

FLORIDA GRAND Opera

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Florida Grand Opera to Open 2009-10 Season With *Pagliacci* – *Suor Angelica* Double Bill

Miami, FL – June 1, 2009 Florida Grand Opera will open its 69th season on Saturday, November 14, 2009, with a double-bill of Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* and Puccini's *Suor Angelica* featuring the outstanding American soprano **Kelly Kaduce** singing both Nedda in *Pagliacci* and Sister Angelica in Puccini's gripping musical drama. Ms. Kaduce will be joined in *Suor Angelica* by mezzo-soprano **Mzia Nioradze** as the Princess, Sister Angelica's aunt, who visits the convent to demand that Angelica relinquish her inheritance. When Angelica begs for news of the son she bore seven years earlier, she is devastated to learn he has been dead for two years. Angelica's desperate suicide is followed by a dispensation of grace that provides one of the most moving effects in all of opera. *Suor Angelica* is one of three one-act operas, collectively known as *Il trittico*, that were given their world premiere at New York's Metropolitan Opera in 1918. The others are *Gianni Schicchi* and *Il tabarro*. Mzia Nioradze, a Georgian mezzo-soprano, made her Metropolitan Opera debut in 2002 in *War and Peace* and has performed with leading companies in the United States and Europe.

Tenor **Jay Hunter Morris** will join Ms. Kaduce in *Pagliacci* singing Canio, the leader of a group of itinerant performers. His rage at Nedda, who has betrayed him, spills over into their performance, resulting in the death of both Nedda and her lover, Silvio, before a stunned audience who realize that the arresting drama is in fact real life being played out before them. This *verismo* opera concludes with the famous words signaling the end of the play within a play as well as the opera, "La commedia è finita."

Kelly Kaduce will be seen this summer in the title role of Richard Strauss' *Salome* at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Her previous engagements with Florida Grand Opera include Marguerite in *Faust*, Mimì in *La bohème*, the title role in the world premiere of *Anna Karenina*, and last season as the Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro*. Jay Hunter Morris last appeared with Florida Grand Opera in the 2000 production of *La traviata*, and has since specialized in some of the tenor repertory's most demanding roles for leading companies. Baritone **Mark Rucker** will return to Florida Grand Opera in his signature role of Tonio, who sings the famous prologue to *Pagliacci*, and later betrays Nedda's infidelity to Canio.

Florida Grand Opera Resident Conductor **Andrew Bisantz** will conduct the double-bill. He made his FGO main-stage debut in 2006 conducting performances of *Carmen*, and has subsequently led FGO performances of *Manon Lescaut*, *La bohème* and *La Cenerentola*. He made his Glimmerglass

Opera debut in 2004, conducting Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience*, and in 2005 conducted Massenet's *Le portrait de Manon*, which was subsequently broadcast on NPR. He is currently Guest Music Director of Eugene Opera, where he conducted critically acclaimed productions of *Orphée aux Enfers* and *Don Giovanni* last season, and will return this season to conduct *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Faust*. Additionally, he returns to Portugal to lead the Orquestra Nacional do Porto and will make his Boston Lyric Opera debut conducting a new production of Britten's *Turn of the Screw*.

The season continues in January with the return of soprano **Eglise Gutiérrez** in the title role of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. This bell-canto masterpiece is based on Sir Walter Scott's historical novel, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, and tells the story of a wedding where celebration turns to horror as the young bride enters in her bloodstained nightgown clutching the knife with which she has killed her new husband. The ensuing mad scene is arguably the most famous in all of opera, and has served as a showcase for the world's leading coloratura sopranos.

Eglise Gutiérrez's highly acclaimed performances of Violetta in FGO's 2008 production of *La traviata* were a highlight of the season, and she has become internationally recognized as one of the leading upcoming sopranos. The months prior to her FGO appearance as Lucia will find her in productions at Opéra de Montréal, the Savonlinna Festival, the Ravinia Festival, the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Seattle Opera, and the Dresden Opera. The upcoming Mexican soprano **María Alejandres** will perform the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* on January 27 and 30, prior to her performances of Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette* at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden.

Spanish tenor **Israel Lozano** will join Ms. Gutiérrez in performances as Edgardo. He is a 2003 winner of the Plácido Domingo International Operalia Competition, and has sung leading roles with Washington National Opera, Los Angeles Opera, and Palm Beach Opera, among others. **Mark Panuccio** will join Ms. Alejandres as Edgardo for the January 27 and 30 performances. He appears regularly with leading American companies, including the Cincinnati Opera, Sarasota Opera, Opera Pacific, Utah Festival Opera, Nevada Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Opera Carolina, Portland Summer Opera, and the Opera Company of Philadelphia.

Ramón Tébar, a closely watched young Spanish conductor, will conduct. Maestro Tébar, born in Valencia in 1978, for several years has been the assistant conductor at Palm Beach Opera. He has performed and collaborated with a number of singers, including Montserrat Caballé, Teresa Berganza, Ileana Cotrubaş and Virginia Zeani. He has conducted symphony orchestras in Spain, Italy, the United States, and Russia and opera performances of *Don Pasquale*, *L'italiana in Algeri*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, and *Madama Butterfly*.

