



Administrative: 612-333-2700

Patron Services: 612-333-6669

Fax: 612-333-0869

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Eric Broker, Marketing and Communications Director, 320-293-6616, ebroker@mnopera.org

MINNESOTA OPERA ANNOUNCES ITS 60TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

The 2022-2023 Season includes three productions at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts and two productions at the [Luminary Arts Center](#).

Season features two world premieres: *Edward Tulane*, based on the novel by Kate DiCamillo, and *The Song Poet*, based on the memoir by Kao Kalia Yang.

MINNEAPOLIS (March 2, 2022) – Minnesota Opera is thrilled to announce the 2022-2023 Season, marking the company's 60th season of producing opera in Minnesota. The season features a full five-opera lineup consisting of three productions at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts and two productions at the Luminary Arts Center, Minnesota Opera's newly acquired and renovated performance space in Minneapolis' North Loop. MN Opera recently announced the [renamed performance space](#) on Saturday, February 26.

The Ordway Series features the long-awaited premiere of *Edward Tulane*; based on the best-seller by local author Kate DiCamillo; the Minnesota Opera premiere of Donizetti's popular opera *The Daughter of the Regiment*; and a new production of Mozart's sharp and otherworldly *Don Giovanni*. The Luminary Series brings us Handel's *Rinaldo*, a tune-filled story of love and redemption, and the world premiere of *The Song Poet*, the first Hmong story adapted for the operatic stage.

"We cannot wait to share our 60th Anniversary Season," said Minnesota Opera President and General Director Ryan Taylor. "We have elected to feature works for this special season that explore the themes of hope and resilience. During this anniversary year, our repertoire, casting, and stagecraft celebrate the best of what Minnesota Opera has become over the past 60 years—an organization committed to new works, developing new voices and artists through our Resident Artist program, diversity, and the bel canto repertoire and philosophy of beautiful singing. The season also features several exciting milestones: our first full season of live, in-person opera since the start of the pandemic; our first subscription season performances at our new Luminary Arts Center; and our company's 50th and 51st world premieres. These exciting organizational landmarks—along with the enduring power of opera itself—are sure to make for a remarkable 60th season of opera in Minnesota."

The 2022-2023 Season marks the return of several artists familiar to MN Opera audiences, as well as noteworthy debuts. *Edward Tulane*, originally scheduled to premiere in March 2020 and postponed because of the pandemic, features several members of the originally planned cast and creative team, including Minnesota native and Project Opera alum Jack Swanson in his MN Opera debut, soprano Zulimar López-Hernández, tenor Brian Vu, soprano Jasmine Habersham, and conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya. *The Daughter of the Regiment* features soprano Vanessa Becerra, who first appeared with MN Opera in *Ópera Afuera* at Allianz Field last year, as Marie and also features the return of Minnesota residents David Portillo and Resident Artist alum Andrew Wilkowske. Seth Carico, last seen in Minnesota Opera's 2018 production of *Dead Man Walking*, returns to perform the title role in *Don Giovanni*. Countertenor Patrick Terry, a graduate of the



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University of Minnesota and an alum of the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme at The Royal Opera at Covent Garden, makes his Minnesota Opera debut in the title role of *Rinaldo*.

Season ticket packages (\$40-\$651) for the 2022-2023 Season are available now online at mnopera.org or by calling Minnesota Opera Patron Services at 612-333-6669. Individual tickets go on sale this summer. 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.

2022-2023 SEASON

Ordway Series

A NEW MN OPERA PRODUCTION

Edward Tulane

Based on the novel by Kate DiCamillo

Music by Paola Prestini

Libretto by Mark Campbell

Sung in English with English captions projected above the stage.

October 8, 13, 15 and 16, 2022

Ordway Music Theater

345 Washington St.

St Paul, MN 55102

A miraculous journey. Based on the best-seller by Kate DiCamillo, *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 Minnesota original shows us a true miracle—that even the most broken of hearts can learn to love again.

