

PLÁCIDO DOMINGO ELI AND EDYTHE BROAD GENERAL DIRECTOR
JAMES CONLON RICHARD SEEVER MUSIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Plácido Domingo Announces LA Opera's 2010/11 Season

Il Postino (Daniel Catán; World Premiere)
Le Nozze di Figaro (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart)
Lohengrin (Richard Wagner)
Rigoletto (Giuseppe Verdi)
Il Turco in Italia (Gioacchino Rossini)
The Turn of the Screw (Benjamin Britten)

**James Conlon to conduct four productions;
Plácido Domingo, Grant Gershon and Israel Gursky will also conduct**

**Stars of the season include Sir Thomas Allen, William Burden,
Charles Castronovo, Vladimir Chernov, Sarah Coburn, Plácido Domingo,
George Gagnidze, Cristina Gallardo-Domâs, Paolo Gavanelli,
Ben Heppner, Soile Isokoski, Nino Machaidze, Ann Murray,
Daniel Okulitch, Marlis Petersen, Patricia Racette, Martina Serafin,
Kristinn Sigmundsson, Bo Skovhus and Dolora Zajick**

**Season highlights also include all-star 25th Anniversary Gala
and recitals by René Pape, Dmitri Hvorostovsky and Jonas Kaufmann**

(LOS ANGELES, CA) January 27, 2010 — **Plácido Domingo**, LA Opera's Eli and Edythe Broad General Director, announced the details of the Company's 2010/11 season today. The Company's 25th Anniversary Season includes two operas never before produced by LA Opera including one world premiere, two of the Company's most acclaimed productions in revival, and two tragic masterpieces returning in productions new to Los Angeles. Four productions will be conducted by **James Conlon**, the Company's Richard Seaver Music Director. The season will open with the world premiere of Daniel Catán's *Il Postino*, based on the acclaimed 1994 film and starring Mr. Domingo as the poet Pablo Neruda. Other season highlights include the Company premiere of Gioacchino Rossini's *Il Turco in Italia* as well as revivals of highly acclaimed productions of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Richard Wagner's *Lohengrin*. Giuseppe Verdi's *Rigoletto* and Benjamin Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* will return to the Company's repertoire in productions new to Los Angeles. The season will also feature recitals by three of the most important artists of our time: bass René Pape, baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky and tenor Jonas Kaufmann.

The 2010/11 season will open on September 23, 2010, and continue through March 30, 2011. During this time, LA Opera will present six operas, one gala concert and three recitals for a total of 42 performances. Productions include the highly anticipated season-opening world premiere of Daniel Catán's *Il Postino (The Postman)* starring tenor **Plácido Domingo** as Pablo Neruda and tenor **Charles Castronovo** in the title role; a revival of Mozart's beloved *Le Nozze di Figaro*, with a cast that includes baritone **Daniel Okulitch**, sopranos **Marlis Petersen** and **Martina Serafin** and baritone **Bo Skovhus**; a revival of Wagner's *Lohengrin* featuring tenor **Ben Heppner** in the title role, soprano **Soile Isokoski** as Elsa and mezzo-soprano **Dolora Zajick** in her role debut as Ortrud; Verdi's *Rigoletto* starring baritone **George Gagnidze**, soprano **Sarah Coburn** and tenor **Gianluca Terranova**; the Company premiere of Rossini's *Il Turco in Italia* starring soprano **Nino Machaidze**, who made her triumphant U.S. debut in 2009 in LA Opera's *L'Elisir d'Amore*, as well as baritones **Paolo Gavanelli** and **Sir Thomas Allen**; and Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* starring soprano **Patricia Racette**, **William Burden** and **Ann Murray**. LA Opera's Richard Seaver Music Director, **James Conlon**, will conduct four of the season's productions, with **Grant Gershon**, the Company's Associate Conductor and Chorus Master, conducting *Il Postino* and **Plácido Domingo** and **Israel Gursky** conducting *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Throughout the season, members of LA Opera's Domingo-Thornton Young Artist Program will fill important featured roles and understudy leading roles.

