



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ellen McDonald
816.444.0052
publicity@kcopera.org

For season tickets: 816.471.7344

**LYRIC OPERA OF KANSAS CITY ANNOUNCES
NEW CASTING FOR SECOND SEASON AT
KAUFFMAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS**

*New Production of Wagner's The Flying Dutchman, conducted by Ward Holmquist
and directed by Bernard Uzan with Richard Paul Fink as the Dutchman is the
cornerstone of the 55th Lyric Opera season*

*A role debut by Elizabeth Caballero as the title character in Puccini's tragic Madama
Butterfly and directed by Mark Streshinsky kicks off the season*

Single tickets go on sale to the general public Tuesday, August 7 at 9 a.m.

KANSAS CITY, MO. (August 1, 2012) – The Lyric Opera of Kansas City today announced new casting information for its upcoming 2012-2013 season to be held in the Muriel Kauffman Theatre in the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. Tickets for the Company's second season at the Kauffman Center will go on sale to the general public at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, August 7.

"The Company's commitment to continue artistic growth and celebrate the capabilities of our wonderful performance home is evident in the planning and casting of the 2012-13 season," added **Deborah Sandler**, the Company's new General Director and CEO. "Audiences and critics will be enthralled by the artists performing in this season's electrifying productions."



“When selecting the artists we wanted to work with during the second season in the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, we knew without a doubt that we wanted to continue the artistic growth we realized during our first season,” notes **Ward Holmquist**, Lyric Opera Artistic Director.

2012-2013 Season

Madama Butterfly

By Giacomo Puccini

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

September 15, 2012 7:30 p.m.

September 19, 2012 7:30 p.m.

September 21, 2012 7:30 p.m.

September 23, 2012 2:00 p.m.

September 24, 2012 7:30 p.m. – added due to demand

Puccini’s beautifully tragic *Madama Butterfly* is a story of love, fidelity and betrayal that occurs when two very different cultures collide. A marriage contract has drastically different meanings to a U.S. Navy lieutenant and his Japanese child-bride. When the nuptials result in a beloved child, the mother will do anything to protect her honor and her child’s future as an American.

Soprano Elizabeth Caballero (Liu, *Turandot* 2011) returns to the Lyric Opera to make her role debut as the title character in *Madama Butterfly* after her widely acclaimed debut performance in *Turandot*: “Most notable was the Cuban-American soprano Elizabeth Caballero, who sang Liu in sensuously glowing tones, her charged legato shaping the music into cogent paragraphs. Liu’s death scene tore at the heart,” *The New Yorker*.

Tenor **Dinyar Vania** will return to the Company to sing the role of Lt. Pinkerton. Mr. Vania made his debut with the Lyric Opera of Kansas City in 2010 as Don José in *Carmen*. *Present Magazine* noted that “Vania commanded his climactic lines with masterful expression and powerful volume.” Mr. Vania has been awarded Syracuse Opera’s “Artist of the Year” in addition to First Place in the Giulio Gari Vocal



Competition. Mr. Vania has also performed at Boston Lyric Opera and New York City Opera.

Baritone **Weston Hurt** will make his Lyric Opera debut in the role of Sharpless. Pierre Ruhe of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* noted that, “Weston Hurt was a vocally handsome Sharpless” when he performed the role at Atlanta Opera. Mr. Hurt’s credits include performances at the Austin Lyric Opera, Seattle Opera, New York City Opera, and Portland Opera. Additionally, Mr. Hurt has been the recipient of several awards including People’s Choice Award at the Dallas Opera Guild Vocal Competition, First Place in the 2003 Oratorio Society of New York Competition, and a variety of other awards from the Metropolitan Opera National Council, Opera Index, Inc., and Palm Beach Opera Competition.

Director Mark Streshinsky returns to the Lyric Opera (*Julius Caesar* 2008, *The Marriage of Figaro* 2011) to direct this Puccini tragedy. Mr. Streshinsky is currently the Artistic Director of West Edge Opera in California, and has directed numerous productions around country including at Cincinnati Opera, Dallas Opera, Seattle Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and Ziff Opera House.

Il Trovatore

By Giuseppe Verdi

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

November 3, 2012 7:30 p.m.

November 7, 2012 7:30 p.m.

November 9, 2012 7:30 p.m.

November 11, 2012 2:00 p.m.

Nobility, gypsies, murders, curses, kidnappings, a suicide and a love triangle – all combined with a sensational score – no wonder this opera has been bringing audiences to their feet since its premiere. This opera is jam-packed with show stopping music including the legendary “Anvil Chorus.”

