



SACRAMENTO OPERA NEWS RELEASE

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SACRAMENTO OPERA

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A SACRAMENTO OPERA PREMIERE: THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

FEBRUARY 27, MARCH 1 AND 3, 2009

(Sacramento, CA 11/7/08) **Sacramento Opera presents Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Sacramento Community Center Theater, 1301 L Street, Sacramento, Friday, February 27, 2009 at 8 pm; Sunday, March 1, 2009 at 2 pm; and Tuesday, March 3, 2009 at 7:30 pm.** *The Marriage of Figaro* is a comic opera in four acts, with music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte. This Sacramento Opera premiere is sung in Italian with projected English supertitles. For more information, visit www.sacopera.org. **For tickets, call 916.808.5181 or visit www.tickets.com. Single tickets are \$15 to \$115.**

A cornerstone of the operatic repertoire, *The Marriage of Figaro* was one of Mozart's most successful works. Based on a once banned stage comedy, this brilliant opera is a miraculous marriage of music and drama in a sublime comedy of manners, as touching as it is funny. **Presenting Bojan Knezevich as Figaro, Malcolm MacKenzie as the Count, Emily Pulley as the Countess, and Sarah Kleeman as Cherubino.** All shows feature the **Sacramento Philharmonic Orchestra**, Sacramento Opera Artistic Director and Conductor, **Timm Rolek**, and the **Sacramento Opera Chorus**. **Richard Harrell** is the stage director.

Bass-Baritone Bojan Knezevich has received critical acclaim for his many operatic portrayals in opera houses in America and in Europe. He sang the role of the Sacristan in Sacramento Opera's 2008 production of *Tosca*. Other recent highlights include: Harasta in *The Cunning Little Vixen* and Hali in *L'Italiana in Algeri* with San Francisco Opera, Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with the New National Theatre in Tokyo and Sarasota Opera in Florida. He has sung Scarpia in *Tosca*, Marcello, Schaunard, Colline, and Benoit/Alcindoro in *La Boheme*, Amonasro in *Aida*, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, the

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four Villains in *The Tales of Hoffman*, Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Enrico Ashton in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Don Alfonso and Guglielmo in *Così fan Tutte*, Don Pasquale in *Don Pasquale*, and Don Bartolo in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. He began his operatic career singing in all the major opera companies in the former Yugoslavia, including Belgrade, Zagreb, and Ljubljana. He then performed concerts in Greece, Romania and in Belgium, where he sang Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, which brought him to the United States and to San Francisco, where he currently resides.

Baritone Malcolm MacKenzie was last seen as Iago in the Sacramento Opera's 2007 production of *Otello*. Mr. MacKenzie has performed with numerous companies, including New York City Opera, The Washington Opera, Paris Opera Bastille, Finland's Savonlinna Festival, San Diego Opera, Opera Pacific, Pittsburgh Opera, Dayton Opera, Madison Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, and Sacramento Opera. A frequent favorite with Los Angeles Opera, he has performed over 20 roles with the company, most recently appearing as Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, and as a special guest in the *Placido Domingo and Friends 20th Anniversary Gala Performance*. Mr. MacKenzie's recent performances include Alfio and Tonio in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* (Opera Santa Barbara), Zurga in Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers* (San Diego Opera), and Horatio Parker's *Hora Novissima* with the Pacific Master Chorale.

Soprano Emily Pulley was last seen as the Governess in the Sacramento Opera's 2007 production of *The Turn of the Screw*. A frequent presence at the Metropolitan Opera, Ms. Pulley's roles include Marguerite in *Faust*, Nedda in *I Pagliacci*, Blanche in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Gretel in *Hänsel und Gretel*, Anne Trulove in *The Rake's Progress*, Musetta in *La Bohème*, Valencienne in *The Merry Widow*, Thérèse in *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*, and First Lady in a new production of *Die Zauberflöte* directed by Julie Taymor. She made her debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden as Mimi in *La Bohème*. Ms. Pulley has delighted audiences across the country and beyond on the stages of New York City Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Dallas Opera, Minnesota Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Seattle Opera, Opera Colorado, and Central City Opera in such roles as Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin*, Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, Minnie in *La Fanciulla del West*, and Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus*.

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Also a champion of new repertoire, she created the role of Lysia in the world premiere of Mark Adamo's new opera, *Lysistrata*, in her Houston Grand Opera debut, which she then reprised for New York City Opera. She made her New York City Opera debut as Lavinia Mannon in *Mourning Becomes Electra*. Recent performances include Marguerite in *Faust* with New Orleans Opera, Madame Lidoine in *Dialogues of the Carmelites* with Kentucky Opera, Love Simpson in *Cold Sassy Tree* with Amarillo Opera, and the title role in *Susannah* with Central City Opera.

The young American **mezzo-soprano Sarah Kleeman** is rapidly becoming known for her beautiful voice, intelligent musicianship, and spirited stage portrayals. In the 2003-2004 Season she was a Resident Artist with Pittsburgh Opera, where her roles included Penelope in *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*, and Mercedes in *Carmen*. In summer of 2004 she sang Siebel in *Faust* with Chautauqua Opera. This summer Ms. Kleeman made her Central City Opera debut as Dorothee in Massenet's *Cendrillon*. Ms. Kleeman has performed Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* with the San Francisco Opera Merola Program, Clotilde in *Norma* with Seattle Opera, Eduige in *Rodelinda* with Music Academy of the West, and Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel* with Guild Opera of Los Angeles. With the Seattle Opera Young Artist Program she has performed Tisbe in *La Cenerentola* and Second Lady in *The Magic Flute*.

Les & Janice Lederer and Drs. John & Lois Crowe are Production Sponsors of *The Marriage of Figaro*.

The Sacramento Opera's 2008-2009 Season is sponsored by the generosity of the James Irvine Foundation, Raley's Family of Fine Stores, Barbara K. Jackson, and the County and City of Sacramento's Cultural Arts Award administered by the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission.

The mission of the Sacramento Opera is to produce outstanding opera, to develop and cultivate a wider public interest in opera and its allied arts, and to further music education in the region.

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