



THE DALLAS OPERA  
MEDIA ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
Monday, September 14, 2009  
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THE DALLAS OPERA WELCOMES  
**Former First Lady**  
**Laura Bush**  
HONORARY CHAIR OF “OVATION!”

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OCTOBER 23 THROUGH NOVEMBER 7, 2009  
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DALLAS, SEPTEMBER 14, 2009 – The Dallas Opera is delighted to announce that former **First Lady Laura Bush**, the wife of **President George W. Bush**, has graciously agreed to serve as the honorary chair of “OVATION!,” The Dallas Opera’s multifaceted grand opening celebration of the company’s once-in-a-lifetime inaugural season in the new **Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House at the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts**.

“OVATION!,” chaired by **Joyce and Harvey Mitchell**, will consist of an “**Opening Night Celebration Dinner**” at the new Winspear Opera House on the evening of October 23, 2009, when the curtain goes up on the very first Dallas Opera performance in this outstanding state-of-the-art venue. The post-performance dinner will be chaired by **Myra and Bob Hull**; “**Champagne Dessert Celebrations**,” chaired by **Carol and Don Glendenning**, designed to follow each subsequent performance of the new Dallas Opera production of Verdi’s *Otello*; and the “**OnStage Gala with Deborah Voigt**”

**presented by the Ted and Shannon Skokos Foundation** on the evening of November 7, 2009, chaired by **Arlene and John Dayton**.

“When I approached Laura Bush to be our honorary chairperson,” explains “OVATION!” co-chair Joyce Mitchell, “I was not only thinking about the class, grace and intelligence she exhibited throughout two terms in the White House; I was counting on her lifelong commitment to art and culture, from her influential and unparalleled advocacy of global literacy to ‘Preserve America,’ the national initiative Mrs. Bush helped launch to protect our cultural and natural heritage.

“Laura Bush,” adds Ms. Mitchell, “is herself a national treasure – and The Dallas Opera is deeply, deeply honored to make her a part of this historic occasion.”

An exclusive patron party honoring Mrs. Bush for her participation will be held later this month.

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The “Opening Night Performance and Celebration Dinner” will begin Friday, October 23, 2009 at 6:00 pm with a glittering Champagne Toast. Opening ceremonies will commence at 7:00 pm followed by the curtain for the inaugural performance at 7:30 pm. The sumptuous black-tie dinner for V.I.P.s, patron/donors, civic leaders, cast members and media will take place after the final curtain call.

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The Dallas Opera’s “Champagne Dessert Celebrations” on October 25, 28, 31, November 5 & 8, 2009 will enable patrons to linger in the new opera house after each performance, mingle with members of the cast, and raise a toast to the excitement of the Winspear Era.

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The first elegant dinner to be held on the Skokos stage of the Winspear Opera House will take place the evening of November 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. The “OnStage Gala with Deborah Voigt” presented by the Ted and Shannon Skokos Foundation will feature an intimate, cabaret performance by one of the most sought-after sopranos in the world, in addition to an exclusive live auction.

Tables may be created by patrons wishing to share the Opening Night Celebration Dinner and the OnStage Gala with friends and family. Single tickets are also available but certain restrictions apply.

For information about OVATION! events and packages, contact **Special Events Manager Morgan Vaughn at 214.443.1063 or [morgan@dallasopera.org](mailto:morgan@dallasopera.org)**.

For information about OVATION! sponsorships, please contact **Corporate Sponsorships Manager Lori Rayfield at 214.443.1061 or [lori@dallasopera.org](mailto:lori@dallasopera.org)**.

**The Silver OVATION! Package** for one: \$3,750. This package includes highest priority seating for one to both the Opening Night Celebration Dinner and the November 7<sup>th</sup> *OnStage* Gala with Deborah Voigt.

**The Bronze OVATION! Package** for one: \$2,500. This package includes priority seating for one to both the Opening Night Celebration Dinner and the November 7<sup>th</sup> *OnStage* Gala with Deborah Voigt.

