

# LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY <sup>1</sup>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Lyric Opera of Kansas City Presents NEW PRODUCTION**  
**of Johann Strauss' *Die Fledermaus***  
**To Close the 56<sup>th</sup> Season**  
*Performances April 26 – May 4*  
*at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts*

**Kansas City, MO (March 26, 2014)** – Lyric Opera of Kansas City closes its 56<sup>th</sup> season with Johann Strauss' *Die Fledermaus* April 26, 30 and May 2 and 4, 2014 at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts.

This will be a new production designed by the Lyric Opera's Director of Design and Technical Production **R. Keith Brumley** and conducted by Artistic Director **Ward Holmquist**. *Die Fledermaus* will be directed by **Tomer Zvulun**, who has directed at the Metropolitan Opera, Seattle Opera and Wolf Trap Opera. The cast includes soprano **Kelly Kaduce** as Rosalinde, baritone **Liam Bonner** as Eisenstein, soprano **Anna Christy** as Adele, tenor **Gordon Gietz** as Alfred, mezzo soprano **Joyce Castle** as Count Orlofsky and baritone **John Stephens** as Frank.

Johann Strauss' effervescent operetta satirizes the decadent society of his time. Before serving a short jail sentence for offending the tax collector, Gabriel von Eisenstein stops by Prince Orlofsky's ball as a last-minute diversion. Eisenstein and his friends are confounded by masked identities while spouses push the limits of fidelity. After hilarious twists and turns, the evening's indiscretions are ascribed to the effects of too much bubbly champagne.

Making his Lyric Opera debut is baritone **Liam Bonner**, playing the role of Eisenstein. Praised by *Opera News* for his "rich, versatile voice" and "beautiful instrument", he will be returning to the Lyric Opera next season to perform the role of Lt. Audebert in the February 2014 production of *Silent Night*.

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Returning to the Lyric Opera in the role of Rosalind is soprano **Kelly Kaduce**. In the Lyric Opera's 2003-04 season, she performed the role of Juliette in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*. Her recent debut appearance with Houston Grand Opera in *The Passenger* was met with national critical acclaim. *The Wall Street Journal* stated, "As the fierce Russian partisan Katya, Kelly Kaduce was mesmerizing in the a cappella Russian folk song that she sings before the guards finally take her away."

Making his Lyric Opera debut in the role of Alfred will be tenor **Gordon Gietz**. He recently returned to Netherlands Opera as the Marquis in Sergey Prokofiev's *The Gambler* and made his Edmonton Opera debut singing Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*. *Le Monde de la Musique* recently opined, "Gordon Gietz is a fine performer: sexy and tender, irresistibly young..."

Beloved local legendary mezzo soprano **Joyce Castle** returns to the Lyric Opera to play the 'trouser role' as Prince Orlofsky; her last celebrated appearance was with the Company as the Marquis of Berkenfield in *Daughter of the Regiment* in 2011. The 'trouser role' literally means a role in which a female performer puts on a male costume and plays a male character. She recently was heralded for her role as Madame Armfeldt in Houston Grand Opera's *A Little Night Music*. During Ms. Castle's 40 year tenure as a professional singer she has performed at most of the major U.S. houses including performances with Glimmerglass Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, New York City Opera, The Metropolitan Opera, Santa Fe Opera, and Seattle Opera. She is a Professor of Voice at the University of Kansas.

Audience favorite baritone **John Stephens** returns to the Lyric Opera to portray Frank, having most recently portrayed Sulpice in *Daughter of the Regiment* in 2011. Mr. Stephens has performed across the country including performances with Houston Grand Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Washington National Opera and Glimmerglass Opera. He is also a professor of voice at the University of Kansas.

Directing this production and making his Lyric Opera debut is General and Artistic Director of The Atlanta Opera **Tomer Zvulun**. His work has been presented by opera houses all over the world including the Metropolitan Opera, and the opera companies of Seattle, Dallas, Buenos Aires, and New Orleans.

Making his Lyric Opera debut, Kansas City Ballet Artistic Director **Devon Carney** will be the choreographer for the production. Kansas City Ballet Company artists Caroline Arnold, Sarah Chun, Taryn Mejia, Mona Meng and Logan Pachciarz will be performing.

### University Apprentices

The Lyric Opera Apprentice Program is a collaboration with the Conservatory of Music and Dance at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and the School of Music at the University of Kansas. During the two-year program students gain experience and training with the Lyric Opera to become professional opera singers. University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) apprentice **Samantha Gossard** will perform the

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role of Sally. University of Kansas apprentices **Tara Cooper, Michael Colman** and **Clark Weyrauch** will perform in the chorus.

