



Administrative: 612-333-2700

Patron Services: 612-333-6669

Fax: 612-333-0869

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Eric Broker, Marketing and Communications Director, 320-293-6616, [ebroker@mnopera.org](mailto:ebroker@mnopera.org)

# MINNESOTA OPERA ANNOUNCES 2020-2021 SEASON UPDATES

**The new 2020 Fall Season includes Opera in the Outfield at CHS Field, a digital version of *Wuthering Heights*, a 3D digital version of *Das Rheingold* and a live-streamed holiday concert.**

**The previously announced 2020-2021 Season performances at the Ordway have been cancelled, with new programming scheduled through the Fall Season and a planned Spring Season.**

**The Spring Season starting in 2021 is expected to include a virtual gala event and two new productions at the Ordway.**

**MINNEAPOLIS (July 28, 2020)** - Based on guidance from the city, state and federal agencies regarding the ongoing health crisis, Minnesota Opera has made the difficult decision to cancel the previously announced 2020-2021 Season performances and replace them with a Fall Season announced today that prioritizes the safety of audiences and artists. The 2021 Spring Season will be announced later so the Company can better respond to the shifting landscape of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 2020-2021 Ordway Season Productions Cancelled

"There are so many in our opera family—artists, creatives, staff, audience, students and community members—who rely on our artmaking as a source of inspiration, income, healing and security," said President and General Director Ryan Taylor. "And the two pandemics that we are all struggling with now—COVID-19 and racism—continue to have devastating effects on our community. Artists and artistic organizations are often spiritual leaders in times of crisis. We offer connection, community and a shared storytelling that provides light, hope and a path to think differently and be better. Our typical prescription to work our magic requires physical and emotional proximity for company members and our community at large. And we know that very proximity currently endangers our health. With all this in mind, we present today an innovative approach and a new 2020 Fall Season that draws on the creative reserves of our company. We believe it provides a new path forward for our organization, as we look forward to returning to the Ordway in the spring."

The originally scheduled 2020-2021 Season productions, spanning September 26, 2020 through May 23, 2021, consisted of 28 performances of five operas, including Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, composer Jeanine Tesori and librettist Tazewell



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Thompson's *Blue*, Rossini's *Cinderella* and composer Paul Moravec and librettist Mark Campbell's *The Shining*.

*Blue*, a new work that grapples with the killing of an unarmed Black man at the hands of a police officer, will be presented in a future season. "We believe in the power and significance of *Blue*, which was recently named Best New Opera by the Music Critics Association of North America," said Taylor. "We look forward to sustaining the message of this piece throughout this season, as well as performing the opera in a future season when we are able to stage it fully, honoring the piece and our community to the best of our ability."

Minnesota Opera's previously announced search for a principal conductor is being restructured to allow time for proper evaluation of all candidates when they can work in partnership with the Minnesota Opera Orchestra and Company vocal artists.

All patrons who purchased tickets for cancelled performances will automatically have the value of those tickets transferred to their MN Opera accounts. That credit can be applied to the new fall and spring season offerings, future performances (including 2021-2022 Season subscriptions), special events, refunded or donated. All ticket holders affected will receive communication directly from Minnesota Opera with a full description of their options for the updated season.

Minnesota Opera is preparing to stage a Spring Season of two operas not originally planned for the 2020-2021 Season at the Ordway beginning in March 2021, using all locally based talent. This will provide for the greatest flexibility possible should the performances need to be modified to comply with future pandemic instruction. The leadership team and the Minnesota Opera Board of Directors are carefully monitoring guidance from city, state and national leaders along with health directives from the Minnesota Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in making these decisions. Further updates about the 2021 Spring Season will be shared as they become available.

## 2020 Fall Season Announcement

The Company is preparing a wide range of exciting alternative artistic activities to be presented through the fall, with a focus on ensuring that opera remains in the hearts and minds of Minnesota audiences and stakeholders through this period. Additionally, virtual events and new digital content will continue to be featured through the Company's *At Home with MN Opera* platform at [mnopera.org/at-home](https://mnopera.org/at-home), launched in March 2020 to foster continued connections with the Minnesota Opera community and share great artistry worldwide. A digital venue for engagement with opera, *At Home with MN Opera* will continue to expand over the coming months.

Minnesota Opera's top priority is the health and safety of all patrons, artists and staff. Many protocols will be implemented in response to the desires of our patrons at the outdoor concert offering in September at CHS Field, including reducing the capacity of the stadium; requiring reservations, face coverings and health screenings upon entry; instituting enhanced cleaning procedures between performances; coordinating physically distant entry and exit experiences and leveraging directional signs and reminders to maintain safe physical distancing during the event. A complete list of event safety policies is available at [mnopera.org/safety](https://mnopera.org/safety).



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## 2020 Fall Season

### **Opera in the Outfield**

*Experience MN Opera at CHS Field*

**In-Person Events:** September 24 and 26, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.

**Available On Demand:** September 27-October 11, 2020

**Slide into home.** Root, root, root for your hometown opera team! Join us for an evening of opera outdoors at majestic CHS Field in downtown St. Paul. Featuring live performance elements and an innovative digital creation up on the field's giant videoboard, this event includes music from *Carmen*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, modern classics and more. This spectacular, one-of-a-kind and physically distanced event is sure to be a home run.

