



SEATTLE OPERA  
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

**FOR RELEASE: September 30, 2009**

**Press Contacts:** Hilda Cullen, 206.676.5543, [hilda.cullen@seattleopera.org](mailto:hilda.cullen@seattleopera.org)  
Sara Schweid, 206.676.5559, [sara.schweid@seattleopera.org](mailto:sara.schweid@seattleopera.org)

**Visuals Contact:** Monte Jacobson, 206.676.5545, [monte.jacobson@seattleopera.org](mailto:monte.jacobson@seattleopera.org)

## **Seattle Opera Presents Verdi's *Traviata* October 17-31**

### **Nuccia Focile and Eglise Gutiérrez Return Dimitri Pittas and Francesco Demuro Make Seattle Opera Debuts**

Seattle—On October 17, Verdi's universally loved *La Traviata* returns to Seattle Opera for the first time in 13 years. The company will present nine performances, with two spectacular casts, through October 31.

Arguably Verdi's most popular work, *La Traviata* is the story of a worldly courtesan struggling to hold on to the man of her dreams. Compelling characters, sensational party scenes, and memorable music combine to make this sumptuous tale of love, strife, and human drama an irresistible classic.

Opening night will feature Italian soprano Nuccia Focile as the glamorous courtesan Violetta. Focile has appeared at Seattle Opera as Mimì in Puccini's *Bohème*, Nedda in Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*, and the title role in Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris*. American tenor Dimitri Pittas makes his Seattle Opera debut as Violetta's true love, Alfredo, a role he has performed at the Metropolitan Opera and Opéra de Montréal. American baritone Charles Taylor, who made his Seattle Opera debut last season as Amonasro in Verdi's *Aida*, sings the role of Germont.

The Sunday/Friday cast features Cuban soprano Eglise Gutiérrez and Italian tenor Francesco Demuro as the lovers. Gutiérrez, who recently made a "sensational" Royal Opera Covent Garden debut in the title

role of Donizetti's *Linda di Chaumonix*, came first to Seattle Opera in 2008 as Elvira in Bellini's *Puritani*. "Demuro, a new voice on the opera scene, has engagements now in many important European houses," said General Director Speight Jenkins. "He also will sing in San Francisco and other U.S. houses, and we are fortunate to have his North American debut here in Seattle." American baritone Weston Hurt makes his Seattle Opera debut as Germont.

*La Traviata* is staged by director Mark Streshinsky and conducted by Maestro Brian Garman. The production features sets by John Conklin and lavish period costumes by David Walker, originally created for San Francisco Opera. Connie Yun will design the lighting and Sara de Luis will choreograph the Spanish dance sequences in Act Two.

*La Traviata* runs from October 17 to October 31. Single tickets range from \$25 to \$175 and are available online at [seattleopera.org](http://seattleopera.org), by calling 206.389.7676 or 800.426.1619, or by mobile phone at [mobile.seattleopera.org](http://mobile.seattleopera.org). Tickets may also be purchased at the Box Office by visiting 1020 John Street (two blocks west of Fairview), Monday to Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

*Please note the following artists list for La Traviata replaces all previously announced cast lists.*

### ***La Traviata***

Music by Giuseppe Verdi  
Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, after Alexandre Dumas, *fil*  
In Italian with English Captions

Marion Oliver McCaw Hall  
9 Performances: October 17, 18m, 21, 23, 24, 25m, 28, 30, 31, 2009.

Approximate Running Time: 3 hours and 15 minutes, including two intermissions  
Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m.; matinees begin at 2:00 p.m.

Premiere: Teatro La Fenice, Venice, Italy, March 6, 1853  
Previous Seattle Opera Presentations: 1967 (MET tour), 1973, 1980, 1988, 1996

### **Artists**

Violetta Valéry:	Nuccia Focile/Eglise Gutiérrez <sup>*</sup>
Alfredo Germont:	Dimitri Pittas <sup>†</sup> /Francesco Demuro <sup>†*</sup>
Giorgio Germont:	Charles Taylor /Weston Hurt <sup>†*</sup>
Flora Bervoix:	Sarah Heltzel
Baron Douphol:	Barry Johnson

Gastone: Leodigario del Rosario  
Marquis d'Obigny: Jonathan Silvia  
Dr. Grenvil: Byron Ellis  
Annina: Emily Clubb  
Giuseppe: George Scott  
Messenger: Brett Youngquist  
Flora's Servant: Michael Myznikov  
Principal Dancers: Sara de Luis  
Raúl Salcedo<sup>†</sup>

Conductor: Brian Garman<sup>†</sup>  
Stage Director: Mark Streshinsky<sup>†</sup>  
Set Designer: John Conklin  
Costume Designer: David Walker<sup>†</sup>  
Lighting Designer: Connie Yun  
Choreographer: Sara de Luis  
English Captions: Jonathan Dean

Sets and Costumes: San Francisco Opera

<sup>†</sup>Company debut

<sup>‡</sup>U.S. debut

\* On October 18, 23, 25, 30 only

*Sarah Heltzel and Leodigario del Rosario are former Seattle Opera Young Artists.*

###

### **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.