

PITTSBURGH OPERA

For Immediate Release

May 4, 2009

Contact:

Kesha M. Pate, Public Relations Manager
kpate@pittsburghopera.org or (412) 281-0912 ext 248

Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist Steps in to Sing from the Pit

Pittsburgh, PA... The May 2 opening of [Pittsburgh Opera's](#) *The Italian Girl in Algiers* was full of surprises, both on stage and off. In a last-minute twist, William Burden was unable to sing the role of Lindoro and [Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist Dean Kokanos](#) stepped in to sing from the orchestra pit while Mr. Burden walked the role on stage.

"It is always a very tense moment when you find out one of your singers won't be able to perform," said [General Director Christopher Hahn](#). "But Dean is a talented young artist and we were glad to have him on hand to step in. He did a wonderful job and we are very proud of him."

*Experience is
Everything
2008-2009
Season*

A native of Pittsburgh, Mr. Kokanos grew up singing at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Dormition in Oakmont and has earned degrees at Duquesne University (BM) and Carnegie Mellon University (MM). He joined Pittsburgh Opera's Resident Artists program last season and performed as Nemorino in *The Elixir of Love* Behind the Curtain, Bill in *Flight* and Tebaldo in *The Capulets & the Montagues* Student Matinee. This season he has performed as the First Philistine in *Samson & Dalila*, Ernesto in *Don Pasquale* and Parpignol in *La bohème*.

Mr. Kokanos will perform the role on stage for the Tuesday, May 5 performance. Mr. Burden is expected to return for the Friday, May 8 and Sunday, May 10 performances.

[Pittsburgh Opera](#), now celebrating its 70th season, is one of America's leading opera companies. It produces a range of programs, from mainstage productions to free community concerts to intimate cabarets. Pittsburgh Opera's internationally renowned resident artist program is among the country's top five training centers for rising opera stars. More than 20,000 students, families and educators participate in Pittsburgh Opera educational events annually. The company's newly designed administrative and rehearsal space is housed in a 140-year-old air brake factory in the city's Strip District.

Subscriptions for as little as \$41. Single tickets for as little as \$16. For ticket information visit our website www.pittsburghopera.org or call (412) 281-0912

###