

# Lincoln Theater

## THE MET LIVE IN HD PRE-OPERA TALKS: 2017-2018 SEASON

Morton Achter, presenter

*This is the ninth season of **The Met: Live in HD** for which Morton Achter, formerly a resident of New Harbor and now of Topsham, will present a series of pre-opera talks prior to selected broadcasts at the Lincoln Theater. A retired college professor, Dr. Achter has taught about, produced and directed opera and related stage genres for over sixty years. Holding a Ph.D. in music and theater history from the University of Michigan, locally he has directed for the Lincoln County Community Theater, River Company and Bath's Chocolate Church, and has offered opera-related courses for the Midcoast Senior College in Brunswick.*

Pre-opera talks begin at 11:45 a.m.; the operas begin at 12:55 p.m.

(NOTE: except for *L'elisir d'amore*, which starts 1 hour earlier; talk at 10:45 a.m., opera at Noon)

**October 14, 2017:** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* ("The Magic Flute") - features an international all-star cast with the Met's Music Director Emeritus James Levine conducting.

**"Mozart's Magic, Mysticism, and Masonry"** *Die Zauberflöte* was Mozart's final opera, an especially tuneful concoction of musical imagery. Although usually classified as comic opera (in German, "Singspiel"), the work nevertheless contains a number of serious elements worth probing.

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**January 27, 2018:** Giacomo Puccini's *Tosca* - with Sonya Yoncheva making her role debut as Tosca, Vittorio Grigolo as Cavaradossi, and Bryn Terfel as Scarpia; James Levine conducts.

**"The 'Alpha Woman' in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Opera"** Last season we surveyed the "vulnerable woman" in 19<sup>th</sup>-century opera; this time we consider the "alpha woman," of whom Puccini's character of Floria Tosca is a (perhaps *the*) prime example.

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**February 10, 2018:** Gaetano Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore* ("The Elixir of Love") - featuring Pretty [*sic*] Yenda and Matthew Polenzani as the young lovers; conducted by Domingo Hindoyan.

**"Does True Love Really Need an Elixir?"** Donizetti is one of the relatively few opera composers (Mozart and Rossini are others) as adept with the comic genre as he is with the serious (think *Lucia*). We'll summarize Donizetti's contributions to both types, with special emphasis upon "Elixir."

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**April 28, 2018:** Jules Massenet's *Cendrillon* ("Cinderella") - starring Joyce DiDonato in the title role and Stephanie Blythe as the evil stepmother; Bertrand de Billy is the conductor.

**"Why Cinderella?"** The Cinderella story is ancient, universal, and the inspiration for many operas and other musical settings. We will list the reasons for the tale's popularity, explore Massenet's imaginative adaptation for *Cendrillon*, and also make some comparisons to Rossini's *La Cenerentola*.