Mr. Domingo also announced that Classical KUSC FM 91.5 will once again broadcast and stream LA Opera on Air, a series of radio broadcasts from the Company's 2009/10 season recorded live in performance, including the current season's complete *Ring* cycle. The radio broadcasts, which will be distributed nationally by the WFMT Radio Network and internationally via the European Broadcast Union, are scheduled to begin airing and streaming at www.kusc.org on May 22, 2010, at 10am, after the final Metropolitan Opera broadcast of the spring. Once again, the series will be hosted by KUSC's Duff Murphy. This endeavor continues to be made possible by a generous major grant from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, spearheaded by the efforts of Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky.

"As LA Opera reaches its 25th anniversary year, this important milestone gives us the opportunity to look forward as well as back, by presenting beloved favorites alongside exciting works that have not previously been produced by LA Opera," said Plácido Domingo. "It is very important to me that we continue to solidify the Company's reputation for presenting imaginative productions and challenging works, so I am especially excited to participate in the world premiere of an opera by one of today's most important composers. Even during this difficult economic era, we have assembled a diverse and satisfying season that lives up to LA Opera's artistic standards of excellence, featuring the debuts of important artists, the returns of world-class singers who have already proven themselves on our stage, and some of the most exciting operas in the repertoire. I am also deeply appreciative of our generous family of supporters, especially our dynamic Board of Directors, under the extraordinary leadership of Chairman and CEO Marc I. Stern and President Carol F. Henry. I am also grateful to our Chief Operating Officer Stephen Rountree and to the Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles County for their support."

"I am looking forward to a season that upholds LA Opera's high measure of artistic distinction and ambition," said James Conlon. "The great masterworks of Italian and German opera are essential elements in every opera company's season. It is critical also to balance the standard repertoire with new works and lesser known operas. I am particularly pleased to revive an early LA Opera tradition of performing works by Benjamin Britten, whom I consider one of the greatest composers of the twentieth century and in the entire history of English opera. Beginning with *The Turn of the Screw*, LA Opera will embark on a four-year initiative to celebrate the coming centenary of the composer's birth. With a world premiere, three staples of every opera season—Mozart, Verdi and Wagner—and a lesser known Rossini opera, I think that we have succeeded in creating a season that will have broad appeal to all audiences, especially those who will be coming to the opera for the first time."

"In just a quarter-century of existence, LA Opera has become a leader among the world's opera companies," said Marc I. Stern. "Thanks to the inspired leadership of Plácido Domingo and James Conlon, I have every expectation that the next 25 years to come will see the Company climbing even higher on the international ladder of operatic success. Our devoted audiences, our generous supporters and our first-rate Board of Directors deserve nothing less, so all of us at LA Opera are determined to make that happen."

"This is an exceptionally challenging time for the performing arts," said Stephen D. Rountree. "It is essential for us to maintain the highest artistic standards while remaining fiscally prudent. The coming season may be shorter than those of

recent years, but it is strictly a reduction in quantity—not quality. This also makes the full season more affordable for our subscribers. That we have been able to continue operating at the level our audiences expect of us is due to the inspirational support of our many donors, our employees—who have been living with reduced wages—and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.”

LA Opera’s 2010/11 season will open on Thursday, September 23, 2010, with the world premiere of Mexican composer Daniel Catán’s *Il Postino* (*The Postman*). Based on the internationally popular 1994 Italian film of the same name and on the 1985 novel *Ardiente Paciencia* by Antonio Skármeta, *Il Postino* stars tenor **Plácido Domingo** as the exiled Chilean poet Pablo Neruda. Tenor **Charles Castronovo** sings the title role of Mario Ruoppolo, a shy postman who discovers poetry and, with it, the courage to pursue his dreams. Mr. Castronovo began his career as a chorister and then resident artist with LA Opera, where he has been seen in more than 100 performances of numerous roles, and he now regularly appears in the world’s most important opera houses. The superb cast also includes soprano **Amanda Squitieri** as Beatrice Russo, the beautiful cafe waitress who inspires Mario’s love, Chilean soprano **Cristina Gallardo-Domâs** as Matilde Neruda, Russian baritone **Vladimir Chernov** as Giorgio, the postmaster, and Spanish mezzo-soprano **Nancy Fabiola-Herrera** as Donna Rosa, Beatrice’s aunt. Catán’s rich, melodic score, commissioned by LA Opera, will be brought to life in a beautiful production by director **Ron Daniels**, a renowned interpreter of opera, theater and film. The design team includes Tony Award-winning scenery and costume designer **Riccardo Hernandez**, lighting designer and MacArthur “Genius” Grant winner **Jennifer Tipton**, and video artist **Philip Bussmann**. Following his acclaimed house debut leading *La Traviata* in 2009, **Grant Gershon** will conduct. (Six performances: September 23 through October 16, 2010)

