

## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

07 FEBRUARY 2013

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

### Minnesota Opera's *Hamlet* opens on March 2

Brian Mulligan, Marie-Eve Munger, Katharine Goeldner and Wayne Tigges  
lead the cast in this French take on the Shakespearean classic

- What:** *Hamlet* by composer Ambroise Thomas.  
Sung in French with English surtitles projected above the stage
- Where:** Ordway, 345 Washington Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102
- When:** Saturday, March 2, 7:30pm      Tuesday, March 5, 7:30pm  
Thursday, March 7, 7:30pm      Saturday, March 9, 7:30pm  
Sunday, March 10, 2pm
- Tickets:** \$20 – \$200. Call the Minnesota Opera Ticket Office at 612.333.6669,  
Monday–Friday, 9am–6pm, or purchase online at mnopera.org.
- Media:** An online press kit (available now on Dropbox at [bit.ly/mnoperapressroom](http://bit.ly/mnoperapressroom)) includes  
artist headshots, design renderings, production photos and other useful resources.  
Contact Communications Manager Daniel Zillmann to take advantage of the following  
interview, photo and video opportunities at dress rehearsals at Ordway: **Wednesday,  
February 27, 7:30pm** and **Thursday, February 28, 7:30pm.**
- Preview:** Minnesota Opera hosts its fourth **Social Media Preview** of the season for bloggers and  
tweeters, including refreshments, a social hour and pre-rehearsal discussion with special  
guest, conductor **Christopher Franklin** backstage at Ordway, and exclusive access to the  
dress rehearsal on **Thursday, February 28, 6pm.** R.S.V.P. to Daniel by February 25.

Minneapolis–Minnesota Opera is proud to present its company premiere of *Hamlet* by French composer Ambroise Thomas. Trapped by the horrifying truth about this father's murder, Hamlet becomes the eye of an increasingly violent storm. His obsession with revenge and his suspicion of all those close to him drive his lover, Ophélie (Ophelia), to madness. Based on Shakespeare's unforgettable classic, this treasure of French Grand Opera shimmers anew with luxurious melodies and searing theatricality.

Winner of the European Opera Directing Prize (2005), stage director and designer **THADDEUS STRASSBERGER** (*Nabucco*) sets this production of *Hamlet* in the midst of a totalitarian regime, reminiscent of the 1950s Cold War era. The *Kansas City Star* hailed it as "virtuosic in its visual concept and its dramatic impact."

*continued ...*

According to Strassberger, the production “... centers on Hamlet’s – and our own – inability to know clearly who is a ‘liberal’ and who is a ‘conservative’ and what that brings to bear on the world. Was Hamlet’s father a totalitarian monster who had to be brought down at any cost, or rather, a visionary thoughtfully leading his people to a future filled with prosperity and peace? Is his successor Claudius a liberator or a tyrannical war criminal?” This new look at Shakespeare’s enduring masterwork embodies Strassberger’s philosophy that we do not live in the end days of the art form, but rather at the beginning.

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Conductor ..... Christopher Franklin  
Stage Director/Set Designer ..... Thaddeus Strassberger  
Costume Designer ..... Mary Traylor\*  
Lighting Designer ..... Mark McCullough

THE CAST

Hamlet, *prince of Denmark* ..... Brian Mulligan\*  
Ophélie, *daughter of Polonius* ..... Marie-Eve Munger\*  
King Claudius, *Hamlet’s uncle* ..... Wayne Tigges\*  
Queen Gertrude, *Hamlet’s mother* ..... Katharine Goeldner\*  
Laërte, *son of Polonius* ..... Jason Slayden\*  
Ghost of Hamlet’s father ..... TBD  
Horatio, *Hamlet’s friend* ..... Rodolfo Nieto  
Marcellus, *an officer* ..... John Lindsey+  
Two gravediggers ..... Matthew Opitz+, Jeffrey Hill\*  
Polonius, *Lord Chamberlain* ..... Alex Ritchie\*

\*Minnesota Opera Debut  
+Minnesota Opera Resident Artist

Fast-rising American baritone **BRIAN MULLIGAN** makes his company debut in the title role as the distrustful Prince of Denmark. He performs regularly with the leading opera houses in the United States, including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago, and is known for his “velvety, evenly and effortlessly produced baritone” and “commanding presence, booming sound and exemplary diction” (*Opera News*). Hailed for her crystalline timbre, soaring range and moving performances, Canadian coloratura soprano **MARIE-EVE MUNGER** (debut) sings her first repeated operatic role as Ophélie. *Opéra Magazine* praised her as “... a moving Ophélie, with full high notes and beautiful suppleness ... [whose] death scene brought tears to one’s eye.” One of today’s finest mezzo-sopranos, **KATHARINE GOELDNER**, “a shimmering and radiant voice” (*Arizona Daily Star*), also makes her Minnesota Opera debut as Gertrude, Queen of Denmark. Bass-baritone **WAYNE TIGGES**, known for his “rich, dark tone and beautiful legato” (*Chicago Sun Times*), makes his Minnesota Opera debut as Hamlet’s uncle, King Claudius, and tenor **JASON SLAYDEN**, winner of the 2011 Gerda Lissner Foundation First Prize, also makes his Minnesota Opera debut as Laërte, Ophélie’s brother. Costume designer **MARY TRAYLOR** makes her company debut, **MARK MCCULLOUGH** (*Nabucco*) returns as lighting designer and **CHRISTOPHER FRANKLIN** (*Doubt*) conducts the Minnesota Opera Orchestra.

The Minnesota Opera season is sponsored by Ascent Private Capital Management of U.S. Bank.

*Hamlet* is presented by Target.

Minnesota Opera combines a culture of creativity and fiscal responsibility to produce opera and opera education programs that expand the art form, nurture artists, enrich audiences and contribute to the vitality of the community.