

News Release

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Minnesota Opera Announces 2015-2016 Season

From world premieres of contemporary works to timeless classics.

MINNEAPOLIS (February 21, 2015) – Minnesota Opera presents five operas in its 2015-2016 season, which includes the highly anticipated world-premiere thriller, *The Shining*, by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Paul Moravec and librettist Mark Campbell (*Silent Night* and *The Manchurian Candidate*). Other season highlights include Puccini's *Tosca*, an encore of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Dvořák's *Rusalka* and the first Minnesota Opera production of Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos* in three decades.

"I am pleased to announce Minnesota Opera's new season filled with masterpieces, passionate performers, intriguing stories and beautiful music," said General Director Nina Archabal. "These five accessible operas range from a suspenseful new production to one of Puccini's most popular works. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our audiences and the greater community for their generous support, which allows Minnesota Opera to bring the highest quality artistic product to the stage."

Artistic Director Dale Johnson continues, "Each season, we embark on an exciting journey with our audience, sharing unforgettable moments in the theater, which may bring tears to our eyes or send chills up our spines. This season will prove to be just as stunning!"

"Our offerings in 2015-2016 make me beam with pride to be a member of this dynamic artistic team," said Music Director Michael Christie. "This quintessential Minnesota Opera season highlights beloved blockbusters and an attention-grabbing world premiere sure to dazzle our audiences both vocally and visually."

ARIADNE AUF NAXOS by Richard Strauss

September 26, October 1, 3 and 4, 2015

Sung in German with English translations projected above the stage.

When the wealthiest man in Vienna double-books a group of buttoned-up opera singers and a band of bawdy comedians as dinner entertainment, the fun begins. Ariadne and her fellow singers must perform their serious opera, now including the saucy comedy troupe's antics. This opera-within-an-opera tickles your funny bone one minute and tugs at your heartstrings the next. Richard Strauss' look at art, fidelity and love is at once divinely comic and achingly tender, enchanting audiences from the beginning to the last note.

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Soprano Amber Wagner makes her company debut as the prima donna, Ariadne, and acclaimed bass-baritone Dale Travis returns as The Music Master. Lyric tenor Brian Jagde, making his role debut as the god Bacchus, was recently praised with “... an ample voice, natural acting style and likable stage presence ...” by *Chicago Classical Review*. Polish mezzo-soprano Hanna Hipp, described as a singer who “lights up the stage” by *Opera Britannia*, makes her American debut as The Composer. Music Director Michael Christie returns for his fourth season to conduct the Minnesota Opera Orchestra in *Ariadne auf Naxos*; last performed by the company in 1987.

THE MAGIC FLUTE by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

November 14, 15, 17, 19, 21 and 22, 2015

Sung in German with English translations projected above the stage.

A production of the Komische Oper Berlin; presented in coproduction with LA Opera.

Mozart's timeless comedy sprouts wings and flies in this boundary-busting production by Komische Oper Berlin and the British theater group 1927. Fantastical, highly stylized and synchronized animation sets a surreal stage upon which a quirky cast of characters explore love, truth and the pursuit of enlightenment. Minnesota Opera remounts the show that thrilled audiences of all ages and still has the critics talking.

Mozart's masterpiece stars soprano Christie Conover as Pamina, singing opposite tenor Julien Behr as Tamino. Baritone Andrew Wilkowske returns as the humorous birdcatcher Papageno, tenor John Robert Lindsey as Monostatos, and bass Benjamin Sieverding as the High Priest of the Sun, Sarastro. Tobias Ribitzki directs, and Music Director Michael Christie conducts this encore presentation of the best-attended show in the company's history. The infamous role of the Queen of the Night will be performed by soprano Jeni Houser.

In North America, only Minnesota Opera and LA Opera were able to secure rights to this unique production. Due to time-sensitive licensing agreements, this is our last opportunity to share *The Magic Flute* with Minnesota audiences. Thanks to a generous Minnesota State Arts Board grant, we will also present this amazing production in Duluth, bringing it to audiences in greater Minnesota.

