



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lyric Opera of Kansas City *Don Giovanni* Cast Change Announcement:

American baritone Christopher Schaldenbrand to make Lyric Opera debut in title role, replacing ailing Keith Phares

KANSAS CITY, MO. (April 13, 2010) – Lyric Opera of Kansas City Artistic Director **Ward Holmquist**, announced today that baritone **Keith Phares** has withdrawn from his engagement in the title role of *Don Giovanni* for health reasons.

“Mr. Phares has delighted Lyric Opera audiences in three different productions since 2003, including *The Merry Widow* and *The End of the Affair*” noted Mr. Holmquist. “I am deeply sorry that a persistent illness has compelled him to withdraw from our production.”

American baritone **Christopher Schaldenbrand** will join the production immediately, and will sing all four performances of the Mozart opera. *Don Giovanni* is one of his signature roles, which he has portrayed on many American stages, including the Boston Lyric Opera and the New York City Opera. Mr. Schaldenbrand is currently on the roster of the Metropolitan Opera. His international career has taken him to many companies, including the Minnesota Opera, Opéra National de Paris, Seattle Opera, Opera Theater of Saint Louis and the Compañía de Ópera de Bellas Artes at the Festival del Centro Histórico de México.

Of his performance as *Don Giovanni* in Mexico, the British publication *Opera* noted, “The American baritone Christopher Schaldenbrand was a charming, handsome *Don Giovanni*, playing the part more as a suave and easy-going seducer than a cruel predator.



Don Giovanni: The Story

With more than 2,000 names in his book of female conquests, Don Giovanni finds himself in a sticky situation and kills the father of his latest female interest. Will the main character, based on the legendary Don Juan, be able to get away with his devil-may-care lifestyle or will he finally get what he deserves?

Music by W. A. Mozart

Performed in Italian with English subtitles projected above the stage

Lyric Theatre, 11th and Central, Downtown Kansas City

4 performances:

Saturday, April 24 at 8 p.m.

Wednesday, April 28 at 7:30 p.m.

Friday, April 30 at 8 p.m.

Sunday, May 2 at 2 p.m.

Audiences are invited and encouraged to attend a free opera preview in the theatre one hour before curtain, presented by the Lyric Opera Guild.

Ticket availability varies by performance. Limited student rush tickets are \$10 one hour before curtain, with valid ID. To purchase tickets, visit www.kcopera.org, or call the ticket office at (816) 471-7344 or 1-800-OPERA KC (673-7252).

Don Giovanni “At Ease With Opera” Presentation

Don Giovanni: Super Man or Super Villain?

On Monday, April 19, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. Eugene Butler will lecture on *Don Giovanni*.

The presentation is located in the Plaza Branch of the Kansas City Public Library at 4801 Main St., Kansas City, MO.

At Ease with Opera is presented free of charge by the Lyric Opera Guild.

The Lyric Opera of Kansas City is a member of OPERA America, and this production is made possible with funding from the Lathrop and Gage, LLP, Bank of America, The Kansas City Star, Midwest Airlines, Missouri Arts Council and the Arts KC Fund.



Cast List

Don Giovanni: Christopher Schaldenbrand*

Leporello: Andrew Gangestad

Donna Anna: Brenda Harris*

Don Ottavio: Chad Johnson

Donna Elvira: Christine Abraham

Masetto: Robert McNichols, Jr.~

Zerlina: Sara Burke+

Commendatore: Andrew Harris

*Lyric Opera Debut

~University of Kansas Apprentice

+University of Missouri-Kansas City, Conservatory of Music Apprentice

Artistic Staff

Conductor: Ward Holmquist

Director: Ellen Douglas Schlaefer

Scenic Designer: R. Keith Brumley

Lighting Designer: Julie Duro

Chorusmaster/Accompanist Coach: Mark Ferrell

Wig and Makeup Designer: Jan Delovage

Production Stage Manager: Erin Thompson

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