



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SACRAMENTO PHILHARMONIC & OPERA PRESENTS OPERA FINALE, *RIGOLETTO*

SACRAMENTO, CALIF. The Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera brings a dramatic, masterfully imagined opera to the Sacramento Community Center Theater with Giuseppe Verdi's *Rigoletto* on Saturday, April 13, 2019. The semi-staged production will feature the orchestra at the heart of the action juxtaposed by a uniquely designed set and nationally recognized artists in full costume. The opera acts as the 2018-2019 Classics Series finale, bringing to a close the SP&O's most impactful season yet.

"Opera is at home in Sacramento and we couldn't be more proud of that. After the success of *Tosca* last year it was clear that the artistic quality and emotion of this year's opera had to resonate even more," said Executive Director Alice Sauro.

Verdi's tragic masterpiece of passion and retribution revolves around a lecherous duke who lives to take his pleasure and his twisted court jester named Rigoletto who lives to take his revenge. The opera's original title, *La maledizione* (The Curse), refers to a curse placed on both the Duke and Rigoletto by a courtier whose daughter the Duke has seduced with Rigoletto's encouragement. The curse comes to fruition when Rigoletto's daughter Gilda falls in love with the Duke and sacrifices her life to save him from the assassin hired by her father.

Grammy award-winning conductor **Michael Christie** makes his debut on Sacramento's operatic stage to take patrons on the treacherous journey of love and betrayal. He is joined by a star-studded cast featuring lauded artists from around the nation including: rich-voiced baritone **Joshua Jeremiah**, colorful tenor **Rafael Mouras**, powerful soprano **Monica Dewey**, and more. The production is led by award-winning stage director **Michael Mori** who is known for working in both urban site-specific settings as well as conventional opera houses.

"We're doing something different here. With a semi-staged opera, an incredible amount of energy goes into the musical details, and bringing them to sparkling life requires an excellent cast. That's what makes this a truly unique presentation. It's a new way to experience opera and we look forward to sharing this together," said Sauro.

A limited number of tickets are still available at SacPhilOpera.org.

Performance Date: Saturday, April 13, 2019 at 8:00 pm

Location: Sacramento Community Center Theater

Director: Michael Mori

Conductor: Michael Christie

Cast:

Rigoletto	Joshua Jeremiah
Duke	Rafael Moras
Gilda	Monica Dewey
Sparafucile	Kenneth Kellogg
Maddalena	Julie Miller
Giovanna	Hilary Taylor
Count Ceprano	Niels Krop
Countess Ceprano	Caroline Hewitt
Matteo Borsa	Aaron Gallington
Count Monterone	Chauncey Blade
Marullo	Jared Guest
Herald	Adriel Cruz

Cast bios can be found at SacPhilOpera.org/season/guest-soloists/

About Michael Mori, director

Michael Hidetoshi Mori is an award-winning Canadian/American stage director, and the Artistic Director of Tapestry Opera in Toronto, Canada. A trained baritone and actor, Michael made his performance debut in New York City at the age of 11 with the Dicapo Opera, and as a child performing artist he toured the U.S. and Europe extensively. After completing Bachelor's and Master's degrees in opera performance at the University of British Columbia, Michael obtained diplomas from Die Wiener Meisterkurse, Vienna, and Die Universität Mozarteum Sommerakademia, Salzburg.

A highlight among Michael's most innovative projects is Tapestry Explorations (Tap:Ex), an annual concert experience that collides opera with other artistic forms. The series has experimented with fully choreographed art-music (Revolutions), synthesizing cut-film, track, turn-table, live soprano and percussion (Tables-Turned), and a new collaboration with punk band Fu*ked Up (Metallurgy). Past credits as a stage director or assistant director have included productions in Toronto, Vancouver, St. John's, Columbus and Dallas.

About Michael Christie, conductor

Michael Christie is a thoughtfully innovative conductor, equally at home in the symphonic and opera worlds, who is focused on making the audience experience at his performances entertaining, enlightening, and enriching. He is the newly appointed Music Director of the New West Symphony, serving the greater Los Angeles area in Thousand Oaks and Oxnard, California. The New York Times reports, "Michael Christie is a director open to adventure and challenge," and the Cincinnati Enquirer declares, "If Michael Christie represents the future of music in this country, the future looks promising indeed."

Christie won a 2019 Grammy Award (Best Opera Recording) for the world premiere recording of Mason Bates' *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* with The Santa Fe Opera (PENTATONE). In 2017, Christie led the world premiere performances at The Santa Fe Opera, "with suave assurance" (San Francisco Chronicle), with "precision and pizzazz" (Santa Fe New Mexican), and "preside[d] over an expertly executed performance" (The Financial Times).

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What began as the Sacramento Symphony in 1927 is now combined into the Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera, returning with authority as a melded organization in 2015. The organization is now entering its fifth season under the executive leadership of Alice Sauro, and once again offers musical power, beauty, and innovation. As one of the Central Valley's premier arts ensembles, the organization continues to bring the very best artistic talent to audiences throughout the region.

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