



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 14, 2015

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Seattle Opera receives \$30,000 from National Endowment for the Arts

NEA awards more than \$27.6 million to U.S. arts groups

SEATTLE – Seattle Opera has just received a \$30,000 grant from National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The funds, which will be used for the February, 2016 production of Donizetti’s *Mary Stuart*, are part of a larger \$27.6 million that NEA is awarding to American arts groups in fiscal year 2016.

Seattle Opera General Director Aidan Lang said the generous grant, which specifically draws from NEA’s Art Works Program, will allow audiences to connect with *Mary Stuart* in meaningful ways—both during the performance, and before they step in to the theater.

“NEA is supporting a wide range of our education and community engagement activities—and the hope is that we’ll be able to connect with people who may be new to opera,” Lang said. “For example, the funding will support our partnership with Classical King FM 98.1; this partnership is crucial, as it allows us to share the music with as many people as possible.”

These activities will include previews, pre-performance talks, post-performance question-and-answer sessions, and dress rehearsals for students—all surrounding the performances of *Mary Stuart* (Feb. 27-28; March 2, 5, 9, 11 and 12, 2016). Broadcast performances via radio and live-streaming on KING FM 98.1 will also be offered on the following dates: Feb. 27 (preview hosted by General Director Lang), and March 5 (a live-streamed performance).

Mary Stuart, tells the story of a fictional confrontation between Queen Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots. The production will be directed by **Kevin Newbury** with Maestro **Carlo Montanaro** at the podium. The cast includes soprano **Mary Elizabeth Williams**, tenor **Andrew Owens**, baritone **Michael Todd Simpson**, and soprano **Serena Farnocchia**.

NEA Chairman Jane Chu said, “The arts are part of our everyday lives – no matter who you are or where you live – they have the power to transform individuals, spark economic vibrancy in communities, and transcend the boundaries across diverse sectors of society. Supporting projects such as Seattle Opera’s *Mary Stuart* offers more opportunities to engage in the arts every day.”

Join the conversation on Twitter and Facebook with #NEAFall15 and #SOMaryStuart. For more information on projects included in the NEA grant announcement, go to arts.gov.

About Seattle Opera

Seattle Opera is a leading opera company, recognized both in the United States and around the world. The company is committed to advancing the cultural life in the Pacific Northwest with performances of the highest caliber, and through innovative education and community programs that take opera far beyond the McCaw Hall stage. Each year, more than 95,000 people attend Seattle Opera performances and the company’s programs serve more than 400,000 people of all ages (including school performances, radio broadcasts and community engagement initiatives). Seattle Opera is especially known for its acclaimed works in the Richard Wagner canon, and has created an “international attraction” in its presentation of Wagner’s epic *Ring*, according to *The New York Times*. Connect with Seattle Opera on Facebook, Twitter, SoundCloud and through the [Seattle Opera channel on Classical King FM. 98.1](#).