The role of Manrico will be sung by tenor **Rafael Dávila**, who returns to the Lyric Opera having previously sung in the Company’s productions of *Tosca* (2009) and *Norma* (2010). Mr. Dávila has sung with the opera companies of Fort Worth, Austin, and New Jersey in the United States, and internationally at Teatro San Carlo in Naples, Opera de Puerto



Rico, and will make his debut in Bilbao this season. Additionally, he makes his Washington National Opera debut this year reprising the role he originated in the Kansas City production of *Norma*.

Russian baritone **Roman Burdenko** will sing the role of Count di Luna. Mr. Burdenko makes his Lyric Opera debut with this role, and his appearance with the Company marks the first time the Lyric Opera has engaged an international singer who lives outside the United States. He has sung in houses across Europe and Asia, and placed third in Placido Domingo's Operalia competition in Beijing, China this year. Mr. Burdenko already has covered roles at The Metropolitan Opera, and will perform at the Glyndebourne Festival this season.

Soprano **Michelle Capalbo** will make her Lyric Opera debut in *Il Trovatore* singing the role of Leonora. Ms. Capalbo has sung at Houston Grand Opera, Seattle Opera, San Francisco Opera, New York City Opera, Canadian Opera Company, and many others. The *New York Sun* raved that her performance as Floria Tosca had a “rich and polished lyric voice full of color and fluidity.”

Native Kansan and mezzo-soprano **Nancy Maultsby** will make her Lyric Opera debut singing the role of Azucena. A regular singer at The Metropolitan Opera, Ms. Maultsby also has sung with Lyric Opera Chicago, San Francisco Opera, Pittsburgh Opera and Royal Opera, Covent Garden. She also appeared in the recent Stephen Wadsworth *Ring* cycle for Seattle Opera, singing the role of Erda in *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried* and the role of Waltraute in *Götterdämmerung*.

Kathleen Smith Belcher will return to the Lyric Opera of Kansas City to direct, having last directed *La Traviata* with the Company in 2009. Ms. Belcher is a resident of Liberty, Missouri and is in her 11th year as a member of the directing staff at The Metropolitan Opera. Among others, she has worked extensively with the San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera and the San Diego Opera. Ms. Belcher assisted Peter Sellars on the world premiere of John Adams' *Dr. Atomic* in San Francisco and has worked with acclaimed directors Woody Allen, Anthony Minghella, Bartlett Sher and Julie Taymor.

Renowned opera conductor **John Keenan**, long associated with The Metropolitan Opera, will make his Lyric Opera debut with *Il Trovatore*. Mr. Keenan is a frequent guest conductor at the famed Kirov Opera in St. Petersburg, Russia and also has conducted



with the Minnesota Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Washington National Opera, and Los Angeles Opera.

***The Flying Dutchman* – All New Production**

By Richard Wagner

Sung in German with English subtitles

March 2, 2013 7:30 p.m.

March 6, 2013 7:30 p.m.

March 8, 2013 7:30 p.m.

March 10, 2013 2:00 p.m.

After a 38 year absence from the Lyric Opera repertoire **Ward Holmquist** will conduct an all new production of *The Flying Dutchman*. Wagner's great music, set to this haunting tale of a damned sea captain who can only be saved by true love, will encompass the entire theatre.

Baritone Richard Paul Fink (*Rigoletto* 2010, *Nixon in China* 2012) returns to the Lyric Opera to sing the cursed sea captain. *Opera News* hailed Mr. Fink as a "...healthy, big-voiced, commanding Dutchman." Mr. Fink has sung the role previously with The Atlanta Opera, Opera Grand Rapids, Canadian Opera Company, and Portland Opera. Mr. Fink recently won a Grammy for his role in John Adam's *Doctor Atomic*.

Soprano **Melissa Citro** will make her Lyric Opera debut singing the role of Senta. She was a Grand Finals winner of the 2001 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and since has sung with Glimmerglass Opera, Los Angeles Opera, San Francisco Opera, and The Metropolitan Opera.

The role of Erik will be sung by tenor **John Pickle**, who also will be making his debut with the Company, having previously sung with Mobile Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, and Utah Festival Opera.

Bass **Phil Cokorinos** will make his Lyric Opera debut singing the role of Daland. Mr. Cokorinos toured Japan in the summer of 2011 for The Metropolitan Opera, and has sung with Los Angeles Opera, The Metropolitan Opera, among others.



The role of Mary will be sung by contralto **Suzanne Hendrix**, an alumna of the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance. She teaches voice at Avila University and was a 2012 apprentice artist for Santa Fe Opera. Ms. Hendrix has sung roles at the San Francisco Opera and Santa Fe Opera.

This all-new production designed by **R. Keith Brumley** (*Turandot* 2011) will be worth the 38-year wait! Brumley received glowing reviews for *Turandot*. “The sets were simply phenomenal, where vertical and horizontal elements met on the new stage in a grand scale, offering a physical perspective not possible at the Lyric Theatre,” admired Sarah Tyrell of *KCMetropolis.org*.

