

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lyric Opera of Kansas City
2016-17 Season Continues with
Kansas City PREMIERE of
Dead Man Walking
March 4, 8, 10 and 12 at
Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts
**Extensive Community Events to Explore this
Journey of Faith**

Kansas City, MO (Feb. 6, 2017) – Lyric Opera of Kansas City continues its 59th season with the powerful modern classic, *Dead Man Walking*, music by Jake Heggie and libretto by Terrence McNally, and based on the novel by Sister Helen Prejean, with performances March 4, 8, 10 and 12 at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. The production will be sung in English with English titles. High res production and artists' photos can be downloaded [here](#).

The Lyric Opera of Kansas City is proud to present the Kansas City debut of the modern classic, *Dead Man Walking*, the searing story of truth and redemption on Death Row. *Dead Man Walking* is the story of a profound spiritual journey taken by a nun and a convicted killer about to face the ultimate sentence. Based on the book by Sister Helen Prejean, the opera delves into the conflict between the act of murder, society's demand for retribution, redemption and forgiveness. *Dead Man Walking* is an unforgettable experience and promises to leave audiences stunned and breathless. Please note: this opera contains brief nudity, graphic violence and explicit language.

Dead Man Walking has become a must-see modern classic since it opened in 2000 to critical acclaim. It will be directed by **Kristine McIntyre**, in her seventh production for Lyric Opera of Kansas City. **Kate Aldrich** will portray Sister Helen Prejean in her Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut. Also making their Lyric Opera of Kansas City debuts, are **David Adam Moore** in the role of Joseph de Rocher, **Maria Zifchak** in the role of Mrs. Patrick de Rocher, and Conductor **Steven Osgood**.

General Director and CEO Deborah Sandler stated, "*Dead Man Walking* is a dramatically riveting and relevant story. I am proud that we are presenting this Lyric Opera premiere production and that we are presenting an in-depth series of community events, thanks to our

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

partners including the Kansas City Public Library, American Public Square and KCPT. I look forward to many thoughtful conversations about the issues that surface in this opera.”

About the Artists

Making her Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut as Sister Helen Prejean, mezzo-soprano **Kate Aldrich** has performed with the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, Los Angeles Opera, L'Opéra de Montréal, and National Theatre in Prague among many others. *The San Francisco Chronicle* describes Ms. Aldrich as “...a singer with both the lustrous lower range and forceful high notes... She moves easily and arrestingly on stage, and infuses even the most transitory moments with a sense of dramatic purpose.”

Also making his Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut, **David Adam Moore**, in the role of Joseph de Rocher, is a highly sought-after leading baritone by major opera houses and orchestras worldwide, including the Metropolitan Opera, Teatro alla Scala, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Salzburg Festival, and Carnegie Hall. "What ultimately distinguished Moore's performance was his consistent delivery of beauty within the bluster, including some exquisitely floated tones above the staff... This was one of the most shattering evenings I have ever spent in a theater." (*Opera News*).

Making her Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut in the role of Mrs. Patrick de Rocher, **Maria Zifchak** is a highly accomplished mezzo-soprano. Of her recent performance in Central City Opera's *Dead Man Walking*, *Daily Camera* claimed, "Mezzo-soprano Maria Zifchak, as De Rocher's mother, moves the audience to open weeping on several occasions." She performs regularly with The Metropolitan Opera, and has also performed with Opera Theater of St. Louis, Central City Opera, Arizona Opera, Dallas Opera, Cincinnati Opera and Atlanta Opera.

Hailed for her voice of extraordinary beauty and her commitment to artistry, soprano **Karen Slack** performs the role of Sister Rose. She has collaborated with major conductors in opera houses and concert halls worldwide, including The Metropolitan Opera, Scottish Opera, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Washington National Opera, San Francisco Opera, and Carnegie Hall. Recent highlights include Serena in *Porgy and Bess* with Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, Verdi's *Aida* with Austin Lyric Opera, *Champion* with Opera Parallèle, and her role debut as Alice Ford in *Falstaff* with Arizona Opera. She was previously seen with Lyric Opera of Kansas City in 2007 as *Aida*.

Making his Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut, conductor **Steven Osgood** is General and Artistic Director of Chautauqua Opera. He brings a distinct musical incisiveness and dramatic insight to his work as a result of a unique combination of his experience in the world of theater as well as opera in repertoire ranging from the baroque through the contemporary era. He has worked with many of North America's premiere opera companies, including Canadian Opera Company, the San Francisco Opera, and The Metropolitan Opera, where he has served as Assistant Conductor for the world premiere of Tan Dun's *The First Emperor*, and acclaimed productions of Glass' *Satyagraha*, Adams' *Nixon in China*, *The Death of Klinghoffer*, and Muhly's *Two Boys*, to name a few.

