* (Fairouz), often in

Nathan believes that music is a living art form and must be nurtured to remain relevant. He has championed dozens of new songs, operas, and sung theater in a multitude of venues. He recently debuted his one-man autobiographical show produced and written by Hershey Felder, entitled *Flying Solo*, which has been lauded as a "riveting autobiographical musical [that] is a stunner both with its touching, relatable, family-centric narrative and Gunn's entertaining, charismatic performing style (Broadway World review)." Nathan and Julie Gunn created their production company, *Shot in the Dark*, to produce and perform cabaret shows which entertain the public, and give young artists and hometown celebrities a platform to showcase their talents. Nathan and Julie are also often seen in recital and cabaret settings where they enjoy creating programs uniquely tailored to the special event. This season, Nathan will perform new roles with Pittsburgh Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, Beth Morrison Projects and PROTOTYPE Festival, and will debut *Drytown: a Living Room Vaudeville* with Julie Gunn.

Nathan is a professor and Swandlund Chair at the University of Illinois where he is co-director of Lyric Theatre @ Illinois, a comprehensive program embracing a broad continuum of opera and musical theatre, as well as the development of new works. At the Lyric Theatre @ Illinois, Nathan developed and founded the first ever Bachelor of Musical Arts in Lyric Theatre curriculum in the nation. The program is part of the School of Music at the University of Illinois and housed in the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts.

In addition to life as a performer, educator, and arts advocate, Nathan is an avid patron of the arts. Nathan and Julie Gunn consistently support pre-college music education and sponsor local cultural events in order to secure the future of the art form. Nathan and his family reside in Champaign, Illinois.

collaboration with Beth Morrison Projects and American Opera Projects. Last year, Nathan and Julie Gunn launched their new production company, Shot in the Dark Productions Inc., which made its debut at the Krannert Center in *Nathan and Julie Gunn and friends: An Evening on Broadway*.

This season she looks forward to the premiere of *Drytown: A living room vaudeville*, a production of Shot in the Dark Productions, and serving as the music director of Kander and Ebb's *Cabaret* at the Krannert Center.

A member of ASCAP, she is the author of many arrangements of songs for chamber groups and orchestras. Her arrangements have been heard at Carnegie Hall, Chicago's Symphony Center, the DeBartolo Center, Ithaca College, Interlochen, the Kennedy Center, the Krannert Center, London's Queen Elizabeth Hall, and in Sun Valley, Idaho.