



THE DALLAS OPERA
MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

December 13, 2006

Contact: Suzanne Calvin

214-443-1014

suzannec@dallasopera.org

**THE DALLAS OPERA
IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE
The 51st INTERNATIONAL SEASON:
DEATH BY DIVA!
Presented by the Elsa von Seggern Foundation
Opening Night: November 9, 2007**

DALLAS, DECEMBER 13, 2006 — **The Dallas Opera** is proud to announce the launch of a new era in North Texas opera: the **51st International Season**, presented with major support from the **Elsa von Seggern Foundation**. The upcoming season will consist of five popular productions (including one new Dallas Opera production), several of which are returning to our stage after a lengthy hiatus.

The “**51st International Season: Death by Diva!**” will also mark the return of one of the most sought-after singers of our time, soprano **Renée Fleming**, for a special gala event celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the now-legendary **Maria Callas** concert that inaugurated The Dallas Opera in 1957. This **Golden Jubilee Concert & Gala**, featuring Ms. Fleming and other guest artists, will be held **Saturday, November 17, 2007 at the Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center** located in the Downtown Dallas Arts District.

RENEW YOUR FULL SEASON SUBSCRIPTION TODAY AND RECEIVE A FREE PARKING PASS! CONTACT DALLAS OPERA TICKET SERVICES AT 214-443-1000.

The 2007-2008 Season will open in the **Music Hall at Fair Park** at **7:30 PM on the evening of Friday, November 9, 2007** when The Dallas Opera presents a thrilling new Seattle Opera production of Giuseppe Verdi's magnificent 1847 masterpiece (revised by the composer in 1865), **MACBETH**, starring Russian soprano **Tatiana Serjan** as Lady Macbeth and Italian baritone **Alberto Gazale** as Macbeth in their American Stage debuts. This **Bernard Uzan production**, designed by Robert Israel, never before seen in Dallas, will mark the welcome return of bass **Eric Halfvarson** in the role of Banquo and **Brandon Jovanovich** as Macduff.

Halfvarson has often wowed Dallas Opera audiences since his 1986 debut as Daniel Webster in *The Mother of Us All*, most recently in the pivotal roles of Hunding and Hagen in our multi-year production of Wagner's *Ring Cycle*. Mr. Jovanovich dazzled audiences with his vocal talent and easy charm as Turiddu in the 2005 Season Opener, *Cavalleria rusticana*.

MACBETH, not seen on The Dallas Opera stage since 1977, will be conducted by **Dallas Opera Music Director Graeme Jenkins**. The lighting designer will be **Marie Barrett**. The chorus will be prepared by **Chorus Master Alexander Rom**.

Based on William Shakespeare's immortal play, Verdi urged his librettist, "This tragedy is one of the greatest creations of man! If we can't do something great with it, let us at least try to do something out of the ordinary." The work premiered at the Teatro della Pergola in Florence on March 14, 1847 and although it was an immediate hit, the opera was substantially revised by Verdi nearly two decades later.

Performances will take place November 9, 11(m), 14 & 16, 2007 (Evening performances at 7:30 PM and the Sunday matinee at 2:00 PM).

The second production of the 2007-2008 Season, opening on **Friday, November 30, 2007**, will be a delightful confection last staged by The Dallas Opera in 1989: Franz Lehar's **THE MERRY WIDOW**, starring soprano **Ruth Ann Swenson** in the title role and baritone **Rod Gilfry** returning to sing the suave Count Danilo Danilowitsch. This San Francisco Opera production, conducted by Music Director Graeme Jenkins and staged by **Lofti Mansouri**, also features baritone **Andrew Shore** in his company debut as Baron Zeta, soprano **Nathalie Paulin** as Valencienne and tenor **Stephen Costello** as Camille de Rosillon.

Set in turn-of-the-century Paris, *THE MERRY WIDOW* was the most commercially successful operetta of its day and remains an audience favorite a century after its 1905 Viennese premiere due to an abundance of fresh, inventive and graceful melodies.

In the hands of outstanding talents like Ruth Ann Swenson (most recently heard on our stage in the title role of *Rodelinda*) and Rod Gilfry (Don Giovanni, Figaro, Eisenstein and – of course – Billy Budd), patrons can expect a truly magical evening of music and romance.

Performances will take place November 30, December 2(m), 5 & 8, 2007 in the Music Hall at Fair Park. All evening performances will begin at 7:30 PM and the Sunday matinee at 2:00 PM.

The third production of the 51st International Season is a work not seen on The Dallas Opera stage since 1976: a new Dallas Opera production of the opera that established Richard Strauss as a major composer in this genre; his wildly controversial 1905 interpretation of Oscar Wilde's scandalous stage play, *SALOME*.

Starring soprano **Mlada Khudoley** in the title role (a company debut); mezzo-soprano **Judith Forst**, who gave a heart-wrenching performance in TDO's most recent production of *Jenůfa*, as the scheming Herodias; tenor **Allan Glassman** as Herod Antipas; baritone **Richard Berstein** as Jokanaan (John the Baptist); and tenor **Garrett Sorenson** in his company debut as Narraboth.

