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(L'elisir d'amore)

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LETTER FROM OUR BOARD LEADERSHIP



DEAR FRIENDS,

Thank you for celebrating another glorious Pittsburgh Opera season with us. It has been immensely gratifying to present such a breadth of programming—one that continues to earn Pittsburgh Opera national and international acclaim.

 Our repertoire this year spans 230 years—from Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro to our second world premiere, Savage Winter (formerly called Ashes & Snow) by Douglas J. Cuomo.

- Our community programs reach over 20,000 adults and children through teacher training, in-school programs, and performances, with another 2,400 students and teachers attending this year's Student Matinee, **The Elixir of Love**.
- Our Resident Artists grow before our eyes. For the past three years, our Resident Artists have won prizes in the prestigious George London Awards.

Your support has given Pittsburgh Opera the ability to stretch, grow, and succeed. Gifts from individuals, events, and institutions account for more than 60% of our annual revenue. We could not achieve this level of quality without you. We thank all who have already contributed to this year's Annual Fund.

However, our fiscal year is not over yet. If you still have not given this year, we ask that you consider a gift to the Pittsburgh Opera Annual Fund or buy tickets for our fabulous Maecenas Gala on May 12. Please help us achieve our goals for artistic excellence and community engagement for next year and into the future.

As we conclude this season on such a high note with **The Elixir of Love**, we would like to express our deepest appreciation to our colleagues on the Board and all the staff, artists, technicians, and volunteers whose passion and indefatigable efforts make these remarkable performances possible.

Thank you again!

GENE WELSHBoard President

MICHELE FABRIZI

Board Chair

LETTER FROM OUR GENERAL DIRECTOR



DEAR FRIENDS,

Welcome to the Benedum Center for the final opera of our 2017-18 season, Donizetti's comic love story L'elisir d'Amore, or The Elixir of Love.

Donizetti was a prolific composer who wrote over 70 operas. Two of his most famous, **The Elixir of Love** (1832) and **Don Pasquale** (1843), are considered masterpieces of comic opera and continue to entertain audiences to

this very day. See them, and you'll know why they epitomize the *bel canto* ("beautiful singing") style of opera.

Our top-notch cast will delight and excite you: Russian soprano Ekaterina Siurina brings fun and sizzle to the role of Adina, the object of everyone's affections; our Nemorino, tenor Dimitri Pittas, is a Metropolitan Opera veteran called "one of the most exciting artists on the horizon today"; and baritone Zachary Nelson makes his Pittsburgh Opera debut as the dashing, boastful Belcore. The Italian bass Paolo Pecchioli is as entertaining a Dr. Dulcamara as you will ever see or hear. Joining these out-of-towners is our own Shannon Jennings as Giannetta, in her final role as a Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist before she continues to the next stage in her career.

If you haven't already renewed your subscription for our 2018-19 season, I encourage you to do so today. It will combine classics Madama Butterfly, Hansel & Gretel, La bohème, and the aforementioned Don Pasquale with the contemporary American work Glory Denied, plus a brilliant new reimagining of Mozart's *Idomeneo* called afterWARds. Stop by one of the lobby tables to lock in your seats and pick up your Thank You Chocolates from our friends at Trello Cioccolato. If you're not a subscriber, now is the perfect time to sign up—please vote your support of our great company by ensuring we will have full houses all next season, our 80th!

Now, please sit back and enjoy this "potent potion certain to inspire your devotion!"

Warmest Regards,

CHRISTOPHER HAHN

General Director

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THE CAST

THE ELIXIR FLOVE

(L'elisir d'amore)

Music by Gaetano Donizetti

Libretto by Felice Romani, after Eugène Scribe's libretto for Daniel Auber's Le philtre (1831)

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

Giannetta Nemorino Adina Belcore Dr. Dulcamara

Dr. Dulcamara's Assistant

Shannon Jennings* **Dimitri Pittas** Ekaterina Siurina+ Zachary Nelson⁺ Paolo Pecchioli Simon Nigam

ARTISTIC TEAM

Conductor Stage Director Set Designer Costume Designer **Lighting Designer** Wig & Make-up Designer Choreographer **Assistant Conductor** Chorus Master Associate Coach/Pianist **Guest Pianist Assistant Director** Stage Manager

Christian Capocaccia Daniel Slater⁺ **Robert Innes Hopkins Robert Innes Hopkins** Simon Mills+ **James Geier** Timothy Claydon⁺ Glenn Lewis Mark Trawka **lames Lesniak** Luis Hernandez⁺ Frances Rabalais* Cindy Knight

Pittsburgh Opera presents The Elixir of Love, first performed on May 12, 1832 at the Teatro della Canobbiana in Milan.

These performances mark the 7th production of The Elixir of Love at Pittsburgh Opera., the most recent in 2007.

Comic opera in two acts.

Sung in Italian with English texts projected above the stage.

Supertitles by Christopher Bergen.

Estimated performance time: 2 hours and 30 minutes including 1 intermission.

