



SEATTLE OPERA
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

NEWS

For Immediate Release

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Bybee Joins the Cast for Seattle Opera's New *Carmen*

Seattle—Mezzo-soprano Luretta Bybee will sing *Carmen* in Seattle Opera's performances of Georges Bizet's opera on January 11 (matinee), 16, 18 (matinee), 23, and 25 (matinee). Bybee replaces mezzo-soprano Mary Phillips, who withdrew from Seattle Opera's production after contracting the flu.

This is Bybee's first *Carmen* for Seattle Opera; her *Carmen* is, however, well known to New York audiences who have seen her in the role at City Opera. She has also performed *Carmen* at several other opera companies around the country and in Dublin.

"I am very sorry to lose Mary Phillips to influenza," said Seattle Opera General Director Speight Jenkins, "but I am more than delighted to have Luretta Bybee as *Carmen*. Her *Gypsy* is a great one, and I am sure that vocally and dramatically she will be a treat for our audiences. I am particularly grateful to the University of Michigan, which released her literally overnight from her teaching duties so that she could sing *Carmen* at Seattle Opera."

Bybee has sung several roles at Seattle Opera: Dame Quickly in Verdi's *Falstaff*, a Flower Maiden and Voice from Above in Wagner's *Parsifal*, the First Norn and Schwertleite in the 2001 *Ring*, and Princess Bolkonski and Matryosha in Prokofiev's *War and Peace* among others.

Seattle Opera has scheduled twelve performances of *Carmen*. Bybee will sing five of the performances (January 11, 16, 18, 23, and 25). Mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe will sing *Carmen* in the others (January 10, 14, 17, 21, 24, 28, and 30).

Tickets for *Carmen* are selling fast: Performances on January 10, 11, 17, and 24 are sold out. Tickets are available for the other performances, with the best selection of seats available on Wednesdays and Fridays (January 14, 16, 21, 23, and 28).

Tickets for *Carmen* are priced from \$43 to \$103 and are available from Seattle Opera's ticket office, 206-389-7676 or 800-426-1619, or online at www.seattleopera.org.

Carmen

Music by Georges Bizet

Libretto by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy (based on the novella of the same title by Prosper Mérimée)

In French with English captions

Twelve Performances: January 10, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18, 21, 23, 24, 25, 28, and 30, 2004

Evening Performances: 7:30 p.m.

January 11, 18, and 25 Matinees: 2:00 p.m.

All Performances in Marion Oliver McCall Hall

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

Online Orders: www.seattleopera.org

Single Ticket Prices: \$43-\$103 (January 18, 25, 28, and 30 performances)

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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. Seattle Opera dedicates its inaugural season in the new Marion Oliver McCaw Hall to Dorothy Priscilla "Patsy" Bullitt Collins.

Seattle Opera is grateful to the following organizations for their steadfast major institutional support: ArtsFund, Bank of America, The Boeing Company, Classical KING FM 98.1, Charles E. Stuart Charitable Foundation, The James and Sherry Raisbeck Singers' Endowment, King County Cultural Development Authority, Kreielsheimer Foundation, Wallace Foundation, Microsoft Corporation, National Endowment for the Arts, Nesholm Family Foundation, PONCHO, Seattle Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, Seattle Opera Guild, Sherman Clay Pianos, and Washington State Arts Commission. Seattle Opera is a participant in the Seattle Arts Stabilization Project, a joint venture of the Seattle Arts Stabilization Committee and the National Arts Stabilization Fund.

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