



## **NEW YORK CITY OPERA ANNOUNCES 2016 - 17 SEASON**

**SEVEN NEW PRODUCTIONS  
THREE NEW YORK PREMIERES  
ONE U.S. PREMIERE**

**Five Productions and Two Concerts at Jazz at Lincoln Center**

**New Productions of *Aleko* and *Pagliacci*  
*Aleko/Pagliacci* Double Bill Opens Season on September 8, 2016  
Marks New York Premiere of Rachmaninoff's *Aleko***

**New Production of Bernstein's *Candide* Staged by Harold Prince in January 2017**

**New Production of Respighi's *La campana sommersa* in March 2017**

**New Production of *Angels in America* by Péter Eötvös  
New York Premiere Closes City Opera Season in June 2017**

### **CHAMBER OPERA SERIES**

**New York Premiere of *Fallujah* by Tobin Stokes in November 2016**

**Ópera en Español  
New Production and U.S. Premiere of Spanish Baroque Opera *Los Elementos*  
Harlem Stage in May 2017**

### **OPERA COMMISSIONING INITIATIVE BEGINS**

**Tobias Picker Commissioned to Write *American Venus*  
Based on the Life of Audrey Munson  
Celebrated Muse of the Gilded Age  
Opera will Premiere during City Opera's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

**May 24, 2016 - New York City Opera General Director Michael Capasso today announced the 2016-17 season of City Opera, a full season of new productions, concerts, and presentations for the "people's opera." New York City Opera will offer five operas (including a double bill) at**

**Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Rose Theater; two chamber operas**, including a Spanish baroque work at **Harlem Stage** as part of its **Ópera en Español** series, and **New York City Opera Concerts at The Appel Room at Jazz at Lincoln Center**. **New York City Opera Orchestra** will be featured in every opera and concert.

The company leads New York’s cultural season with **Opening Night on Thursday, September 8, 2016** featuring an original double bill pairing of **Rachmaninoff’s** rarely heard *Aleko* (**New York staged premiere**) and **Leoncavallo’s** *Pagliacci*. These two operas have been staged together only once, although both follow similar dramatic narratives and were both completed and premiered in 1892. The season continues in **November** with the **New York premiere** of *Fallujah*, about the contemporary consequences of war, by **Tobin Stokes**. **January 2017** will be marked by a **new production** of **Leonard Bernstein’s** *Candide* from legendary director **Harold Prince**; the opera house version premiered under his direction at the company in 1982. **Ottorino Respighi’s** *La campana sommersa* (*The Sunken Bell*), not heard in New York for more than 80 years, will return in **spring 2017**. The company’s **Ópera en Español** series – which will be inaugurated next month with *Florencia en el Amazonas* (June 22, 23, 25 and 26, 2016) at **Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Rose Theater** – continues in **May 2017** at **Harlem Stage** with the rarely performed *Los Elementos* by the Spanish baroque master **Antoni de Lliteres**. The **New York premiere** of *Angels in America* by **Péter Eötvös** closes the City Opera season in **June 2017**.

**General Director Michael Capasso** said, “I’m delighted to unveil a full season for the reorganized company which continues New York City Opera’s historic legacy: classics alongside contemporary works, neglected works by great composers, and explorations of opera’s earliest masterpieces. I believe our season will have both broad public appeal and the artistic integrity that audiences have long associated with City Opera. It is an honor to welcome the legendary Hal Prince back to City Opera to stage *Candide*. We are also pleased that our first collaboration with the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari is Respighi’s unjustly neglected *La campana sommersa*. We are already planning City Opera’s 75th anniversary celebration with the commission of Tobias Picker’s *American Venus*. My colleagues and I along with the board of City Opera are immensely grateful for the public’s continued support and look forward to presenting a full season of opera and welcoming New Yorkers back to their ‘people’s opera.’”

