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**Opera Grand Rapids Hosts West Michigan's  
Most Romantic Ticket In Town This Valentine's Day**

***The Elixir of Love,*  
Feb. 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> at DeVos Hall**

**GRAND RAPIDS** – Just in time for Valentine's Day, Opera Grand Rapids will bring to life Donizetti's classic romantic comedy, *The Elixir of Love*. An endearing and popular score, combined with a delightful story has made this opera buffo (comedy) a crowd pleaser for more than 150 years.

The story follows a young peasant boy who is in love with a beautiful landowner. In hopes of winning her heart he buys a love potion from a traveling salesman. The innocence of young love is shaped by comedic twists of fate that eventually draw the unlikely lovers to the altar. Saucy, sweet and funny, *The Elixir of Love* is the best light opera has to offer, leaving its audience spellbound and smiling.

A stunning national cast, The Grand Rapids Symphony and the Opera Grand Rapids Regional Chorus will bring *The Elixir of Love* to life under the baton of Robert Lyall and Stage Director Matthew Lata.

The role of the love interest Adina will be sung by soprano **Ailyn Pérez**. In February 2008, Pérez performed alongside Plácido Domingo on his World Tour. Most noteworthy on the program, she sang the love duet from *Otello* with Domingo. Last season she also joined the roster of the Metropolitan Opera for *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Hansel und Gretel*, and made her debut at the Michigan Opera Theater. *Opera News* has hailed Pérez. as "...a magnificently assured artist with ample vocal resources and a magnetic stage presence."

The peasant boy Nemorino will be sung by tenor **Scott Ramsay**. The *Toronto Globe & Mail* recently declared that Ramsay, "Proved to be a real find - his voice has a sweetness and the modest purity reminiscent of vintage Bjoerling and Simoneau."

Baritone **Michael Wanko** will sing the role of the salesman, Dr. Dulcamara. From New York City Opera to Santa Barbara, Wanko's performances have been called "show stealing."

For a twist on the traditional show, Opera Grand Rapids has transported the show from a small Italian village in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century to a village circa 1915. Local artist John Despres has worked closely with Opera Grand Rapids' Artistic staff for months to craft a uniquely original set for the production.

For those looking for an alternative to flowers and candy, a night at the opera is the hot ticket this year. Opera buffs and those new to the art form can peek behind the curtain with new tools on the Opera Grand Rapids website, such as in-depth podcasts by the conductor that explain the show, cast bios, the full story of the opera, and blogs by opera staff. For more details, visit [www.operagr.com](http://www.operagr.com).

Tickets for this original Opera Grand Rapids production are available through Ticketmaster or by calling 616.451.2741. Seats start at \$20 each, with half priced student and senior seats available the day of the show at the DeVos Hall Box Office.

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