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**Season opens with powerhouse voices in Puccini's *Tosca***

*Cast includes reunion of world-renowned singers  
International director returns to Lyric Opera  
Kansas City native will take on role in production  
Resident staff member in high demand*

KANSAS CITY, MO. (Aug.7, 2009) – A powerful 2009-2010 season opener, Giacomo Puccini's drama of passion and revenge *Tosca* will be produced by the Lyric Opera of Kansas City Sept. 11, 13, 16 & 19, 2009.

Set in Rome during the time of the Napoleonic Wars, Puccini's *Tosca* is the backdrop for a political game of cat-and-mouse. The drama includes all the elements of a classic opera plot: passion, revenge, secrecy and acts of torture. When her lover is captured by Rome's secret police, Floria Tosca barter with police chief Scarpia. Tosca decides that she will leave nothing up to chance when it comes to saving her beau Mario Cavaradossi. This is opera at its finest with a tragic ending where all three lead characters perish.

**Cast includes reunion of world-renowned singers**

The Lyric Opera 2009-2010 season is packed with opera stars that are normally not available to opera houses of the Company's size. The cast for *Tosca* is no exception, and includes many singers who have appeared on some of the biggest opera stages across the globe. "We are incredibly fortunate to have artists of this high caliber opening our season," noted Lyric Opera Artistic Director **Ward Holmquist**. "Many of the large opera houses do not begin rehearsal until October, allowing us to cast these talented singers in one of the slower times in their schedules."

Soprano **Lisa Daltirus** and bass-baritone **Greer Grimsley**, who make their Lyric Opera of Kansas City debuts with this production, are no strangers to their lead roles as Floria Tosca and Scarpia. The two performed in the spring 2008 production at Seattle Opera. As sheer enemies, Ms. Daltirus and Mr. Grimsley exhibited utter tension on the Seattle stage: "...[Ms. Daltirus] was at her best in the second act, her showdown with the villainous police chief, Baron Scarpia," noted Gavin Borchert, *Seattle Weekly*. Ms. Daltirus also has performed the role of Tosca for the New York Grand Opera, Connecticut Opera and Arizona Opera. Other notable roles include her title role in *Aida* for the Seattle Opera, Portland Opera and Connecticut Opera, and Bess in *Porgy and Bess* for the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Washington National Opera and Michigan Opera Theater. Additionally, Ms. Daltirus has received awards and recognition from the New Jersey State Opera vocal competition, the Joy of Singing competition and The Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

In Seattle, Mr. Grimsley's Scarpia was a match for Ms. Daltrius and his character was not to be ignored: "Urbane and powerfully evil, Grimsley's Scarpia is a smiling sadist who clearly enjoys the wielding of power," noted Melinda Bargreen, *The Seattle Times*. In addition to his performance at the Seattle Opera, Mr. Grimsley made his Metropolitan Opera debut as Captain Balstrode in *Peter Grimes*, and subsequently performed Escamillo in *Carmen*. He also has played the role of Scarpia for the San Diego Opera, L'Opera de Montreal and Opera Colorado.

**Rafael Davila**, tenor, will make his Lyric Opera debut in the role of Tosca's lover Cavaradossi. Mr. Davila made his Italian debut at Naples' Teatro San Carlo, and also appeared at the New Zealand Opera as Don Jose in *Carmen* and as Alfredo in *La traviata*. In 2010, Mr. Davila will perform as King Charles VII in Verdi's *Giovanna D' Arco* for the Sarasota Opera and will make his debut at Palm Beach Opera as Don Jose in *Carmen*.

Bass **Kevin Glavin** will return to Kansas City as the Sacristan. His first performance with the Lyric Opera was as Bartolo in the 2007 production of *The Barber of Seville*. Mr. Glavin is a winner of the Luciano Pavarotti Competition. His career highlights include Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola* with San Francisco Opera, the title role in *Don Pasquale*, Mustafa in *L'Italiana in Algeri*, Don Inigo Gomez in Ravel's *L'heure Espagnole* and the Sacristan in *Tosca* with New York City Opera.

