

## **Pittsburgh Opera NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artists headline new production of *Don Pasquale***

- WHAT:** Gaetano Donizetti's opera *Don Pasquale*
- WHERE:** CAPA Theater, 111 Ninth Street, Downtown Pittsburgh
- WHEN:** Saturday, February 7, 8:00 PM      Tuesday, February 10, 7:00 PM  
 Friday, February 13, 8:00 PM      Sunday, February 15, 2:00 PM  
**Note: all performances are sold out.**
- RUN TIME:** Two hours, 15 minutes, including one intermission.
- LANGUAGE:** Sung in Italian with English titles projected above the stage.
- TICKETS:** Reserved seating is \$40. **All four performances are sold out.**  
 Call 412- 456-6666 for more information or visit [pittsburghopera.org](http://pittsburghopera.org).

**Pittsburgh, PA, January 27, 2009 . . .** Pittsburgh Opera presents a new production of Gaetano Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* at the CAPA Theater February 7 – 15. Directed by Eric Einhorn and conducted by the company's Head of Music Glenn Lewis, Pittsburgh Opera's Resident Artists star in this now-annual production in cooperation with Pittsburgh CAPA (Creative and Performing Arts) magnet school. CAPA provides an intimate space for opera works chosen especially for the current group of Resident Artists. General Director Christopher Hahn commissioned this new production from designer Cameron Anderson that features arresting floral motifs and a multitude of bell jars provided by world-renowned Blenko Glass Company.

Hahn is pleased with rehearsals of the production so far: "I am not at all surprised that our Resident Artists are completely at home in this opera – they are an undeniably talented group and our audiences are recognizing that more and more. The fact that all four shows are already sold out is very exciting, and it is in great part due to their appeal as artists." Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist Liam Moran headlines as the miserly Don Pasquale; Deborah Selig is the young widow Norina, later the shrew "Sofronia"; Jonathan Beyer is Dr. Malatesta; Carlos Feliciano and Dean Kokanos share the roles of Ernesto and The Notary.

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### **Director Einhorn's vision**

Eric Einhorn, who directed Pittsburgh Opera's *Xerxes* (2005), moves the *Don Pasquale* story to Victorian Rome. He has also substantially altered the traditional look and character of Pasquale, usually portrayed as a fat, mean miser. "Having worked with Liam [Moran] before, I knew we could go more interesting places with Pasquale than a traditional blustery "buffo." I see Pasquale as an extremely practical, scientific man of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Like many well-off men of the period, he dabbles in botany. He is very interested in classifying and understanding every aspect of the world. His lab is filled with bell jars and plants that he studies constantly. He would like to marry off Ernesto and move to his next plant." Einhorn's switch to a tall, thin intellectual makes Pasquale "more frustrated than vengeful, when Ernesto doesn't 'fit under his bell jar.'"

Einhorn also modified the character of Norina. "She is, of course, a very strong character. In this version, rather than reading about the knights in her aria, she is the author of the book. In her, we see a vivacious Victorian woman trying to make a name for herself as a writer."

### **The bell jars: Cameron Anderson's set design**

Set Designer Cameron Anderson, making her Pittsburgh Opera debut, conceived a set that captures the world of the 'new' Pasquale: an elegant retreat from the rest of the world, a peaceful, cerebral place for study and contemplation, with a wall full of specimens covered by bell jars – until "Sofronia" brings her over-the-top sensibilities into it. Pasquale's prized bell jars, by special arrangement, are provided by the Blenko Glass Company of Milton, West Virginia. The jars are hand-blown, signed and numbered for this production and will be auctioned as part of a fundraiser in the coming months.

### **THE CAST** (in order of vocal appearance)

Don Pasquale	Liam Moran	bass
Dr. Malatesta	Jonathan Beyer	baritone
Ernesto	Carlos Feliciano 2/7, 2/13	tenor
	Dean Kokanos 2/10, 2/15	tenor
Norina	Deborah Selig	soprano
Notary	Dean Kokanos 2/7, 2/13	tenor
	Carlos Feliciano 2/10, 2/15	tenor

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## PRODUCTION CREDITS

Conductor Glenn Lewis  
Stage Director Eric Einhorn  
Set Designer Cameron Anderson+  
Costume Designer Toni West  
Lighting Designer Stevie O'Brian Agnew  
+Pittsburgh Opera debut

## RELATED EVENTS

### **Pittsburgh Opera Preview on WQED-FM 89.3**

Saturday, January 31 at 12:30 PM and Friday, February 6 at 7:00 PM

An in-depth introduction to the singers, music and production of *Don Pasquale*.

### **Free Pre-Opera Talks**

One hour before each performance in the CAPA Theater Black Box.

Join Pittsburgh Opera's Manager of Education Programs, Kristin Gatch, for an introduction to *Don Pasquale*. Free of charge to all ticketholders; no reservations necessary.

## FACTS ABOUT *DON PASQUALE*

- Opera in three acts; premiered in Paris, France at the Théâtre Italien, January 3, 1843.
- Originally set to French texts.
- The Italian premiere was at La Scala, Milan on April 17, 1843.
- Composer: Gaetano Donizetti (1797 – 1848)
- Librettist: Giovanni Ruffini (1807-1881)
- Setting for this production: *Don Pasquale*'s bourgeois villa in Rome, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century

Pittsburgh Opera, now celebrating its 70<sup>th</sup> 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.

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