



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 19, 2010
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PORTLAND OPERA ANNOUNCES 2010/11 SEASON

FANTASY^{OR} REALITY?

Leoncavallo **PAGLIACCI** / *Orff* **CARMINA BURANA**
Humperdinck **HANSEL AND GRETEL** *Puccini* **TURANDOT**
Ravel **L'HEURE ESPAGNOLE** *Ravel* **L'ENFANT ET LES SORTILÈGES**

(Portland Ore.)—Portland Opera General Director Christopher Mattaliano has officially announced the details of the 2010/11 Season, the Company's 46th season and Mr. Mattaliano's seventh as artistic leader. Plays within plays, characters real and imagined and spellbinding fairy tales of all sorts are what's in store as Portland Opera explores the theme of **Fantasy or Reality?** on a grand and operatic scale.

In September the season begins with Christopher Mattaliano's unique and acclaimed pairing of Leoncavallo's **PAGLIACCI** and Orff's **CARMINA BURANA**. *The Oregonian* proclaimed this engaging double bill "a hit" when it premiered in 1997 and it has proven to be one of Portland's all-time favorites. In November the delicate edge between fantasy and reality is examined even more closely in a gorgeous, English-language production of Humperdinck's best-known opera, **HANSEL AND GRETEL**, a frighteningly delicious feast for children of all ages.

The American premiere of stage director Christopher Alden's distinctive take on Puccini's **TURANDOT** opens in February, 2010. The Welsh Independent Review said of this production "The focus of Alden's characteristically poetic, even balletic staging is very sure ... he isolates his protagonists to great effect ... and the final confrontation unfolds with icy clarity." The season closes with what has become a highly anticipated event each year, the Portland Opera Studio Artist production. Composer Maurice Ravel makes his Company debut with the only two operas he wrote, a double-bill of **L'HEURE ESPAGNOLE** (The Spanish Hour) and **L'ENFANT ET LES SORTILÈGES** (The Bewitched Child).

"Visually and theatrically this might be our most compelling season ever," said Portland Opera General Director Christopher Mattaliano. "All these operas have a thread of the fantastical," he continued, "and all will ask the audience to wonder what's real and what's not. It is a big, powerful and altogether delightful season."

The 2010/11 Season celebrates the sixth year of the highly regarded and increasingly heralded Portland Opera Studio Artists program. The Portland Opera Studio Artist program boasts some of the nation's finest young singers who join the company for an intensive, nine-month training that includes vocal recitals, which have become standing room only affairs, Keller Auditorium mainstage roles, and featured roles in the Studio Artist production at the Newmark Theatre.

PAGLIACCI

Ruggiero Leoncavallo

CARMINA BURANA

Carl Orff

September 24, 26m, 30, October 2, 2010

The question of fantasy or reality is front and center in this season opener.

Now general director, Christopher Mattaliano was a guest director when he created and debuted this innovative double-feature in collaboration with the Portland-based dance company, BodyVox. In its 1997 premiere, *Opera News* magazine praised Christopher Mattaliano's unorthodox pairing of *Pagliacci* with *Carmina Burana* as "an evening rich in theatrical and musical excitement." Thrilling audiences with its intensity, it was an immediate success. Since then the Portland Opera-created production has been presented in Minneapolis, Minnesota; Omaha, Nebraska; Salt Lake City, Utah; Atlanta, Georgia; and twice in Costa Mesa, California. This marks its third presentation at Portland Opera.

Pagliacci is full of irony, along with some of the most powerful music ever written. Composed by Ruggiero Leoncavallo in 1890, *Pagliacci* began to cement the new, more realistic *verismo* opera. Based on the lives of real people, *verismo* opera was calculated to stir an emotional reaction from audiences.

Canio leads a troupe of traveling actors who have just arrived in town. His jealous behavior has destroyed his relationship with his much younger and beautiful wife, Nedda. The unraveling of their lives, played out on and off their traveling stage, propels the action forward to its famously tragic ending.

