



SEATTLE OPERA
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

For Release: September 5, 2006

**Seattle Opera Single Tickets On Sale September 5
For**

**Seattle Opera Premieres
of Rossini's *Italiana in Algeri (The Italian Girl in Algiers)*
and Handel's *Giulio Cesare in Egitto (Julius Caesar)***

New production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*

Return of Puccini's *Bohème*

Seattle—Single tickets go on sale today for two operas new to Seattle Opera's repertoire: Rossini's *Italiana in Algeri (The Italian Girl in Algiers)* in October and Handel's *Giulio Cesare in Egitto (Julius Caesar)* in February. Also on sale are single tickets for a new production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in January and the return of one of the most popular operas ever written, Puccini's *Bohème*, in May.

Both Rossini's *Italiana in Algeri (The Italian Girl in Algiers)* and Handel's *Giulio Cesare in Egitto (Julius Caesar in Egypt)* make great demands on the singers—true *bel canto* “aplomb” is needed for the Rossini opera, and both an authoritative and scintillating baroque style for the Handel opera.

American mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe, who sang Fricka in Wagner's *Ring* in 2005, is Isabella, the Italian Girl in Rossini's opera, for the Opening Night cast. Her Lindoro is tenor William Burden, who sang the role at Santa Fe Opera in 2002 and at San Francisco Opera. In the Sunday/Friday cast, mezzo-soprano Helene Schneiderman, last seen here as the Muse in Offenbach's *Contes d'Hoffmann* in 2005, sings the Italian Girl (a regular role for her in Europe) opposite tenor Lawrence Brownlee as Lindoro. A former Seattle Opera Young Artist who last appeared here in Daniel Catán's *Florencia en el Amazonas*, Brownlee is the 2006 Richard Tucker Award winner. Conductor Eduardo Müller returns to Seattle Opera for *L'italiana in Algeri*. Director Chris Alexander (two-time Seattle Opera Artist of the Year) directs this production.

Following Rossini's *Italiana*, director Alexander reunites with his recent *Contes d'Hoffmann* production team of set designer Robert Dahlstrom, costume designer Marie-Theresa Cramer, and lighting designer Robert Wierzel to create a new production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* for Seattle Opera. *Don Giovanni* will be presented in January 2007. The Don will be sung by two young baritones: Polish baritone Mariusz Kwiecien (last seen here in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*) in the Opening Night cast and American baritone Morgan Smith (a former Seattle Opera Young Artist who last appeared here in Puccini's *Fanciulla del*

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West) in the Sunday/Friday cast. Conductor Andreas Mitisek, who last appeared at Seattle Opera for the 2006 production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, leads the orchestra.

Handel's *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* (*Julius Caesar*) demands the highest range of male voices, which will be sung by a countertenor and a male soprano in Seattle Opera's production, and the lowest range of female voices. Polish contralto Eva Podleř (2002/03 Seattle Opera Artist of the Year) sings the role of Handel's Julius Caesar in the Opening Night cast with British mezzo-soprano Anna Burford making her U.S. debut as Caesar in the Sunday/Friday cast. The countertenor role Tolomeo will be sung by Brian Asawa (1996/97 Seattle Opera Artist of the Year) in the opening night cast and by Mark Crayton (in his Seattle Opera debut) in the Sunday/Friday cast. Male soprano David Korn, a Seattle Opera 2005/06 Young Artist, sings Nireno. Other leading roles include Cleopatra, sung by sopranos Alexandra Deshorties and Christine Brandes, and Cornelia (a noble Roman matron), sung by mezzo-sopranos Helene Schneiderman and Gloria Parker. Conductor Gary Thor Wedow makes his Seattle Opera debut for this production. *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* (*Julius Caesar*) will be directed by Robin Guarino, the associate director of the 2001 and 2005 productions of Wagner's *Ring*.

The season concludes in May 2007 with Puccini's *Bohème*. Italian soprano Nuccia Focile returns to the company as the fragile Mimì in the Opening Night cast while German soprano Gun-Brit Barkmin makes her Seattle Opera debut in the role in the Sunday/Friday cast. Australian tenor Rosario La Spina will make his Seattle Opera debut as Rodolfo in the Opening Night cast, while American tenor Scott Piper sings the role in the Sunday/Friday cast. The production will be conducted by Vjekoslav Sutej, who last appeared here to conduct *Florenzia en el Amazonas*, and directed by Josemaria Condemi, who has served as an assistant director for several mainstage productions at Seattle Opera and directed the 2003 Young Artists production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte*.

Seattle Opera Free Preview at *Festa Italiana*

Seattle Opera Education Associate Jonathan Dean will preview the four upcoming operas, all of which are sung in Italian, at the Seattle Center's *Festa Italiana*. He will be joined by singers from Seattle Opera's Young Artists Program, who will perform Italian arias from the season and other popular works. Costumes and accessories from past Seattle Opera productions will be displayed at this preview.

The Seattle Opera Preview at *Festa Italiana* takes place Saturday, September 23, at 4:00 p.m. in Room A of the Seattle Center Pavilion.

*For information on individual artists as well as more information on each production, check Seattle Opera's Web site: www.seattleopera.org/operas/ and click on the **Artists** pages for each opera in the 2006/07 season.*

Seattle Opera Ticket Information Single Tickets on Sale September 5

Seattle Opera Ticket Office: 206-389-7676/ 800-426-1619
1020 John Street, Seattle, Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Online Orders: www.seattleopera.org
Group Sales: 206-389-5588

All performances take place at Marion Oliver McCaw Hall, 321 Mercer Street, Seattle
Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m., the matinees at 2:00 p.m.

L'ITALIANA IN ALGERI
(THE ITALIAN GIRL IN ALGIERS)

Music by Gioachino Rossini

Libretto by Angelo Anelli

In Italian with English Captions

Seattle Opera Premiere

8 Performances: October 14, 15m, 18, 21, 22m, 25, 27, 28, 2006

Tickets: \$41 to \$135

Student Matinee, October 22: \$15 Student Tickets Available

DON GIOVANNI

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte

In Italian with English Captions

New Seattle Opera Production

8 Performances: January 13, 14m, 17, 20, 21m, 24, 26, 27, 2007

Tickets: \$43 to \$141

GIULIO CESARE IN EGITTO
(JULIUS CAESAR)

Music by George Frideric Handel

Libretto by Nicola Francesco Haym

In Italian with English Captions

Seattle Opera Premiere

8 Performances: February 24, 25m, 28, March 3, 4m, 7, 9, 10, 2007

Tickets: \$41 to \$135

LA BOHÈME

Music by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica

In Italian with English Captions

10 Performances: May 5, 6m, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13m, 15, 16, 19, 2007

Tickets: \$51 to \$141

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