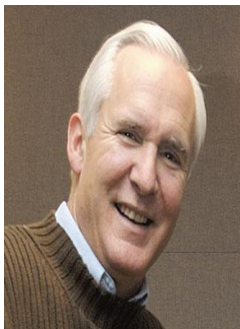


**RETIRED MEN'S ASSOCIATION OF GREENWICH, Inc. (RMA)  
invites you to attend its meeting, on Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2014.  
First Presbyterian Church, Lafayette Pl., Greenwich, CT.**

**JERRY SEHULSTER**

**INFLUENCES OF COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE CHARACTER TYPES  
ON ITALIAN OPERA BUFFA IN THE 18<sup>TH</sup> AND 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES**



Comic characters had always been a part of opera, but it was not until the early 18th century that "opera buffa" emerged as a separate genre. Opera buffa was a parallel development to opera seria, intended as a musical entertainment that the common man could easily relate to. While opera seria was both made for and portrayed kings and nobility, opera buffa was made for and depicted common people with more common problems. High-flown language was avoided in favor of dialogue that the middle and lower class would relate to, often in the local dialect, and the stock characters were often derived from those of the Italian Commedia dell'Arte. Mozart composed *Don Giovanni* and *Così fan tutte* in this style. Renaissance actors developed a set of rich character types in their improvisational comedies, which were later incorporated into the plots of 18<sup>th</sup> century Italian comic operas. As a separate category, Italian opera buffa reached its highpoint in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, primarily with the comic operas of Rossini (*The Barber of Seville*) and Donizetti (*Don Pasquale*; *L'elisir d'amore*). After introducing the Commedia character types, Dr. Schulster will show how they became part of opera buffa, even influencing the style of composition. But ultimately the genre died...well, sort of, because Commedia types begin to reappear in operas at the turn of the last century. Dr. Schulster is Professor of Psychology at the Univ. of Connecticut, focusing on cognitive psychology (autobiographical memory and thinking styles). He has a B.A. from Lafayette College and an M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Delaware in Experimental Psychology. Classical music has been a part of his life as long as he can remember. He is opera critic for the Stamford Advocate. Including a college radio show and various local radio series, he has been sharing his love of opera with local groups for over 25 years. He lives with his wife and two daughters in Stamford. In his spare time, he dabbles in screenwriting and fiction.

**Our business meetings begin at 10, and our speakers are scheduled for 10:30. No Charge and No Reservations are required. For additional information, call Bernard Schneider, 203-698-2558; [bgsesq@gmail.com](mailto:bgsesq@gmail.com); or see our website, [greenwichrma.com](http://greenwichrma.com).**