APRIL 20, 2021

Wait…this opera's in a parking garage?

Thanks to the brilliant mind of "opera's disrupter in residence" (*New York Times*), Yuval Sharon, Lyric Opera of Chicago will present a radical reimagining of *Götterdämmerung*, the final chapter of Wagner's *Ring* cycle with a sold-out run of ***Twilight: Gods*** — in Millennium Garages - Millennium Lakeside Parking Garage in late April and early May. Say what? Michael Smallwood, Lyric's technical director and VP, and Jackie Kane, Millennium Garages' director of sales and marketing, are here to answer your questions.

Why Millennium Garages?

Taking a giant step back for additional context — Yuval Sharon was brought on as Lyric's creative catalyst shortly after the canellation of the *Ring* cycle to help reimagine Lyric programming. Through a partnership between Michigan Opera Theatre and Lyric, Sharon's innovative idea to present an opera in a parking garage began to look like it could really work. Once Sharon and Anthony Freud, Lyric's general director, president & CEO, decided to present *Twilight: Gods* in Chicago (after its premiere in Detroit), the first big question was, "Where?" "We started conversations with the City of Chicago and they brought up to Millennium Garages," Smallwood recalls. Originally, the plan was to set up this unconventional opera experience in a multistory outdoor garage, similar to the one used in Michigan Opera Theatre's production. Noise from the CTA elevated trains near most of the city's major outdoor parking garages nixed that thought and led the team to go underground. "We loved the option because Millennium Garages are massive, the community knows their name, and we were excited to bring recognition to the newer Lakeside Garage," Smallwood adds.

"When Lyric reached out to us presenting the idea, we were thrilled to play a role in bringing music back into people's lives," says Kane. "We have been looking for ways to utilize our garages for events other than parking, especially in this COVID time, and this was the perfect indoor event to make it happen and show the city what's possible." Kane notes that Millennium Garages have been used for movie filming, and that they envision using it for a variety of non-parking activities in the future — anything from car shows to winter farmers' markets. "Not everyone realizes the Millennium Garages actually consist of four different garages: Millennium Lakeside, Millennium Park, Grant Park North, and Grant Park South. Our Lakeside Garage is the biggest of the four. It has a great location under Maggie Daley Park and just off Lake Shore Drive, and it's quiet. It was the perfect match."

Fun fact: The Millennium Lakeside Parking Garage could hold the entire Aon Center building if it was laid on its side! That's plenty of room for a drive-through opera.

Lyric Lately

Lyric Lately

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- Making their mark
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A corner of the 13 acres of Millennium Lakeside Parking Garage.

Logistically, how do you stage an opera in a parking garage?

Once the location was set, the next question centered around logistics. What does an opera in a parking garage look like? Lyric decided to embrace the Millennium Garages' aesthetic in creating the design for the opera production, integrating the garage into the storytelling. "This drive-through opera is really taking audiences on a journey," says Smallwood. "We'll add theater lights to illuminate the cars' paths and of course we'll add props and sets, but the garage's fluorescent lighting and white cement walls add to the general look of the show."

Lyric is working with Sharon and PXT Studios to design the production, testing the path that the cars will take in a "car-eography" rehearsal earlier this year. A singer and cellist were also brought to the garage in October 2020 to test the musical acoustics for voice and instrument. The audience's journey has been central to planning this production. "We're thinking of every possible issue at every possible turn that someone might experience in their car, giving us the idea to put lights on direction signs, have backup signs to remind audiences to change radio stations, using safety wands for staff to guide cars, and more," says Smallwood.

How will Lyric's Chicago production compare with Michigan Opera Theatre's production?

For the premiere of *Twilight: Gods* last October, MOT used its own seven-level above-ground garage (with an open-air rooftop level where the finale was set), adjacent to the 99-year-old opera house. Lyric's production will take place across the Loop from our 92-year-old opera house, set in a 13-acre portion of the vast underground Millennium Garages complex, all on one level. In preparing for the Chicago performances, Lyric has benefited greatly by being able to consult with partner Michigan Opera Theatre on what went well, what could be improved, and what can be tweaked to make the production unique to Chicago. The premiere featured narration written and performed by Detroit interdisciplinary artist Marcia Music; Lyric's production will feature narration written and performed by Chicago interdisciplinary artist avery r. young. The principal singing artists who created their roles in Detroit will reprise those roles in Chicago, except for the Rhinemaidens, who will be portrayed by current ensemble members of The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center.

