



# City Opera Returns, Ready for a Comeback

Thursday, November 05, 2009 By [Matthew Sollars](#)



Lincoln Center, home of The New York City Opera. ([The New York City Opera](#))

New York's City Opera is making its homecoming tonight.

As [John Schaefer points out](#), City Opera had a very difficult off-season. The company was essentially homeless for a full season as its theater underwent renovations. Its director [left abruptly](#) and, like all not-for-profits, the opera was hurt by [the economic crisis](#). A challenging mix for a company trying to compete with the Met.

But, now it's back in the newly renovated (and renamed) David H. Koch Theater, which has been getting its own buzz for a [dramatic art installation in the lobby](#) by [E.V. Day](#). And Schaefer says that City Opera's new artistic director, George Steel, and his staff have the company poised for a comeback.

They've put together a typically interesting, offbeat, and surprising season — they even had to add a fifth performance of Hugo Weisgall's "Esther," a very unexpected and pleasant surprise. I think this shows that City Opera *can* play in the big leagues, even in a city that already has *the* premiere big league team.

The season gets underway tonight [at 7 p.m. with a benefit concert, "American Voices,"](#) that will include Lauren Flanigan, Marc Kudisch, Samuel Ramey, the New York City Ballet and Rufus Wainwright.

