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Contact: Suzanne Calvin (cell) 817.995.1687

suzanne.calvin@dallasopera.org

The Dallas Opera returns to Winspear with new *“Welcome Back” Song Series*

starting March 31, 2021, featuring four major stars in three unique events:

bass Morris Robinson on March 31;

soprano Leah Crocetto and mezzo-soprano Jamie Barton on April 3;

and countertenor John Holiday on April 9.

Socially distanced seating and other COVID precautions in place for all events.

TDO 2020/2021 season subscribers are offered one recital free—no strings attached!

DALLAS, TX, MARCH 10, 2021 – The Dallas Opera announced today that it will be launching a new, three-event ***“Welcome Back” Song Series*** in the Winspear Opera House commencing March 31, 2021. The company’s first event in the Winspear since it was forced to cease live performances in February, 2020, because of COVID-19, the new series will feature four celebrated opera stars in three unique events: bass Morris Robinson on Wednesday, March 31; soprano Leah Crocetto and mezzo-soprano Jamie Barton on Saturday, April 3; and countertenor John Holiday on Friday, April 9.

Sponsor for the **“Welcome Back” Song Series** is Ann Stuart, PhD, who is chairman of The Dallas Opera’s board of directors, and former chancellor and president of Texas Woman’s University.

Tickets, priced at \$15, \$25, and \$50 for each event, are available now for members of TDO’s subscriber and donor family, with general public sale commencing March 17.

Ian Derrer, The Dallas Opera’s Kern Wildenthal General Director and CEO, also announced that all current subscribers (2020/2021 season) are being offered the opportunity to enjoy one of the recitals free.

“This is a no-strings-attached offer,” Derrer said. “We are so grateful to our subscribers for their loyalty and their patience in sticking with us through this tremendously challenging period—and we want to thank them by giving them the opportunity to see one of these events as our guest.”

“Of course, we hope that season-ticket holders will also choose to *purchase* the other two events because these are great artists, and each program is completely different in style and repertoire,” Derrer stated.

He explained that the free offer was limited to one ticket per 2020/2021 subscriber, with a maximum of two per household. Because of the socially distanced seating protocols, Derrer stressed that seating is limited and urged subscribers to reserve quickly.

The “Welcome Back” Song Series opens with bass Morris Robinson on Wednesday, March 31 at 7:30

pm. The classical program, **“An Evening in Song with Morris Robinson,”** includes **Mozart’s** *Mentre ti lascio, O figlia!*, K. 513, and “O, wie will ich triumphieren” from *The Abduction from the Seraglio*; **Hugo Wolf’s** *Drei Lieder nach Gedichten von Michelangelo*; **Verdi’s** “Il lacerato spirito” from *Simon Boccanegra*; **Bernstein’s** *Greeting*; selections from **Margaret Bonds’** *Three Dream Portraits*, and more.

Caren Levine is the pianist for Mr. Robinson’s program.

The world-renowned American bass appears regularly at the Metropolitan Opera, most recently in *The Magic Flute* and *Salome*. He has been a featured artist with virtually every major American opera company including The Dallas Opera, with European engagements at La Scala, the Vienna Volksoper, and France's Aix-en-Provence Festival, among others. Morris will sing the role of Nourabad in The Dallas Opera production of Georges Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers* in the 2021/2022 season. He was to have sung in TDO's *Don Carlo* in 2021, but the production was cancelled because of the pandemic.

Soprano Leah Crocetto and mezzo soprano Jamie Barton take center stage on Saturday, April 3 at

2 pm. Audiences will have the opportunity to hear these two great artists in an "American Songbook" of favorites by composers including **Cole Porter, Harold Arlen, George Gershwin, Jason Robert Brown, and more.** Selections will include "You'll Never Walk Alone," "I Got Rhythm," "Over the Rainbow," "I'll Be Seeing You," "Sentimental Mood," and more.

Mark Markham is the pianist for the program.

Soprano **Leah Crocetto** is admired for both her beautiful voice and her passionate acting. Highly successful in a variety of dramatic soprano roles, Crocetto's eminence especially in the Verdi repertoire has been confirmed by successes in *Il trovatore* (Bordeaux, Verona, Frankfurt), *Otello* (Frankfurt, Venice, and on the Teatro La Fenice's tour of Japan), *Luisa Miller* (San Francisco, Tel Aviv), *Aida* (San Francisco, Seattle), and *Falstaff* (Frankfurt).

The critically acclaimed mezzo soprano **Jamie Barton** is a sought-after star at major opera houses everywhere. A huge audience favorite wherever she performs, she is the winner of the Beverly Sills Award, the Richard Tucker Award, both Main and Song Prizes at the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, and the BBC Music Personality of the Year Award.

Both Miss Crocetto and Miss Barton were to have sung with TDO in Verdi's *Don Carlo* in 2021, but all performances had to be cancelled because of the pandemic.

Countertenor John Holiday concludes the series on Friday, April 9 at 7:30 pm. Lauded on the opera stage, he also created a sensation with fans of NBC's "The Voice," for which he was one of the finalists for the grand prize. In "The John Holiday Experience," he will offer an array of hits by composers from a multitude of genres, including **Stevie Wonder, George Gershwin, Thelonious Monk, Fats Waller, and Beethoven.** "Summertime," "You are the Sunshine of My Life," "Round Midnight," and "Fly Me to the Moon," are just some of the selections audiences will enjoy in this eclectic program.

Pianists for his program are Kevin J. Miller and Neeki Bey.

Holiday has rapidly established himself as one of the most versatile artists of his generation. His operatic successes have ranged from Handel's *Xerxes* (Glimmerglass Festival) and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (LA Opera) to Philip Glass's *Galileo Galilei* (Portland Opera, Holiday's operatic stage debut), and Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice* (LA Opera, world premiere). He will sing the role of the Refugee in Jonathan Dove's *Flight*, scheduled for The Dallas Opera's 2021/2022 season.

In addition to mandatory masks and social-distanced seating, a full range of meticulous COVID-19 precautions will be in place for the "*Welcome Back*" *Song Series*. The complete list is outlined at dallasopera.org in the visitor information section.

English supertitles will be used for all events.

Full biographies for all artists can be found in the links above or at dallasopera.org. Tickets may be purchased at dallasopera.org or by calling the box office at 214-443-1000.

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#### **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, TDO is known for the notable U.S. debuts of a host of legendary artists including Plácido Domingo, Dame Joan Sutherland, 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. TDO'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, TDO 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**

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