

The Metropolitan Opera

“Metropolitan Opera: Live in HD” Now Playing at a Theater Near You

Tickets on sale beginning November 18 for live, high-definition broadcasts of Met operas in movie theaters in North America and the United Kingdom

Mozart’s *The Magic Flute* kicks off the series of six broadcasts on December 30

New York, NY (November 15, 2006)— Tickets for the Metropolitan Opera’s first live high-definition broadcasts into movie theaters will go on sale beginning this Saturday, November 18th at movie theaters and online. As part of the company’s efforts to build a larger audience around the globe, the Met is launching “Metropolitan Opera: Live in HD,” a series of six performances to be broadcast live via satellite into movie theaters across the U.S. and Canada, with select titles broadcast in the United Kingdom. The series kicks-off with the December 30 matinee performance of the Met’s new, 100-minute, English-language version of Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, directed by **Julie Taymor** and conducted by Met Music Director **James Levine**.

“The Met has launched an array of new initiatives that are designed to broaden the public appeal of opera,” says **Peter Gelb**, the Met’s General Manager. “The company’s new media partnerships and expanded union agreements provide unprecedented distribution opportunities and better ways to reach new audiences. The HD movie broadcasts provide a front row seat to the unique spectacle of live opera.”

Through U.S. cinema partner **National CineMedia** and Canadian partner **Cineplex Entertainment**, “Metropolitan Opera: Live in HD” will be broadcast into select movie theaters in North America that are equipped with satellite-based digital High-Definition (HD) projection systems, including Regal Entertainment Group (Regal Cinemas, United Artists and Edwards), Cinemark, and AMC theaters in the U.S. and Cineplex Odeon, Galaxy, and Famous Players theatres in Canada.

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Through English cinema partner **City Screen**, the performance of *The Magic Flute* will be broadcast live in HD-equipped movie theaters throughout the United Kingdom, including Picturehouses in Greenwich, London (Notting Hill Gate), Cambridge, Brighton and York.

Tickets are available for the first two broadcasts in U.S. theaters beginning November 18. Ticket prices in the U.S. are \$18.00 U.S. adults and \$15.00 U.S. children. Tickets for the remaining three broadcasts in the U.S. are available beginning December 8. Tickets are available for all six performances in Canadian theaters beginning November 18. Tickets in Canada are \$17.95 CDN advance purchase adults; \$19.95 CDN same day adults and \$14.95 CDN children. Single ticket prices for the UK broadcast of *The Magic Flute* are £12.00. More information on tickets and theaters at all participating locations is now available at <http://www.metoperafamily.org/hdlive>.

“Our theaters have always presented the best that Hollywood offers, and we are excited to be able to bring U. S. audiences the best in opera and other areas of arts and entertainment through the technology of our Digital Content Network,” said **Tom Galley**, chief operations and technology officer of National CineMedia. “This Metropolitan Opera series is a unique opportunity for people to experience world-class opera in their local community, plus the movie theater environment and affordable ticket price make these events something that the entire family can enjoy. If you’ve never had the pleasure of attending a live opera performance before, this is the perfect opportunity to see why this magical art form has captured audiences’ imaginations for generations.”

“We are very pleased to partner with the Metropolitan Opera to bring this outstanding series to Canada,” said **Ellis Jacob**, President and CEO, Cineplex Entertainment. “The combination of the Met’s superb music productions combined with our giant screens, Dolby Digital Surround Sound, and the comfort of our theatres will make these events the next best thing to actually being there.”

Following a thirty-day period, a recorded version of these performances will be presented on television in the U.S. by **Thirteen/WNET New York’s Great Performances** on PBS, beginning in January 2007. All six of the live performances to be transmitted into movie theaters will be broadcast live in the U.S. on “Metropolitan Opera Radio on Sirius,” the Met’s new 24-hour satellite radio channel broadcasting live and rare

historical performances. The matinee performances will also be broadcast over the Toll Brothers-Metropolitan Opera International Radio Network.

