



Grammy-winning Conductor Michael Christie Leads Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera in

Verdi's *Rigoletto*

Saturday, April 13, 2019 at 7:30pm
Sacramento Community Center Theater
1301 L St. | Sacramento, CA

Tickets (\$23 - \$75) and more information: www.sacphilopera.org

“Conductor Michael Christie melds fire and ice.” – *Star Tribune*

www.michaelchristieonline.com



Photos of Michael Christie available in high resolution at www.jensenartists.com.

Sacramento, CA — Grammy-winning conductor **Michael Christie** returns to the **Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera** on **Saturday, April 13, 2019 at 7:30pm** at the **Sacramento Community Center Theater** (1301 L Street). For this performance entitled “Opera in Concert: Rigoletto,” Christie leads the orchestra and a cast of soloists in a staged production of **Giuseppe Verdi’s *Rigoletto***.

Verdi’s tragic masterpiece revolves around the Duke of Mantua, his hunch-backed court jester Rigoletto, and Rigoletto’s beautiful daughter Gilda. 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 Gilda falls in love with the Duke and sacrifices her life to save him from the assassin hired by her father.

The cast for this production of *Rigoletto* features Joshua Jeremiah as Rigoletto; Rafael Moras as Duke; Monica Dewey as Gilda; Kenneth Kellogg as Sparafucile; Julie Anne Miller as Maddalena; Hilary Taylor as Giovanna; Niles Krop as Count Ceprano; Caroline Hewitt as Countess Ceprano; Aaron Gallington as Matteo Borsa; and Chauncey Blade as Count Monterone.

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*).

Christie was featured in *Opera News* in August 2012 as one of 25 people believed to “break out and become major forces in the field in the coming decade.” At Minnesota Opera, Christie led 24 productions over eight years, six seasons as its first-ever Music Director (2012-2018). Highlights for Christie’s 2018-2019 season include engagements with Indiana University Opera and Ballet Theater, Opéra de Montréal, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera, and Michigan Opera Theatre. 2019-2020 will be Christie’s first full season as Music Director of the New West Symphony, and he will lead operas with San Francisco Opera and Lyric Opera of Kansas City.

Deeply committed to bringing new works to life, Michael Christie has championed commissions by leading and emerging composers alike, including Mark Adamo, Mason Bates, Michael Daugherty, Osvaldo Golijov, Mark Grey, Daron Hagen, Huang Ruo, Matthew Hindson, Marjan Mozetich, Stephen Paulus, Kevin Puts, and more. In 2018, he led the world premiere of *An American Soldier*, a two-act opera by Huang Ruo, with Opera Theatre of St. Louis. *The New York Times* reported, “Both the subtle colorings and pummeling intensity came through in the compelling performance the conductor Michael Christie drew from the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra.”

Christie’s conducting career, spanning more than 20 years, has included serving as Music Director of the Phoenix Symphony (2005-2013) and Brooklyn Philharmonic (2005-2010), and as Chief Conductor of the Queensland Orchestra (2001-2004) in Australia, as well as guest appearances leading the Los Angeles Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Rhode Island Philharmonic, and the Symphonies of Dallas, St. Louis, Atlanta, Houston, Minnesota, Oregon, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, and Santa Rosa. Christie’s many European engagements have included leading the Rotterdam Philharmonic, DSO Berlin, Orchestre National de Lille, Swedish and Netherlands Radio Symphony, City of Birmingham Symphony, NDR Hannover Orchestra and the Czech Philharmonic. In addition, Christie enjoys a strong profile in Australia, where he has conducted the Sydney Symphony, Tasmanian Symphony, Opera Queensland, and the Western Australian Symphony in Perth.

Michael Christie first came to international attention in 1995 when he was awarded a special prize for “Outstanding Potential” at the First International Sibelius Conductors’ Competition in Helsinki. Following the competition, he was invited to become an apprentice conductor with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra where he subsequently worked with Daniel Barenboim as well as at the Berlin State Opera during the 1996-1997 season. Christie graduated from the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music with a bachelor's degree in trumpet performance.

Christie lives in the Twin Cities with his wife, Alexis, a physician, and their two children

For more information, visit www.michaelchristieonline.com.

About the Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera: What began as the Sacramento Symphony in 1948 is now combined into the Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera, returning as a melded organization boldly and with authority in 2015. The organization is now entering its third season under the executive leadership of Alice Sauro, and once again offers 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.

As an emissary for the arts to a culturally diverse region, the Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera continues its long history of community engagement and dedication through outreach initiatives that bring the passion of classical music to schools, hospitals, shelters, and more. We try to retain this spirit of community involvement in our programming choices, by offering a broad spectrum of musical styles—from works such as Vaughan Williams’ very community-minded Concerto Grosso to our Pops Series to the large-scale classical symphonic repertoire.

The Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera continues toward a status of artistic leadership in the community. As a melded organization our mission is to rise above and transcend past challenges and become an integral, thriving, sustainable part of the greater Sacramento area.