

The New England Conservatory Opera Theatre

presents

Paul Bunyan

Music by Benjamin Britten
Libretto by Wystan Hugh Auden

Benjamin Britten *Paul Bunyan*, used by arrangement
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Conductor – Stephen Lord
Stage Director – James Robinson

The Mattina R. Proctor Foundation is a generous sponsor of the Opera Studies Program.

Saturday, Monday, Tuesday – April 14, 16, 17, 2012
at 8:00 PM

Sunday – April 15, 2012
at 3:00 PM

The Paramount Theatre – 559 Washington Street, Boston

Paul Bunyan

Prologue

Act One –

Scene 1 – A clearing in the forest (Spring)

Scene 2 – The camp (Summer)

Intermission

Act Two –

Scene 1 – A clearing in the forest (Autumn)

Scene 2 – The Christmas Party

CAST

Saturday, Monday

Sunday, Tuesday

THE VOICE OF PAUL BUNYAN	James Maddalena	
NARRATOR	Tom Suber	Mark Williams
JOHNNY INKSLINGER (Book-Keeper)	Christopher Culpepper	Marquis Fuse
TINY (Daughter of Paul Bunyan)	Emily Tweedy	Emily Jensen
HOT BISCUIT SLIM (A Good Cook)	Michael Kuhn	Joshua Quinn
SAM SHARKEY (A Bad Cook)	Davis Charles Tay	
BEN BENNY (A Bad Cook)	Gyasi Barber	
HEL HELSON (Foreman)	Daniel Brevik	Jason Ryan
Swedes:		
ANDY ANDERSON	Robert Cinnante	
PETE PETERSON	Yuchen Zhang	
JEN JENSON	Christopher Weigel	
CROSS CROSSHAULSON	Leroy Davis	
JOHN SHEARS (A Farmer)	Hernan Berisso	

Special thanks to:

Bob Winters and NEC Concert Halls staff,
Derek Wiles, Cambridge Used Bicycles, and Menotomy Vintage Bicycles,
Advanced Lighting Production Services, United Staging and Rigging,
Diane Brainerd, The Winsor School,
MIT Theater Arts, Rachel Padula-Shufelt,
Nancy Flessas and Helena Mestenhauer

New England Conservatory Opera Theatre

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Costume crew:

Sheena Dorci, Rebecca Butler, Jill Coleman, Kristen Donahue,
Meghan Dowd, Elizabeth Fitzpatrick, Jana Howland, Becky Hylton,
Carley Wilcox, Andrea Zax, Phoebe Zax, Heidi and Renata, Brenda Huggins,
Kelly Baker, Margaret Koerber

Scenery by BENT Productions

For New England Conservatory Opera Studies

Artistic Director

Stephen Lord

Executive Director and Chair

Luretta Bybee

Program Administrator

Maleia R. Sheflin

Vocal Coaches/Musical Preparation

Jean Anderson Collier

Damien Francoeur-Krzyzek

Timothy Steele

Michael Strauss

Daniel Wyneken

Diction

Terry Decima

John Moriarty

Faculty Stage Directors

Patricia-Maria Weinmann

Greg Smucker

Movement

Melinda Sullivan

NEC Voice Faculty

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William Cotten

D'Anna Fortunato

Carole Haber

Karen Holvik, *Chair*

Michael Meraw

Patricia Misslin

Lorraine Nubar

Lisa Saffer

Mark St. Laurent

Dean of the College,

New England Conservatory of Music

Thomas Novak

CAST
(continued)

	<u>Saturday, Monday</u>	<u>Sunday, Tuesday</u>
WESTERN UNION BOY	Joshua Collier	
FIDO (A Dog)	Emily Brand	Soyoung Park
MOPPET (A Cat)	Amal El-Shrafi	Wendy Wang
POPPET (A Cat)	Elena Jarlson	Mary Starkey
GOOSE 1	Cristina Bakhoum	
GOOSE 2	Tai Oney	
GOOSE 3	Jennifer Russo	Susanna Su
QUARTET OF THE DEFEATED	Cristina Bakhoum Joshua Collier Leroy Davis Gyasi Barber	Hyunho Yoo

Chorus

OLD TREES:

Stephanie Barnes, Asha Carroll, Robert Cinnante,
Michelle Doolittle, Bridget Haile, Eduardo Antonio Ramos Suárez

