

SEATTLE OPERA.

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***Katya Kabanova* sounds like opera, feels like a dark TV drama**

**With a brand-new production, Seattle Opera premieres a
masterpiece by Czech composer Leoš Janáček**

**Feb. 25, 26 | Mar. 1, 4, 8, 10, & 11
McCaw Hall**

SEATTLE—Next up at McCaw Hall is a piece that **Seattle Opera General Director Aidan Lang** calls the perfect first-time opera experience. *Katya Kabanova*, the story of a young woman longing to be free from an oppressive small town and her monstrous mother-in-law, is told through music that's as lush and gorgeous as it is highly emotional.

"Janáček may be less familiar than composers like Verdi or Mozart, but his music is masterful," said General Director Lang. "This dark drama—where the dialogue is similar to how we speak—will grab you with the same gritty intensity of a TV show like *Breaking Bad* or *The Man in the High Castle*."

In a town of strict moral codes, there's no room for Katya to be herself, let alone express the innermost longings of her heart. Katya's husband Tichon does little to protect his wife from the vicious attacks of his mother, Kabanicha. But there's Boris—an educated young man also trapped in the village—whom Katya secretly loves. When Tichon is away on business, Katya and Boris seize the opportunity to express their attraction, and afterward, the young woman's guilt and agitation gathers like a storm. What happens when pent-up passions finally explode? With a brand-new production set in rural America in the 1950s, the stage is set for a high-stakes clash between repressed feelings and provincial respectability.

Running only two hours long (with one intermission), this opera offers themes of isolation, societal pressure, and unattainable romance—which the composer himself experienced during his creative process. Janáček was inspired by his passion for Kamila Stösslová, a married woman more than 40 years his junior. While she did not return the composer's affections, he's said to have sent her more than 700 love letters throughout the course of 11 years.

Alternating as Janáček's heroine are two American sopranos: **Melody Moore**, making both role and Seattle Opera debuts; as well as **Corinne Winters**, who returns to McCaw Hall for her role debut after singing Violetta in *La traviata*. **Victoria Livengood** makes her role debut as Kabanicha, a character *NPR Music* describes as "one of the most unusual villains in any opera, and one of the most disturbing...the sort of person who can live among us, quietly and without anyone objecting." Also making company debuts are **Joseph Dennis** and **Scott Quinn** who portray Boris; **Nicky Spence** in the part of Katya's good-for-nothing husband, Tichon; and **Stefan Szkafarowsky** as Dikoj.

Returning artists include **Maya Lahyani** and **Joshua Kohl** as the superficial but appealing Varvara and Kudrjás.

The entire creative team makes its Seattle Opera debut, including acclaimed stage director **Patrick Nolan**, production designer **Genevieve Blanchett**, and lighting

designer **Mark Howett**—all of Australia; as well as **Maestro Oliver von Dohnányi** of Slovakia.

Katya Kabanova premieres Saturday, Feb. 25 and runs through Saturday, March 11. Tickets are available online at 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 at least 20 percent: 206.676.5588 or groups@seattleopera.org. Seattle Opera Ticket Office: 206.389.7676/800.426.1619. Online orders: seattleopera.org.

In February, Seattle Opera offers free public previews with live music from *Katya Kabanova* performed at libraries throughout the Puget Sound. For a full list, go to seattleopera.org/calendar.

Katya Kabanova

Music by Leoš Janáček
Libretto by Vincenc Cervinka

In Czech with English captions

Marion Oliver McCaw Hall
Performances: February 25 & 26; March 1, 4, 8, 10, 11, 2017

Approximate Running Time: 2 hours with 1 intermission
Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m., matinee at 2:00 p.m.
Premiere: November 23, 1921 at the National Theater in Brno, Moravia
Seattle Opera Premiere

Cast:

Katya Kabanova	Melody Moore* (Feb. 25, Mar. 4, 8, & 11) Corrine Winters (Feb. 26m, Mr. 1 & 10)
Kabanicha	Victoria Livengood
Boris	Joseph Dennis* (Feb. 25, Mar. 4, 8, & 11) Scott Quinn*(Feb. 26m, Mar. 1 & 10)
Dikoj	Stefan Szafarowsky*
Varvara	Maya Lahyani†
Vanya Kudrjas	Joshua Kohl

Tichon
Kuligin
Glascha
Fekluscha

Nicky Spence*
Joseph Lattanzi †
Jennifer Cross*
Susan Salas

Conductor
Director
Production Design
Lighting Design

Oliver von Dohnányi*
Patrick Nolan*
Genevieve Blanchett*
Mark Howett*

† Former Seattle Opera Young Artist

* Company Debut

2016/17 Season Sponsor:

Seattle Opera Guild

In memory of Marian E. Lackovich and Captain Louis J. Lackovich

Production Sponsors: Seattle Opera Foundation, Nesholm Family Foundation, City of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, and Kreielsheimer Endowment Fund

#SOKatya

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About Seattle Opera

Established in 1963, Seattle Opera is committed to serving the people of the Pacific Northwest with performances of the highest caliber and through innovative educational and engagement programs for all. Each year, more than 95,000 people attend Seattle Opera performances, and more than 400,000 people of all ages are served through school performances, radio broadcasts, and more. By drawing our communities together, and by offering opera's unique fusion of music and drama, we create life-enhancing experiences that speak deeply to people's hearts and minds. Connect with Seattle Opera on Facebook, Twitter, SoundCloud, and through the [Seattle Opera channel on Classical King FM. 98.1.](#)