Plácido Domingo conducts Mozart’s *Le Nozze di Figaro*, which returns in a revival of the popular **Ian Judge** production previously presented in 2004 and 2006. Baritone **Daniel Okulitch** (*The Fly*) returns as Figaro, with the role of Susanna shared by sopranos **Marlis Petersen** (in her Company debut) and **Rebekah Camm**. Danish baritone **Bo Skovhus** and Austrian soprano **Martina Serafin** make their Company debuts as Count and Countess Almaviva, and mezzo-soprano **Renata Pokupić** makes her LA Opera debut as Cherubino. **Israel Gursky** will conduct on October 14 and 17. (Seven performances: September 26 through October 17, 2010)

James Conlon conducts a revival of *Lohengrin*, the seventh Wagner opera he will have conducted for LA Opera, featuring the Company debut of superstar Canadian heldentenor **Ben Heppner** in the title role. The production, created by director **Maximilian Schell** for LA Opera in 2001, features several other internationally acclaimed Wagnerian artists, including Finnish soprano **Soile Isokoski** in her Company debut as Elsa and Icelandic bass **Kristinn Sigmundsson** as King Heinrich. The sensational mezzo-soprano **Dolora Zajick** returns to make her role debut as the scheming Ortrud, with baritone **James Johnson** as Telramund. (Six performances: November 20 through December 12, 2010)

Verdi’s beloved masterwork *Rigoletto* returns to the repertoire, conducted by **James Conlon**. The title role will be performed by Georgian baritone **George Gagnidze** in his Company debut, with soprano **Sarah Coburn** as Gilda and Italian tenor **Gianluca Terranova** as the Duke of Mantua. The evocative perspectives and elaborate period costumes of the production, which originated at San Francisco Opera, were created by acclaimed opera and theater director **Mark Lamos**, scenery designer **Michael Yeargan** and costume designer **Constance Hoffman**, who took their inspiration from the Italian metaphysical painter Giorgio De Chirico. (Seven performances: November 27 through December 18, 2010)

One of Rossini’s lesser known comic masterpieces, *Il Turco in Italia* (*The Turk in Italy*), receives its Company premiere under the baton of **James Conlon**. Georgian soprano **Nino Machaidze**, who made a sensational U.S. debut in LA Opera’s 2009 production of *L’Elisir d’Amore*, returns as Fiorilla. The impressive cast also includes Italian baritone **Paolo Gavanelli** as Geronio, Russian tenor **Maxim Mironov** as Narciso, Italian bass-baritone **Simone Alberghini** as Selim, British baritone **Sir Thomas Allen** as Prosdocimo and mezzo-soprano **Kate Lindsey** as Zaida. Director **Christof Loy**’s riotous production has previously won high acclaim in Munich, Hamburg and Vienna. (Six performances: February 19 through March 13, 2011)

James Conlon conducts Benjamin Britten’s *The Turn of the Screw*, a work last presented by the Company in 1991. This production marks the launch of a new programming initiative to present Britten’s works as we approach the centennial of the composer’s 1913 birth. Planned future productions will include *Albert Herring* and *The Rape of Lucretia*, leading up to the presentation of a major—and rare—Britten work in the centenary. LA Opera has been regarded as a

major proponent of the operas of Britten since its early years under founding general director Peter Hemmings, having produced six of the composer's operas at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion as well as acclaimed family performances of *Noye's Fludde* at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, led by Mr. Conlon, in 2007 and 2009. The production will feature soprano **Patricia Racette** in her role debut as the Governess. The cast will also include tenor **William Burden** as Peter Quint, mezzo-soprano **Ann Murray** as Mrs. Grose and soprano **Tamara Wilson** as Miss Jessel. The technically elaborate production, which originated at the Glyndebourne Festival, is directed by **Jonathan Kent**. (Six performances: March 12 through 30, 2011)