Sir Andrew Davis and Peter Sagal in conversation

Lyric Music & More: May 18

Pasión Latina artist interviews

Scott Marr on Hansel and Gretel

Lyric Family Favorites: May 14

Celebrating Sir Andrew Davis: memories and tributes

Spotlight on Kyle Ketelsen

What makes a classic?

Behind the Scenes: Celebrating Sir Andrew Davis

How your support sparked Lyric's creativity

Lyric Music & More: May 11

Spotlight on Sondra Radvanovsky

Spotlight on David Chase

Sir Andrew Davis Playlist

Spotlight on Amanda Majeski

Lyric Family Favorites: May 7

The gold standard: Highlights of Sir Andrew Davis's magnificent tenure at Lyric

Valhalla in photos: a journey through Twilight: Gods

Lyric Music & More: May 4

Week of May 3: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

Lyric Family Favorites: April 30

Behind the Rossini Sonatas

Lyric Music & More: April 27

Airing out Wagner's Götterdämmerung: Wagner in the Age of Coronavirus

Lyric Family Favorites: April 23

Richard Wagner and the journey of the RING

Week of April 26: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

Lyric Music & More: April 20

Wait…this opera's in a parking garage?

Behind the scenes of Rising Stars

Lyric Family Favorites: April 16

Week of April 19: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

Ride of the Spectators: Out of the Opera House and Into the Car

Spotlight on Nicole Cabell

Hey! You're on! Lyric's last-minute cast changes

Lyric Family Favorites: April 9

Spotlight on Matthew Polenzani

ELEVATOR TO
OPERA HOUSE

Directing cars through Michigan Opera Theatre's production of *Twilight: Gods.*

What is the ventilation system like in the garage for the performers?

The safety and comfort of the artists involved in *Twilight: Gods* are a top priority for Lyric, which is another reason why Millennium Garages was a perfect venue fit. "Millennium Garages uses an air intake and outake system of venting fans that are controlled with sensors around the garage that detect car fumes," says Smallwood. "If fumes get too high, the venting system cranks up." Kane explains, "Our automatic ventilation system is normally measuring CO levels by sensors, but we also have full capability to operate the system manually per area of the garage, meaning we can ensure a safe environment for everyone involved in the production."

How have some of the physical elements of the *Ring* been adapted to the garage setting?

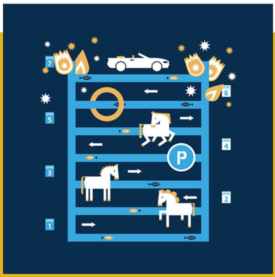
One of the pleasures of taking in an opera performance is seeing how certain aspects are physicalized, whether traditionally or innovatively, or somewhere in between. Lyric's technical staff is working hard with the *Twilight: Gods* creative team to freshly conjure anticipated iconic images for the unconventional environment of Millennium Lakeside Garage. In place of a flying four-legged Grane, Brünnhilde's trusty steed, the daughter of Wotan will instead arrive in a red 1964 Mustang, though the original metal horses and red light sticks from Lyric's recent *Ring* production will be incorporated into *Twilight: Gods.* Blue fabric will represent the Rhine River. "There are columns inside the garage that flank the driving path at times, which we plan to use to build out the scenes and help depict the journey toward the end of the world," says Smallwood. Millennium Lakeside Garage will present a unique version of Valhalla at every turn.