“Metropolitan Opera: Live in HD” broadcast schedule:

***The Magic Flute* (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart): New English version**

Julie Taymor’s dazzling production of *The Magic Flute* has been abridged into a 100-minute version for the Met’s first holiday entertainment presentation, with a new English translation by J.D. McClatchy. The cast includes Ying Huang as Pamina, Matthew Polenzani as Tamino, Nathan Gunn as Papageno, Erika Miklósa as the Queen of the Night, and René Pape as Sarastro. James Levine conducts. **Saturday, December 30 at 1:30 PM/ET; 10:30 AM/PT; 6:30 PM/GMT. PBS-*Great Performances* broadcast date: Wednesday, January 24.**

***I Puritani* (Vincenzo Bellini)**

International sensation Anna Netrebko sings Elvira Walton in the Met’s production of Bellini’s *I Puritani*. Tenor Eric Cutler is Arturo, Franco Vassallo is Riccardo, and John Relyea is Giorgio. Patrick Summers conducts. **Saturday, January 6 at 1:30 PM/ET; 10:30 AM/PT. PBS-*Great Performances* broadcast date: Check local listings.**

***The First Emperor* (Tan Dun): World premiere production**

The First Emperor, a Met commission, will be conducted by composer Tan Dun, who also co-wrote the libretto with novelist Ha Jin; acclaimed filmmaker Zhang Yimou directs. Legendary tenor Plácido Domingo sings the role of the Emperor who unites China and builds the Great Wall. Paul Groves is Gao Jianli, the court composer who defies him and seduces Princess Yueyang, the Emperor’s daughter, sung by Elizabeth Futral. **Saturday, January 13 at 1:30 PM/ET; 10:30 AM/PT. PBS-*Great Performances* broadcast date: Check local listings.**

***Eugene Onegin* (Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky)**

The sensational Renée Fleming performs the role of Tatiana in Tchaikovsky’s *Eugene Onegin* for the first time at the Met. Dimitri Hvorostovsky sings the title role, with Ramón Vargas as Lenski. The Met’s principal guest conductor Valery Gergiev conducts. **Saturday, February 24 at 1:30 PM/ET; 10:30 AM/PT. PBS-*Great Performances* date: Check local listings.**

Il Barbiere di Siviglia (The Barber of Seville) (Gioachino Rossini): New Production

This new production of Rossini's comic opera is staged by theater director Bartlett Sher (*The Light in the Piazza, Awake and Sing!*). The Met's all-star cast includes tenor Juan Diego Flórez as the Count Almaviva, mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato as Rosina, and baritone Peter Mattei is the title role of Figaro. John Relyea performs Don Basilio, and John Del Carlo performs Doctor Bartolo. Maurizio Benini conducts. **Saturday, March 24 at 1:30 PM/ET; 10:30 AM/PT. PBS-Great Performances broadcast date: Check local listings.**

Il Trittico (Giacomo Puccini): New Production

Award-winning theater director Jack O'Brien (*The Times They Are A-Changin', Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*) directs Puccini's *Il Trittico* (consisting of the three one-act operas *Il Tabarro, Suor Angelica, and Gianni Schicchi*). The casts include: Maria Guleghina as Giorgetta, Salvatore Licitra as Luigi, and Juan Pons as Michele in *Il Tabarro*; Barbara Frittoli as Suor Angelica and Stephanie Blythe as the Princess in *Suor Angelica*; and Olga Mykytenko as Lauretta, Massimo Giordano as Rinuccio, and Alessandro Corbelli in the title role of *Gianni Schicchi*. Met Music Director James Levine conducts. **Saturday, April 28 at 1:30 PM/ET; 10:30 AM/PT. PBS-Great Performances broadcast date: Check local listings.**

About the Met's cinema partners

National CineMedia, LLC is a venture of AMC Entertainment Inc., Cinemark USA, Inc. and Regal Entertainment Group (NYSE: RGC), three of the world's leading theatrical exhibition companies. The company develops pre-feature entertainment; cinema and lobby advertising products; comprehensive meeting and event services; and alternative forms of entertainment content for distribution across the approximately 13,000 screens operated by its owner theater circuits and other theater affiliates. Over 11,000 of these screens are part of NCM's Digital Content Network (DCN), one of the world's largest in-theater digital distribution networks. The network provides content and advertising to 150 U.S. markets, including 49 of the top 50, reaching an estimated 525 million movie patrons annually. For additional information, please go to www.ncm.com or www.BigScreenConcerts.com.

