

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lyric Opera of Kansas City 2014-15 Season Continues with Rossini's *The Italian Girl in Algiers*

*Irene Roberts, Patrick Carfizzi, Taylor Stayton and Conductor Leonardo Vordoni
Making KC Debuts*

Nov. 8 – 16 at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

Kansas City, MO (Oct. 6, 2014) – Lyric Opera of Kansas City continues its 57th season with Gioachino Rossini's hilarious opera, *The Italian Girl in Algiers*, November 8-16, 2014 at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. The production will be sung in Italian with English and Italian titles.

The Italian Girl in Algiers is one of Rossini's most popular operas, written when he was only 21 years old, with a score marked by brilliant orchestration and witty melodies. Reminiscent of a story set inside a child's pop-up book, *The Italian Girl in Algiers* tells the bubbly and comedic story of Isabella as she lands on the Algerian coast to rescue her true love, Lindoro, only to find herself the focus of the powerful Mustafa's unwanted affections. This updated production set in the 1930s features Isabella as an aviatrix. **Irene Roberts**, in the role of Isabella will be making her Lyric Opera debut, as is **Patrick Carfizzi**, in the role of Mustafa. **Taylor Stayton**, also making his Lyric Opera debut, will perform the role of Lindoro. Finally, another Lyric Opera debut, **Leonardo Vordoni** will conduct.

"We wanted our 2014-15 season to highlight different styles of the repertoire for our audiences and this delightful gem absolutely fits the bill," stated Deborah Sandler, General Director and CEO of the Lyric Opera. "This splendid opera promises to be phenomenally pleasing to the eye and ear with a charming stage design and stellar cast that our audiences have come to expect from us."

All Star Cast and Production Team

Mezzo-soprano **Irene Roberts**, in her Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut in the role of Isabella, is internationally renowned for her “plush, opulent voice” (*San Jose Mercury News*). Her breakthrough performance in her debut in the Metropolitan Opera’s Live in HD series while performing in *Parsifal* won accolades. Critics have praised her voice and technique, saying, “here is the vocally plush and lovely mezzo-soprano Irene Roberts.” (*Anthony Tommasini, New York Times*.)

Playing the role of Mustafa is bass **Patrick Carfizzi**, also making his Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut. In addition to charming critics with his ‘smooth, rich baritone’ (*Albuquerque Journal*), his Mustafa in Houston Grand Opera won raves. “As the opera’s gullible antagonist, Patrick Carfizzi’s Mustafa steals the show. His rich bass instrument is powerfully employed in the production, giving the audience countless memorable and remarkable moments in the show.” (*Broadway World*).

Also making his Lyric Opera debut, tenor **Taylor Stayton** will perform the role of Lindoro. One of the more sought-after tenors of his generation, Taylor Stayton has worked with Metropolitan Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin and Opéra de Lille. Opera News noted his “laser-bright timbre” and “exceptional fluidity.”

Bass **Ben Wager** will be returning to the Lyric Opera, after his charming debut as Colline in *La bohème* last season to perform the role of Taddeo. He will be returning to the Lyric Opera later this season in *Tosca*.

Leonardo Vordoni, also making his Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut, will conduct. Director **Michael Cavanaugh** will be returning to Lyric Opera of Kansas City, after his imaginative and fresh approach in the recent production of *Nixon in China* in 2012.

Production originally designed for and created by the Santa Fe Opera. Scenery designed by **Robert Innes Hopkins**. Costumes designed by **David C. Woolard**.

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 **Elliot Harrison Brown** will perform Halyand **Samantha Gossard** will perform Zulma. University of Kansas apprentice **Clark Weyrauch** will perform in the chorus.

Principals Cast

Isabella: Irene Roberts *
Lindoro: Taylor Stayton*
Mustafa: Patrick Carfizzi*
Taddeo: Ben Wager
Elvira: Heather Phillips@

Zulma: Samantha Gossard +
Haly: Elliot Harrison Brown~

Artistic Staff

Conductor: Leonardo Vordoni *
Director: Michael Cavanagh
Set Designer: Robert Innes Hopkins
Costume Designer: David C. Woolard **
Lighting Designer: Nate Wheatley*
Wig and Make-Up Designer: Joanne Middleton Weaver
Chorus Master: Mark Ferrell
Stage Manager: Jennifer Rimmer

*Lyric Opera Debut

~UMKC Apprentice

@ Former Lyric Opera Apprentice

** Production originally designed for and created by The Santa Fe Opera.

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. Limited student rush tickets are available for \$15, cash only, one hour before the performances, with a valid student ID.

Pre-Opera Talks

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. Debra Karr 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.

The Italian Girl in Algiers “At Ease with Opera” Presentations:

First Friday, Presented by Lyric Opera of Kansas City, November 7 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Beth Ingram Administration Building (1725 Holmes, KCMO) Join Lyric Opera of Kansas City for FREE food, drinks and performances by Lyric Opera apprentices! Food generously sponsored by Yummy’s Choice; beer sponsored by Boulevard Brewery.

Monday, October 20 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation (4801 Rockhill Rd. KCMO 64111) Opera Updating: the Good, the Bad and the just plain Ugly (which can also be Good!) Why update an opera? When does changing the period give a refreshing new perspective on a beloved work? Join stage director **Linda Ade Brand** and husband singer/actor **Robert Gibby Brand** as they discuss.

Monday, October 27 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation (4801 Rockhill Rd. KCMO 64111) Stereotyping Middle Eastern Cultural Elements in Western Music, Literature and Art.

Experts from the Nelson-Atkins Museum, UMKC and Lyric Opera Guild present a panel discussion on how Middle Eastern elements are incorporated into Western art forms. Lyric Opera Guild member **Richard Byrum** will moderate.

Monday, November 3 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation (4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO) What's Love Got to Do With It? **Dr. Debra Karr** will give a detailed preview of *The Italian Girl in Algiers*.

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 some performances. 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 Ticketing & Patron Services at 816-471-7344.

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.

Visit www.kcopera.org for more information about Lyric Opera of Kansas City 2014-2015 season and www.kauffmancenter.org for a downloadable media kit about the Kauffman Center.

2014-2015 Season at a Glance:

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

Set Designer: Robert Innes Hopkins

Isabella: Irene Roberts

Mustafa: Patrick Carfizzi

Lindoro: Taylor Stayton

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

Lt. Audebert: Liam Bonner

Anna Sorenson: Erin Wall

Lt. Horstmayer: Craig Irvin

Nikolaus Sprink: Sean Panikkar

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

Flora 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.

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

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 or 816.213.4355.

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