

News Release

FOR RELEASE:

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Minnesota Opera's *The Elixir of Love* opens January 24

Donizetti's romantic comedy delivers midwinter warmth and charm

MINNEAPOLIS (January 9, 2015)– Music lovers will temporarily swap frigid Minnesota temps for the warmth of sun-drenched Tuscany, thanks to Minnesota Opera's upcoming production, *The Elixir of Love*. Set in the rolling hills of the Italian countryside, Donizetti's timeless romantic comedy opens January 24 at the Ordway Music Theater in St. Paul for five performances. In the opera, American soprano Nicole Cabell stars as the beautiful and wealthy Adina, doggedly pursued by the love-struck Nemorino, a handsome but simple peasant sung by Italian American tenor Leonardo Capalbo.

"We're so excited to have these amazingly talented artists performing with us," said Artistic Director Dale Johnson. "Cabell and Capalbo play perfectly off each other musically, as well as romantically. This is Minnesota Opera's first production of *The Elixir of Love* since 1986 and this new staging set in the early 20th century features elegant costumes and a beautiful set depicting a working Italian *pensione* (farm)."

Directed by Helena Binder and conducted by Leonardo Vordoni, *The Elixir of Love* is one of the most popular and beloved bel canto operas. Literally "beautiful singing," this Italian bel canto period emphasizes intense emotional expression and showcases exquisite and elaborate vocal technique to tell its stories. "This is not a high-concept production. The innocent storyline between Adina and Nemorino fueled the design," said Stage Director Helena Binder.

Boasting the popular tenor aria "Una furtiva lagrima (A furtive tear)," *The Elixir of Love* has become one of Donizetti's most-performed works. The soprano aria "Prendi, per me sei libero (Take it; through me you are free)," is an excellent example of Donizetti's mature bel canto style with its gorgeous melody sung by Adina when she finally admits her true love for Nemorino.

In one of the most endearing Italian comic operas, a love-struck country bumpkin sets out to win a feisty socialite's heart, aided by a "magic" potion and a doctor of dubious credentials. Donizetti's

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light-hearted comedy bubbles with effervescent arias and charm as the elixir causes as many problems as it solves.

Stage Director [Helena Binder](#) (*The Italian Girl in Algiers*, 2007) brings her wit and warmth to the production inspired by a recent vacation in Italy enjoying the olive groves. Soprano [Nicole Cabell](#) makes her Minnesota Opera debut as the independent Adina, praised with “... a lovely sweet voice like honey ...” by *The New York Times*. [Leonardo Capalbo](#) (debut), whose tenor was called “... lithe, sunny, and effortlessly lyrical” by *The Times*, sings the role of her bumbling suitor Nemorino. [David Pershall](#) (debut) completes *The Elixir of Love* triangle as the arrogant and dashing sergeant Belcore who gets in the way of Nemorino and Adina’s burgeoning relationship. Baritone [Andrew Wilkowske](#) (*Manon Lescaut*, 2013; *The Magic Flute*, 2014) continues to delight audiences as the traveling quack Dr. Dulcamara. One of the country’s most in demand bel canto coaches, [Leonardo Vordoni](#) (*Lucia di Lammermoor*, 2012; Opera under the Stars *La bohème*, 2013), returns to conduct the Minnesota Opera Orchestra.

Visit mnop.co/elixir to find casting updates, creative team and artist biographies, audio and video clips, show synopses, and background notes.

- What:** *The Elixir of Love* by composer Gaetano Donizetti.
Sung in Italian with English translations projected above the stage.
- Where:** Music Theater at Ordway, 345 Washington Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102.
- When:** Saturday, January 24, 7:30 p.m. Sunday, January 25, 2:00 p.m.
Thursday, January 29, 7:30 p.m. Saturday, January 31, 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, February 1, 2:00 p.m.
- Tickets:** \$25 – \$200. Call the Minnesota Opera Ticket Office at 612-333-6669, Monday–Friday, 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., or purchase online at mnopera.org.
- Media:** An online press room (available at mnop.co/dropbox) includes artist headshots and marketing artwork. Check back for updated resources and information.
- Contact Communications Manager Julie Behr to take advantage of interview, photo, and video opportunities at *The Elixir of Love* dress rehearsals at Ordway:
Wednesday, January 21, 7:30 p.m. and **Thursday, January 22, 7:30 p.m.**
- Preview:** Minnesota Opera hosts a **Social Media Preview Night** for press members, bloggers, and tweeters to attend *The Elixir of Love* dress rehearsal at Ordway on **Thursday, January 22, 6:00 p.m.** The evening begins with refreshments, a cash bar, and a pre-rehearsal discussion with Minnesota Opera artistic staff. R.S.V.P. by January 20 at mnop.co/preview.

The Creative Team

Conductor.....Leonardo Vordoni
Stage Director.....Helena Binder
Scenic Coordinator and Lighting Designer.....Marcus Dilliard
Costume Designer.....Martin Pakledinaz

The Cast

Nemorino, *a simple peasant*.....Leonardo Capalbo*
Adina, *a wealthy landlord*.....Nicole Cabell*
Belcore, *a sergeant*.....David Pershall*
Dr. Dulcamara.....Andrew Wilkowske
Giannetta, *a peasant girl*.....Shannon Prickett+

*Minnesota Opera Debut
+Minnesota Opera Resident Artist

The 2014–2015 Minnesota Opera season is supported by Target.

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