

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lyric Opera of Kansas City Continues 2019-2020 Season with *La bohème*

***Soprano Sylvia D'Eramo, Baritones Timothy Renner and Hadleigh Adams,
and Bass Baritone Jake Gardner make Lyric Opera debuts
Soprano and Lawrence, Kan., native Raquel González, Tenor Georgy Vasiliev,
Bass Christian Zarembo, Stage Director Kathleen Smith Belcher and
Conductor David Charles Abell return to Lyric Opera***

Kansas City, MO (Oct. 11, 2019) – Lyric Opera of Kansas City continues its 2019-2020 season with Giacomo Puccini's timeless tale of love and loss, *La bohème*. An audience favorite for more than a century, this tale of four young Parisians who dedicate their lives to art and love blends bohemian rhapsodies with riveting romance in one of opera's quintessential tearjerkers.

Performances Nov. 9, 13, 15 and 17 at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, sung in Italian with English subtitles, transport the imagination into the cozy cafes, drafty dwellings and stately street scenes of 19th-century Paris.

"We are so pleased to produce Puccini's perennial classic, *La bohème*," says **General Director and CEO Deb Sandler**. "In what is perhaps the most beloved opera of all time, Puccini's iconic score and soaring melodies sweep us into the beauty and tragedy of a cold Parisian winter. We've assembled a youthful and talented cast whose performances will convey the soaring convictions and passions of the idealistic bohemians. The combined effect makes *La bohème* easy to love—and impossible to forget. Bring a special person with you to be carried away."

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The production marks the Lyric Opera debuts of soprano **Sylvia D'Eramo** as Musetta, baritone **Timothy Renner** as Marcello and baritone **Hadleigh Adams** as Schaunard.

Returning to lead the cast are soprano and Lawrence, Kansas native **Raquel González** as Mimì (Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*, 2017) and tenor **Georgy Vasiliev** as Rodolfo (Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, 2018). Also returning are **Christian Zarembo** as Colline (Nourabad in *The Pearl Fishers*, 2019), Metropolitan Opera directing staff member **Kathleen Smith Belcher** as Stage Director (*Il trovatore*, 2012) and **David Charles Abell** as Conductor (*West Side Story*, 2018). Find high-res production and artist photos [here](#).

Three things about *La bohème*:

1. When it first was performed in 1896, negative critical response appeared to contrast with the rapturous enthusiasm of the opera's first audiences. One critic of the time settled the case this way: "Between the two litigants, I say that the public is right."
2. During the early 1830s, Henri Murger created a series of magazine sketches about the bohemian lifestyle, which he eventually adapted into a novel, *Scenes de la Vie de Bohème* (1848). Puccini used Murger's stories as the inspiration for his *La bohème*. Murger, in fact, lived the bohemian life in his youth, and many of the historical details in his work were based on his experiences.
3. *RENT*, a modern-day rock musical, was inspired by *La bohème*. The works share similarities in music, plot, lyrics and even some character names. For example, *La bohème* centers around a love story between Rodolfo and Mimì while *RENT* focuses on the love story of Roger and Mimi. *RENT* had its official Off-Broadway opening Jan. 25, 1996, one week shy of the 100th anniversary of the first performance of *La bohème*.

***La bohème* (1896)**

By Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

Four performances at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

- Sets built in Kansas City by Lyric Opera
- Costumes executed by Seattle Opera Costume Shop
- *La bohème* was last performed at Lyric Opera of Kansas City in 2014

Performances of *La bohème*

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- Saturday, Nov. 9 at 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Nov. 13 at 7:30 p.m.
- Friday, Nov. 15 at 7:30 p.m.
- Sunday, Nov. 17 at 2 p.m.

