

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 6, 2016

**Washington National Opera
announces a change to its season**

**The annual *Stars of Tomorrow* concert
featuring the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists
will now be**

Don Giovanni in Concert

**A semi-staged performance of Mozart's classic opera
to be conducted by Michael Christie
and directed by WNO Artistic Director Francesca Zambello**

**Friday, March 17, 2017
in the Kennedy Center Opera House**

(WASHINGTON)—Washington National Opera (WNO) today announced a change to its 2016–2017 season programming: *Don Giovanni in Concert* will replace the previously scheduled *Stars of Tomorrow* concert on Friday, March 17, 2017 in the Kennedy Center Opera House. Instead of a traditional showcase featuring arias and scenes from different operas, members of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program will now present a semi-staged concert performance of Mozart's timeless drama, with the WNO Orchestra conducted by Michael Christie and featuring direction by WNO Artistic Director Francesca Zambello.

In *Don Giovanni*, widely regarded as one of the greatest operas ever composed, Mozart weaves the tale of the legendary rake Don Juan into a comically lighthearted yet deadly serious musical masterpiece. With more than two thousand seductions behind him and no end in sight, the Don becomes increasingly reckless as he descends into excess and

immorality. But when his unrepentant antics turn fatal, the women he has discarded seek revenge.

The cast for *Don Giovanni in Concert* features current and former Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists in all roles. Baritone Michael Adams is the suave Don Giovanni, with bass-baritone Andrew Bogard as his trusted wingman and servant Leporello. Soprano Raquel González is the mournful Donna Anna, while an alumna of the program, soprano Kerriann Otaño, is the fiery Donna Elvira. Soprano Ariana Wehr is the peasant bride Zerlina, and baritone Hunter Enoch is her groom-to-be Masetto. Rounding out the cast are tenor Rexford Tester as Donna Anna's patient fiancé Don Ottavio and Timothy J. Bruno as the Commendatore, whose murder sets the opera in motion and drives it to a terrifying climax.

Michael Christie, music director of the Minnesota Opera, leads the WNO Orchestra in some of Mozart's most beautiful and memorable music. Christie will make his WNO debut earlier in the season leading the orchestra for Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*, which opens February 25, 2017. Assisting Christie with musical preparation for the concert event will be two coach/accompanists in the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, Michael Sherman and Paul Jarski. The semi-staged performance will be directed by WNO Artistic Director Francesca Zambello, whose mentoring of the young artists has long been a hallmark of the program.

Washington National Opera's 2016–2017 season also includes a new production of Donizetti's comedy *The Daughter of the Regiment*, 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 Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, 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.

Don Giovanni in Concert with the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists

Friday, March 17, 2017 at 7:30 p.m.
in the Kennedy Center Opera House

Cast and Creative Team

| | |
|--------------|---------------------------|
| Conductor | Michael Christie |
| Director | Francesca Zambello |
| Don Giovanni | Michael Adams ‡ |
| Donna Anna | Raquel González ‡ |
| Donna Elvira | Kerriann Otaño ± |
| Don Ottavio | Rexford Tester ‡ |
| Leporello | Andrew Bogard ‡ |
| Zerlina | Ariana Wehr ‡ |
| Masetto | Hunter Enoch ‡ |
| Commendatore | Timothy J. Bruno ‡ |

± Alumnus of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program
‡ Current member of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for *Don Giovanni in Concert* start at \$35 and are available [online](#), in person at the Kennedy Center Box Office, and by calling (202) 467-4600 or (800) 444-1324.

ABOUT THE DOMINGO-CAFRTIZ YOUNG ARTIST PROGRAM

Founded by Plácido Domingo and currently in its 15th season, the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program guides young singers and pianists/coaches on the verge of international careers. The program provides intensive study with renowned vocal and drama coaches and offers voice lessons, language classes, career guidance, and master classes with Washington National Opera staff and guest artists. The Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists also have the opportunity to perform and cover roles in WNO productions.

In addition to many performances on the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage, the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists have performed at the White House, Teatro alla Scala in Milan, Opéra de Monte-Carlo, the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia, the United States Senate, the Supreme Court, the Music Center at Strathmore, the Smithsonian Institution, the Mexican Cultural Institute, with the Baltimore and Charleston Symphony Orchestras, and at numerous embassies. They have also appeared in concert with Maestro Domingo at the Reignwood Theatre in Beijing.

Each season, the Young Artists sing a fully staged performance with orchestra in the Kennedy Center Opera House as part of the WNO season. Past productions have included *La traviata*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, and *Madama Butterfly* conducted by Maestro Domingo; *Così fan tutte*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Magic Flute*, and *La bohème* conducted by WNO Music Director Philippe Auguin; and *Carmen*, conducted by Evan Rogister. In the 2016–2017 season, the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists performed in a special presentation of *The Marriage of Figaro* on Saturday, October 1, 2016, conducted by James Gaffigan, and will take the stage on Friday, May 19, 2017, for *Madame Butterfly*, conducted by Maestro Auguin.

Graduates of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program have gone on to successful careers including performances at the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, LA Opera, New York City Opera, The Glimmerglass Festival, Santa Fe Opera, National Symphony Orchestra, Carnegie Hall, Bayreuth Festival, Glyndebourne Festival, Berlin State Opera, Teatro Real in Madrid, and Opéra de Monte-Carlo.

Auditions for places in the program's 2017–2018 season will be held throughout the fall of 2016 in Washington, San Francisco, New York, Chicago, Cincinnati, and Philadelphia.

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.

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#DonGiovanniDC

FUNDING CREDITS

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WNO's presenting sponsor
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TICKETS & INFORMATION

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