



SEATTLE OPERA NEWS
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

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Seattle Opera *Rigoletto* Tickets On Sale August 30, 2004
Josephson Sings Title Role
Amsellem and Lopardo Make Seattle Opera Debut

Seattle—Tickets go on sale for *Rigoletto*, Seattle Opera's second production of the season, on August 30, 2004. Verdi's tragedy of revenge features such familiar tunes as "La donna è mobile (Woman is fickle)" and great ensemble pieces such as "Bella figlia dell'amore (Fair daughter of love)." The opera routinely makes the "top ten" favorite lists of operagoers for its music and dramatic characters.

American baritone Kim Josephson, who made his Seattle Opera debut as Jack Rance in Puccini's *Fanciulla del West* last season, sings the title role in the Opening Night (Wednesday/Saturday dates) cast. Josephson has sung *Rigoletto* for the Metropolitan Opera, Santa Fe Opera, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. French-American soprano Norah Amsellem, in her Seattle Opera debut, sings the role of *Rigoletto*'s daughter, Gilda. Recent roles for Amsellem include Violetta in Verdi's *Traviata* at Teatro Real in Madrid and the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Liù in Puccini's *Turandot* at the Teatro Carlo Felice in Italy. Also making his debut here, American tenor Frank Lopardo sings the Duke of Mantua, a role that he has sung for the Metropolitan Opera, Paris Opera, Vienna State Opera, and many others.

For the Sunday/Friday cast, baritone Stephen Kechulius makes his Seattle Opera debut as *Rigoletto*. Kechulius has sung *Rigoletto* for North American and European companies, and this marks his tenth production singing the title role. In the same cast, American soprano Sandra López (Gilda) and Mexican tenor Raúl Hernández (the Duke) make their Seattle Opera debuts. López's recent credits include Adina in Donizetti's *Elisir d'amore* with El Paso Opera, Violetta in Verdi's *Traviata* at Opera North, and Adele in Johann Strauss Jr.'s *Fledermaus* with Palm Beach Opera. Hernández has a long history of singing the Duke, having sung the role at the Met, New York City Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Opera Pacific, and Deutsche Oper am Rhein among others.

Director Linda Brovsky made her Seattle Opera debut directing *La fille du regiment* during the 1989/90 season and returned to the company to direct *The Merry Widow*, *La cenerentola*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, and, in 2002, *Madama Butterfly*. This time, she has chosen to move the time period of this *Rigoletto* to Mussolini's Italy of the 1930s. New costumes have been designed by Marie Anne Chiment in her Seattle Opera debut. Set designer Robert A. Dahlstrom, whose most recent credits at Seattle Opera include the 2003 production of Beethoven's *Fidelio* and the 2004 production of Richard Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*, has adapted his 1988 set designs for this new time period. For more information on the transformation of Mantua, see "Behind the Scenes" on www.seattleopera.org.

Edoardo Müller returns to Seattle Opera to conduct all performances. Müller made his Seattle Opera debut conducting Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* in 1991 and has since conducted here Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia* in 1992 and 2000, Puccini's *Turandot* in 1996, and Bellini's *Norma* in 1994 and 2003.

Tickets for *Rigoletto* go on sale to the public August 30, 2004. Tickets are priced from \$42 to \$129. *Rigoletto* will run for ten performances: October 16, 17, 20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29, 30, and 31.

(over)

Rigoletto

Music by Giuseppe Verdi

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave

(after the play *Le roi s'amuse* by Victor Hugo)

In Italian with English Captions

Premiere: Venice, Teatro La Fenice, March 11, 1851

Seattle Opera Premiere: February 1965

Last Seattle Opera Presentation: April/May 1995

All performances take place at Marion Oliver McCaw Hall, Seattle, Washington

Ten performances: October 16, 17 (matinee), 20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29, 30, and 31 (matinee), 2004

Approximate Running Time: 3 hours, including 2 intermissions

All evening performances of *Rigoletto* begin at 7:30 p.m., the matinee at 2:00 p.m.

***RIGOLETTO* TICKET INFORMATION**

Single ticket prices: \$42 to \$129

Single tickets go on sale: August 30, 2004

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

Online Orders: www.seattleopera.org

***RIGOLETTO* ARTIST INFORMATION**

Rigoletto: Kim Josephson/Stephen Kechulius*†

Conductor: Edoardo Müller

Gilda: Norah Amsellem†/Sandra López*†

Director: Linda Brovsky

Duke of Mantua: Frank Lopardo†/Raúl Hernández*†

Set Designer: Robert A. Dahlstrom

Sparafucile: Perry L. Brown

Costume Designer: Marie Anne Chiment†

Maddalena: Mary Ann McCormick

Lighting Designer: Thomas C. Hase

Count Monterone: Jason Grant†

Hair and Makeup Designer: Joyce Degenfelder

Giovanna: Emily Clubb†

Scenery: Seattle Opera Scenic Studios (1988, revised 2004)

Count Ceprano: Byron Ellis

Costumes: Seattle Opera Costume Shop (2004)

Countess Ceprano/Page: Julianne Gearhart

Borsa: Doug Jones

*October 17, 22, 26, 29, and 31 only † Seattle Opera debut

Marullo: Barry Johnson

This production of *Rigoletto* is sponsored by The Boeing Company with additional support from American Airlines, Key Bank, and Cossé International Securities. Frank Lopardo's performances are made possible in part by generous support from the James and Sherry Raisbeck Singers' Endowment.

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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.

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