MINNESOTA OPERA ANNOUNCES ITS 2021-2022 SEASON

Alongside select digital offerings, live opera returns to CHS Field and the Ordway Center for Performing Arts.

Denyce Graves to make her directorial debut leading a new production of Carmen.

MINNEAPOLIS (June 8, 2021) – Minnesota Opera is thrilled to announce the 2021-2022 Season, featuring in-person events alongside virtual offerings. The 2021-2022 Season consists of four live artistic productions: Opera in the Outfield returns to CHS Field in downtown St. Paul in September; February marks MN Opera’s return to the Ordway for live, full-capacity performances with The Anonymous Lover, an opera written in 1780 by the groundbreaking Black composer Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges; March brings a special concert experience to the Ordway Music Theater entitled Voices United, a concert of opera hits and modern masterpieces starring the MN Opera Chorus; and the season concludes in May with Carmen, Georges Bizet’s tantalizing tale about romance, obsession and vengeance.

In addition to these four in-person events, MN Opera will also present three virtual productions, which include interstate, a story about old friendship and the hard questions of accountability; MNiatures, a follow-up to last season’s series of short operas created by Minnesota artists; and Edward Tulane Choral Suite, a vocal performance featuring music from last year’s postponed opera based on the novel by local author Kate DiCamillo with music by Paola Prestini and a libretto by Mark Campbell.

“We cannot wait to connect our artists with the community as we return to live performances for in-person audiences,” said President and General Director Ryan Taylor. “The entire organization feels abuzz at the prospect of seeing the curtain rise and hearing the applause echo through the Ordway again. We’re also looking forward to continuing with meaningful digital presentations. By offering both in-person and virtual events, we hope to meet our community at wherever their comfort level might be—there’s something for everyone in this exciting and eclectic season.”

The 2021-2022 Season marks the return of several artists familiar to MN Opera audiences, as well as noteworthy debuts. Former Resident Artist David Radamés Toro returns as stage director and dramaturg for Opera in the Outfield in a program that features Latinx vocal music, and Miguel Harth-Bedoya makes his return to MN Opera as the conductor. Voices United features John de los Santos as director and choreographer with Lidiya Yankovskaya leading the Minnesota Opera Chorus and Orchestra in her MN Opera debut after originally being scheduled to lead 2020’s postponed world premiere of Edward Tulane. Soprano Leah Hawkins, a recent alumna of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program at the Metropolitan Opera, stars as the soprano soloist in Voices United. Mezzo-soprano superstar Denyce Graves, internationally known for her
portrayal of Carmen that she premiered at Minnesota Opera, leads the production in her directorial debut.

With the 2021-2022 Season, soprano Symone Harcum will begin her tenure as a Resident Artist with MN Opera. Current Resident Artists Emily Bishai (assistant director), Leah Brzyski (soprano), Celeste Marie Johnson (pianist/coach), Allen Michael Jones (bass), Aaron Keeney (baritone) and Joseph Lepeck (tenor) return for their second season. One of North America’s premier training programs, the MN Opera Resident Artist Program offers a full season of employment for talented artists beginning their professional careers.

Season tickets packages ($41-$336) for The Anonymous Lover and Carmen are available now, with the option to add on Opera in the Outfield ($20) and Voices United ($15-$35). Subscriptions can be purchased online at mnopera.org or by calling Minnesota Opera Patron Services at 612-333-6669 (open Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.). Individual tickets for Opera in the Outfield and Voices United go on sale in July 2021 and individual tickets for The Anonymous Lover and Carmen go on sale in November 2021. All three digital offerings—Interstate, MNiatures and Edward Tulane Choral Suite—will be available for free.

Performances will take place with health and safety protocols in alignment with CDC guidelines and Stay Safe MN’s guidance for indoor entertainment venues. For more information, please visit mnopera.org/safety.

2021-2022 SEASON

Live Performances

**Opera in the Outfield**
Experience MN Opera Live at CHS Field

Friday, September 24 at 7:30 p.m.
CHS Field

*A season opener that knocks it out of the park.* Opera in the Outfield returns to CHS Field in 2021 for a live performance in downtown St. Paul! Riding on the coattails (or should we say pinstripes) of last year’s success, Minnesota Opera is thrilled to connect with our audiences back at the ballpark. This year, we’re putting an array of artists on the pitcher’s mound with a program that will highlight Latinx vocal music alongside some of opera’s classic hits. Join us outside for the second outing of Opera in the Outfield!

