

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

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Lyric Opera of Kansas City Announces 2020-2021 Season

Heartbreaking Blues of *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*
and
an ALL NEW co-production of
The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs
Exquisite Tragedy of *La traviata* and
Fiery Love of **Carmen** Round Out a Spectacular Season

Kansas City, MO (February 7, 2020) – Lyric Opera of Kansas City General Director and CEO Deborah Sandler today announced the company's 2020-2021 season. It features four mainstage productions, including **The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess** and **The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs**, both of which are being performed on a Lyric Opera of Kansas City stage for the first time. Two all-time favorites known for incomparable melodies — Verdi's beloved *La traviata* and Bizet's passionate **Carmen** — round out the extraordinarily diverse season. The Kansas City Symphony Orchestra will accompany all performances at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. Find biographies of the casts and creative teams at Lyric Opera of Kansas City and find high-resolution photos [here](#).

"It's an exciting season that reveals an amazing breadth and depth of musical styles and subject matter, and it will spotlight superb casts, blending well-known voices with exciting new talent," says Sandler. "We are thrilled to share with you the monumental **Porgy and Bess** and an opera based on the enigmatic Steve Jobs, which explores his drive, as well as some of the key relationships in his all-too-short life. We add to that two of the most beloved operas of all time, **Carmen** and *La traviata*."

The 2020-2021 season is sponsored by the Richard J. Stern Foundation for the Arts and the Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation.

The 2020-2021 Operas

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Photo Credit: Karli Cadel for The Glimmerglass Festival.

La traviata (1853)

Music by Giuseppe Verdi

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave

Based on *La Dame aux Camélias* by Alexandre Dumas

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

Last performed at Lyric Opera of Kansas City in 2014

Four performances

- Saturday, Sept. 26, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Sept. 30, 7:30 p.m.
- Friday, Oct. 2, 7:30 p.m.
- Sunday, Oct. 4, 2 p.m.

The Tragedy of La traviata

Violetta, a famous young Parisian courtesan, throws a party during which she meets a new admirer, Alfredo. Immediately fascinated by her beauty and intelligence, Alfredo publicly toasts Violetta's honor — an extraordinary accolade for someone known as *la traviata*, the fallen woman. Eventually, Violetta realizes that Alfredo offers the true love of which she has dreamed and abandons her courtesan lifestyle. But Alfredo's father, Germont, demands that she leave his son because her tarnished reputation will prevent Alfredo's sister from marrying into a high-status family. Grieved, Violetta agrees to leave Alfredo. But knowing that she is losing a battle with tuberculosis, she extracts Germont's promise that, after she dies, he will tell his son the truth about why she left.

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Unrequited love drives Alfredo to jealous anger, but Violetta keeps her promise to his father, publicly pretending to love another. As she lies penniless and dying in a modest apartment, she learns that Germont has confessed to his son about her sacrifice and that they will visit her soon. But they arrive too late. Alfredo once more confesses his love for Violetta, who dies comforted by forgiveness from the man she loves. Music from the rousing to the plaintive tells the story, including “Libiamo ne’lieti calici (Brindisi),” “Sempre libera (Always Free)” and “Parigi, o cara (Away from Paris, my love).”

Cast and Artistic Team

Violetta Valery: Vanessa Vasquez *

Alfredo Germont: Matthew White *

Giorgio Germont: Weston Hurt

Conductor: Timothy Myers*

Director: Francesca Zambello

Associate Director: Joshua Horowitz

La traviata is partially underwritten by Mr. and Mrs. C. Humbert Tinsman, Jr.



Photo Credit: Karli Cadel for The Glimmerglass Festival

The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess (1935)

Music by George Gershwin

Libretto by DuBose and Dorothy Heyward, Ira Gershwin

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Inspired by Porgy by DuBose Heyward

Four performances

- Saturday, Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Nov. 11, 7:30 p.m.
- Friday, Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m.
- Sunday, Nov. 15, 2 p.m.