In addition to the six mainstage productions, major highlights of the 2010/11 season include an all-star 25th Anniversary Gala on April 2, 2011. Details will be released in the spring. The season will also feature recitals by three of the greatest artists of our time. On January 15, 2011, German bass **René Pape** returns to LA Opera in recital, his first LA Opera appearance since his 2007 debut in the Verdi *Requiem*. Russian baritone **Dmitri Hvorostovsky**, who has previously appeared with LA Opera in a 2004 recital and a 2006 concert, will make his eagerly anticipated return with a recital on February 10, 2011. German tenor **Jonas Kaufmann** will make his first appearance with the Company with a recital on March 11, 2011.

LA Opera's education and community outreach programs continue to receive international acclaim and the 2010/11 season presents over 20 offerings. Highlights include In-School Operas performed by professionals and students together; special performances for elementary and secondary students at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion and on tour in venues throughout Southern California; "Opera Tales" family productions touring to numerous public libraries throughout the county, as well as the Library Project's popular opera talks; accredited Professional Development for Teachers; the Voices for Tolerance choral music program; and many other community education programs and partnerships. A complete listing of education and community programs will be available in the spring.

The complete 2010/11 season schedule is attached. Subscriptions for the 2010/11 season are available by phone and by mail and range in price from \$174 to \$1458. Subscribers receive up to 10% off of the price of single ticket prices. For further information, please visit LA Opera's website at **www.laopera.com** or call Audience Services at **(213) 972-8001**. All performances will take place at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Music Center, 135 North Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012. For disability access, call (213) 972-0777 or e-mail wehelpyou@laopera.com.

All programs, artists and dates are subject to change.

Artist headshots and production photographs are available on the Los Angeles Opera Press Gallery:

<http://www.laopera.com/press/photo.htm>

Rolex is the Official Timepiece of LA Opera
Silversea is the Official Cruise Line of LA Opera
Yamaha is the Official Piano of LA Opera

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2010/11 SEASON: CASTING AND CALENDAR

* denotes LA Opera debut artist
+ denotes Domingo-Thornton Young Artist Program alumnus
• denotes Operalia winner

IL POSTINO (THE POSTMAN) World Premiere

Music and libretto: Daniel Catán

Based on the 1994 film *Il Postino* directed by Michael Radford and the 1985 novel *Ardiente Paciencia* by Antonio Skármeta

Conductor: Grant Gershon

Director: Ron Daniels*

Scenery and Costume Designer: Riccardo Hernandez

Lighting Designer: Jennifer Tipton*

Projection Designer: Philip Bussman*

Chorus Master: Grant Gershon

Mario Ruoppolo: Charles Castronovo

Pablo Neruda: Plácido Domingo

Beatrice Russo: Amanda Squitieri

Matilde Neruda: Cristina Gallardo-Domâs

Giorgio: Vladimir Chernov

Donna Rosa: Nancy Fabiola-Herrera•

Di Cosimo / Antonio's Voice: José Adán Pérez+

Thug: Daniel Montenegro

Thug: Gregorio González

Thug: Daniel Armstrong+

Opening performance: Thursday, September 23, 2010 at 6:00pm

Evening performances: September 29, October 5, 16 at 7:30pm

Matinee performances: October 2, 9 at 2:00pm

The season opens with the world premiere of Daniel Catán's *Il Postino*, based on the Italian film that became a surprise hit with audiences around the world. In a tiny Italian fishing village, an unassuming young postman finds the inspiration to live out his dreams during his daily deliveries to his only customer, a famous poet. Overflowing with exquisite music and heartfelt emotion, *Il Postino* is an eagerly awaited addition to the contemporary operatic repertoire.