In consideration of your fellow audience members, please turn off all personal electronic devices.

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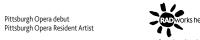
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SYNOPSIS

THE ELIXIR OF LOVE

ACT I

Scene 1. Nemorino, whose name accurately describes him as a "little nobody," is smitten with the wealthy Adina, but can't inspire love in her heart. (**Quanto è bella, quanto è cara**) Nemorino sees Adina reading a book in the square and wonders how a fool like him could possibly win her love. Everyone begs Adina to tell the story, so she reads the tale of Tristan, who bought a love potion from a magician in order to win the hard-hearted Isolde. If only they knew how to get the recipe!

A drum roll signals the arrival of a platoon of soldiers headed by handsome Sergeant Belcore. Arrogantly likening himself to Paris wooing a goddess, Belcore immediately proposes to Adina, much to Nemorino's dismay. But when Adina says she needs time to think it over, Nemorino seizes the moment and declares his undying love for her. Irritated, Adina declares that she is capricious and fickle—he should look for love elsewhere.

Scene 2. Dr. Dulcamara, a fast-talking quack, arrives and sings the praises of his amazing elixir, guaranteed to cure all diseases—and even chase away mice and bugs! (Udite, udite, o rustici)

Nemorino, who falls for the con like everybody else, asks if Dulcamara carries Isolde's love potion.

Dulcamara gives Nemorino a bottle of Bordeaux, warning him that it will only take effect after twenty-four hours (giving Dulcamara time to get away) and that it must be kept secret. Nemorino drinks enough to get tipsy, so when Adina comes by he is so full of confidence that he pretends to ignore her. (Lallarallaa la la la la la) Aggravated to find her swain so impervious to her charms, she promises to marry Belcore in six days. Nemorino isn't worried because the elixir will be in effect the next day. But Belcore receives orders to leave the village in the morning, so Adina agrees to marry him immediately. Now that Nemorino is really desperate, Adina enjoys his torment. She invites everyone to the marriage feast, and Nemorino rushes away, moaning that the elixir has ruined him.

20-Minute Intermission

ACT II

Scene 1. While they're waiting for the notary to arrive at the wedding, Dr. Dulcamara entertains everyone with a comic song. Adina, however, hesitates to continue because Nemorino isn't there—she wants to complete her revenge. After the company goes off for the wedding toast, Nemorino sneaks in and begs Dulcamara for help. Always obliging, he prescribes another dose, but Nemorino is broke. Belcore finds Nemorino alone and talks him into signing up—what a victory to enlist your own rival! (La donna è un animale stravagante) Nemorino accepts, hoping the elixir will work before he leaves with the soldiers.

Scene 2. Rumor has it that Nemorino's uncle has died, leaving him as heir to a fortune. All the girls flirt with Nemorino, who doesn't know about the inheritance and thinks the potion is finally working. Adina is astonished at his popularity and realizes that she is jealous. When Dulcamara brags that it was his elixir that worked the miracle, Adina also learns that Nemorino has sold his freedom for her. She realizes that she is in love with him, and Nemorino is delighted to see her shed a tear on his behalf. (Una furtiva lagrima) Adina takes action, buying back the enlistment papers from Belcore and admitting to Nemorino that she loves him. When Dulcamara tells everyone about Nemorino's inheritance, Dulcamara claims the credit—his elixir is so powerful, it can make rich men out of poor ones! As he leaves town in triumph, everyone wishes him well, except Belcore.

-- freely adapted from Opera Today

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ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

THE ELIXIR OF LOVE



SHANNON JENNINGS: GIANNETTA

Shannon Jennings is a second-year Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist in 2017-18. She was seen earlier this season as Aunt Sarah/Shrink/Iraqi Woman/The Long Walk. During her first-year as a Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist, she performed as Costanza/Richard the Lionheart and Slave/Salome. She was a participant in the 2016 Merola Opera Program with the San Francisco Opera Center, as Anne Sexton/Transformations.

Other recent roles include Marguerite/Faust with Annapolis Opera, Fiordiligi/Così fan tutte with Opera Orlando, Mimì/La bohème with DC Public Opera, and Josephine/H.M.S. Pinafore with Virginia Opera. Ms. Jennings' other residencies have included the Virginia Opera Emerging Artist Program, Central City Opera, Ash Lawn Opera, the Wolf Trap Opera Studio, and the Mittelsächsisches Theater in Freiberg, Germany, where she started her career singing Pamina/Die Zauberflöte. She has sung with Washington Concert Opera, the Virginia Symphony, the Richmond Symphony, the Connecticut Valley Symphony Orchestra, and the Mittelsächsisches Philharmonie. Ms. Jennings was also a winner of the 2015 Annapolis Opera Vocal Competition, a Capitol District winner of the 2016-17 Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions, and recently won 2nd Prize in the 2017 Mildred Miller International Voice Competition here in Pittsburgh. Originally from Orlando, Florida, she earned her B.M. in Vocal Performance at Florida State University College of Music, where her roles at Florida State University Opera included Atalanta/Serse, Elaine O'Neill/Later the Same Evening, and First Lady/The Magic Flute. In the summer of 2018, Ms. Jennings will sing as an Apprentice Artist with Santa Fe Opera, covering Cio-Cio San/Madama Butterfly. Mr. and Mrs. John E. Traina generously sponsor Ms. Jennings's residency.