The Struggle of Porgy and Bess

Fleeing for her life from Crown, her abusive lover, Bess is turned away by everyone except Porgy, the crippled beggar. She finds love with him and acceptance from others who live inside the rusty, corrugated tin walls of Catfish Row. Porgy and Bess struggle to stay together as they ward off poverty and addiction in the face of setbacks, including a hurricane that brings death and loss. When Crown returns to terrorize and rape Bess, Porgy kills him and is arrested. With Porgy gone, a drug dealer named Sportin' Life tells desperate Bess that the two of them should go to New York where her good looks could make them a fortune. She resists, but when he tempts her with cocaine, Bess gives in. Porgy returns triumphant from police custody — but Bess is not there. Porgy's friends reluctantly tell him that she has gone to New York with Sportin' Life. Determined to find her, Porgy sets off to the opera's final number, "Oh Lawd, I'm On My Way." Audiences will recognize other well-known songs throughout the performance, including "Summertime," "My Man's Gone Now," "I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'," "It Ain't Necessarily So," and "Bess, You Is My Woman Now."

Cast and Artistic Team

Porgy: Eric Greene *

Bess: Talise Trevigne

*

Sportin' Life: Jermaine Smith *

Crown: Donovan Singletary *

Conductor: David Charles Abell

Director: Francesca Zambello

Associate Director: Garnett Bruce

Choreographer: Eric Sean Fogel

The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess is partially underwritten by the Hall Family Foundation.

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Photo Credit: Jacob Lucas for Seattle Opera

The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs (2017)

Music by Mason Bates

Libretto by Mark Campbell

A new production for Lyric Opera of Kansas City, co-produced with Atlanta Opera and Austin Opera

Four performances at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

- Saturday, Feb. 27, 2021, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, March 3, 2021, 7:30 p.m.
- Friday, March 5, 2021, 7:30 p.m.
- Sunday, March 7, 2021, 2:00 p.m.

The Fascinating Facets of Steve Jobs

Meet the young hippie who shared friendship and work with Woz (Steve Wozniak). See the hopeful beginning and coldhearted ending of his marriage to first wife Chrisann. Trace his relationship with second wife Laurene, who stays the course. Watch as he transforms from idealist to hard-edged businessman who exploits his friends' ideas and sacrifices principles to the deity of capitalism. Understand the influence of his spiritual advisor. Hear the story of Steve Jobs in a new way — a way that sings with music such as “The Stage of a Convention Center,” “The Rise and Fall of Steve Jobs,” “You’ve Become One of the People We Hated” and “And Now He Is Gone.”

Cast and Artistic Team

Steve Jobs: John Moore

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Laurene Powell Jobs: Sarah Larsen
Kōbun: Wei Wu *
Steve Wozniak: Bille Bruley *
Chrisann Brennan: Madison Leonard *
Conductor: Michael Christie
Director: Tomer Zvulun



Photo Credit: Cory Weaver for Lyric Opera of
Kansas City, 2015

Carmen (1875)

Music by Georges Bizet
Libretto by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy
Based on Carmen, a novella by Prosper Merimee
Production owned by Lyric Opera of Kansas City
Sung in French with English subtitles
Last performed by Lyric Opera of Kansas City in 2016

Four performances at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

- Saturday, April 24, 2021, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, April 28, 2021, 7:30 p.m.
- Friday, April 30, 2021, 7:30 p.m.
- Sunday, May 2, 2021, 2 p.m.

The Passion that Consumes Carmen's Lovers ... and Carmen

The provocative gypsy who charms all men (and upsets all women) sings and dances to seduce the soldier Don Jose after he arrests her for attacking a woman with a knife. Rather than imprison her, Jose falls head over heels for Carmen, freeing her and leaving his post to be with her and

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her smuggler friends. When Jose leaves the den of thieves to see his dying mother, Carmen takes up with Escamillo the bullfighter. In the final act, Escamillo enters the bullfighting arena with Carmen by his side, and Jose appears, begging Carmen to return to him, but she rejects him and he stabs her to death. Music that powerfully conveys the burning emotions of the story includes the famous Habanera, or “L’amour est un oiseau rebelle (Love is a Rebellious Bird),” and “Votre toast (Toreador Song).”

