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# Opera takes wing at The Museum of Flight

**Seattle Opera films *Flight* on location amidst historic, vintage aircrafts**

**Streaming April 23–25, 2021 for \$35**  
[seattleopera.org/flight](https://seattleopera.org/flight)

SEATTLE—Picture yourself at the airport: the excited rush of people coming and going. The roar of planes taking off. Familiar sights of suitcases, pilots, people lining up, and—the enchanting sounds of opera?! In Seattle Opera’s *Flight*, a unique collaboration with **The Museum of Flight** takes pandemic programming to new heights. The streaming opera created by composer **Jonathan Dove** and librettist **April De Angelis** was filmed on location at the museum, across several exhibits of the T.A. Wilson Great Gallery. Historic aircrafts are suspended in a 6-story exhibit—a jaw-dropping set that wouldn’t be possible in McCaw Hall. Other parts of the museum easily replicate the look and feel of a real-life airport.

“The opportunity for us to be a part of Seattle Opera’s production makes me want to break into song—but I will leave that to the professionals and sing praises for this collaboration instead,” said **Matt Hayes, Museum of Flight President and CEO**. “*Flight* is a dynamic reflection of the personal stories we tell and cherish at the Museum. It’s an honor for us to be a part of this wonderfully creative opera during the pandemic.”

Full of intense drama, humor, pathos, anguish—and profound beauty—*Flight* was written in 1998 for the Glyndebourne Festival and has been performed all over the world. This upcoming presentation is both *Flight*'s Seattle premiere, and the first time it's been reimagined for film.

In this story, an omniscient air traffic controller watches over a departure lounge bustling with relentlessly cheerful flight attendants, an excitable couple on vacation, a mysterious older woman, and a diplomat and his expectant wife, all of whom must spend the night to wait out a storm. At the heart of the show is the Refugee, a character inspired by Mehran Karimi Nasseri, who lived in Charles de Gaulle Airport near Paris for almost 18 years.

The resonance for *Flight* today is striking, said director **Brian Staufenbiel**: "During the global pandemic, it is perhaps easier now to feel, viscerally, what it was like for Nasseri to be isolated and even ostracized, what the world would be like if no one would come close to you, wrap their arms around you, and whisper in your ear, 'I love you.' That sense of separation—even banishment—is the crux of *Flight*."

Available on Seattle Opera's website April 23–25, *Flight* ushers American Countertenor **Randall Scotting** (Refugee) back to Seattle Opera after his recent debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Canadian soprano **Sharleen Joynt**, praised for her "silvery, sparkling, substantial and resonant soprano" (*Die Deutsche Bühne*) makes her company debut as the Controller.

Returning performers include **Joshua Kohl** (Bill), **Margaret Gawrysiak** (Older Woman), **Sarah Larsen** (Stewardess), **Joseph Lattanzi** (Steward), **Aubrey Allicock** (Minskman), **Karin Mushegain** (Minskwoman), and **Damien Geter** (Immigration Officer).

**Karen Vuong** (Tina in *Flight*) will also be singing in two free events: [The Big Opera Show](#) on April 11, and [a solo recital with pianist David McDade](#) on May 7.

Premiering at 7 p.m. on Seattle Opera's Facebook, YouTube, and website, the recital will include contemporary works such as "The Red Dress" (1995) by Ricky Ian Gordon and "Animal Passion" (1997) by Jake Heggie. Classical selections include works by Henri Duparc, Claude Debussy, Richard Strauss, and Giacomo Puccini ("Che tua madre" from *Madame Butterfly*).

Joining Staufenbiel on the *Flight* creative team are Film Director and Editor **Kyle Seago** (*The Elixir of Love*) and Maestro **Viswa Subbaraman**, who recently served as the Artistic Director/Music Director of the Skylight Music Theatre in Milwaukee.

*Flight* premieres on Seattle Opera's website at 7 p.m. on Friday, April 23 and can be viewed until 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, April 25. Tickets are available online at [seattleopera.org](http://seattleopera.org) or by calling 206.389.7676 or 800.426.1619. For questions about streaming, view our [Streaming FAQs](#). This opera is rated PG-13 for sexual violence. [Read content advisories](#).

## ***Flight***

Music by Jonathan Dove

Libretto by April De Angelis

In English with English captions

Premiere: Sept. 24, 1998 with Glyndebourne Touring Opera in Glyndebourne  
Seattle Opera premiere

Approximate Running Time: 2 hours and 9 minutes including one intermission

### **Cast:**

Refugee	Randall Scotting
Controller	Sharleen Joynt*
Bill	Joshua Kohl
Tina	Karen Vuong
Older Woman	Margaret Gawrysiak
Stewardess	Sarah Larsen
Steward	Joseph Lattanzi
Minskman	Aubrey Allicock
Minskwoman	Karin Mushegain
Immigration Officer	Damien Geter
Conductor	Viswa Subbaraman*
Director	Brian Staufenbiel*
Costume, Hair, &	

Makeup Designer	Liesl Alice Gatcheco
Audio & Sound Designer	Robertson Witmer
Film Director & Sound Designer	Kyle Seago
Choreographer	Sonia Dawkins*
Lighting Designer	Duane Schuler

\* Company Debut

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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 on 98.1 Classical KING FM.