Cast

Edward Tulane – Jack Swanson*

Young Abilene/Betty – Zulimar López-Hernández

Bryce – Brian Vu

Sarah Ruth – Jasmine Habersham

Creative Team

Conductor – Lidiya Yankovskaya

Director – Eric Simonson

Minnesota Opera's [New Works Initiative](#) launched in 2008, and *Edward Tulane* represents the final opera commissioned as part of the original Initiative's 10-year cycle. Suspended in the spring of 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic took hold, the long-awaited stage premiere of the work will open the company's 60th Anniversary Season. *Edward Tulane* is based on a children's book by Minnesota resident and two-time Newberry Award-winning author Kate DiCamillo. The operatic adaptation is composed by Paola Prestini with a libretto by Mark Campbell.

An [article written in advance of the originally scheduled 2020 premiere](#) provides more details about the piece. Exploring what it means to find love and family, *Edward* reminds us all that losing our way is often part of the difficult journey of growing, learning, living, loving and finding ourselves in the process. After more than two years of this devastating pandemic, which has disrupted our ability to come together, *Edward Tulane's* celebration of reunion and homecoming are both timely and welcome. The cast of the original 2020 premiere returns almost in its entirety to perform the piece two and half years later. The production features Stillwater, Minnesota native Jack Swanson making his MN Opera debut in the title role.

SET FROM FORT WORTH OPERA. COSTUMES FROM WASHINGTON NATIONAL OPERA.

The Daughter of the Regiment

Music by Gaetano Donizetti

Libretto by Jules-Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges, Jean François Bayard

Sung in French with English captions projected above the stage.

February 4, 9, 11 and 12, 2023

Ordway Music Theater

345 Washington St.

St Paul, MN 55102

Love is a battlefield. Adopted and raised by a squadron of French soldiers and unaware of her aristocratic lineage, punky Marie falls for a handsome villager. But when her past comes to whisk her away, will she fall in line or follow her heart? Donizetti's romantic comedy mixes hilarious snafus with vocal pyrotechnics in this witty and heartwarming production.

Cast

Marie – Vanessa Becerra

Tonio – David Portillo

Sergeant Sulpice – Andrew Wilkowske⁺

La Marquise de Berkenfield – Margaret Gawrysiak

Creative Team

Director – John De Los Santos

While the company has presented eight previous works by Donizetti, *The Daughter of the Regiment* is among his most well-known pieces, and this will be the first presentation of this piece at Minnesota Opera.

The *bel canto* era opera celebrates a strong central female character, Marie. She forges of her own destiny, under unusual circumstances and in defiance of societal norms, with the high-flying vocal sparkle so characteristic of the *bel canto* era, and alternating moments of humor, passion, and vulnerability. The focus on chosen family and rejecting society's expectations for one's life embraces the spirit of inclusivity and empowerment reflected in MN Opera's values. The cast of this piece is led by Vanessa Becerra in the title role of Marie with David Portillo as her love interest, Tonio.

A NEW MN OPERA PRODUCTION

Don Giovanni

Music By Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte

Sung in Italian with English captions projected above the stage.

May 6, 11, 13, 14, 18, 20 and 21, 2023

Ordway Music Theater

345 Washington St.

St Paul, MN 55102

So hot, he'll burn. Don Giovanni is an egotistical and infamous womanizer, brazen in his shameless seductions. But his betrayals soon catch up to him when divine retribution exacts the ultimate price. Mozart's smart and otherworldly opera seamlessly blends dark comedy with biting social commentary, all set to some of opera's most stirring music.

Cast

Don Giovanni – Seth Carico

Donna Anna – Symone Harcum

Donna Elvira – Sara Gartland

Leporello – Thomas Glass⁺

Commendatore – Allen Michael Jones⁺

Creative Team

Conductor – Karen Kamensek

Director – Keturah Stickann

This new production of *Don Giovanni* was originally scheduled to premiere in May of 2020 and was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The production is led by an all-female creative team, along with the MN Opera conducting and directing debuts of Karen Kamensek and Keturah Stickann, respectively.