YOUNG TREES:

Dana Atwood, Joshua Collier, Shannon Kelly,
Youjin Kim, Michael Kuhn, David Charles Tay,
Hyun-Ho Yoo

Cover

Tom Suber, JOHNNY INKSLINGER
Bridget Haile, TINY
Mark Williams, SAM SHARKEY
Melody Jenkins, FIDO

Paul Bunyan by W. H. Auden

Most myths are poetical history – that is to say, they are not pure fantasy, but have a basis in actual events. Even in its dreams, the human mind does not create out of nothing. The anthropomorphic gods of folk-legends may, for example, in many instances, represent memories of invaders with a superior culture; these, in their turn, should a further invasion occur, may be demoted into giants and dragons. The fantastic elaborations are an expression of the psychological attitudes of men toward real events over which they have no control. Further, myths are collective creations; they cease to appear when a society has become sufficiently differentiated for its individual members to have individual conceptions of their tasks.

America is unique in being the only country to create myths after the occurrence of the industrial revolution. Because it was an undeveloped continent with an open frontier and a savage climate, conditions favorable to myth-making still existed. These were not, as in most previous civilizations primarily political, the reflection of a cultural struggle between two races (though Bunyan does fight the Indians) but geographical. In the New World the struggle between Man and Nature was again severe enough to obliterate individual differences in the face of a collective danger.

Appearing so late in history, Paul Bunyan has no magical powers; what he does is what any man could do if he were as big and as inventive; in fact, what Bunyan accomplishes as an individual is precisely what the lumbermen managed to accomplish as a team with the help of machinery. Moreover, he is like them as a character; his dreams have all the naïve swaggering optimism of the nineteenth century; he is as Victorian as New York.

Babe, the blue ox who gives him advice, remains a puzzle; I conceive of her quite arbitrarily, as a symbol of his anima, but, so far as I know, one explanation is as valid as another. Nor have I really the slightest idea why he should fail to get on with his wife, unless it signify that those who, like lumbermen, are often away from home, rarely develop the domestic virtues.

Associated with Bunyan are a number of satellite human figures, of which the most interesting are Hel Helson, his Swedish foreman, and Johnny Inkslinger, his book-keeper. These are eternal human types: Helson, the man of brawn but no brains, invaluable as long as he has somebody to give him orders whom he trusts, but dangerous when his consciousness of lacking intelligence turns into suspicion and hatred of those who possess it; and Inkslinger, the man of speculative and critical intelligence, whose temptation is to despise those who do the manual work that makes the life of thought possible. Both of them learn a lesson in their relations with Paul Bunyan; Helson through a physical fight in which he is the loser, Inkslinger through his stomach.

Production/Technical Personnel

Musical Preparation – Damien Francoeur-Kryzek, Timothy Steele,
Daniel Wyneken

Chorus Master – Daniel Wyneken

Scenic Designer – Justin Townsend

Lighting Designer – Justin Townsend

Associate Lighting Designer – Christopher Theilking

Assistant Lighting Designer – Juliana Beecher

Costume Designer – Katherine Stebbins

Production Coordinator – Linda O'Brien

Production Manager – Lauren Audette

Production Stage Manager – Amy Spalletta

Stage Manager – Nicole Cote

Assistant Stage Manager – Katy Clanton

Hair Designer – Jackie Bufalino

Makeup Designer – Jennifer DeMarco-Gregory

Technical Director – Peter Lanza

Assistant Technical Director – Dave Foley

Master Carpenter – Brandon McSweeney

Propsmaster – Ed Hartigan

Props Run Crew – Jill Coleman

Master Electrician – Charlie Wise

Assistant Master Electrician/LBO – Tori Sweetser

Costume Coordinator – Amanda Mujica

Wardrobe Supervisor – Susie Moncousky

Mask Construction – Jeffrey Burrows

Audio/Video Engineer – Mike Mayo

Supertitles Preparation – Emily Brand

Supertitles Operator – Joseph Smith

Carpenters:

Alan Boyer, Karina Boyer, John Whiteside, Jeff Maynard, Matt Breton,
Rick Roman, Dan Martinez, Craig Burns, Jim Crosby, Tom Farrell,
Greg Hanawald, Rich Callahan

Electricians:

Steve Manifold, Lauren Glover, Lauren Scatolini, Toby Chandler,
Kasey Sheehan, John Pelletier, Meghan Crimmins, Brian Rothchild

NEC Opera Orchestra

First Violin

QianQian Li
Ben Carson
Di Wu
Tara Mueller
Yunji Han
Olga Caccanova
Daniel Koo

Second Violin

Kuan-Yu Chen
Natsuki Kumagai
Nahyun Kim
Kuan-Fu Jeff Chen
Lisa Goddard
Katheryn Hewatt

Guitar

Maarten Stragier

Viola

Brett Walfish
Kiyool Kim
Maureen Heflinger
Eunji An

Cello

Emanuel Evans
Louise Grévin
Youbin Jun
Jeremiah-Everard C.
Barcus

Bass

Kevin Garçon
Lin Chang

Fiddler

Brendan O'Donnell

Flute

Christina Hughes
Lisa Husseini

Piccolo

Lisa Husseini

Oboe

Zachary Boeding

Clarinet

Jay Hutchinson
Nathan G. Raderman

Bass Clarinet

Christopher Mothersole

Horn

Jennifer Hyde
David Vaughan

Trumpet

Matthew Yasuji Ebisuzaki
David Sterrett

Trombone

Nathaniel Lee
Gregory Platt

Tuba

Robert B. Mortenson

Timpani

Eliza Kinney

Percussion

Ethan Pani

Harp

Drew Cryer

Piano/Celeste

Damien Francoeur-
Krzyszek

NEC Orchestra Department

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*Stanford and Norma Jean
Caldewood Director of
Orchestras*

Marjorie Apfelbaum
Administrative Director

David Loebel
*Associate Director of
Orchestras*

Donald Palma
*Artistic Director of
Chamber Orchestra*

Melissa Steinberg
Performance Librarian

Kayleigh Miller
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Richard Henebry
Student Manager

In writing an operetta about Bunyan, three difficulties arose. In the first place, his size and general mythical characteristics prevent his physical appearance on the stage – he is presented as a voice and, in order to differentiate him from the human characters, as a speaking role. In consequence someone else had to be found to play the chief dramatic role, and Inkslinger seemed the most suitable, as satisfying Henry James's plea for a fine lucid intelligence as a compositional center. Inkslinger, in fact, is the only person capable of understanding who Paul Bunyan really is, and, in a sense, the operetta is an account of his process of discovery.

In the second place, the theatrical presentation of the majority of Bunyan's exploits would require the resources of Bayreuth, but not to refer to them at all would leave his character all too vaguely in the air. To get round this difficulty we have interposed simple narrative ballads between the scenes, as it were, as solo Greek chorus.

Lastly, an opera with no female voices would be hard to produce and harder to listen to, yet in its earlier stages at least the conversion of forests into lumber is an exclusively male occupation. Accordingly we have introduced a camp dog and two camp cats, sung by a coloratura soprano and two mezzo-sopranos respectively.

The principal interest of the Bunyan legend today is as a reflection of the cultural problems that occur during the first stage of every civilization, the stage of colonization of the land and the conquest of nature. The operetta, therefore, begins with a prologue in which America is still a virgin forest and Paul Bunyan has not been born, and ends with a Christmas party at which he bids farewell to his men because now he is no longer needed. External physical nature has been mastered, and for this very reason can no longer dictate to men what they should do. Now their task is one of their human relations with each other and, for this, a collective mythical figure is no use, because the requirements of each relation are unique. Faith is essentially invisible.

At first sight it may seem presumptuous for a foreigner to take an American folk-tale as his subject, but in fact the implications of the Bunyan legend are not only American but universal.

Until the advent of the machine the conquest of nature was still incomplete, and as users of the machine all countries share a common history. All countries are now faced at the same and for the first time with the same problem. Now that, in a material sense, we can do anything almost that we like, how are we to know what is the right thing to do and what is the wrong thing to avoid, for nature is no longer a nurse with her swift punishments and rewards? Of what happens when men refuses to accept this necessity of choosing, and are terrified

of or careless about their freedom, we have now only too clear a proof.

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Biographies

Conductor **Stephen Lord**, named one of the “25 Most Powerful Names in U.S. Opera” by *Opera News*, makes his return to Boston and turns his attention to the comprehensive education of young singers as he becomes artistic director of New England Conservatory’s opera studies program.