Notable conducting engagements include productions at New York City Opera (*La Bohème*, *Seance on a Wet Afternoon*), Netherlands Opera (*Marco Polo*), Edmonton Opera (*Bluebeard's*

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

Castle, Erwartung, La Traviata), Chautauqua Opera (*Peter Grimes, The Ballad of Baby Doe*, and *Tosca*), Hawaii Opera (*Tosca*), Opera Memphis (*Die Fledermaus, This Is the Rill Speaking & Bon Appetite, The Rape of Lucretia, Glory Denied*), Fort Worth Opera (*Glass' Hydrogen Jukebox*), Long Beach Opera (*Ainadamar*), Sarasota Opera (*Little Nemo in Slumberland*), Wolf Trap Opera (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Manhattan School of Music (*The Mother of Us All, Griffelkin, Summer and Smoke, A Month in the Country, The Ghosts of Versailles*), Beth Morrison Projects (*Sumeida's Song, Song From the Uproar*), Juilliard Opera Theater (*Transformations*), Northwestern University (*The Ghosts of Versailles*), DiCapo Opera (Floyd's *Susannah*, Picker's *Thérèse Raquin*) and the Miller Theater at Columbia University (Xenakis' *Oresteia*). Last season, he made a debut with The Atlanta Opera conducting Jake Heggie's *Three Decembers* and returned to Opera Saratoga to lead the premiere of Jeremy Howard Beck's *The Long Walk*. This season includes a return to the Fort Worth Opera for the premiere of David Little's *J.F.K.*, a revival of *Song From the Uproar* to be presented by Los Angeles Opera, and *La Traviata, The Mikado, and Songs from the Uproar* for Chautauqua Opera.

Last season includes a return to the Fort Worth Opera for the premiere of David Little's *J.F.K.*, a revival of *Song From the Uproar* presented by Los Angeles Opera, and *La Traviata, The Mikado, and Songs from the Uproar* for Chautauqua Opera. In September, he debuted with Opera Philadelphia conducting the world premiere of Missy Mazzoli's *Breaking the Waves*, after which he returned to The Juilliard School to conduct Jonathan Dove's *Flight*. Later this season, he will debut with Utah Opera conducting *The Long Walk*.

Director **Kristine McIntyre** returns to Kansas City for her seventh Lyric Opera production. She has directed more than 75 operas across the U.S. with a focus on new, contemporary and American works including *Dead Man Walking, Soldier Songs, Three Decembers, Flight, Elmer Gantry, Of Mice and Men, Street Scene, The Tender Land, Bon Appétit*, and the world premiers of Louis Karchin's *Jane Eyre*, Mark Lanz Weiser's *The Place Where You Started* and *The Canticle of the Black Madonna*. Known for her visually stunning and emotionally rich productions, her other Lyric Opera credits include last season's *Don Giovanni*, as well as the world premier of *John Brown, The End of the Affair, Norma, Così Fan Tutte* and *The Turn of the Screw*. Upcoming projects include new productions of *Billy Budd* and Jake Heggie's *Moby Dick* as well as Barber's *Vanessa* and Daniel Catán's *Florencia en el Amazonas*.

Principal Cast

Sister Helen Prejean: Kate Aldrich*
Joseph de Rocher: David Adam Moore*
Mrs. Patrick de Rocher: Maria Zifchak*
Sister Rose: Karen Slack
George Benton: Jeffrey Beruan
Father Grenville: Casey Candebat+*
Owen Hart: Daniel Belcher
Kitty Hart: April Martin+@
Howard Boucher: Brian Frutiger
Jade Boucher: Samantha Gossard +@
Motorcycle Cop: John Viscardi +

Artistic Staff

Director: Kristine McIntyre

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

Conductor: Steven Osgood *
Set Designer: R. Keith Brumley
Costume Designer: Scott Reid
Lighting Designer: Marcus Dilliard
Wig and Make-up Designer: Alison M. Hanks
Chorus Master: Mark Ferrell
Stage Manager: Erin Thompson- Janszen

~ UMKC Apprentice
+ Resident Artist
@ former Lyric Opera Apprentice
* Lyric Opera Debut

Ticket availability varies by performance. To purchase tickets, call Ticketing & Patron Services (816) 471-7344 or 1-800-OPERA KC (673-7252). Patrons can select their own seat and print their tickets at home by visiting www.kcopera.org. Limited student rush tickets are available for \$15, cash only, one hour before the performances, with a valid student ID. Parental advisory: this opera will contain brief nudity, graphic violence and explicit language and is best suited for those ages 18 and up.

