



Washington National Opera
The Kennedy Center

Timothy O'Leary
General Director

Francesca Zambello
Artistic Director

Press Release

January 24, 2020

Washington National Opera presents

Don Giovanni

Mozart's masterpiece combines comedy, drama, and the supernatural in a reflection on an infamous womanizer

***Let's Go There* conversation series launches with a dialogue on "Bad Romance" and pop culture in opera**

**February 29–March 22, 2020
in the Kennedy Center Opera House**

(WASHINGTON)—Washington National Opera (WNO) kicks off its spring repertory period with a production from February 29–March 22, 2020 of Mozart's **Don Giovanni**, a commentary on social deviance in which the anti-hero gets his due, centuries before the #MeToo movement. *Don Giovanni* surfaces issues of power and justice that seems ripped from today's headlines.

The production features:

- Evan Rogister leading the WNO Orchestra in his first staged production as principal conductor
- Rising female director E. Loren Meeker leading the creative team in a thrilling production
- Celebrated American bass-baritone Ryan McKinny, who has received acclaim in this role recently at the Lyric Opera of Chicago and Houston Grand Opera, brings his powerful voice that "drips with gold" (*Opera News*) in his return to the WNO stage
- Colombian American soprano Vanessa Vasquez in her WNO debut

Charming, but predatory and manipulative, Don Giovanni is a lover so notorious that his reputation precedes him. He's eager to add to the rambling list of women he has already enticed, but when Don Giovanni forces himself on Donna Anna, his devious antics dig him deeper and

~ more ~

deeper into trouble. As the discarded women of his past unite to speak out against their offender, Don Giovanni is destined to meet his fate—the fires of Hell.

Introducing a New Conversation Series: Washington National Opera invites figures from arts, culture, academia, politics, and other fields to participate in a new series of conversations, ***Let's Go There***. Using opera as a prism to examine and candidly discuss questions central to contemporary culture, WNO is committed to developing meaningful conversations and greater civic understanding around topics that challenge us. The first conversation in the series takes on the harsh truths of the “Bad Romance” in opera. Join *Don Giovanni* Director **E. Loren Meeker**, former *Washington Post* classical music critic **Anne Midgette**, cultural critic and host of the NPR’s Pop Culture Happy Hour podcast **Linda Holmes**, and acclaimed writer and author of *You Play the Girl* **Carina Chicano** as they explore how *Don Giovanni* is a springboard into a larger cultural dialogue about the glamorization of the villain in opera and pop culture. From #MeToo to Netflix’s *You* and the 2019 film *Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil and Vile* about Ted Bundy,

- **BLUE – March 21, 2020, Skylight Pavilion:** “When Tough Conversations Hit Home,” focuses on the ways in which families confront tough topics—especially with children. Featuring **Ronald E. Hampton** (Blacks in Law Enforcement of America), **Jaquail Durham** (Alfred Street Baptist Church Social Justice Ministry), **Temil Whipple** (co-author of *The Day Tajon Got Shot*), and **Kenneth Kellogg** (Father, *Blue*).
- **PORGY AND BESS – April 22, 2020, Library of Congress:** “Representation and Ownership in Opera and Pop Culture,” explores the politics of representation and ownership in art and pop culture. *Full line-up to be announced at a later date.*

Don Giovanni Performance and Ticket Information

Saturday, February 29 at 7 p.m. ▪ Monday, March 2 at 7 p.m.
Friday, March 6 at 7:30 p.m. ▪ Sunday, March 8 at 2 p.m.
Wednesday, March 11 at 7:30 p.m. ▪ Saturday, March 14 at 7 p.m.
Thursday, March 19 at 7:30 p.m. ▪ Sunday, March 22 at 2 p.m.

Ticket Information

Tickets start at \$35 and are available [online](#), in person at the Kennedy Center Box Office, and by calling (202) 467-4600 or (800) 444-1324. Groups of 10 or more receive discounts up to 25% for *Don Giovanni* purchases. For all other ticket-related customer service inquiries, call the Advance Sales Box Office at (202) 416-8540.