Overview of *La bohème*

Puccini's incandescent melodies, lush score, and a plot centered around young love and starving artists in Paris have proved to be an intoxicating combination for the romantic in all of us. We love the bright bohemian rhapsodies set against the tragic inevitability of Mimi's illness, and like Rodolfo and Mimi, we wait for spring and the rekindling of romance. Two new Kansas City favorites lead Lyric Opera's beguiling traditional production: Raquel González as Mimi and Georgy Vasiliev as Rodolfo.

Cast and Artistic Team: *La bohème* (bios available at www.kcopera.org)

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Mimi | Raquel González |
| Rodolfo | Georgy Vasiliev |
| Musetta | Sylvia D'Eramo* |
| Marcello | Timothy Renner* |
| Colline | Christian Zarembo |
| Schaunard | Hadleigh Adams* |
| Benoit/Alcindoro | Jake Gardner* |
| Composer | Giacomo Puccini |
| Librettists | Luigi Illica & Giuseppe Giacosa |
| Conductor | David Charles Abell |
| Director | Kathleen Smith Belcher |
| Set Designer | R. Keith Brumley |
| Costume Designer | Martin Pakledinaz |
| Lighting Designer | Kendall Smith |
| Wig and Makeup Designer | David Zimmerman |
| Chorus Master | Piotr Wisniewski |

* Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut

La bohème is sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. C. Humbert Tinsman, Jr. This project is supported in part by the KCMO Neighborhood Tourist Development Fund.

Tickets start at just \$36 (including fees) for Wednesday and Friday performances. To purchase tickets, call Ticketing & Patron Services, (816) 471-7344. Patrons can select their own seats and print tickets at home by visiting www.kcopera.org. Limited student rush tickets are available for \$15, starting 90 minutes before the performances, with valid student ID.

RELATED EVENTS

Orpheus KC presents *Paint, Pinot and Puccini*

Friday, Oct. 18, 7:00 p.m., Art Experience, 1809 McGee St., KCMO 64112

Orpheus KC invites members and prospective members to enjoy libations and paint a Parisian

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scene step-by-step, led by a local artist. Event tickets are \$25. To join Orpheus KC and purchase tickets, visit [the event page at kcopera.org](http://theeventpageatkcopera.org).

***La bohème* At Ease with Opera events, presented by Lyric Opera Guild**
Admission to At Ease events is free and open to everyone.

Monday, Oct. 21, 7 p.m., at Kauffman Foundation, 4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO, 64110
Bohemians in Opera and ...

Who were the Bohemians? Why were they romanticized by 19th-century artists? Why do we find them fascinating today? Don Dagenais, a Lyric Opera preview speaker, will explore the Bohemians in art and culture. Learn about hidden gems such as a zarzuela by Vives, a novel by George Sand, and paintings by Picasso and Renoir.

Monday, Oct. 28, 7 p.m., at Kauffman Foundation, 4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO, 64110
The Unknown Puccini

Although *La bohème* was Puccini's first big hit, it was not his first opera. Opera mavens Bob Wise and Don Dagenais explore Puccini's earlier works, which never have achieved the great popularity of *La bohème* or *Tosca*, but contain startlingly beautiful music and highly dramatic scenes. See how Puccini's skill matured and how he developed a liking for certain kinds of melodramatic operatic plots.

Monday, Nov. 4, 7 p.m., at Kauffman Foundation, 4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO, 64110
The Folly of Youth

Join William Everett of the UMKC Conservatory to explore Murger's *The Bohemians of the Latin Quarter* and its vivid descriptions of carefree young artists. Everett will talk about *La bohème*'s principal romances between Rodolfo and Mimì, and Marcello and Musetta. He also looks at how *La bohème* has influenced popular culture, including 1930s Hollywood cinema and the Broadway musical *RENT*.