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

DEAD MAN WALKING COMMUNITY EVENTS

JAN. 29th FYI BOOK CLUB LAUNCH

Read the January 29th edition of *The Kansas City Star* to learn more about how you can join a discussion about the book that inspired the opera *Dead Man Walking*. This is a partnership with the **Kansas City Public Library** and part of the **FYI Book Club** series, sponsored by *The Kansas City Star*.

FEB. 6th CONSIDERING FORGIVENESS

Join us at Unity Temple on the Plaza from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. for an evening of film and discussion that includes a screening of the documentary *Unlikely Friends*, with a discussion led by Unity minister **Sandra Campbell**, and representatives from **Parents of Murdered Children** and audience members. **RSVP** for this **FREE event** at kcopera.org/dmw-events.

FEB. 9th FYI BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION

In partnership with the **Kansas City Public Library** and sponsored by *The Kansas City Star*, the **FYI Book Club: *Dead Man Walking*** meets at our Michael and Ginger Frost Production Arts Building at 7:00 p.m. to discuss Sister Helen Prejean's memoir, a thoughtful and painful journey through the justice system and inspiration for the opera *Dead Man Walking*. Participants will enjoy a brief talk about the Kansas City production from **Linda Ade Brand**, Director of Education and Community Engagement for the Lyric Opera, and engage in a conversation about the book with **Kaite Stover**, Director of Readers' Services for the Kansas City Public Library. **RSVP** for the **FREE discussion** by contacting Kaite Stover at 816.701.3683 or kaitestover@kclibrary.org.

FEB. 15th DEAD MAN WALKING SCREENING

From book to movie to opera, *Dead Man Walking* has captivated audiences since its publication in 1993, its Academy Award winning film adaption in 1995, and finally the leap to opera in 2000. Attend a screening of the film followed by discussion of both film and memoir at the **Kansas City Public Library - Central Library** in the Durwood Film Vault beginning at 6:30 p.m. **RSVP** at www.kclibrary.org for this **FREE event**.

FEB. 21st AN EYE FOR AN EYE: REEVALUATING THE DEATH PENALTY

In partnership with American Public Square and KCPT, we present **An Eye for an Eye: Reevaluating the Death Penalty** at the Kansas City Public Library - Plaza Branch in the Truman Forum beginning with a reception at 6:00. At 6:30 a panel of proponents and opponents of capital punishment will consider this issue, moderated by **Ambassador Allan Katz** with roving reporter, **Nick Haines**. The panelists, **Rev. Adam Hamilton**, Senior Pastor, Church of the Resurrection, **Tricia Bushnell**, Director, Midwest Innocence Project, **Eric Zahnd**, longtime Prosecuting Attorney for Platte County, Missouri, and **Terry Nelson**, Consultant, Republican Strategist and Founding Partner of FPI Strategies, will discuss the morality, legality, politics and other arguments both in favor and against the death penalty. **RSVP** for this **FREE event** at www.kclibrary.org/signature-events/eye-eye-re-evaluating-death-penalty.

MAR. 3rd THE JOURNEY CONTINUES AN EVENING WITH SISTER HELEN PREJEAN

Don't miss **Sister Helen Prejean** in Kansas City at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts at 6:30 p.m. for a discussion about *Dead Man Walking* followed by a book signing. **RSVP** at kcopera.org/dmw-events for this **FREE event**.

MAR. 5th AFTERNOON WITH JAKE HEGGIE

Dead Man Walking composer **Jake Heggie** will lead a masterclass coaching his own compositions sung by the LOKC Resident Artists from 1:30 - 3:30 at the Frost Production Arts Building, 712 E. 18th Street, KCMO. Afterward, LOKC General Director and CEO Deborah Sandler brings together longtime collaborators **Jake Heggie** and librettist **Gene Scheer** for a discussion about contemporary opera at the Plaza Library Truman Forum, 4:15 - 5:15. **RSVP** at kcopera.org/dmw-events for these **FREE events**.

MAR. 10th LENTEN FRIDAY EVENT: CATHOLIC THINKING ON THE DEATH PENALTY

Interested in considering the issues raised in *Dead Man Walking* from a Catholic perspective? Join us at our Michael and Ginger Frost Production Arts Building beginning at 5:00 p.m. for a traditional fish fry followed by a talk and discussion led by the **Rev. Thomas B. Curran, S.J.**, President of Rockhurst University. Complete the evening by attending the thought-provoking opera at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts beginning at 7:30 p.m. **Tickets for this special event** - including the fish fry, discussion and the opera *Dead Man Walking* - are available for \$75 at kcopera.org.

