



NEWS RELEASE

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FORT WORTH OPERA ANNOUNCES 2012 FESTIVAL

Company's Role as Champion of Contemporary Opera and Modern Composers
Expands with Regional Premieres of
Mark Adamo's *Lysistrata* and Jake Heggie's *Three Decembers*,
opposite Traditional Favorites *Tosca* and *The Marriage of Figaro*

FORT WORTH, Texas – Fort Worth Opera (FWOpera) will kick off its 66th season and its sixth Festival with Puccini's blockbuster *Tosca*, followed by Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*. Well-known for its reputation for programming contemporary works, the company will reinforce that commitment with not just one but two regional premieres: Mark Adamo's *Lysistrata* and Jake Heggie's *Three Decembers*. This is the second opera for each composer produced by Fort Worth Opera—Adamo's *Little Women* was staged in 2005 and Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* ran in 2009.

In announcing the 2012 season line-up, General Director **Darren K. Woods** said, "The casting in *Tosca* and *Figaro* is second-to-none, and it is a particular thrill to program works by **Mark Adamo** and **Jake Heggie**—two of our generation's leading opera composers—together in the same Festival. It will be the first time audiences can experience their incredible music in repertory together. After staging *Little Women* in 2005 and *Dead Man Walking* in 2009, I knew that we had to bring these gifted composers back to Fort Worth. Plus, we're pairing these operas with new directors who weren't involved with the premieres, and I can't wait to see their vision come to life: **David Gately** is perfect for Mark's comedic yet provocative satire *Lysistrata*, as is **Candace Evans** for Jake's touching family drama *Three Decembers*."

Continued Woods, "I'm excited that **Carter Scott** and **Michael Chiodi** are returning for *Tosca*—they are literally back by popular demand. Hers was a magnificent *Tosca* in 2005 and his *Scarpia* was searing. And our *Marriage of Figaro* is a perfect example of Fort Worth Opera's success at showcasing the best of today's young operatic talent, including the Opera Guild of

Fort Worth's McCammon Competition alumni **Donovan Singletary** and **Jonathan Beyer** as Figaro and the Count, respectively, plus fellow up-and-comers **Andrea Carroll** as Susanna, **Jan Cornelius** as the Countess, and **Wallis Giunta** as Cherubino."

The 2012 Festival will run **May 12 – June 3, 2012**. *Tosca*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, and *Lysistrata* will be performed in world-renowned **Bass Performance Hall**. As part of Fort Worth Opera's ongoing dedication to performing in alternative venues, *Three Decembers* will play in the **Scott Theatre**, an intimate 500-seat venue at the Fort Worth Community Arts Center that is ideally suited to the chamber work and where the company performed *Angels in America* to great success in 2008.

TOSCA

Music by Giacomo Puccini and libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa

- May 12, 20, 25, and June 2, 2012
- Bass Performance Hall, Fort Worth
- In Italian with projected English and Spanish translations

The season kicks off with *Tosca*, Puccini's blockbuster opera about the fiery diva who makes a dreadful bargain with the lecherous Baron Scarpia in order to save her beloved Cavaradossi. Fort Worth Opera welcomes back soprano **Carter Scott** (*Tosca*) and baritone **Michael Chioldi** (*Scarpia*), whose performances in Fort Worth Opera's *Tosca* in 2005 were burned into the city's memory. "The intensity they projected was almost frightening," raved the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*. Tenor **Roger Honeywell** (*Carmen*, 2009) joins them as the passionate painter Cavaradossi. Music Director **Joe Illick** conducts and **Daniel Pelzig** (*Turandot*, 2008) directs Fort Worth Opera's period production.

THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte

* denotes Fort Worth Opera Debut Season

- May 19, 27, and June 1, 2012
- Bass Performance Hall, Fort Worth
- In Italian with projected English and Spanish translations

Considered revolutionary when it was written, Mozart's comedy *The Marriage of Figaro* is as fresh and relevant now as when it was premiered—and Fort Worth Opera has assembled a young cast packed with rising stars. Singing the title role is bass-baritone **Donovan Singletary** (*Julius Caesar*, 2011), who won both the 2010 George London Foundation Award and the Opera Guild of Fort Worth's 2010 McCammon Competition's Audience Choice Award. Making their house debuts are soprano **Andrea Carroll*** as Figaro's fiancée Susanna, 2010 McCammon winner and baritone **Jonathan Beyer*** as Count Almaviva, soprano **Jan Cornelius*** as the Countess, and mezzo-soprano **Wallis Giunta*** as Cherubino. **Stewart Robertson** (*Elixir of Love*, 2010) returns to conduct, and **Eric Einhorn*** makes his house debut directing the period production.

LYSISTRATA

Music and libretto by Mark Adamo

+ denotes Fort Worth Opera Studio Member ^ denotes Fort Worth Opera Studio Alumnus

- May 26 and June 3, 2012
- Bass Performance Hall, Fort Worth
- In English with projected English translations
- Regional premiere (world premiere: Houston, 2005)

Acclaimed American composer **Mark Adamo**, whose opera *Little Women* has enjoyed over 75 productions worldwide (including Fort Worth), has created in *Lysistrata* an opera that is “at once provocative, hilarious, bawdy and tender” (*Houston Chronicle*). Based on Aristophanes’ work, this “fantastical riff on the ancient Greek play” (*The New York Times*) satirizes humanity’s endless legacy of war, not only war between nations, but the war of the sexes. The opera expands on the original premise (a group of Athenian and Spartan women are tired of the constant warring between their cities, so they band together and refuse to have sex with their men until peace is declared), but despite the comic backdrop, the “brittle antiwar satire becomes a sumptuous love story, poised between comedy and heartbreak,” (*New Yorker*).

Metroplex favorite and Texas native soprano **Ava Pine** (*Julius Caesar*, 2011) takes on the title role, and her lover Nico, the Athenian soldier, is sung by tenor **Scott Scully** (*Angels in America*, 2008). Mezzo-soprano **Meaghan Dieter**⁺ (*The Mikado*, 2011) is Kleonike, the leader of the Athenian women, while her Spartan counterpart, Lampito, is sung by mezzo-soprano **Alissa Anderson**[^] (*Cinderella*, 2009). Lampito’s husband Leonidas is the Spartan general, sung by bass-baritone **Seth Mease Carico** (*Before Night Falls*, 2010). The Athenian couple Myrrhine and Kinesias are sung by soprano **Ashley Kerr**[^] (*Don Giovanni*, 2010) and baritone **Michael Mayes** (*Dead Man Walking*, 2009).

Music Director **Joe Illick** conducts, and the production is directed by FWOpera favorite **David Gately**, who is well-known to Fort Worth audiences for directing contemporary opera (*Before Night Falls*, 2010; *Angels in America*, 2008; *Little Women*, 2005) as well as the classics (*Julius Caesar*, 2011; *Cinderella*, 2009; and *Lucia di Lammermoor*, 2008; among others).

THREE DECEMBERS

Music by Jake Heggie and libretto by Gene Scheer

* denotes Fort Worth Debut Season

- May 13, 18, 20, 26, 31, and June 2, 2012
- Scott Theatre, Fort Worth Community Arts Center
- In English
- Regional premiere (world premiere: Houston, 2008, under original title *Last Acts*)

Renowned American composer **Jake Heggie**, whose opera *Dead Man Walking* has dominated the opera scene worldwide (including in Fort Worth), chronicles three decades in the lives of a Broadway diva and her adult son and daughter in his second opera, *Three Decembers*. Unfolding through Christmas letters, phone calls, and family visits, the story captures their heartbreaking and inspiring struggle to love each other despite conflict and disappointments. Called “a modern masterpiece” (*Opera Today*) and “sharp and witty and poignant” (*Chicago Tribune*), the chamber opera is based on the play

Some Christmas Letters by Terrence McNally (the *Dead Man Walking* librettist), with a libretto by writer **Gene Scheer*** (also the librettist for Heggie's opera *Moby-Dick*).

