

FLORIDA GRAND Opera

NEWS RELEASE

8390 NW 25th Street ♦ Miami, FL 33122 ♦ T: 305-854-1643 ♦ F: 305-856-1042 ♦ www.fgo.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Justin Moss, jmoss@fgo.org, 305-854-1643 ext. 1600

COMPANY HISTORY OF FLORIDA GRAND OPERA

Florida Grand Opera, celebrating its 70th anniversary season of continuous performances, stands as one of the oldest performing arts organizations in Florida. Florida Grand Opera is one of the resident companies of The Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County where it presents its Miami performances in the *Sanford and Dolores Ziff Ballet Opera House*. Fort Lauderdale performances are given at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts. Florida Grand Opera was formed in June 1994 by the merger of Greater Miami Opera, founded in 1941, and The Opera Guild Inc. of Fort Lauderdale, founded in 1945.

The Greater Miami Opera was founded by Dr. Arturo di Filippi, a voice teacher at the University of Miami. The first production, held at Miami Senior High School in 1942, was a single performance of Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*, performed in English, with Dr. di Filippi singing the role of Canio. In 1945, Dr. di Filippi appeared in a production of *Il trovatore* at Ft. Lauderdale Central High School, representing the first production of the The Opera Guild, Inc. Florida Grand Opera has a rich history of presenting internationally acclaimed artists such as Robert Merrill, Dorothy Kirsten, Richard Tucker, Renata Tebaldi, Roberta Peters, Franco Corelli, Renata Scotto, Montserrat Caballe, Jon Vickers, Sherrill Milnes, Nicolai Gedda, Birgit Nilsson, Anna Moffo, Plácido Domingo, Beverly Sills, Joan Sutherland, Evelyn Lear, James Morris, Thomas Stewart, Diana Soviero, Justino Diaz, Simon Estes, Elizabeth Futral, Helen Donath, Deborah Voigt, and Fernando de la Mora. Luciano Pavarotti made his American debut in 1965 with the company's production of *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

In April, 2007, Florida Grand Opera presented the critically acclaimed world premiere of David Carlson's *Anna Karenina* with libretto by Colin Graham. *Anna Karenina* was commissioned as a co-production by Florida Grand Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. In May 1997, the Company presented the world premiere of *Balseros*, an opera by Robert Ashley with libretto by world renowned Cuban writer María Irene Fornés. *Balseros* was commissioned as a co-production by Florida Grand Opera, Miami-Dade Community College and the South Florida Composers Alliance. Another world premiere was Robert Ward's *Minutes Till Midnight* in 1982. American premieres include Gioachino Rossini's *Bianca e Falliero* and the final revised version of Alberto Franchetti's *Cristoforo Colombo*.

Continued on following page . . .

At the core of Florida Grand Opera's mission is a commitment to training emerging opera professionals and educating young people about opera while embracing the diverse cultural heritage of the South Florida community. Each year, established education programs, including the School Dress Rehearsal Program and the company's education festivals expose thousands of children and students to opera's many facets. Florida Grand Opera's renowned artist training program, the Young Artist Studio, nurtures gifted young singers and provides them with the skills and experiences necessary to move beyond their training at universities and music conservatories into successful careers in the professional opera world.

Florida Grand Opera will present four main-stage productions for the 2010-2011 season: Puccini's *Turandot*, Offenbach's *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and David DiChiera's *Cyrano*, an opera based on Edmond Rostand's play *Cyrano de Bergerac*. *Cyrano*, with a French libretto by Bernard Uzan, that had its world premiere at Michigan Opera Theatre in Detroit in 2007.

#