



THE DALLAS OPERA
MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Wednesday, February 25, 2009
Contact: Suzanne Calvin
214-443-1014/suzannec@dallasopera.org

**TDO AND THE DALLAS PUBLIC LIBRARY
PROUDLY PRESENT**

**“Turning the Page: The
Journey of *Moby-Dick* to
The Dallas Opera Stage”**

~~~~~

**COMPOSER JAKE HEGGIE IN CONVERSATION  
AT THE DOWNTOWN DALLAS PUBLIC LIBRARY  
SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2009 AT 3:00 PM**

~~~~~

**DISPLAY OF RARE DESIGNS BY FRANCO ZEFFIRELLI
FROM “THE ITALIAN GIRL IN ALGIERS” (1957)**

DALLAS, FEBRUARY 25, 2009 – **The Dallas Opera** and the **Dallas Public Library** will host one of opera’s greatest living composers, **Jake Heggie** (“Dead Man Walking”), for an intimate conversation about the upcoming world premiere of his new opera—based upon the sprawling 19th century literary classic “**Moby-Dick**” by Herman Melville.

This event, which is **FREE and open to the public**, will take place **Saturday, March 7, 2009**, in the **Bradshaw Gallery** located on the fourth floor of the **J. Erik Jonsson Central Library, 1515 Young Street, Dallas, TX 75201** from **3:00 – 4:30 PM**.

It will be hosted by **Suzanne Calvin (“Inside The Dallas Opera” on WRR)**, **Assoc. Director of Marketing for The Dallas Opera** with **Director of Artistic Administration Jonathan Pell**.

Art lovers (music, literary—or both!) will hear, first-hand, from the composer about his approach to the project, challenges and potential pitfalls, and the Herculean quest to bring this renowned masterpiece to life on The Dallas Opera stage.

“The decision to adapt the novel is a timely one,” explains **Dallas Opera Director of Artistic Administration Jonathan Pell**, “in an increasingly multicultural and inter-connected world.

“As the ongoing economic crisis demonstrates, we’re all in this ‘ship’ together. It’s time for people of all cultures and nationalities to find ways to work together more effectively. We need to meet the challenges that confront us and to create works of art that reinforce the ties that unite us.”

Heggie’s collaboration with acclaimed **librettist Gene Scheer** (*Thérèse Raquin*) will mark the first world premiere to be presented in the new **Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House at the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts**. It is slated to open on the evening of April 30, 2010 with additional performances in May. Tickets for *Moby-Dick* will go on sale later this year.

As an added bonus, library patrons will have a rare opportunity to glimpse several “jewels” from the Fine Arts Division vaults: a display of original set designs made by legendary **designer/director Franco Zeffirelli** for the 1957 premiere production of Dallas Civic Opera: Rossini’s *The Italian Girl in Algiers*.

This display will be available to the public only during this exclusive special event.

“It’s fantastic to actually view these designs that helped launch this opera company on the world stage,” says **Dallas Opera Marketing Director Jennifer Schuder**. “And, as we prepare to revive this opera in a dazzling production from Santa Fe Opera to end our half-century of performances in the Music Hall, it’s a great time to look back and see how far we have come.”

Although the event is absolutely free, reservations are requested. Save your seat by contacting The Dallas Opera at 214.443.1044 or by emailing amici@dallasopera.org

For directions and/or parking instructions, visit The Dallas Public Library online at <http://dallaslibrary.org/directions.htm>. For additional information, you may also contact **Music Librarian Tina Murdock** in the Fine Arts Division of the Dallas Public Library, **214.671.8337** or tina.murdock@dallaslibrary.org.

Jake Heggie, Composer & Pianist

Jake Heggie is the composer of the acclaimed operas *Dead Man Walking* (libretto: McNally), *Three Decembers* (libretto: Scheer), *The End of the Affair* (libretto: McDonald), the lyric drama *To Hell and Back* (libretto: Scheer), and the musical scene *At the Statue of Venus* (libretto: McNally). The recipient of a 2005/06 Guggenheim Fellowship, he has also composed more than 200 songs, as well as concerti, orchestral works and chamber music. His songs, song cycles and operas are championed internationally by singers including Frederica von Stade, Susan Graham, Audra McDonald, Kiri Te Kanawa, Patti LuPone, Isabel Bayrakdarian, Kristin Clayton, Kristine Jepson, Joyce DiDonato, Joyce Castle, Zheng Cao, and Bryn Terfel. He has collaborated extensively with conductors Patrick Summers, Nicholas McGegan, John DeMain, Michael Morgan, and director Leonard Foglia.

Heggie is currently at work on an epic opera based on Melville's *Moby-Dick* with librettist Gene Scheer, commissioned by The Dallas Opera for its inaugural season in the Winspear Opera House. Scheduled to open on April 30, 2010, *Moby-Dick* will star the great Canadian tenor Ben Heppner as Ahab; Patrick Summers conducts and Leonard Foglia directs. The opera has been co-commissioned by San Francisco Opera, San Diego Opera and Calgary Opera. Heggie has also been asked to develop an opera project with playwright Richard Greenberg for the Metropolitan Opera and Lincoln Center Theatre.

Dead Man Walking has been performed more than 100 times since its San Francisco premiere in 2000, making it one of the most performed of new American operas. In 2007 alone, the opera was performed more than 50 times internationally, including new productions in Sweden, Ireland and Australia.

Beware the Ides of March—because that's too late!
**THE FINAL DALLAS OPERA PERFORMANCE IN THE MUSIC HALL
AT FAIR PARK IS SLATED FOR THE EVENING OF SATURDAY, MARCH 14.**

Special 2008-2009 Season Honoree: Joyce Mitchell

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT "FEBRUARY AT THE DALLAS OPERA"
IS CONVENIENTLY AVAILABLE ONLINE
VISIT WWW.DALLASOPERA.ORG AND CHECK THE CALENDAR LISTINGS

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

Ticket Information for the 2008-2009 Dallas Opera Season

Single tickets \$15 to \$199, if purchased in advance. Group ticket sales at a substantial discount. For more information, contact The Dallas Opera Ticket Services Office at 214.443.1000 or visit TDO's web site at dallasopera.org.

THE DALLAS OPERA 2008-2009 SEASON INFORMATION

The Dallas Opera celebrates its Fifty-Second International Season with 20 performances of five productions in the Music Hall at Fair Park. Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m. and matinees begin at 2 p.m. English translations are projected above the stage at every performance and assistance is available for the hearing impaired.

THE ITALIAN GIRL IN ALGIERS by Gioachino Rossini

March 6, 8(m), 11 & 14, 2009

The Grand Finale! Production from Santa Fe Opera.

A comic opera in two acts first performed in Venice's Teatro San Benedetto, May 22, 1813.

Text substantially derived from Angelo Anelli's libretto for Luigi Mosca's 1808 *L'italiana in Algeri*.

Time: Fantasy

Place: Algiers

Conductor: Graeme Jenkins

Stage Director: Chris Alexander

Scenic Design: Robert Innes Hopkins*

Costume Design: David C. Woolard*

Lighting Design: Duane Schuler

Wig & make-up Design: David Zimmerman

Chorus Master: Alexander Rom

Starring: Manuela Custer* (*Isabella*), William Burden* (*Lindoro*), Paolo Pecchioli* (*Mustafà*) and Patrick Carfizzi* (*Taddeo*).

* Dallas Opera Debut

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 would like to thank its 2008-2009 production underwriters, including: **Marten S. Klop** and **Dr. and Mrs. Tom G. Mayer**. **American Airlines** is the official airline 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.

###