

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

16 APRIL 2012

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

Kevin Puts wins Pulitzer Prize in Music for *Silent Night*

Minneapolis – Minnesota Opera congratulates composer Kevin Puts, who was awarded today the Pulitzer Prize in Music for *Silent Night*.

The citation from the Pulitzer Prize Board reads: “Awarded to Kevin Puts for ‘*Silent Night*: Opera in Two Acts,’ commissioned and premiered by the Minnesota Opera in Minneapolis on November 12, 2011, a stirring opera that recounts the true story of a spontaneous cease-fire among Scottish, French and Germans during World War I, displaying versatility of style and cutting straight to the heart. Libretto by Mark Campbell (Aperto Press).”

“I am beyond thrilled by this news,” said **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR DALE JOHNSON**. “Kevin is an extraordinary talent, and this opera – his first – was so richly deserving of this award.”

Johnson, who was struck by power and sentimentality of the 2006 film *Joyeux Noël*, decided to commission an adaptation of that telling of the Christmas truce of 1914. “I thought it would be a terrific opera,” recalled Johnson. “When I first heard Kevin’s orchestral music on a CD in my car, I had to pull over immediately. Though he’d never written an opera before, I knew immediately he was the one for this job.”

Silent Night marked the first commission and fourth production of Minnesota Opera’s groundbreaking New Works Initiative, a multi-year program designed to infuse the operatic art form with new commissions and revivals of contemporary American works. Minnesota Opera’s next commission, *Doubt*, by composer Douglas J. Cuomo and librettist John Patrick Shanley, will receive its world premiere on January 26, 2013, as the centerpiece of the company’s 50th anniversary season.

“We’re honored that *Silent Night*, the first New Works Initiative commission has been recognized with this prestigious award,” said **MANAGING DIRECTOR KEVIN RAMACH**. “We’re also incredibly grateful for the generosity of our early supporters of the Initiative. We expect to announce the successful completion of the \$7 million campaign and news about two future commissions by the end of the year.”

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.

###