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Lyric Opera of Kansas City
Presents Puccini’s Masterpiece La bohème
Katie Van Kooten returns to Lyric Opera and U.S. debut of Italian tenor Giorgio Berrugi straight from his La Scala debut
March 15-23 at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

Kansas City, MO (February 17, 2014) – Lyric Opera of Kansas City continues its 56th season with Giacomo Puccini’s La bohème March 15, 17, 19, 21 and 23, 2014 at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts.

This glorious masterpiece with an especially strong cast continues the 2013-14 season, “Building on Greatness”. Rising star Katie Van Kooten returns to the Lyric Opera after her acclaimed performance as Countess Almaviva in The Marriage of Figaro to sing the role of Mimì. She performed the role of Mimi at Houston Grand Opera and Royal Opera House to much acclaim. Opera News wrote of her performance with Houston Grand Opera, “Katie Van Kooten sang with a soprano of richness and warmth, which was a delight to the ears…”

Performing the role of Rodolfo marks the United States and Lyric Opera debut of tenor Giorgio Berrugi. Berrugi has performed in La bohème at the Festival Puccini and has sung several roles at the Semperoper Dresden.

General Director and CEO Deborah Sandler stated, “We have brought together a highly memorable cast. This is a group of artists that any company would be proud to have on its stage to bring to life one of greatest operas of all time.”

Perhaps the most beloved opera of all time, La bohème follows the adventures of a quartet of irrepressible and impoverished young Parisians. When the seamstress Mimi and the poet Rodolfo fall in love, the fragile nature of life and love follow the course of the changing seasons. Puccini’s tenderly beautiful music plays in counterpoint to the comic antics of the bohemians, creating and unforgettable and enduring masterpiece.
Directed by **Linda Brovsky** and conducted by **Craig Kier**, the cast of bohemians also includes **Lucas Meachem** as Marcello, **Ellie Dehn** as Musetta, **Ben Wager** as Colline, **Marcus DeLoach** as Schaunard and **Rod Nelman** as Alcindoro/Benoit.

Linda Brovsky's innovative productions are found on operatic stages throughout North America, including San Francisco Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Seattle Opera, Los Angeles Opera, San Diego Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Glimmerglass Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, Florentine Opera, Opera Pacific and Cincinnati Opera among many other with repertoire ranging from standard classics to world premieres. Recent credits include a critically acclaimed new production of *Don Quichotte* for Seattle Opera, *Rigoletto* for both Cincinnati Opera and Pittsburgh Opera, *The Magic Flute* for Apollo's Fire Baroque Orchestra, a double bill of *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi* for Temple University, and *Le Nozze di Figaro* for IVAI in Tel Aviv, Israel.

The production will be conducted by Craig Kier, who is making his Lyric Opera debut. Mr. Kier has already established an impressive reputation during the 2013-14 season with his return to Atlanta Opera to conduct *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. At Houston Grand Opera he conducted performances of *Die Fledermaus*, the world premiere of the East + West chamber opera *Bound*, and served as cover conductor. Mr. Kier returned to the Houston Ballet for his third season as a guest conductor leading performances of *The Nutcracker*. Rounding out his 2013-14 season, Mr. Kier makes his company debut with Central City Opera leading *The Sound of Music*. Highlights in Mr. Kier's 2012-13 season included his Glimmerglass Festival debut conducting Weill's *Lost in the Stars*, his company debut at the Royal Opera House, Muscat, Oman leading performances of *The Music Man*, and appearances with the Houston Ballet conducting *The Nutcracker* and *Peter Pan*.

**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) apprentices **Samantha Gossard** and **Elliot Harrison Brown** will perform in the chorus. University of Kansas apprentices **Dominic Johnson** will perform Sergeant and in the chorus and **Tara Cooper**, **Michael Colman** and **Clark Weyrauch** will perform in the chorus.

**Principals Cast**
- Rodolfo: Giorgio Berrugi *
- Mimi: Katie Van Kooten
- Marcello: Lucas Meachem *
- Musetta: Ellie Dehn *
- Colline: Ben Wager *
- Schaunard: Marcus DeLoach *
- Alcindora/Benoit: Rod Nelman
- Parpignol: Clark Weyrauch +
- Custom-House Officer: Elliot Harrison Brown ~
- Sergeant: Dominic Johnson +

Lyric Opera of Kansas City 2013-14 Season Continues with *La bohème* March 15-23
Artistic Staff
Conductor: Craig Kier *
Director: Linda Brovsky *
Set Designer: R. Keith Brumley
Costume Designer: Martin Pakledinaz, from Seattle Opera
Lighting Designer: Steve Ross *
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-OPERAKC (673-7252). Patrons can select their own seat and print their tickets at home by visiting www.kcopera.org. Limited student rush tickets are available for $15, one hour before the performances, with a valid student ID.

