

## About the French American Chamber of Commerce in Houston

### Joana Videgain, Executive Director



Joana Videgain, is Executive Director of the French American Chamber of Commerce in Houston. The Chamber is a non-profit, non-governmental, 100% independent, member-driven organization, made by companies for companies. Its mission is to foster the French-American business community, support businesses in their settlement and development in Houston, and build bridges for US companies with France. The FACC Houston is a place to exchange, learn and network. An exciting array of events is coming up this month and a complete listing is available on the website.

[Joana.videgain@facchouston.org](mailto:Joana.videgain@facchouston.org)



## About the International Friends of the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna

The **Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna** brings together one of the largest, most complex collections in the world, spanning over 5000 years. The collections reflect diverse global cultures and are housed in a palace of fine arts, which is an artwork in itself and in 2016 celebrated the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its grand opening. The wide-ranging collections are the result of centuries of passionate collecting by a long succession of Habsburg family members and are open to all who wish to be inspired by and enhance their understanding of art.

The **International Friends of the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna (IFKHM)** is a dynamic group of patrons, collectors, and connoisseurs, joined by their love of the museum's extraordinary imperial collection and masterpieces of European art, with a desire to see them properly cared for and passed on to future generations.

International Friends  
of the  
Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna

## About the Painting on the Front Cover (Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna)

Our featured painting is of Emperor Joseph II of Austria (shown with Grand Duke Peter Leopold), a work dating from 1769 by Pompeo Batoni. We chose it to highlight *The Abduction from the Seraglio* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, the opera in which Albina Shagimuratova is currently starring at Houston Grand Opera in the role of Konstanze. Premiered in 1782, *Abduction* was commissioned by the Emperor Joseph II who reportedly criticized the composer for including "too many notes," to which Mozart is said to have responded, "no more than necessary." The Emperor is known for more than this exchange made famous in Milos Forman's 1984 film *Amadeus* based on the play by Tom Stoppard. He instituted numerous reforms including in the area of taxation, enshrining tax breaks to encourage sales of new wine at restaurants on the outskirts of Vienna where the *Heurigen* thrives to this day.

[www.khm.at](http://www.khm.at)

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## The Business of Being an Opera Singer

### Albina Shagimuratova

May 4, 2017  
The Tasting Room  
Uptown Park, Houston

THE POWER OF BEING UNDERSTOOD  
AUDIT | TAX | CONSULTING



The Art of  
Business

## About Albina Shagimuratova



Albina Shagimuratova is no stranger to Houston, having spent two years at the Houston Grand Opera in its Opera Studio program. She was born into a family of lawyers in 1979 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan (USSR). Her parents encouraged her interest in music and at age five she began performing in front of audiences to the accompaniment of her father playing the accordion. Later, when the family moved to Kazan, Albina became a student of the Kazan Music College and then the Kazan State Conservatory. She went on to study at Moscow Conservatory from which she graduated with honors.

Her enchanting coloratura soprano first found international acclaim in 2007 when she won the Gold Medal in the Vocal Division of the International Tchaikovsky Competition. Soon after, she made her European opera debut as the Queen of the night in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* at the Salzburg Festival with the Vienna Philharmonic under the direction of Riccardo Muti. Established as the leading interpreter of this fiendishly challenging role, she has performed it in other venues including Covent Garden, the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala Milan (released on DVD), Vienna State Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, San Francisco Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Bolshoi Theatre, Los Angeles Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Hamburg State Opera, and the Lucerne Festival.

Albina's operatic roles include other heroines of the dramatic coloratura repertoire such as Violetta (*La Traviata*), Elvira (*I Puritani*), Lucia (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*), Gilda (*Rigoletto*), Musetta (*La Bohème*), Ludmilla (*Ruslan and Ludmilla* for the grand re-opening of the Bolshoi Theatre), Aspasia (*Mitridate Re di Ponto*) and Konstanze (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*).

She also performs on the concert stage, including solo recitals and as soloist in works such as Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, Poulenc's *Gloria* and Britten's *War Requiem*.

Albina lives in Moscow with her husband, Ruslan, a psychiatrist, and their daughter, Adelina.

### **The Abduction from the Seraglio at Houston Grand Opera**

In *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, Mozart tells the story of Konstanze and her maid, Blonde, who are being held captive by Pasha Selim after their capture at sea by pirates. Konstanze resists the Pasha's advances, and his goal of adding her to his harem, while her fiancé, Belmonte, plots her escape. The son of Pasha Selim's arch enemy, Belmonte and his servant, Pedrillo, arrive at the Pasha's palace and devise a ruse in which Belmonte presents himself as an architect playing to the ego of the Pasha and his desire for a more grandiose palace. Several bottles of Cyprian wine dispatch the Pasha's overseer, Osmin, and Konstanze is reunited briefly with Belmonte to hatch an escape plan. Disaster looms and all are captured. Overcome by the power of true love, the Pasha recognizes that Konstanze will never submit and so lets all four prisoners return home.

Performances of *Abduction* take place on April 28, 30, May 6, 10, and 12 at the Wortham Center.

## About *The Art of Business*

*The Art of Business* is a luncheon series featuring business people presenting a topic of interest highlighting how commercial enterprise spurred and funded artistic endeavors. Emphasis is on the history of Europe from Ancient Greece to the mid-20th century with topics showcasing the intersection of culture and commerce, such as --

- Looted, lost, and stolen art and legal steps to get it back
- Double-entry bookkeeping and its importance for the luxury goods market across Renaissance Europe
- International banking and credit facilities from the Knights Templar to the Bruges-Florence axis
- Works of art and design as valuable intangible property and protecting them from counterfeiters
- Commissioning new operas and attracting the businesses who sponsor them

**Have an idea for a presentation?**

Contact Meril Markley at 713.350.6109 or [Meril.Markley@rsmus.com](mailto:Meril.Markley@rsmus.com)

## About RSM (Tom Rourick, Office Managing Partner, Houston)



RSM is a leading provider of audit, tax and consulting services in Houston. We guide our clients through today's complex business environment by understanding their needs and bringing together the right teams to address them. We are a world leader in providing audit, tax, and consulting services to middle market enterprises. Our motivation is to help them think ahead and prepare for the future of their business as they grow and expand domestically and abroad. At RSM, we build strong relationships based on deep understanding of what matters most to our clients.

With more than 9,000 professionals in more than 86 U.S. cities and access to more than 38,300 people in over 120 countries through our membership in RSM International, we can meet your needs wherever in the world you do business.

**For over 50 years, RSM has been taking the middle market to the global market.**