



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 14, 2020**

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# Seattle's Opera Center Bustles in January – March. Free, Low Cost Activities for All!

**14 opera-themed events at Seattle Center (and beyond).  
Ticket Prices: Free - \$35**

As the days get longer and Spring hits Seattle in the first quarter of 2020, The Opera Center bustles with free and low-cost activities for all ages. The mainstage operas attract big crowds *Eugene Onegin* (1/11 – 1/25) and *Charlie Parker's Yardbird* (2/22 – 3/7) at Marion Oliver McCaw Hall. But, adjacent to McCaw Hall, is Seattle's newest education, artistic and civic space known as The Opera Center. This state-of-the-art facility opened to the public on December 15, 2018 and is accessible to everyone.

In the past year, Seattle Opera has expanded its programming to reach new audiences and enrich the lives of Seattle area residents and visitors. The beautiful Opera Center lobby is open to the public (M-F 9am – 5pm) and the giant windows along Speight Jenkins Way allow unsuspecting pedestrians a "sneak peek" at the stunning opera costumes being crafted. Portable displays detail the history, important themes and production background.

Fourteen additional opera-themed community programs are scheduled for the first quarter of 2020. **Dynamic, diverse press photos available here.** FREE events may require an RSVP so check the website to secure your space.

**Melody Wilson & John Keene in Recital**      **Friday, January 17, 7:30pm;**      **Tickets \$25**  
**Tagney Jones Hall at the Opera Center**      <https://www.seattleopera.org/recitals>  
Mezzo-soprano Melody Wilson takes a break from debut performances in Eugene Onegin to show off her creative range with an eclectic program of art songs, joined by pianist John Keene. Alongside Berlioz's iconic, shimmering cycle "Les nuits d'été" (Summer Nights), rising opera star Wilson will showcase Catalan composer Xavier Montsalvatge's "Cinco canciones negras" (Five Black Songs).

**Opera Talk: What Happened to Opera Romance?**      **Tuesday, January 21, 7:30pm;**      **FREE**  
**Tagney Jones Hall at the Opera Center**      <https://www.seattleopera.org/operatalks>  
No love duet in *Eugene Onegin*!? The standard opera romance between tenor and soprano has become less standard in recent decades, as "modern love" makes its way onto the opera stage. "I cannot offer you eternal love, for we have learned today such words are lies," sings a tenor in a 1958 American opera. Join Seattle Opera dramaturg Jonathan Dean for a lively discussion about the representation of love, romance, and sex in operas then and now.

**Opera From a Sistah's Point of View**      **Saturday, January 25, 6pm;**      **Tickets \$35**  
**Northwest African American Museum**      <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/opera-from-a-sistas-perspective-tickets-87700290931>  
NAAM partners with Seattle Opera to present Angela Brown in Opera... From A Sistah's Point Of View. Angela works with the audience to develop an appreciation and comfort level with opera. The program is designed to appeal to a diverse base with only a general or basic knowledge of the art form. Angela's hilarious educational narrative is interspersed with musical selections as she dispels the myths of opera with humor and charm. Each aria is described and explained in the context of the opera's plot. The narrative is comical at times, charming and delightful. Angela encourages participation and the entire audience will leave feeling less intimidated and prepared to enjoy any upcoming production.

**Laser Opera**      **Saturday February 1, 6:30pm (all ages) & 8:30pm (21+);**      **Tickets \$10**  
**Pacific Science Center Laser Dome**      <https://www.seattleopera.org/laseropera>  
Opera takes over the Pacific Science Center Laser Dome for one night only! Featuring a live laser show choreographed to a soundtrack of operatic favorites – this year will showcase an exciting night of opera, classical music, and jazz in anticipation of the West Coast premiere of *Charlie Parker's Yardbird*.

