



SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Jennifer Scott, 843.720.1137
jscott@spoletousa.org

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Spoleto Festival USA Announces 2014 Opera Casts

Festival to present new productions of Janáček's *Kát'a Kabanová*, John Adams's *El Niño*, and the US premiere of Michael Nyman's *Facing Goya*

APRIL 21, 2014 (CHARLESTON, SC)—Spoleto Festival USA General Director Nigel Redden today announced the casts for the three new opera productions that will be presented as part of the 38th annual Festival being held May 23 through June 8 in Charleston, South Carolina. American soprano **Betsy Horne** will make her Festival and US professional debut in the title role of Janáček's *Kát'a Kabanová*. Horne made her role debut as the ill-fated Kát'a in 2012 for the Landestheater Coburg in Bavaria where she is engaged as a resident singer. These performances garnered Horne the prestigious Bayerischer Kunstförderpreis, a prize presented by the Bavarian government.

"I am really excited that my US debut is at the Spoleto Festival USA and that it is with Kát'a as it was a very important role to me in 2012. I began my career in Europe and after debuting as the Marschallin (*Der Rosenkavalier*) at Stadttheater Klagenfurt and as Elsa (*Lohengrin*) at my home stage at the Landestheater Coburg, making my American debut is another significant milestone this season and I am thrilled it is with such a challenging and rewarding role and cannot wait to work with Garry Hynes and Anne Manson to tell Kát'a's story."

American mezzo-soprano **Jennifer Roderer** makes her Festival debut as Kát'a's venomous mother-in-law, Kabanicha, one of opera's most cold-hearted villains. Festival regulars **Jane**

Shaulis, Dennis Petersen, and Jan Opalach, and Festival newcomers **Megan Marino, Alex Richardson, and Rolando Sanz** complete the cast.

Kát'a Kabanová will also see the operatic debut of Tony Award-winning Druid theater director **Garry Hynes** (*The Cripple of Inishmaan*, 2011 Spoleto Festival USA). Although based on a play—Ostrovsky's *The Storm*—Hynes says Janáček's score provides rich dramatic potential for telling Kát'a's story: "It is extraordinary how Janáček managed to compress the story and fuse the music into it with such intensity and power. Kát'a is front and center of the opera in a way that she is not in (Ostrovsky's) play. We're inside her head rather than judging her from the broad perspective of society."

Kát'a Kabanová will be conducted by **Anne Manson**, who conducted the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra in 2012.

John Adams's *El Niño* has been described as retelling of the nativity story with an unprecedented spotlight on the voices of women. Mezzo-soprano **Erica Brookhyser**, principal mezzo in the permanent company at Staatstheatre Darmstadt in Germany, and soprano **Caitlin Lynch**, who recently made her Metropolitan Opera debut as Cynthia in the American premiere of Nico Muhly's *Two Boys*, will sing these central roles for the first time at the Festival. Lynch performed the poignant role of Mrs. Gobineau in *The Medium* at the Spoleto Festival USA in 2011. This will be Brookhyser's Festival debut.

Countertenors **Daniel Bubeck, Brian Cummings, and Steven Rickards** performed their *El Niño* roles at the world premiere in Paris in 2000, the US premiere in San Francisco in 2001, and at a 2009 Carnegie Hall performance. Baritone **Mark Walters** completes the cast. All four will make their Festival debut with *El Niño*.

Since the world premiere of Peter Sellars's production in Paris in 2000, *El Niño* has mostly been performed as a concert presentation or with minimal staging. English director **John La Bouchardière** will make his Spoleto Festival USA debut with a full-scale staging. With a libretto pulled from a variety of sources, *El Niño* does not follow a linear narrative; instead, singers often play several roles and characters are portrayed by different voices, frequently in Spanish. La Bouchardière has employed a striking visual device—to be revealed at the premiere on May 23—that draws on historic imagery to assist the 21st-century storytelling.

Joe Miller will conduct *El Niño*, christening his new role as the Festival's director for choral activities. Miller fell in love with the work when he was invited to prepare the choral forces for the performance at Carnegie Hall in 2009, conducted by the composer.

The US premiere of Michael Nyman's *Facing Goya* will be the third Festival appearance for soprano **Anne-Carolyn Bird** who performed in Philip Glass's *Kepler* in 2012 and as Camille in Charpentier's *Louise* in 2009. She will sing the role of Soprano #1 with **Aundi Marie Moore** making her Festival debut as Soprano #2.