## Principals Cast

Eisenstein: Liam Bonner\*  
Rosalinde: Kelly Kaduce  
Adele: Anna Christy\*  
Prince Orlofsky: Joyce Castle  
Alfred: Gordon Gietz\*  
Dr. Falke: Paul LaRosa\*  
Frosch: Gary Neal Johnson  
Frank: John Stephens  
Dr. Blind: Scott Wichaël  
Sally: Samantha Gossard ~  
Ivan: Robert Gibby Brand

## Artistic Staff

Conductor: Ward Holmquist  
Director: Tomer Zvulun\*  
Choreographer: Devon Carney  
Set Designer: R. Keith Brumley  
Costume Designer: Zack Brown  
Lighting Designer: Marie Barrett\*  
Wig and Make-Up Designer: Alison Hanks  
Chorus Master: Mark Ferrell  
Stage Manager: Jennifer Rimmer

\*Lyric Opera Debut  
~UMKC Apprentice  
+ KU Apprentice

Ticket availability varies by performance. To purchase tickets, call Ticketing & Patron Services (816) 471-7344 or 1-800-OPERA KC (673-7252). Patrons can select their own seat and print their tickets at home by visiting [www.kcopera.org](http://www.kcopera.org). Limited student rush tickets are available for \$15, one hour before the performances, with a valid student ID.

*Die Fledermaus* will be sung in English with English and German titles visible on personal monitors mounted on each audience member's seatback in the Muriel Kauffman Theatre. This production will be performed in the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, located at 1601 Broadway, Kansas City, MO 64108.

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## Performance dates are as follows:

Saturday, April 26, 2014 7:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, April 30, 2014 7:30 p.m.  
Friday, May 2, 2014 7:30 p.m.  
Sunday, May 4, 2014 2:00 p.m.

## Opera Previews

Audience members are invited and encouraged to attend a free opera preview, presented by the Lyric Opera Guild, in the Muriel Kauffman Theatre within the Kauffman Center one hour before curtain. Lyric Opera Guild presenter Dr. Bill Everett of the UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance will lead the 25-minute talks. The Lyric Opera Guild also presents a series of free “At Ease with Opera” presentations prior to the performance dates. ***Die Fledermaus*** “At Ease with Opera” Presentations:

**Tuesday, April 1 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation** (4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO) “Confessions of an Opera Singer” by Joyce Castle. Our speaker is one of the most celebrated mezzo sopranos on the world’s opera stages over the past four decades. She is now is an instructor at the University of Kansas School of Music, in addition to maintaining an impressive performing career. She’ll give us her insights into the practical reality of being an international opera star. You will also enjoy her performances as Prince Orlofsky (a trouser role) in the Lyric Opera’s *Die Fledermaus*.

**Monday, April 14 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation** (4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO) Dr. Bill Everett of the UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance will discuss “Beyond the Laughter: Economic Crisis, Ethnic Tensions and Viennese Politics in *Die Fledermaus*.” Many of us think of Strauss’ operetta as a raucous good-time romp, but did you know that the story has its dark side, drawing from the undercurrents of European politics of the time? This is your chance to find out all about the shadowy background of *Die Fledermaus*.

**Monday, April 21 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation** (4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO) Dr. Lyric Opera Guild speaker Richard Byrum will present “*Die Fledermaus*; or, No Bats are in the Belfry Tonight - They are All at a Party.” This presentation is an in-depth preview of *Die Fledermaus*, including the background of the composer and story of the opera, with audio and video excerpts.

## First Friday

April 4 from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Beth Ingram Administration Building (1725 Holmes, KCMO) During the April 4<sup>th</sup> First Friday, ‘what happens in Vienna, stays in Vienna’! This preview of *Die Fledermaus* will feature live entertainment, fine cuisine and fun which have come to be the standard of all Lyric Opera First Fridays!

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Guests will enjoy complimentary drinks and appetizers. Food catered by Haus Restaurant, with delicious entrée-sized portions available for purchase. Event is free and open to the public so bring all of your friends!

## **Young Friends of the Lyric Opera**

Young Friends of the Lyric provides an exciting outlet for young arts supporters (ages 21-40) in Kansas City to get involved in the community, meet other young adults and support the Lyric Opera of Kansas City. The group hosts “Cocktails with Friends” social hours prior to every Friday night performance. You do not have to be a member to attend these happy hours. Membership benefits include admission into a private room with complimentary drinks and food during intermissions, networking opportunities, restaurant discounts, invitations to special events and all the benefits of being a Lyric Opera Guild member.

Young Friends of the Lyric membership is \$25 for an individual, \$40 for a couple, or \$75 for a dual patron membership. To join, contact [youngfriends@kcoopera.org](mailto:youngfriends@kcoopera.org). Become a fan on [Facebook](#) to keep up with current events.

## **About the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts**

The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts is a major center for music, opera, theater, and dance designed by Moshe Safdie opened September 2011. The Kauffman Center presents vibrant performances and advances the role of the performing arts as a catalyst for Kansas City’s civic, economic, and educational vitality.

Three of the region’s leading performing arts organizations—Kansas City Ballet, Kansas City Symphony, and Lyric Opera of Kansas City—are in residence at the Kauffman Center. The Kauffman Center’s two performance venues, the 1,800-seat Muriel Kauffman Theatre and the 1,600-seat Helzberg Hall, offer audiences engaging and intimate experiences, while at the same time providing resident companies with dramatically enhanced performance capabilities.

