

January 12, 2017

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Pittsburgh Opera presents Puccini's Turandot
Puccini's magnum opus

What:	Turandot , by Giacomo Puccini. Libretto by Giuseppe Adami and Renato Simoni
Where:	Benedum Center for the Performing Arts, 237 7 th Street, downtown Pittsburgh
When:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sat, March 25, 2017 * 8:00 PM • Tue, March 28, 2017 * 7:00 PM • Fri, March 31, 2017 * 7:30 PM • Sun, April 2, 2017 * 2:00 PM
Run Time:	2 hours, 32 minutes, including two intermissions
Language:	Sung in Italian with English texts projected above the stage
Tickets:	Tickets start at just \$12. Group Discounts available. Call 412-456-6666 for more information or visit pittsburghopera.org/tickets .
Media Events	<i>Please contact ccox@pittsburghopera.org for reservations</i> Photo Call (Monday, March 13 th , 12:30 PM) – location TBD Full Dress Rehearsal (Thursday, March 23 rd , 7:00 PM), Benedum
Related Events <i>See pages 5-6 of this release.</i>	Opera Up Close (March 12 th) Brown Bag Concert (March 18 th) WQED Preview (March 18 th & 24 th) Meet the Artists (March 28 th) Audio Commentary (March 28 th)



Photo by David Bachman Photography.

Pittsburgh, PA

Pittsburgh Opera continues its 78th season with Puccini's masterpiece **Turandot**, at the Benedum Center March 25 – April 2.

Set in ancient China, **Turandot** is one of the most popular operas of all time - a lavish production full of dazzling sets and costumes, beautiful music, and epic singing.

The opera's story involves Prince Calaf, who falls in love with the icy Princess Turandot. To marry her, he must solve three riddles; a single wrong answer results in death.

[Alexandra Loutsion](#) makes her long-awaited role debut as Princess Turandot. [Thiago Arancam](#) makes his Pittsburgh Opera debut as her suitor Calaf, having sung the role previously in Auckland, Caracas, and Naples, Florida.

Even first-time opera-goers will recognize Calaf's powerful aria "Nessun dorma," which is a staple of dramatic cinematic moments, sporting events, and [Italian tire commercials](#) alike.

Can Calaf win Turandot's heart without losing his head? See why **Turandot** is an all-time favorite.

Renaud Doucet directs. Antony Walker conducts.

Tickets start at just \$12 and are [available online](#).

Fascinating Facts about Turandot

1. The “Nessun Dorma” (English translation “No one shall sleep”) is one of the most famous, dramatic, and well-known arias in opera history. Luciano Pavarotti famously performed it at the 1990 World Cup, and reprised it at his last-ever performance, at the 2006 Torino Winter Olympics. It has been featured at climactic moments in movies ranging from [Bend it Like Beckham](#), [The Sum of All Fears](#), and [Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation](#) (where it occurred during a performance of the opera in Vienna), as well as a famous [Pirelli tire commercial](#).
2. This marks the role debut for [Alexandra Loutsion](#) as Turandot. Ms. Loutsion grew up in Canonsburg, PA, home to Perry Como and Bobby Vinton. She is an alumna, not just of the Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist program, but also the [Pittsburgh Youth Chorus](#) (formerly Children’s Festival Chorus) and the [Junior Mendelssohn Choir](#). The role is famously difficult, and takes such a toll on the vocal chords that singers specialize in it knowing they are risking a shortened career.
3. **Turandot** was Puccini’s final opera. In fact, he died shortly before he could complete it. The ending was composed by Franco Alfano. During the world premiere opening night in 1926, conductor Arturo Toscanini stopped the performance where Puccini finished writing, telling the audience “Here the Maestro laid down his pen.”

The story, in brief

Set in ancient China, the opera's story involves Prince Calaf, who falls in love with the icy Princess Turandot.

To obtain permission to marry Turandot, a suitor has to solve three riddles; a single wrong answer results in death. Prince Calaf is dazzled by Turandot's beauty and wants to attempt to solve her three riddles. His father Timur, and Timur’s servant Liù– who is secretly in love with the Prince– plead with him in vain not to attempt the riddles.

Calaf correctly solves the riddles, but Turandot still refuses to marry him. Calaf offers her a way out: learn his name before dawn, and he will die after all. Believing that no one will reveal his name, the Prince waits for dawn and anticipates his victory, singing his famous aria "Nessun dorma."

Turandot realizes that Liù knows Calaf’s name, and attempts to torture it out of her. Liù withstands the torturing, declares that she will not reveal his name, then seizes a dagger from a soldier's belt and stabs herself.