Commissioned by LA Opera

*Co-production with Theater an der Wien (Vienna), Théâtre du Châtelet (Paris) and Cincinnati Opera
Sung in Spanish with English Supertitles*

LE NOZZE DI FIGARO (THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO) Revival

Music: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto: Lorenzo Da Ponte

World premiere: May 1, 1786; Vienna, Austria (Burg Theater)

Previous LA Opera performances: 1990, 1994, 1997, 2001, 2004, 2006

Conductor: Plácido Domingo

Conductor: Israel Gursky (Oct. 14, 17)

Director: Ian Judge

Scenery Designer: Tim Goodchild

Costume Designer: Deirdre Clancy

Lighting Designer: Mark Doubleday

Original Choreographer: Sergio Trujillo

Choreographer: Chad Everett Allen*

Associate Conductor / Chorus Master: Grant Gershon

Figaro: Daniel Okulitch

Susanna: Marlis Petersen* (Sept. 26, 30; Oct. 3)

Susanna: Rebekah Camm (Oct. 6, 10, 14, 17)

Count Almaviva: Bo Skovhus*

Countess Almaviva: Martina Serafin*

Cherubino: Renata Pokupić*

Doctor Bartolo: Alessandro Guerzoni*

Antonio: Philip Cokorinos

Opening performance: Sunday, September 26, 2010 at 2:00pm

Evening performances: September 30, October 6, 14 at 7:30pm

Matinee performances: October 3, 10, 17 at 2:00pm

LA Opera revives its enchanting production of one of opera's greatest comic masterpieces. From the opening notes of the overture to the final curtain, *Le Nozze di Figaro* turns convention upside down when the wily Figaro outwits his master Count Almaviva, whose wandering eye has landed on Figaro's bride-to-be, Susanna. Plots are hatched, secrets are revealed, and virtue wins out in the end. *Le Nozze di Figaro* delights with its lovable characters, deeply felt emotions and the powerfully moving eloquence of its glorious music.

Sung in Italian with English Supertitles

LOHENGRIN Revival

Music and libretto: Richard Wagner

World premiere: August 28, 1850; Weimar, Germany (Court Opera)

Previous LA Opera performances: 2001

Conductor: James Conlon

Production: Maximilian Schell

Director: Lydia Steier*

Scenery and Costume Designer: Dirk Hofacker

Associate Conductor / Chorus Master: Grant Gershon

Lohengrin: Ben Heppner*

Elsa: Soile Isokoski*

King Heinrich I of Saxony: Kristinn Sigmundsson

Friedrich von Telramund: James Johnson

Ortrud: Dolora Zajick

Herald: Eike Wilm Schulte

Opening performance: Saturday, November 20, 2010 at 6:30pm

Evening performances: December 1, 4, 9 at 6:30pm

Matinee performances: November 28, December 12 at 2:00pm

An extraordinary cast brings this tale of royalty, honor, innocence and treachery to life. The most lyrical of all Wagnerian operas, *Lohengrin* sweeps the audience into a valorous age of knights in shining armor, wrongly accused maidens, the impossible quest for ideal love and the power of the Holy Grail.

Sung in German with English Supertitles

RIGOLETTO Production New to Los Angeles

Music: Giuseppe Verdi

Libretto: Francesco Maria Piave

World premiere: March 11, 1851; Venice, Italy (Teatro La Fenice)

Previous LA Opera performances: 1993, 2000

Conductor: James Conlon

Director: Mark Lamos*

Scenery Designer: Michael Yeagan

Costume Designer: Constance Hoffman

Associate Conductor / Chorus Master: Grant Gershon

Rigoletto: George Gagnidze*

Duke of Mantua: Gianluca Terranova*

Gilda: Sarah Coburn

Count Monterone: Daniel Sumegi

Sparafucile: Andrea Silvestrelli

Maddalena: Kendall Gladen

Opening performance: Saturday, November 27, 2010 at 7:30pm

Evening performances: December 2, 8, 11, 15 at 7:30pm

Matinee performance: December 5, 18 at 2:00pm

One of the world's most popular operas, *Rigoletto* is the unforgettable tale of a father's rage and a daughter's shame. Several of opera's best known arias, including Rigoletto's passionate denouncement "Cortigiani, vil razza dannata," Gilda's dreamy "Caro nome" and the Duke's instantly recognizable "La donna è mobile," illuminate this timeless tragedy of sacrifice, betrayal and revenge.