- Spotlight on Quinn Kelsey
- Attila: Opera vs. History
- Week of April 12: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more
- Spotlight on Christine Goerke
- Lyric Music & More: April 13
- Lyric Music & More: April 6
- Lyric Family Favorites: April 2
- Week of April 5: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more
- Spotlight on Tamara Wilson
- Christine Goerke on singing the Ring
- Lyric Music & More: March 30
- Adapting Attila: Highlights in Concert
- Maestro Mazzola on the move
- Lyric Family Favorites: March 26
- Beauty and Power: The thrills of Early Verdi
- Week of March 29: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more
- Meet the cast of The New Classics
- Lyric Music & More: March 23
- Rossini's greatest hits
- Lyric Family Favorites: March 19
- A Talk with the Director: Tim Albery spoke with Lyric's dramaturg, Roger Pines
- Attila Concert in Photos
- Politics in Opera
- Lyric Music & More: March 16
- Jewel of Chicago: All About the Lyric Opera House
- Time, love & madness: The Moon in classical music
- Week of March 22: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more
- A Tug at the Heart
- Behind the scenes of the Ryan Opera Center gala
- Lyric Family Favorites: March 12
- Spring is in bloom on Zoom
- Week of March 15: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more
- De-myth-ifiying Rossini
- Happy go lucky
- Spotlight on Christian Van Horn
- Lyric Music & More: March 9
- A talk with conductor Eun Sun Kim
- Women of Lyric
- New programming added to Lyric Opera of Chicago's 2020/21 Season
- Spotlight on avery r. young
- Lyric Family Favorites: March 5
- Rossini Sonata Sessions: A photo preview

Mezzo-soprano Catherine Martin portrays Waltraute in Lyric's production of *Twilight: Gods*, as she did with Michigan Opera Theatre.

What behind-the-scenes preparations were made in the garage to accommodate rehearsals and performances?

The Millennium Lakeside Parking Garage has served as home to two fleets of 600 overflow cars from nearby car dealerships, which had to be moved out of the *Twilight: Gods* production path. Parking tenants who often use the garage for car storage also needed to temporarily relocate their vehicles. "Before Lyric arrived, we did some general cleaning, pressure washing of the walls and floors, and light garage maintenance," Kane notes. "We're fortunate that the garage is as big as it is and that it isn't as busy as our other nearby garages, so that we have plenty of room to accommodate all uses at once."



APRIL 28 - MAY 2, 2021

Twilight: Gods

Experience a reimagining of the final chapter of Wagner's epic *Ring* cycle in the Chicago premiere of *Twilight: Gods*. From the safety of your own vehicle, you'll be immersed in a series of live performances, videos, and installations brought to life by singers, small instrumental groups, and actors as you drive through the parking garage. With new English texts written by **Yuval Sharon** and poetic transitions written and performed by Chicago interdisciplinary artist **avery r. young**, each of the discrete scenes is linked together and recontextualized, making this story unique to its time and place.

LEARN MORE →

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- Week of March 8: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more
- Lyric Music & More: March 2
- SOLE E AMORE: The Ryan Opera Center's Voyage of Discovery – Part 2
- Spotlight on Yuval Sharon
- Lyric Family Favorites: February 26
- Opera Staycations
- Week of March 1: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more
- Lyric Music & More: February 23
- Lyric Family Favorites: February 19
- Lyric Libations: SOLE E AMORE
- SOLE E AMORE: The Ryan Opera Center's Voyage of Discovery – Part 1
- Week of February 22: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more
- Lyric Music & More: February 16
- Lights, Camera, Action! Maestro Mazzola's vision for Sole e Amore
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- Week of February 1: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more
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- Week of January 25: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more
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- Week of January 11: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more
- Lyric Music & More: December 29
- Lyric Music & More: December 22

Lyric Family Favorites: December 18

Lyric favorites: Holiday treats

Lyric Music & More: December 15

Week of December 21: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

Lyric Family Favorites: December 11

Week of December 28: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

Week of January 4: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

Aproveche al máximo su experiencia de transmisión

Meet The Factotum Team: Will Liverman and K-Rico

Holidays with Maestro Mazzola

Lyric Music & More: December 8

Week of December 14: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

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A Conversation with Ana María Martínez and David Portillo

Lyric Music & More: December 1

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Lyric Music & More: November 24

Lyric Family Favorites: November 20

Lyric Music & More: November 17

Get to Know: Terence Blanchard's Fire Shut Up in My Bones

Sir Andrew Davis and The Marriage of Figaro: A Perfect Match

Which Lyric digital experience is right for you?

Holiday Zoom Backgrounds

Spotlight on Ana María Martínez

Rossini: composing the perfect meal

Renée Fleming Artist Spotlight

Share the beauty of music on #GivingTuesday

What's Happening at Lyric This Fall

Your seat awaits

Opera Has Made It To TikTok

Spotlight on EmpowerYouth! mentors

Give opera's regard to Broadway

What is a Master Class?