Serving as a cultural cornerstone for Kansas City’s dynamic downtown, the Kauffman Center brings a new spotlight to the region’s performing arts community while simultaneously attracting some of the world’s most talented performers and entertainers, further establishing Kansas City as a major cultural destination.

More information on the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts is available at [kauffmancenter.org](http://kauffmancenter.org).

The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts is fully accessible and provides assistive listening devices plus Braille and large print programs. Service animals are welcome with advance notice. All dates, operas and artists are subject to change.

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Visit [www.kcopera.org](http://www.kcopera.org) for more information about Lyric Opera of Kansas City 2013-2014 and the 2014-15 season and [www.kauffmancenter.org](http://www.kauffmancenter.org) for a downloadable media kit about the Kauffman Center.

## 2014-2015 Season at a Glance:

### *La Traviata*

Giuseppe Verdi 1853

Sung in Italian with English and Italian titles

Saturday, September 27, 2014 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 1, 2014 7:30 p.m.

Friday, October 3, 2014 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, October 5, 2014, 2014 2:00 p.m.

Director: David Gately

Conductor: Ward Holmquist

Set and Costume Designer: Desmond Heeley

Violetta Valery: Joyce El-Khoury

Giorgio Germont: Anthony Michaels-Moore

### *The Italian Girl in Algiers*

Gioachino Rossini 1813

Sung in Italian with English and Italian titles

Saturday, November 8, 2014 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 12, 2014 7:30 p.m.

Friday, November 14, 2014 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, November 16, 2014, 2014 2:00 p.m.

Director: Michael Cavanagh

Conductor: Leonardo Vordoni

Scenery Designed by Robert Innes Hopkins

Costumes Designed by David C. Woolard

Isabella: Irene Roberts

Lindoro: Taylor Stayton

Mustafà: Patrick Carfizzi

### *Silent Night*

Kevin Puts 2011

Sung in English, German, French, Italian, and Latin with English titles

Saturday, February 21, 2015 7:30 p.m..

Wednesday, February 25, 2015 7:30 p.m.

Friday, February 27, 2015 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 1, 2015 2:00 p.m.

Director: Octavio Cardenas

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Conductor: David Charles Abell  
Lt. Audebert: Liam Bonner  
Anna Sorenson: Erin Wall  
Lt. Horstmayer: Craig Irvin  
Father Palmer: Daniel Belcher

## *Tosca*

**Giacomo Puccini 1900**

**Sung in Italian with English and Italian titles**

**Saturday, April 18, 2015 7:30 p.m.**

**Wednesday, April 22, 2015 7:30 p.m.**

**Friday, April 24, 2015 7:30 p.m.**

**Sunday, April 26, 2015 2:00 p.m.**

Director: Garnett Bruce

Conductor: Ward Holmquist

Production Designer: R. Keith Brumley

Floria Tosca: Melody Moore

Mario Cavaradossi: James Valenti

Baron Scarpia: Gordon Hawkins

Sacristan: Julien Robbins

## **Building for the Future**

On November 4, 2010 the Lyric Opera of Kansas City announced a Capital Campaign for the renovation of property on 18th and Charlotte in the Kansas City Crossroads Arts District for the new Richard J. Stern Opera Center. The Company moved from its temporary home to the new Opera Center campus located at 1725 Holmes on July 5, 2012.

The new Opera Center complex consists of two buildings: the Michael and Ginger Frost Production Arts Building and the Beth Ingram Administration building with set rental inventory storage. The Production Arts Building includes a rehearsal space that matches the footprint of the stage in the Muriel Kauffman Theatre at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. The Production Arts Building houses a full wig, costume and set construction shop and facilities for educational and community outreach programs. Such an integrated and dedicated production facility does not exist in Kansas City; the Company envisions the Production Arts Building becoming a resource for other local performing arts companies.

The second building on the property is adjacent to the Production Arts building. It provides the Company with set rental inventory storage, parking lots and outside green spaces for the Opera Center, and houses the administrative staff.

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## **About Lyric Opera of Kansas City**

The Lyric Opera of Kansas City was founded in 1958; it is one of the nations' premier regional opera companies and brings high quality live operatic performances to the people of the Kansas City area and a five-state region. Repertoire choices encompass original language performances of standard repertory as well as contemporary and American operas. The Company mounts productions that enrich the community it serves, as well as reflect the highest artistic standards of the profession. The Lyric Opera offers innovative and award-winning programs designed to further music and arts education both in schools and in the community and serves more than 18,000 students and educators each year.

Opera lovers can follow the Lyric Opera of Kansas City online under “@kcopera” on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and Flickr and “@LyricOperaKC” on YouTube.

The Lyric Opera of Kansas City is a member of OPERA America and this season is made possible with funding from Richard J. Stern Foundation for the Arts, and the Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation.

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**Please direct all media inquiries to Ellen McDonald, 816.444.0052.**

**For Tickets: [kcopera.org](http://kcopera.org) or 816.471.7344**