## **NEW PRODUCTION**

### **DOUBLE BILL: ALEKO BY RACHMANINOFF AND PAGLIACCI BY LEONCAVALLO NEW YORK PREMIERE OF ALEKO**

*Aleko*, set to a libretto by Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, based on the narrative poem *The Gypsies* by Alexander Pushkin, was written in 1892 by Rachmaninoff when the composer was only nineteen years old. City Opera’s double bill, a **new production**, juxtaposes *Aleko*, Rachmaninoff’s first opera, about a love triangle, with *Pagliacci*, Leoncavallo’s lurid verismo drama of jealousy and betrayal. This staging will mark the New York staged premiere of *Aleko*. **Performances are September 8, 10, 11, and 13, 2016** at Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Rose Theater.

## **NEW PRODUCTION OF *CANDIDE* BY LEONARD BERNSTEIN**

Harold Prince commented, “*Candide* was so successful for New York City Opera that I’m thrilled to put it into the revived company and hope that it does as well. I have enormous affection for New York City Opera, after all New York deserves a people’s opera company.”

In January 2017, New York City Opera presents a **new production** of **Leonard Bernstein’s** comic operetta *Candide*. Premiered by the company in 1982 in a staging by **Harold Prince**, the landmark work is again directed by Mr. Prince. Performances of *Candide* are **January 6, 7 (matinee and evening), 8, 11, and 12, 2017** at Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Rose Theater.

## **NEW PRODUCTION OF *LA CAMPANA SOMMERSA* BY OTTORINO RESPIGHI**

*La campana sommersa* (*The Sunken Bell*), a four-act opera by Ottorino Respighi, based on the symbolist fairy tale drama by German playwright Gerhart Hauptmann, with a libretto by Claudio Guastalla, comes to City Opera in a **new co-production** from the **Teatro Lirico di Cagliari**. Respighi’s evocative music drama, which premiered in Hamburg in 1927, and in New York in 1928, receives its first modern-day performances in a staging by **Pier Francesco Maestrini**. **Performances are March 31, April 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, 2017** at Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Rose Theater.

**Francesco Pigliaru, president of the Region of Sardinia**, issued a statement on the co-production between Teatro Lirico di Cagliari and New York City Opera:

"The Region of Sardinia along with Sovrintendente Claudio Orazi of the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari are pleased to announce the formal collaboration for the opera *La campana sommersa* to be presented in New York. The international interest toward the Teatro Lirico and its productions represents the excellence and value of Italian cultural heritage. The region of Sardinia aims to make itself more broadly known in the world and this initiative in particular is consistent with the policies of our region."

## **NEW PRODUCTION OF *ANGELS IN AMERICA* BY PÉTER EÖTVÖS NEW YORK PREMIERE**

The **New York Premiere** of **Péter Eötvös’s** *Angels in America* closes the City Opera season in **June 2017**. This operatic adaptation of **Tony Kushner’s** groundbreaking, Pulitzer Prize-winning play distills the two-night, seven-hour drama into a single, powerful evening. *The New York Times* critic reviewing the U.S. premiere in Boston in 2006 wrote, “I am pleasantly astonished at how Mr. Eötvös, a Hungarian composer long residing in France, has so acutely touched Mr. Kushner’s unequivocally American personalities. The reduction of the play’s seven hours to less than half that works more easily than one would think.”

**Performances of *Angels in America* are June 10, 12, 14, and 16, 2017** at Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Rose Theater.

## **CHAMBER OPERA SERIES**

As part of its **Chamber Opera Series**, New York City Opera presents **two works** in the 2016-17 season.

**FALLUJAH BY TOBIN STOKES  
NEW YORK PREMIERE AND NEW PRODUCTION FOR CITY OPERA**

City Opera will present the **New York premiere** of *Fallujah* by Canadian composer **Tobin Stokes**, with a libretto by **Heather Raffo**. The 90-minute, one-act opera, is inspired by the life and work of U.S. Marine Christian Ellis and follows the relationships among American and Iraqi mothers and sons in the aftermath of the Iraq war. About the work, which had its premiere in March 2016 at the Long Beach Opera, staged by **Andreas Mitisek**, the *Los Angeles Times* reported, “Stokes writes clear, expressive vocal lines in which words and sentiments are easily understood. His musical style is porous, leaving room for elements of Iraqi music, American pop and much else.” *Fallujah* will be staged at a location to be announced; **performances are November 17, 18, 19, and 20, 2016.**