Soprano **Janice Hall** returns to sing her first Madeline (the mother). No stranger to contemporary opera, Hall's performance in Fort Worth Opera's 2008 *Angels in America* was hailed as "nothing less than magnificent" (*Opera News*). Soprano **Emily Pulley*** and baritone **Matthew Worth*** make their FWOpera debuts reprising their roles as daughter Bea and son Charlie (sung at Chicago Opera Theatre and Central City Opera, respectively).

Christopher Larkin (*Angels in America*, 2008) conducts. Director **Candace Evans*** makes her FWOpera debut at the helm of a new production with sets by **Bob Lavalee***, costumes by **Rondi Hillstrom Davis***, and lighting by **Lisa Miller** (*Hydrogen Jukebox*, 2011).

TICKETS: Tickets can be purchased by phone or in person at Bass Performance Hall or at the Fort Worth Community Arts Center. Season subscriptions range from \$70 to \$455 while single tickets range from \$18 to \$180. Season subscriptions are available now. Single tickets will be available starting September 1, 2011. For more information or tickets, visit www.fwopera.org or call 817.731.0726 or 1.877.396.7372.

ABOUT FORT WORTH OPERA: Fort Worth Opera was founded in 1946 and is the oldest continually performing opera company in Texas, and one of the 14 oldest opera companies in the United States. Under the leadership of General Director Darren Keith Woods since 2001, the company has gained national attention from critics and audiences alike for its artistic quality and willingness to take risks. Known throughout the operatic world as a champion of new and rarely-performed works, the company has taken a leadership role in producing contemporary operas. In 2007, when the company changed its fall/winter schedule to a condensed one-month long Festival in the spring, FWOpera staged its first world premiere, *Frau Margot*, and followed up the next season with *Angels in America* (which resulted in "More Life: the Art and Science of AIDS", a community-wide collaboration amongst organizations in the performing and visual arts, children's education, medicine, and social services), *Dead Man Walking* in 2009, and the world premiere of *Before Night Falls* in 2010. The company's CD recordings of *Frau Margot* and *Before Night Falls* are available on the Albany label.

ABOUT FORT WORTH: Fort Worth boasts a unique mix of western culture, urban sophistication, and fine art. The city is home to world-renowned arts organizations such as the Kimbell Art Museum, the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, the Amon Carter Museum and the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. On the other end of the spectrum, the city sponsors daily cattle drives through its "Stockyards" district, hosts equestrian and livestock events throughout the year, and is home to the Cowgirl Hall of Fame. Downtown Fort Worth is a lively spot for residents and tourists; attractions include fine dining, shopping, nightclubs, and the opera house, Bass Performance Hall.

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Schedule of 2012 Festival Performances

Saturday, May 12	7:30 p.m.	<i>Tosca</i>	Bass Hall
Sunday, May 13	2:00 p.m.	<i>Three Decembers</i>	Scott Theatre
Friday, May 18	7:30 p.m.	<i>Three Decembers</i>	Scott Theatre
Saturday, May 19	7:30 p.m.	<i>The Marriage of Figaro</i>	Bass Hall
Sunday, May 20	2:00 p.m.	<i>Tosca</i>	Bass Hall
Sunday, May 20	7:30 p.m.	<i>Three Decembers</i>	Scott Theatre
Friday, May 25	7:30 p.m.	<i>Tosca</i>	Bass Hall
Saturday, May 26	2:00 p.m.	<i>Three Decembers</i>	Scott Theatre
Saturday, May 26	7:30 p.m.	<i>Lysistrata</i>	Bass Hall
Sunday, May 27	2:00 p.m.	<i>The Marriage of Figaro</i>	Bass Hall
Thursday, May 31	7:30 p.m.	<i>Three Decembers</i>	Scott Theatre
Friday, June 1	7:30 p.m.	<i>The Marriage of Figaro</i>	Bass Hall
Saturday, June 2	2:00 p.m.	<i>Three Decembers</i>	Scott Theatre
Saturday, June 2	7:30 p.m.	<i>Tosca</i>	Bass Hall
Sunday, June 3	2:00 p.m.	<i>Lysistrata</i>	Bass Hall