

# Opening Night Invitation

Giacomo Puccini

## LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST (THE GIRL OF THE GOLDEN WEST)

September 29, 2018

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Esteemed Colleagues,

You are cordially invited to attend the first premiere of the Oper Leipzig's 2018/19 season: On **Saturday, September 29, 2018, 7 pm** the curtain will rise on Giacomo Puccini's *La fanciulla del West* in a production by stage director Cusch Jung, musically directed by Prof. Ulf Schirmer.

Starting off the season with a bang, we'll go west with Puccini and his commission for the Metropolitan Opera in New York. *La fanciulla del West*, or *The Girl of the Golden West* – Puccini's seventh opera – is set in a gold mining town in America's Wild West. Life in the raw, isolated, primarily male world of the camp is ruled by a strict pecking order. Here, far from home and hearth, the search for gold is a thinly veiled search for true meaning in life. For Sheriff Jack Rance and his fellow miners, Minnie (the barkeep and one of the few women in the camp) is the personification of hope for a different life. But when a stranger with a dark past shows up, the camp descends into chaos. As he did with *La bohème* and *Madame Butterfly*, Puccini creates a richly contoured world for his Wild West opera, complete with its own atmospheric musical idiom.

Director Cusch Jung, the principal stage director of Leipzig's Musikalische Komödie, was hand-picked by Intendant and music director Prof. Ulf Schirmer to spearhead this production, and it marks Jung's directorial debut at the Opera House. With it, Jung frees the opera from its image as a "Wild West operetta," choosing instead to focus on the harsh realities of life at a mine. Karin Fritz designed the stage and the costumes. Superstar Anja Kampe, who spent her summer electrifying audiences as Sieglinde in Wagner's *Die Walküre* at the Bayreuth Festival, makes her role and house debut as Minnie. Simon Neal (whom audiences in Leipzig met this past spring when he thrilled audiences as Dr. Schön in *Lulu*) and Gaston Rivero (last seen in Leipzig breaking hearts in *Don Carlo*), will both debut new roles.

**This invitation is valid for media representatives with a reporting assignment only.** You will receive one press ticket and one guest ticket (18 Euro) for the premiere. Please contact me for further information, or if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Patricia Grünzweig

**RADIO- / FILM- / PHOTOGRAPHY DATE**

Final Dress Rehearsal: Thursday, September 27, 6:00pm

**PREMIERE**

Saturday, September 29, 2018, 7:00pm

**FURTHER PERFORMANCES**

October 3, 6, & 28 / November 10 & 24 / 2. December 2, 2018

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**LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST** GIACOMO PUCCINI

Opera in three acts | Text by Guelfo Civinini and Carlo Zangarini, after the play *The Girl of the Golden West* (1905) by David Belasco | In Italian with German supertitles

**DIRECTION**

Musical Director ULF SCHIRMER | Stage Director CUSCH JUNG

Stage and Costume Designer KARIN FRITZ

Chorus Master THOMAS EITLER-DE LINT | Dramaturgy CHRISTIAN GELTINGER

**CAST**

Minnie ANJA KAMPE | Wowkle CHRISTIANE DÖCKER | Jack Rance SIMON NEAL | Dick Johnson GASTON RIVERO | Nick PATRICK VOGEL

Ashby RANDALL JAKOBSH | Sonora JONATHAN MICHIE | Trin MATTHEW PEÑA | Sid FRANZ XAVER SCHLECHT | Jake Wallace SEJONG CHANG

Bello VIKTOR RUD | Harry TYLER CLARKE | Joe SVEN HJÖRLEIFSSON | Happy JAKOB KUNATH | Larkens ROLAND SCHUBERT | Billy Jackrabbit

ARTUR MATEUSZ GARBAS | José Castro JEAN-BAPTISTE MOURET | The Pony Express Rider TAE HEE KWON

CHORUS OF THE OPER LEIPZIG | GEWANDHAUS ORCHESTRA