

APRIL 24 - 30, 2018

NETREBKO, DiDONATO AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL GRAND FINALS IN NEW YORK CITY

We were going to call this tour *The Best New York City Tour Ever*, but that would be boastful. Yet, as baseball player Dizzy Dean once said, "It ain't bragging if you can do it." And in 2018, we can do it.

Why is this tour so good? First and foremost, we have Orchestra Premium and Orchestra Prime seats for an incredible slate of operas with dream casts. And if that were not enough, we will attend the finals of the National Council Auditions, where we hear the finest young voices in opera before the rest of the world does.

In addition to the performances, we stay at the superb, elegant, spacious and fun Firmdale Whitby Hotel, ideally located on 56th, between 5th and Madison. This is the new sister hotel of the Covent Garden Hotel in London, and it is likely to become your favourite hotel in New York.

Tana Ross will be your host for the week, escorting you on private tours that highlight the city's finest art, architecture and public spaces. And as always, the cuisine will be superb.

This is a New York City opera experience not to be missed.

Lucia di Lammermoor (4/25/18)

Conductor: Roberto Abbado
 Lucia: Pretty Yende
 Edgardo: Michael Fabiano
 Enrico: Quinn Kelsey
 Raimondo: Alexander Vinogradov

Tosca (4/26/18)

Conductor: Bertrand de Billy
 Tosca: Anna Netrebko
 Cavaradossi: Marcelo Álvarez
 Scarpia: Michael Volle
 Sacrista: Patrick Carfizzi

Roméo et Juliette (4/27/18)

Conductor: Plácido Domingo
 Juliette: Ailyn Pérez
 Stéphan: Karine Deshayes
 Roméo: Bryan Hymel
 Mercutio: Joshua Hopkins
 Frère Laurent: Kwangchul Youn

Cendrillon (4/28/18; matinée)

Conductor: Bertrand de Billy
 La Fée: Kathleen Kim
 Cendrillon: Joyce DiDonato
 Le Prince Charmant: Alice Coote
 M. de la Haltière: Stephanie Blythe
 Pandolfe: Laurent Naouri

TOUR INCLUDES

- Top Category seats for 4 operas plus the National Council Grand Finals concert
- 6 nights deluxe accommodation at the Firmdale Whitby Hotel
- Full breakfast daily, 1 lunch, 3 dinners, 2 receptions and 1 Afternoon Tea
- Private guided tours as listed
- Airport-hotel transfers
- On-site Tour Direction by New York resident/guide Tana Ross
- Comprehensive Tour Guidebook

Cost: \$7295 USD

Single supplement: \$1800 USD

Deposit: \$2500 USD

Balance due: January 24, 2018

Tour Flights: Ideally, return flights should be booked to arrive at JFK or Newark early afternoon on April 24 with departure on the morning of April 30. *Please note that LaGuardia Airport is under extensive construction until at least 2021.*

Transfers: We provide airport/rail station—hotel transfers on published arrival and departure days only. For arrivals/departures on days other than published tour dates, we suggest taxis or contacting the hotel to make arrangements. *We cannot provide transfers to LaGuardia, you must take a taxi and you will be reimbursed by our Tour Director.* We also provide transfers for group meals and performances that are beyond a 10 minute walk.

Mobility: As for all of our tours, we are happy to accommodate you regardless of your mobility level. Please make clear your mobility concerns at the time of registration.

Insurance: We strongly recommend that all tour members purchase cancellation insurance upon registration. We can assist you with this, though you are welcome to purchase a policy at your own discretion.

ITINERARY

Tuesday, April 24

Upon arrival at your NYC-area airport, you are met and transferred to the new (2017), ideally located Firmdale Whitby Hotel. The design is elegant, warm and wistful, the rooms are large and superbly appointed, and the staff is charming, attentive and professional. This is the sister hotel to the Firmdale Covent Garden in London, one of our favourite hotels anywhere. Tonight we meet for a Cocktail Reception in the Drawing Room prior to dinner at the hotel.

Wednesday, April 25

Following breakfast (included each day), we enjoy a tour of your Director Tana Ross's favourite spots in the city, including the



Morgan Library. A complex of buildings in the heart of New York City, The Morgan Library & Museum began as the private library of financier Pierpont Morgan (1837–1913), one of the preeminent collectors and cultural benefactors in the United States. As early as 1890, Morgan had begun to assemble a collection of illuminated, literary, and historical manuscripts, early printed books, and old master drawings and prints. Built between 1902 and 1906 at Madison Avenue and 36th Street by Charles McKim, the library is an Italian Renaissance-style palazzo with three magnificent rooms epitomizing America's Age

of Elegance. Afternoon Tea is included at the Palm Court of the Plaza Hotel. This evening we depart to The Met for *Lucia di Lammermoor* (7:30pm curtain).

Thursday, April 26

Late morning we depart for a highlights tour of The Frick Collection. The Frick carries masterpieces of European painting, major works of sculpture (among them one of the finest groups of small bronzes in the world), superb 18th-century French porcelains, Old Master and 19th-century works on paper, Limoges enamels, and other works of remarkable quality. Lunch is included at Lincoln Ristorante. Optional: those who wish can partake in a behind-the-scenes tour of Lincoln Center, including the Metropolitan Opera House. Tonight we return to The Met for Puccini's *Tosca* (8pm curtain).

Friday, April 27

Following breakfast, we depart for a tour of The Whitney, whose collection includes over 22,000 works created by more than 3,000 artists in the United States during the 20th and 21st centuries. The Whitney has deep holdings of the work of certain key artists, spanning their careers and the mediums in which they worked, including Alexander Calder, Mabel Dwight, Jasper Johns, Glenn Ligon, Brice Marden, Reginald Marsh, Agnes Martin, Georgia O'Keeffe, Claes Oldenburg, Ed Ruscha, Cindy Sherman, Lorna Simpson, and David Wojnarowicz. Dinner is included in the Grand Tier Restaurant prior to Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* (8pm curtain).

Saturday, April 28

Enjoy the morning at leisure in

New York. This afternoon, we transfer to the Met for Massenet's *Cendrillon* (1pm).

Sunday, April 29

This morning we offer an optional tour (included) to the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, founded more



than a century ago. Today, the Garden represents the very best in urban gardening and horticultural display. Following lunch at leisure, we transfer to The Met for the National Council Grand Finals concert (3pm). Some of today's greatest singers got their start in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, including Jamie Barton, Stephanie Blythe, Lawrence Brownlee, Renée Fleming, Susan Graham, Thomas Hampson, Angela Meade, Eric Owens, and Frederica von Stade. We will hear the 2018 Finalists compete for cash prizes and the chance to launch a major operatic career while accompanied by the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, conducted by Bertrand de Billy. Following the concert, we toast our new 2018 winners at a champagne reception on The Mercedes T. Bass Grand Tier. Our magical day (and tour) concludes with a refined Farewell Dinner at Michael's, offering haute California cuisine.

Monday, April 30

Airport transfers are included and will be arranged on-site.