

RIGOLETTO 2009 BACKSTAGE INFO

Staff/Running crew:	(34) stagehands (carpenters, electricians, av tech, prop men, fly men) (23) wardrobe (wardrobe mistress, dressers, stitchers, launderers) (11) wig and make-up crew (4) artistic team (conductor, director, designers, choreographer) (12) music and production staff (incl. asst. designers, titles, stage mgrs, etc.)
Cast:	(13) principals; (30) chorus (all m); (16) supers (9f, 7m); (10) dancers (5m, 5f)
Orchestra:	(54) (33 strings, 8 w winds, 10 brass, timpani, percussion, plus librarian)
Total Budget:	\$1,777,926 (for artists, orchestra, crews, building scenery and costumes, everything else . . .)

Orchestra While the usual complement of strings and winds, as well as the percussion and timpani are used in the orchestra, there is also a cimbasso. This is an unusual low brass instrument of the trombone family called for in the score. Backstage left there is also a keyboard used for the storm in the final act. Actual thunder sounds are entered into the synthesizer and played by the chorus master backstage.

Scenery/Props This production was built in the late 1980's for New York City Opera. San Diego Opera purchased the production (scenery, props, costumes) and it will be available for rent after we close. It was originally designed by Carl Toms. At some point, John Conklin did a redesign which made it starker and more open. We have reverted to the original design. There are 3 different settings, (the tower unit plays in all three settings). The scene change between the scenes in Act I is very busy as it needs to be done as quickly as possible. Though this scenery was built over 20 years ago, it has held up remarkably well. It is in that style of large representational scenery that dominated opera design in the 1980's. In addition to the statue and columns, there are also panels that are translucent and could appear to be glowing from within. The over sized statue is made of fiberglass. In order to create it, the statue had to be carved and fiber glassed over and then separated from the carving so that it is translucent.

Lighting The lighting is designed by Michael Whitfield who was here last year to design *Cav/Pag*. Michael has been in residence to focus the lights, create the looks of the show, and set cues during the technical rehearsals. Since the scenery in this production is somewhat adjustable, he and the director have needed to make some aesthetic decisions regarding how the scenery is staged. Over 500 lighting instruments are used – from the newest and best in modern stage lighting to traditional opera workhorses. If you laid the gel in the lights side by side, you could cover a football field. Over 100 metal templates or gobos are used to break up the light into patterns. 9 strobes are used to effect the lightning during the storm. 4 of them are operated from the lighting board and the rest are operated by a stagehand backstage with a mini “piano” board. As the Stage Manager calls the cue, the operator plays the 5 keys to match the intensity of the storm. Five large format Pani projectors are used to make the rear projected images (moving clouds, sky, stars, etc.) and one in the booth projects the Act title images. There are 20 color scrollers that fit on the ends of the instruments to change the color of the light, each with several colors of gel. If all the lights were turned on together it would be 580,000 watts of electricity. That would power approximately 9,000 60watt household light bulbs or toast 17,999 pieces of bread. The scenic elements (statue and columns) that are translucent, are lit from within with simple lights so that they appear to glow. As usual, the performers are accented with follow spots.

Costumes The costumes were also designed by Carl Toms. The costumes were built in 1988 for NYCO. The palette of the costumes is a very bold red, black and gold and they are of the early 17th century period. There are 78 costumes. Principals have several changes including a quick change backstage for Gilda. We have more choristers than costumes that came with the show. Therefore, the costume shop had to create and build 10 additional chorus costumes including hats and masks. You will notice the masquerade masks worn by the chorus and dancers in the party scene as they are quite fanciful. For the dancers in particular, these had to be carefully fitted so that the dancers are able to see well enough to do their twirls and lifts. The costume shop works closely with the props department on several items including sword belts and pockets for keys and the like.

Wigs/Make-up Principal makeup and wigs (including facial hair) are applied by 4 M/U artists including the designer – Steven Bryant. The dancers, chorus, and supers have their wigs and makeup applied by 7 more artists in the rehearsal hall downstairs. There are less than 35 wigs used in the show (only 2 on women) which is a small number for an opera. Several of the principals will use their own hair. Dancers and chorus don't wear much makeup since they have masks on in the first scene. Most of the men wear ruffs around their necks and in order to keep them from getting too much makeup on them, little is worn below the chin. Wigs are secured in several ways (pins, clips) including toupee tape which is a type of double stick tape. Some of this toupee tape was used by the scenery department to adhere loose edges of a cloth covering on the statue pedestal as a quick fix in order to avoid using a strong smelling glue.

<u>CIVIC THEATRE BASIC TECH INFO:</u>	# of seats = 2885
Proscenium opening: width = 56'	height = 29'6"
Depth of stage = 56' (86' to back wall)	Height of grid = 80'
# of line sets = 69	# of traps = 6 (4'x6' to 4'x18')