

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 21, 2016

**Washington National Opera
presents**

Donizetti's delightful romantic comedy

The Daughter of the Regiment

**New production features the return of American breakout stars
Lawrence Brownlee and Lisette Oropesa**

**November 12–20, 2016
in the Kennedy Center Opera House**

(WASHINGTON)—Washington National Opera (WNO) continues its 2016–2017 season with a new production of Gaetano Donizetti's mashup of slapstick comedy and charming romance—*The Daughter of the Regiment*, November 12–20, 2016, in the Kennedy Center Opera House. The cast is led by superstar tenor Lawrence Brownlee as the hero Tonio and fast-rising soprano Lisette Oropesa, who starred as Susanna earlier this season in WNO's *The Marriage of Figaro*, as Marie. While the opera is best known for the vocal acrobatics required of its singers, the high-comedy antics of the non-singing role of The Duchess of Krakenthorp often steal the show. On opening night, November 12, 2016, the role of The Duchess will be performed by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg in her official Washington National Opera stage debut. The brand-new WNO production is directed by acclaimed Broadway director and choreographer Robert Longbottom, and the WNO Orchestra is led by rising conductor Christopher Allen, both in their WNO debuts.

Marie is no ordinary canteen girl—she was orphaned on a battlefield and adopted by a squadron of French soldiers she affectionately calls her fathers. All grown up, this

~ more ~

spunky young woman is in love with the strapping Tonio, a peasant who once saved her life but is still forbidden to ask for her hand. Adding to this troublesome snafu, a mysterious Marquise from Marie's past has come to whisk her away and raise her as a proper lady. Facing a future of high-society fashions, classical ballet lessons, and a dreaded arranged marriage, what's a tomboy like Marie to do? Military might meets aristocratic delight in this stylish production of Donizetti's masterful *opéra comique*, which blends instantly hummable melodies and flag-waving anthems with innocent romance. Among all the vocal acrobatics, perhaps the most famous is the show-stopping "Ah, mes amis," sometimes dubbed the "Mount Everest" of arias, requiring the tenor to sing a succession of nine high C's.

Sharing the role of Tonio, who must sing those daunting nine high C's, are American tenors Lawrence Brownlee, a favorite of WNO audiences last seen in 2009's *The Barber of Seville*, and Andrew Stenson, who was acclaimed for his portrayal of the title role in WNO's *An American Soldier* in 2014. Sharing the role of Marie are sopranos Lisette Oropesa, fresh off her role in WNO's *The Marriage of Figaro*, and Andriana Chuchman, who charmed audiences in WNO's *Show Boat* in 2013. In-demand bass Kevin Burdette is the bumbling Sulpice in his WNO debut, and mezzo-soprano Deborah Nansteel, a former Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist, returns as The Marquise of Birkenfeld. The cast also features current Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists in key supporting roles: bass Timothy J. Bruno is Hortensius and baritone Hunter Enoch is the Corporal.

Justice Ginsburg portrays The Duchess of Krakenthorp on opening night, November 12, 2016; at all other performances the role is played by Cindy Gold, who was a memorable Parthy in WNO's *Show Boat*. While this is Justice Ginsburg's official Washington National Opera debut, she has appeared as a supernumerary, or extra, on three previous occasions: *Ariadne auf Naxos* in 1994 and 2009, and *Die Fledermaus* in 2003.

American conductor Christopher Allen—Associate Conductor at LA Opera, Resident Conductor for Cincinnati Opera, and a recipient of the 2016 Solti Foundation Career Assistance Award—makes his WNO debut leading the WNO Orchestra in interpreting Donizetti's melodious score. The new WNO production is directed by Tony Award® nominee Robert Longbottom in his WNO debut. *The Daughter of the Regiment* also

features set design by James Noone, costume design by Zack Brown, lighting design by Mark McCullough, hair and makeup design by Anne Ford-Coates for Elsen Associates, and movement direction by Courtney Young in her WNO debut.

The Daughter of the Regiment opens on Saturday, November 12, 2016, at 7 p.m. in the Kennedy Center Opera House and runs for eight performances, including November 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20. The opera's running time is approximately two hours and 15 minutes, including one intermission. Visit WNO's [website](#) for complete production details and casting information.

Washington National Opera's 2016–2017 season also includes the American Opera Initiative Festival featuring four world-premiere American operas, a new production of Jake Heggie and Terrence McNally's modern classic *Dead Man Walking*, the East Coast premiere of Terence Blanchard and Michael Cristofer's "opera in jazz" *Champion*, an evening of *Justice at the Opera* with U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, *Don Giovanni in Concert* featuring the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists, Puccini's beloved *Madame Butterfly* in a dazzling production designed by visual artist Jun Kaneko, and other special events. [Subscription packages](#) and [single tickets](#) are available now.

***The Daughter of the Regiment* Performance and Ticket Information**

Saturday, November 12 at 7 p.m. ▪ Sunday, November 13 at 2 p.m.
Monday, November 14 at 7 p.m. ▪ Wednesday, November 16 at 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, November 17 at 7:30 p.m. ▪ Friday, November 18 at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, November 19 at 7 p.m. ▪ Sunday, November 20 at 2 p.m.

Tickets start at \$45 and are available [online](#), in person at the Kennedy Center Box Office, and by calling (202) 467-4600 or (800) 444-1324. For all other ticket-related customer service inquiries, call the Advance Sales Box Office at (202) 416-8540.

