

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

14 MAY 2012

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Minnesota Opera presents webcast of Susan Kander's *The Giver* on May 18 and 23

What: Webcast of Susan Kander's *The Giver* (based on the novel by Lois Lowry)
Sung in English with English captions projected beside the stage.
Recommended for ages eight and above.

Where: operamusicbroadcast.com

When: Friday, May 18, 7pm*
Wednesday, May 23, 1pm*
(*Showtimes relative to all timezones.)

Minneapolis – Minnesota Opera announces its second opera webcast – Project Opera's production of *The Giver*. The webcast will be streamed on Friday, May 18, 2012 at 7pm, and Wednesday, May 23, 2012 at 1pm, at OPERAMUSICBROADCAST.COM. There will also be a live chat during Wednesday's webcast so viewers can participate in the experience and ask questions about the performance.

The Giver, a new opera by Susan Kander based on the popular novel by Lois Lowry, was a co-commission by Minnesota Opera and Lyric Opera of Kansas City. It had its Minnesota premiere April 27-29, 2012, in a fully staged production performed by Project Opera at the Minnesota Opera Center in Minneapolis.

The Giver was the first opera commissioned for Project Opera, Minnesota Opera's vocal training program for kids in grades 4-12. The goal of Project Opera is to provide young singers with authentic, hands-on operatic experiences through singing and performing. Through this commission, students had the additional opportunity to take part in the creation of new work.

Commissioning an opera for student performers is a natural outcome of the company's decades-long commitment to new work. In 2008, that commitment was renewed when it launched the **MINNESOTA OPERA NEW WORKS INITIATIVE**, a landmark program designed to invigorate the operatic repertoire with an infusion of contemporary works. Most recently, Minnesota Opera premiered *Silent Night* (with music by Kevin Puts and libretto by Mark Campbell) as part of this Initiative, which earned its composer the 2012 Pulitzer Prize in Music.

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“Commissioning *The Giver* amplified the company’s efforts to expand the art form,” said **MANAGING DIRECTOR KEVIN RAMACH**. “By webcasting the final performance, we are able to expand accessibility to the work itself, as well. *The Giver* was a sold-out run, serving more than 1,000 audience members. It is our hope that through these webcasts, we can reach exponentially more than that.”

With its webcast of *Werther*, Minnesota Opera became the first major American opera company to webcast its works through this emerging distribution channel. Minnesota Opera’s partner on this project, Michigan-based production firm **SOUNDQUE**, brought the project success by providing its vast experience of webcasting a wide variety of live events and its tremendous proficiency for attracting an internet audience through their 10 different networks, including operamusicroadcast.com. The *Werther* webcast reached 12 times the total number of audience members who saw the week-long run of performances at Ordway.

About the story ...

The Giver is a science fiction novel about a dystopian community where there are no choices and where everyone has his or her place in the world assigned according to gifts and interests. The time has come for 12-year-old Jonas to become the new Receiver of Memory. He will be the one to bear the collective memories of a society that lives only in the present where “Sameness” is the rule. But Jonas soon recognizes the losses and discovers the lie that supports his community. He decides to change his world, but he cannot predict how that change will come about, or what that change will mean for himself and the “new child” Gabriel, whom he has resolved to protect. *The Giver* won the Newbery Medal, an award for children’s literature, in 1994.

The Minnesota Opera’s mission is to produce opera and opera education programs
at the highest artistic level that inspire and entertain our audiences
and enrich the cultural life of our community.

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