

SEATTLE OPERA.

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Seattle Opera expands programs, performances in 2017/18

Company to offer operas at new venues around town

***Madame Butterfly, The Barber of Seville, Così fan tutte,
Beatrice & Benedict, Aida* come to McCaw Hall**

SEATTLE—Opera is for everyone—and so is [Seattle Opera's 2017/18 season!](#) There's a new bilingual performance for elementary-school students, new performance venues such as Georgetown Steam Plant, a new mainstage collaboration with ACT Theatre and Seattle Symphony leaders, and even an outdoor performance offered free of charge. Regardless of background or socioeconomic status, this season offers ways for a broad audience to be able to experience opera; it's an open invitation for the Pacific Northwest.

"We want to present opera in a way that reflects our time and place—so naturally, representing the diverse people of our region is important to us," said **General Director Aidan Lang**. "Whether it's Verdi or Mozart on our mainstage, or an opera with Muslim or LGBTQ characters presented in our community—opera speaks to the experience of being human which we share. This is why it's crucial to reduce historic barriers that have made our art form, at times, inaccessible."

In addition to five mainstage operas featuring the work of beloved composers like Verdi, Mozart, and Puccini, the company hopes to keep building an audience that's diverse in age, race, and more following the success of *As One* (November, 2016). This story of a transgender woman performed at Washington Hall helped establish new community partners such as **Pride Foundation**, and also brought more young people and newcomers through the door compared to the company's performances at McCaw Hall. (For example, the *As One* overall audience was 59 percent people under 50, versus only 27 percent people under 50 for a given mainstage performance). The effort to reach new viewers continues in 2017 at venues throughout Seattle, including Georgetown Steam Plant, where a war-torn, interfaith love story called ***The Combat*** (Monteverdi) will be performed. [**An American Dream**](#) (by composer **Jack Perla** and librettist **Jessica Murphy Moo**) returns following its 2015 premiere, this time in a new Seattle location. Our annual [**Frost Fest**](#) on Feb. 4, 2017 at Cornish Playhouse, introduces opera to young audiences with [**Cinderella en España**](#), a story in English and Spanish; this 45-minute opera also plays Kirkland Performing Arts Center on March 19, and will tour schools statewide. Finally, in July 2017, Seattleites can bring a picnic if they choose while enjoying **Opera Outside**, offered free of charge.

The mainstage season at McCaw Hall kicks off with Puccini's famous ***Madame Butterfly***, Aug. 5-19, 2017. Stage director **Kate Cherry**'s "sublime, visually fantastic, must-see" show (stuff.co.nz) stars **Lianna Haroutounian** and **Alexia Voulgaridou** who each make company debuts as Cio-Cio-San. The performance also includes Seattle debuts for **Alexey Dolgov** and **Dominick Chenes** (Pinkerton); and the return of **Weston Hurt** (Sharpless), **Renée Rapier** (Suzuki), and **Maestro Carlo Montanaro**. This tragic tale of a reckless American naval officer and a trusting geisha he purchased as a temporary bride includes some of Puccini's most famous music such as the radiant "Flower Duet," *Butterfly*'s poignant arias, and a rapturous love song for the ages.

Inspired by true events, *Butterfly* is an often painful reminder of racial and cultural injustice found throughout America's history. Thus, ***An American Dream***, a story depicting the incarceration of Japanese Americans, will provide an essential second perspective for *Butterfly* audiences a month later in September, 2017. By showing these pieces in tandem, Seattle Opera seeks to emphasize Puccini's intentional criticism of American attitudes toward Japan; such attitudes would later scar our own Pacific Northwest history during World War II.

The mainstage season continues with another new-to-Seattle production: ***The Barber of Seville*** (Rossini), Oct. 14-28, 2017. Stage Director **Lindy Hume** returns following smash hit *The Wicked Adventures of Count Ory* (2016) to delight audiences with colorful sets and costumes inspired by the seductive and playful spirit of southern Spain. This "riotously funny" (*The Australian*) prequel to *The Marriage of Figaro* includes the company debut of soprano **Sofia Fomina** (Rosina). Also featured are **Matthew Grills** and **Andrew Owens** (Almaviva); **John Moore** and **Will Liverman** (Figaro); **Kevin Glavin** (Dr. Bartolo); **Daniel Sumegi** (Basilio); and **Margaret Gawrysiak** (Berta). **Maestro Giacomo Sagripanti** returns to conduct.

