Wednesday, May 9, 2012

You don't need to be an opera fan to enjoy 'Elixir of Love'

Charming, funny show plays in GP on Saturday

By Edith Decker of the Daily Courier

Rogue Opera's 2012 production of "Elixir of Love" may be the perfect opera for people who've never been to the

It's light and charming and

funny. It's a classic underdog story with a happy ending and lovely singing.

"Elixir" opened at Medford's Craterian last weekend, but has one last performance in Grants Pass on Saturday.

Director Noel Koran has set this production in the 1930s at the beginning of the wine industry in the Rogue Valley and in "The State of Jefferson." The elixir of love, by the way, is wine.

A salesman of the road, in town to fleece ... errrrr... help heal some of the locals sells this amazing concoction to a sweet, gullible, impoverished young man named Nemorino who's in love with the flirty daughter of a wealthy landowner. Adina flatly tells Nemorino to give up, especially since the handsome army sergeant Belcore has come on the scene.



Photo By TERRY TUTTLE

In the finale of "Elixir of Love," the salesman (Igor Vieira) presents his case for his love potion, center, as happy couple Nemorino and Adina (James Callon, Laura Portune) look on, left, and even the sergeant (Kreshnik Zhabjaku) has found new girls to woo, right.

Nemorino begs the sales- now a catch — even before man for a love potion, but it hasn't taken effect when Belcore convinces Adina to marry him right away. Luckily she has second thoughts and Nemorino buys a second helping of the elixir.

But a better help to his sex appeal is the fact that he's just inherited a large estate and the messenger, Giannetta, has told all the girls that Nemorino's she's told him he's rich. Of course, he believes the elixir is really working. And it is, in a

way ...
"This is a period of opera where we get the stereotype that opera stories don't make much sense," said Koran in the pre-performance talk. "But this story holds together." That may be because Donizetti himself wrote most of the libretto as well as the music.

Beyond the story and some of opera's most real characters, the music is elegant and upbeat. The opera exemplifies the best of the Italian belle canto — beautiful songs style of opera. The singers have a chance to revel in their voices and bring the audience along to enjoy the ride.

Laura Portune was obviously enjoying her role as Adina.

Portune has years of experience in opera and is based in San Diego. Luckily, she's also one of Koran's former students, so he convinced her to take the role. She's at once flirty and snotty in the first act in a way that will take you right back to junior high. But she realizes her mistake and grows before our eyes into a good

match for our hayseed hero.

James Callon sings the underdog Nemorino — and one of the most beautiful tenor arias in opera — in the production. Callon played Alfredo in last year's Rogue Opera production of "La Traviata." He's completely believable as the young man in love who doesn't seem to have a chance with his beauty, but remains faithful to his feelings.

That's not only due to his acting, but to his emotional and gorgeous voice. Look for his aria "a furtive tear" ("Una furtiva lagrima")

But stealing the show was baritone Igor Vieira as the salesman Dulcamara, adding comic bits as the showman who's ready to hit the road should the need arise when the folks find out his magic elixirs are snake oil — and a nice cabernet. He even manages to sing while eating, as Dulcamara is not willing to pass up a free meal.

Also well cast as soldier and ladies man Belcore was sung by Kreshnik Zhabjaku, an

Just the ticket

- WHAT: "The Elixir of Love" a comic opera by Gaetano Donizetti, produced by Rogue
- WHEN: Saturday at 3 p.m. ■ WHERE: Grants Pass High School Performing Arts Center, Eighth and Olive streets
- TICKETS: \$30 for adults, \$10 for youth; Call 541-608-6400 or see www.rogueopera.org. Any remaining tickets will be for sale at the

Albanian-born baritone who is now based in New York City. This is his third Rogue Opera production. His songs with Adina are a highlight.

The opera is sung in Italian, but you'll follow easily what's going on. And the translation — in colloquial English — is projected right over the stage. "Gosh she's pretty!" sings Nemorino. And the chorus is hardly prim or proper when drinking the new vintage and singing: "Love's gonna get ya and it's sure gonna burn!

Opera fans will not want to miss this fun performance and those who've never tried the opera will find this a great introduction — no Viking goddesses in brass bras or tormented souls. Just beautiful songs and a great day for the