RUSALKA by Antonín Dvořák

January 23, 28, 30 and 31, 2016

Sung in Czech with English translations projected above the stage.

Rusalka, a beautiful water nymph, falls in love with a prince, sacrificing her voice in return for entry into his human world. But betrayal condemns her to eternal solitude. Dvořák juxtaposes the mortal and the mythical with beautiful folk melodies and luminous arias, including Rusalka's heartbreaking “Song to the Moon.”

Soprano Kelly Kaduce “... sings with bell-like purity and silvery sweetness ...” according to *Opera News*. Kaduce returns to the stage in a reprisal of Minnesota Opera's critically acclaimed 2008 production. Mezzo-soprano Marianne Cornetti, who stole the show as the witch in *Hansel and Gretel*, plays the role of Ježibaba. Bass Ben Wager returns to the Minnesota Opera stage as the water goblin Vodník and Academy Award-winner Eric Simonson directs.

TOSCA by Giacomo Puccini

March 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24 and 26, 2016

Sung in Italian with English translations projected above the stage.

A fiery prima donna, an idealistic artist and a manipulative chief of police find themselves entangled in a web of drama in this spellbinding classic. Tosca's allegiance to her lover, Cavaradossi, is put to the ultimate test by the obsessive Scarpia who will stop at nothing to possess her. This magnificent tale of deceit, love and honor brims with sumptuous music and unforgettable arias.

Soprano Csilla Boross makes her company debut as Floria Tosca. Tenor Rafael Davila stars as the painter Mario Cavaradossi and Stephen Powell performs the role of the Chief of Police, Baron Scarpia. Music Director Michael Christie conducts the Minnesota Opera Orchestra in *Tosca*; last performed by the company in 2006.

THE SHINING (a world premiere)

Music by Paul Moravec

Libretto by Mark Campbell

Based on the novel by Stephen King

May 7, 12, 14 and 15, 2016

Sung in English with English captions projected above the stage.

A New Works Initiative Production

Stephen King's best-selling novel comes to life in this suspenseful new opera by Pulitzer Prize winning composer Paul Moravec. As the Torrance family settles in at the infamous Overlook Hotel, Jack comes face to face with his own demons – real and imagined. Will he be able to protect his wife and son from the evil forces within the hotel? This dramatic thriller will keep you on the edge of your seat with a dynamic musical score befitting King's page-turner.

Pulitzer Prize-winning composer, Paul Moravec, makes his company debut with this new work teaming up with celebrated librettist Mark Campbell and stage director Eric Simonson. Music Director Michael Christie recognized as “... a top-notch conductor of new works ...” by the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, leads the Minnesota Opera Orchestra.

Baritone Brian Mulligan, who delivered a riveting performance in *Hamlet*, returns to Minnesota Opera to create the iconic role of Jack Torrance. A commanding performer on stage, *The Chicago Tribune* touts his “... burnished, pliant sound and gripping, expressive penetration ...” Soprano Kelly Kaduce plays his wife, Wendy Torrance.

MAINSTAGE SEASON INFORMATION

All productions will be staged at Ordway Music Theater, 345 Washington Street, St. Paul, Minnesota. Sunday matinee performances begin at 2:00 p.m. All other performances begin at 7:30 p.m., with the exception of September 26, 2015 which begins at 8:00 p.m.

Discounted season ticket packages may be ordered by calling 612-333-6669, Monday – Friday, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. or online at mnopera.org. Full season subscription packages range in price from \$110 - \$815 with three-opera packages starting as low as \$75. Single tickets for individual shows range from \$25 - \$200 and go on sale to the general public in July 2015.

An [online press room](#) includes a full news release, marketing artwork and photography. Check back for updated resources and information for [Ariadne auf Naxos](#), [The Magic Flute](#), [Rusalka](#), [Tosca](#) and [The Shining](#).

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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.