Washington National Opera
Francesca Zambello, Artistic Director
announces its

2018–2019 SEASON

La traviata
Silent Night
Eugene Onegin
Faust
Tosca

Plus, the return of The Lion, the Unicorn, and Me, the American Opera Initiative Festival, a special Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist performance, one-night-only concert events, and more

General Director Designate Timothy O’Leary Joins WNO Administration in July 2018


Conductors include James Lowe, Steven Osgood, Nicole Paiement, Renato Palumbo, Speranza Scappucci, Robert Trevino, Keri-Lynn Wilson, and Lidiya Yakovskaya

Directors include Francesca Zambello, Garnett Bruce, Peter McClintock, Ethan McSweeny, and Tomer Zvulun

~ more ~
WASHINGTON—Washington National Opera (WNO), led by Artistic Director Francesca Zambello, announces its 2018–2019 season, one that continues its focus on bold productions of classic operas, fascinating contemporary perspectives, and the best in American artistry. The season includes a new WNO production of Verdi’s classic romantic drama La traviata, the company premiere of Kevin Puts’s and Mark Campbell’s Pulitzer Prize–winning Silent Night, Tchaikovsky’s epic Eugene Onegin, Gounod’s devilishly entertaining Faust, and Puccini’s towering masterpiece Tosca. The season also features a weekend of four world premieres during the American Opera Initiative Festival; a revival of WNO’s hit world-premiere holiday family opera The Lion, the Unicorn, and Me; a special Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist performance of La traviata; and other exciting vocal events, including the annual Mars, Inc.’s Opera in the Outfield.

“Washington National Opera’s 2018–2019 season represents the creative spirit and values of our company showcasing new works alongside classics,” said WNO Artistic Director Francesca Zambello. “The line-up next season offers operas long absent from our repertory, as well as several new works. I am also pleased to return French and Russian titles alongside the Italian operas, as well as our enduring commitment to American works in English. One of the most unique aspects of our company is the opportunity to perform in four dynamic theater spaces of the Kennedy Center.”

As announced in the fall, Timothy O’Leary begins his tenure as the WNO’s General Director this summer, in advance of the 2018–2019 season. “It is a thrill to be joining Francesca Zambello and the entire Washington National Opera team for the launch of the 2018–2019 season,” said O’Leary, who is currently General Director Designate. “As I have gotten to know the people of this company over the past few months, my excitement about its future has only grown. I am so grateful to all the artists, technicians, staff, board members, supporters, volunteers, and audience members who have already been so welcoming. I can’t wait to join the wonderful WNO, Kennedy Center, and Washington D.C. communities.”
## Washington National Opera 2018–2019 Season Schedule

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### La traviata

WNO’s 2018–2019 season opens with Verdi’s tragic romance *La traviata*, October 6–21, in the Opera House. The worldly courtesan Violetta has made Paris her playground, but life’s greatest pleasure continues to elude her: true love. Her world changes forever when she meets the young and impetuous Alfredo. Violetta allows herself to follow her heart, but the strict rules of 19th-century society force them apart. A short-lived final reunion between the two lovers showcases Verdi’s immense skill as a composer and dramatist, and seals the opera’s reputation as one of the most beloved works in the repertory.

A star at Moscow’s Bolshoi Theatre who has been hailed as “the new voice of Russia,” Russian soprano Venera Gimadieva makes her WNO debut as the ill-fated Violetta, a role she has portrayed to great acclaim at the Royal Opera House in London, Opéra National de Paris, La Fenice in Venice, and other important theaters around the world. In 2017, she was the toast of Santa Fe Opera for her riveting performance as the Queen of Shemakha in *The Golden Cockerel*. As Violetta’s lover Alfredo, American tenor Joshua Guerrero makes his WNO debut. Following multiple prizes at the 2014 Operalia competition, Guerrero continues to enjoy a skyrocketing international career in roles ranging from Greenhorn in *Moby-Dick* at LA Opera to The Duke in *Rigoletto* at English National Opera. American baritone Lucas Meachem makes his WNO debut as Alfredo’s stern father, Giorgio Germont. Meachem’s career includes the landmark
baritone roles of Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* at Vienna State Opera and the Royal Opera House, Marcello in *La bohème* at the Metropolitan Opera, and Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* at San Francisco Opera.