Currently the music director of Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and continually praised for conducting both traditional and contemporary operatic works, Lord has also visited or had primary affiliations with many other opera companies in the U.S. and overseas. He was music director at Boston Lyric Opera for 16 seasons.

Lord’s 2012-2013 season includes a critically acclaimed production of *Tosca* at the English National Opera, a new production of *Sweeney Todd* for Opera Theatre of St Louis, a production of *Don Pasquale* at Lyric Opera of Chicago as well a new production of the same opera at the Julliard Opera Theatre, *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Canadian Opera Company and a new production of *La Donna del Lago* for the Santa Fe Opera.

James Robinson (Stage Director) is the Artistic Director of Opera Theatre of St. Louis where he has directed Argento’s *Miss Havisham’s Fire*, Weill’s *Street Scene*, Adams’ *Nixon in China* and *The Death of Klinghoffer*, and the world premiere of Ash’s *The Golden Ticket*, among others. Recent productions include *Il Trittico* and *The Elixir of Love* for the San Francisco Opera, *La Bohème* and *The Abduction from the Seraglio* for the Houston Grand Opera, *The Rake’s Progress* and *Così fan tutte* for the Santa Fe Opera, Bernstein’s *Mass* and Honegger’s *Jeanne d’Arc au Bucher* for the London Symphony Orchestra, and Corigliano’s *The Ghosts of Versailles* and *The Golden Ticket* for the Wexford Festival. His work has also been seen at the Hollywood Bowl, the Baltimore Symphony, Carnegie Hall, Chicago’s Court Theatre and the Minnesota Orchestra. He has mounted new productions for Opera Australian Opera, the Royal Swedish Opera, Welsh National Opera, Opera Ireland, the Deutch Oper Berlin, the Canadian Opera Company as well as opera companies in Seattle, Boston, Dallas, Los Angeles, Denver, Washington DC, Vancouver, Miami and Minneapolis as well as the New York City Opera. Future projects include the American premiere of Unsk Chin’s *Alice in Wonderland* and the world premiere of Terence Blanchard’s *Champion* for Opera Theatre of St. Louis, *Don Pasquale* for the Julliard School, *The Barbary Coast* for the San Francisco Symphony and the

world premiere of Tobias Picker's *Dolores Claiborne* for the San Francisco Opera.

James Robinson's engagement is sponsored by the Mattina R. Proctor Visiting Artist Fund.

James Maddalena, baritone, first gained international recognition for the title role of John Adams' *Nixon in China*, a role he has sung to great acclaim throughout the world including his Metropolitan Opera debut in 2011 and most recently with the Lyric Opera of Kansas City in 2012. He has appeared with many of the world's leading opera companies and orchestras including San Francisco Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Frankfurt Opera, and Glyndebourne, the Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Houston Symphony and the London Symphony Orchestra. He is a frequent collaborator with director Peter Sellars in Mozart operas, Haydn, Handel and John Adams. Renowned for his work in contemporary music, he premiered additional roles in John Adams operas (The Captain in *The Death of Klinghoffer* and Jack Hubbard in *Doctor Atomic*, and works of Tod Machover (*Death and the Powers*, Monte Carlo Opera), John Harbison (*Four Psalms*, Chicago Symphony), Stewart Wallace (*Harvey Milk*, Houston Grand Opera, *Bonesetter's Daughter*, San Francisco Opera), Paul Moravec (*The Letter*, Santa Fe Opera), Louis Spratlan (*Life Is A Dream*, Santa Fe Opera), Kirke Mechem (*John Brown*, Lyric Opera of Kansas City), Elliot Goldenthal (*Fire Water Paper*, Pacific Symphony), Hugo Weisgall (*Esther*, New York City Opera) and Mark Adamo (*Little Women*, Houston Grand Opera). James Maddalena has recorded for Decca/London, BMG, Classical Catalyst, Nonesuch, Teldec, Sony Classical, Harmonia Mundi, and EMI. He is on the Grammy Award-winning recording of *Nixon In China* (Nonesuch) and the Emmy Award-winning PBS telecast on DVD. His performance of Mark Adamo's *Little Women* was released in 2011 on Naxos DVD.

James Maddalena's engagement is sponsored by the Mattina R. Proctor Visiting Artist Fund.