**Tickets:** In-person tickets are \$10-\$50. Digital access to a video version of the experience is available for \$10-\$15. The video will premiere on Sunday, September 27 at 7:30 p.m. and be available for on-demand streaming until October 11. Call Minnesota Opera Patron Services at 612-333-6669, Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., or purchase online at [mnopera.org/opera-in-the-outfield](https://mnopera.org/opera-in-the-outfield).

### ***Wuthering Heights***

*Streaming On Demand for the First Time*

Music by Bernard Hermann

Libretto by Lucille Fletcher

**Premiere:** Saturday, October 10, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.

**Available On Demand:** October 10-24, 2020

**Untamed passion and everlasting love.** For the first time anywhere, see our 2011 production of *Wuthering Heights* on your screen at home. Based on Emily Brontë's celebrated literary romance, this timeless, larger-than-life story of love and passion on the English moors will sweep you right off your feet (if they aren't already on your ottoman, that is).

To learn more about the 2011 MN Opera production of *Wuthering Heights*, [view the show's concert program](#).

**Tickets:** \$10-\$15. Call Minnesota Opera Patron Services at 612-333-6669, Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., or purchase online at [mnopera.org/wuthering-heights](https://mnopera.org/wuthering-heights).

### ***Das Rheingold 3D***

*Presented in 2D, 3D and Virtual Reality*

Music and libretto by Richard Wagner



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**Premiere:** Saturday, November 14 at 7:30 p.m.

**Available On Demand:** November 14-28, 2020

**Gods, gold, and giants—now in 3D!** Be a part of the action and experience opera like you never have before with this 3D version of Wagner's *Das Rheingold*, Minnesota Opera's critically acclaimed 2016 production of the first installment of the legendary *Ring Cycle*. Put on your provided 3D glasses and get ready to join an epic battle between gods and giants for ultimate power. Also available in 2D and virtual reality.

To learn more about the 2016 MN Opera production of *Das Rheingold*, [view the show's concert program](#).

**Tickets:** \$20-\$25, includes a pair of 3D glasses shipped to homes in WI, MN, SD, ND and IA. Call Minnesota Opera Patron Services at 612-333-6669, Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., or purchase online at [mnopera.org/das-rheingold](http://mnopera.org/das-rheingold).

## A Holiday Special—Live!

*Live Broadcast from the Ordway Concert Hall*

**Live Stream:** Sunday, December 13 at 3 p.m.

**Available On Demand:** December 13-27, 2020

**Coming to your home for the holiday season.** Celebrate with us as we present a special holiday concert, livestreamed from the Ordway Concert Hall. Enjoy an inclusive afternoon of treasured holiday classics from various traditions, opera favorites and perhaps a surprise or two. It's sure to be a day of good cheer that will put you in a jolly spirit.

**Tickets:** \$10-\$15. Call Minnesota Opera Patron Services at 612-333-6669, Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., or purchase online at [mnopera.org/a-holiday-special](http://mnopera.org/a-holiday-special).

### 2020 Fall Classical MPR Broadcasts

## *Casanova's Homecoming*

Music and libretto by Dominick Argento  
Featuring the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra

**Tuesday, October 27 at 7 p.m.**

This October 27th marks what would have been the 93rd birthday of renowned Minnesota composer Dominick Argento, who passed away in 2019. Join us as we honor his life and legacy with a broadcast of 2009's *Casanova's Homecoming*, a delightful farce based on the memoirs of the legendary adventurer Giacomo Casanova.



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To learn more about the 2009 MN Opera production of *Casanova's Homecoming*, [view the show's concert program](#).

## *Silent Night*

Music by Kevin Puts

Libretto by Mark Campbell

Based on the screenplay by Christian Carion

For the motion picture *Joyeux Noël* produced by Nord-Ouest

Commissioned by MN Opera as part of its New Works Initiative

Tuesday, December 1 at 7 p.m.

MN Opera's Pulitzer Prize-winning, international sensation makes its homecoming just in time for the holidays. Join us for a broadcast of our 2018 production of the story of a miraculous moment of holiday peace on the frontlines of World War I. *Silent Night* masterfully juxtaposes the bombastic sounds of war with serene songs from home, and stands as a heartfelt hymn to our common humanity.

To learn more about the 2018 MN Opera production of *Silent Night*, [view the show's concert program](#).

2020 Fall Season digital packages (\$45-\$50) and individual tickets to the four fall events are available now online at [mnopera.org](http://mnopera.org) or by calling Minnesota Opera Patron Services. Minnesota Opera's Patron Services Office windows located at 620 N 1<sup>st</sup> St., Minneapolis, MN remain closed, but the Patron Services team is available to assist patrons by phone at 612-333-6669, Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## Organizational Updates

In support of the Company's updated season, the Minnesota Opera Board of Directors has approved a new annual budget of \$8.5 million, reduced from \$12.7 million. The decrease reflects a reduction in staff, reduced costs to produce the new season offerings and a 33% decrease in anticipated revenues. As a result of these changes, 11% of full-time employees across all departments experienced layoffs and hourly reductions. In addition, all staff have experienced a salary reduction of up to 15% as of the fiscal year, which officially began July 1, 2020. Existing contract and part-time employee hours will also be reduced an average of 61% in alignment with updated operational and production needs.

Among the staffing changes, Dale Johnson, former artistic director and, for the last two years, creative advisor, announced his retirement from the organization on July 1, 2020 after more than 35 years with the Company.

The Company extends its gratitude to all its patrons for their flexibility and unwavering support.



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Minnesota Opera changes lives by bringing together artists, audiences and community, advancing the art of opera for today and for future generations.