WNO welcomes a second cast to the production of *La traviata* for three performances on October 7, 14, and 20, 2018. Jacqueline Echols, a graduate of WNO’s Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, returns to WNO to take on the challenging role of Violetta, a role she first performed at North Carolina Opera. Her roles at WNO include Micaëla in *Carmen*, Clorinda in *Cinderella*, Woglinde and Forest Bird in the 2016 *Ring* Cycle, and Sister Rose in *Dead Man Walking*. Her other recent appearances include Pip in *Moby-Dick* at LA Opera and The Dallas Opera and Helen Gibson in the world premiere of *The Summer King* at Pittsburgh Opera. Guatemalan tenor Mario Chang makes his WNO debut as Alfredo. A First Prize, Zarzuela Prize, and audience prize winner at the 2014 Operalia competition, Chang’s operatic highlights include the role of Nemorino in *L’elisir d’amore* at the Metropolitan Opera, his LA Opera debut as Rodolfo in *La bohème* conducted by Gustavo Dudamel, and the Italian Tenor in *Der Rosenkavalier*, which he performed both at the Met under the baton of Edward Gardner and with the National Symphony Orchestra opposite Renée Fleming under the baton of Christoph Eschenbach. A veteran on the WNO stage, baritone Michael Chioldi returns as Germont. His previous WNO work includes Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, the title role in *Hamlet*, and Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, as well as roles in *Andrea Chenier*, *Billy Budd*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

This exciting new production of *La traviata* is directed by WNO Artistic Director Francesca Zambello. Lavish designs by Peter Davison set the production in turn-of-the-century Paris, and Jess Goldstein complements these with his costume design. Rounding out the creative team are associate director and choreographer Keturah Stickann and lighting designer Mark McCullough. Leading the WNO Orchestra is Italian conductor Renato Palumbo, one of the most important Verdi conductors of his generation, who previously led Verdi’s *Macbeth* at WNO in 2007.

A special *Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Performance* of *La traviata* takes place in the Opera House on Friday, October 19, 2018, and features current singers and alumni
of WNO’s Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. Complete casting for this performance will be announced in the coming months.

**Silent Night**

WNO’s season continues with the company premiere of the Pulitzer Prize–winning modern classic *Silent Night*, November 10–25, in the intimate Eisenhower Theater. The opera, with music by Kevin Puts and a libretto by Mark Campbell (a frequent mentor to WNO’s American Opera Initiative), is based on the 2005 film *Joyeux Noël*, which was nominated for an Academy Award® for Best Foreign Language Film. *Silent Night* recounts the true story of a miraculous moment of peace during one of the bloodiest wars in human history. On World War I’s Western Front, weapons are laid down when the Scottish, French, and German officers defy their superiors and negotiate a Christmas Eve truce. Enemies become brothers as they come together to share Christmas and bury their dead. Since its world premiere at Minnesota Opera in 2011, *Silent Night* has been performed the world over; WNO’s performances coincide with the centennial of the end of World War I. The opera is performed in English, French, German, Italian, and Latin.

A true ensemble piece, the cast of *Silent Night* is filled almost exclusively by graduates of WNO’s prestigious Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. Cast members include soprano Raquel González; baritones Michael Adams, Aleksey Bogdanov, Christian Bowers, Hunter Enoch, and Norman Garrett; and basses Timothy J. Bruno and Kenneth Kellogg. Additional casting details will be announced in the coming months.

The production, set in the trenches on the front lines during the First World War, is a co-production of Atlanta Opera, The Wexford Festival, and The Glimmerglass Festival. Tomer Zvulun, the General and Artistic Director of Atlanta Opera, makes his WNO debut as director. Nicole Paiement, who conducted WNO’s *The Little Prince* in 2014 and *The Dictator's Wife* in 2017 and will conduct *Candide* in May 2018, leads the WNO Orchestra in interpreting Puts’s evocative and moving score.
**The Lion, the Unicorn, and Me**
Continuing its tradition of producing a family opera during the holiday season, WNO presents the first revival of its much-admired world-premiere production of *The Lion, the Unicorn, and Me*, December 14–16, in the Terrace Theater. Featuring a score by Tony® winner Jeanine Tesori (*Fun Home; Shrek The Musical; Caroline, or Change*), an English-language libretto by poet and playwright J.D. McClatchy, and direction by WNO Artistic Director Francesca Zambello, this family-friendly opera is based on the award-winning children’s book by Jeanette Winterson and tells the story of the first Christmas from an unlikely point of view. The cast includes members of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program and also features the WNO Children’s Chorus. James Lowe, who last appeared in 2017 leading *The Little Prince*, conducts the WNO Orchestra.