Patrons 30 and under and active-duty members of the military are invited to join the Kennedy Center's *MyTix* program for special discount offers and chances to win free tickets. *MyTix* discounts will be available for select performances. For more information, visit kennedy-center.org/mytix

Don Giovanni Production Information

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte

In Italian with projected English titles

February 29, March 2, 6, 8, 11, 14, 19, and 22

The opera's running time is approximately three hours and 35 minutes, and runs for eight performances.

Visit WNO's [website](#) for more information.

Cast and Creative Team

Don Giovanni	Ryan McKinny	Conductor	Evan Rogister
Donna Anna	Vanessa Vasquez*	Director	E. Loren Meeker
Donna Elvira	Keri Alkema†	Scenic Design	Erhard Rom
Don Ottavio	Alek Shrader	Costume Design	Jean-Pierre Ponnelle
Leporello	Kyle Ketelsen	Lighting Designer	Robert Wierzel
The Commendatore	Peter Volpe	Stage Manager	Lynn Krynicki
		Choreographer	Eric Sean Fogel
		Projection Design	S. Katy Tucker

* Washington National Opera Debut

‡ Current member of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program

† Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program Alumni

Washington National Opera's 2019–2020 season continues in March with a spectacular new production of the Biblical story *Samson and Delilah* (March 1–21, 2020) and the D.C. premiere of *Blue* (March 15–28, 2020). [Tickets](#) are available now.

ABOUT WASHINGTON NATIONAL OPERA

Washington National Opera (WNO) is one of the leading opera companies in the United States. Under the leadership of General Director Timothy O'Leary and world-renowned Artistic Director Francesca Zambello, the company presents a diverse repertory of grand opera across three main venues of the Kennedy Center. From classic operas to more contemporary pieces each season, WNO's artistic output also includes several commissioned American works and a variety of special concerts, youth operas, and events. In the fall of 2018, Evan Rogister was appointed Principal Conductor of the WNO orchestra for a three-year term.

Recent celebrated productions have included the world premiere of Philip Glass’s reconceived *Appomattox*, presented in conjunction with cultural events throughout Washington, D.C.; the powerful performances of Kurt Weill’s *Lost in the Stars*; and the massive feat of WNO’s first-complete *Ring* cycle, which was helmed by Zambello and played to sold-out houses following international acclaim.

Founded in 1956 and an artistic affiliate of the Kennedy Center since 2011, WNO has a storied legacy of more than 100 new productions, plus world premieres, international tours, live recordings and radio broadcasts, as well as innovative education and community-engagement programs. Throughout its history, WNO has been led by titans in the opera field, including the legendary Plácido Domingo who headed the company for 15 years, as well as luminaries such as Music Director Heinz Fricke and Director of Artistic Operations Christina Scheppelmann.

Among the company’s most successful programs is the *American Opera Initiative* (AOI), a commissioning program that develops new one-act works for WNO’s annual festival. By mentoring emerging composers and librettists, the Initiative works to expand the American operatic repertory and enhance its relevance to our time. Since its inception, AOI has commissioned 28 chamber opera world premieres, with some going on to future productions around the country.

With a commitment toward youth, WNO contributes to the future of opera through two signature artist-development programs. The Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, now in its 17th season, is one of the nation’s most competitive professional training programs, providing two years of intensive study to a highly selective cadre of young singers and collaborative pianists. Alumni of the program have won major competitions and gone on to successful careers at major opera houses worldwide. The WNO Opera Institute nurtures the ambitions of high-school-age singers from across the nation during an intensive three-week summer program held at American University in Washington.

The most popular of WNO’s community engagement programs is *Opera in the Outfield*[®], a free Kennedy Center Opera House production broadcast on the high-definition scoreboard at Nationals Park. The company’s other education programs include the Kids Create Opera program at local elementary schools, Look-In performances for students in grades 3–8, and the Student Dress Rehearsal Program for middle and high school students. The company also offers free Opera Insights programs before every performance in the Opera House.

Discover [Washington National Opera](#) on social media:



#DonGiovanniDC

FUNDING CREDITS

David M. Rubenstein is the Presenting Underwriter of WNO.

WNO acknowledges the longstanding generosity of Life Chairman Mrs. Eugene B. Casey.

WNO’s Presenting Sponsor General Dynamics

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TICKETS & INFORMATION

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