

News Release

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Minnesota Opera webcast of *Werther* reaches more than 77,000 households in 18 countries

Minneapolis – Minnesota Opera is pleased to announce that its live webcast of Massenet’s *Werther* on February 5, 2012, starring James Valenti and Roxana Constantinescu, reached 77,016 households in 18 countries. This project, in collaboration with SoundQue and Opera Music Broadcast.com, furthered the company’s efforts to expand accessibility to the operatic art form and exposure to Minnesota Opera’s artistic excellence.

Thanks to major funding provided by the St. Paul Cultural STAR Program, this single live webcast reached more than 11 times the total number of audience members who saw Minnesota Opera’s *Werther* live throughout the week-long run of performances. This single performance of *Werther* was watched by double the number of individuals expected to attend the 28 live performances of Minnesota Opera’s season.

Through this project, Minnesota Opera became the first major American opera company to webcast its works through this emerging distribution channel. Minnesota Opera’s partner on this project, Michigan-based production firm SoundQue, brought the project success by providing its vast experience of webcasting a wide variety of live events and its tremendous proficiency for attracting an internet audience through their ten different networks, including operamusicbroadcast.com.

“The *Werther* webcast was a great success for the company,” said **MINNESOTA OPERA PRESIDENT AND GENERAL DIRECTOR ALLAN NAPLAN**. “Harnessing this technology, Minnesota Opera not only efficiently reached a much broader audience than what is possible in the house, but the webcast also distributed an operatic experience of the highest artistic quality that was absolutely free to the tens of thousands who saw it. We hope this has ignited a greater interest in Minnesota Opera and the art form in general.”

The Minnesota Opera’s mission is to produce opera and opera education programs at the highest artistic level that inspire and entertain our audiences and enrich the cultural life of our community.

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