**American Opera Initiative Festival**
Now in its seventh season, WNO once again hosts the groundbreaking **American Opera Initiative Festival**, a weekend celebrating the continuing vitality of new American opera, January 11–13, 2019, in the Terrace Theater.

Following many sold-out performances of *Approaching Ali* (2013), *An American Soldier* (2014), *Penny* (2015), *Better Gods* (2016), *The Dictator’s Wife* (2017), and *Proving Up* (2018), WNO presents the world premiere of **Taking Up Serpents** by composer Kamala Sankaram and librettist Jerre Dye. This engrossing hour-long work explores the controversial world of religious snake-handling. Sankaram has received commissions from Beth Morrison Projects and American Lyric Theater, while Dye is a prolific playwright and up-and-coming opera librettist. Members of the WNO Orchestra are conducted by Lidiya Yankovskaya, the new music director of Chicago Opera Theater. Yankovskaya was part of the inaugural residency program of The Dallas Opera’s Hart Institute for Women Conductors in 2015 and currently serves as artistic director of Boston’s Juventas New Music Ensemble and the Boston New Music Festival. **Taking Up Serpents** is presented on January 11 and 13, 2019.

The popular **Three 20-Minute Operas**, featuring the work of three new composer-librettist teams, are presented at two performances on January 12, 2019, with
members of the WNO Orchestra conducted by Steven Osgood, the General and Artistic Director of the Chautauqua Opera Company. Osgood serves as one of three formidable mentors to the American Opera Initiative, alongside the acclaimed team of composer Jake Heggie (Moby-Dick and Dead Man Walking) and librettist Gene Scheer (Moby-Dick). More information on the three composer-librettist teams selected for the 20-Minute Operas will be announced in the coming months.

**Eugene Onegin**

Tchaikovsky’s masterpiece of unrequited passion, Eugene Onegin returns to the Opera House for the first time in more than 30 years, March 9–29, 2019, in a classic, elegant production. Standing supreme as the most popular of all Russian operas, Eugene Onegin features a breathtakingly beautiful score, in which every episode contributes to the overwhelming cumulative impact of Tchaikovsky’s lyricism.

The cast is led by two Russian stars making their WNO debuts. Soprano Anna Nechaeva sings her signature role of Tatiana, which she has masterfully performed with the Mikhailovsky and Bolshoi theatres in Russia. She is joined by baritone Igor Golovatenko, who makes his U.S. debut in the title role. Winner of the 2008 St. Petersburg “Three Centuries of Classical Romance” competition, Golovatenko has thrilled audiences in this role at Teatro San Carlo di Napoli and Moscow’s Novaya Opera Theatre. Nechaeva and Golovatenko have sung these roles together at the 2017 Festival d’Aix-en-Provence and the 2017 Savonlinna Opera Festival.

The stellar cast also features Russian tenor Alexey Dolgov in his return to WNO as Onegin’s ill-fated friend Lensky, following his acclaimed run as The Duke in Rigoletto in 2008 and as Rodolfo in La bohème in 2014. Dolgov’s celebrated Lensky has been seen at the Metropolitan Opera, Bavarian State Opera, and the Bolshoi Theatre. American bass Eric Halfvarson, who was an unforgettabley menacing Hagen in WNO’s 2016 Ring Cycle, also returns to WNO as the stately Prince Gremin. A trio of mezzo-sopranos—two American, one Russian—round out the opera’s supporting roles. Lindsay Ammann—who was Erda, Schwertleite, and First Norn in WNO’s Ring Cycle—sings the role of Olga. Victoria Livengood, heard previously at WNO as The Marquise in La fille
du rėgiment and Marcellina in *The Marriage of Figaro*, is Filippyevna. Elena Zaremba returns to WNO as Madame Larina (Fricka in *Die Walküre* and Erda in *Das Rheingold*).