ZACHARY NELSON: BELCORE

Zachary Nelson makes his Pittsburgh Opera debut. He has been praised for his rich and powerful baritone, as well as his ability to embody dramatic and comic characters on the operatic stage. The 2017-18 season started with a joint recital with soprano Leah Crocetto and Pianist Mark Markham, a return to the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Ping/Turandot, and the title role in Le nozze di Figaro (Dresden Semperoper). He will be the baritone soloist in "Sacred Service (Avodat Hakodesh)" with the Voices

of the Ascension. The 2016-17 season brought debuts at the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Donner/ Das Rheingold, Escamillo/Carmen (Den Norske Opera), and a fourth season with the Santa Fe Opera as Enrico Ashton/Lucia di Lammermoor. A former ensemble member at the Dresden Semperoper, his roles included: Figaro/Il barbiere di Siviglia, Figaro and Conte/Le nozze di Figaro, Escamillo/Carmen, Gugliemo/Così fan tutte, Paolo/Simon Boccanegra, Belcore/L'elisir d'amore, Marcello/La bohème, and Der Sprecher/Die Zauberflöte. Previous seasons included debuts at the Salzburg Landestheater, Palm Beach Opera, and San Francisco Opera as Escamillo/Carmen; Malatesta/Don Pasquale, Figaro/Le nozze di Figaro, Angelotti/Tosca (Santa Fe Opera), Escamillo/ Carmen, Masetto/Don Giovanni (Canadian Opera Company), Germont/La traviata (Lyric Opera of Virginia), Quinault/Adriana Lecouvreur (Opera Orchestra of New York), Herzog Robert/Guntram, Sciarrone/Tosca (Glimmerglass Opera), and a soloist in Steven Blier's "Killer B's" with the New York Festival of Song. He is a graduate of the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia, PA, and of The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. Mr. Neslon's awards include The George London Award from the 2012 George London Foundation, 1st prize prize from the 2012 Opera Index Competition, The 2012 Liederkranz Foundation Competition (General Opera Division), the 2012 Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation, 2nd prize from the 2011 Gerda Lissner Competition, the 2011 Giulio Gari Foundation, and the 2011 Loren Zachary Competition.



SIMON NIGAM: DR. DULCAMARA'S ASSISTANT

Simon Nigam returns to the stage at Pittsburgh Opera after recently appearing as Virgil/The Long Walk and debuting in 2015 as Flavio/Rodelinda. A sixth grade Theatre major at Pittsburgh CAPA, he has performed with the Pittsburgh CLO (Tiny Tim, Cratchit Child/A Musical Christmas Carol), Prime Stage Theatre (Dill/To Kill a Mockingbird), Carnegie Mellon University (Little Boy/Ragtime), University of Pittsburgh

Stages (Young Guido/Nine; The Dauphin/Marie Antoinette), and numerous community theaters. He is also a 2016 winner, 2017 finalist, and 2018 honorable mention of the Pittsburgh Public Theater's Shakespeare Monologue and Scene contest.



DIMITRI PITTAS: NEMORINO

Dimitri Pittas returns to the Pittsburgh Opera stage, having last performed as Rodolfo/La bohème (2003). He has performed on leading opera stages throughout North America and Europe, including debuts with the Bavarian State Opera, the Vienna State Opera, and the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. He is a graduate of the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program and has been heard on the Met stage as Rodolfo/

La bohème, Macduff/Macbeth, Nemorino/L'elisir d'amore, and Tamino/Die Zauberflöte. Operatic engagements of the current season include Alfredo/La traviata with Houston Grand Opera. In concert he performs Verdi's Requiem with the Atlanta Symphony and the Portland Symphony and Puccini's Tosca with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra. Last season, Mr. Pittas sang Verdi's Requiem for the BBC Proms with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment led by Marin Alsop, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the Oslo Philharmonic, and Rachmaninoff's The Bells with the Orchestre Metropolitain de Montreal, under the baton of Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Operatic engagements included Nemorino/L'elisir d'amore with Houston Grand Opera, a return to the Bolshoi Opera in the title role of Don Carlo, his role debut as Lt. Pinkerton/Madama Butterfly with Washington National Opera, and performances of Alfred/Die Fledermaus with Santa Fe Opera.