**Angela Brown & John Keene in Recital**      **Tuesday, February 4, 7:30pm;**      **Tickets \$25**  
**Tagney Jones Hall at the Opera Center**      <https://www.seattleopera.org/recitals>  
Before taking the stage as Addie in *Charlie Parker's Yardbird*, world-renowned soprano Angela Brown presents a unique recital in Tagney Jones Hall. This concert features musical settings of poetry and prose by American literary legends Toni Morrison, Maya Angelou, and Mari Evans. Through music, Brown and pianist John Keene will take the audience on an intimate journey through the lives of these three luminaries and her own, describing her relationship with each writer and how they helped to shape her life and singing career.

**Wilde Tales: a Youth Opera for Families**      **Feb. 7 & 8 @ 7pm, Feb. 8 & 9 @ 2pm;**      **Tickets \$5-\$15**  
**Cornish Playhouse**      <https://www.seattleopera.org/wildetales>  
Beauty lies in what you give. Inspired by the stories of Irish playwright Oscar Wilde, *Wilde Tales* weaves together several of the author's stories into a colorful and heartwarming parable that reminds us all that true beauty lies in the way we treat one another. This exciting presentation of the Youth Opera Project is performed by youth ages 7–18 and is perfect for audiences of all ages.

**Opera Time:** (kids age 2-7)      **February 8, 10:30 - 11 am;**      **FREE**  
**The Opera Center**      <https://www.seattleopera.org/earlylearning>  
Seattle Opera hosts drop-in sessions of Opera Time at the Opera Center. Each 30-minute class will introduce young ones to opera through interactive songs and stories. These sessions are an exciting and free way to start off the weekend! Great for families with busy schedules or those who aren't sure if a full six-week course is right for them. This program is best suited for children ages 2–7, but all families are welcome! RSVPs are encouraged, but not required.

**Opera Talk: A Bird's Eye View: Telling the Story of Charlie Parker Through Opera**

**Tuesday, February 11, 7:30pm;**

**FREE**

**Tagney Jones Hall at the Opera Center**

<https://www.seattleopera.org/operatalks>

How did the story of one of jazz's greatest innovators become an opera? The genre once called "America's past and its potential" is a vital contributor to the American classical landscape. Join Charlie Parker's Yardbird composer Daniel Schnyder and librettist Bridgette Wimberly as they discuss their work and the unique task of blending jazz and opera. Co-moderated by Seattle Opera dramaturg Jonathan Dean and KNKX's Abe Beeson.

**Community Conversation: Black Representation in the Arts Thurs., February 13, 7pm; **FREE****

**Tagney Jones Hall at the Opera Center** <https://www.seattleopera.org/communityconversations>

What happens when audiences see an African-American ballerina dance Clara in *The Nutcracker* or a Black opera singer sing Mimi in *La bohème*? How does the storytelling change when Black creators and artistic leaders are the ones making decisions behind the scenes? How can companies help to undue harm, create a more diverse pipeline of talent, and ultimately, enable the decolonization of art forms long-dominated by racism? Join Seattle Opera for a discussion on Black representation in the arts. The conversation will be led by Seattle Opera Scholar in Residence, Naomi André, professor at the University of Michigan and author of *Black Opera: History, Power, Engagement*. Speakers include Theresa Ruth Howard, formerly of Dance Theatre of Harlem; founder and curator of the Memoirs of Blacks in Ballet, and Bridgette Wimberly (award-winning poet, playwright, and librettist of *Charlie Parker's Yardbird*).

**SIFF Film Night: Bird Thursday February 20, 7pm;**

**Tickets: \$15-\$20**

**SIFF's Uptown Theatre, Queen Anne**

<https://www.siff.net/year-round-cinema/bird>

SIFF, KNKX and Seattle Opera partner around Seattle Opera's upcoming production of Charlie Parker's Yardbird to bring this special screening of the Oscar-winning film *Bird*. This biographical film is directed by Clint Eastwood and stars Forest Whitaker as the great saxophone player Charlie "Bird" Parker. It's set during the 1930s, '40s, and '50s that traces the life of jazz saxophonist Charlie "Bird" Parker—from his Bebop Jazz, to his drug problem and legal difficulties. KNKX's Jim Wilke hosts the event with a pre-show discussion.