Stickann has expressed an interest in telling Mozart and Da Ponte's timeless critique of humanity from the perspectives of the central female characters in the work. In a post-#metoo society with greater awareness of the ubiquity of violence against women, our Diversity Charter and equity work adds urgency to the exploration of this well-known classic through a new lens. As MN Opera continues to explore the resonance of the legacy repertoire, this production aims to shed light on the true depth, integrity, and influence of Elvira, Anna, and Zerlina, and what it means to triumph in the most dire of circumstances.

Luminary Series

A NEW MN OPERA PRODUCTION

Rinaldo

Music by George Frideric Handel

Libretto by Giacomo Rossi

Sung in Italian with English captions projected above the stage.

November 19, 20, 26, 27, December 2 and 3, 2022

Luminary Arts Center

700 N 1st St.

Minneapolis, MN 55401

A spellbinding adventure. In this magical tale filled with brass fanfares and memorable melodies, our hero must save his innocent, true love from a sorcerer who will stop at nothing to gain victory. The opera sweeps the audience from laughter to heartbreak and back again in this enchanting musical fantasy where love triumphs over darkness.

Cast

Rinaldo – Patrick Terry

Almirena – Symone Harcum°

Armida – Keely Futterer

Creative Team

Conductor – Emily Senturia

Stage Director – Mo Zhou

When considering operatic works to be presented at the Luminary, the company has taken a deliberate stance to program works that we would be unlikely to present at the Ordway. Largely drawing on early operatic works or modern compositions, these pieces afford an opportunity for artists and audiences to share a much more intimate setting and performance relationship.

The last time MN Opera produced a work by Handel was nearly 30 years ago, with *Giulio Cesare* in 1993. *Rinaldo* is the sixth of Handel's 46 operas, and the first of a group commonly referred to as his "magic operas." The story is drawn from an epic poem by Italian Renaissance poet Torquato Tasso and centers around the characters of Rinaldo and Armida. The opera's central themes of redemption and forgiveness are evergreen, especially after so much unrest in our society.

The MN Opera version of this production showcases the depth of talent in the MN Opera Resident Artist Program and highlight the rare countertenor voice type. Patrick Terry is a graduate of the University of Minnesota and an alum of the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme at The Royal Opera at Covent Garden. He won second prize in the 2019 Handel Singing Competition and returns to the Twin Cities for his MN Opera debut in the title role of Rinaldo. Emily Senturia, who recently conducted Opera Santa Barbara's production of Handel's *Semele*, will lead our MN Opera Orchestra from the harpsichord in our inaugural Luminary Arts Center production.

A NEW MN OPERA PRODUCTION

The Song Poet

Music by Jocelyn Hagen

Libretto by Kao Kalia Yang

Sung in English with English captions projected above the stage.

March 9, 11, 12, 16, 18 and 19, 2023

Luminary Arts Center

700 N 1st St.

Minneapolis, MN 55401

A father's love, a family's journey. Based on Kao Kalia Yang's memoir, the first Hmong story adapted for the operatic stage tells the story of Yang's family and her song poet father. With his poetry, her father inspires hope in his family, polishing their reality so that they might shine.

Creative Team

Composer – Jocelyn Hagen

Librettist – Kao Kalia Yang

Director – Rick Shiomi

Together with celebrated Minnesota author Kao Kalia Yang, an operatic adaptation of her non-fiction book *The Song Poet* was originally conceived as an opera to be performed by the company's Project Opera program participants. The new opera offers a glimpse into Minnesota's difficult immigrant history in a production that shares the challenges, loss, and triumphs of the unexpected and the uninvited and the willingness to persevere. Given the richness of the story's themes, the success of the original novel, and in recognition of the abundance of talented Twin



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Cities-based performers of Asian descent, MN Opera will now present the premiere of *The Song Poet* at the Luminary as part of its mainstage season offerings.

Across the country, immigrants are overrepresented relative to the entire population among the ranks of essential workers. In the Twin Cities, immigrants comprise 20 to 35 percent of essential-worker jobs, but their labor remains undervalued, their stories underexplored. These challenges accord an extraordinary opportunity to highlight the Hmong immigrant experience in our region. Rick Shiomi, former artistic director of Theater Mu, directs the production.

+ 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.