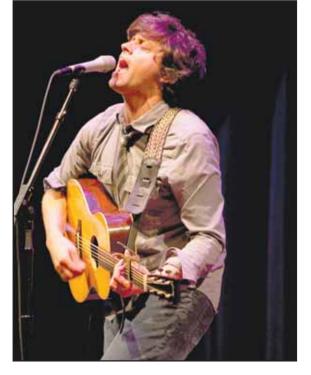
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								BROA	DCAST						
KFBI 43	3	48	48	How I Met Your Mother (HD)	How I Met Your Mother HD) MLB Baseball: San Francisco Giants at Los Angeles Dodgers from Dodger Know Terrorist plans to blow up Miami. (HD)						Burn Notice: Friends and Enemies Lawyer needs protection from biker gang. (HD)				
KOBI	5	5	5	NBC 5 News at 6:00 The daily news. (N)		Entertain- ment Tonight (N) (HD)	The Insider (N) (HD)	Off Their		Rock Center with Brian Williams (N) (HD) Law & Order: Special Victims Unit: Father Dearest Biological search. (N) (HD)		NBC 5 News at 11:00 (N)	The Tonight Show with Jay Leno (HD)		
KSYS	8	8	8	Nightly Business Report (N) (HD)			Oregon Art Beat	Nature: The W Two rare cubs the savanna. (growing up on	The 2011 tornado season is examined. (R) (HD)		NOVA: Hunt for the Supertwister Data for tornado prediction sought. (R) (HD)		Charlie Rose (N) (HD)	
CREATE 8.3	297			Steves' Europe: France's Dordogne	Equitrek Jordan's treasures.	Garden Smart U.S. Botanic Garden.	Ask This Old House (HD)	For Your Home: Intro to Komen House		Love of Quilting: Fabric 101	Donna Dewberry: Crafty Notions	Country	Lidia's Italy in America (HD)	Tommy Tang Vegetables & spices.	Weeknight Meals: Dinner for Two
KTVL 100	10	10	10	News 10 at 6pm (N)	Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? (N)	Inside Edition (N) (HD)	Extra (N) (HD)	Survivor: One (HD)	World (N)	101 The science of criminal profiling. (N) (HD)				News 10 at 11pm (N)	Late Show with David Letterman (N
				The King of	The King of	Seinfeld: The	Seinfeld: The	America's Ne	xt Top Model:	America's Ne	xt Top Model:	Cops: Ho! Ho!	'Til Death:	'Til Death:	That '70s

The Middle:

Doll Spooky doll scares. Jeopardy!: DC Teen Newswatch Wheel of Newswatch 12 at 6:30pm (HD) The Big Bang Theory The Bio Two and a 13 26 26 Simpsons Wacky family. (HD) He Big Two and Half Men (HD)

Singer/author to read, perform in Ashland Singer, songwriter and author

David Berkeley is giving a concert and book reading Friday at the Unitarian Center, 84 Fourth St., in Ashland, He'll be reading excerpts from his book "140 Goats and a Guitar: the Stories Behind Some Kind of Cure" and performing music from the CD. Tickets to the 8 p.m. concert are \$18 in advance, \$20 at the door, \$10 for youth 12 to 17 and free for children under 12. Call 541-535-3562 or visit www.stclairevents.com.



Suburgatory Tessa must adjust. (N)

American Idol: Performance Show (N) (HD)

Modern

Special production of 'Stuart Little' will be presented Saturday in Medford

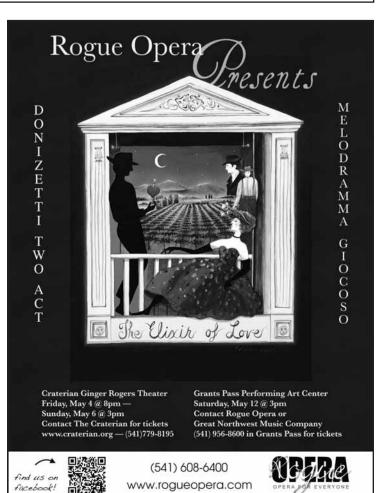
A special production of "Stuart Little," featuring both hearing and deaf actors who speak and sign simultaneously, is being presented Saturday in Medford

The adaptation of E. B. White's fantasy will be at the Craterian Ginger Rogers Theater, 23 S. Central Ave., at 3 p.m. It's presented by Sign-Stage Theatre.

In the story, Stuart, the young and noble mouse with the spirit of a giant, jumps head first into adventures, including rescuing his friend, the bird Margalo, from his family's cat.

As this mild-mannered mouse tries to cope in a "real person's" world, he realizes size isn't important. It's attitude and ability that count.

Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 for youth 18 and younger. Get tickets by calling 541-779-3000 or online at www.craterian.org.



(:35) Nightline News of the day. (N) (HD) Friends: The

Show Blonde Donna. (HD)

Rachel Tells.

and more, visit thedailycourier.com

Includes full color picture,

graduate's name narents' names

Newswatch

(:05) The

For videos,

photo galleries

Revenge: Legacy Amanda begins planning her revenge (N) (HD)

Fox 26 News First at Ten (:35) TMZ (N)

Don't Trust

Family: B—— in Apartment 23

River will be the theme of monthly poetry reading Friday at art museum

The river is the theme for from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Grants this month's evening of poetry sharing.

Anyone is welcome to read their poetry or to listen to others. River poems printed on 8 1/2-by-11-inch paper will be placed in a stand in the museum library. Vinyl sheet protectors will be provided.

The event is divided into two sessions, with a snack break between. Each reader shares up to two poems per

The gathering is Friday

Pass Museum of Art, 229 S.W. G St. Admission is free.

Call the museum at 541-479-3290 for information.

Poetry sharing events are held every second Friday of

MEAT COMPANY, INC. Farm Butchering 541-476-6838



Vote for Don Reedy on May 15th

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