In the New Year, ***Così fan tutte*** (Mozart) returns Jan. 13-27, 2018. Last seen in 2006, Jonathan Miller's acclaimed modern-dress production may be "the funniest and most dramatically successful show Seattle Opera has ever staged" (*The Seattle Times*). This account of two buddies who test the faithfulness of their fiancées includes company debuts by **Marina Costa-Jackson**, **Marjukka Tepponen** (Fiordiligi); **Ben Bliss**, **Tuomas Katajala** (Ferrando); **Ginger Costa-Jackson** (Dorabella); **Michael Adams** (Guglielmo); and **Maestro Paul Daniel**. Returning artists include **Hanna Hipp** (Dorabella); **Craig Verm** (Guglielmo); **Laura Tatulescu** (Despina); and **Kevin Burdette** (Don Alfonso).

New to Seattle Opera is Hector Berlioz's ***Beatrice and Benedict***—a unique Seattle Opera premiere created through artistic collaborations. **Seattle Symphony Orchestra Maestro Ludovic Morlot** and **ACT Artistic Director John Langs**

make debuts as conductor and stage director, respectively for this performance, which runs Feb. 24-March 10, 2018. Based on *Much Ado About Nothing*, this work will kick off a city-wide event, **Seattle Celebrates Shakespeare**.

“This is a unique and unprecedented opportunity for three different arts organizations to create something fresh and engaging,” said Langs, who, working with Aidan Lang and **Seattle Opera Dramaturg Jonathan Dean**, will make these English-language performances faithful to Shakespeare. “It’s a beautiful story in an epic setting at a time when the world needs a bittersweet romance and joy.”

In the role of Beatrice, **Daniela Mack** makes her company debut, sharing the role with **Hanna Hipp**. **Alek Shrader** and **Andrew Owens** return to sing Benedict. The performance also includes **Laura Tatulescu** (Hero), **Avery Amereau** (Ursule), **Kevin Burdette** (Somarone), **Craig Verm** (Claudio) and **Daniel Sumegi** (Don Pedro).

The mainstage season concludes with **Verdi’s** magnificent *Aida*. Acclaimed creative team **Francesca Zambello** and **Michael Yeargan** oversee a visually imposing production with hieroglyphic projections by noted graffiti artist **RETNA** and evocative choreography by in-demand visionary **Jessica Lang**. This high-stakes love triangle between an Ethiopian princess, a military commander, and the Pharaoh’s formidable daughter includes performances by **Leah Crocetto** in her company debut as Aida—a role shared with **Alexandra LoBianco**. Additional company debuts include **Milijana Nikolic** and **Elena Gabouri** as Amneris; as well as **Brian Jagde** and **David Pomeroy** as Radames. Returning artists include **Gordon Hawkins**, **Alfred Walker** (Amonasro); **Daniel Sumegi** (Ramfis); and **Maestro John Fiore**.

Seattle Opera Ticket Information: Subscriptions on sale now. Five-opera renewal and new subscription ticket prices: \$225 to 3,915.* Seattle Opera Ticket Office: 206.389.7676 or 800.426.1619. Online orders: seattleopera.org/subscribe2017. Mainstage performances take place at Marion Oliver McCaw Hall, 321 Mercer Street.

Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m., with Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m.

*Prices include a \$3-per-ticket facility fee and (in some locations) a preferred seating donation. Young professionals ages 21-39 who join BRAVO! and students under 18 save 50 percent on tickets.

Madame Butterfly

Music by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica

In Italian with English captions

Marion Oliver McCaw Hall

Performances: August 5, 6, 9, 12, 13, 16, 18, 19, 2017

Approximate Running Time: 2 hours and 55 minutes with no intermission

Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m., matinees at 2:00 p.m.

Premiere: Feb. 17, 1904, at Teatro alla Scala

Previous Seattle Opera Performances: 1966, 1970, 1977, 1995, 1982, 1989, 2002, 2012

Cast:

Cio-Cio-San	Liana Haroutounian* (Aug. 5, 9, 13, & 18) Alexia Voulgaridou* (Aug. 6, 12, 16, & 19)
Pinkerton	Alexey Dolgov* (Aug. 5, 9, 13, & 18) Dominick Chenes* (Aug. 6, 12, 16, & 19)
Sharpless	Weston Hurt (All dates)
Suzuki	Renée Rapier (All dates)

Director	Kate Cherry*
Conductor	Carlo Montanaro
Production Design	Christina Smith*
Lighting Design	Matt Scott*

* Company Debut

Production Sponsors: Tagney Jones Family Fund, Barbara Stephanus

The Barber of Seville

Music by Gioachino Rossini

Libretto by Cesare Sterbini

In Italian with English captions

Marion Oliver McCaw Hall

Performances: October 14, 15, 18, 20, 21, 22, 25, 28, 2017

Approximate Running Time: 2 hour and 50 minutes with one intermission

Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m., matinees at 2:00 p.m.

