

## **BEFORE NIGHT FALLS, world premiere – Fact Sheet**

**COMPOSER:** Jorge Martín

**LIBRETTIST:** Jorge Martín with Dolores M. Koch, based on the memoir by Reinaldo Arenas

### **FORT WORTH OPERA DATES / TIMES / LOCATION:**

Saturday, May 29, 2010 at 8:00 pm

Sunday, June 6, 2010 at 2:00 pm

All performances will be held at Bass Performance Hall, downtown Fort Worth, Texas

### **PRIMARY CAST**

Reinaldo Arenas – Wes Mason +

Ovidio – Jesus Garcia +

Victor – Seth Carico

Pepe – Javier Abreu +

Lázaro – Jonathan Blalock\*

Mother/The Sea – Janice Hall

The Moon – Courtney Ross \*

Customs Officer/Visa Official – Corey Trahan\*\*

Director – David Gately

Conductor – Joe Illick

+Fort Worth Opera Debut Season \*Fort Worth Opera Studio Artist \*\*Festival Young Artist

**PRODUCTION:** Original set design by Riccardo Hernandez, with costumes by Claudia Stephens for Fort Worth Opera. Lighting Design by Harry Frehner and Projection Design by Peter Nigrini. Estimated running time is 2:50 with one 20-minute intermission.

**PHOTOS:** High resolution photos are available online at [www.fwopera.org](http://www.fwopera.org), under “Press.” The password is 12343. More photos and even video will be posted beginning in April and as the 2010 Festival progresses.

**TICKETS:** **Season tickets** and weekend packages range from \$33-\$394. **Individual tickets** range from \$17-\$149 for *The Elixir of Love* and *Before Night Falls*, and \$19-\$154 for *Don Giovanni*. Special student and military pricing available. More information and tickets can be purchased online at [www.fwopera.org](http://www.fwopera.org), or by calling 817.731.0726 or toll free 1.877.396.7372.

**BACKGROUND:** The opera *Before Night Falls* is based on the memoir of Cuban dissident and author, Reinaldo Arenas (1943-1990). Composer Jorge Martín was born in Cuba and came to the United States at the age of six when his family fled Cuba. Inspired by the story, Martín secured the rights to the opera prior to the creation of the *Before Night Falls* movie starring Javier Bardem and Johnny Depp. He wrote the libretto with the help of the late Dolores M. Koch, a personal friend of Arenas who translated several of his works from Spanish to English.

**STORY:** As Reinaldo Arenas lies dying of AIDS in New York City, he remembers his beloved homeland before and after Fidel Castro took power in Cuba. Born in extreme poverty, Arenas joins Castro's rebellion as a teen. As he matures, he realizes that Castro is not interested in a free Cuba after all. A rising poet and writer, he defies Castro when a manuscript is smuggled out of the country and published in France. Embarrassed by the bad publicity, the regime imprisons Arenas for being a homosexual. After imprisonment and torture, he agrees to stop writing as a condition of his release, but can not handle his “silence” for long. He escapes to the U.S. in the Mariel exodus, but during his newfound freedom outside of Cuba he contracts HIV/AIDS. He rushes to complete his memoir before he commits suicide to end his suffering.