Leading the WNO Orchestra in Tchaikovsky’s expressive score is American conductor Robert Trevino in his WNO debut. Trevino, who burst into the international spotlight conducting Verdi’s *Don Carlo* at the Bolshoi Theatre in December 2013, is the Music Director of the Basque National Orchestra in San Sebastian, Spain. He has also served as Associate Conductor at the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and New York City Opera.

This Canadian Opera Company production, originally created by celebrated Canadian director Robert Carsen for the Metropolitan Opera in 2007, is directed for WNO by Peter McClintock, a stage director at the Met for more than 30 years. His work has been seen at WNO in *The Queen of Spades* in 2002, *Samson et Dalila* in 2005, and *The Golden Gala* in 2006.

**Faust**

A deal with the devil goes captivatingly awry in Gounod’s tragedy, *Faust*, March 16–30, 2019 in the Opera House. One of the most important French works in the repertory, *Faust* has not been seen at WNO in 25 years. In the familiar tale, Faust makes an infernal bargain for the love of the beautiful and innocent Marguerite, with devastating results. Gounod’s colorful music expertly captures the struggle between religion, morality, and sin.

Starring as the object-of-affection Marguerite is Canadian soprano Erin Wall, who was last seen at WNO as Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* in 2007. Wall enjoys a major international career at the world’s leading opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, Teatro alla Scala, Vienna State Opera, and Opéra National de Paris. French tenor Benjamin Bernheim makes his WNO debut in the title role. Following his success as a member of the ensemble and as a resident artist at Opernhaus Zürich, Bernheim is now featured in impressive debuts at renowned venues throughout Europe and America. Wall and Bernheim will also appear together in a new production of *Faust* at Lyric Opera of Chicago in March 2018.
Also featured in the cast are American bass Raymond Aceto, who was last seen at WNO as Hunding in WNO’s 2016 Ring Cycle, as the fiendish Méphistophélès, and Joshua Hopkins, the Canadian baritone who starred at WNO as Papageno in The Magic Flute in 2014 and as Count Almaviva in The Marriage of Figaro in 2016, as Marguerite’s brother Valentin. Two American mezzo-sopranos, both alumni of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, round out the cast: Allegra De Vita is Siébel, a boy in love with Marguerite, and Deborah Nansteel is Marthe, Marguerite’s guardian.

The production, from Houston Grand Opera, is directed by Garnett Bruce, and the WNO Orchestra is conducted by Keri-Lynn Wilson.

**Tosca**

WNO’s 2018–2019 season concludes with one of the most popular operas in the repertory, Puccini’s riveting drama *Tosca*, May 11–25, 2019, in the Opera House. Set in a trio of signature Roman locales, *Tosca* follows a strong-willed diva as she makes the ultimate leap of faith in pursuit of love. This new-to-Washington production was originally seen at Seattle Opera and is part of the Kennedy Center’s Celebration of Italian Culture in 2019. Heading the powerhouse cast is American soprano Keri Alkema as Tosca, a role she has played to great acclaim at opera houses in London, Frankfurt, and Toronto. Alkema is an alumna of the first-ever class of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. Italian tenor Riccardo Massi makes his WNO debut as Tosca’s doomed lover Cavaradossi, a signature role he has portrayed across a stunning lineup of global stages, including the Royal Opera House, Opera Australia, and the Hamburg State Opera. WNO company stalwart Alan Held is the evil Scarpia, a role he performed at WNO in 2011; the American bass-baritone most recently sang the leading role of Wotan in WNO's Ring Cycle in 2016.

At the performances on May 12 and 19, 2019, two notable singers make their WNO debuts: Latonia Moore, a rising-star American soprano who has sung Tosca at New York City Opera, is Puccini’s heroine. She made a dazzling debut at the Metropolitan Opera in 2012 in the title role in *Aida*, filling in for an ill colleague on less than a day’s notice. American tenor Robert Watson is Cavaradossi, a role he has sung while a
member of the ensemble of the Deutsche Oper Berlin. Watson is familiar to local audiences as a two-time Filene Young Artist at Wolf Trap Opera, where he sang the role of Lt. B.F. Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* with the National Symphony Orchestra.

