

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Wednesday, January 27, 10:00 am, 2021

Contact: Suzanne Calvin 214.443.1014

Cell: 817.995.1687

suzanne.calvin@dallasopera.org

Extreme ongoing COVID concerns force The Dallas Opera to cancel this spring's subscription season set to open this March. A new slate of four, full-scale grand opera productions returns in February 2022, the launch of the 2021/2022 Season that includes Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, Jonathan Dove's *Flight*, Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, and Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers*. Remaining 2021 events in the Winspear Opera House include the Joyce DiDonato "VIVA DIVA" concert on May 10, 2021.

The Dallas Opera National Vocal Competition, The Hart Institute for Women Conductors Showcase Concert, the TDO Family Season performances of *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *Doctor Miracle*, and the Student Matinees will all be delayed until later in the year, with dates yet to be announced.

Soon-to-be-announced 2021 recitals will take place in the Winspear Opera House with socially distanced seating in late spring of this year, with special outdoor concerts also being planned.

New digital-performance events are currently in production that will be announced and released over the next few months.

DALLAS, TX, JANUARY 27, 2021— Ian Derrer, The Dallas Opera's Kern Wildenthal General Director and CEO, announced today that extreme and ongoing COVID 19 concerns are forcing the company to cancel its March and April 2021 subscription performances, with full-scale operas in the Winspear Opera House

resuming in February and March of 2022 in a brand-new 2021/2022 Season. Subscribers who purchased season tickets for the now-cancelled season will be moved to the 2021/2022 Season, retaining their preferred seats at no additional cost.

“It is with profound disappointment that TDO has made the decision not to proceed with the 2020/2021 Season performances planned for March and April of this year,” Derrer said. “The ongoing spread of COVID, the level of hospitalizations in our area, and the rate of vaccine rollout is such that we believe we cannot proceed with the modified season we had planned. On the advice of medical experts, and with the full safety of our artists, patrons, and staff of paramount importance, we are moving all our subscribers to the new 2021/2022 Season in the Winspear that will begin February of 2022 with four, full-scale grand opera productions.

“We want to return to the Winspear with a collection of grand opera favorites that we know will thrill our audiences,” Derrer explains. “With *Madame Butterfly*, *The Barber of Seville*, and *The Pearl Fishers*, that is what we will accomplish. The season will also include the TDO premiere of Jonathan Dove’s *Flight*, a crowd-pleaser that takes place in an airport terminal: it’s a story about identity and connection that’s sometimes very funny and always fascinating.” And, he continued, “We have some very exciting plans brewing for this spring and fall, 2021, as well as some unique presentations that will keep TDO front and center on the digital stage.

Derrer said that while the mainstage season will not begin until February 2022, we are currently in the middle of planning a series of live outdoor opera events, as well as some socially distanced recitals in the Winspear that will take place in late spring this year.

Derrer explained that the COVID pandemic has forced the company to pivot twice: suspending the 2019/2020 Season in March of 2020, and now cancelling the reconfigured season that was to have replaced it this spring. “We are eternally grateful to our subscribers for ‘sticking with us’ through this very challenging time, and to our donors—many of whom have increased their gifts because they understand that these are perilous times for arts organizations everywhere, including their Dallas Opera.”

After being postponed in June 2020 because of the onslaught of the COVID 19 pandemic, the reconfigured 2020/2021 Season was to have begun on March 5, 2021, with the world premiere of *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, composed by Joby Talbot with libretto by Gene Scheer; followed by Verdi’s *Don Carlo*, Mozart’s *The Marriage of Figaro*; and Puccini’s *Tosca*. Plans were in place to present the season in specially produced, 90-minute presentations that allowed for social distancing for both the performers and audience members, with myriad other safety precautions in place in the theater. “But the current COVID situation makes even this modified plan untenable,” Derrer said. “Now, we must focus our efforts on bringing full-scale opera back to the Winspear in 2022.” Derrer stated. “The time needed to assemble an entire season of fully staged operas with internationally renowned casts our audiences expect makes opening the mainstage season earlier than February of 2022 an impossibility.” Derrer said that the much-anticipated world premiere of *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* will now happen in the 2022/2023 Season.

Subscribers will be contacted in the coming weeks regarding their various options to transfer their previously purchased subscription seats to the new 2021/2022 Season, with the opportunity to add to their series with the Joyce DiDonato “VIVA DIVA!” concert on May 10, 2021.

Current subscribers are being accommodated immediately for the 2021/2022 Season, with subscription sales for the general public opening May 17, 2021. Subscribers can find more information on The Dallas Opera's [website](#).

Current TDO productions and performances now planned are as follows:

The Joyce DiDonato “VIVA DIVA” concert takes place on **May 10, 2021, at 7 pm**, with socially distanced seating in the Winspear.

