



Updated release: May 25, 2010

Media Contact: Sally Cohen, 585-749-1795

EMPIRE STATE LYRIC THEATRE AT KILBOURN JUNE 5 & 6

RPO joins ESLT on stage for in-concert *L'elisir d'amore (Elixir of Love)*

Festive musical event marks beginning of new RPO/ESLT partnership

**NEW: Champagne pre-concert reception for all Saturday ticket holders
& student discounts for Sunday matinee**

Rochester, NY – **Empire State Lyric Theatre** debuted in 2006 at Geva Theatre Center with a mission: to offer musical events that provide world-class performances in a festive, social atmosphere.

The non-profit arts organization stays true to its roots with an elegant **in-concert** production of **Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore (Elixir of Love)*** featuring the **Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra** on **Saturday, June 5 at 7:30 p.m.** and on **Sunday, June 6 at 2 p.m.** at the Eastman School of Music's beautiful **Kilbourn Hall** (26 Gibbs St., 14604). ESLT's Artistic Director/Conductor **Raffaele Ponti** will conduct the 40-piece orchestra, cast of five professional singers and a chorus of 12 local singers.

"In-concert productions could be considered our signature," explains Maestro Ponti, who is a frequent guest conductor all over Europe and North America, and was just named artistic director and conductor for the **Paducah Symphony Orchestra** (Kentucky). "We're not recreating the opera with period costumes and sets, although the performers will certainly be beautifully dressed, in character and off book. Instead, we focus on the wonderful score and nuances of the music...and who better to share the stage with us than the wonderful Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra?!"

"The RPO is so pleased to be an integral part of ESLT's upcoming performances of *L'elisir d'amore*," says RPO President & CEO **Charles H. Owens**. "This new partnership promises even more of a variety of artistic experiences for Rochester audiences, and we applaud ESLT's fresh approach to opera presentation."

The plot of this comic opera centers around Nemorino, a peasant, and wealthy landowner, Adina, with whom he has fallen in love. Fearing that his rival, Belcore, will win Adina, Nemorino buys a love potion from a traveling salesman, Dr. Dulcamara, unaware that the "magic" elixir is only wine. Hilarity and drama ensue, and love triumphs in the end.

Renowned San Francisco tenor **Andrew Bidlack**, who will make his South American debut with Teatro Municipal de Santiago in Chile the following month, plays Nemorino. Adina is soprano **Susan Cotroneo**, the only local lead in the production, who sang the role at La Festival di Musica da Camera in Italy in 2004. Baritone **JJ Hudson** (Belcore) and soprano **Kate Maroney** (Gianetta, Adina's friend) both received doctorates from the Eastman School of Music and enjoy busy teaching and performing careers. And Buffalo bass, **Valerian Ruminski**, whose award-winning career has taken him all over the world and back home to start his own Nickel City Opera Company, is the production's Dr. Dulcamara.

In keeping with the ESLT's philosophy, however, the musical production is only part of June fifth's special evening. A lavish pre-performance soiree will kick off the festivities at 6 p.m. in Eastman

(more)

(Empire State Lyric Theatre, continued)

School's beautiful Cominsky Promenade, which leads directly in and out of Kilbourn Hall. An open bar and a sumptuous feast of heavy hors d'oeuvres will put ESLT sponsors and guests who have purchased the VIP Reception ticket* in the mood for a relaxing, enjoyable evening. **Just announced: all Saturday evening's ticket holders are invited to a complimentary champagne reception beginning at 7 p.m. in the Cominsky Promenade.**

"In a way, we're recreating a time when music was written and performed for composers' patrons," explains ESLT's Executive Director Susan Cotroneo, who is also the production's female lead. "Our audience isn't just attending a concert – they're getting a real evening out...a party!"

Sunday, June sixth's matinée will offer a more traditional concert approach, as well as a **newly-announced \$5 student discount. Tickets for both performances are \$20, \$30 and \$40 (with a 20% senior discount) and are available at the RPO Box Office in person (108 East Ave., 14604), by phone at 585-454-2100 or at any area Wegmans' *That's T.H.E. Ticket!* location. *A limited number of VIP Reception tickets for June 5 are available for \$50 at www.empirestatelyrictheatre.org or by calling 585-738-5995.**

About Empire State Lyric Theatre (ESLT) was founded in 2006 by a group of music and business professionals with a common interest in providing Rochester with extraordinary musical evenings. ESLT founders and directors believe that music should be enjoyed by everyone, and it is the company's goal to offer musical events that provide world-class performances in a festive, social atmosphere, as well as to evolve into one of Western New York's preeminent performing arts companies. ESLT's mission is to offer challenging, dynamic and diverse programming which will engage and entertain regional audiences, and to provide inventive contexts and facilitate dynamic collaborations for the most outstanding regional, national and international artists of our time.

Media, please note: High-resolution promotional photos are available, along with performers' headshots and bios. Interviews and photo/footage opportunities may be arranged. Please visit www.empirestatelyrictheatre.org for more information.

Listing information: Empire State Lyric Theatre presents Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore (Elixir of Love)* in concert with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra on Saturday, June 5 at 7:30 p.m. and on Sunday, June 6 at 2 p.m. in the Eastman School of Music's Kilbourn Hall (26 Gibbs St.) Tickets are \$20, \$30 and \$40 (with a 20% discount for seniors, and a \$5 student discount for June 6th's matinee only), and are available in person at the RPO Box Office (108 East Ave.) and at any Wegmans' *That's T.H.E. Ticket!* location, or by phone at 585-454-2100. A complimentary champagne reception for June 5th ticket holders begins at 7 p.m. in the Eastman School's Cominsky Promenade. A limited number of \$50 VIP Reception tickets to June 5th's lavish pre-performance party are available by calling 585-738-5995. Please visit www.empirestatelyrictheatre.org for more information.

###