#### **International director returns to Lyric Opera**

France native **Bernard Uzan** will return to the Lyric Opera after his successful Kansas City directing debut with *The Marriage of Figaro* in 2005. Mr. Uzan's productions have appeared on the stages of 50 opera companies in North America, France, Italy, Switzerland, and South America in more than 300 productions. Uzan's 2008 direction of *Rigoletto* for Palm Beach Opera received rave reviews: "Stage director Bernard Uzan contrived an imaginative and unobtrusive choreography for what was a stunning production," noted R. Spencer Butler, *Palm Beach Daily News*; "Bernard Uzan's direction is smart and sensible," said Greg Stepanich, *Palm Beach ArtsPaper*.

Some of Mr. Uzan's most recent works include directing for *Three Penny Opera* for Arizona Opera, *Macbeth* for Seattle Opera and Dallas Opera, and *Faust* for Montreal Opera, Seattle Opera, Portland Opera and Florida Grand Opera.

#### **Kansas City native will take on role in production**

Born in Independence, Mo. and raised in Shawnee Mission, Kansas, **Doug Jones** (tenor) will return to the Lyric Opera stage as Spoletto in this year's production of *Tosca*. Jones' first performance with the Company was his role as Monostatos in *The Magic Flute* in 2008. His resume includes more than 90 roles in more than 70 operas. In addition to his Kansas City roles, Mr. Jones has performed with Opera Bastille, Covent Garden, Netherlands Opera, Oper Frankfurt, Grand Theatre de Geneva, New Israeli Opera Tel Aviv, Wiener Operntheater, Stadttheater Basel, Gran Theatre del Liceu (Barcelona), as well as the festivals in Salzburg, Bregenz and Aix-en-Provence. In the United States, Mr. Jones has performed with major opera houses including Seattle Opera, San Francisco Opera, Los Angeles Opera, San Diego Opera, Opera Colorado, Austin Lyric Opera and Michigan Opera Theater. His upcoming plans include *Falstaff* at Pittsburgh Opera and Seattle Opera and *The Magic Flute* in Bordeaux and Toulouse, France.

#### **Resident staff member in high demand**

**R. Keith Brumley**, Lyric Opera Director of Design and Technical Production, has created numerous sets for Lyric Opera productions since 1984, including *Cinderella*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*,

*The End of the Affair, The Magic Flute, La bohème* and the world premiere of *John Brown*. For this season's *Tosca*, Mr. Brumley's "elegant sets" (as described by Michael Morain, *Des Moines Register*) will have its debut on the Lyric Opera stage after a preview run of the set at Des Moines Metro Opera. Lyric Opera is no stranger to renting Mr. Brumley's sets to other opera companies; in January, his *Cinderella* set, originally designed for the Company, was rented by Austin Lyric Opera: "The period feel of R. Keith Brumley's sets...fills the screen, grounding us in that bygone era of the Dream Factory," raved Robert Faires, *The Austin Chronicle*. Additionally, Mr. Brumley's set design for the Lyric Opera of Kansas City's *La bohème* in 2008 "delighted the eye," according to Timothy McDonald, *The Kansas City Star*.

### *Tosca* Performance Information

#### **Music by Giacomo Puccini**

**Performed in Italian with English subtitles projected above the stage**

**Lyric Theatre, 11<sup>th</sup> and Central, Downtown Kansas City**

**4 performances: September 11, 13, 16, & 19 2009**

Friday and Saturday performances begin at 8 p.m.; Wednesday curtains are at 7:30 p.m.; and Sunday is a 2:00 p.m. matinee.

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 student ID. To purchase tickets, visit [www.kcopera.org](http://www.kcopera.org), or call the ticket office at (816) 471-7344 or 1-877-OPERA KC.

The Lyric Opera of Kansas City is a member of OPERA America, and this season is made possible with funding from the Missouri Arts Council, the ArtsKC Fund and Neighborhood Tourism Development Fund.

#### **Cast List**

Floria Tosca: Lisa Daltirus  
Mario Cavaradossi: Rafael Davila  
Baron Scarpia: Greer Grimsley  
Cesare Angelotti: Andrew Harris  
Sacristan: Kevin Glavin  
Spoletta: Doug Jones  
Sciarrone: Stephen Fish  
Jailer: Joseph Hager

#### **Artistic Staff**

Conductor: Ward Holmquist  
Director: Bernard Uzan  
Scenic Designer: R. Keith Brumley  
Lighting Designer: Donald Thomas  
Chorusmaster/Accompanist Coach: Mark Ferrell  
Wig and Makeup Designer: Jan Delovage

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