Week of November 30: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

Week of November 23: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

Week of November 16: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

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Lyric Family Favorites: November 6

Lyric Music & More: November 3

Get to Know: Daniel Catán's Florencia en el Amazonas

Week of November 2: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

Lyric Family Favorites: October 30

A look at Master Classes with Sir Andrew Davis

Lyric Music & More: October 27

Operatic chills and thrills

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Highlights planned for the 2021 | 22 Season

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Spotlight on Lawrence Brownlee

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Spot Maestro Mazzola

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Fall Zoom Backgrounds

Week of October 12: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

Lyric Music & More: October 6

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Lyric Family Favorites: October 2

Lyric Music & More: September 29

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Week of September 28: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

Lyric Opera of Chicago announces reimagined season programs

Lyric Music & More: September 22

Remembering Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

J'Nai Bridges in Conversation: For the Love of Lyric

Lyric Family Favorites: September 18

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Lyric Music & More: September 15

Week of September 14: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

Lyric Family Favorites: September 11

From "Ryan Opera Center From Home" to "Ryan Opera Center At Work"

From the Opera House to the writing room: Carson's Lyric Story

Lyric Libations: For the Love of Lyric

Lyric Music & More: September 8

Lyric Family Favorites: September 4

Week of September 7: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more

How to watch For the Love of Lyric as a family

Lyric Music & More: September 1

The Ryan Opera Center returns to the airwaves!

Lyric Family Favorites: August 28

Virtual activities for kids!

Week of August 31: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more!

How opera can change your life

Lyric Music & More: August 26

Six trailblazing women who made Lyric history

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Pets of Lyric: Act II

Lyric Family Favorites: August 14

The Making of Lawrence Brownlee and Friends: The Next Chapter

Week of August 17: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more!

Lyric Music & More: August 11

The thrill of the new

Lyric Family Favorites: August 7

Meet our teaching artists!

Lyric Libations: THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

Week of August 10: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more!

Lyric Music & More: August 5

A new opening to the 2020/21 Season

Lyric Welcomes The Joffrey to the Opera House

Lyric Family Favorites: July 31

Classical music for sleep

Streaming guide

Week of August 3: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more!

Week 20: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more!

Ryan Opera Center in Conversation: Lunga's Journey

How Opera Can Change a Life: Sophia's Lyric Story

"Je crois entendre encore" - The Pearl Fishers

Week 19: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more!

Lyric Family Favorites: July 17

Emoji Opera Titles

Virtual concerts for hospital patients

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Broadway Musical Quiz

Broadway Zoom Backgrounds

"Una Voce Poco Fa" - The Barber of Seville

Lawrence Brownlee and Friends: A virtual event on July 26

The Joys of The Sound of Music

Lyric's Broadway Hits…A Growing Chicago Tradition

My Fair Lady: Almost—But Not Quite—A Love Story

Rodgers and Hammerstein's Oklahoma!

A Glorious Partnership: The Hero and Heroine of The King and I

Week 17: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more!

Ryan Opera Center From Home: The First Week

Lyric Family Favorites: June 26

Show your Lyric PRIDE

Rigoletto - "Caro nome che il mio cor"

Week 16: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more!

Lyric Music & More: June 19

Don Giovanni - "Don Giovanni! A cenar teco m'invitasti"

Faust - Jewel Song

Lyric Family Favorites: May 22

From Wacker Drive to Working from Home

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Popera!

Week 14: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more!

The King and I: "Shall we Dance?"

Lyric Music & More: May 19

The Barber of Seville: "Ecco ridente in cielo"

Lyric Family Favorites: May 15

Opera 101: Who's in that box? The life of an opera prompter

Rigoletto - La donna è mobile

Lyric Music & More: May 12

You can never get enough "Summertime"

Happy Mother's Day from Lyric

Ryan Opera Center from Home: Kayleigh Decker

Lyric Family Favorites: May 8

Ryan Opera Center From Home: Madeline Slettedahl

La Traviata: "Sempre libera"

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Elektra: "Ob ich nicht höre"

