

NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Daniel Zillmann, 612.342.1612 or dzillmann@mnopera.org

New production of *Wuthering Heights* to conclude Minnesota Opera's 2010–2011 season

World premiere of Ricky Ian Gordon and Michael Korie's *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* postponed until the spring of 2013, as part of Minnesota Opera's 50th anniversary season

Minneapolis, MN—Minnesota Opera and the creative team of *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* announce the postponement of the opera's world premiere, which had been scheduled for April, 2011, until the spring of 2013, as part of Minnesota Opera's 50th anniversary season. A new production of Bernard Herrmann's *Wuthering Heights*, which was previously scheduled for the 2013–2014 season as part of the Minnesota Opera New Works Initiative, will replace the commission to close the 2010–2011 season.

This decision comes on the heels of the first workshop of the piece, which is an essential development stage of Minnesota Opera's commissioning process. "Ricky Ian Gordon and I have always rewritten sequences after having seen them in context in a staged workshop," said librettist **MICHAEL KORIE**. "This was true with *The Grapes of Wrath*, and it is true with *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*. With less than a year before we are scheduled to go into rehearsals, we requested that the premiere be delayed so that we could make revisions, then orchestrate the opera, and upon its completion, send out the music to the singers with ample time to familiarize themselves with their roles. We are extremely grateful that Minnesota Opera is giving us its full support by giving us the necessary extra months we need to refine our work. With this extension, we need never feel that we didn't give sufficient attention to any aspect of this opera or its vitally important subject matter."

"Creating a new opera is a complex and intricate process, even with an extremely experienced team," said **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR DALE JOHNSON**. "Having just completed the first workshop for *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*, we feel the opera shows tremendous promise, and we are committed to giving it the resources necessary to reach its full potential. In this case, the most critical resource is time."

continued ...

“Minnesota Opera’s New Works Initiative, of which this commission is a part, was designed to support the production of new works and accommodate the unique needs of each opera,” said **PRESIDENT AND CEO KEVIN SMITH**. “With a blend of commissions and revivals, the New Works Initiative’s flexible structure allows us to adjust the schedule without compromising our commitment to new work or feeling the need to rush a commission to the stage.”

About the Minnesota Opera New Works Initiative ...

Now approaching its third season, the Minnesota Opera New Works Initiative is a landmark, multi-year program designed to invigorate the operatic repertoire with an infusion of contemporary works, including an international coproduction (Jonathan Dove and Alasdair Middleton’s *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, February 2009), three revivals of American works (including Dominick Argento’s *Casanova’s Homecoming*, November 2009) and three commissions by American composers.

About Bernard Herrmann’s *Wuthering Heights* ...

Wuthering Heights is based on Emily Brontë’s gothic romance. Unable to bridge the chasm of social class, Heathcliff and Catherine are consumed by a love that can never be, and its legacy haunts the windswept Yorkshire moors. Bernard Herrmann’s opera underscores the novel’s passion, prejudice and mystery.

Composer Bernard Herrmann (1911–1975) was a Hollywood legend – an Academy Award-winning American composer who scored almost every Alfred Hitchcock soundtrack from 1955 to 1964, including *Psycho*, *Vertigo* and *North by Northwest*, and his numerous, unforgettable collaborations include *Citizen Kane* with Orson Welles and *Taxi Driver* with Martin Scorsese.

Wuthering Heights was Bernard Herrmann’s only opera. Though he completed it in 1951, it didn’t receive its premiere until 1982, when it was staged by Portland Opera. Minnesota Opera’s new production of this forgotten masterpiece celebrates the centennial of the composer’s birth.

The 2010–2011 Minnesota Opera season is sponsored by The Private Client Reserve at U.S. Bank.

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