



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ellen McDonald
816.444.0052
publicity@kcopera.org

For Tickets: kcopera.org or 816.471.7344

Lyric Opera of Kansas City Opens 2010-2011 Season with New Production of *Carmen*

Kansas City, MO (August 12, 2010)—The Lyric Opera of Kansas City opens its 53rd season with *Carmen*. This will be the Company's final season in the Lyric Theatre. Beginning in the fall of 2011, the Lyric Opera will perform at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. The new production of *Carmen* features a renowned cast of singers and The Kansas City Symphony conducted by Lyric Opera Artistic Director Ward Holmquist as well as magnificent original sets designed by Director of Design and Technical Production R. Keith Brumley.

Carmen's sensuous melodies and intriguing story about a beautiful gypsy who refuses to be tied down by the social conventions of the day will intoxicate audiences with some of the opera world's most memorable music. The cast, more than 75 members strong, will be the largest of the season and is filled with debut and returning Lyric Opera audience favorites.

"*Carmen* was the fitting choice to open the Lyric Opera season, the Company's 41st season performing in the Lyric Theatre," noted Holmquist. "There was little debate over which opera should open our final season in the Lyric Theatre. We wanted to be able to perform a beloved opera – for audiences and artists alike – and bring everything we have to the table. This production – starring the incomparable **Sandra Piques Eddy**, directed by highly acclaimed **Bernard Uzan**, with original sets built especially for this production and Bizet's masterful music should – not be missed."

A set as stunning as Bizet's beautiful music will don the Lyric Theatre stage. **Director of Design and Technical Production R. Keith Brumley**, who has been designing sets for the Company since 1984, will create an entirely new production consistent with Uzan's vision. "The challenge I have overcome for this *Carmen* set was to make it move seamlessly, to leave enough space on stage for the multitude of performers, and to make the set acoustically kind for the singers, all the while making it feel like the rough side of Seville, Spain in the 1830s. After working on numerous *Carmen* sets over the years, I can truly say that this design is the best I have ever completed." Brumley said.

Artists

Mezzo-soprano Sandra Piques Eddy makes her Lyric Opera debut in the title role. Eddy recently sang the role of Carmen in *La tragedie de Carmen* (an opera comprised of all of *Carmen*'s solo arias without any ensemble pieces) at the Chicago Opera Theater and received rave reviews. The *Chicago Tribune* noted, "...Sandra Piques Eddy in this production deserves to be placed alongside legends. Ms. Eddy gave a star-making performance with her rich, velvety mezzo and superb acting. She did not perform Carmen, she became Carmen, and it seemed that the entire audience was excited about her performance after the opera."

Tenor Dinyar Vania makes his Lyric Opera debut as Don José. Mr. Vania has recently been seen in *La bohème* and *Lysistrata* at New York City Opera, *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Syracuse Opera, *Tosca* at Dallas Opera, and *Madama Butterfly* at Cedar Rapids Opera Theater

Soprano Alyson Cambridge returns to the Lyric Opera as Micaëla. Cambridge recently sang Clara in *Porgy and Bess* at the Washington National Opera. *The Washington Post* describes Cambridge as "radiant, vocally assured, dramatically subtle and compelling and artistically imaginative." **Baritone Marcelo Guzzo** makes his Lyric Opera debut as Escamillo. Mr. Guzzo has recently been seen in *La bohème* at Princeton Festival, *La nozze di Figaro* at Mannes Opera and *L'Elisir d'Amore* at State Repertory Opera of New Jersey.

Director Benard Uzan returns to the Lyric Opera after his highly acclaimed production of *Tosca* with the Company during the 2009-2010 season. As a native of France, Mr. Uzan will bring his expertise of the French language – the original language the opera was written in – to the production.

Cast List

Carmen: Sandra Piques Eddy*

Don José: Dinyar Vania*

Micaëla: Alyson Cambridge

Escamillo: Marcello Guzza*

Zuniga: David Michael

Moralès: Stephen Fish ~ ^

Frasquita: Amy Cahill + ^

Mercédès: Christina Hager*

Dancaïro: Adam Zúñiga + ^

Remendado: Doug Jones

~UMKC Apprentice

+KU Apprentice

*Lyric Opera Debut

Artistic Staff

Conductor: Ward Holmquist

Director: Bernard Uzan

Scenic Designer: R. Keith Brumley

Lighting Designer: Donald Thomas

Chorusmaster/Accompanist: Mark Ferrell

Children's Chorusmaster: Paula Winans

Wig and Makeup Designer: Jan Delovage

Stage Manager: Erin Thompson

About *Carmen*

Carmen was composed by Georges Bizet with the libretto by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy. *Carmen* is about a gypsy who can have any man she wants. When Don José seems disinterested, she is drawn to the challenge. Carmen strings him along while Don José abandons his duty and his pride in pursuit of her love. A toreador, Escamillo, gets between the two, and Don José slips into a deep, murderous despair.