PAOLO PECCHIOLI: DR. DULCAMARA

Paolo Pecchioli returns to Pittsburgh Opera, most recently here as Don Magnifico/La cenerentola (2013), Osmin/The Abduction from the Seraglio (2012), Basilio/The Barber of Seville (2010), and Mustafà/The Italian Girl in Algiers (2009). The Italian Bass began his career singing Don Tritemio/Il Filosofo di Campagna with the Settimana Musicale Senese in Siena, Italy and has since debuted more than 45 principal roles in theatres

around the world. On the operatic stage, he has become an expert in Rossini, Verdi, and *bel canto* repertoire and has sung it in theatres all around the world including Washington National Opera, Gran Teatro del Liceu Barcelona, Bolshoi Theatre Moscow, Dallas Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Victorian Opera in Melbourne, Hanoi State Theatre, Opera Ireland, Grange Park Opera, Holland Park Opera, Teatro Verdi Busseto, Staatsoper Dresden, Teatro Gayarre Pamplona, and many more theatres in Italy including Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Torre del Lago Festival, Teato Regio Torino, Teatro Verdi, Trieste, Teatro Carlo Felice, Genoa, Teatro Comunale Bologna, Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, and Teatro Petruzzelli in Bari. Concert highlights include appearances at Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow, Carnegie Hall in New York, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Auditorium di Milano, Münchener Rundfunkorchester, Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano G. Verdi, and Orchestra Toscanini di Parma. He has recorded Alidoro in La cenerentola for Sony alongside Vesselina Kasarova. His other recordings include a DVD of Cleopatra by Lauro Rossi (Cesare Ottaviano Augusto) directed by Pierluigi Pizzi, a DVD of Aida (Il Re) directed by Franco Zeffirelli, and the world premiere of Jazz Te Deum and Sacred Concert by jazz musician and composer Giorgio Gaslini.



EKATERINA SIURINA: ADINA

Russian soprano Ekaterina Siurina makes her debut with Pittsburgh Opera. During her studies at the Russian Academy of Theatrical Arts in Moscow, Ms. Siurina became a soloist with the Municipal Moscow Theatre, Novaja Opera. After garnering honors at the 2000 International Elena Obrazova competition for singers of Chamber Art in Moscow, and the 2002 Opera competition in St. Petersburg, she was declared a winner at the Rimski-Korsakov competition in St. Petersburg. In 1999, while still a student, Ms.

Siurina made her professional role debut as Gilda/Rigoletto. She performed as soloist including the title role/Maria Stuarda, Snowmaiden, and again appearing as Gilda/Rigoletto and a coproduction at the Savonlinna Festival, Finland. Prominent solo debuts include appearances as Giulietta/I Capuleti e Montecchi (Opera de Montpellier, Royal Opera de Wallonie, and Brussels), I puritani at the Opera de Monte-Carlo, and also Adina/Elisir d'Amore at the Staatsoper Berlin and Staatsoper, Hamburg. Significant role debuts have included Gilda at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Bordaux Opera Servilia. Ms. Siurina made her Metropolitan Opera debut in October 2006 singing the role of Gilda with Juan Pons. She was invited back to the Metropolitan in November 2007, to sing the role of Susanna/Le nozze di Figaro. In addition to opera, Ekaterina has also appeared on the concert stage, performing solos throughout Europe. Ms. Siurina adds to her current season role debuts as Donna Anna/Don Giovanni at the Wiener Staatsoper and Mimi/La bohème at The Royal Opera, Covent Garden. She also made her much anticipated debut as Gilda at Arena di Verona in Verdi's Rigoletto this season.



CHRISTIAN CAPOCACCIA: CONDUCTOR

Italian conductor Christian Capocaccia returns to Pittsburgh Opera, having conducted La traviata (2016). His ease on the podium and comfortable coaching style with musicians and singers alike have made him a favorite with orchestras, opera companies, and vocalists. The 2017-18 season is marked by the increasingly close relationship Mr. Capocaccia enjoys with the arts community in Syracuse, NY. In September he began a three-year agreement with the Syracuse Symphoria, assuming the title of Associate

Conductor and Youth Orchestra Music Director. He was announced as the new Music Director of the Syracuse Opera, and will conduct all performances in the upcoming 2018-19 season. In the 2016-17 season, he completed his 5th and final season as Music Director of the Stamford Young Artists Philharmonic. He returned to Syracuse Opera to lead performances of Rigoletto. In the 2015-16 season, he took the Stamford Young Artists Philharmonic ensemble to New York City for their Carnegie Hall debut. For the Spring semester of 2016, he served as adjunct professor and visiting conductor with Montclair State University's opera department. In the Fall of 2015, he returned to the Manhattan School of Music to lead the Philharmonia Orchestra in a symphonic concert, and made his debut with Syracuse Opera in La bohème. His performances with the Wallingford Symphony Orchestra in March marked his debut with that ensemble. He previously held positions as assistant conductor of the Dallas Opera, resident conductor of the Fischer Center at Bard College, assistant conductor of the IU New Music Ensemble, and assistant professor of conducting at the State University of New York College at Fredonia. He has regularly conducted AsLiCo, and has recently conducted operas with the Manhattan School of Music and the Welsh National Opera. He is a former Aspen Music Festival Conducting Fellow, where he studied with David Zinman and Murry Sidlin. Born in Rome, he attended the Santa Cecilia Music Conservatory, studying under Paolo Ciociola and completed his studies with world-renowned violinist Nina Beilina in New York. Subsequently he studied composition under Boris Porena and Luciano Pelosi, and conducting with Piero Bellugi and Donato Renzetti. A graduate of Indiana University Jacobs School of Music in Bloomington under David Effron, he has participated in Master classes with Herbert Blomstedt, Gustav Meier, and Leonard Slatkin. As a guest conductor, Mr. Capocaccia has appeared both in the United States and Europe leading ensembles such as the Orchestra di Roma e del Lazio, Moscow Ballet Orchestra, Orchestra Sinfonica Città di Grosseto, Orchestra Città Aperta, International Chamber Ensemble, Orchestra da Camera delle Marche, and Orchestra Sinfonica di Pesaro among others.