Other members of the cast include David Cangelosi, who memorably sang the role of Mime in WNO’s *Ring* Cycle 2016, as Spoletta, and former Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Wei Wu, who won raves in 2017 for his role in the world premiere of Mason Bates’s *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* at Santa Fe Opera, as the Sacristan.

Italian conductor Speranza Scappucci, who made her WNO debut in 2015 leading the WNO Orchestra in Rossini’s *Cinderella*, returns to interpret Puccini’s harrowing score. *Tosca* is directed by Ethan McSweeny, a local favorite who is a mainstay at D.C.’s Shakespeare Theatre Company and whose work has been seen at WNO in the 2016 world premiere of *Better Gods* and the 2017 world premiere of *The Dictator’s Wife*, both presented as part of the American Opera Initiative.

**Other Special Vocal Events of the 2018–2019 Season**

Named for the groundbreaking African American contralto, the Marian Anderson Vocal Award recognizes a young American singer in opera, oratorio, or recital repertoire with outstanding promise for a significant career. In addition to a cash prize and an educational residency at Washington’s Duke Ellington School of the Arts, the winner performs in a recital co-presented by WNO and the Kennedy Center’s Fortas Chamber Music Concerts. This year’s recipient is gifted bass-baritone Ryan Speedo Green, who gives an intimate recital on October 4 in the Terrace Theater. Green was selected by a distinguished panel comprising Evans Mirageas (Artistic Director Cincinnati Opera and Atlanta Symphony Orchestra), Michael Heaston (Executive and Acting Artistic director of Metropolitan Opera’s Lindemann Young Artist Development Program), Francesca Zambello (WNO Artistic Director), Andrew Jorgensen (WNO Director of Artistic Planning and Operations), director Tazewell Thompson (*Lost In The Stars* and *Appomattox* at WNO), mezzo-soprano and former Marian Anderson Prize winner Denyce Graves, and soprano and Kennedy Center Honoree Martina Arroyo.
In their annual spring showcase, members of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program star in *A Concert of Comic Masterpieces* on Friday, May 24, 2019, in the Opera House. Accompanied by the WNO Orchestra, the Young Artists will perform the complete first act and closing fugue of Giuseppe Verdi’s final masterpiece, *Falstaff*, as well as other ensembles from the world’s wittiest operas.

The National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) and its Music Director, Gianandrea Noseda, present several programs highlighting vocal music during the 2018–2019 season. In November, honoring the centennial of the World War I Armistice, Noseda leads the NSO in two performances of Benjamin Britten’s epic *War Requiem*, featuring—as Britten intended—a Russian soprano (Karina Flores), British tenor (Ian Bostridge), and German baritone (Matthias Goerne). Early music specialist Nicholas McGegan leads the NSO’s annual performances of Handel’s *Messiah* in December. Soprano Renée Fleming joins Noseda and the NSO for an all-Schubert program in January 2019. As part of the Kennedy Center’s *Celebration of Italian Culture* in the spring, Noseda leads a program of Italian music that includes Rossini’s *Stabat Mater* with vocalists Erika Grimaldi, soprano; Chiara Amarù, mezzo-soprano; Piero Pretti, tenor; and Luca Pisaroni, bass-baritone; along with the University of Maryland Concert Choir, Edward Maclary, director. Mezzo-soprano Anita Rachvelishvili makes her NSO debut with Noseda and the Orchestra for Luciano Berio’s Folk Songs in June 2019.

The Kennedy Center’s 2018–2019 Fortas Chamber Music Concerts series also includes several notable vocal events, presented in the intimate Terrace Theater. Soprano Robin Johanssen appears with the Venice Baroque Chamber Ensemble on April 10, 2019, in a program of Italian repertoire, also part of the Center-wide *Celebration of Italian Culture*; and the Tallis Scholars perform *A Renaissance Christmas: The Song of Mary* on December 5.