**Charlie Parker's New York in the '50s**

**Monday February 24, 7:30pm;**

**Tickets:\$10-\$20**

**The Royal Room, Columbia City**

<https://www.strangertickets.com/events/104028854/188-sullivan-charlie-parkers-new-york-in-the-50s>

Seattle Opera and the Royal Room proudly present an evening of jazz and poetry celebrating the innovation and virtuosity of **Charlie Parker's New York in the 50s**. Opera soprano Angela Brown (also performing in Seattle Opera's *Charlie Parker's Yardbird*) delivers *Discography*, a spoken word piece by librettist Bridgette A. Wimberly. Julia Tai conducts the Seattle Modern Orchestra in Wayne Horvitz's new work *188 Sullivan*. The piece pays homage to the meetings between Parker and Edgard Varèse featuring motifs found within Parker's works. It's written for five strings, piano, percussion, electronics, and features guest clarinetist James Falzone. The D'Vonne Lewis Quartet rounds out the evening by performing celebrated favorites of Charlie Parker.

**BIG Opera Party Friday, February 28, 6pm;**

**By Donation**

**The Opera Center & McCaw Hall**

<https://www.seattleopera.org/bigoperaparty>

Guests are transported back in time to Manhattan's legendary jazz club, Birdland, to experience the life and times of jazz great and bebop innovator, Charlie Parker. Enjoy one-night-only musical experiences in Seattle Opera's state-of-the-art Opera Center, and dine on stage at McCaw Hall amid the set of Charlie Parker's Yardbird. Bid on special opera experiences at the Live Auction or pick your favorite when you win the Golden Raffle. Sip on cocktails, strike a pose in the photo booth, and enjoy performances by jazz vocalist Gail Pettis and participants in our Teen Vocal Studio during the reception. Local musicians with JazzEd set the tone at dinner on stage as KIRO 7's Deborah Horne plays emcee and Freddie Ballentine, who plays Charlie Parker in the opera, joins in the fun. The Big After Party includes music and dancing with the Thomas Marriott Quintet and DJ Mixx America.

**Opera Time (kids age 2-7)**

**March 14, 10:30 -11 am;**

**FREE**

**The Opera Center**

<https://www.seattleopera.org/earlylearning>

Seattle Opera hosts drop-in sessions of Opera Time at the Opera Center. Each 30-minute class will introduce young ones to opera through interactive songs and stories. These sessions are an exciting and free way to start off the weekend! Great for families with busy schedules or those who aren't sure if a full six-week course is right for them. This program is best suited for children ages 2–7, but all families are welcome! RSVPs are encouraged, but not required.

**Opera Talks**

**Tuesday, March 24, 7:30pm;**

**FREE**

**Tagney Jones Hall at the Opera Center**

<https://www.seattleopera.org/operatalks>

Each month, join Seattle Opera dramaturg Jonathan Dean presents an entertaining look at this unique art form, with topics ranging from opera's rich literature and history to behind-the-scenes insights into how we put these grand productions on stage. Details on the March 24<sup>th</sup> topic will be posted online in the coming weeks.

Details on all Seattle Opera mainstage and community events, as well as ticket and subscription information, is available at [www.seattleopera.org](http://www.seattleopera.org).

**About Seattle Opera**

Established in 1963, Seattle Opera is committed to serving the people of the Pacific Northwest with performances of the highest caliber and through innovative educational and engagement programs for all. Each year, more than 95,000 people attend Seattle Opera performances, and more than 400,000 people of all ages are served through school performances, radio broadcasts, and more. By drawing our communities together, and by offering opera's unique fusion of music and drama, we create life-enhancing experiences that speak deeply to people's hearts and minds. Connect with Seattle Opera on Facebook, Twitter, SoundCloud, and on Classical King FM. 98.1.

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