Famous for its passionate depiction of life in the court of King Herod, culminating in the exotic "**Dance of the Seven Veils**," *SALOME* contains some of Strauss' most mesmerizing music and, certainly, his most powerful drama.

SALOME opens **Friday, January 31, 2007 with additional performances on February 3(m), 6 & 9, 2008. All evening performances will begin at 7:30 PM and the Sunday matinee at 2:00 PM**, conducted by Music Director Graeme Jenkins.

Catfish Row is the setting of the fourth production of the 2007-2008 Season, as The Dallas Opera revives its co-production (with Houston Grand Opera) of George Gershwin's unforgettable **PORGY AND BESS**, last seen in 1994. Conducted by renowned British maestro **Wayne Marshall** in his company debut, the Depression-Era opera will herald the return of soprano **Indira Mahajan** (one of the most delightful Musettas ever!) and bass **Gordon Hawkins**, who dominated the stage in the title role of *Rigoletto* (2001) and as Miller in *Luisa Miller* (2005).

The cast of PORGY AND BESS will also include the return of baritone **Lester Lynch** as Crown and soprano **Angela Renee Simpson** as Serena; and a host of company debuts: soprano **Janice Chandler-Eteme** in the role of Clara; mezzo-soprano **Bonita Hyman** as Maria; baritone **Leon Williams** singing the role of Jake; and tenor **Victor Ryan Robinson** as Sportin' Life.

PORGY AND BESS will open **Friday, February 22, 2007** and play for **four** additional performances on **February 24(m), February 26, 28, and March 1, 2008**. **All evening performances will begin at 7:30 PM and the Sunday matinee at 2:00 PM.**

The finale of the 2007-2008 Season will focus on one of the most "Divine Divas" in the operatic repertoire: Floria Tosca, as The Dallas Opera revives our own acclaimed production of Puccini's celebrated masterpiece, **TOSCA**. This **Giulio Chazalettes** production, designed by **Ulisse Santicchi**, last seen in 2002, stars soprano **Catherine Naglestad** making her Dallas Opera debut in the title role and baritone **James Morris** (a commanding Wotan in TDO's *Ring Cycle*) as the evil Baron Scarpia.

The Dallas Opera Orchestra and singers will perform under the baton of guest conductor **Maestro Anthony Barrese**, currently serving as Assistant Conductor of The Dallas Opera.

TOSCA opens **Friday, March 7, 2008** with additional performances scheduled for **March 9(m), 12 & 15, 2008**. **All evening performances will begin at 7:30 PM and the Sunday matinee at 2:00 PM.**

Easy-to-read English translations are projected above the stage during every Dallas Opera performance and special headsets are available for the hearing impaired.

TICKET INFORMATION FOR THE 2007-2008 SEASON:

Season subscribers may renew their seats today and a limited number of new subscriber seats are being offered to the general public. A subscription seat for all five productions ranges **from \$75 to \$1,020**. The first 500 subscribers for each performance also receive a free purple parking pass.

Single tickets go on sale **Monday, October 1, 2007, priced from \$25 to \$199**.

Contact Dallas Opera Ticket Services at **214-443-1000** or visit us online at www.dallasopera.org.

THE DALLAS OPERA 2006-2007 SEASON INFORMATION

The Dallas Opera celebrates its fiftieth anniversary season with 20 performances of five productions in the Music Hall at Fair Park. Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m. (except for *Lohengrin*) and matinees begin at 2 p.m (except *Lohengrin*, see below).

NABUCCO by Giuseppe Verdi

November 10, 12(m), 15 & 18, 2006

A New Dallas Opera Production and a Dallas Opera Premiere!

An opera in four acts first performed at Milan's Teatro alla Scala, March 9, 1842. Text by Temistocle Solera after the play by Auguste Anicet-Bourgeois and Francis Cornu and the ballet by Antonio Cortesi.

Time: 586 B.C.

Place: Jerusalem and Baylon

Conductor: Graeme Jenkins

Stage Director: James Robinson*

Production Design: Frances Bagley** and Tom Orr**

Lighting Design: Paul Palazzo*

Chorus Master: Alexander Rom

Starring: Anna Shafajinskaia (*Abigaille*), Katharine Goeldner* (*Fenena*), José Luis Duval (*Ismaele*), Zeljko Lucic* (*Nabucco*), Peter Rose* (*Zaccaria*), Mark McCrory (*High Priest of Baal*), Joseph Hu (*Abdallo*), and Ava Pine* (*Anna*)

THE BARBER OF SEVILLE by Gioachino Rossini

December 1, 3(m), 6 & 9, 2006

Production from New York City Opera

An opera in two acts first performed on February 20, 1816 at Rome's Teatro Argentina. Text by Cesare Sterbini, after the comedy by Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais.