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### **Biography:**

#### **Laura Bush**

Mrs. Laura Bush is actively involved in issues of national and global concern, with a particular emphasis on education, health care and human rights.

As First Lady, Mrs. Bush made an historic trip to Afghanistan in 2005 and witnessed firsthand the progress achieved by the Afghan people after the fall of the Taliban regime. She visited the Women's Teacher Training Institute in Kabul, which is training women to lead classrooms that girls were once forbidden to enter. She met with President Hamid Karzai and expressed America's continued support for Afghanistan's new democracy, which ensures equal rights for women and men. Mrs. Bush's involvement in Afghanistan began in 2001, when she delivered the weekly presidential radio address to call attention to the plight of women and children suffering under the Taliban.

A former teacher and librarian, Mrs. Bush convened in 2001 a Summit on Early Childhood Cognitive Development, providing a forum for prominent scholars and educators to share research on the best ways for parents and caregivers to prepare children for lifelong learning. She is an enthusiastic proponent of teacher recruitment programs such as Teach for America, The New Teacher Project and Troops to Teachers.

As the leader of former President George W. Bush's Helping America's Youth initiative, Mrs. Bush has listened closely to the concerns of young people, parents and community leaders throughout the country. She draws attention to proven programs that help children avoid such risky behaviors as drug and alcohol use, early sexual activity and violence, and highlights the need for a caring adult role model in every child's life.

In September 2001, Mrs. Bush joined the Library of Congress to launch the first National Book Festival. The Festival has grown each year, drawing more than 120,000 book-lovers from across the nation to Washington, D.C. in 2008. In 1995 Mrs. Bush established the Texas Book Festival, and it continues to thrive today. In 2006 Mrs. Bush hosted leaders from around the world for the White House Conference on

Advancing Global Literacy, showcasing successful, culturally aware literacy programs from a diversity of countries. Her leadership of this effort led to her current role as Honorary Ambassador for the United Nations Literacy Decade.

Mrs. Bush is an advocate for women's health and has been an active participant in campaigns to raise awareness of breast cancer and heart disease, both in the U.S. and around the world. She partnered with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute in The Heart Truth campaign and the Red Dress project. And she traveled to Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Panama to help launch international partnerships for breast cancer awareness and research in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State, Susan G. Komen for the Cure, and M.D. Anderson Cancer Center.

A hiking and camping enthusiast and strong supporter of our national parks, Mrs. Bush has spotlighted the glories and needs of the parks through her many visits as First Lady. As Honorary Chair of the National Park Foundation, she has worked to promote the Junior Ranger program to encourage children to become active stewards of our national parks. And she has helped start Preserve America, a national initiative to protect our cultural and natural heritage.

Laura Bush was born in Midland, Texas, to Harold and Jenna Welch. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in education from Southern Methodist University and a master's degree in library science from the University of Texas. She taught in public schools in Dallas, Houston and Austin and worked as a public school librarian. In 1977, she met and married George Walker Bush. They are the parents of twin daughters, Barbara and Jenna.

