

NEWS RELEASE

UMass Amherst Fine Arts Center

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 9, 2008

WHAT: Fine Arts Center Presents Teatro Lirico D'Europa's production of Bizet's *Carmen*
Tuesday, October 28, 7:30 PM
Fine Arts Center Concert Hall

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UMass Fine Arts Center Presents Teatro Lirico D'Europa's *Carmen*

The UMass Fine Arts Center presents a performance of Bizet's *Carmen* by Teatro Lirico D'Europa at the FAC Concert Hall on Tuesday, October 28 at 7:30 P.M.

Back by popular demand, Teatro Lirico D'Europa offers Bizet's indelible portrait of the willful gypsy woman conveyed through a forceful, beguiling, and unforgettable score. Considered Bizet's greatest work, *Carmen* is set in 19th-century Spain, where amorous passion erupts into high drama. What makes this company so worth seeing is that its priorities are always right. Opera exists to melt our hearts—and Teatro Lirico does just that. The opera will be sung in French with English supertitles. There will be a pre-performance lecture by Alan Schneider from 6:45 to 7:15 P.M. in the lobby of the Concert Hall.

Teatro Lirico D'Europa was formed in 1988 by former Bulgarian opera singer Giorgio Lalov, and has now completed over 3,000 performances worldwide, including nine consecutive seasons of American tours. Teatro Lirico D'Europa holds the outstanding distinction of being the only European opera touring company to present its own season of opera in a US theatre supported by its own subscription series. The company has presented over 15 different full-scale productions of opera at the historic Majestic Theatre in Boston. This season, in addition to its US performances Teatro Lirico will perform by invitation in Mexico, Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Martinique, Jamaica, and Denmark.

Galia Ibragimova sings the title role in this traditional production of Bizet's masterwork. She is the laureate of the Vincenzo Bellini Competition (Italy, 1995) and the Belvedere Competition (Vienna, 1996). She is also the winner of the 1997 edition of the Angelica Catalani Competition (Italy). Since 1998, she has been a soloist at the State Opera in Prague.

Opposite Ibragimova as Don José will be Romanian lyrico-spinto tenor Viorel Saplacan, who currently performs as a principal soloist in Bucharest with the Romanian National Opera, with the State Opera of Timosoara, and with opera companies in other large Romanian cities. He frequently performs as a guest artist with the State Opera of Chisinau, Moldova and with opera companies in other major eastern and western European cities.

Soloists for the rest of the cast were chosen from major opera houses in Russia, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Romania, Bulgaria and the US. Artistic Director Giorgio Lalov engages only seasoned professionals who have performed their roles many times. Lalov himself made his operatic debut at La Scala at the age of 25. In 1986, while on tour with an opera company in France, he decided to put together a world-class orchestra and chorus for full-scale productions of opera. By 1988, Lalov was leading what was to become the most successful opera touring company in Europe.

Tickets for *Carmen* are \$40, \$30 and \$15; Five College/GCC Students and Youth 17 and under are \$15. They are available through the Fine Arts Center Box office at 545-2511, 1-800-999-UMAS and online at fineartscenter.com.

Patrons may also opt for the season's first Global Gourmet dinner in conjunction with the opera. The University Club and Restaurant invites opera-goers to a dinner of Lobster in Phyllo Tulips with Shrimp, Scallops and Sherry, or the vegetarian option of Spinach and Roast Garlic Raviolis with Caramelized Grape Tomato Cream. Dinner also includes tossed baby greens with dressing, warm rolls, a special selection of desert, and coffee or tea—all for the prix fixe of \$25. Seating begins at 5:00 P.M. and reservations are available through the FAC Box Office. The University Club and Restaurant is a short walk from the Concert Hall.

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