Carmina Burana is familiar to virtually everyone from its ubiquitous presence in film and advertising. Usually enjoyed in the concert hall, Carl Orff actually created the piece to be staged. Based upon a collection of poetry by 13th century Bavarian monks and bards, it is a work of great force, moving audiences with its powerful rhythms and elegant, beautiful melodies. The stellar Portland Opera Chorus and the expressive dance of BodyVox return as integral parts of this remarkable production.

The cast boasts several singers familiar to Portland audiences. Singing Nedda, soprano **MARIA KANYOVA** will be remembered for her unforgettable Company debut here as Violetta in the 2008 *La Traviata*. As Nedda at New York City Opera, she gave what *The New Yorker* declared "the performance of a lifetime ...". Tenor **RICHARD CRAWLEY** (title role in *Faust* 2006) sings Canio. Anthony Tommasini of *The New York Times* praised his "healthy, pleasing and robust

voice,” and of his Portland Opera debut as Faust, *The Oregonian* said “... Crawley delivered a stylish Faust with both declamatory power and lyrical sweetness.” Baritone **MARK RUCKER** (title role in *Rigoletto* 2009 and 1998, Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* 1993, High Priest in *Samson et Dalila* 1991, Amonasro in *Aida* 1989) returns after last season’s stunning performance in *Rigoletto* to sing Tonio. *Opera News* said “Mark Rucker delivered Tonio with ... a masterful blend of vocal power and delicacy of expression,” and the *Los Angeles Times* declared him “an intense, detailed and sympathetic Tonio.” Baritone **MARIAN POP** (Figaro in *The Barber of Seville* 2004 and Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* 1998) sings Silvio. Of his performance here as Figaro, *The Oregonian* said he was “a fabulous Figaro, a gifted physical comedian with a rich, agile voice and high notes that could nearly part your hair.” **CHRISTOPHER MATTALIANO**, who originated this popular double bill in 1997 and reprised it in 2000, directs the action once again and John DeMain (*A View from the Bridge* 2003, *Porgy & Bess* 1995) conducts. *Pagliacci / Carmina Burana* also features the return of **BODYVOX**.

HANSEL AND GRETEL

Engelbert Humperdinck

November 5, 7m, 11, 13, 2010

In a wildly imaginative production with a decidedly modern edge, Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel* features a mezzo soprano playing Hansel and a tenor as the Witch—a sort of operatic Julia Child channeling Dame Edna, complete with Mixmaster. With its finely honed concept, the opera deals with hunger, and food is an ongoing metaphor throughout.

Based on a Brothers Grimm fairy tale, this production is not afraid to realize the sinister aspects of the story. Appropriately dark, visually stunning, sweet and scary in equal measure, it has been very well received by children at both the Metropolitan Opera and Welsh National Opera. At its heart, it is a feast for children of all ages with plenty of joy to share and questions to ponder. *The New York Times* called the production “a treat.”

Humperdinck began to compose this as a favor to his sister. He set four folk songs in the Grimm’s fairy tale to music, but he’d always wanted to compose an opera. The result is a rich, folk-inspired work. It premiered in 1893 with composer Richard Strauss conducting and has been a favorite ever since. Heavily influenced by the concepts and techniques of German music drama, *Hansel and Gretel* was its creator’s first opera and remains the one for which he is most remembered.

Following the familiar bedtime tale, Hansel and Gretel, after being naughty and banished from their home, find themselves lost in the woods after an afternoon of strawberry picking. Hungry and tired, they fall asleep and wake to find themselves on the threshold of the greatest adventure of their lives. After they have had their fill of sugary treats, they find that they are in fact next on the menu.

The cast features several exciting Company debuts, including soprano **MAUREEN MCKAY**, as Gretel, noted by *Opera Today* for her “lovely clear voice, and her perfect acting” and mezzo-soprano **SANDRA PIQUES EDDY**, as Hansel, of whom *The New York Times* said recently, “The brightest sparkle belonged to Ms. Piques Eddy, a swan-necked mezzo with fine technique,

