

# SEATTLE OPERA.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 4, 2016**

Contact: Gabrielle Nomura Gainor, [206.676.5559](tel:206.676.5559), [gabrielle.gainor@seattleopera.org](mailto:gabrielle.gainor@seattleopera.org)

## Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* unleashes the imagination

Non-traditional production takes viewers on a dark and stormy ride

May 7, 8, 11, 14, 18, 20, & 21  
McCaw Hall

Seattle—Before Captain Jack Sparrow of the *Pirates of the Caribbean* films sailed the seven seas, Wagner's operatic tale of a cursed pirate had been thrilling audiences for almost 200 years. Seattleites will soon get to experience this masterpiece for themselves in May 2016, as Seattle Opera presents [\*The Flying Dutchman\*](#).

"*Dutchman* truly has something for everybody," said **General Director Aidan Lang**. "With stirring choruses and orchestral writing, it's the ideal entry point for the first-time Wagnerian. For those more familiar with Wagner's operas, this piece offers tantalizing glimpses of his mature musical style, and the deeper idea that permeates most of his later works—finding redemption through love."

In this story, a ghostly sailor condemned to wander for all eternity sets foot on land every seven years to search for a bride who can bring him peace. In a small fishing village he encounters Senta, a young woman obsessed with his legend.

Should the Dutchman dare to hope that true love can break the curse and end his suffering?

More than 125 artists, including principals, Seattle Opera Chorus, and Seattle Symphony Orchestra, perform in this movie-length production, presented without intermission. When previously presented in Portland, this new-to-Seattle show was praised by *The Oregonian*, who wrote: “[Stage director **Christopher Alden** and Wagner] are in many respects, kindred spirits—provocative, divisive, and dismissive of tradition.” Alden has created an abstracted version of this Wagner masterpiece which draws its inspiration from art and social trends of the 1920s. Coupled with Wagner's sweeping orchestrations under the baton of **Maestro Sebastian Lang-Lessing** (2014 International Wagner Competition and Speight Celebration), *Dutchman* will evoke the power of the sea and the dark recesses of humanity.

Sharing the title character are two singers who've made big impressions on Seattle audiences in the past: **Greer Grimsley**, Wotan from Seattle Opera's *Ring* cycle and the villain Scarpia from *Tosca*, as well as **Alfred Walker**, who earned praise for his portrayal of The Villains in *The Tales of Hoffmann* (2014). In the role of Senta, the young woman who obsessively loves the doomed pirate, are Australian soprano **Rebecca Nash** in her Seattle Opera debut, and **Wendy Bryn Harmer**, who returns to McCaw Hall following the 2013 *Ring*.

Erik, Senta's fiancé, will be performed by both Austrian tenor **Nikolai Schukoff**, and Danish tenor **David Danholt**, winner of a first prize at the 2014 Seattle Opera International Wagner Competition. Two other singers from Seattle Opera's world-famous *Ring* return for all performances of *Dutchman*. They include **Luretta Bybee** as Mary, an older lady who now regrets filling Senta's head with ghost stories, and **Daniel Sumegi** as Daland, Senta's father. **Colin Ainsworth** makes his company debut as the Steersman.

*The Flying Dutchman* premieres Saturday, May 7, and runs through Saturday, May 21. Tickets are available online at [seattleopera.org](http://seattleopera.org) or by calling 206.389.7676 or 800.426.1619. Tickets may also be purchased at the box office by visiting 1020 John Street (two blocks west of Fairview), Monday-Friday between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Ticket prices start at \$25. Groups save 15 percent: 206.676.5588 or [groups@seattleopera.org](mailto:groups@seattleopera.org). Seattle Opera Ticket Office: 206.389.7676/800.426.1619. Online orders: [seattleopera.org](http://seattleopera.org).

**In April, Seattle Opera offers free public-preview talks on *The Flying Dutchman* at libraries throughout the Puget Sound. For a full list, go to [seattleopera.org/calendar](http://seattleopera.org/calendar).**

### ***THE FLYING DUTCHMAN***

Music and Libretto by Richard Wagner  
In German with English captions

Marion Oliver McCaw Hall  
Performances: May 7 - 21, 2016

Approximate Running Time: 2 hours and 30 minutes **(no intermission)**  
Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m., matinee at 2:00 p.m.

Premiere: January 2, 1843, at Semperoper, Dresden

#### **Cast:**

Dutchman	Greer Grimsley (May 7, 11, 14, 18 & 21) Alfred Walker (May 8m & 20)
Senta	Rebecca Nash† (May 7, 11, 18 & 21) Wendy Bryn Harmer (May 8m, 14 & 20)
Erik	Nikolai Schukoff† (May 7, 11, 14, 18 & 21) David Danholt †(May 8m & 20)
Daland	Daniel Sumegi (May 7, 8m, 11, 14, 18, 20 & 21)
Steersman	Colin Ainsworth †(May 7, 8m, 11, 14, 18, 20 & 21)
Mary	Luretta Bybee (May 7, 8m, 11, 14, 18, 20 & 21)

Conductor	Sebastian Lang-Lessing
Director	Christopher Alden
Sets & Costumes	Allen Moyer
Lighting Design	Anne Militello†
Hair & Makeup	Joyce Degenfelder
English Captions	Gunta Dreifelds
Sets & Costumes	Canadian Opera Company

† Seattle Opera Debut

*Please note: Alwyn Mellor, who was previously scheduled to perform, has withdrawn due to family issues.*

***The Flying Dutchman* Production Sponsors: Nesholm Family Foundation, ArtsFund and City of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture**

**#SODutchman**

###

**About Seattle Opera**

Seattle Opera is a leading opera company, recognized both in the United States and around the world. The company is committed to advancing the cultural life in the Pacific Northwest with performances of the highest caliber, and through innovative education and community programs that take opera far beyond the McCaw Hall stage. Each year, more than 95,000 people attend Seattle Opera performances and the company's programs serve more than 400,000 people of all ages (including school performances, radio broadcasts and community engagement initiatives). Seattle Opera is especially known for its acclaimed works in the Richard Wagner canon, and has created an "international attraction" in its presentation of Wagner's epic *Ring*, according to *The New York Times*. Connect with Seattle Opera on Facebook, Twitter, SoundCloud and through the [Seattle Opera channel on Classical King FM. 98.1](#).