TICKET INFORMATION

Subscription renewals and new subscriptions to WNO’s 2018–2019 season are available now. To purchase a subscription, patrons should call the Subscription Office at (202) 416-8500 or go to www.kennedy-center.org/subscribe. Subscriptions may be purchased in advance of general on-sale dates, which will be announced soon. Groups of 20 or more may contact the Kennedy Center Group Sales office at (202) 416-8400.

Artists and performances are subject to change
The 2018-2019 Season

La traviata

Music by Giuseppe Verdi
Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave
Based on the novel La dame aux Camélias by Alexandre Dumas
October 6–21, 2018

As a courtesan, the beautiful Violetta is the life of every party, toasting to high-class pleasures alongside wealthy men. But Violetta holds a devastating secret: she is sick and dying. When the affluent Alfredo confesses his love, happily-ever-after finally seems within reach—until his father condemns his lover’s low social status. Now Violetta must make an impossible choice before death claims her.

WNO launches its 2018–2019 season with a stunning new production of Verdi’s everlasting story of love and sacrifice. From the famous brindisi drinking song to the heartbreaking “Addio del passato” aria, La traviata captures Violetta’s unforgettable plight and illuminates tensions of social class that still ring true today.

New WNO Production
In Italian with projected English titles
Kennedy Center Opera House

Saturday, October 6, 2018 at 7 p.m.
Sunday, October 7, 2018 at 2 p.m.
Tuesday, October 9, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, October 11, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, October 13, 2018 at 7 p.m.
Sunday, October 14, 2018 at 2 p.m.
Monday, October 15, 2018 at 7 p.m.
Wednesday, October 17, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.
Friday, October 19, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, October 20, 2018 at 7 p.m.
Sunday, October 21, 2018 at 2 p.m.

Violetta Valéry
JACQUELINE ECHOLS ±

Venera Gimadieva* (10/6, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 21)
Joshua Guerrero* (10/6, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 21)
Lucas Meachem* (10/6, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 21)

Conductor
Renato Palumbo

Director
Francesca Zambello

Associate Director
Keturah Stickann

Set Designer
Peter Davison

Costume Designer
Jess Goldstein

Lighting Designer
Mark McCullough

† Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Performance
* Washington National Opera debut
± Alumnus of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program
Silent Night

Music by Kevin Puts
Libretto by Mark Campbell

November 10–25, 2018

The year is 1914, and the Great War has just been declared, dividing nations and sending millions into battle. As Christmas Eve falls on a battlefield near Belgium, soldiers in French, German, and Scottish trenches begin recalling songs of home, stepping into no-man’s-land for a spontaneous truce. Once sworn enemies, they trade their weapons for merriment and camaraderie—resulting in one miraculous night of peace.

Based on the true story of a wartime ceasefire, and as depicted in the Academy Award®-nominated 2005 film Joyeux Noël, Silent Night makes its WNO premiere in the centennial month of World War I’s end. Alumni from the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program return to perform the opera’s Pulitzer Prize-winning music, featuring lyrics in multiple languages that together capture a powerful vision of humanity and hope.

This production of Silent Night is an original production of the Wexford Festival Opera in partnership with The Atlanta Opera and The Glimmerglass Festival.

In English, French, German, Italian, and Latin with projected English titles

Kennedy Center Eisenhower Theater

Nikolaus Sprink  Alexander McKissick^  
Anna Sorensen  Raquel González ±  
Lt. Audebert  Michael Adams ±  
Lt. Horstmayer  Aleksey Bogdanov ±  
Lt. Gordon  Norman Garrett ±  
Kronprinz  Patrick Cook  
Father Palmer  Kenneth Kellogg ±  
William Dale  Hunter Enoch ±  
Ponchel  Christian Bowers ±  
French General  Timothy J. Bruno ±  

Conductor  Nicole Paiement  
Director  Tomer Zvulun*  
Associate Director  Dan Miller*  
Set Designer  Erhard Rom*  
Costume Designer  Victoria Tzykun*  
Lighting Designer  Robert Wierzel  

* Washington National Opera debut  ^Current member of Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program  
± Alumnus of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program
The Lion, the Unicorn, and Me

Music by Jeanine Tesori
Libretto by J.D. McClatchy
Based on the book by Jeanette Winterson

December 14–16, 2018

As the first Christmas nears, who among the animals can lead Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem? Fearsome Lion and graceful Unicorn are the top contenders—though it certainly won’t be Donkey, whose only humble gift is a small but sturdy back. But with the birth of a very special king on the horizon, Donkey soon discovers that miracles can happen anywhere!

