



SACRAMENTO OPERA NEWS RELEASE

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SACRAMENTO OPERA

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SACRAMENTO OPERA PRESENTS LA TRAVIATA

FEBRUARY 26, 28 AND MARCH 2, 2010

(Sacramento, CA 1/13/10) **Sacramento Opera presents Giuseppe Verdi's *La Traviata* at the Sacramento Community Center Theater, 1301 L Street, Sacramento, Friday, February 26, 2010 at 8 pm; Sunday, February 28, 2010 at 2 pm; and Tuesday, March 2, 2010 at 7:30 pm.** *La Traviata* is an opera in three acts, with music by Giuseppe Verdi and libretto by Francesco Maria Piave. This Sacramento Opera production is sung in Italian with projected English supertitles. For more information, visit www.sacopera.org. **For tickets, call 916.808.5181; visit the Box Office, 1301 L Street, Sacramento; or click tickets.com. Single tickets are \$15 to \$130. Join the Sacramento Opera on Facebook and Twitter.**

The Sacramento Opera production presents Karen Slack as Violetta, Alexander Boyer as Alfredo, Kenneth Overton as Germont, Erin Neff as Flora, Will Tvrdik as Douphol, and Alina Ilchuk as Annina. James Marvel is the stage director. All shows feature Sacramento Opera Artistic Director and Conductor, Timm Rolek, the Sacramento Opera Chorus, and the Sacramento Philharmonic Orchestra.

Based on the novel and play *La Dame aux Camélias* by Alexandre Dumas, Jr., *La Traviata* is one of the ten most popular operas in the repertoire. The story was immortalized in the classic movie *Camille* starring Greta Garbo and later given popular updates in *Pretty Woman* and *Moulin Rouge*. Listen for the famous "Drinking Song" and *Sempre libera* aria. This vivid "slice of life" is loosely based on actual events that took place between Alexandre Dumas, Jr., and his lover Marie Duplessis. The story revolves around the relationship between the stunningly beautiful but frail courtesan Violetta Valéry and her lover the well-born Alfredo Germont. Alfredo's father thwarts their relationship which leads to the opera's heart-wrenching climax. Don't miss this romantic tale of love, passion, and betrayal.

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SACRAMENTO OPERA LA TRAVIATA PAGE 2

Stage Director James Marvel states, “On some level, *La Traviata* is the ultimate love story. It is more tragic in some ways than *Romeo and Juliet* because it actually involves adult decisions and personal sacrifice. The only thing more tragic than two lovers dying is the thought of one of them having to live on. This production’s staging will focus on the extreme affection shared between Alfredo and Violetta. It will also concentrate on the societal constraints that prevent them from being together. The raw emotional complexity that is so abundant in this Verdi classic is sure to be on display.”

Soprano Karen Slack’s (Violetta) voice sparkles with sheer brilliance and warmth in the roles of Mimi, Cio-Cio San, Suor Angelica, Liu, Luisa Miller, Arabella, Desdemona, Countess, Donna Anna, Tatyana, and Serena. Karen made her Metropolitan Opera debut in 2006 in the demanding title role of *Luisa Miller* and quickly followed that with performances at San Francisco Opera, Carnegie Hall, Santa Fe Opera, Opera Company of Philadelphia, and Melbourne Symphony (Australia). Future and recent engagements include the role of Cilla in the relatively new, American opera *Margaret Garner* for Michigan Opera Theater, Serena in *Porgy and Bess* for San Francisco Opera and Washington National Opera, and soprano soloist for Verdi’s *Requiem* with Madison Symphony Orchestra.

Tenor Alexander Boyer (Alfredo) is in his second season as a member of Opera San Jose’s resident company. His upcoming roles with the company are Des Grieux (*Manon*), Don Basilio (*The Marriage of Figaro*), and Ruggero (*La Rondine*). His previous performances with Opera San Jose include Nemorino (*The Elixir of Love*), Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*), and Don José (*Carmen*). A New York native, Mr. Boyer holds degrees from Boston University and Manhattan School of Music. He has sung the roles Arkady in Lee Hoiby’s *A Month in the Country*, the Chevalier de la Force (*Dialogues des Carmelites*), Alfredo (*La traviata*), and Luigi (*Il tabarro*). Mr. Boyer has participated in the Merola and Santa Fe Opera programs and is a winner of the Mario Lanza scholarship award.

Baritone Kenneth Overton (Germont) was in the Sacramento Opera’s 2006 production of *Turandot*. In March of 2007, Mr. Overton performed the complex role of Stephen Kumalo in *Lost in the Stars* with Skylark Opera. He also made his debut this spring with Stadttheater Klagenfurt (Austria) as Jake (Porgy

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SACRAMENTO OPERA LA TRAVIATA PAGE 3

and Bess). In the summer of 2007, Mr. Overton made his role debut as Marcello (*La Bohème*) with the Missouri Symphony Society, and a debut with American Opera Projects, portraying the role of Afro-American Baseball Star Josh Gibson in (*The Summer King*).

Mezzo-Soprano Erin Neff (Flora) made her solo debut with the San Francisco Opera as Blanche in their 2000 production of *Louise* and since then has returned to make several appearances with the company, including productions of *Rigoletto*, *The Bonesetter's Daughter*, *Simon Boccanegra*, and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. She has also sung with Berkeley Opera, Livermore Valley Opera, North Bay Opera, and San Francisco Lyric Opera. Roles in Ms. Neff's repertoire include Damon (*Acis and Galatea*); Sextus (*La clemenza di Tito*); Hansel (*Hansel and Gretel*); Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*); Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*); Tisbe (*La Cenerentola*); and Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*).

In November 2008, **Stage Director James Marvel** made his Lincoln Center debut for The Juilliard Opera Center, directing Mussorgsky's *The Marriage*; Krenek's *The Heavyweight*; and Shostakovich's *Rothschild's Violin* with Maestro James Conlon conducting. Upcoming engagements include *Il Ritorno D'Ulisse in Patria* for the Wolf Trap Opera Company; *La Traviata* for Orlando Opera and Kentucky Opera; *Salome* and *Falstaff* for Toledo Opera. In May 2008, Mr. Marvel was named Classical Singer Magazine's "2008 - Stage Director of the Year." Mr. Marvel has directed over 60 productions in the United States, England, Scotland, Germany, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. His new production of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* for the San Francisco Opera Merola Program was named "Best Production of the Year" by the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and his production of *Faust* was named "Best Production of the Year" by the *Augusta Chronicle*. Mr. Marvel last worked with the Sacramento Opera on the company's 2006 production of *Aida*.

The Sacramento Opera's 2009-2010 Season is sponsored by the generosity of the James Irvine Foundation, Raley's Family of Fine Stores, and the County and City of Sacramento's Cultural Arts Award administered by the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission. La Traviata Production Sponsors are Ted DeYoung and Les & Janice Lederer. The mission of the Sacramento Opera is to produce outstanding opera, to develop and cultivate a wider public interest in opera and its allied arts, and to further music education in the region. Programs and artists are subject to change.

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