MAR. 12th POST-SHOW TALKBACK WITH SUELLEN FRIED

Join us at the Kauffman Center around 5:00 p.m. following the Sunday Matinee performance of *Dead Man Walking* for a talkback around led by **SuEllen Fried**, founder of Reaching Out From Within. ROFW supports prison rehabilitation programs for inmates who want to make lasting changes in their behavior so they can become a role model for non-violence. **FREE event, no RSVP needed**.

OPERA GOES TO THE MOVIES

This course offered by **UMKC** begins on **Mar. 11th** at Tivoli Theatre in Westport discussing and viewing films related to *Dead Man Walking*. The next day the class visits our Michael and Ginger Frost Production Arts Building for a discussion about the opera before attending the **Mar. 12th** performance. Contact Linda Ade Brand at lbrand@kcopera.org for more information about the course.

AT EASE WITH OPERA

Join the Lyric Opera Guild at the Kauffman Foundation this February as they delve into *Dead Man Walking*. All presentations begin at 7:00 p.m., and are **FREE to attend**.

Feb. 13th - American Opera by John Stephens and Maria Kanyova

Feb. 20th - Opera and Social Issues by William Everett

Feb. 27th - *Dead Man Walking* Preview by Dr. Rebecca Johnson

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

Young Friends of the Lyric

Young Friends of the Lyric provides an exciting outlet for young arts supporters (ages 21-40) in Kansas City to get involved in the community, meet other young adults and support the Lyric Opera of Kansas City. Membership benefits include exclusive ticket offers, networking opportunities, restaurant discounts invitations to special events and more.

Young Friends of the Lyric membership is \$30 for an individual, \$50 for a couple, or \$75 for a dual patron membership. To join, contact Ticketing & Patron Services at 816-471-7344. Become a fan on [Facebook](#) to keep up with current events.

About the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts is a major center for music, opera, theater, and dance designed by Moshe Safdie opened September 2011. The Kauffman Center presents vibrant performances and advances the role of the performing arts as a catalyst for Kansas City's civic, economic, and educational vitality.

Three of the region's leading performing arts organizations—Kansas City Ballet, Kansas City Symphony, and Lyric Opera of Kansas City—are in residence at the Kauffman Center. The Kauffman Center's two performance venues, the 1,800-seat Muriel Kauffman Theatre and the 1,600-seat Helzberg Hall, offer audiences engaging and intimate experiences, while at the same time providing resident companies with dramatically enhanced performance capabilities.

Serving as a cultural cornerstone for Kansas City's dynamic downtown, the Kauffman Center brings a new spotlight to the region's performing arts community while simultaneously attracting some of the world's most talented performers and entertainers, further establishing Kansas City as a major cultural destination.

More information on the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts is available at [kauffmancenter.org](#).

The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts is fully accessible and provides assistive listening devices plus Braille and large print programs. Service animals are welcome with advance notice. All dates, operas and artists are subject to change.

Visit [www.kcopera.org](#) for more information about Lyric Opera of Kansas City 2016-2017 season and [www.kauffmancenter.org](#) for a downloadable media kit about the Kauffman Center.

Upcoming 2016-2017 Season Productions:

The Pirates of Penzance

Gilbert & Sullivan 1879

Sung in English with English subtitles

Saturday, April 22, 2017	7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, April 26, 2017	7:30 p.m.
Friday, April 28, 2017	7:30 p.m.
Saturday, April 29, 2017	2:00 p.m.

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

Sunday, April 30, 2017

2:00 p.m.

Director: James Alexander

Conductor: Hal France

Mabel: Anya Matanovič

Frederic: Jonathan Johnson

The Pirate King: Kevin Burdette

Major-General Stanley: Robert Gibby Brand

Ruth: Margaret Gawrysiak

Sergeant of Police: Ben Wager

Edith: April Martin

Kate: Samantha Gossard

Samuel: Rhys Lloyd Talbot

Isabel: Laurel Weir

About Lyric Opera of Kansas City

The Lyric Opera of Kansas City was founded in 1958; it is one of the nation's premier regional opera companies and brings high quality live operatic performances to the people of the Kansas City area and a five-state region. Repertoire choices encompass original language performances of standard repertory as well as contemporary and American operas. The Company mounts productions that enrich the community it serves, as well as reflect the highest artistic standards of the profession. The Lyric Opera offers innovative and award-winning programs designed to further music and arts education both in schools and in the community and serves more than 18,000 students and educators each year.

Opera lovers can be fans of the Lyric Opera of Kansas City on Facebook or follow us on Twitter at @kcopera.

The Lyric Opera of Kansas City is a member of OPERA America and this season is made possible with funding from Richard J. Stern Foundation for the Arts, and the Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation.

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Please direct all media inquiries to Ellen McDonald, 816.444.0052 or 816.213.4355.

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