



SEATTLE OPERA
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

NEWS

Seattle Opera Celebrates Archie Drake's 80th Birthday Onstage at Opening Night of *Hoffmann*



Rosemary Jones Photo

Seattle—For 38 seasons, baritone Archie Drake has been a regular singer for Seattle Opera. On the opening night of Offenbach's *Contes d'Hoffmann*, Seattle Opera celebrated Drake's 80th birthday (which was in March) by bringing on a cake following the final bows.

"Archie has been the soul of Seattle Opera for 38 seasons," said General Director Speight Jenkins. "With the amazing longevity of his voice and his enormous stage presence, the variety of his accomplishments cannot be equaled by anyone else in his voice category."

Since making his debut with Seattle Opera in 1968 as Rocco in Beethoven's *Fidelio*, this English-born singer's 109 mainstage roles and 1063 appearances with Seattle Opera have included Candy in the 1970 world premiere of Carlisle Floyd's *Of Mice and Men*, Gunther in Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* from 1975 to 1983 (nine productions), and three roles in Prokofiev's *War and Peace* in 1990. In the 21st century, he has sung for Seattle Opera: Mitiukha in Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, Ambrogio in Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia*, Sacristan/Jailer in Verdi's *Tosca*, Imperial Commissioner in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, Cappadocian in Richard Strauss's *Salome*, the Notary in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*, the Second Prisoner in Beethoven's *Fidelio*, and Jed in Marvin David Levy's *Mourning Becomes Electra*.

Drake has been a regular participant in the Seattle Opera's educational programs since the 1960s, touring Washington State in various productions including, in 1970, an original opera called *Penelope*. That production, recalled Drake in a later interview, starred singer Marni Nixon in the lead and featured a young UW drama school graduate Patrick Duffy (long before his days of fame on the soap opera *Dallas*).

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In more recent years, Drake has appeared in several Young Artists Program operas. He turned 80 during the March rehearsals of this year's production of Mozart's *Nozze di Figaro* (*The Marriage of Figaro*), in which he sang Antonio the gardener. In the same production, he danced the fandango for the first time in his long career.

Drake's most recent mainstage role is Luther in Seattle Opera's **new production** of Offenbach's *Contes d'Hoffmann*.

Les contes d'Hoffmann (The Tales of Hoffmann)

New Production

Music by Jacques Offenbach

Libretto by Jules Barbier

(after the play of the same title by Barbier and Michel Carré,
based on the stories of E.T.A. Hoffmann)

In French with English captions

This new production is dedicated in memory of Gertrude E. Sprenger



Rozarii Lynch Photo

Performances

Nine Performances: May 7, 8 (matinee), 11, 13, 14, 18, 20, 21, and 22 (matinee), 2005

Approximate Running Time: 3 hours and 30 minutes with 2 intermissions

Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m. and matinee performances begin at 2:00 p.m.

All performances in Marion Oliver McCaw Hall

Ticket Information

Ticket Prices: \$42–\$129

Student Matinee Tickets for May 22: \$15

Ticket Office: 206-389-7676/800-426-1619

Group Sales: 206-676-5587

Credit Cards Accepted: American Express, VISA, MasterCard

Online Orders: www.seattleopera.org

Founded in 1963, Seattle Opera has developed into one of the leading opera companies in the United States. The company is recognized internationally for its theatrically compelling and musically accomplished performances, especially the Opera's interpretations of the works of Richard Wagner.

This new production of Offenbach's *Contes d'Hoffmann* (*The Tales of Hoffmann*) is co-produced by Seattle Opera, The Dallas Opera, Arizona Opera, The Minnesota Opera Company, and Cincinnati Opera.

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