DANIEL SLATER: STAGE DIRECTOR

Daniel Slater began his career as acting Artistic Director of the Tricycle Theatre and Associate Director of the Nottingham Playhouse. For the last two decades he has worked as a freelance international opera director. His first major production, **The Bartered Bride**, was nominated for numerous awards (including the TMA "Outstanding Achievement in Opera" and Manchester Evening News Best Opera Production 1998/99) and went to Strasbourg, Valencia, and New Zealand. Other awards include: **The**

Cunning Little Vixen (What'sOnStage Best New Production, 2015); Tannhäuser (Aasta Lavastus Production of the Year in Estonia, 2014); Romeo and Juliet (nominated for the President's Prize, Singapore); Samson (nominated for Manchester Evening News Best Opera Production 2008); Don Pasquale (Gramophone Magazine Best Opera Production on DVD 2007); and Wozzeck (Arts Event of the Year, New Mexico, 2001). Mr. Slater has directed sixty productions in seventeen countries all over the world, including in major opera houses such as Glyndebourne, Welsh National Opera, Opera North, Strasbourg, Geneva, the Palau de les Arts in Valencia, the Royal Opera Stockholm, the Norwegian National Opera, Flanders Opera, the Komische Oper Berlin, Bregenz Festival, Santa Fe, Houston Grand Opera, and San Francisco. A fluent speaker of French, German, Spanish, Swedish, and Italian, he was educated at the United World College of the Atlantic, received a 1st class degree in English Literature from Bristol University then went to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where he was awarded a PhD for his research on Nietzsche's Influence on D.H. Lawrence.



ROBERT INNES HOPKINS: **SET DESIGNER AND COSTUME DESIGNER**

Robert Innes Hopkins's opera credits include: Das Rheingold, Die Walkure, and Rigoletto (Lyric Opera Chicago); In Parenthesis, War and Peace, Rigoletto, and Flying Dutchman (Welsh National Opera); Madama Butterfly (Den Jyske Opera); Charodeika (Teatro di San Carlo, Naples); The Italian Girl in Algier, Peter Grimes, and Billy Budd (Santa Fe Opera); Lohengrin and The Cunning Little Vixen (San Francisco Opera);

Tristan und Isolde (La Fenice Venice); Aida (Opera Holland Park); The Cunning Little Vixen and Mamoetto II (Garsington Opera). Theatre Credits include: Julius Caesar, Anthony and Cleopatra, Titus Andronicus, Coriolanus, Don Quixote, and Oppenheimer (RSC); Neville's Island, Speed the Plow. and Clybourne Park (West End); Kenny Morgan (Arcola); Other Desert Cities (Old Vic); Noises Off (Nottingham Playhouse/Northern Stage/Nuffield Southampton); The Crucible and Swallows and Amazons (Bristol Old Vic); Kafka's Dick (Theatre Royal Bath); King Lear (Chichester Festival Theatre/BAM); The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas (Chichester Festival Theatre/UK Tour); A Doll's House (NT Scotland); The Crucible (Bristol Old Vic); Twelfth Night and Romeo And Juliet (Regent's Park); Arturo Ui (New York); The Weavers (awarded Critics Circle Designer of The Year at The Gate), and The Member Of The Wedding (Young Vic).



SIMON MILLS: LIGHTING DESIGNER

Simon Mills, winner of the 1999 Variety Magazine Best Newcomer Award, designed lighting for **Lohengrin**, which has been seen at Houston Grand Opera, Geneva, and San Francisco. This production of **The Elixir of Love** has been staged in Oviedo and at Opera North, Houston Grand Opera, Welsh National Opera, and the New Zealand Festival. Mr. Mills's current and recent work includes **Alcina** (Madrid and Bordeaux) and **Luisa Miller** (Lyon), both with director David Alden; **Die Fledermaus** (National Opera

Korea) with Stephen Lawless; The Bartered Bride (Opera North and New Zealand Opera), with Daniel Slater; and The Threepenny Opera (Gate Theatre, Dublin) and Twelfth Night (Abbey, Dublin), both directed by Wayne Jordan. Other work includes Tristan und Isolde (Oslo); The Cunning Little Vixen (Bregenz, San Francisco, Geneva); Manon Lescaut (Opera North, Oslo, Oviedo), Maometto II (Strasbourg), and Rigoletto (Grange Park Opera), all directed by Daniel Slater. Mr. Mills's work has also been seen at the Operosa Festival in Bulgaria, in open-air performances on the grounds of the Euxinograd Palace; and in Cologne, Malmö, London, Hamburg, Zurich, Shanghai, Scotland, Copenhagen, Toronto, and many other cities internationally.