Rossini's beloved opera, *The Barber of Seville*, continues the season in February, with a delightful cast of artists. English baritone **Roderick Williams** will make both his Florida Grand Opera and American debut as Figaro, Seville's famous barber. Williams has become widely known throughout the UK and Europe for his opera performances and recitals, and his Figaro in Rossini's opera and his Count in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* are highly regarded. Soprano **Sarah Coburn** returns to Florida Grand Opera to sing Rosina, following her spectacular FGO concert last season with Bryn Terfel, and her performances of Kitty in FGO's 2007 world premiere of *Anna Karenina*. Canadian tenor **Frédéric Antoun** returns to FGO to sing Count Almaviva following his acclaimed performances of Prince Ramiro in last season's *La Cenerentola*.

Three new cast members join the *Barber of Seville* production for the February 24 and 27 performances. Baritone **Kyle Pfortmiller**, who will take the role of Figaro, was recently seen as

Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* with New York City Opera, and as Figaro in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* with the Lake George Opera Festival. He has appeared with companies across the United States including New York City Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Tulsa Opera, Fort Worth Opera, Sarasota Opera, Fresno Grand Opera, Lake George Opera Festival, Opera Grand Rapids and Utah Festival Opera. Tenor **Andrew Bidlack** will perform the role of Count Almaviva. He is a former member of FGO's Young Artist Studio who is enjoying a highly successful career with leading opera companies. Bidlack and Pfortmiller will be joined by soprano **Lielle Berman**, a former member of the Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago who recently made her New York City Opera debut as Cunégonde in *Candide*, who will sing the role of Rosina.

Gary Thor Wedow, who made his FGO debut in the 2008 production of *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, returns to conduct *The Barber of Seville*. This American conductor has a long association with New York City Opera, and has conducted for companies including San Francisco Opera, Seattle Opera, Tokyo's New National Theater, and Toronto's Canadian Opera Company.

The final production of the season, Bizet's *Carmen*, will feature three exciting FGO company debuts: American mezzo-soprano **Kendall Gladen** in the title role, tenor **Adam Diegel** as Don Jose, and Miami's own **Elaine Alvarez** as Micaëla. They will be joined by baritone **Mark Walters**, who made his FGO debut last season as Giorgio Germont in *La traviata*. Kendall Gladen performed the title role of *Carmen* last season for Los Angeles Opera, with Plácido Domingo conducting. She has appeared with the San Francisco Symphony under the direction of Michael Tilson Thomas, and in October 2009 will perform in Miami with the New World Symphony in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, again conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas. Adam Diegel was a National Finalist in the 2003 Metropolitan Opera National Auditions and recently made his European debut as Maurizio in *Adriana Lecouvreur* at the National Theater of Hungary. He also stepped in as a last minute replacement to sing Cavaradossi in *Tosca* with that company. Mr. Diegel's additional engagements for 2009-2010 include Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* with the Savonlinna Opera Festival.

On October 1, 2007, Elaine Alvarez made her Lyric Opera of Chicago debut as Mimì in the season's opening production of Puccini's *La bohème*, and received the highest accolades for her singing in addition to her ability to replace a well-known star and make an outstanding impression. She was launched on an important international career, and is appearing regularly with leading companies in the United States and Europe.

Former FGO Music Director and Artistic Director of Connecticut Opera **Willie Anthony Waters** returns to conduct these performances of *Carmen*. Maestro Waters conducts internationally and is a frequent guest on Metropolitan Opera broadcast intermission features.

For Florida Grand Opera's 2009-2010 season, the creative team of stage director **Renaud Doucet** and designer **André Barbe** have been engaged to develop all new productions, incorporating contemporary technology into visually arresting and artistically insightful productions that will captivantly illuminate each opera. They have stated that, "We conceived the 2009-2010 season as a dinner party menu where five favorites of the opera repertoire will be revisited through various fragrances and aromas. In the course of this musical journey we set the table for our guests and bring to our designs and direction a variety of flavoring through emotions and theatricality." Doucet and Barbe have gained international recognition for their productions at L'Opéra National du Rhin, Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe, New York City Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Opéra de Montréal, Vienna Volksoper, Wexford Festival Opera, Arizona Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, and the Royal Swedish Opera. Of their May 2009 production of Massenet's *Manon* for Scottish Opera, The

Guardian wrote, “. . . director-and-designer team Renaud Doucet and André Barbe have captured perfectly the artifice that is a large part of *Manon's* charm.”

Full subscriptions to the 2009-10 season start at just \$32. Call 1-800-741-1010 to order.

Cast lists and performance dates follow:

* = Debut; ■ = Former Young Artist

Pagliacci by Ruggero Leoncavallo and ***Suor Angelica*** by Giacomo Puccini
Sung in Italian with English and Spanish projected translations

**MIAMI ■ Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County
Sanford and Dolores Ziff Ballet Opera House**

November 14 at 7 p.m. – Opening Night
November 18, 20, 24, 28 at 8 p.m.
November 22 matinee at 2 p.m.