When WNO first premiered this family-friendly opera in 2013, the Washington Post praised its “fresh energy and charm,” and tickets quickly sold out. Based on an award-winning children’s book and featuring music from a Tony®-winning composer, this heartwarming production returns for the holidays with whimsical costumes and a talented cast, to include members of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program and the WNO Children’s Chorus.

WNO Production
In English with projected English titles
Kennedy Center Terrace Theater

Friday, December 14, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, December 15, 2018 at 2 p.m. ¥
Saturday, December 15, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, December 16, 2018 at 2 p.m.
Sunday, December 16, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.

Conductor: James Lowe
Director: Francesca Zambello
Associate Director and Choreographer: Eric Sean Fogel
Set Designer: Michael Yeargan
Costume Designer: Erik Teague
Lighting Designer: Mark McCullough

¥ Sensory friendly performance
American Opera Initiative Festival

January 11–13, 2019

WNO’s acclaimed commissioning program for contemporary American opera enters its seventh exciting season, featuring four world premieres across a single weekend. The Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists and other talented performers are featured throughout the festival, guided by program director Robert Ainsley. Award-winning composer Jake Heggie, acclaimed librettist Gene Scheer, and renowned conductor Steven Osgood are the program’s 2018–2019 mentors. Complete casts and creative teams will be announced in the coming months.

Taking Up Serpents
Music by Kamala Sankaram*
Libretto by Jerre Dye*

In Taking Up Serpents, 25-year-old Kayla is the estranged daughter of a fire-and-brimstone preacher who is dangerously bitten by one of his own snakes. Kayla’s journey home forces her to confront her troubled upbringing. With a score showcasing Sakaram’s deft stylistic eclecticism and an original story inspired by Dye’s roots in the Deep South, Taking Up Serpents calls into question faith, family, and destiny, with shocking results.

Conductor Lidiya Yakovskaya*

World Premiere
Kennedy Center Terrace Theater
Friday, January 11, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, January 13, 2019 at 2 p.m.

Three 20-Minute Operas

Three new 20-minute operas are staged in a concert performance, accompanied by a small chamber orchestra. The 9 p.m. performance is followed by a Talkback with the artists and creative team.

World Premieres
Kennedy Center Terrace Theater
Saturday, January 12, 2019 at 7 p.m.
Saturday, January 12, 2019 at 9 p.m.

Conductor Steven Osgood

* Washington National Opera debut
**Eugene Onegin**

Music and Libretto by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Based on the novel by Alexander Pushkin

March 9–29, 2019

Pushkin’s sweeping novel comes to vivid life in Tchaikovsky’s masterwork. Young Tatiana confesses her devotion to the worldly Onegin, but his cold refusal devastates her. Years later, when Tatiana matures, it is Onegin who begs for her love. Will Tatiana embrace the man she once longed for? Or will Onegin forever be the victim of his own bitter decision?

More than 30 years have passed since WNO last staged this dramatic story of unrequited love, and now a visually stunning production marks its return. Complete with lush period costumes, majestic ballroom scenes, and a deadly duel, *Eugene Onegin* is a provocative tale of rejection and regret, exploring a society divided between rural austerity and aristocratic extravagance.

Production from Canadian Opera Company
This production of *Eugene Onegin* was originally created for the Metropolitan Opera.