The Dallas Opera National Vocal Competition, The Hart Institute for Women Conductors Showcase Concert, the TDO Family Season performances of *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *Doctor Miracle*, and the **Student Matinees** will all be delayed until later in year, with dates yet to be announced.

Famed baritone Benjamin Appl will appear in January of 2022 as part of the Robert E. and Jean Ann Titus Art Song Recital Series. The exact performance date will be announced in the near future.

The official grand opening of The Dallas Opera 2021/2022 Season begins on Friday, February 18 with the acclaimed TDO production of Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*. Boasting some of the most famous operatic music of all time, the beloved romantic tragedy reveals the story of the gentle geisha Cio Cio San, who gives up everything to marry American naval officer B.F. Pinkerton—a heartless cad who ultimately abandons her and their little son with devastating results. Starring [Latonia Moore](#) as Cio Cio San and [Evan LeRoy Johnson](#) as Pinkerton, Emmanuel Villaume, TDO's Mrs. Eugene McDermott music director, will conduct. Additional casting is to be announced. *Madame Butterfly* will be presented February 18, 20 (matinee), 23, and 26.

The Dallas Opera premiere of Jonathan Dove's opera *Flight* follows on March 4, 6 (matinee), 9, and 12. With a libretto based on a real-life story that inspired the movie *Terminal* starring Tom Hanks, *Flight*

takes place in an airport. Here, a refugee has been in hiding for years, falling in love with the icy air traffic controller in the process. The plot thickens and emotions roil when a storm forces a diverse group of stranded passengers to join the refugee, forcing everyone to live together, like it or not. Originally premiered at the Glyndebourne Festival in 1998, *Flight* comes to Dallas in a production from Des Moines Metro Opera, described as “riveting” by *Opera Today*, “...with an evocative score, often haunting and melancholy, frequently ironic and funny...and always exceedingly vibrant in theatrical and musical invention.” Stars include John Holiday, Karita Mattila, and Jessica Pratt. Emmanuel Villaume will conduct, with further casting to be announced.

Rossini’s *The Barber of Seville* will be seen on March 19, 23, 25, and 27 (matinee). In this effervescent romantic comedy, Figaro—the ultimate “Mr. Fix It”—is called upon to save two young people in love. Count Almaviva wants to marry his beloved Rosina, but her crusty old guardian wants to wed the girl himself! Comedic mayhem ensues before the happily-ever-after conclusion. Lucas Meachem stars as Figaro, with Wallis Giunta portraying Rosina, and Alasdair Kent singing the role of Count Almaviva in a production from Minnesota Opera. The conductor is to be announced, as is future casting.

The season concludes with *The Pearl Fishers*, Bizet’s exotic romance set in ancient Ceylon. Filled with sumptuous music including the famous “friendship” duet, it is the story of two men who have the misfortune of falling in love with the same woman, the beautiful priestess Leïla. Love survives—but one man doesn’t in this sensuous French masterwork. With performances on April 2, 6, 8, and 10 (matinee), the much-lauded production from Santa Fe Opera will feature stars including Joyce El-Khoury as Leïla, René Barbera as Nadir, and Morris Robinson as Nourabad. Nicole Paiement, TDO’s Martha R. and Preston A. Peak principal guest conductor, will be on the podium.

Program details for the 2021/2022 Season can be found at dallasopera.org.

Additional casting for the 2021/2022 Season will be announced in the near future.

~~~~~

## **ABOUT THE DALLAS OPERA**

One of the leading opera companies in the country, The Dallas Opera has an extraordinary legacy of world-class productions and thrilling premieres featuring the greatest operatic artists of our time.

Inaugurated in 1957 with a concert featuring the incomparable Maria Callas, The Dallas Opera is known for the notable U.S. debuts of a host of legendary artists including Dame Joan Sutherland, Plácido Domingo, Jon Vickers, Franco Zeffirelli, and Sir David McVicar. The company has long been an industry leader and innovator through groundbreaking initiatives including the Hart Institute for Women Conductors, TDO Network, free public simulcasts, acclaimed art song recitals, the national vocal competition, special concerts, and outstanding family and award-winning education programs. The Dallas Opera's home is the Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House, a jewel in the Dallas Arts District. As one of the largest performing arts employers in North Texas, The Dallas Opera is proudly committed to diversity, both onstage and off, and is a major contributor to the economic vitality and international cultural reputation of this region.

## **SEASON SPONSOR**

### **The Nancy A. Nasher and David J. Haemisegger Family**

The Dallas Opera is supported, in part, by funds from: **Elsa von Seggern Foundation;**  
**Texas Instruments;** the **City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture;**  
The **Texas Commission on the Arts;**  
and the **National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).**

**American Airlines** is the official airline of The Dallas Opera.

**Lexus** is the official vehicle of The Dallas Opera.

Advertising support from ***The Dallas Morning News.***

**NorthPark Center**, the official shopping center of The Dallas Opera.

The Dallas Opera is a proud member of **OPERA America.**

###