

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

06 FEBRUARY 2014

CONTACT: Daniel Zillmann, 612.342.1612 or dzillmann@mnopera.org

The Dream of Valentino opens March 1

Dominick Argento's tango-tinged opera about Hollywood's first star
receives a major revival

Oscar-winning director Eric Simonson invokes 1920s-era Hollywood in a new
production starring tenor James Valenti as the legendary Rudolph Valentino

What: *The Dream of Valentino* by composer Dominick Argento
Sung in English with English captions projected above the stage

Where: Ordway, 345 Washington Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102

When: Saturday, March 01, 7:30pm Thursday, March 06, 7:30pm
Saturday, March 08, 7:30pm Sunday, March 09, 2pm

Tickets: \$20 – \$200. Call the Minnesota Opera Ticket Office at 612.333.6669,
Monday–Friday, 9am–6pm, or purchase online at mnopera.org.

Media: An online press kit (available now on our website at mnop.co/files)
includes artist headshots, marketing artwork and other useful resources.

Contact Communications Manager Daniel Zillmann to take advantage of the following
interview, photo and video opportunities at dress rehearsals at Ordway:
Wednesday, February 26, 7:30pm and **Thursday, February 27, 7:30pm**.

Preview: Minnesota Opera hosts a **Social Media Preview** for bloggers and tweeters on **Thursday,
February 27, 6pm**. Beginning with refreshments and a pre-rehearsal discussion on the
Mezzanine Level at Ordway with a special guest to prepare attendees for the final dress
rehearsal of *The Dream of Valentino*. R.S.V.P. online at mnop.co/preview by February 25.

Minneapolis—Minnesota Opera presents a major new revival of Dominick Argento's *The Dream of
Valentino* as the sixth production of the New Works Initiative. A sultry young dancer is transformed
from an unknown immigrant into a silent film sensation. Rudolph Valentino's stardom blazes across the
silver screen but is quickly consumed by the same forces that ignited it. Seduction and scandal swirl in
this tango-tinged opera about an artist discovered and destroyed by Hollywood. Composed by Argento

continued ...

with a libretto by Charles Nolte as a joint commission between Washington and Dallas opera companies, the work received its world premiere in 1994 at The Kennedy Center, where it was described by the *Chicago Tribune* as “visually and theatrically ... a thumping success.”

“I have known Dominick since my first season when Minnesota Opera premiered *Casanova’s Homecoming* in 1985 and have always admired the freshness and vibrancy of his works,” said **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR DALE JOHNSON**. “*The Dream of Valentino* is the only major Argento opera that we have not staged, and I thought it imperative, as we began the New Works Initiative, that we invest in producing his entire canon. After I approached Dominick to discuss this revival, he spent the summer making major changes to literally give *Valentino* a new beginning. By reworking the dramaturgy and focusing more on Valentino the artist, Dominick feels that the work will better embody how Hollywood uses its stars and tosses them away when they are no longer convenient.”

Internationally acclaimed tenor **JAMES VALENTI** (*Werther*) reimagines the role of the 1920s film icon and sex symbol, Rudolph Valentino. As the catalyst of his meteoric rise to fame, soprano **BRENDA HARRIS** (*Macbeth*) sings the role of June Mathis, a screenwriter. Mezzo-soprano **EVE GIGLIOTTI** (debut) is celebrated movie star Alla Nazimova, **ALAN HELD** (*The Aspern Papers*) is The Mogul and former Minnesota Opera Resident Artist soprano **ANGELA MORTELLARO** (*Madame Butterfly*) is Jean Acker. Tony Award nominee and Academy Award winner, **ERIC SIMONSON** (*The Grapes of Wrath*, *Silent Night*), directs this new production by **ERHARD ROM** (sets), **KÄRIN KOPISCHKE** (costumes), **ROBERT WIERZEL** (lighting) and **PETER NIGRINI** (projections). Maestro **CHRISTOPH CAMPESTRINI** (*Werther*) conducts this Minnesota Opera New Works Initiative production.

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Conductor	Christoph Campestrini
Stage Director	Eric Simonson
Scenic Designer	Erhard Rom
Costume Designer	Kärin Kopischke
Lighting Designer	Robert Wierzel
Projection Designer	Peter Nigrini*
Choreographer	Heidi Spesard-Noble

THE CAST

Rudolph Valentino	James Valenti
June Mathis, <i>a screenwriter</i>	Brenda Harris
The Mogul, <i>a film studio boss</i>	Alan Held
Alla Nazimova, <i>a celebrated actress</i>	Eve Gigliotti*
Marvin Heeno, <i>the Mogul’s nephew</i>	John Robert Lindsey+
Natcha Rambova, <i>a Hollywood director and designer</i>	Victoria Vargas+
Jean Acker, <i>a young actress</i>	Angela Mortellaro

*Minnesota Opera Debut; +Minnesota Opera Resident Artist

To learn more about *The Dream of Valentino* ...

Please visit mnop.co/valentino. There you will find casting updates, artist biographies, synopses, background notes, audio and video clips, ticketing services and other company information.

The 2013–2014 Minnesota Opera season is sponsored by Ascent Private Capital Management of U. S. Bank.

Minnesota Opera combines a culture of creativity and fiscal responsibility to produce opera and opera education programs that expand the art form, nurture artists, enrich audiences and contribute to the vitality of the community.