IAMES GEIER: WIG & MAKEUP DESIGNER

James Geier returns to Pittsburgh Opera for a fourteenth season after recently completing his thirteenth season at Cincinnati Opera. He formerly worked as a staff makeup artist and wigmaker for a decade with San Francisco Opera and, more recently, as resident wig and makeup designer for Florida Grand Opera. Mr. Geier is a graduate of the Theatre Arts Department at Brandeis University and completed apprenticeships with both the San Francisco and Santa Fe operas. He has

worked for several film companies, including Lucasfilms Ltd., as well as an impressive number of opera, ballet, and theatre companies. His credits include the Denver Center Theatre Company, Cincinnati Shakespeare Company, Cincinnati Ballet, Spoleto Festival USA, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Baltimore Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, Seattle Opera, Tulsa Opera, Fort Worth Opera, Opera Omaha, Portland Opera, the Bolshoi Ballet, Kirov Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Fresno Grand Opera, and American Ballet Theatre.



TIMOTHY CLAYDON: CHOREOGRAPHER

Tim Claydon trained in classical dance and was an aerialist/trapeze artist. He has choreographed five of The Little Greats (Opera North); Romeo and Juliet (The Globe); Pyramus and Thisbe (Canadian Opera Company); La traviata, Don Carlos (Houston Grand Opera); Parsifal (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Andrea Chénier, La Rondine, Albert Herring (Opera North); Carmen (Vlaamse Opera); The Elixir of Love (Welsh National Opera, Opera North, Houston, Oviedo); Falstaff, and I

Capuleti e i Montecchi (Opera North, Melbourne, Sydney); La bohème, The Bartered Bride (Opera North, Valencia, New Zealand); Il turco in Italia and Veronique (Buxton); The Tales of Hoffman (Malmö); Grimes on the Beach (Aldeburgh); and Madama Butterfly (Oviedo).



GLENN LEWIS: ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Glenn Lewis, a native of Rochester, New York, has worked as Pittsburgh Opera Head of Music since January 2008. He has served as pianist, vocal coach, and assistant conductor primarily to Music Director Antony Walker on most of the main stage productions of the past several seasons. These include Tosca, Eugene Onegin, Samson & Dalila, Rigoletto, Don Giovanni, The Grapes of Wrath, Orphée, and Aida. He made his conducting debut in 2009 with the Resident Artist

production of Don Pasquale and has since conducted Little Women, Dark Sisters, Hänsel und Gretel, among others. In February 2017 he made his debut with Dayton Opera, conducting The Abduction from the Seraglio. In the spring of 2016, he was in Washington, D.C. at the Kennedy Center working as an assistant conductor for the Wagner Ring Cycle at the Washington National Opera. For 16 seasons he has been on the staff of the Santa Fe Opera. There he has worked on productions including Wozzeck and Salome with Maestro David Robertson and Peter Grimes with Maestro Alan Gilbert. He worked for 11 years in the opera houses in Cologne and Düsseldorf, Germany. There he conducted productions of La cenerentola, Orpheus in the Underworld, Zar und Zimmermann, and My Fair Lady. He assisted Maestri James Conlon, John Fiore, Donald Runnicles, among others, on works including Elektra, The Makropulos Case, Der Rosenkavalier, and Meistersinger von Nürnberg. This spring, he makes his debut with Syracuse Opera conducting Madama Butterfly. Past engagements include the Metropolitan Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago. He is a frequent recitalist in solo, chamber, and vocal repertoire. He holds degrees in piano performance from Ithaca College, Northwestern University, and an Artist Diploma in Opera Coaching and Conducting from Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.



MARK TRAWKA: CHORUS MASTER

Mark Trawka joined Pittsburgh Opera as Director of Musical Studies for the prestigious Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist Training Program in the 2003-04 season. In the 2006-07 season, he also took on the position of Chorus Master. Mr. Trawka coaches and performs with the Resident Artists and has also accompanied renowned mezzo-soprano Marianne Cornetti in her Pittsburgh recital appearances. He has been a member of the music staff at Houston Grand Opera, Dallas Opera,

and Portland Opera (Oregon), where he was principal pianist and assistant chorus master. Mr. Trawka served as coach/accompanist at Chautauqua Opera and at Glimmerglass Festival for many summer seasons. In the summer of 2006, he was director of the resident artist program at Berkshire Opera. He was a music director at Tyrolean Opera Program in the summer of 2014. Mr. Trawka has been a member of the coaching faculty at the renowned Songfest for the last three summer seasons, where he has also conducted choral performances. He made his opera conducting debut at Pittsburgh Opera with the Resident Artist production of Ricky Ian Gordon's 27. Educated at the Eastman School of Music and the University of Southern California, Mr. Trawka began his operatic career in the Houston Opera Studio and in San Francisco Opera's Merola Program.



