



## Livermore Valley Opera NEWS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ***Livermore Valley Opera Hosts Guest Lecture Thomas Holliday, Authorized Biographer of Composer Carlisle Floyd***

LIVERMORE, CALIF. – The Tri-Valley's own professional opera company, Livermore Valley Opera (LVO), is thrilled to host a special guest lecture by Thomas Holliday, the authorized biographer of American composer, Carlisle Floyd, on September 14 at 7pm at the Bothwell Arts Center in Livermore. Seating is limited, advance reservations are requested ([info@LVOpera.com](mailto:info@LVOpera.com)) and tickets will be \$10 each at the door.

Holliday will share with the LVO community some fascinating details about the composer, known as "Father of American Opera," and speak about his book entitled *Falling Up: The Days and Nights of Carlisle Floyd* (Syracuse University Press, 2013). A limited number of Holliday's books will also be on hand for sale at \$30 per copy. This author's guest appearance also promises to offer unique insights into and a preview of LVO's own upcoming production *OF MICE AND MEN*.

### **About the Author**

Thomas Holliday's staging [is] traditional in spirit but full of imaginative touches that instantly define the characters." (*New York Magazine*) "He is that rare opera director, an innovator who has respect for his material." (*Syracuse Post-Standard*)  
With a background in both instrumental (brass) and vocal music, trained as a stage director and operatic bass-baritone at Indiana University's School of Music, Holliday has been active as a stage director of opera in both Europe and the United States. His directing work includes engagements with the Hamburg State Opera (Germany), and the Stadttheater Klagenfurt and American Institute of Musical Studies in Austria. His American assignments include productions for Indianapolis Opera, Pennsylvania Opera Theatre, Glimmerglass Opera Theater, Opera Colorado, Central City Opera, Baton Rouge Opera, Berkshire Opera Company, Shreveport Opera, Sacramento Opera, Bronx Opera Company, and the Ash Lawn Festival in Virginia, where he was Director of Productions for three seasons. His repertoire extends to more than fifty fully-staged operas, operettas and musical comedies, in more than seven languages, many in multiple productions.

Holliday finds himself increasingly devoted to writing: fourteen supertitle translations, articles for Lyric Opera of Chicago's *Season Companion* study guide, and *The Opera Journal*; twenty-four performing English translations of operas; two original opera librettos; and unpublished fiction, poetry, and settings of dozens of art song texts. He is currently at work on an historical thriller series, *The Counterfactual Mozart*.

His well-received *Falling Up: The Days and Nights of Carlisle Floyd* (Syracuse University Press, 2013) is the authorized biography of America's greatest and most prolific opera composer. *Tempo* (Jan 2014) credited the volume as "a heroic story of a truly remarkable individual, told in meticulous detail by an author whose sympathy and understanding derive from his own experience of his subject's field...Floyd's operatic themes run through the wider spectrum of humanity, in accessible musical language, and we are shown how his operas have not only legs, but now wings, showing up in all parts of the globe. A thoroughly enjoyable and informative book...stamped with resounding authority and undoubted affection."

Marc Scorca, President and CEO, Opera America noted, "Tom Holliday's biography of Carlisle Floyd documents the distinguished career of one of our most beloved artists and teachers, with vivid descriptions of creative ideas transformed into the operas we know and love. Introducing a large cast of real characters central to the development of an American opera repertoire, Holliday captures the composer's poetic insight into the medium's essence."

Tony Award-winning producer and director, Hal Prince, said, "Tom Holliday's astonishingly comprehensive biography of one of America's preeminent composers makes great reading, because it marries the private and the professional, the trials and the triumphs of a long and fascinating career."

### **About Carlisle Floyd**

The late irreplaceable Carlisle Floyd was a man who spoke brilliantly and elegantly, always in shapely, completely-formed sentences, about most anything—including himself. Carlisle was the quintessential renaissance artist: composer, librettist, writer of poetry, fiction, and essay; painter, virtuoso pianist, and master teacher. It was Thomas Holliday's great honor to be asked by him in 2006 to embark upon his authorized biography, published in 2013.

Floyd's skills as a mentor were at least as great as the musical and dramatic components of his gift. Regardless of the specialties of his individual collaborators—generations of great singers, conductors, stage directors, students of all stripes; and at least one writer—he dispensed the rarest amalgam of truth and tact. His criticism was invariably subtle but cutting to the core, delivered with the tact, kindness, and generosity that inspired growth—the hallmark of the greatest teachers.

His two most-performed works are *Susannah* (1955); and *Of Mice and Men* (1970), the meat of LVO's current season. Replete as both are with gorgeous, singer- and audience-friendly lyricism, his dramatic sense alternately caresses and knockout-punches. His operas are guideposts to an artistic synthesis, especially when inspired by great literature. His grand vision, coupled to the ability to realize it, was for a new hybrid American form of musical theater, that speaks, unfiltered, to audiences of all sizes, shapes, and consistencies. Carlisle was and will continue to be a great opener of the human heart.

Ticket information and performance details for *OF MICE AND MEN* are as follows:

**OF MICE AND MEN: by Carlisle Floyd**

- Saturday, October 7, 7:30pm; Season Opening Night
- Sunday, October 8, 2pm
- Saturday, October 14, 7:30pm
- Sunday, October 15, 2pm
- Season Opening Night Dinner at Uncle Yu's at the Vineyard, 4:00pm. (Separate ticket purchase required at a price of \$125 per person by visiting [www.lvpac.org](http://www.lvpac.org).)

**Season Opening Night Dinner at Uncle's Yu's at the Vineyards**

Before the first *Of Mice and Men* performance, join fellow opera lovers for the Season Opening Night Dinner at Uncle Yu's at the Vineyard, conveniently located one-half block from the Bankhead Theater. Welcome reception with wines sponsored by local vintners, and appetizers begins at 4pm with dinner seating at 4:30pm. Guests will have a chance to meet the Stage Director and LVO's Music Director, Alexander Katsman. Tickets at \$125 each available now online through the Bankhead Theater box office ([www.lvpac.org](http://www.lvpac.org)) Opera performance tickets are sold as a separate purchase.

**Pre-Opera Lecture**

Included in the ticket price is a pre-opera lecture held one hour prior to curtain time.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday Casual and Pre-Opera Meet Up on October 14<sup>th</sup> Only**

By popular demand, the special LVO event called **2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday Casual** returns for the October 14<sup>th</sup> performance, when you can dress up, or dress down in your favorite jeans.

**Ticket Pricing**

Adults \$20-\$105. Tickets can be purchased through the LVO website at [www.LVOpera.com](http://www.LVOpera.com). Special ticket pricing: \$20, ages 20 and younger; \$40, ages 20-40

**Performance & Box Office Location:**

Bankhead Theater 2400 First Street, Livermore, CA 94550

Bankhead Ticket Office: 925-373-6800

**About LVO**

Livermore Valley Opera (LVO) strives to enrich its community by producing world class operas and fostering the careers of professional opera singers. LVO encourages a wider appreciation of opera and the associated arts through community outreach and educational programs for youth in schools. Founded in 1992, Livermore Valley Opera presents fully-staged operas in the spring and fall at the Bankhead Theater, located in Livermore in the Tri-Valley area, just 45 miles east of San Francisco. The Bankhead Theatre features excellent lines of sight and acoustics, helping LVO to attract talented singers and stage directors. To attain its artistic goals, LVO combines the talents of professional musicians, stage directors, principal singers, and designers with the dedication and practical abilities of volunteers filling such critical roles as board members, chorus members, stage crew, and set builders.

Livermore Valley Opera is a 501(c) 3 non-profit charitable organization.

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