The Daughter of the Regiment Production Information

Music by Gaetano Donizetti
Libretto by Jules-Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges
and Jean-François-Alfred Bayard

New Production

Performed in French with Projected English Titles

November 12, 13m, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20m, 2016

Cast and Creative Team

Tonio	Lawrence Brownlee (Nov. 12, 14, 16, 18, 20)	Conductor	Christopher Allen *
		Director	Robert Longbottom *
	Andrew Stenson (Nov. 13, 17, 19)	Set Designer	James Noone
Marie		Costume Designer	Zack Brown
	Lisette Oropesa (Nov. 12, 14, 16, 18, 20)	Lighting Designer	Mark McCullough
	Andriana Chuchman (Nov. 13, 17, 19)	Hair and Makeup Designer	Anne Ford-Coates for Elsen Associates
Sulpice	Kevin Burdette *	Movement Director	Courtney Young *
The Marquise of Birkenfeld	Deborah Nansteel ±		
The Duchess of Krakenthorp	Ruth Bader Ginsburg * (Nov. 12 only)		
	Cindy Gold		
Hortensius	Timothy J. Bruno ‡		
Corporal	Hunter Enoch ‡		
Dancing Master	Randy Snight		

* Washington National Opera Debut

‡ Current member of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program

± Alumnus of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program

The Daughter of the Regiment Related Programs and Events

Renée Fleming VOICES: Lawrence Brownlee in Recital Tuesday, October 18 at 7:30 p.m., Family Theater

Prior to his star turn in *The Daughter of the Regiment*, hear tenor Lawrence Brownlee in an intimate recital in the inaugural event of the Kennedy Center's new VOICES series curated by Renée Fleming. Brownlee will perform selections from Liszt, Donizetti, Strauss, Rossini, and Bellini, as well as a selection of American spirituals.

[Tickets](#) are \$69.

Musical Preview: *The Daughter of the Regiment* Monday, October 31 at 6 p.m., Kennedy Center Millennium Stage

Enjoy a free preview of musical highlights from *The Daughter of the Regiment*, featuring members of WNO's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program and other artists from the production.

Opera Insights before every performance

WNO presents a free pre-performance education event prior to every performance of *The Daughter of the Regiment*. These events will begin one hour prior to curtain in the Opera House and last approximately 20–25 minutes. (The *O-Zone* lecture with musicologist Saul Lilienstein on Wednesday, November 16 begins at 6:15 p.m. and lasts approximately 45 minutes.) A complete list of discussion leaders will be posted to WNO's [website](#).

Artist Q&A: *The Daughter of the Regiment*

Sunday, November 13; Monday, November 14; and Sunday, November 20—post-performance, Opera House

Join WNO artistic staff for a wide-ranging discussion with the artists of the production. This event is free to patrons presenting a ticket from any performance of *The Daughter of the Regiment*.

Lawrence Brownlee CD Signing

Wednesday, November 16—post-performance, Grand Foyer

Meet *The Daughter of the Regiment* star Lawrence Brownlee as he autographs copies of his new CD *Allegro io son*, which includes the show-stopping aria "Ah! mes amis" from this opera.

ABOUT WASHINGTON NATIONAL OPERA

Washington National Opera (WNO) is one of the leading opera companies in the United States. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Francesca Zambello, the company presents a diverse season of grand opera—including both classics from the repertory and more contemporary pieces—plus several newly commissioned American works and a variety of special concerts and events. The WNO Orchestra is led by Music Director Philippe Auguin. Founded in 1956 and an affiliate of the Kennedy Center since 2011, WNO has a storied legacy of world premieres, new productions, international tours, live recordings and radio broadcasts, and innovative education and community-engagement programs. Throughout its history, WNO has been led by titans in the opera field, including the legendary Plácido Domingo, who headed the company from 1996 to 2011.

WNO contributes to the future of opera through two signature artist-development programs. The Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, now in its 15th season, has become one of the nation's most competitive and comprehensive professional training programs for young singers and collaborative pianists. Alumni of the program have won major competitions and gone on to successful careers at major opera houses in the U.S. and abroad. The WNO Opera Institute nurtures the ambitions of high-school-age singers from across the nation during an intensive three-week summer program held at American University in Washington.

Among the company's most successful recent programs is the 2012 launch of the American Opera Initiative, a comprehensive commissioning program that works to expand the American operatic repertory, to give WNO's young artists the chance to collaborate with living composers and librettists on new works, and to make American opera more relevant to 21st-century audiences. The most popular of WNO's community-engagement programs is M&M'S® *Opera in the Outfield*, during which an opera is broadcast live from the Kennedy Center Opera House stage to the high-definition scoreboard at Nationals Park. The company's other education programs include the *Kids Create Opera* program at local elementary schools, Look-In performances for students in grades 4–8, and the Student Dress Rehearsal Program for middle and high school students. The company also offers free Opera Insights programs before every performance in the Opera House.

To celebrate the company's 60th anniversary last season, Washington National Opera presented three complete cycles of Wagner's *Ring* in spring 2016. These performances, featuring an acclaimed production by Artistic Director Francesca Zambello and conducted by Music Director Philippe Auguin, marked the first time the company presented *The Ring* in complete cycles in its history.

Discover [Washington National Opera](#) on social media:



#RegimentDC

FUNDING CREDITS

Major support for WNO is provided by Jacqueline Badger Mars.

David and Alice Rubenstein are the Presenting Underwriters of WNO.

WNO acknowledges the longstanding generosity of Life Chairman Mrs. Eugene B. Casey, including underwriting this production of *The Daughter of the Regiment*.

WNO's presenting sponsor
General Dynamics

PRESS CONTACT

Michael Solomon
(202) 416-8453
masolomon@kennedy-center.org

TICKETS & INFORMATION

(202) 467-4600; (800) 444-1324
www.kennedy-center.org/wno