



SEATTLE OPERA
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

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Press Contacts: Hilda Cullen, 206.676.5543, hilda.cullen@seattleopera.org

Sara Sorden, 206.676.5559, sara.sorden@seattleopera.org

Visuals Contact: Monte Jacobson, 206.676.5545, monte.jacobson@seattleopera.org

Seattle Opera Presents Verdi's Hilarious *Falstaff* February 27 to March 13

Featuring stage director Peter Kazaras and conductor Riccardo Frizza with Peter Rose, Stephanie Blythe, Svetla Vassileva, and Weston Hurt

Family Day Matinee on March 7
\$15 Student tickets plus family-friendly activities all afternoon

Seattle—Seattle Opera's production of Verdi's *Falstaff* opens on February 27 and runs for eight performances through March 13. Based on Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Verdi's career-capping opera keeps the subplot of the young lovers, and adds Falstaff's wittiest observations from *Henry IV*. The ignoble nobleman, Falstaff—a knight whose plots are foiled by a group of merry wives—teaches everyone a valuable lesson: “he who laughs last, laughs best.”

The colorful characters, entertaining antics, and memorable music of *Falstaff*, make it the perfect outing for new operagoers—which is why Seattle Opera has designated the Sunday, March 7 performance as this year's Family Day Matinee. For just \$15, young music- and theater-lovers can join their families for an afternoon at the opera (up to four \$15 student tickets may be purchased for every full-priced adult ticket. See website for details). Attendees can enjoy visits from cast members during intermission, try on costumes from Seattle Opera's costume shop, and

experience the KING FM instrument “petting zoo,” for a hands-on exploration of the world of musical instruments.

Falstaff is a light-hearted ensemble comedy, featuring the inventive stage direction of Peter Kazaras, who originally conceived this production for Seattle Opera’s Young Artists Program. Maestro Riccardo Frizza lends his baton to Verdi’s melodious score. Anna Björnsdotter’s costumes pair with Donald Eastman’s sets, and the production also features lighting designed by Connie Yun.

The Opening Night cast includes English bass Peter Rose as Sir John Falstaff, Bulgarian soprano Svetla Vassileva in her Seattle Opera debut as Alice Ford, and baritone Weston Hurt as Ford. Argentinean bass-baritone Eduardo Chama, American soprano Sally Wolf, and Korean baritone David Won alternate as Falstaff, Alice, and Ford, respectively.

Mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe, an Artist-of-the-Year winner for her portrayal of Amneris in Verdi’s *Aida* in 2008, sings Dame Quickly at every performance. Also singing in both casts are Macedonian tenor Blagoj Nacoski, making his U.S. debut as Fenton, former Young Artist Anya Matanovic as Nannetta, and Sasha Cooke as Meg Page. Rounding out the cast are Doug Jones as Dr. Caius, Steven Goldstein as Bardolph, and Ashraf Sewailam as Pistol.

Falstaff opens on February 27 and runs until March 13. Single tickets start at \$25 and are available online at seattleopera.org, by calling 206.389.7676 or 800.426.1619, or by mobile phone at mobile.seattleopera.org.

Please note: the following artists list for Falstaff replaces all previously published or announced cast lists. Further information on the 2009/10 season can be found at seattleopera.org.

FALSTAFF

Music by Giuseppe Verdi
Libretto by Arrigo Boito, after William Shakespeare
In Italian with English Captions

Marion Oliver McCaw Hall
8 Performances: February 27, 28m, March 3, 6, 7m, 10, 12, & 13, 2010.

Approximate Running Time: 3 hours, including two intermissions

Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m.; matinees begin at 2:00 p.m.

Premiere: Teatro alla Scala, Milan, February 9, 1893

Previous Seattle Opera Presentations: 1978, 2001

Artists

Sir John Falstaff:	Peter Rose/Eduardo Chama*
Ford:	Weston Hurt/David Won†*
Alice Ford:	Svetla Vassileva†/Sally Wolf*
Dame Quickly:	Stephanie Blythe
Nannetta:	Anya Matanovic†
Fenton:	Blagoj Nacoski†*
Meg Page:	Sasha Cooke†
Dr. Caius:	Doug Jones
Bardolph:	Steven Goldstein
Pistol:	Ashraf Sewailam

Mute roles

Innkeeper:	David Smith Larsen
Robin:	Langston Emerson Guettinger

Conductor:	Riccardo Frizza
Stage Director:	Peter Kazaras
Set Designer:	Donald Eastman
Costume Designer:	Anna Björnsdotter
Lighting Designer:	Connie Yun
English Captions:	Jonathan Dean

Sets: Seattle Opera

Costumes: Cleveland Opera

†Company Debut

‡U.S. Debut

* On February 28, March 7, and 12, 2010, only

Anya Matanovic is a former Seattle Opera Young Artist.

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About Seattle Opera

Founded in 1963, Seattle Opera is 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. Since 1975, Seattle Opera has presented 38 cycles of the *Ring* (three different productions), in addition to acclaimed productions of all the other major operas in the Wagner canon. Seattle Opera has achieved the highest per capita attendance of any major opera company in the United States, and draws operagoers from four continents and fifty states.