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ESLT opens 4th season with DIE FLEDERMAUS Strauss operetta paired with signature gala reception ESLT Children's Choir debuts; ROS' Resonanze assists

Rochester, NY – Empire State Lyric Theatre (ESLT) toasts the upcoming holiday season with an in-concert production of Johann Strauss's *Die Fledermaus* ("The Bat") on Sunday, November 28 at 3 p.m. at Hochstein Performance Hall (50 N. Plymouth Ave.) General admission tickets are \$25 and include a pre-concert champagne reception at 2:30 p.m. General admission tickets that also include a lavish post-concert reception are \$40. Both are available at www.empirestatelyrictheatre.org or by calling 585-738-5995.

Since its 2006 debut at Geva Theatre Center, Empire State Lyric Theatre has stayed true to its unique mission: to offer musical events that provide world-class performances in a festive, social atmosphere. Well known for its elegant in-concert productions accompanied by sumptuous receptions – including last season's production of Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore* (*Elixir of Love*) with the RPO at Kilbourn Hall – ESLT's fourth season will feature *Lily: An Opera in Five Tableaux* by Amanda Jacobs and Lindsay Warren Baker as part of the Women in Music Festival at the Eastman School of Music on May 23, 2011; and *I Pagliacci* with the RPO in May (TBA).

ESLT's production of *Die Fledermaus* will mark the debut of the newly-formed **ESLT Children's Choir**, led by Sarah Mancini. The 32 third-through-eighth graders will entertain during Prince Orlofsky's ball in Act II. The 40-member Rochester Oratorio Society chamber chorus, **Resonanze**, under the direction of Eric Townell, will also join in the ball scene.

ESLT Artistic Director **Raffaele Ponti** will conduct the on-stage, 30-member ESLT Orchestra. The cast includes soprano **Darlene Marks** (*Rosalina*), ESLT Executive Director and soprano, **Susan Cotroneo** (*Adele*), tenor **Drew Duncan** (*Eisenstein*), tenor **Grant Knox** (*Alfred*), tenor **Brian Bohrer** (*Dr. Blind*), baritones and Eastman School of Music alumni **Ted Christopher** (*Dr. Falke*) and **Donald Davis** (*Frank*), and mezzo-soprano and ESM voice teacher, **Kathryn Cowdrick** as Prince Orlofsky.

Die Fledermaus is a comic operetta full of mistaken identities, frothy fun and memorable waltzes. Composed by Johann Strauss II to a German libretto by Karl Haffner and Richard Genée, it premiered in Vienna in 1874 and has been part of operetta repertoire ever since. ESLT's in-concert production will be **sung in English**.

About Empire State Lyric Theatre (ESLT) was founded in 2006 by a group of music and business professionals with a common interest in providing Rochester with extraordinary musical evenings. ESLT founders and directors believe that music should be enjoyed by everyone, and it is the non-profit arts organization's goal to offer musical events that provide world-class performances in a festive, social atmosphere, as well as to evolve into one of Western New York's preeminent performing arts companies. ESLT's mission is to offer challenging, dynamic and diverse programming which will engage and entertain regional audiences, and to provide inventive contexts and facilitate dynamic collaborations for the most outstanding regional, national and international artists of our time.

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