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Ring in the new year with a Russian romance

**Experience a journey through poetry and tormented love in
Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin***

**January 11–25, 2020 at McCaw Hall
Tickets start at \$35**

SEATTLE—Leave everyday life in Puget Sound behind this January and step into the splendor of 1800s Russia. Seattle Opera's [*Eugene Onegin*](#) will offer audiences lush orchestrations by Tchaikovsky, elegant ballroom dances, grand sets, and period costumes worthy of *The Last Czars* on Netflix.

Tchaikovsky, famous Russian composer of *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker*, wasn't a fan of grand opera when he wrote the opera *Eugene Onegin* (pronounced "oh-NYAY-ghin," where the "G" is like "goose") in 1877. He found works like Wagner's *Ring* or Verdi's *Aida* to be difficult for everyday people to relate to. Thus, he chose a ubiquitous work of Russian literature, Pushkin's famous novel in verse *Eugene Onegin*, as the subject of his opera.

"Alexander Pushkin is to Russian what William Shakespeare is to English," said **Seattle Opera General Director Christina Schepelmann**. "Still today Russians read and study Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* in school—a story without a happily-ever-

after, but one that offers an incomparable journey through beauty, poetry, and romance.”

In this story, Onegin, a restless socialite, rejects the passionate Tatyana after she declares her love for him. Trying to avoid Tatyana, Onegin ends up insulting his best friend Lensky, and killing him in the duel that results. Years later, and filled with regret, Onegin comes face-to-face with Tatyana once again. He realizes he loves her, but now, she’s married to someone else. While Tatyana still has feelings for Onegin, she chooses to remain faithful to her husband, breaking the heart of the man who once crushed her.

Alternating as the title character are two American baritones returning to McCaw Hall: **John Moore**, whose portrayal of Steve Jobs in *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* (‘19) was heralded as a great success by local and national critics, and **Michael Adams**, featured among “25 Rising Stars” by *Opera News*. Starring as Tatyana are Finnish soprano **Marjukka Tepponen**, returning after her debut as Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* (‘18), and **Marina Costa-Jackson**, who most recently wowed Seattleites in the Three Singing Sisters concert (‘19).

Eugene Onegin also features performances by returning artists: **Colin Ainsworth** (Lensky), **Margaret Gawrysiak** (Madame Larina), **Martin Bakari** (Monsieur Triquet), and **Misha Myznikov** (Zaretsky/A Captain). Making debuts are **Meredith Arwady** (Filipievna), **David Leigh** (Prince Gremin), and **Melody Wilson** (Olga)—who kicks off Seattle Opera’s Artist Recital series with a [special performance](#) at The Opera Center on January 17. The mezzo-soprano shows off her creative side with a program that includes Berlioz’s iconic *Les nuits d’été* (*Summer Nights*), and Catalan composer Xavier Montsalvatge’s playful *Cinco canciones negras* (*Five Black Songs*). Learn more about Seattle Opera’s new Artist Recitals series, which features opera artists of color in the 2019/20 season, at seattleopera.org/recitals.

Naomi André, Seattle Opera Scholar in Residence, says Pushkin wrote many works that were later adapted for opera, including the historical drama *Boris*

Godunov. Tchaikovsky used Pushkin sources for his two most well-known operas—*The Queen of Spades* and *Eugene Onegin*. While the two men were very different from one another, both of their identities clashed with societal norms.

“Pushkin, whose great-grandfather is thought to have been born in Cameroon, had mixed-race ancestry that was largely kept hidden. Meanwhile, Tchaikovsky was tortured as a gay man in a repressed society,” André said. “Tchaikovsky could have identified with both of his leading characters—Onegin as someone who pushes women away or perhaps Tatyana—a person deeply in love who cannot have what she wants.”

Seattle Opera’s *Eugene Onegin* opens Saturday, January 11 and closes Saturday, January 25. Tickets start at \$35 and are available online at seattleopera.org, by calling 206.389.7676, or in person at the ticket office located at the Opera Center, 363 Mercer Street. Box office hours are 10 a.m.–6 p.m., Monday–Friday. Groups save at least 20 percent: 206.676.5588 or groups@seattleopera.org

Eugene Onegin

Music by Peter Ilych Tchaikovsky

Libretto by Peter Ilych Tchaikovsky and Konstantin S. Shilovsky

In Russian with English captions

Premiere: Maly Theatre, Moscow, Russia, March 19, 1879

Previous Seattle Opera Performances: 1975, 1986, 2002

Marion Oliver McCaw Hall

Performances: Jan. 11, 12, 15, 18, 19, 22, 24, & 25, 2020

Approximate Running Time: 3 hours, 10 minutes including two intermissions

Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m., Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m

Cast:

Eugene Onegin	John Moore (Jan. 11, 15, 19, & 25) Michael Adams (Jan. 12, 18, 22, & 24)
Tatyana	Marjukka Tepponen (Jan. 11, 15, 19, & 25) Marina Costa-Jackson (Jan. 12, 18, 22, & 24)
Lensky	Colin Ainsworth
Olga	Melody Wilson*
Filipievna	Meredith Arwady*
Madame Larina	Margaret Gawrysiak

Prince Gremin
Monsieur Triquet
Zaretsky/A Captain

David Leigh*
Martin Bakari
Misha Myznikov

Conductor
Production
Stage Director
Associate Director
Scenic Designer
Costume Designer
Lighting Designer
Chorusmaster
English Captions

Aleksandar Marković*
Tomer Zvulun

Stephanie Havey
Erhard Rom
Isabella Bywater
Robert Wierzel
John Keene
Jeremy Sortore

* Company Debut

2019/20 Season Sponsor: In memory of Karyl Winn
Production Sponsor: Seattle Opera Foundation

About Seattle Opera

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