

<p>An undisputed master of Giuseppe Verdi's final comic masterpiece, James Levine conducts Robert Carsen's acclaimed production of Falstaff for Metropolitan Opera, the first new version of the opera at the Met since 1964. USCB Center for the Arts will feature the new work when it is transmitted live on Saturday afternoon, Dec. 14.</p> <p>♦</p> <p>Adapted from Shakespeare's plays "The Merry Wives of Windsor" and scenes from "Henry IV," Verdi composed the opera in his '90's. It was the last opera he wrote, and only the second of his 28 operas to be a comedy. It premiered in 1893 and has long been a favorite with critics and musicians alike. Ambrogio Maestri sings the iconic basso buffo role of Sir John Falstaff. A powerful and robust Italian baritone, Maestri is noted for this role of the booming, boorish man with unexpected remnants of chivalry and grace.</p> <p>The story takes place in England during the reign of Henry IV. Three wealthy, married women plot against Falstaff, who has professed love to all three but is really after their husbands' money. While the "merry wives" plot their revenge the husbands also discover Falstaff's deceit and plan their own revenge. Disguises abound at the place of assignation and high comedy ensues as the various characters' roles are discovered.</p> <p>All seats are assigned. For online tickets, Adults \$22 and OLLI members \$18, go to www.uscbcenterforthearts.com or call the Box Office at 843-521-4145. Tickets also available at the door one hour prior to the 12:55 p.m. curtain at USCB Center for the Arts, 801 Carteret St. in downtown Beaufort.</p>