Suzanna Guzmán, who will sing the contralto role of Art Banker, has a special affinity with both Goya and Spoleto Festival USA: she first gained international attention in 1991 at the Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy for her critically acclaimed portrayal of the Duchess of Alba in the European premiere of Gian Carlo Menotti's *Goya*, the Festival founder's own compositional take on the Spanish painter. Tenor **Thomas Michael Allen** and baritone **Museop Kim** complete the cast.

Facing Goya is a co-production with the Singapore International Festival of the Arts. Director **Ong Keng Sen's** previous Spoleto Festival USA productions were the theatrical production *Geisha* in 2006 and the 2000 opera *The Silver River* composed by Bright Sheng. The Festival's Resident Conductor and Director of Orchestral Activities **John Kennedy** will lead the musicians. *Facing Goya*, which mixes sci-fi and art history with a little conspiracy theory, was premiered in Spain in 2000. The Festival will present an updated libretto by Victoria Hardie that incorporates recent advances in DNA technology, significant to the plot, which is centered in eugenics and cloning.

Chorus and supernumerary roles in all three operas will be performed by members of the Westminster Choir under the leadership of Joe Miller. The Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra is comprised of the best young musicians from around the country selected by audition by John Kennedy and performs all of the operas in addition to symphonic concerts and new music recitals during the Festival.

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA OPERA CASTING 2014

Kát'a Kabanová

Performances: May 24, 29, 31, June 2, and 6 at the College of Charleston Sottile Theatre, 44 George Street

KÁT'A: Betsy Horne

VARVARA: Megan Marino

DIKOl: Jan Opalach

TICHON: Dennis Petersen

VANYA: Alex Richardson

KABANICHA: Jennifer Roderer

BORIS: Rolando Sanz

FEKLUSHA: Jane Shaulis

Betsy Horne made her acclaimed role debut as Kát'a in 2012 for the Landestheater Coburg, Bavaria where she is engaged as a resident singer. The same year she was awarded the prestigious Bayerischer Kunstförderpreis, a prize for promising young artists working in Bavaria. Originally from Imperial Valley in California, Ms. Wolfe relocated to Europe to study at the Hochschule in Mainz. She made her soprano debut at the end of a four-year engagement at Staatstheater Wiesbaden in 2009 as Agathe in *Der Freischütz*.

American/Italian mezzo-soprano **Megan Marino** has been hailed by the *Washington Times* for her "considerable range and confidence," Ms. Marino made her Metropolitan Opera debut this season as 'a Voice of an Unborn Child' in Strauss's *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. She also performed in the Met's 2013-14 productions of *Rusalka*, *Werther*, and *Rigoletto*.

American bass-baritone **Jan Opalach** combines serious musicianship with excellent acting skills and has performed over 50 roles during his distinguished career during which he was a principal artist of the New York City Opera for 30 years. He is a member of the voice faculty of the Eastman School of Music.

American tenor **Dennis Petersen** has spent more than three decades on opera stages throughout the world with regular performances at the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, New York City Opera, and with Seattle Opera in their *Ring* Cycle, most recently singing Mime in 2013.

American tenor **Alex Richardson's** recent roles have included Romeo in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* with St. Petersburg Opera; Cavaradossi in *Tosca* with Winter Opera Saint Louis; the Steuermann in Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer* at the Princeton Festival; Fenton in Otto Nicolai's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* with Boston Midsummer Opera; and Tom Buchanan in John Harbison's *The Great Gatsby* with Emmanuel Music, a role he reprised at the Tanglewood festival.

Since her 1999 debut at New York City Opera, **Jennifer Roderer** has performed a diverse array of roles for that company, including the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel* which became a signature role that she has performed with Utah Opera, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Phoenix Symphony, Tulsa Opera and Opera Roanoke, among others.

Rolando Sanz has been praised by *Opera News* for his "warm, strong, highly promising tenor." Debuts in his 2013-2014 season included the Duca di Mantua in *Rigoletto* with Seattle Opera, Arminio in *I masnadieri* with Washington Concert Opera, and Alfredo in *La traviata* with Florentine Opera and the Pacific Symphony.

Jane Shaulis has been a staple of the Metropolitan Opera's roster for 23 years appearing in 551 performances. Prior to joining the Met she performed with New York City Opera for 15 years, appearing in over 60 roles. She has also sung with the major opera companies in this country, including, San Francisco, Chicago, San Diego and has performed with many major orchestras, including Chicago, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh.

El Niño

Performances: May 23, 26, and 30 at the Memminger Auditorium, 56 Beaufain Street

MEZZO: Erica Brookhyser

SOPRANO: Caitlin Lynch

COUNTERTENOR: Daniel Bubeck

COUNTERTENOR: Brian Cummings

COUNTERTENOR: Steven Rickards

BARITONE: Mark Walters

The 2013-14 season was **Erica Brookhyser's** third as principal mezzo in the permanent company at Staatstheatre Darmstadt in Germany, a position she won following the end of her

tenure in LA Opera's Domingo-Thornton young artist program. In 2012 she won the role of Carmen as part of the German reality television show produced by the ARTE-TV channel called *Who Will Become Carmen?* Her performances in this role took place at the newly-established Berlin Seefestspiele in August 2012.