Premiere: Feb. 20, 1816, at Teatro Argentina, Rome, Italy

Previous Seattle Opera Performances: 1966, 1974, 1983, 1992, 2000, 2011

Cast:

Rosina	Sofia Fomina* (Oct. 15, 18, 21, & 28)
Almaviva	Matthew Grills* (Oct. 14, 20, 22, & 25) Andrew Owens (Oct. 15, 18, 21, & 28)
Figaro	John Moore (Oct. 14, 20, 22, & 25) Will Liverman (Oct. 15, 18, 21, & 28)
Dr. Bartolo	Kevin Glavin (All dates)
Don Basilio	Daniel Sumegi (All dates)
Director	Lindy Hume
Conductor	Giacomo Sagripanti
Production Design	Tracy Grant Lord*
Lighting Design	Matthew Marshall*

* Company Debut

Production Sponsor: Kreielsheimer Endowment Fund

Così fan tutte

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte

In Italian with English captions

Marion Oliver McCaw Hall

Performances: January 13, 14, 17, 20, 24, 26, 27, 2018

Approximate Running Time: 3 hours, 15 minutes with one intermission

Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m., matinees at 2:00 p.m.

Premiere: Jan. 26, 1790 in Vienna

Previous Seattle Opera Performances: 1974, 1992, 1986, 2006

Cast:

Fiordiligi	Marina Costa-Jackson* (Jan. 13, 17, 24, & 27) Marjukka Tepponen* (Jan. 14, 20, & 26)
Ferrando	Ben Bliss* (Jan. 13, 17, 24, & 27) Tuomas Katajala* (Jan. 14, 20, & 26)
Dorabella	Ginger Costa-Jackson* (Jan. 13, 17, 24, & 27) Hanna Hipp (Jan. 14, 20, & 26)
Guglielmo	Craig Verm (Jan. 13, 17, 24, & 27) Michael Adams* (Jan. 14, 20, & 26)
Despina	Laura Tatulescu (All dates)
Don Alfonso	Kevin Burdette (All dates)
Original Stage Director and Production Design	Jonathan Miller
Conductor	Paul Daniel*

* Company Debut

Production Sponsors: Seattle Opera Foundation, ArtsFund

Beatrice & Benedict

Music by Hector Berlioz

Libretto by Berlioz and Shakespeare. Singing translation by Amanda Holden.

In English with English captions

Marion Oliver McCaw Hall

Performances: February 24, 25, 28, March 3, 7, 9, 10, 2018

Approximate Running Time: 2 hours and 30 minutes with one intermission

Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m., matinees at 2:00 p.m.

Premiere: Aug. 9, 1862 at Theater der Stadt, Baden-Baden, Germany

Seattle Opera premiere

Cast:

Beatrice	Daniela Mack* (Feb. 24, 28, Mar. 7, & 10) Hanna Hipp (Feb. 25, Mar. 3, & 9)
Benedict	Alek Schrader (Feb. 24, 28, Mar. 7, & 10) Andrew Owens (Feb. 25, Mar. 3, & 9)
Hero	Laura Tatulescu (All dates)
Ursule	Avery Amereau* (All dates)
Somarone	Kevin Burdette (All dates)
Claudio	Craig Verm (All dates)
Don Pedro	Daniel Sumegi (All dates)
Director	John Langs*
Conductor	Ludovic Morlot*

* Company Debut

Production Sponsors: Nesholm Family Foundation, Marks Family Foundation, City of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture

Aida

Music by Giuseppe Verdi
Libretto by Antonio Ghislanzoni
In Italian with English captions

Marion Oliver McCaw Hall

Performances: May 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16, 19, 2018

Approximate Running Time: 3 hours with one intermission

Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m., matinees at 2:00 p.m.

Premiere: Dec. 24, 1871, Cairo, Opera House

Previous Seattle Opera Performances: 1962, 1968, 1976, 1980, 1992, 2008

Cast:

Aida	Leah Crocetto* (May 5, 11, 13, 16, & 19) Alexandra LoBianco (May 6, 9, & 12)
Amneris	Milijana Nikolic* (May 5, 11, 13, 16, & 19) Elena Gabouri* (May 6, 9, & 12)
Radames	Brian Jagde* (May 5, 11, 13, 16, & 19) David Pomeroy* (May 6, 9, & 12)
Amonasro	Gordon Hawkins (May 5, 11, 13, 16, & 19) Alfred Walker (May 6, 9, & 12)
Ramfis	Daniel Sumegi (all dates)
Director	Francesca Zambello
Conductor	John Fiore
Scenic Concept	RETNA*
Set Design	Michael Yeorgan
Costume Design	Anita Yavich*
Lighting Design	Mark McCullough
Choreographer	Jessica Lang*

* Company Debut

Production Sponsors: Lenore M. Hanauer, 4Culture

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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 through the [Seattle Opera channel on Classical King FM. 98.1.](#)