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The Dallas Opera Closes 2021/2022 Season with Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers*

Production Led by Principal Guest Conductor Nicole Paiement

Performances April 2, 6, 8, and 10, 2022

Dallas – (3/29/2022) **The Dallas Opera** (TDO) closes out the 2021/2022 Season with Bizet's ***The Pearl Fishers***. The production, from San Diego Opera, opens at the Winspear Opera House on **Saturday, April 2,** at **7:30pm**, with subsequent performances on **Wednesday, April 6** (7:30pm), **Friday, April 8** (7:30pm), and **Sunday, April 10** (2pm).

"The company has not presented this important work in over 40 years, and we're thrilled to bring Zandra Rhodes' beautiful production to Dallas audiences," said **Ian Derrer**, Kern Wildenthal General Director and CEO. "While a mainstay in the repertoire, the piece does present its challenges which we are actively approaching through TDO Connections™, The Dallas Opera's commitment to explore various themes to tell opera in a respectful and authentic way. We are grateful to start these important conversations and invite you to join us."

René Barbera (Nadir) and **Morris Robinson** (Nourabad) return to the TDO stage, while **Alfredo Daza** (Zurga) and **Joyce El-Khoury** (Leïla) make their Dallas Opera debuts.

Martha R. and Preston A. Peak Principal Guest Conductor **Nicole Paiement** returns to the podium leading **The Dallas Opera Orchestra**, while **Shawna Lucey** and **James Smith** co-direct. The production features sets and costumes by award winning designer **Zandra Rhodes**, lighting design by **Lee Fiskness**, choreography by **Eboni Adams** (*TDO debut*), and wig and makeup design by **David Zimmerman**. Chorusmaster **Alexander Rom** prepared **The Dallas Opera Chorus**.

Join us in exploring the richness of opera as we work to do a better job of telling stories as authentically and respectfully as possible through **TDO Connections™**—our intentional process for human-centered, operatic storytelling.

This season, **TDO Connections™** explores representation and Orientalism in opera through ***Madame Butterfly*** and ***The Pearl Fishers*** in partnership with Asian Opera Alliance. While Asian Opera Alliance was not part of the original process in choosing these productions for the stage, they have been engaged to consult on these pieces, working with the Company's stage directors and staff. These conversations with the Asian Opera Alliance are pivotal in improving the Company's approach to Orientalist operas as we work to ensure respectful storytelling for all future productions. The public-facing component began in February with a **pre-recorded panel discussion** with **Dallas Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation**, the **Asian Opera Alliance**, and the **Black Opera Alliance**, available now on The Dallas Opera website.

The season concludes with a panel discussion with ***The Pearl Fishers*** stage directors, **Shawna Lucey** and **James Smith**, ***Madame Butterfly*** stage director, **Laurie Feldman**, ***The Pearl Fishers*** choreographer, **Eboni Adams**, **Asian Opera Alliance**, and **The Dallas Opera** team.

Through this work and learning, Dallas Opera has altered the upcoming production of *The Pearl Fishers* by:

- Eliminating the use of head dresses, bindis, non-essential stylized jewelry, cages, and spears.
- Utilizing natural makeup and hair whenever possible.
- Revising the costumes in collaboration with the original costume designer, Zandra Rhodes.
- Recasting the location of Sri Lanka to a fictionalized land.

TDO also offers engaging and informative pre- and post-opera discussions:

- **Joy and Ronald Mankoff Pre-Opera Talks** are interactive 30-minute lectures one hour before the start of each opera held in the Margaret McDermott Performance Hall. Admission is free with your ticket to a Dallas Opera performance. ***Hosted by Nicole Paiement****, Martha R. and Preston A. Peak Principal Guest Conductor*
- **Post-Opera Talkbacks** will immediately follow the Sunday matinee performances from the stage. These brief and casual Q&A sessions with members of the cast give audiences an opportunity to ask questions about the performance. ***Hosted by TBA***

For this production, audiences will have the opportunity to engage with additional online and lobby resources.

The Pearl Fishers

- **Program book** available **here**
- **Synopsis here**
- **Four performances:** April 2 (7:30pm), 6 (7:30pm), 8 (7:30pm), 10 (2pm)
- **2 hours and 12 minutes**, including one intermission
- **Sung in French** with English Supertitles
- **Location:** Winspear Opera House (2403 Flora St., Dallas, TX)

- **Tickets start at $19** and can be purchased online at **dallasopera.org** or by calling 214.443.1000 (Monday – Friday from 10am – 5pm)
- **$15 advance student tickets** are available for the Saturday, April 2, Wednesday, April 6, and Friday, April 8, performances of *The Pearl Fishers*.
- **$15 student rush tickets** are available at the Winspear Opera House 90 minutes prior to any Dallas Opera performance and will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis.
- *We require one valid Student ID for every two tickets purchased.*

Health and Safety Protocols

Masks are strongly encouraged, but not required for all guests in the lobby and performance hall. As a resident company of the AT&T Performing Arts Center, The Dallas Opera adheres to the health and safety protocols and policies in our home venue, the Winspear Opera House.

Visit the AT&T Performing Art Center's website for more information about health and safety protocols and policies, including detailed information about ventilation and sanitization procedures.

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Production Sponsor: Martha Peak Rochelle

René Barbera is The Phyllis A. and Thomas H. McCasland, Jr. Lead Soloist
Shawna Lucey is The James R. Seitz, Jr. Stage Director in honor of John Gage

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About The Dallas Opera

One of the leading opera companies in the country, **The Dallas Opera** has an extraordinary legacy of world-class productions and thrilling premieres featuring the greatest operatic artists of our time. Inaugurated in 1957 with a concert featuring the incomparable Maria Callas, TDO is known for the notable U.S. debuts of a host of legendary artists including Plácido Domingo, Dame Joan Sutherland, Jon Vickers, Franco Zeffirelli, and Sir David McVicar. The company has long been an industry leader and innovator through groundbreaking initiatives including the Hart Institute for Women Conductors, TDO Network, free public simulcasts, acclaimed art song recitals, the national vocal competition, special concerts, and outstanding family and award-winning education programs. TDO's home is the Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House in the Dallas Arts District. As one of the largest performing arts employers in

North Texas, TDO is proudly committed to diversity, both onstage and off, and is a major contributor to the economic vitality and international cultural reputation of this region.

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