Director Bernard Uzan returns to the Lyric Opera after his acclaim for his 2010 production of *Carmen*. Mr. Uzan has directed productions across the United States and Canada including companies such as: Seattle Opera, Montreal Opera, Arizona Opera, Opera Carolina, Michigan Opera Theatre, Cincinnati Opera, Opera New Orleans, Dallas Opera and Portland Opera.

The Mikado – All New Production

By Gilbert and Sullivan

Sung in English with English Subtitles

April 20, 2013 7:30 p.m.

April 24, 2013 7:30 p.m.

April 26, 2013 7:30 p.m.

April 28, 2013 2:00 p.m.

Widely regarded as the finest Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, *The Mikado* will captivate and delight you at every turn. Nanki-Poo, son of the Emperor of Japan, is desperately in love with Yum-Yum. But she is betrothed to Ko-Ko, the Lord High Executioner! Witty lyrics and brilliantly constructed plot twists make this tale of forbidden love, deception and beheadings a light-hearted favorite among opera-goers everywhere.

Kansas City comedic actor and tenor **Robert Gibby Brand** again graces the Lyric Opera stage to perform in a Gilbert and Sullivan work. He will sing the role of Nanki-Poo. Mr. Brand previously appeared in Lyric Opera productions of *The Pirates of Penzance* (2009) and *H.M.S. Pinafore* (2009), receiving much critical acclaim for each. His first appearance with the Company was in the 1985 production of *Sweeney Todd*.



Soprano **Sarah Jane McMahon** will make her Company debut singing the role of Yum-Yum. Hailed by *The New York Times* as “bright, active, and fastidiously musical” and by *Opera News* as having “a golden sound,” Ms. McMahon has performed at the New York City Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Arizona Opera, and recently sang a gala concert opposite Placido Domingo.

William Theisen returns to direct *The Mikado*, having garnered rave reviews for his 2012 production of *The Barber of Seville* during the Company’s inaugural season in the Kauffman Center. He has directed over 100 productions for theatre and opera companies throughout the United States and Canada, and was recognized by *The Washington Post* as “an expert in the works of Gilbert and Sullivan.” Mr. Theisen’s recent credits include *The Pirates of Penzance* for the Santa Fe Opera, Virginia Opera and Skylight Opera Theater, *The Mikado* with Opera Carolina, Piedmont Opera Theatre and Virginia Opera, and *H.M.S. Pinafore* at Skylight Opera Theatre and Virginia Opera.

Ticket Information

All performances will be held in the Muriel Kauffman Theatre at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. All performances will be accompanied by members of the Kansas City Symphony.

Single ticket prices ranges from \$25 to \$150 and go on sale to the general public Tuesday, August 7, 2012. Season ticket packages for the 2012-2013 season are still available. Subscribers receive a substantial discount - four operas for the price of three. Season ticket prices range from \$150 to \$450.

For ticket information, contact Lyric Opera Patron Services at (816) 471-7344, toll free at 1-877-OPERA KC (673-7252), or visit Lyric Opera Patron Services at the Company’s new Opera Center, 1725 Holmes Street in the Crossroads Arts District of downtown Kansas City.

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.

The Lyric Opera began performing in the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts in September, 2011 which was a critical and financial success for the Company. Lyric Opera productions were lauded by critics from *The Kansas City Star*, *The New Yorker*, *The Toronto Star*, and Paul Horsley of *The Independent* wrote, "With [*Turandot*] the Lyric Opera is entering a new epoch in its history, and future productions will doubtless be measured by the ambitions of this show." The subscriber base grew to more than 4,100, a 17 year high, and total ticket revenue increased by 73% from the previous season. Ninety percent of the available seats were sold and 75% of performances were sold out. The Company also grew its base of contributors, realizing an increase of the number of donors and establishing a new model to raise funds, which generated \$11,000 in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Company's nationally recognized education programs. The generosity and support of its patrons and donors allowed the Lyric Opera to end the fiscal year with a surplus.

New Leadership at the Lyric Opera

On July 1st, 2012, Deborah Sandler began her tenure as new Executive Director and CEO at the Lyric Opera. Previously, Ms. Sandler served as General Director of Opera Festival of New Jersey, in Princeton, NJ for ten years and then as General Director of Kentucky Opera. During her tenure in each of these companies, Ms. Sandler developed institutional resources and capacities resulting in the growth and acclaim of each company. Ms. Sandler has a commitment to deepening community connections through the creation of programs which involve and engage audiences of diverse ages. Originally from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Ms. Sandler received her Bachelors of Arts in Music from Temple University and a Master's degree in Musicology from New York University.

Ms. Sandler also has studied at the Mandel Center for Nonprofits at Case Western Reserve and at the Fundraising School at Indiana University.

Building for the Future

On July 5th, 2012, the Lyric Opera moved from its temporary home to the new Opera Center campus located at 1725 Holmes.