Production from San Francisco Opera

Sung in Italian with English Supertitles

RENÉ PAPE IN RECITAL

Saturday, January 15, 2011, at 7:30pm

Hailed by *Opera News* as "the world's most charismatic bass," René Pape returns to LA Opera for his first appearance since his 2007 Company debut in the Verdi *Requiem*. The Dresden-born artist has been the object of countless critical raves and constant audience enthusiasm in every major opera house in the world.

DMITRI HVOROSTOVSKY IN RECITAL

Thursday, February 10, 2011, at 7:30pm

One of the most celebrated artists of his generation, Russian baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky won the prestigious Cardiff Singer of the World Competition in 1989. Audiences have been bowled over by his cultivated voice, innate sense of musical line and natural legato in his appearances in the world's major opera houses and concert halls, and as a recitalist in demand in every corner of the globe.

IL TURCO IN ITALIA (THE TURK IN ITALY) **Company Premiere**

Music: Gioacchino Rossini

Libretto: Felice Romani

World premiere: August 14, 1814; Milan, Italy (Teatro alla Scala)

Conductor: James Conlon

Director: Christof Loy*

Scenery and Costume Designer: Herbert Muraier*

Lighting Designer: Rheinhard Traub*

Associate Conductor / Chorus Master: Grant Gershon

Fiorilla: Nino Machaidze

Don Geronio: Paolo Gavanelli*

Narciso: Maxim Mironov*

Selim: Simone Alberghini*

Prosdocimo, the Poet: Sir Thomas Allen

Zaida: Kate Lindsey*

Opening performance: Saturday, February 19, 2011 at 7:30 PM

Evening performances: March 2, 5, 10 at 7:30pm

Matinee performances: February 27, March 13 at 2:00pm

LA Opera presents the Company premiere of Rossini's zaniest comedy, which has been described as *The Barber of Seville* meets *Così fan tutte*. The sensational Nino Machaidze returns as Fiorilla, a woman who determines to rid herself of the two men in her life—an exasperated husband and a tedious admirer—in favor of a more exotic suitor.

Production from Hamburg Opera

Sung in Italian with English Supertitles

THE TURN OF THE SCREW **Production New to Los Angeles**

Music: Benjamin Britten

Libretto: Myfanwy Piper

World premiere: September 14, 1954; Venice, Italy (Teatro La Fenice)

Previous LA Opera performances: 1991

Conductor: James Conlon

Director: Jonathan Kent*

Scenery and Costume Designer: Paul Brown

Associate Conductor: Grant Gershon

Governess: Patricia Racette

Prologue/Peter Quint: William Burden*

Mrs. Grose: Ann Murray*

Miss Jessel: Tamara Wilson

Opening performance: Saturday, March 12, 2011 at 7:30 PM

Evening performances: March 17, 25, 30 at 7:30pm

Matinee performances: March 20, 27 at 2:00pm

Britten's mesmerizing score brings an unforgettable Henry James classic to the opera stage in a dramatically compelling production that captures the supernatural atmosphere of the work. The riveting Patricia Racette, one of the most celebrated sopranos of our time, makes her role debut as the Governess, determined to protect two children from the menacing spirits who hope to lure their innocent souls into darkness.

Production from Glyndebourne Festival Opera

Sung in English with English Supertitles

JONAS KAUFMANN IN RECITAL

Friday, March 11, 2011 at 7:30pm

Born in Munich, tenor Jonas Kaufmann has emerged as one of today's most important artists. His 2009 debut as Lohengrin at the Bavarian State Opera was hailed as revelatory by the international musical press. His engagements for the 2009/10 season include leading roles at Covent Garden, the Metropolitan Opera and La Scala, and in the summer of 2010, he will make his highly anticipated debut at the Bayreuth Festival.

25TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

Saturday, April 2, 2011

LA Opera has achieved an extraordinary level of international acclaim since its inaugural production of *Otello* in 1986. The Company will celebrate its 25th anniversary with a one-night-only gala, featuring Plácido Domingo, James Conlon and special guest artists, saluting the astonishing accomplishments of the nation's youngest major opera company.