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Maria Stuarda

Starring Joyce DiDonato as Mary, Queen of Scots

Premieres on THIRTEEN's *Great Performances at the Met*

Sunday, July 14 at 12 noon on PBS

David McVicar directs the first-ever Met production of Donizetti's opera, the second part of the composer's famous "Tudor trilogy" with South African soprano Elza van den Heever as Elizabeth I, Mary's formidable rival, and Matthew Polenzani as the Earl of Leicester

Joyce DiDonato stars as Mary, Queen of Scots, in the first-ever Met production of Donizetti's intensely dramatic historical opera ***Maria Stuarda***, on ***Great Performances at the Met*** Sunday, July 14 at 12 noon on PBS (check local listings).

South African soprano **Elza van den Heever** makes her Met debut as Mary's rival, the formidable Queen Elizabeth I, and **Matthew Polenzani** sings Leicester, the nobleman caught

between the two dueling monarchs. **Maurizio Benini** conducts a cast that also includes **Matthew Rose** as Talbot, Mary's jailer, and **Joshua Hopkins** as Elizabeth's advisor Cecil.

The production is by **David McVicar**, who also staged last season's broadcast of Donizetti's Tudor drama *Anna Bolena*.

After the production's December 31 premiere, *The New York Times* raved, "It was hard to imagine a better New Year's Eve gift to opera lovers than this musically splendid and intensely dramatic performance." *The Financial Times* opined, "Joyce DiDonato gives an exquisitely proportioned, remarkably sensitive performance."

Soprano **Deborah Voigt** hosts the broadcast and conducts backstage interviews with the stars.

Maria Stuarda was originally seen live in movie theaters on January 19 as part of the groundbreaking *The Met: Live in HD* series, which transmits live performances to more than 1900 movie theaters and performing arts centers in 64 countries around the world.

Great Performances at the Met is a presentation of THIRTEEN for WNET, one of America's most prolific and respected public media providers. Throughout its 40 year history on public television, **Great Performances** has provided viewers across the country with an unparalleled showcase of the best in all genres of the performing arts, serving as America's most prestigious and enduring broadcaster of cultural programming. Now in its fifth decade, the series has been the home to the greatest artists in the areas of drama, dance, musical theater, classical and popular music, providing many with their very first television exposure.

Corporate support for **Great Performances at the Met** is provided by Toll Brothers, America's luxury home builder®. Additional funding is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts. This **Great Performances** presentation is funded by the Irene Diamond Fund, the Philip and Janice Levin Foundation, The Agnes Varis Trust, and public television viewers.

For the Met, Gary Halvorson directs the telecast. Jay David Saks is Music Producer, Mia Bongiovanni and Elena Park are Supervising Producers, and Louisa Briccetti and Victoria Warivonchik are Producers. Peter Gelb is Executive Producer. For **Great Performances**, Bill O'Donnell is Series Producer; David Horn is Executive Producer.

Visit **Great Performances** online at www.pbs.org/gperf for additional information on this and other **Great Performances** programs.

About WNET

In 2013, WNET is celebrating the 50th Anniversary of THIRTEEN, New York's flagship public media provider. As the parent company of **THIRTEEN** and **WLIW21** and operator of **NJTV**, WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to over 5 million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as **Nature**, **Great Performances**, **American Masters**, **Need to Know**, **Charlie Rose** and a range of documentaries, children's programs, and local news and cultural offerings available on air and online. Pioneers in educational programming, WNET has created such groundbreaking series as **Get the Math**, **Oh Noah!** and **Cyberchase** and provides tools for educators that bring compelling content to life in the classroom and at home. WNET highlights the

tri-state's unique culture and diverse communities through [NYC-ARTS](#), [Reel 13](#), [NJ Today](#) and [MetroFocus](#), the multi-platform news magazine focusing on the New York region. WNET is also a leader in connecting with viewers on emerging platforms, including the [THIRTEEN Explore iPad App](#) where users can stream PBS content for free.

About the Met

Under the leadership of General Manager Peter Gelb and Music Director James Levine, the Met has a series of bold initiatives underway that are designed to broaden its audience and revitalize the company's repertory. The Met's 2012-13 season features seven new productions, including Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*, directed by Bartlett Sher and conducted by Maurizio Benini; the Met premiere of Thomas Adès's *The Tempest*, directed by Robert Lepage and conducted by the composer; Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera*, directed by David Alden and conducted by Met Principal Conductor Fabio Luisi; the Met premiere of Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda*, directed by David McVicar and conducted by Benini; Verdi's *Rigoletto*, directed by Michael Mayer in his Met debut and conducted by Michele Mariotti; Wagner's *Parsifal*, directed by François Girard in his Met debut and conducted by Daniele Gatti; and Handel's *Giulio Cesare*, also directed by David McVicar and conducted by Harry Bicket.

Building on its 81-year-old radio broadcast history—heard over the Toll Brothers-Metropolitan Opera International Radio Network—the Met uses advanced media distribution platforms and state-of-the-art technology to reach audiences around the world. *The Met: Live in HD*, the Emmy and Peabody Award-winning series of live performance transmissions to movie theaters around the world, returns for its seventh season in 2012-13. Met Player, a subscription service makes much of its extensive video and audio catalog of full-length performances available to the public for the first time online, and in exceptional, state-of-the-art quality. Metropolitan Opera Radio on SIRIUS XM broadcasts live performances from the Met stage three times a week during the opera season, as well; the Met on Rhapsody on-demand service offers audio recordings; and the Met presents free live audio streaming of performances on its website once every week during the opera season.

The Met has launched several audience development initiatives, including Open House dress rehearsals, a popular rush ticket program, Gallery Met, and an annual Holiday Series presentation for families. For more information, please visit: www.metopera.org.

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