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### **OVATION! COMMITTEE**

*Chairs:* Joyce and Harvey Mitchell

*Vice-Chairs:* Holly and Tom Mayer

*Chairs, Opening Night Celebration Dinner:* Myra and Bob Hull

*Chairs, OnStage Gala:* Arlene and John Dayton

*Chairs, Champagne Dessert Celebrations:* Carol and Don Glendenning

*Chair, Opening Night Pre-Performance Champagne Toast:* Sonia Hamra

*Special Advisor:* Sally Berry

*Arrangements Chair, Opening Night Celebration Dinner:* Sara Martineau

*Decorations Chair, Opening Night Celebration Dinner:* Ellen Winspear

*Favors Chair:* Sharon McCullough

*Invitation Chair:* Jo Anne McCullough

*OnStage Gala Live Auction Co-Chairs:* Nancy Duncan and Gloria McCall Snead

*Patron Sales Chair:* Kaki Hopkins

*Public Relations Chair:* Delilah Boyd

*Reservations Co-Chairs:* Tucean Webb and Linda McFarland

*Wine Selection Co-Chairs:* Alexandra and Robert Lavie

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT "SEPTEMBER AT THE DALLAS OPERA"  
IS CONVENIENTLY AVAILABLE ONLINE  
VISIT [WWW.DALLASOPERA.ORG](http://WWW.DALLASOPERA.ORG) AND CHECK THE CALENDAR LISTINGS

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*For high-resolution, digital photographs suitable for print*

*To arrange an interview*

*Or for additional information*

*Please contact Assoc. Dir. Of Marketing Suzanne Calvin*

*214.443.1014 or [suzannec@dallasopera.org](mailto:suzannec@dallasopera.org)*

The Dallas Opera 2009-2010 Season Presented by Comerica Bank

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### **Ticket Information for the 2009-2010 Dallas Opera Season**

**Subscriptions for the inaugural season in the new Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House at the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts start at just \$75 and are currently on sale to the general public – online only – at [dallasopera.org](http://dallasopera.org). For more information, contact The Dallas Opera Ticket Services Office at 214.443.1000.**

### **THE DALLAS OPERA 2009-2010 SEASON INFORMATION**

The Dallas Opera celebrates its Fifty-Third International Season with 30 performances of five productions in the Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House at the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts in downtown Dallas. Evening performances will begin at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday matinees will begin at 2:00 p.m. English translations will be projected above the stage at every performance. Assistance is available for the hearing impaired.

#### **OTELLO by Giuseppe Verdi**

**October 23, 25(m), 28 & 31, November 5 & 8(m), 2009**

**A new Dallas Opera production to inaugurate the Winspear Opera House!**

An opera in four acts first performed at Milan's Teatro alla Scala, February 5, 1887.

Text by Arrigo Boito after William Shakespeare's tragedy, *Otello*, or *The Moor of Venice*.

**Time:** the 15<sup>th</sup> century

**Place:** The island of Cyprus

**Conductor:** Graeme Jenkins

**Stage Director:** Tim Albery\*

**Production Design:** Anthony Baker\*

**Lighting Design:** Thomas C. Hase

**Wig & make-up Design:** David Zimmerman

**Chorus Master:** Alexander Rom

**Starring:** Clifton Forbis (*Otello*), Allan Glassman (*Otello, Oct. 25<sup>th</sup>*) Annette Dasch\*\* (*Desdemona*), Lado Ataneli\* (*Iago*), Sean Panikkar\* (*Cassio*), Elizabeth Turnbull (*Emilia*), Mark McCrory (*Montano*), and Raymond Aceto (*Lodovico*)

#### **COSÌ FAN TUTTE by W.A. Mozart**

**February 12, 14(m), 18, 20, 26 & 28(m), 2010**

**One of the world's greatest composers on the subject of love!**

An opera in two acts first performed in Vienna's Burgtheater, January 26, 1790.

Text by Lorenzo Da Ponte.

**Time:** 18<sup>th</sup> century

**Place:** Naples, Italy

**Conductor:** Graeme Jenkins

**Stage Director:** John Cox

**Production Design:** Robert Perdziola\*

**Lighting Designer:** Duane Schuler

**Wig & make-up Design:** David Zimmerman

**Chorus Master:** Alexander Rom

**Starring:** Elza van den Heever\* (*Fiordiligi*), Jennifer Holloway (*Dorabella*), Michael Todd Simpson (Guglielmo), Brian Anderson (*Ferrando*), Sir Thomas Allen\* (*Don Alfonso*) and Nuccia Focile (*Despina*).