Time: 18th century

Place: Seville, Spain

Conductor: Graeme Jenkins

Stage Director: Helena Binder*

Production Design: Desmond Heeley

Lighting Design: Marie Barrett

Chorus Master: Alexander Rom

Starring: Vivica Genaux (*Rosina*), Richard Croft (*Count Almaviva*), Giorgio Caoduro** (*Figaro*), Donato DiStefano (*Doctor Bartolo*), Oren Gradus (*Don Basilio*), Sheryl Woods (*Berta*) and Steven Hall (*Ambrogio*).

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS (Maria Stuarda) by Gaetano Donizetti

January 5, 7(m), 10 & 13, 2007

A new Dallas Opera production and a Dallas Opera Premiere!

An opera in three acts first performed as "Buondelmonte" at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples, October 18, 1834. Text by Giuseppe Bardari, from the tragedy by Friedrich Schiller.

Time: 1567

Place: The Palace of Westminster, London

Conductor: Graeme Jenkins

Stage Director: Stephen Lawless

Scenic Design: Benoit Dugardyn

Costume Design: Ingeborg Bernerth*

Lighting Design: Wolfgang Goebbel

Chorus Master: Alexander Rom

Starring: Majella Cullagh** (*Mary Stuart*), Adina Nutescu (*Queen Elizabeth I*), Stephen Costello* (*Earl of Leicester*), James Westman (*Talbot*) and John Marcus Bindel* (*Cecil*).

BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE by Béla Bartók

In Concert – January 17, 2007, at the Meyerson Symphony Center

(Tickets not included in season subscription but subscribers will receive first priority.

Tickets are \$50, \$75 and \$200. See dallasopera.org for more details.)

An opera in one act first performed at the Royal Opera, Budapest, Hungary on May 24, 1918. Text by Béla Balázs. **A Dallas Opera 50th Anniversary Special Event.**

Starring: Denyce Graves (*Judith*) and Robert Lloyd (*Duke Bluebeard*)

Conductor: Graeme Jenkins

A woman, enraptured by the dark personality of Duke Bluebeard, abandons her home, family and fiancé to follow him to his mysterious fortress. There, she discovers seven doors that hold secrets, she believes, will enable her to understand the man she loves. Instead, Judith learns that every room hides a nightmare... a nightmare she cannot escape!

LA RONDINE by Giacomo Puccini

January 26, 28(m), 31 & February 3, 2007

Production from New York City Opera, a Dallas Opera Premiere!

An opera in three acts first performed at Théâtre du Casino in Monte Carlo on March 27, 1917. Text by Giuseppe Adami from a German libretto by Alfred M. Willner and Heinz Reichert.

Time: 1850

Place: A Parisian salon

Conductor: Stephen Lord*

Production: Lotfi Mansouri

Stage Director: Michael Scarola*

Scenic Designer: Ralph Funicello*

Costume Designer: Sam Kirkpatrick*

Lighting Designer: Jeff Harris

Choreographer: Candace Evans

Chorus Master: Alexander Rom

Starring: Verónica Villarroel (*Magda*), Caroline Worra* (*Lisette*), Massimo Giordano* (*Ruggero*), Gordon Gietz (*Prunier*), Kelly Anderson* (*Rambaldo/Steward*), Mark McCrory (*Perichaud*), Steven Hall (*Gobin*), John Bates* (*Crebillon*), Ava Pine (*Yvette*), Abla Hamza* and (*Bianca*) Lisa Huffaker (*Suzy*).

LOHENGRIN by Richard Wagner

February 15, 18(m), 21 & 24, 2007

A Dallas Opera Premiere!

PLEASE NOTE EVENING CURTAIN MOVED BACK TO 7:00 PM, MATINEES AT 1:30 PM.

An opera in three acts first performed in Grossherzogliches Hoftheater in Weimar on August 28, 1850.

Text by Richard Wagner.

Time: The Middle Ages

Place: In and near Antwerp

Conductor: Graeme Jenkins

Stage Director: Alfred Kirchner*

Scenic & Lighting Design: Ramón López*

Costume Design: María Elena Amos*

Chorus Master: Alexander Rom

Starring: Nancy Gustafson* (*Elsa of Brabant*), Jeanne-Michèle Charbonnet (*Ortrud*), Christopher Ventris* (*Lohengrin*), Sergei Leiferkus (*Frederick of Telramund*), Michael Todd Simpson (*The King's Herald*) and Dean Peterson (*King Henry the Fowler*).

* Dallas Opera Debut

** American Opera Debut

Ticket Information for the 2006-2007 Dallas Opera Season

Presented by the Elsa von Seggern Foundation

Special Gratitude extended to Margot and Bill Winspear

For more information or to order tickets, contact The Dallas Opera Ticket Services Office at 214-443-1000 or visit TDO's website at www.dallasopera.org.

The Dallas Opera is supported, in part, by funds from: **City of Dallas, Office of Cultural Affairs; TACA;** and the **Texas Commission on the Arts**. The Dallas Opera would like to thank its 2006-2007 production underwriters, including: **Kimberly-Clark Corporation, Nokia** and **Margot and Bill Winspear**. **American Airlines** is the official airline of The Dallas Opera. Advertising support from *The Dallas Morning News*.

###