Carmen will be sung in French with English subtitles projected above the stage at the Lyric Theatre, 11th and Central, Downtown Kansas City.

Due to the great popularity of *Carmen* a fifth performance has been added to the production schedule. Performance dates are as follows:

Saturday, September 25 at 8 p.m.

Wednesday, September 29 at 7:30 p.m.

Friday, October 1 at 8 p.m.

Sunday, October 3 at 2 p.m.

Monday, October 4 at 7:30 p.m. ADDED PERFORMANCE

Ticket availability varies by performance. **Limited student rush tickets are available for \$10**, cash only, one hour before curtain, with a valid student ID. **Single tickets go on sale to the general public on August 23, 2010.** Season ticket prices range from \$135 to \$270. Season ticket holders for the 2010-2011 season receive a substantial discount – four shows for the price of three and will also **receive priority seating** when the Lyric Opera moves to the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts in the fall of 2011.

To purchase tickets, visit www.kcopera.org, or call Patron Services at (816) 471-7344 or 1-800-OPERA KC (673-7252).

Opera Previews

Audience members are invited and encouraged to attend a free opera previews in the Lyric Theatre Auditorium one hour before curtain, presented by the Lyric Opera Guild. The 25-minute talks will be lead by **Rebecca Johnson Ph.D**, instructor of choral music at the Metropolitan Community Colleges.

Carmen “At Ease with Opera” Presentations:

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

When in Opera do as the Roma Do: Gypsies in Opera

On **Monday, August 30, 2010 at 7 p.m.**, Guild speaker **Don Dagenais** will explore the subject of gypsies, their history in Europe, the gypsy community in Spain around 1800 and how gypsies have influenced literature and opera. The presentation is located in the Plaza Branch of the Kansas City Public Library at 4801 Main St., Kansas City, MO.

Great Singers of the Past: Carmen and Her Suitors

On **Monday, September 13, 2010 at 7 p.m.**, Guild speaker **Richard Byrum** will discuss the performance history of *Carmen*. The presentation is located at the Kauffman Foundation, 4801 Rockhill Road, Kansas City, MO.

Love is a Rebellious Bird—The Carmen Story with Live Vocal Illustration

On **Monday, September 20, 2010 at 7 p.m.**, **Vox Lumeniz**, the choral ensemble of the Metropolitan Community Colleges, will perform excerpts from the opera. The presentation is located in the Plaza Branch of the Kansas City Public Library at 4801 Main St., Kansas City, MO.

The Bohemians: Young Friends of the Lyric Opera

The Bohemians is the Lyric Opera organization for young professionals (age 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 performance of *Carmen* on September 25 at 8 p.m., the Bohemians gather for dinner prior to the Saturday night performance of each opera at the restaurant partners of the Lyric Opera where members receive discounted meals. To learn more, email bohemians@kcopera.org.

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 seeks to mount 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 over 18,000 students and educators each year.

In fall 2011, the Lyric Opera will move its performances to a new home: the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. The state-of-the-art theatre, with acoustics designed by the creative minds behind the innovative Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, promises to be one of the greatest performance venues in the world.

The Company is renovating a property at 18th and Charlotte Streets in the Kansas City Crossroads Arts District. The facility will become a state of the art production and rehearsal facility and will serve as the Company's new home. In addition to housing the administrative offices, the facility will feature a full wig, costume and scenic construction shop, set storage space, as well as rehearsal space that exactly mimics the proportions of the stage of the Kauffman Center.

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

The Lyric Opera of Kansas City is a member of OPERA America, and this production is made possible with funding from Bank of America, Frontier Airlines, The National Endowment for the Arts, Missouri Arts Council and the Arts KC Fund.

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Please direct all media inquiries to Ellen McDonald, 816.444.0052.
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