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**Opera Boston Announces 2008-2009 Season**

**Three groundbreaking directors: Helfrich, Roht, Pelzig**  
**Returning principal cast members include Salters, Snyder, Aylmer, Buck, Maddalena**

(BOSTON - Feb. 27, 2008) Opera Boston announces its 2008-2009 Season, to be presented at the Cutler Majestic Theatre: Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz*, widely recognized as the first important German Romantic opera, last performed in Boston in 1984; the New England premiere of Dmitri Shostakovich's absurdist satire *The Nose*; and Bedřich Smetana's delightful comedy *The Bartered Bride*, last performed in Boston in 1973. The season will be conducted by Opera Boston Music Director **Gil Rose**; directors include **Ken Roht** and **Daniel Pelzig** in their company debuts, and **Sam Helfrich's** third project for the company.

According to General Director **Carole Charnow**, "the operas are very different from each other, but what ties the season together is a focus on the productions, as envisioned by these three directors. A key strength of Opera Boston is that our all-new productions give our directors a unique opportunity to design and create a world from scratch. Sam, Ken, and Danny each have a style that is very well suited to the operas they will be directing; they will lead productions that are at once very creative and surprising but also deeply rooted in and informed by the musical text."

Opera Boston will maintain its current three-performance schedule of three operas, for a total of nine performances this season. Performances will take place Friday evenings at 7:30 p.m., Sunday afternoons at 3 p.m., and Tuesday evenings at 7:30 p.m..

Opera Boston is now taking subscription renewals; new subscription brochures will be available later this spring. Patrons may request a brochure by calling (617) 451-3388, or by e-mailing: info@operaboston.org. Individual tickets go on sale after Labor Day through Telecharge and the Cutler Majestic Theatre box office.

Opera Boston is Boston's most innovative opera company. Founded in 1980, the company has presented more than 70 operas, including 34 regional and two world premieres. In addition to its critically acclaimed, award-winning mainstage productions, Opera Boston offers a range of programs, including an occasional chamber opera festival, a popular informal cabaret series and an extensive educational program in Boston's schools.

**2008 / 2009 Season**

***Der Freischütz***

("The Sharpshooter" or "The Marksman")

Carl Maria von Weber; 1821

Libretto by Friedrich Kind

October 17, 19, and 21, 2008

Directed by Sam Helfrich

Conducted by Gil Rose

Daniel Snyder as Max  
Emily Pulley as Agathe  
Andrew Funk as Kaspar  
Heather Buck as Ännchen

Sung in German with English supertitles

*Der Freischütz* is considered the first German Romantic opera. With its basis in folk legend, as well as the heightened emotions and supernatural elements of the plot, it was a strong influence on Richard Wagner.

Tenor **Daniel Snyder** makes his second Opera Boston appearance (Jimmy McIntyre, *Mahagonny*, 2007) as Max, a young ranger who enters a Faustian bargain (in the famous Wolf's Glen scene) with Samiel, the Black Marksman, to cast unerring bullets that will allow him to win a shooting contest and win the hand of Agathe (**Emily Pulley**, debut). Ms. Pulley is a regular at the Metropolitan Opera in such roles as Marguerite in *Faust*, Nedda in *I Pagliacci*, Blanche in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Gretel in *Hänsel und Gretel*, Anne Trulove in *The Rake's Progress*, and Valencienne in *The Merry Widow*. She made her debut at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden as Mimi in *La Bohème*.

Director **Sam Helfrich** returns to direct. Mr. Helfrich was widely acclaimed for his staging of Kurt Weill's *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* in 2007, and for his present-day re-imagining of Handel's *Semele* in February 2008.

### ***The Nose***

(Nos)

Dmitri Shostakovich; 1930

Libretto by the composer after the short story by Nikolai Gogol

February 27; March 1 and 3, 2009

New England Premiere

Directed by Ken Roht

Conducted by Gil Rose

Stephen Salters as Kovalyov

Sung in Russian with English supertitles

*The Nose* is an absurdist satirical opera about a petty bureaucrat who faces an identity crisis when his nose leaves his face and takes on a life of its own, eventually rising to a higher station than its owner and refusing to return. The composition was influenced by Berg's *Wozzeck*, and is a blend of such unlikely genres as folk music, atonality, and popular song.

Baritone **Stephen Salters** returns as Kovalyov, the functionary whose nose goes astray. Mr. Salters has appeared in a number of Opera Boston productions: as the title character of *Toussaint Before the Spirits*, as Hercules in *Alceste*, and as Bank-Account Bill in *Mahagonny*.

*The Nose* will be directed by Los Angeles-based theatre and opera director Ken Roht. Mr. Roht is the Producing Artistic Director of Orphean Circus, an ensemble of artists, designers and composers, who present innovative multi-media programs from the whimsical to the avant-garde. Mr. Roht's most recent project was to choreograph the world premiere of a new arrangement of Ricky Ian Gordon's *Orpheus and Euridice* for Long Beach Opera - in a million-gallon swimming facility built for the 1968 Olympic Trials.

### ***The Bartered Bride***

Bedřich Smetana; 1870

Libretto by Karel Sabina  
May 1, 3, and 5, 2009

Directed and Choreographed by Daniel Pelzig  
Conducted by Gil Rose

Jennifer Aylmer as Marenka  
James Maddalena as Kecal

Scenic Design by Michael Raiford

Sung in English with projected supertitles

Opera Boston's season concludes with Bedřich Smetana's comic opera *The Bartered Bride*, a village comedy about a young couple determined to undermine the town marriage-broker's attempts to split them up by arranging marriages to others. The score has a number of dances that are influenced by Czech folk melodies; it is a favorite in the Czech repertory.

Soprano **Jennifer Aylmer** returns to Opera Boston as Marenka, her first appearance with the company since 2004's *La vie Parisienne*. She has made a number of appearances at the Metropolitan Opera, among them Papagena in an internationally-simulcast performance of *The Magic Flute*. Baritone **James Maddalena** appears as Kecal, the marriage-broker, in his first appearance with the company since *The Crucible* in 2005.

Director **Daniel Pelzig** makes his Opera Boston debut with *The Bartered Bride*; he has extensive dance experience, including four years as the resident choreographer at the Boston Ballet, at Santa Fe Opera, and as the choreographer for Mary Zimmerman's *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Metropolitan Opera. His opera directing credits include Kálmán's *Countess Maritza* at the Santa Fe Opera and *Turandot* at Fort Worth Opera.

Scenic designer **Michael Raiford** makes his Opera Boston debut with *The Bartered Bride*. He is a member of the Theatre and Dance faculty at the University of Texas at Austin and the Resident Scenic Designer at Austin's Zachary Scott Theatre. Recent credits include *Porgy and Bess* at Zachary Scott Theatre and *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* at the Actors Theatre of Louisville.

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