Cineplex Entertainment LP owns, leases, or has a joint venture interest in 132 theaters with 1,309 screens and is the largest motion picture exhibitor in Canada. Headquartered in Toronto, Canada, the Partnership operates theaters with the following six top-tier brands: Cineplex Odeon, Galaxy and Famous Players (including Coliseum, Colossus and SilverCity). Proudly Canadian, the units of Cineplex Galaxy Income Fund, which owns approximately 59.7% of Cineplex Entertainment LP, are traded on the Toronto Stock Exchange under Cineplex Galaxy Income Fund (symbol CGX.UN). More information can be found at www.cineplex.com.

City Screen is the UK's leading independent exhibitor and fourth largest operator with a network of 18 'Picturehouse'-branded cinemas in major university cities across the country. With a strong presence in London, and a further 20 cinemas under contract for programming services and marketing support, City Screen leads the arthouse cinema market. City Screen strongly believes in digital technology as a means to modernise and diversify programming. In October 2006 the company became the first exhibitor in Europe to deploy a live HD satellite network across its entire circuit, and has already successfully undertaken live event and other alternative digital programming across the chain. Visit www.picturehouses.co.uk for more details.

About the Met's television partners

PBS is a media enterprise that serves 354 public noncommercial television stations and reaches almost 90 million people each week through on-air and online content. Bringing diverse viewpoints to television and the Internet, PBS provides high-quality documentary and arts and cultural entertainment, and consistently dominates the most prestigious award competitions. More information about PBS is available at www.pbs.org, one of the leading dot-org websites on the Internet.

Thirteen/WNET New York is one of the key program providers for public television, bringing such acclaimed series as *Great Performances*, *Nature*, *American Masters*, *Charlie Rose*, *Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly*, *Wide Angle*, *Secrets of the Dead*, *NOW With David Brancaccio*, and *Cyberchase* – as well as the work of Bill Moyers – to audiences nationwide. As the flagship public broadcaster in the New York, New Jersey and Connecticut metro area, Thirteen reaches millions of viewers each week, airing the best of American public television along with its own local productions such as *The Ethnic Heritage Specials*, *The Thirteen Walking Tours*, *New York Voices*, and *Reel New York*. Thirteen extends the impact of its television productions through educational and community outreach projects - including the *Celebration of Teaching and Learning* - as well as web sites and other digital media platforms. More information can be found at: www.thirteen.org.

About the Met

Under the leadership of new General Manager Peter Gelb, the Met has launched many initiatives to connect the company with a larger audience. They include: a first-ever free Open House that offered the public an opportunity to attend the final dress rehearsal of *Madama Butterfly*; an extensive *Madama Butterfly* transit advertising campaign in New York City during the month of September; \$15 tickets (formerly \$26) in the Family Circle section; the new Agnes Varis and Karl Leichtman Rush Ticket program that offers 200 orchestra seats deeply discounted to \$20 for weekday performances, available at the box office two hours before curtain; the new Arnold and Marie Schwartz Gallery Met exhibiting contemporary art; a groundbreaking commissioning program in partnership with the Lincoln Center Theater that provides renowned composers and playwrights the resources to create and develop new works at the Met and Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater; and dynamic new content on the web site, the house program, and the Saturday matinee radio broadcasts heard over the Toll Brothers-Metropolitan Opera International Radio Network.

The Met recently announced the use of advanced distribution platforms and state-of-the-art technology to attract new audiences and reach millions of opera fans around the world. On September 25, "Metropolitan Opera Radio on Sirius" launched as a 24-hour satellite radio channel broadcasting live and rare historical performances. The Met presents free live streaming of performances from its website once every week with support from RealNetworks.

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