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Soprano Olga Orlovskaya headlines 'Russian Seasons' concert

By Michael J. Solender

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Growing up in Moscow, Olga Orlovskaya was surrounded by music. Her mother was a choirmaster and a professional musician with expectations that her daughter would become a concert pianist. Orlovskaya mastered the piano, yet her true passion is found singing on the operatic stage.

Orlovskaya, a soprano, is a featured performer Saturday in "Russian Seasons – An Evening of Russian Classics" at CPCC's Tate Hall. The concert is presented in partnership with Opera Carolina and United Communities Association, a Charlotte-based educational and cultural organization.

The concert is part of [Opera Carolina's](#) ongoing community outreach, broadening access to classical music through ensemble performances.

Orlovskaya's love for opera and magnificent voice were born from a remarkable family legacy. Her great-grandfather was the heralded Fedor Shalyapin, one of the greatest Russian opera stars of the 20th century.

Possessing an outsized personality matched only by his booming resonate bass, Shalyapin appeared on worldwide stages including the Bolshoi, the Metropolitan Opera, London's Royal Opera House and the Paris Opera. He rose from humble beginnings in Kazan, Russia, as the son of a clerk to become an international star. Late in his life, Shalyapin (the spelling of his name often appears as "Chaliapin") collaborated with noted Soviet writer Maxim Gorky on his autobiography.

Orlovskaya graduated with honors from the Russian Academy of Music and went on to win first prize in the

- Preview

'Russian Seasons – An Evening of Russian Classics'

When: 7 p.m. Saturday

Where: Tate Recital Hall, Central Piedmont Community College, 1206 Elizabeth Ave.

Tickets: \$30.

Details: www.carolinatix.org/events

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International Competition, Operetta Land, for Best Performance of Kalman in Moscow. She performed with the Baltimore Opera Theater as Mimi “La Boheme” and Violetta in “La Traviata” and tours extensively throughout Europe and the U.S.

Saturday’s concert is curated by Opera Carolina’s general director James Meena in collaboration with Charlotte resident and community leader Tatyana Thulien.

“The program is an eclectic evening of Russian classical romance music and familiar traditional Russian folk songs,” said Thulien, a soprano, who will share the stage, as will pianist Emily Jarrell Urbanek.

Works from Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov and others will be featured.

“I’m very excited about the concert because of the great love and appreciation I have for the compositions from my homeland,” said Orlovskaya, who came to the U.S. in 2009, settling in Washington, D.C. “Each piece is a diamond in the crown of Russian classics.”

Touring pianist Denis Evstuhin also performs Saturday. He was a semifinalist in the Tchaikovsky International Competition in Moscow and took the top prize in 2005 at the International Rachmaninoff Competition in Los Angeles.

He returns to Charlotte after performing last year in Charlotte for the Ambassador of the Russian Federation, where he caught Meena’s attention.

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