

## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Minnesota Opera anticipates finishing in the black

#### Artistic, box office and fundraising success reported at annual meeting

**Minneapolis**—Minnesota Opera announced it expects to finish its 2012 fiscal year on June 30 with a balanced budget.

“I am happy to report that for the ninth year in a row,” said **MANAGING DIRECTOR KEVIN RAMACH**, “Minnesota Opera will complete its season with a budget surplus. Our company continues to produce new works, innovative productions and education programs that contribute to the vitality of our community, while being a strong financial steward.”

**RAMACH** continued: “Minnesota Opera achieved remarkable success this year through performances that attracted capacity crowds, contributions from generous donors both locally and nationally that exceeded \$5 million and education programming which introduced students throughout the state of Minnesota to opera for the first time. On behalf of the entire Opera family, I extend deep appreciation to the many supporters and patrons whose commitment to great opera made this yet another successful season for Minnesota Opera.”

The company reported many institutional successes at its annual meeting on June 21, 2012:

#### **Strong Ticket Sales and Subscription Growth**

Minnesota Opera achieved an all-time high in ticket revenue, which totaled just over \$2.7 million in subscriptions and single ticket sales. In the midst of a 10-year high in subscriptions, more than half of the Opera’s performances were sold out, including a sold-out premiere of the Pulitzer Prize-winning opera, *Silent Night*.

#### **New Works Initiative**

Minnesota Opera’s New Works Initiative, the company’s landmark program designed to infuse the operatic art form with new commissions and revivals of contemporary American works, continued with the world premiere of **KEVIN PUTS’** *Silent Night*. Minnesota Opera congratulates composer Kevin Puts, who was awarded the 2012 Pulitzer Prize in Music for *Silent Night*. Minnesota Opera recorded the November 17 and 19 performances in HD for national and international release. 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 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season.

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### Artistic, Educational and Institutional Success

“It was an extraordinary year for Minnesota Opera,” said ARTISTIC DIRECTOR DALE JOHNSON. “In addition to balancing the budget in very difficult financial times, the Opera raised its artistic profile, both here in the community and world-wide with a stylish *Così fan tutte* directed by acclaimed local director PETER ROTHSTEIN. The season continued with *Silent Night* by KEVIN PUTS and MARK CAMPBELL, which received the best notices of any new opera throughout the United States. JAMES VALENTI and ROXANA CONSTANTINESCU made audiences around the world cry as the doomed lovers from the French tragedy *Werther* through the company’s first live webcast which reached more than 77,000 people in 18 countries. SUSANNA PHILLIPS joined the long line of great Lucias, as she dazzled the audience in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. The season closed with a heartrending performance of *Madame Butterfly*, featuring two of the best singers of the title role in the world, KELLY KADUCE and YUNAH LEE.

PROJECT OPERA, Minnesota Opera’s vocal training program for young singers, produced its first commission of a youth opera with *The Giver* by Susan Kander, based on Lois Lowry’s Newbery Medal winning novel. *The Giver* achieved an overwhelming success with eight sold-out performances and two webcasts that reached more than 12,000 people in 20 countries.

Minnesota Opera’s in-school program, COOPERATION!, brought opera to more than 6,000 students in 23 schools statewide. A highlight of the year was a residency with St. Cloud Public Schools, which encompassed the entire 6<sup>th</sup> grade class of 620 students in 37 classroom visits and ended with a joint concert at the Paramount Theater serving an audience of more than 1,200 children.

### Expansion of Social Media Reach

Minnesota Opera’s presence on social media colossi, Twitter and Facebook, soared with nearly 1,400 tweets and more than 4,600 followers on Twitter, both of which nearly doubled in the last season, and nearly 2,200 “likes” on the Minnesota Opera Facebook page, a 25% growth since the beginning of the season. The company’s “Blogger Night at the Opera” welcomed more than 100 locally and nationally based bloggers to opera dress rehearsals.

### New Minnesota Opera Music Director

Minnesota Opera announced January 19, 2012, the appointment of MICHAEL CHRISTIE as Music Director, a new strategic role for the company. Maestro Christie is charged with enhancing the company’s artistic product through his work with the Minnesota Opera Orchestra, as well as conducting a majority of each season’s operas, beginning with the 2012–2013 season.

### Changes in the Minnesota Opera Board of Directors

Minnesota Opera’s Board expressed appreciation at its annual meeting to directors completing their terms: Martha Goldberg Aronson, Susan Boren, Kathleen Callahan, Steve Fox, Mary Ingebrand-Pohlrad, Philip Isaacson, Brad Pleimann, Stephanie Prem and Peter Sipkins.

The board welcomed directors who were voted on for a first term: Patricia Beithon, Sara Donaldson, Jim Langdon, Albin “Jim” Nelson, Elizabeth Redleaf, Connie Remele, Nadege Souvenir and Virginia Stringer. The board also welcomed renewing directors who were voted on for another term: Bianca Fine and Shelli Chase.

Officers were elected to serve two-year terms at the annual meeting, as well. Shelli Chase will serve as Chair, Jim Johnson as Vice-Chair, Bob Lee as Secretary and Patti Johnson as Treasurer.

The 2012–2013 season opens September 22, 2012, with a new Minnesota Opera production of Verdi’s *Nabucco*.

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.