The Opera Center campus consists of two buildings: a Production Arts building and an Administrative building with set rental inventory storage. The Production Arts building includes a rehearsal space that matches the footprint of the stage of 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 did not exist until now 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 the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, a major new center for music, opera, theater, and dance designed by Moshe Safdie opened September 2011. The Kauffman Center presents vibrant performances and will advance 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, including a downloadable media kit, 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.



The Lyric Opera Guild

The Lyric Opera Guild is a social and support group for men and women of all ages who attend the Lyric Opera of Kansas City. The Guild supports the Company by presenting adult education programs including *At Ease with Opera* and *Opera Previews*.

- *At Ease with Opera* is an award-winning program featuring speakers who appear at local venues in four series of presentations a year, two in the spring and two in the fall. The programs sometimes revolve around a particular upcoming production, but more often deal with a general topic in the field of opera. For more information visit the events calendar at www.kcopera.org.
- *Opera Previews* are presented for each performance one hour before curtain. The previews are entertaining, informational presentations about the history and context of the opera, composer, etc. For more information visit the events calendar at www.kcopera.org.

The Guild also supports the company financially through proceeds generated from their trips, boutique and membership dues. For more information visit www.kcopera.org.

The Bohemians: Young Friends of the Lyric Opera

The Bohemians is the Lyric Opera organization for young professionals (ages 21-40). The Bohemians offer great opportunities to get involved in the community, meet other young adults and learn a little something about opera, too! Bohemians enjoy discounted tickets, monthly *Third Friday Happy Hour* gatherings at local hot spots and special invitations to exclusive events. In addition to attending the Saturday night performances, the Bohemians gather for dinner prior to the performance of each opera at the restaurant partners of the Lyric Opera where members receive discounted meals. To learn more, email bohemians@kcopera.org.

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, Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation, Hall Family Foundation, Lyric Opera of Kansas City Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, Missouri Arts Council and the Arts KC Fund.

Opera lovers can be fans of the Lyric Opera of Kansas City on Facebook or follow us @kcopera on Twitter.



2012-13 Season at a Glance:

Madame Butterfly

By Giacomo Puccini

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

September 15, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

September 19, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

September 21, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

September 23, 2012 at 2:00 p.m.

September 24, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

Director: Mark Streshinsky

Conductor: Ward Holmquist

Cio-Cio-San: Elizabeth Caballero

Lt. Pinkerton: Dinyar Vania

Suzuki: Elizabeth Tredent

Sharpless: Weston Hurt

Goro: Doug Jones

Prince Yamadori: Chris Carr

The Imperial Commissioner:

Michael Coleman

Kate Pinkerton: Angela Gribble

The Official Registrar: Dominic Johnson

Scenic Designer: Neil Patel

Costume Designer: David C. Woolard

Lighting Designer: Kendall Smith

Il Trovatore

By Giuseppe Verdi

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

November 2, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

November 7, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

November 9, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

November 11, 2012 at 2:00 p.m.

Director: Kathleen Smith Belcher

Conductor: John Keenan

Count di Luna: Roman Burdenko

Manrico: Rafael Dàvila

Leonora: Michele Capalbo

Azucena: Nancy Maultsby

Ruiz: Benjamin Cleveland

Inez: Tara Curtis

Scenic Designers: Jay Lesenger &

Michael Baumgarten

Costume Designer: John Conklin

Lighting Designer: Michael Baumgarten



***The Flying Dutchman* – New Production**
By Richard Wagner
Sung in German with English subtitles
March 2, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.
March 6, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.
March 8, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.
March 10, 2013 at 2:00 p.m.

Director: Bernard Uzan
Conductor: Ward Holmquist

Senta: Melissa Citro
Dutchman: Richard Paul Fink
Erik: John Pickle
Daland: Philip Cokorinos
Steersman: Casey Finnigan
Mary: Suzanne Hendrix

Scenic Designer: R. Keith Brumley
Costume Designer: Mary Traylor
Lighting Designer: Michael Baumgarten
Wig and Make-up Designer:
Joanne Middleton Weaver

***The Mikado*- New Production**
By Gilbert and Sullivan
Sung in English with English Subtitles
April 20, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.
April 24, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.
April 26, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.
April 28, 2013 at 2:00 p.m.

Director: William Theisen
Conductor: Mark Ferrell

Ko-Ko: Robert Gibby Brand
Yum-Yum: Sarah Jane McMahon
Pish-Tush: Chris Carr
Pitti-Sing: Elizabeth Tredent
Peep-Bo: Etta Fung

Scenic Designer: R. Keith Brumley
Costume Designer: Karin Kopischke

Please direct all media inquiries to Ellen McDonald, 816.444.0052.
For Tickets: kcopera.org or 816.471.7344

###