

Handel's opera, "Orlando," to be staged here

Michigan Opera Theatre will bring conductor Christopher Hogwood and The Academy of Ancient Music to Music Hall Center in the only Midwest presentation of George Frederick Handel's heroic opera of 1733, "Orlando," at 7 p.m. Sunday, March 19.

The cast includes Emma Kirkby and Lynne Dawson, sopranos, Catherine Hobbin, mezzo-soprano, James Bowman, tenor, and David Thomas, bass-baritone.

Hogwood and The Academy are celebrating their 15th anniversary with a seven-city tour of North America. Following the tour, the troupe will return home to London, England, to record "Orlando" on the Decca/L'Oiseau-Lyre label.

Hogwood founded the Academy of Ancient Music in 1973 with the idea of assembling leading British players of historical instruments in the first orchestra-size group capable of performing great baroque literature.

"ORLANDO" will be performed in the original libretto and will be semi-staged in three acts. It is a tale of magic and adventure, following the hero through travels in order to win the heart of Angelica, Queen of Cathay. Typical of the style of that period, the opera consists almost entirely of solo singing preceded by recitatives.

Kirkby, who will sing the role of Dorinda, the shepherdess, has made more than 80 recordings and has appeared as a soloist with the Detroit, San Francisco, St. Louis, Los Angeles, Montreal and Quebec City symphony orchestras.

Dawson will sing the role of Angelica. She is a regular soloist with the Academy of Ancient Music.

Bowman, who takes the title role, is familiar to Scottish opera audiences as well as those in Paris, Washington, D.C., and Santa Fe, N.M.

on April 15, 19 and 22; Mozart's "The Marriage of Figaro" on April 29 and May 3 and 6; and Bizet's "Carmen" on May 13, 17, 20 and 21. All but "Orlando" will be at Masonic Temple Theatre.

For ticket information, call 874-SING.

Year of Dance kicks off

The Year of Dance, sponsored by the Arts Foundation of Michigan, will take its first step 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday when Michigan's professional dance companies will be adjudicated for performances in the Michigan Dance Festival in November.

The event will be held at the Lila R. Jones-Johnson Theatre on the Royal Oak campus of Oakland Community College.

The out-of-state adjudicators who will select the repertoire for the fall festival at Music Hall Center of Detroit are: Carolinda Dickey, executive director, Pittsburgh Dance Council; Jeraldyn Blunden, artistic director, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company; and Jean Galan, general manager, Dayton Ballet.

During 1989, the foundation is allocating the major portion of its funding dollars to the discipline of dance. In subsequent years, other arts disciplines will receive the same intensive funding and promotional focus. For information, call the Arts Foundation of Michigan at 964-2244, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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