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News Release

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Minnesota Opera Presents Puccini's Gorgeous *Tosca* **New production of *Tosca* combines 21st-century style with traditional elegance**

MINNEAPOLIS (February 25, 2016) – Through its timeless tale of love, deceit and honor, *Tosca* has captivated audiences for decades. Puccini's crowning jewel is a masterpiece of dramatic force, showcasing dynamic characters, inventive orchestrations and unforgettable arias. Now, Minnesota Opera brings this powerful saga to the Ordway stage, wrapped in a stylish Italian setting with distinct 21st-century flair. Featuring internationally acclaimed performer Csilla Boross making her company debut as the fiery prima donna Floria Tosca; renowned Washington, D.C.-based conductor Anne Manson (Minnesota Opera's *Hansel and Gretel*, *The Adventures of Pinocchio*); and marking the American debuts of celebrated Italian Director Andrea Cigni and award-winning Set and Costume Designer Lorenzo Cutùli; this production will immerse the audience in a display of spellbinding performances, sumptuous music and elegant costumes.

Since the opera's premiere in 1900, *Tosca's* depiction of a celebrated diva, an idealistic painter and a manipulative police chief entangled in a web of drama has had enduring popularity. Leonardo Capalbo (Minnesota Opera's *The Elixir of Love*) as the revolutionary artist Mario Cavaradossi and Stephen Powell (Minnesota Opera's *La Traviata*, next year's *Dinner at Eight*) as the obsessive Baron Scarpia take center stage with Csilla Boross as Tosca. Minnesota Opera last created a new production of *Tosca* in 1991, and last performed this iconic work in 2005. Now, ten years later, audiences will delight in an entirely new twist on tradition. Though set in the early 1900s, the three-act production offers an original, modern-day approach. Immense hand-carved sculptures, lavish costumes, projected imagery and stunning sets will create a vibrant backdrop for this fast-paced production, and bring a sophisticated sensibility to this beloved classic.

"We are overjoyed to have such an outstanding cast and creative team behind this explosive production," said Minnesota Opera Artistic Director Dale Johnson. "It's an extraordinary opportunity to introduce Csilla Boross to our audiences. She is simply remarkable. And what good fortune that Director Andrea Cigni and Set and Costume Designer Lorenzo Cutùli chose to make their American debuts with us! Both are exceptionally gifted and internationally recognized for their artistic achievements. Add in the exciting talents of Anne Manson as conductor, and we have a can't-miss collaboration that exemplifies our commitment to exceptional artistry."

Internationally acclaimed soprano Csilla Boross received the prestigious THALIA Prize for her role in *Madama Butterfly* in 2009. Her talents have taken her to celebrated venues worldwide. Boross was chosen by Maestro Riccardo Muti to sing Abigail in *Nabucco* with him at the Rome Opera in 2011, and was also selected by Maestro Muti to perform in the gala performance celebrating the 150th anniversary of Italy. A native of Hungary, Ms. Boross has been a regular guest of the National Theater of Prague since 2008 and continues to perform as a guest at the Hungarian State Opera.

Italian-American tenor and audience favorite Leonardo Capalbo has garnered international acclaim for his performances across the United States and Europe. Capalbo sang the role of Nemorino in Minnesota Opera's 2015 production of *The Elixir of Love* to critical and popular acclaim, later returning to Minnesota Opera to create the role of Ben Marco in the world premiere of *The Manchurian Candidate*. Lauded for his rich lyric voice, good looks and dramatic intensity, Mr. Capalbo continues to make impressive appearances in theaters around the globe. He has

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worked with some of the world's most influential artists including Plácido Domingo, Richard Bonyng, Gianandrea Noseda and many more. Mr. Capalbo trained at The Juilliard School of Music and The Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California where he worked closely with the legendary Marilyn Horne.

The dynamic American baritone Stephen Powell brings his handsome voice, elegant musicianship and robust stage presence to a wide range of music. *Opera* magazine proclaimed "the big news was Stephen Powell's gorgeously-sung Onegin: rock solid, with creamy legato from top to bottom and dynamics smoothly tapered but never exaggerated."

The production's creative team features distinguished Director Andrea Cigni and renowned Set and Costume Designer Lorenzo Cutùli. Together they bring a force of creativity and vision to the stage. Both consistently receiving glowing praise and recognition for their outstanding work worldwide, Mr. Cutùli was awarded the prestigious International Academy of Lyric Opera Award as the best set designer in 2014.

- What:** *Tosca* by Giacomo Puccini. Sung in Italian with English translations projected above the stage.
- Where:** The Music Theatre at the Ordway, 345 Washington Street, St. Paul, MN 55102
- When:** Saturday, March 12, 7:30 p.m. Sunday, March 13, 2:00 p.m.
Thursday, March 17, 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 18, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, March 19, 7:30 p.m. Sunday, March 20, 2:00 p.m.
Thursday, March 24, 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 26, 7:30 p.m.
- Broadcast:** Minnesota Public Radio will host a live broadcast of the highly anticipated opening night performance on March 12 at 7:30 p.m. on Classical MPR (99.5 FM).
- Tickets:** Individual ticket prices range from \$25-\$200. Call the Minnesota Opera Ticket Office at 612-333-6669, Monday – Friday 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., or purchase online at mnopera.org.

The Creative Team

Conductor Anne Manson (March 12, 17, 19, 24, 26)
..... Jonathan Brandani (March 13, 18, 20)
Stage Director Andrea Cigni
Set and Costume Design Lorenzo Cutùli
Lighting Design Fiammetta Baldiserri

The Cast

Floria Tosca Csilla Boross (March 12, 17, 19, 24, 26)
..... Alexandra LoBianco (March 13, 18, 20)
Mario Cavaradossi Leonardo Capalbo (March 12, 17, 19, 24, 26)
..... Dominick Chenes (March 13, 18, 20)
Baron Scarpia Stephen Powell (March 12, 17, 24, 26)
..... Mark Walters (March 13, 18, 20)
Angelotti Andrew Lovato
Spoletta David Walton
Sacristan Benjamin Sieverding
Sciarrone Rodolfo Nieto

ABOUT MINNESOTA OPERA

Founded in 1963, Minnesota Opera has paved a bold, illustrious path. As an artistic pioneer, its dedication to excellence and inventive vision make it a steadfast leader in the opera community and beyond. Each year the company reaches nearly 400,000 people through its mainstage productions, groundbreaking education and training programs, community engagement, radio broadcasts and digital content. Heralded for its commitment to develop original works, the company has commissioned and produced more than 40 new operas that have been seen throughout the world. One of the nation's largest and most distinguished opera companies, Minnesota Opera is consistently recognized for its innovation and world-class artistry, delighting audiences young and old for more than 50 years. Together with the Ordway, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and The Schubert Club, Minnesota Opera is a member of the Arts Partnership and performs on the stage of the Ordway. www.mnopera.org