**DON PASQUALE by Gaetano Donizetti**  
**February 19, 21(m), 24, 27, March 5 & 7(m), 2010**  
**Production from Los Angeles Opera**

A comic opera in three acts first performed in Paris' Théâtre Italien, January 3, 1843.

Text by Giovanni Ruffini and the composer after Angelo Anelli's libretto for Stefano Pavesi's *Ser Marcantonio*.

**Time:** mid-19<sup>th</sup> century

**Place:** Rome, Italy

**Conductor:** Stefano Ranzani\*

**Stage Director:** Candace Evans

**Production Design:** Jean-Pierre Ponnelle

**Lighting Design:** Duane Schuler

**Wig & make-up Design:** David Zimmerman

**Chorus Master:** Alexander Rom

**Starring:** Donato Di Stefano (*Don Pasquale*), Adriana Kucerova\*\* (*Norina*), Nathan Gunn (*Dr. Malatesta*) and Norman Shankle\* (*Ernesto*).

**MOBY-DICK by Jake Heggie (World Premiere!)**

**April 30, May 2(m), 5, 8, 13 & 16(m), 2010**

**A new Dallas Opera co-commission, co-production with San Francisco Opera, San Diego Opera, Calgary Opera and The State Opera of South Australia**

**World Premiere Performances**

An opera in two acts

Text by Gene Sheer after Herman Melville's novel, Moby-Dick

**Time:** the 19<sup>th</sup> century

**Place:** The South Seas

**Conductor:** Patrick Summers

**Stage Director:** Leonard Foglia\*

**Scenic Design:** Robert Brill\*

**Costume Design:** Jane Greenwood\*

**Lighting Design:** Donald Holder\*

**Wig & make-up Design:** David Zimmerman

**Chorus Master:** Alexander Rom

**Starring:** Ben Heppner\* (*Captain Ahab*), Morgan Smith\* (*Starbuck*) Stephen Costello (Ishmael), Jonathan Lemalu\* (*Queequeg*), Allan Glassman (*Flask*), Robert Orth\* (Stubb), Talise Trevigne\* (*Pip*) and Jonathan Beyer\* (*Captain Gardiner*).

**MADAME BUTTERFLY by Giacomo Puccini**

**May 7, 9(m), 12, 15, 20 & 23(m), 2010**

**A Francesca Zambello Production!**

An opera in two acts first performed at Milan's Teatro alla Scala, February 17, 1904.

Text by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica after David Belasco's play *Madame Butterfly*, based on a short story by John Luther Long.

**Time:** Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

**Place:** Nagasaki, Japan

**Conductor:** Graeme Jenkins

**Stage Director:** Garnett Bruce

**Production:** Francesca Zambello

**Scenic Design:** Michael Yeargan

**Costume Design:** Anita Yavich

**Lighting Design:** Alan Burrett

**Wig & make-up Design:** David Zimmerman

**Chorus Master:** Alexander Rom

**Starring:** Adina Nutescu (*Cio-Cio San*), Brandon Jovanovich (*B.F. Pinkerton*), James Westman (*Sharpless*), Maria Zifchak\* (*Suzuki*), David Cangelosi (*Goro*), Young-Bok Kim\* (*The Bonze*) and Yungbae Yang\* (*Prince Yamadori*).

\* Dallas Opera Debut  
\*\* American Debut

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The Dallas Opera is supported, in part, by funds from: **City of Dallas, Office of Cultural Affairs; TACA;** the **Texas Commission on the Arts** and **The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)**. The Dallas Opera 2009-2010 Season Presented by **Comerica Bank**. **American Airlines** is the official airline of The Dallas Opera. **Lexus** is the official vehicle of The Dallas Opera. **Cartier** is the official jeweler of The Dallas Opera. **Rosewood Crescent Hotel** is the official hotel of The Dallas Opera. Pianos provided by **Steinway Hall, Dallas/Ft. Worth/Plano**. Advertising support from *The Dallas Morning News*. A special thanks to the **Elsa von Seggern Foundation** for its continuing support.

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