Lyric Family Favorites: May 1

Week eight: Lyric Commentaries for free Met Nightly Streams

- Week nine: Lyric Commentaries Met Nightly Streams and more!
- Week ten: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more!
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- Week 13: Lyric Commentaries for opera streaming and more!
- La bohème: "Quando me'n vo'"
- Lyric Music & More: April 28
- Idomeneo: "Solitudine amiche...Zeffiretti lusinghieri"
- Lyric Family Favorites: April 24
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- Week seven: Lyric Commentaries for free Met Nightly Streams
- Week six: Lyric Commentaries for free Met Nightly Streams
- An unforgettable "Ride"— Lyric Opera Orchestra delights with virtual performance
- Spot Sir Andrew Davis
- Ryan Opera Center From Home: Anthony Reed
- Lyric Music & More: April 14
- Madama Butterfly: "Un bel dì"
- Pets of Lyric
- Jesus Christ Superstar - Superstar
- "Au fond du temple saint" - The Pearl Fishers Duet
- Lyric's Ring: An inside look at the week when the stage went dark
- Directing the Ring
- Singing and Acting the RING
- Philosophy and the RING
- Lyric Family Favorites: April 10
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- Lyric Family Favorites: April 3
- Opera's Silliest Moments
- Conductor's Note - Gotterdammerung
- Director's Note - Gotterdammerung
- Siegfried's Sabbatical
- Die Walküre: A Tug at the Heart
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- Lyric Family Favorites: March 27
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- Lyric Trivia
- Lyric Opera Commentaries to accompany your streaming experiences
- Week two: Experience Wagner's Ring cycle and more with free Lyric Commentaries and Met Opera Live Streams
- Week three: Lyric's free Commentaries for free Met Nightly Streams
- Week one: Free Commentaries for free Met Live Streams

Week four: Lyric Commentaries for free Met Nightly Streams

Backstage Life: Scott Marr

Interview with April Busch

Hearts full of music

Which RING character are you?

Kiss & Tell: Valentine's Day at Lyric

True to herself: Cio-Cio-San speaks

Rising Stars Reminisce

Which Donizetti Queen Are You?

Opera in the Afternoon: An Insider's Guide to Matinees

DON GIOVANNI Through the Ages

Rape, revenge, love: the DON GIOVANNI puzzle

Harmonies and Hits: Verdi's Choral Music

Top Halloween Masquerade Costumes

Backstage life: Kenneth Nichols

Backstage life: John Clarke

Broadway Meets Barber

The Great Return: Maria Callas and Lyric Opera

Madeline on the Move

West Side Story Insider

West Side Story for Every Budget

Happy Birthday Stephen Sondheim!

Cheers to 25 Years!

Modern Match - Elektra

Master Mentor: Julia Faulkner

What does it mean to be an "opera advocate?"

Modern Match - Ariodante

Modern Match - La traviata

Modern Match - Siegfried

Modern Match - Il trovatore

Modern Match - La bohème

Opera on Broadway: La bohème vs. Rent

Operatic fathers: the best and worst

Glitter... Glitter Everywhere

Give the Gift of Lyric this Holiday Season

Lyric Libations: Orphée et Eurydice

Lyric 101: Dos and Don'ts

Lyric 101: What to Wear to the Opera

Lyric 101: Getting Around

A Romantic Night at the Opera

National Respect for Parents Day

Winter is Here...Opera Season is Coming

Happy National Best Friends Day from Lyric!

MY FAIR LADY: Journey to the Stage

Interview with Brian Traynor

THE TROJANS (LES TROYENS) By the Numbers

Check out our range (of fashions)!

Behind the Scenes of Das Rheingold

Opera-Inspired Halloween Costumes

5 opera myths BUSTED!

How do you plan an opera season?

From Soprano to Bass: Exploring Voice in Opera

The Barber of Seville: After the Curtain Falls

Luisa Miller: After the Curtain Falls

Critical Acclaim for Dead Man Walking

A conversation with Sister Helen Prejean and Jake Heggie

Opera 101 Overtures: Let's start at the very beginning

TOSCA: A Lyric photo history

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Header photo: Michigan Opera Theatre's production of *Twilight: Gods*; Credit: Mitty Carter/Michigan Opera Theatre

All other photos: Mitty Carter/Michigan Opera Theatre, Lyric Opera of Chicago

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