The Prince reproaches Turandot for her cruelty, then takes her in his arms and kisses her. Turandot feels herself falling for him and is conflicted. She admits that, ever since he came, she has both hated and loved him. She asks him to leave, taking his secret name with him. The Prince however, reveals his name and places his life in Turandot's hands. Ultimately, she realizes she loves him too, and spares his life. The lovers embrace while the crowd rejoices.

For additional information, videos, musical samples, and cast biographies, visit pittsburghopera.org/turandot.

Tickets and Group Discounts

- Tickets to **Turandot** start at just \$12
- All performances are at the Benedum Center, 237 7th Street, in downtown Pittsburgh
- To purchase tickets, call 412-456-6666, visit the Theatre Square Box Office, or buy online at https://opera.culturaldistrict.org/production/47941/list_performances.
- Group discounts are available. For discounted group tickets (6 or more), contact Regina Connolly at 412-281-0912, x 213

Sponsors

- The 2016-17 Pittsburgh Opera season is generously supported by [PNC](#)
- [WQED-FM](#) is Season Media Sponsor
- Tuesday performance sponsor: [Ambridge Regional Distribution and Manufacturing Center](#).

Cast and Artistic Team

Princess Turandot	Alexandra Loutsion **
Prince Calaf	Thiago Arancam +
Liù	Maria Luigia Borsi
Timur	Wei Wu +
Emperor Altoum	Joseph Frank
Ping	Craig Verm
Pang	Julius Ahn +
Pong	Joseph Hu +
Conductor	Antony Walker
Stage Director	Renaud Doucet
Set Designer	André Barbe
Lighting Designer	Guy Simard
Asst. Conductor	Glenn Lewis
Chorus Master	Mark Trawka
Associate Coach/Pianist	James Lesniak

+ Pittsburgh Opera debut

* Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist

** Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist alumna

Related Events for Turandot

Opera Up Close: Turandot

Sunday, March 12th, 2017 from 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Founders' Room, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)

Opera Up Close is an in-depth look at the music and story of **Turandot**, with singers and directors from the production. Admission is \$5; free to members of [FRIENDS of Pittsburgh Opera](#) and \$50+ donors. Handicapped parking is available by reservation. For more information: 412-281-0912 or <http://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/opera-up-close-turandot>.

March Brown Bag concert

Saturday, March 18th, 2017 from noon - 1:00PM

George R. White Opera Studio, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)

You're invited to Pittsburgh Opera's free March Brown Bag concert. The program includes some of our 2016-17 Resident Artists' favorite selections. It's free and open to everyone. Bring a friend and bring a lunch! Meet the Resident Artists afterward in an informal reception.

Doors open at 11:30AM. Handicapped parking is available by reservation. For more information: 412-281-0912 or <http://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/march-brown-bag-concert1>

Turandot previews on WQED-FM 89.3 and WQED.ORG

Saturday, March 18th, 2017 from 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM and

Friday, March 24th, 2017 from 7:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Hosted by WQED, and broadcast over the airwaves on WQED-FM 89.3 as well as the WQED website, the **Turandot Preview** gives listeners an engaging introduction to the singers, music, and story of the opera. For more information:

<http://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/wqed-preview-turandot>

Audio Commentary: Turandot

Tuesday, March 28th, 7:00 PM

Benedum Center

Ticketholders with visual impairments are invited to use Pittsburgh Opera's Audio Description service at our Tuesday performances. Trained volunteers describe the scenery, costumes, and stage action. The listeners hear these descriptions via assistive listening devices. Those wishing to use Audio Description should reserve seats to the Tuesday, March 28th performance by contacting Regina Connolly at 412-281-0912, ext. 213 or groups@pittsburghopera.org. Braille and large-print programs are also available at all performances.

Meet the Artists of Turandot

**Tuesday, March 28th, immediately following the opera
Benedum Center**

Ticketholders for the Tuesday, March 28th performance of **Turandot** are invited to remain in their seats immediately following the performance for interviews with [General Director Christopher Hahn](#) and the stars of the opera. This event is free to all Tuesday performance ticketholders.

COMING UP NEXT for Pittsburgh Opera:

The world premiere of Daniel Sonenberg's [The Summer King – the Josh Gibson story](#), April 29th – May 7th

Pittsburgh Opera celebrates its 78th season in 2016-17. Established by five intrepid women in 1939, Pittsburgh Opera is viewed as one of the most vibrant opera organizations in the U.S., with a rich artistic tradition, outstanding educational programs, an acclaimed artist training program, and a progressive outlook toward the future. Its green initiative culminated in LEED® Silver certification for its Strip District headquarters, and its capacity as a true community partner has increased significantly under General Director Christopher Hahn's leadership.

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