IAMES LESNIAK: ASSOCIATE COACH/PIANIST

A native of Kenosha, Wisconsin, James Lesniak joined the Pittsburgh Opera music staff in 2006. After initial studies with Sheila Wiesztort, he received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees at Indiana University, where he studied with pianists Menahem Pressler, Karen Shaw, and Evelyne Brancart. His university credits include music staff work for Mississippi State University and the Indiana University Opera Theatre. Further studies included an apprenticeship with the Domingo-Cafritz

Young Artist Program at Washington National Opera for two seasons, where he gave his stage debut in the non-singing/piano playing role of Lazinski in Fedora at the Kennedy Center, accompanying Plácido Domingo in the opera. In addition, Mr. Lesniak has served on the coaching staff of Brevard Music Center, Glimmerglass Opera, Washington National Opera at the Kennedy Center, and the National Symphony. He has been an official pianist for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and also made his conducting debut in 2017 with Pittsburgh Opera's production of composer Laura Kaminsky's As One. For the summer months, he frequently returns to the music staff of the prestigious Santa Fe Opera, where recently, he served as Musical Director for their Winter Concert Tour.

Mrs. I. William Futrell generously sponsors Mr. Lesniak.



LUIS HERNANDEZ: GUEST PIANIST

Luis Hernandez began his piano studies at the age of eight in Santiago, Dominican Republic, where he received his training at the Institute of Arts under Hilda Melis. In 2006, Mr. Hernandez was awarded a full scholarship from the Boston Conservatory to study with Professor Max Levinson, and earned his Bachelor's Degree in 2010. He has performed extensively as a soloist and chamber musician in the Dominican Republic, Peru, Italy, and United States. He has performed solo and

chamber works at the Killington Music Festival, at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival, and performed as a soloist with the Munster Hochschule Chamber Orchestra, and the Parlarte Orchestra at the Music Fest Perugia in Italy. He has won numerous awards in various national competitions in the Dominican Republic, including First Prize at the Olympic Sonatinas Competition, First Prize at the V Latin American Music Festival, and Second Prize at the Manuel Rueda Piano Competition. At an international level, he has won Third Prize in the Steinway Competition in Boston, MA in 2007, and won the Honors Competition at Boston Conservatory the following year. In Pittsburgh, he has performed with Carnegie Mellon's Contemporary Ensemble the intricate Double Sextet by Steve Reich. Also, he has appeared as soloist with Carnegie Mellon's Baroque Ensemble, performing Mozart's B flat Major Piano Concerto, K. 595, and with Carnegie Mellon's Philharmonic performing Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue. Most recently, he was featured soloing with the Duquesne Symphony Orchestra performing Prokofiev's Second Piano Concerto in G minor. Currently, he is pursuing an Artist Diploma Degree at Duquesne University under David Allen Wehr. When he isn't glued to a piano bench, he enjoys reading, playing sports, and teaching in his private studio in Squirrel Hill.





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AN INTERVIEW WITH STAGE DIRECTOR DANIEL SLATER

Daniel Slater sat down with us and shared his insights on THE ELIXIR OF LOVE.

What made you want to direct this piece?

It appealed to me as being a very human comedy. The characters are very real. The basic core situation—this boy is hopelessly in love with this girl, who he thinks is unobtainable—is evocative of things all of us have felt. The aspiration of the story, and the way that he wins the day are so heartwarming and touching, that I wanted to find the best way to tell this story.

How does this particular production enhance what is already a wonderful opera?

I don't ever update for the sake of updating. If I update, it is because I want to enhance the piece as I see it. If you do the piece straight, the risk is that the characters seem a little distant from us, because they're farmers in the 19th century and it's a long, long way from us. And particularly Nemorino can come across as being a bit stupid, because in a 19th-century context, he's uneducated and illiterate. I generally have a distaste for making characters weak or not clever. The 1950s setting is extremely aesthetically pleasing. It's not so far away from us that we can't recognize it, but far enough away from it to feel that slight distance, which is useful for comedy. We can give him a bit more humanity, and we can make the chorus characters more varied rather than just being farmers.

What are some of the challenges that this production presents?

Getting away from some of the character stereotypes. Making Belcore feel a bit more suave and sophisticated, instead of 'good looking but stupid'. The challenge of trying to chart a journey for Dulcamara.

The challenge for Adina, who's the key one actually, is not making her feel mean. I've seen productions where she is so self-absorbed that when she finally gets together with Nemorino in the end you want to ask him, "are you sure you want to do this?" So, to try to find a way to make her kittenish and playful, a woman who's got deep feelings that she is scared of acknowledging and dealing with. That's something we can all can relate to, and by doing that we can be on her side as well.