Bohemian Rhapsodies at Kansas City Public Library

Wednesday, Oct. 23, 6:30 p.m., at Plaza Library, 4801 Main St., KCMO, 64112

Puccini's *La bohème* remains one of the world's most popular operas. Henri Murger's novel *Scènes de la vie de bohème* inspired other operas, a zarzuela, and the Broadway musical *RENT*. Explore the music and Murger's immortal Bohemians, with David Charles Abell (conductor of *La bohème*) and Raquel González ("Mimi"). Free and open to everyone, but RSVP is required [here](#).

Bohème at the Barrel

Friday, Nov. 8, 4:00 p.m., City Barrel, 1740 Holmes St., KCMO 64112

Open to all over 21, this Bohemian happy hour takes place at City Barrel, just across the street from the Lyric Opera offices. Enjoy *La bohème*-themed cocktails, Puccini's luxurious score, and maybe some trivia too. Admission is free; drink specials will be available.

Friday Fanfare

Friday, Nov. 15

Friday Fanfare is a special "date-night" ticket package for the November 15 performance of *La bohème*. Lyric Opera has created a special ticket package for the 19-20 season that includes two tickets, dinner for two, and parking in the Kauffman Center garage for our Friday performances.

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Customers can choose Classic for \$159 or Deluxe for \$259. Packages are available for *La bohème* now; capacity is limited. Full details are found [here](#).

Reverse Happy Hour with Orpheus KC

Friday, Nov. 15, after the Friday performance of *La bohème*, at Tannin Wine Bar, 1526 Walnut St., KCMO 64108

All are welcome to enjoy this late-night happy hour with food and drink specials, and meet members of Orpheus KC (and perhaps some of the cast of *La bohème*).

Sunday Brunch with Orpheus KC

Sunday, Nov. 17, before the matinee performance of *La bohème*, at Affäre, 1911 Main St., KCMO 64108

All are welcome to enjoy a prix fixe brunch and the company of Orpheus KC members, before the final performance of *La bohème*. Tickets are \$20 per person, available starting Oct. 15 at kcopera.org/.

Remaining 2019-2020 Season at a Glance

NEW-TO-KANSAS CITY PRODUCTION

Lucia di Lammermoor

Gaetano Donizetti

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

Saturday, March 7, 2020 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 11, 2020 7:30 p.m.

Friday, March 13, 2020 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 15, 20120 2:00 p.m.

Conductor: Carlo Montanaro *

Director: Shawna Lucey *

Lucia: Sarah Coburn

Edgardo: Evan LeRoy Johnson *

Enrico: Troy Cook

Raimondo: Adam Lau

Arturo: Joseph Leppok +

Alisa: Kelly Birch @

KANSAS CITY PREMIERE

The Shining

Music by Paul Moravec

Libretto by Mark Campbell

Based on the novel by Stephen King

Sung in English with English subtitles

Saturday, April 25, 2020 7:30 p.m.

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Wednesday, April 29, 2020 7:30 p.m.

Friday, May 1, 2020 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 3, 2020 2:00 p.m.

Conductor: Gerard Schwarz *

Director: Eric Simonson

Jack Torrance: Edward Parks

Wendy Torrance: Kelly Kaduce

Dick Halloran: Aubrey Allicock *

Mark Torrance: Malcolm MacKenzie *

Lloyd the Bartender: Roger Honeywell *

* Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut

+ Lyric Opera of Kansas City Resident Artist

@ Former Lyric Opera of Kansas City Resident Artist

About Lyric Opera of Kansas City

Founded in 1958 and now one of the nation's premiere regional opera companies, Lyric Opera of Kansas City brings high-quality live operatic performances to the people of the Kansas City and a five-state region. Repertoire choices encompass original-language performances of standard repertory, as well as contemporary and American operas. The company's productions enrich the community it serves while reflecting the highest artistic standards of the profession. Lyric Opera offers innovative, award-winning programs to further music and arts education in schools and in the community, and serves more than 18,000 students and educators each year.

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

Lyric Opera of Kansas City is a member of OPERA America. 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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Direct media inquiries to Ellen McDonald, (816) 213-4355

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