Caitlin Lynch recently made her Metropolitan Opera debut in the American premiere of Nico Muhly's *Two Boys* in the role of Cynthia. She previously created the role of Eliza in Muhly's chamber opera, *Dark Sisters* which premiered at the Gotham Chamber Opera in New York with subsequent performances at the Opera Company of Philadelphia. This past May she sang the world premiere of Jake Heggie's new song cycle, *Another Sunrise*. She has performed her signature role of Countess Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro* with the Glimmerglass Opera, Lyric Opera Baltimore, Michigan Opera and Opera Lyra Ottawa.

Ms. Brookhyser and Ms. Lynch will be joined by countertenors **Daniel Bubeck**, **Brian Cummings**, and **Steven Rickards**, who performed these roles in the world premiere of *El Niño* in Paris in 2000, the US premiere in San Francisco in 2001, and at Carnegie Hall in 2009. Baritone **Mark Walters** completes the cast.

Facing Goya (US Premiere)

Performances: May 25, 27, 31, June 4, and 7 at the Dock Street Theatre, 135 Church Street

SOPRANO #1: Anne-Carolyn Bird

SOPRANO #2: Aundi Marie Moore

CONTRALTO (ART BANKER): Suzanna Guzmán

TENOR: Thomas Michael Allen

BARITONE: Museop Kim

Anne Carolyn-Bird most recently performed at the Spoleto Festival USA in 2012 in Philip Glass's *Kepler* and previously sang at the festival in the role of Camille in *Louise* in 2009. She has been widely lauded for her signature role of Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* that she has performed for Virginia Opera, Opera Carolina, Nashville Opera, Opera Columbus, and Opera Grand Rapids.

Career highlights for **Aundi Marie Moore** to date have included her international debut as Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* with L'Opéra de Monte Carlo, Nedda in *Pagliacci* with Sarasota

Opera, Serena in *Porgy and Bess* with Atlanta Opera and Virginia Opera, the role of Young African American Soprano in the world premiere of Ricky Ian Gordon's *Rappahannock County* with Virginia Opera, and Odessa Clay in the world premiere of *Approaching Ali* with Washington National Opera.

Suzanna Guzmán is an Associate Artist of the Los Angeles Music Center Opera and performs as a principal artist with many of the world's finest companies including the Metropolitan Opera, Kennedy Center Opera, Washington Opera, Seattle Opera, the Grand Théâtre in Geneva, and at the Edinburgh Festival. She is the host of KCET's *Open Call* television program.

American tenor **Thomas Michael Allen** has established a reputation for his exceptional vocalism and his vivid portrayals of a wide range of lyric tenor roles. His repertoire includes operas by Monteverdi and haute contre roles of the French baroque, as well as leading roles in the operas of Mozart and recent works by composers such as Hans Werner Henze and Philip Glass.

Korean baritone **Museop Kim** recently concluded his second year of LA Opera's Domingo-Thornton Young Artist Program where he sang Mercutio in *Romeo et Juliette* and Schaunard in *La Bohème* and understudied Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*.

Related Spoleto Festival USA Events:

Conversations with... Director Garry Hynes

Saturday, May 24, 3:30pm

Charleston Library Society, 164 King Street

Conversations with... Director Ong Keng Sen & conductor John Kennedy

Sunday, May 25, 3:30pm

Charleston Library Society, 164 King Street

An Evening with Michael Nyman

Monday, May 26, 8:00pm

College of Charleston Sottile Theatre, 44 George Street

Intermezzi: Vocal Splendor

Vocal recital of art songs and arias by members of the opera casts.

Tuesday, June 3, 5:00pm

Grace Episcopal Church, 98 Wentworth Street

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Tickets

Tickets to all Spoleto Festival USA opera performances are available online at spoletousa.org, by phone at 843.579.3100, in person at the Charleston Visitor Center, 375 Meeting Street, or through the Festival's mobile app.

Spoleto Festival USA | May 23–June 8, 2014

Considered America's premier international performing arts festival, Spoleto Festival USA fills Charleston, SC's historic theaters, churches and outdoor spaces with over 150 performances by world-renowned artists and emerging performers in opera; theater; dance; and chamber, symphonic, choral, bluegrass, and jazz music. For more information on Spoleto Festival USA, visit spoletousa.org or call 843.579.3100.