Beyond that the chorus scenes are a challenge. The chorus scenes are very important in this piece. The way that the choreographer Tim Claydon and I work is very detailed. To try to shove all that detail in and not overload the choristers, but challenge and excite them is definitely a challenge.

What are some of your favorite things about this production?

The idea that Dulcamara would arrive in a hot air balloon, which actually preceded everything in the production. When I was going through the story, I saw Nemorino in a desperate situation looking for help from anywhere. And I re-watched "It's a Wonderful Life", and started thinking of Dulcamara as a kind of 'good angel' who descends down from the sky.

I also love the craziness of the girls' scene, which is the second scene of the second act. This gaggle of 20 women who've had girl time in the bar all night long and then are trying to make themselves look pretty to be attractive to Nemorino because he's rich, I think is such a brilliant situation comedy.



Nemorino (Dimitri Pittas) enlists the aid of Dr. Dulcamara (Paolo Pecchioli Photo: David Bachman Photography^o



FOR PARENTS & GRANDPARENTS

Connect The Elixir of Love with many academic areas in children's lives:

ARTS AND HUMANITIES:

Donizetti was familiar with the greatest singers of his day, and often created roles for specific singers, such as Giuseppe Frezzolini as Dr. Dulcamara. Who are your favorite singers today?

BUSINESS, COMPUTER, AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY:

Dr. Dulcamara offers to sell his elixir for a bargain. What is this sales technique called? Find and analyze an online sales pitch for a "miracle" cure.

CAREER EDUCATION AND WORK:

What current professions employ traveling salespeople? What skills are needed to be a successful salesperson?

CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT:

Dr. Dulcamara is a charlatan. Is he legally allowed to sell his "magic potions"? What does the legal phrase "caveat emptor" mean? How does it apply to Dulcamara's wares?

DRIVER EDUCATION:

This opera production stages Dr. Dulcamara entering in a hot air balloon. Compare the skills and training needed to operate a hot air balloon to those of an automobile.

ECONOMICS:

24

Investigate the earning potential of traveling salesmen. How do salesmen who work in several states handle their tax liabilities?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:

Compare the characters in The Elixir of Love to the stereotypes from Italian commedia dell'arte. Create a chart that contrasts the stereotypes to the opera characters.

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY:

Compare the different modes of transportation depicted in this opera: hot air balloon, Vespas, and automobiles. Which mode is more environmentally friendly? Compare gas mileage from a Vespa to another fuel efficient vehicle, such as a Smart car or Prius.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES:

Nemorino was the sole heir to his uncle's estate. What is a sole heir? What are the steps to develop a will? How does this status change Nemorino's marriage prospects?

GEOGRAPHY:

Dulcamara's "elixir" is really a bottle of wine, and Italy is famous for wine. Create a map of Italy that shows its famous wine-making regions and their geographical, land, and climate features.

HEALTH. SAFETY. AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION:

Dulcamara uses red wine as his "elixir of love." What are some actual, medical benefits of drinking red wine? Why is alcohol used in medicines?

HISTORY:

Trace the meaning of the term "patent medicine" throughout history. How has the meaning changed and who has benefitted the most?

MATHEMATICS:

Dr. Dulcamara says his potion would take effect in 24 hours (giving him enough time to leave town). How quickly do medicines/drugs take effect today? How long would it take someone to leave town before being discovered today? How can someone's travels be traced?

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND **ENGINEERING EDUCATION:**

This production of **The Elixir of Love** features Vespa scooters, the ubiquitous Italian motorbikes once popularized by Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck in the 1953 movie Roman Holiday. The scooters are crafted by a company that originally manufactured aircraft. Investigate a Vespa's ratio of strength and rigidity compared to its weight, the type of internal combustion engine, its simple seating design, and the importance of the front

WORLD LANGUAGES:

Do The Elixir of Love character names have any meaning or significance in Italian? Find out what the names Dulcamara, Nemorino, Adina, and Belcore mean

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THE ELIXIR OF LOVE

Student Matinee is performed by the Resident Artists and guest artists of Pittsburgh Opera on April 26, 2018 at 10:30 AM.

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE:

Giannetta Nemorino Adina Belcore

Dr. Dulcamara

Dr. Dulcamara's Assistant

THE ARTISTIC TEAM:

Conductor **Stage Director**

* Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist

Pittsburgh Opera's Student Matinee is a complete performance of Donizetti's madcap romantic comedy with full orchestra, professional singers, chorus, and production

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Susan Sternberger Theater Services Director

Stacy Bartlebaugh-Gmys Manager of Volunteer Services **Joanna Obuzor** Operations Manager

Gerald Stevens Facilities Manager

Bernard M. Bloom Director of Production **Autumn Abernathy** Production Manager

Bryan Briggs Production Manager

Mick Lohrer Head Carpenter

CAST AND OPERA SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. ALL SALES ARE FINAL. USE OF CAMERA AND RECORDING EQUIPMENT IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.

DAVID YURMAN



