



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

Severin Lier, Communications Manager, 612-342-1614, slier@mnopera.org

MINNESOTA OPERA PRESENTS *INTERSTATE*, A NEW FILM EXPLORING TRAUMA, TRAGEDY AND FRIENDSHIP

This world premiere digital opera features composer Kamala Sankaram and co-librettists and co-stars Jennifer Cresswell and Kathleen Kelly in a work produced by Helio Arts.

MINNEAPOLIS (October 6, 2021) – *Interstate*, the first of three digital offerings in Minnesota Opera’s 2021-2022 Season, tells the story of Olivia and Diane, two women who shared a childhood in vulnerable, unsafe circumstances before life sent them down different roads. The digital opera features music by Kamala Sankaram and a libretto written by the production’s two stars, Jennifer Cresswell and Kathleen Kelly.

Years after Olivia and Diane’s paths diverged, an Adult Diane has escaped the uncertainty and danger of her childhood and is living a stable life. After hearing news of her childhood friend’s circumstances, Diane reaches out to Olivia, now 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.

This brand-new digital production is presented by Minnesota Opera in partnership with Helio Arts, a company of artists with over 50 years of combined experience in the performing arts. Helio Arts has worked and performed with the Metropolitan Opera, Bayreuth, the Washington National Opera, the Houston Grand Opera and the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

Formed in 2020, Helio Arts came together over a shared desire to broaden the types of stories commissioned in the classical performing arts field. Encouraged by wide-spread public adoption of digital performing arts content during the pandemic, they saw an opportunity to change the way artists and audiences interact with on-demand artistic content.

“The current model of artistic commercialization discourages innovation of narrative and medium, while promoting a cutthroat economic model that provides artists with little support and audiences with little novelty,” writes Helio Arts. “We imagine a world that revolves around the creativity of our artists and the viewing experience of our patrons. Through our proprietary platform and innovative business model, we encourage a broader range of artistic narratives, an inventive mix of mediums and an emphasis on inclusivity of voice and background—benefitting audience and artists alike.”

The new work comes first in a series of three digital performances from Minnesota Opera and will be presented for on-demand streaming from October 9-23, 2021.

What: *Interstate*
Music by Kamala Sankaram
Libretto by Jennifer Cresswell and Kathleen Kelly
Produced by Helio Arts
Presented by Minnesota Opera

Where: Access and stream *Interstate* at mnopera.org/interstate.

When: Available from Saturday, October 9-23, 2021.

Media: Digital assets are available on our [Online Press Room](#).

Creative Team

Composer | Kamala Sankaram
Co-Librettist | Jennifer Cresswell
Co-Librettist | Kathleen Kelly
Director | Tonya McKinny
Director of Photography | Ryan McKinny
Producers | Helio Arts

Cast

Olivia | Jennifer Cresswell
Diana | Kathleen Kelly

To learn more about *Interstate*, please visit mnopera.org/interstate.

###

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