La bohème FINAL DRESS REHEARSAL
Approximately 1,000 students from eleven area schools will be attending a dress rehearsal performance of Puccini’s La bohème, sung in Italian with English subtitles, at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts on Thursday, March 13, 2014 beginning at 6 p.m. Recommended for students at 5th grade and above, this program allows schools to bring classes to attend a final dress rehearsal of a Lyric Opera production each season. A school visit from Lyric Opera artists before the performance is included with prior scheduling. This program is now sold out. We encourage school groups interested in attending La bohème to contact Ticketing & Patron Services at 816-471-7344 for special group sales discounts to attend a live performance.

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 Don Dagenais 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.

La bohème “At Ease with Opera” Presentations:

Monday, February 24 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation (4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO) Dr. Charles Gibb, a local physician will present a study of death and dying in opera entitled, “The Opera Ain’t Over Till the Fat Lady Dies.” He will investigate not only the death (by tuberculosis) of Mimi, but also the death throes of other famous operatic characters.

Tuesday, March 4 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation (4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO) Dr. Ernest Neighbor, a longtime opera aficionado, will present “57 Years of Loving Mimi”, a
personal and entertaining romp through the many great singers who have portrayed the role of *La bohème*’s principal, Mimi. Complete with video and audio excerpts.

**Tuesday, March 11 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation** (4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO) “Love is a Stove that Burns Too Hot”, by Debra Karr, an instructor from University of Kansas, will give an in-depth preview of *La bohème* with audio and video excerpts.

**First Friday**
**March 7 from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Beth Ingram Administration Building** (1725 Holmes, KCMO) During the March 7th First Friday, live *la vie bohème* with Lyric Opera of Kansas City’s *La bohème* opera preview event! French-inspired cuisine, entertainment and live performances by Lyric Opera Apprentices will bring Paris to life here in Kansas City.

Guests will enjoy complimentary drinks and appetizers. Food catered by the Deco Street Eats food truck, 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@kcopera.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.

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.


2013-2014 Season at a Glance

The Capulets and the Montagues
(I Capuleti e i Montecchi)
Vincenzo Bellini 1830
Sung in Italian with English and Italian titles
September 21, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.
September 25, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.
September 27, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.
September 29, 2013 at 2:00 p.m.
Director: Kevin Newbury
Conductor: Ward Holmquist
Production Designer: Victoria (Vita) Tzykun
Romeo: Joyce DiDonato
Giulietta: Nicole Cabell
Tebaldo: William Burden
Capellio: Stephen Morscheck
Lorenzo: Julien Robbins

The Magic Flute
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart 1791
Sung in English with English and German titles
November 9, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.
November 13, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.
November 15, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.
November 17, 2013 at 2:00 p.m.
Director: Harry Silverstein
Conductor: Gary Thor Wedow
Production Designer: Jun Kaneko
Tamino: Shawn Mathey
Pamina: Lauren Snouffer
Queen of the Night: Kathryn Lewek
Papageno: Daniel Belcher
Monostatos: Doug Jones

La bohème
Giacomo Puccini 1896
Sung in Italian with English and Italian titles
March 15, 2014 at 7:30 p.m.
March 17, 2014 at 7:30 p.m.
March 19, 2014 at 7:30 p.m.
March 21, 2014 at 7:30 p.m.
March 23, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.
Director: Linda Brovsky
Conductor: Craig Kier
Rodolfo: Giorgio Berrugi
Mimi: Katie Van Kooten
Marcello: Lucas Meachem
Musetta: Ellie Dehn
Colline: Ben Wager
Schaunard: Marcus DeLoach
Alcindoro/Benoit: Rod Nelman

Die Fledermaus
Johann Strauss II 1874
Sung in English with English and German titles
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.
Director: Tomer Zvulun
Conductor: Ward Holmquist
Production Designer: R. Keith Brumley
Eisenstein: Liam Bonner
Rosalinde: Kelly Kaduce
Alfred: Gordon Gietz

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.

About Lyric Opera of Kansas City

Lyric Opera of Kansas City 2013-14 Season Continues with La bohème March 15-23
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, 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.

Please direct all media inquiries to Ellen McDonald, 816.444.0052.

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