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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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MINNESOTA OPERA PRESENTS THE WORLD PREMIERE OF *EDWARD TULANE*

Based on the novel by Minnesota author Kate DiCamillo, *Edward Tulane* brings together visionary composer Paola Prestini and long-time Minnesota Opera collaborator librettist Mark Campbell to create a miraculous journey all about finding home.

MINNEAPOLIS (February 12, 2020) – *Edward Tulane*, a new opera by composer Paola Prestini and librettist Mark Campbell, premieres on Saturday, March 21 at 7:30 p.m. at the Music Theater at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts. The opera is based on the novel *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* by two-time Newbery Medalist and #1 *New York Times* best-selling author Kate DiCamillo and is the first time one of her works is being adapted for the operatic stage.

The story is centered around a toy rabbit, Edward Tulane, who thinks of himself as quite exceptional. Content in his easy life, his world is upturned when he is separated from his loving family. *Edward Tulane* takes us on a miraculous journey, from the depths of the deep blue sea to the streets of Memphis. Perfect for the young and young at heart, this elegantly whimsical Minnesota original shows us a true miracle—that if you open your heart, you can find home.

The story lends itself to audiences eight to 88, making for a performance well-suited for the whole family. *Edward Tulane's* focus on love, separation and the journey home is the kind of story to which DiCamillo has dedicated her craft, exemplified by other books like *Because of Winn-Dixie*, *The Tale of Despereaux*, and *Flora & Ulysses*.

“It’s amazing how Kate has been able to weave this story together that talks about humanity and love and a sense of belonging, which I think is at the core of who we all are as human beings,” says President and General Director Ryan Taylor. “I think any time a company takes on the building of a brand-new work of art, it’s important to look for the right creative team. So to combine that magical story with the text of Mark Campbell and the music of Paola Prestini—who in their own way are magicians in their own work—I think it’s going to be breathtaking once we put all of the pieces together.”

Composer Paola Prestini, who was recently named a top female composer in classical music by *The Washington Post*, says she wants to capture the playful innocence found throughout the story while also highlighting its depth and complexities. “The story is intergenerational,” says Prestini. “It’s the kind of work that will appeal in different ways to different operagoers of different ages.”

Stillwater, Minnesota native Jack Swanson stars as Edward Tulane in his Minnesota Opera debut. An alum of Project Opera, Minnesota Opera's flagship, year-long opera training program, Swanson is quickly becoming one of the most sought-after young tenors in the opera world. The leading cast features several noteworthy house debuts, including those of Puerto Rican soprano Zulimar López-Hernández, baritone Brian Vu, bass Zachary James, mezzo-soprano Elise Quagliata and baritone Daniel Belcher. Former Minnesota Opera Resident Artists Benjamin Sieverding, Victoria Vargas and Adriana Zabala with current Resident Artists Lisa Marie Rogali, Danielle Beckvermit, Nicholas Davis and Christian Sanders fill out the cast. Russian-American conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya, the music director of Chicago Opera Theater, makes her company debut leading the Minnesota Opera Orchestra.

What: *Edward Tulane*
Based on the book by Kate DiCamillo
Music by Paola Prestini
Libretto by Mark Campbell
Commissioned by Minnesota Opera as part of its New Works Initiative
Performed in English with English captions projected above the stage.

Where: Ordway Music Theater, 345 Washington St., Saint Paul, MN 55102

When: Saturday, March 21, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 22, 2020 at 2 p.m.
Thursday, March 26, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, March 28, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 29, 2020 at 2 p.m.*

***Kate DiCamillo Day + Book Signing.** Kate will be signing copies of *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* and her new book *Beverly, Right Here* at the Ordway immediately following this performance. More information at mnopera.org/kate-day.

Tickets: \$25-\$215. Call Minnesota Opera Patron Services at 612-333-6669, Monday – Friday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., or purchase online at mnopera.org/tulane.

Media: Press information and digital assets are available at our [Online Press Room](#).

Creative Team

Conductor – Lidiya Yankovskaya
Stage Director – Eric Simonson
Scenic Design – Walt Spangler
Costume Design – Victoria Tzykun
Lighting Design – Marcus Doshi
Hair & Makeup Design – David Zimmerman
Intimacy Director – Doug Scholz-Carlson

Cast



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Edward Tulane – Jack Swanson[†]
Young Abilene/Betty – Zulimar López-Hernández
Bryce – Brian Vu
Lucius/Witch – Zachary James
Pellegrina/Older Doll – Elise Quagliata
Abilene's Father/Bryce's Father – Daniel Belcher
Bull/Neal – Benjamin Sieverding*
Lucy/Princess/Fancy Doll 1 – Lisa Marie Rogali[†]
Sarah Ruth – Jasmine Habersham
Lolly/Marlene – Danielle Beckvermit[†]
Nellie/Fancy Doll 3 – Victoria Vargas*
Abilene's Mother/Abilene/Fancy Doll 2 – Adriana Zabala*
Lawrence/King/Grandfather – Nicholas Davis[†]
Prince/Father/Rat – Christian Sanders[†]

[†]MN Opera Resident Artist
^{*}MN Opera Resident Artist Alum
[†]MN Opera Project Opera Alum

To learn more about *Edward Tulane*, please visit mnopera.org/tulane.

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