a range of colors from honeyed to bright and charm to burn." Also debuting with the Company is baritone **WESTON HURT** as the Father. *Opera News* said "Hurt produced a remarkably suave sound and ... his acting proved every bit as nuanced and assured." **ELIZABETH BYRNE** (title role in *Aida* 1999, Senta in *The Flying Dutchman* 2007) returns to sing Mother, and Metropolitan Opera regular, tenor **ALLAN GLASSMAN** (*Salome* 1990), sings the Witch. **ARI PELTO** (*The Magic Flute* 2007) returns to the podium, with Stage Director **BENJAMIN DAVIS** making his Company debut. **DAVIS** recently directed the production's 2008 revival for the Welsh National Opera, which *The Guardian* proclaimed "vies with the best" and *The Times* called "Wickedly entertaining, entertainingly wicked." The sets and costumes originated at Welsh National Opera, and recently appeared on the Metropolitan Opera stage.

TURANDOT

Giacomo Puccini

February 4, 6m, 10, 12, 2011

American Premiere

In 2007 Stage Director Christopher Alden made his Portland Opera debut directing *The Flying Dutchman*, a show *The Oregonian* called "a powerful, arresting production." Following that success, Alden returns to direct Puccini's *Turandot*, bringing his cutting-edge style to provide fresh perspective on a classic work. His production—which originated at Welsh National Opera and now makes its American premiere—offers a modern zest that truly enhances this timeless tale. Opera aficionados will have the chance to see *Turandot* in a fresh new way and new audiences will enjoy an opera that speaks in a profound 21st century way.

Perhaps no other composer had the ability to create music so emotional it goes straight to the soul. Puccini's evocative orchestrations, endless melodic invention and masterful theatrical understanding have given us some of the greatest examples of opera the world will ever know. *Turandot*, his final opera, includes "*Nessun dorma*," the international tenor anthem and signature aria of Luciano Pavarotti.

Based on an ancient fairy tale, *Turandot* is a beautiful but icy princess determined to revenge the brutality inflicted on a female ancestor. Drawn by her enigmatic beauty, her suitors are numerous. She demands, though, that they answer three riddles and failure to answer correctly wins a trip to the executioner. All fail until the arrival of Calaf, who steps forward to accept the deadly challenge. *Turandot* panics when he answers correctly and desperately tries to avoid marriage. Propelled by the strength of his love, Calaf again risks his life for her. His love for her finally succeeds in thawing her icy heart and drawing her back into a caring world of humanity.

The cast includes the return of soprano **LORI PHILLIPS** in the title role. She made a strong Portland Opera debut in the title role of *Fidelio* in 2008. Tenor **PHILIP WEBB** (Pollione in *Norma* 2007, Radames in *Aida* 2008) sings Calaf. Of his Calaf, *The New York Sun* said "Mr. Webb's passionate rendition of the work's central theme, "*Nessun dorma*," bled with the Italianate realism of an early Pavarotti" Making their Company debuts are soprano **GRAZIA DORONZIO** as Liù, recently declared "splendid" by *The New York Times*, and bass-baritone **CHRISTIAN VAN HORN** as Timur, of whom *Opera News* said "As Timur, Christian Van

Horn used his booming bass voice to tender effect” Stage Director **CHRISTOPHER ALDEN** (*The Flying Dutchman* 2007) originated this production for Welsh National Opera.

L’HEURE ESPAGNOLE (The Spanish Hour)

L’ENFANT ET LES SORTILÈGES (The Bewitched Child)

Maurice Ravel

April 1, 3m, 5, 7, 9, 2011

All-new Productions

Portland Opera Premieres

Composer Premiere

The Portland Opera Studio production is a chance for our young artists to shine. This year’s production turns the spotlight on the renowned French composer who brought the world *Boléro*. Maurice Ravel, making his Portland Opera debut, had a great love of fairy tales and fantasy which makes him an ideal fit for this particular season. Known as one of music’s great perfectionists, Stravinsky called him the “perfect watchmaker,” and indeed his works are precise, innovative, listenable, and irresistibly French. He is one of the world’s favorite symphonic composers but he only wrote two one-act operas. Although everyone knows his beloved *Boléro*, very few have had the chance to hear his two operas.

