

Pittsburgh Opera NEWS RELEASE

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Pittsburgh Opera's 'Opera Up Close' Returns October 11 Adds music to Saturday shopping trips to The Strip

WHAT: Behind-the-scenes previews

WHEN: Selected Saturdays, October 11, 2008 – April 25, 2009; 12:45 PM

WHERE: Pittsburgh Opera's new headquarters in the Strip District at 2425 Liberty Avenue

COST: Free, no reservations necessary.

Box lunches available from **il mercato**: \$14 in advance, delivered to Pittsburgh Opera in time for the concerts. Box lunch orders must be placed by Friday at noon. Call 412-281-0912 x227 to order, or bring your own lunch.

Pittsburgh, PA (10/6/2008) ... By popular demand, Pittsburgh Opera brings back its **Opera Up Close** series. These behind-the-scenes previews take place at Pittsburgh Opera's new home at 2425 Liberty Avenue in the Strip District. Originated by General Director Christopher Hahn and previously hosted by John Mauceri, these behind-the-scenes previews begin with an in-depth look at the music of the opera currently in production, and continue with a panel discussion by artists who bring the work to the stage: stage directors, singers, and designers. Music Director Antony Walker highlights the *Samson & Dalila* session on October 11.

Opera Up Close begins at 12:45 PM on selected dates, immediately after Pittsburgh Opera's weekly Brown Bag Opera concerts. Opera Up Close continues on November 8 (*The Grapes of Wrath*), January 31 (*Don Pasquale*), March 14 (*La bohème*), and April 25 (*The Italian Girl in Algiers*).

Pittsburgh Opera's popular **Brown Bag Opera Concerts** also return for the 2008-2009 season in a greatly expanded schedule. These 30-minute lunchtime concerts take place at noon each Saturday at Pittsburgh Opera's new home at 2425 Liberty Avenue in the Strip District. Pittsburgh Opera's Resident Artists, a group of seven rising opera stars, shine in these free and engaging community concerts.

Each week in the Brown Bag series, the Resident Artists will present a different program of opera music and songs, including music for the holidays, art songs, and vocal chamber music. They will be accompanied by members of the Pittsburgh Opera music staff, including pianist Mark Trawka and his colleagues Glenn Lewis and James Lesniak. From time to time, guest artists will appear in the Brown Bag concerts.

Pittsburgh Opera's Resident Artists are competitively selected from over 500 applicants each year. Through performance opportunities, community outreach, and coaching with the opera industry's most distinguished professionals, the Resident Artists are prepared for the world's greatest opera stages.

"Opera Lady" Beth Parker and other Pittsburgh Opera staff members will welcome audiences to these concerts that give people an opportunity to see and hear opera singers in an intimate setting. After each performance, audience members also have a chance to meet the artists.

Brown Bag Concerts and Opera Up Close are free and open to the public; no reservations are required. For more information call (412) 281-0912 or visit www.pittsburghopera.org.

Brown Bag schedule for 2008

October 4, 11*, 18, 25

November 1, 8*, 15, 22, 29

December 6, 13, 20

Brown Bag schedule for 2009

January 10, 17, 24, 31*

February 7, 14, 21, 28

March 7, 14*, 21, 28

April 4, 11, 18, 25*

May 2, 9, 16

* includes Opera Up Close

LINKS:

Pittsburgh Opera calendar of events:

http://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/calendar_oct08.shtml

Pittsburgh Opera Resident artists:

http://www.pittsburghopera.org/opera_center/opera_center_artists.shtml

Pittsburgh Opera, now celebrating its 70th season, is one of America's leading opera companies. It offers a range of programs, from main-stage productions to free community concerts to intimate cabarets. Pittsburgh Opera's internationally renowned resident artists program is among the country's top five training centers for rising opera stars. Each year, more than 20,000 students, families, and educators participate in Pittsburgh Opera educational events. 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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