**NEW PRODUCTION OF LOS ELEMENTOS BY ANTONI DE LITERES  
U.S. PREMIERE**

The rarely performed allegorical opera *Los Elementos* by the Spanish baroque master **Antoni de Lliteres** (1673-1747) receives its **U.S. premiere** and forms part of the company’s **Ópera en Español** series. The work, subtitled an “ópera armónica al estilo ytaliano,” reveals the pervasive influence of the Italian musical idiom at the Madrid court in late seventeenth and eighteenth-century Spain and presents a distinct musico-dramatic evocation of the four classical elements—earth, water, air, and fire—in arias of virtuoso display. New York City Opera stages *Los Elementos* at Harlem Stage in **May 2017**; performance dates will be announced at a later date

**NEW YORK CITY OPERA COMMISSIONING INITIATIVE**

**Mr. Capasso announced City Opera’s Commissioning Initiative**, “New York City Opera has a long tradition of commissioning operas and we are overjoyed to begin our “Opera Commissioning Initiative” with **Tobias Picker**, one of the leading opera composers of our time to celebrate City Opera’s 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2019.”

**Tobias Picker** commented on the commission of *American Venus*:

"**Audrey Munson**, 1890-1996, was the first American supermodel. **Although she inspired the greatest monumental sculptors of her day, she died in obscurity, alone and forgotten.** Hundreds of thousands of people pass by her watchful eye every day in New York City, and throughout the country, unaware of her tragic story. **She is Columbia University's bronzed "Alma Mater," "Pomona" of the Pulitzer Fountain at the Plaza Hotel, and the gold leafed "Columbia Triumphant" in Columbus Circle** to name but a few of her many guises. I think of Pygmalion and Galatea as I embark upon this exciting journey to bring the images of Audrey Munson, our **American Venus**, full circle back to life. I am deeply honored that New York City Opera has given me this awe-inspiring opportunity."

**NEW YORK CITY OPERA CONCERTS**

**New York City Opera Concerts** will take place at **The Appel Room at Jazz at Lincoln Center** on **October 26, 2016** and **February 14, 2017**. Program details will be announced at a later date

**THE 2016 – 17 SEASON WILL GO ON SALE IN EARLY JULY 2016**

**New York City Opera will provide casting and additional production details for the 2016 – 17 season at a later date. Please visit [www.nycopera.com](http://www.nycopera.com) for more information.**

**New York City Opera’s 2016 season closes with the New York premiere of *Florenca en el Amazonas* at Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Rose Theater. Performances are June 22, 23, 25 and 26, 2016.**

**ABOUT NEW YORK CITY OPERA**

Since its founding in 1943 by Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia as “The People’s Opera” New York City Opera has been a critical part of the city’s cultural life. During its history, New York City Opera launched the careers of dozens of major artists and presented engaging productions of both mainstream and unusual operas alongside commissions and regional premieres. The result was a uniquely American opera company of international stature.

For more than seven decades, New York City Opera maintained a distinct identity, adhering to its unique mission: affordable ticket prices, a devotion to American works, English-language performances, the promotion of up-and-coming American singers, and seasons of accessible, vibrant and compelling productions intended to introduce new audiences to the art form. Stars who launched their careers at New York City Opera include Plácido Domingo, Catherine Malfitano, Sherrill Milnes, Samuel Ramey, Beverly Sills, Tatiana Troyanos, Carol Vaness, Shirley Verrett, among dozens of other great artists.

In 1999, New York City Opera founded VOX, Contemporary Opera Lab, an annual concert series that offered composers and librettists the opportunity to hear excerpts of their works performed by professional singers and musicians. For decades New York City Opera has been committed to introducing opera to the young, bringing the art form to new audiences with educational outreach performances in New York City’s public schools.

Now, having returned to the stage, New York City Opera continues its legacy at a new, state-of-the-art home at Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Rose Theater with revitalized outreach and education programs, and programming designed to welcome and inspire a new generation of City Opera audiences.

**For more information please visit: [www.nycopera.com](http://www.nycopera.com)**

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