L’heure espagnole—The Spanish Hour—is a highly amusing, racy little romp that is quintessentially French and frolics along the edge of fantasy and farce. Concepción has been bored with her absent-minded clockmaker husband for a long time and counts on his regular schedule of setting the city’s clocks to revel in her love affairs with complete freedom. One day, the appearance of Ramiro, who needs a watch mended and is prepared to wait, sets in motion a chain of events that will have audiences laughing in glee.

L’enfant et les sortilèges—The Bewitched Child—whisks us straight into the world of fantasy as a naughty young boy misbehaves and is sent to his room without dinner. He throws a tantrum, breaking every inanimate object in sight, and then falls into a fitful sleep. The inanimate objects become the characters in his fantasy, tormenting him in his dream as he did them in life and teaching him a valuable lesson. When he wakes and realizes it was all a dream, his life is changed, much for the better.

The two Ravel works will feature the **PORTLAND OPERA STUDIO ARTISTS** in an all-new production directed by **CHRISTOPHER MATTALIANO**, conducted by Portland Opera’s Chorus Master and Principal Coach **ROBERT AINSLEY** and performed at the Newmark Theatre.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Current subscribers will receive renewal packages for the 2010/11 Season beginning January 17, 2010 and have until March 12, 2010 to renew their subscriptions. Subscription renewals guarantee best patron seating, priority preference for seat change requests, along with special subscriber benefits and savings.

Subscriptions can be renewed:

- Online at www.portlandopera.org
- By mail or in person at The Hampton Opera Center, 211 SE Caruthers St., Portland, OR 97214
- By phone at 503-241-1802 or 866-739-6737
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Subscriptions—**with full season packages available for as little as \$125**—go on sale to the general public in February.

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CHRISTOPHER MATTALIANO
GENERAL DIRECTOR

2010/11 PORTLAND OPERA SEASON / CAST SCHEDULE
FANTASY or REALITY?

PAGLIACCI

Ruggiero Leoncavallo

CARMINA BURANA

Carl Orff

Keller Auditorium

Friday, Sept. 24, 2010, 7:30pm
Sunday, Sept. 26, 2010, **2:00pm**
Thursday, Sept. 30, 2010, 7:30pm
Saturday, Oct. 2, 2010, 7:30pm

Nedda Maria Kanyova
Canio Richard Crawley
Silvio Marian Pop
Tonio Mark Rucker

Conductor TBA
Stage Director Christopher Mattaliano
Featuring BodyVox

HANSEL AND GRETEL

Engelbert Humperdinck

Keller Auditorium

Friday, Nov. 5, 2010, 7:30pm
Sunday, Nov. 7, 2010, **2:00pm**
Thursday, Nov. 11, 2010, 7:30pm
Saturday, Nov. 13, 2010, 7:30pm

Hansel Sandra Piques Eddy *
Gretel Maureen McKay *
Mother Elizabeth Byrne
Father Weston Hurt *
The Witch Allan Glassman

Conductor Ari Pelto
Stage Director Benjamin Davis *

TURANDOT

Giacomo Puccini

Keller Auditorium

American Premiere

Friday, Feb. 4, 2011, 7:30pm
Sunday, Feb. 6, 2011, **2:00pm**
Thursday, Feb. 10, 2011, 7:30pm
Saturday, Feb. 12, 2011, 7:30pm

Turandot Lori Phillips
Liù Grazia Doronzio *
Calaf Philip Webb
Timur Christian Van Horn *

Conductor TBA
Stage Director Christopher Alden

L'HEURE ESPAGNOLE

(The Spanish Hour)

and

L'ENFANT ET LES SORTILÈGES

(The Bewitched Child)

Maurice Ravel

Newmark Theatre

All-new Productions
Portland Opera Premieres
Composer Premiere

Friday, Apr. 1, 2011, 7:30pm
Sunday, Apr. 3, 2011, **2:00pm**
Tuesday, Apr. 5, 2011, 7:30pm
Thursday, Apr. 7, 2011, 7:30pm
Saturday, Apr. 9, 2011, 7:30pm

Featuring The Portland Opera Studio
Artists

Conductor Robert Ainsley
Stage Director Christopher Mattaliano

* Portland Opera debut