**FORT LAUDERDALE ■ Broward Center for the Performing Arts
Au-Rene Theater**

December 3 & 5 at 8 p.m.

Conductor..... Andrew Bisantz
Director Sandra Pocceschi*
Set Designer André Barbe
Costume Designer André Barbe
Lighting Designer Gordon W. Olson
Chorus Master..... John Keene
Production Florida Grand Opera

Pagliacci

Canio Jay Hunter Morris
Nedda Kelly Kaduce
Tonio Mark Rucker
Silvio Kyle Pfortmiller*

Suor Angelica

Suor Angelica Kelly Kaduce
The Princess, her aunt Mzia Nioradze*

Lucia di Lammermoor by Gaetano Donizetti
Sung in Italian with English and Spanish projected translations

MIAMI ■ **Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County**
Sanford and Dolores Ziff Ballet Opera House

January 23, 2010 7:00 p.m. – Opening Night
January 26, 27, 29, 30 at 8 p.m.
January 31 matinee at 2 p.m.

FORT LAUDERDALE ■ **Broward Center for the Performing Arts**
Au-Rene Theater

February 4 & 6 at 8 p.m.

Conductor..... Ramón Tébar*
Director Renaud Doucet
Set Designer André Barbe
Costume Designer André Barbe
Lighting Designer Gordon W. Olson
Production Florida Grand Opera
Lucia Eglise Gutiérrez (Jan. 23, 26, 29, 31M, Feb. 4 & 6)
Lucia Maria Alejandres* (Jan. 27 & 30)
Edgardo Israel Lozano* (Jan. 23, 26, 29, 31M, Feb. 4 & 6)
Edgardo Mark Panuccio* (Jan. 27 & 30)
Enrico Mark Walters (Jan. 23, 26, 29, 31M, Feb. 4 & 6)
Enrico Jeremy Kelly* (Jan. 27 & 30)
Raimondo Jordan Bisch*

The Barber of Seville by Gioachino Rossini
Sung in Italian with English and Spanish projected translations

MIAMI ■ **Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County**
Sanford and Dolores Ziff Ballet Opera House

February 20 at 7 p.m. – Opening Night
February 23, 24, 26, 27 at 8 p.m.
February 28 matinee at 2 p.m.

FORT LAUDERDALE ■ **Broward Center for the Performing Arts**
Au-Rene Theater

March 4 & 6 at 8 p.m.

Conductor..... Gary Thor Wedow
Director Renaud Doucet
Set Designer André Barbe
Costume Designer André Barbe
Lighting Designer Gordon W. Olson
Production Florida Grand Opera
Count Almaviva..... Frédéric Antoun (Feb. 20, 23, 26, 28M, March 4 & 6)
Count Almaviva..... Andrew Bidlack* ■ (Feb. 24 & 27)
Rosina..... Sarah Coburn (Feb. 20, 23, 26, 28M, March 4 & 6)
Rosina..... Lielle Berman* (Feb. 24 & 27)
Figaro Roderick Williams * (Feb. 20, 23, 26, 28M, March 4 & 6)
Figaro Kyle Pfortmiller (Feb. 24 & 27)
Bartolo Bruno Pratico*

Carmen by Georges Bizet
Sung in French with English and Spanish projected translations

MIAMI ■ **Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County**
Sanford and Dolores Ziff Ballet Opera House

April 24 at 7 p.m. – Opening Night
April 28, 30, May 4 & 8 at 8 p.m.
May 2 matinee at 2 p.m.

FORT LAUDERDALE ■ **Broward Center for the Performing Arts**
Au-Rene Theater

May 13 & 15 at 8 p.m.

Conductor..... Willie Anthony Waters
Director Renaud Doucet
Set Designer André Barbe
Costume Designer André Barbe
Lighting Designer Gordon W. Olson
Production Florida Grand Opera
Carmen Kendall Gladen*
Don José Adam Diegel*
Micaëla Elaine Alvarez*
Escamillo..... Mark Walters

About Florida Grand Opera

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. Celebrating its 69th season of continuous performances, Florida Grand Opera stands as one of the oldest performing arts organizations in Florida. In addition to producing standard repertoire, Florida Grand Opera also presents lesser known operas, as well as commissions and produces new operas. Annually, performances are attended by nearly 100,000 people, and education and outreach programs serve over 50,000 students. FGO offers several highly successful outreach and educational programs, including its internationally-recognized Young Artist Studio. Founded in 1984, the program attracts young singers who train and enhance their professional skills during a 35-week Miami residency.

Florida Grand Opera is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Funding for this organization is provided, in part, by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners as recommended by the Broward Cultural Council and by the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau. Additional support is provided by the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, the Cultural Affairs Council, the Mayor and the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners. Program support is provided by the City of Miami Beach, Cultural Affairs Program, Cultural Arts Council. Florida Grand Opera is a Resident Company of the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County and a member company of OPERA America.

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