Cast and Artistic Team

Carmen: Ginger Costa-Jackson *

Don Jose: Eric Fennell *

Escamillo: Christian Pursell *

Micaela: Celine Byrne

*

Conductor: Emmanuel Plasson*

Director : Kathleen Belcher

* Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut

Tickets and Group Discounts

Season subscribers have access to the best seats at the best prices, with savings of up to 43 percent compared with the cost of single tickets. They also have the opportunity either to keep their original seats or secure new seats before ticket sales open to the general public.

Subscribers to the 2020-2021 season will receive subscription renewal information soon and will have until May 11 to renew or improve their current subscriptions and seat locations. Reservations for new subscriptions will go on sale to the general public at the same time, but renewing subscribers receive priority seating. Season packages range from \$84 to \$537. Single tickets will go on sale to the general public Monday, July 13, which is preceded by Subscriber Courtesy Week, July 6-12, when subscribers can purchase additional single tickets to any show with their 25 percent discount. For ticket information, visit www.kcopera.org or contact Lyric Opera Ticketing and Patron Services, (816) 471-7344.

Lyric Opera of Kansas City is happy to accommodate groups of all sizes, with added perks like FREE seats for event organizers, pre-opera entertainment and dining discounts. Plus, orders of 10 or more seats receive up to a 25 percent discount. Groups can reserve tickets beginning July 13. For more information about group ticket services and discounts, contact Ashley Benes, abenes@kcopera.org or (816) 802-6078.

Community Events

Lyric Opera of Kansas City’s Education and Outreach programs open the world of opera to people of all ages.

School-Age Programs

Opera lovers of tomorrow can participate in exciting in-school programming such as Lyric Preludes and can visit the Kauffman Center for Student Dress Rehearsals.

Pre-Opera Talks

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Audience members are invited and encouraged to attend a FREE opera preview, presented by the Lyric Opera Guild, in the Kauffman Center's Muriel Kauffman Theatre one hour before curtain.

At Ease with Opera

The Kansas City Lyric Opera Guild continues its lecture and preview series to explore each mainstage opera of the season. FREE one-hour At East With Opera presentations take place at the Kauffman Foundation, 4801 Rockhill Road, Kansas City, MO, 64110:

- **La traviata** – September 7, 2020; September 14, 2020; September 21, 2020.
- **Porgy and Bess** – October 19, 2020; October 26, 2020; November 2, 2020
- **The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs** – February 8, 2021; February 15, 2021, February 22, 2021
- **Carmen** – April 5, 2021, April 12, 2021, April 19, 2021

Orpheus KC (formerly Young Friends of The Lyric)

Young Friends of The Lyric provides an exciting outlet for young arts supporters ages 21 or older to get involved in the Kansas City community, meet other young professionals and support Lyric Opera of Kansas City. Membership benefits include complimentary beverages at Lyric Opera performances, networking opportunities, restaurant discounts, invitations to special events and more. The \$40 membership covers benefits for two people for a full 12 months. To join, visit kcopera.org/orpheus-kc or contact Ticketing and Patron Services, 816-471-7344.

Next Event: Orpheus KC presents Orpheus Affair: Stardust on May 16, 2020 at 7pm
Michael and Ginger Frost Production Arts Building

Travel through a universe where opera and art collide in an experience like no other in Kansas City. Guests will fly away to a cosmic cloud and sail amongst the stars as they experience Lyric Opera's 2020-2021 Season through a series of interactive art installations and pop-up opera performances, paired with drinks, delicious dishes, and an exciting raffle. Orpheus Affair: Stardust promises to be an out-of-this-world night – tickets start at \$50. Visit [//kcopera.org/stardust](http://kcopera.org/stardust) for more information.

Kansas City Lyric Opera Guild

The Lyric Opera Guild is a social and networking group of men and women who attend the Lyric Opera of Kansas City and enjoy the camaraderie of others who share their interest in opera. For those who love opera, are new to opera or want to know more about opera, the Guild is the perfect place. Throughout the year, Guild members participate in social and educational activities designed to expand friendships and opera knowledge. [Click here](#) for a complete description of Guild membership levels and benefits. Questions? Call Ticketing and Patron Services, (816) 471-7344.

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

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offers innovative programs to further music and arts education in schools and in the community. Opera lovers can be fans of Lyric Opera of Kansas City on Facebook or follow the company on Twitter or Instagram at @kcopera.

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