In Russian with projected English titles

Kennedy Center Opera House

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Actor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tatiana</td>
<td>Anna Nechaeva*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Onegin</td>
<td>Igor Golovatenko*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Olga</td>
<td>Lindsay Ammann</td>
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<td>Lensky</td>
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<td>Gremin</td>
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<td>Madame Larina</td>
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<td>Filippyevna</td>
<td>Victoria Livengood</td>
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</tbody>
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Conductor: Robert Trevino*
Director: Peter McClintock
Production: Robert Carsen
Set and Costume Designer: Michael Levine
Lighting Designer: Christine Binder
Choreographer: Serge Bennathan*

* Washington National Opera debut
Faust

Music by Charles Gounod
Libretto by Jules Barbier and Michael Carré
Based on Goethe’s Faust: Part One, An Opera in Three Acts

March 16–30, 2019

Is the freedom of youth worth an eternity in hell? It is to the aging Faust, who makes a pact with Méphistophélès to exchange his soul for earth’s mortal pleasures. With his youth restored, Faust woos the lovely Marguerite, but his troubles are far from over. Along the seductive path to riches and power, Faust realizes his salvation is tragically bound to others, including those he loves most.

WNO takes a look at this French classic with a riveting production featuring a storybook aesthetic and phenomenal cast. From Marguerite’s celebrated “Jewel Song” to the famous soldiers’ chorus, Gounod’s score propels Goethe’s tale of redemption and damnation into a dizzying dance with the devil that will be impossible to forget.

Production from Houston Grand Opera
In French with projected English titles
Kennedy Center Opera House

Saturday, March 16, 2019 at 7 p.m.
Monday, March 18, 2019 at 7 p.m.
Thursday, March 22, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 24, 2019 at 2 p.m.
Wednesday, March 27, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, March 30, 2019 at 7 p.m.

Marguerite Erin Wall
Faust Benjamin Bernheim*
Méphistophélès Raymond Aceto
Valentin Joshua Hopkins
Siébel Allegra De Vita ±
Dame Marthe Deborah Nansteel ±

Conductor Keri-Lynn Wilson
Director Garnett Bruce
Set & Costume Designer Earl Staley*
Original Lighting Designer Ken Billington*
Lighting Designer Michael Clark

* Washington National Opera debut
± Alumnus of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program
Tosca

Music by Giacomo Puccini
Libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa

May 11–25, 2019

Dawn breaks on 18th-century Rome, where zealous painter Cavaradossi and passionate singer Tosca are deeply in love. When Cavaradossi hides escaped political prisoner Angelotti from the villainous chief of police Scarpia, a tragic conflict unfurls. Caught between loyalty to her rebel lover and Scarpia’s web of deceit, Tosca must take matters into her own hands—but no one is guaranteed to get out alive.

Puccini’s breathtaking opera, with its renowned “Vissi d’arte” aria, makes a triumphant return to WNO. Elegant sets depicting grand Roman scenes create the backdrop to one of opera’s most suspenseful and popular dramas. With gripping political corruption, soaring music, and the legendary devastating finale, Tosca is a sumptuous tale of ill-fated love that shocks and awes new and longtime opera lovers alike.

Production from Seattle Opera
In Italian with projected English titles
Part of the Kennedy Center’s Celebration of Italian Culture
Kennedy Center Opera House

Tosca  Keri Alkema ± (5/11, 14, 17, 20, 22, and 25)
      Latonia Moore* (5/12 and 19)
Cavaradossi Riccardo Massi* (5/11, 14, 17, 20, 22, and 25)
      Robert Watson* (5/12 and 19)
Scarpia  Alan Held
Spoletta  David Cangelosi
Sacristerian  Wei Wu ±

Conductor  Speranza Scappucci
Director  Ethan McSweeney
Costume Designer  Lena Rivkina
Lighting Designer  Gary Marder

* Washington National Opera debut
± Alumnus of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program
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 since 2012, 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. 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 16th 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 Mars Incorporated 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.

In July 2018, WNO welcomes Timothy O’Leary as its General Director. O’Leary joins WNO from Opera Theatre of Saint Louis (OTSL), where he has served as its General Director since 2008. He currently serves as Chairman of the Board of OPERA America, the national service organization for opera. Prior to his appointment as OTSL General Director, O’Leary was part of the management team at New York City Opera under General and Artistic Director Paul Kellogg; he was also the first Managing Director of New York’s Gotham Chamber Opera, where collaborations included the Lincoln Center Festival and the Spoleto Festival USA. As an assistant stage director, he worked for the New York City Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Florida Grand Opera, and others.

FUNDING CREDITS

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General Dynamics

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#WNO1819

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