Conductor - Miguel Harth-Bedoya
Stage Director and Dramaturg - David Radamés Toro°

*The Anonymous Lover*
Music by Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges
Libretto by Madame de Genlis

First time at Minnesota Opera
A newly created Minnesota Opera production

February 5, 10, 12 and 13, 2022
Ordway Music Theater

**Yours truly.** For the first time ever, Minnesota Opera presents *The Anonymous Lover*, a 1780 opera by Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges, a Black composer and contemporary of Mozart. This comic romance about earnest vulnerability and steadfast devotion tells the story of a beautiful young widow who is doubtful about ever finding love again. When she begins receiving anonymous love letters, her close friend—and secret admirer—feigns amusement while anxiously working up the courage to confess to his role as the sender. Will their journey result in a woeful case of unrequited love? Or will true love prevail?

**Cast**
Léontine – Symone Harcum*
Ophémon – Aaron Keeney*
Dorothée – Zoie Reams**
Jeannette – Leah Brzyski*
Colin – Joseph Leppek*

**Creative Team**
Conductor – Christopher Franklin

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**Voices United**
Minnesota Opera Chorus in Concert

Sunday, March 27 at 3 p.m.
Ordway Music Theater

**MN Opera Chorus in Concert.** Join Minnesota Opera for Voices United, a dynamic concert experience of opera hits and modern masterpieces. Starring the Minnesota Opera Chorus and Orchestra, Voices United celebrates the power of music and community. Be our guest as we take to the Ordway stage for a performance featuring a variety of selections by Mozart, Verdi, Joplin and more.

Conductor – Lidiya Yankovskaya
Director and Choreographer – John de los Santos
Soprano – Leah Hawkins

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**Carmen**
Music by Georges Bizet
Libretto by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy

Last seen at Minnesota Opera in 2015
A newly created co-production between Minnesota Opera and The Glimmerglass Festival.

May 7, 8, 12, 14, 15, 21 and 22, 2022
Ordway Music Theater

Sultry, bold, daring. When affection turns to obsession, romance becomes dangerous. Carmen, an iconic and beautiful woman, is bound to live life on her own terms. But shortly after a corporal military officer falls for her, what begins as a passionate story of desire quickly turns into a struggle for liberation. Featuring some of the most popular music to ever grace the opera stage, Minnesota Opera's Carmen brings every aspect of Bizet’s thrilling tale to life, from its tantalizing beginning to its devastating climax.

Cast
Carmen – TBA (May 7, 12, 15 and 21), Zoie Reamsii (May 8, 14 and 22)
Don José – Won Whi Choi (May 7, 12, 15 and 21), TBA (May 8, 14 and 22)
Micaëla – Symone Harcum*
Escamillo – Aaron Keeney*
Zuniga – Allen Michael Jones*
Remendado – Joseph Leppek*
Frasquita – Leah Brzyski*
Mercédès – Mia Athey`

Creative Team
Conductor – Elias Grandy
Stage Director – Denyce Graves
Scenic Designer – Riccardo Hernandez
Costume Designer – Oana Botez
Co-Lighting Designers – Amith Chandrashaker, Robert Wierzel

Free Digital Performances

Interstate
Broadcast Debut of the Operatic Film

Music by Kamala Sankaram
Libretto by Jennifer Cresswell and Kathleen Kelly

Streaming October 9-23, 2021
Interstate is the story of Olivia and Diane, who shared a childhood in vulnerable, unsafe circumstances before life sent them down different roads. The adult Diane reaches out from her stable life to Olivia, a prostitute in prison for murder. Interstate blends the horror and violence of Olivia’s life with the tenderness of old friendship and the hard questions of accountability.

**Cast**
Liv – Jennifer Cresswell
Di – Kathleen Kelly

**Creative Team**
Director – Tonya McKinny
Director of Photography – Ryan McKinny
Producers – Helio Arts

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**MNiatures**
Short World Premiere Operas from Minnesota Artists

Streaming begins October 30, 2021

Back by popular demand, MNiatures returns with newly commissioned mini operas by Minnesota artists from all types of artistic backgrounds. In collaboration with MN Opera, selected teams will work in pairs to create brand-new works through the creative mediums of their choosing. This program seeks to uplift local artists and give them space to foster their craft, ideas, and dreams.

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**Edward Tulane Choral Suite**
Broadcast of a World Premiere Sneak Preview

Based on the novel by Kate DiCamillo
Music by Paola Prestini
Libretto by Mark Campbell

Streaming begins December 13, 2021

Halted by the pandemic, Minnesota Opera’s premiere of Edward Tulane was put on hold. Until Edward hops onto the mainstage, the shimmering music from this new work is simply too good to keep to ourselves! Tune in for a virtual concert featuring choral highlights from this heartwarming opera based on the best-seller by local author Kate DiCamillo.

*MN Opera Resident Artist
*MN Opera Resident Artist alum
*Project Opera alum

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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.