

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ellen McDonald
(816) 213-4355 (c)
publicity@kcopera.org

For Tickets: kcopera.org or 816.471.7344

Lyric Opera of Kansas City
Partners with
Teens in Transition and Local Mural Artists
for *West Side Story* Mural
***Mural to tour with West Side Story to Atlanta Opera and
Lyric Opera of Chicago***

Kansas City, MO (July 6, 2018) –Lyric Opera of Kansas City today announced a partnership with Teens in Transition to create a new community project culminating in the creation of a street mural reflecting the themes of the 61st season-opening production of ***West Side Story***. The artwork created here will be included in a growing, “in-progress” traveling exhibition of ***West Side Story***-themed murals from Houston Grand Opera and The Glimmerglass Festival; the exhibition will continue to grow as it travels with this production of ***West Side Story*** to future engagements at Atlanta Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago.

Working with Lyric Opera’s Education department, Teens in Transition will engage local teens who will work in teams to get acquainted with ***West Side Story*** and explore issues raised in the work, such as gang violence and immigration, then collaboratively create murals that will be displayed with other street art at the Lyric Opera performances of ***West Side Story***, September 22-30 at the Kauffman Center. Additionally, the works will travel to Atlanta and Chicago, where those opera companies will also work with street artists to add to the displays.

Teens in Transition (“TNT”) is a program in which at-risk teens led by Kansas City No Violence Alliances (KC NoVA), a community collaboration among several organizations committed to reducing violent crime in the urban core, including the Kansas City Police Department, the Jackson County Prosecuting Attorney’s office, the FBI, the ATF and other groups. Funded by the offices of the Mayor and Jackson County Prosecutor, this program has brought 40 teens at risk for violence together each of the past three summers. Led by Michael Toombs of [Arts Tech](#), they learn conflict-resolution skills, and undergo job training and art therapy. Throughout the program, KCPD’s school resource officers work alongside the teens to build relationships and trust. The officers who nominate the teens volunteer to work with them during the summer program to develop a code of conduct, have sex education classes, and meet with groups such as Mothers in Charge. The youths who graduate from the program have significantly fewer negative contacts with police than before they started. For more information, please visit <http://kansascitynova.org/news.php?id=38>

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

Lyric Opera General Director and CEO **Deborah Sandler** said, “This project originated with Houston Grand Opera. Perryn Leech, HGO’s Managing Director, contacted us with an idea from **West Side Story** director Francesca Zambello: what if we found street artists or muralists who had never seen or heard of **West Side Story** before, and engage them in a meaningful art project that will also enjoy widespread exposure? We loved this idea. These kids haven’t *seen West Side Story*; they’ve been *living* it. Who better to tell the story?”

Kansas City Mayor “Sly” James stated, “This is a wonderful opportunity for this year’s program participants to collaborate with the world of professional theater and music, courtesy of our renowned Lyric Opera, and to learn how art, in its many forms, is a far more constructive, powerful way to express themselves than any form of violence or anger.”

There will be six teams, each with a police officer, a teen artist who works with Michael Toombs, and the TNT members. The teens view the **West Side Story** film and discuss it, listen to the soundtrack, and view images created by the set and costume designers of this brand new staged production. Painting began June 25 and continues through July.

These 4’x8’ panels will be incorporated into one large display. They will be unveiled at a final celebration of Teens in Transition in early August.

The panels will then be displayed at the Lyric Opera of Kansas City administration office atrium as part of the First Friday event on September 7.

On September 20, the artists will also attend the final dress rehearsal of the Lyric’s production of **West Side Story**, when their panels will join the 8’x8’ murals painted by artists with the same guidelines, which were chosen to represent the productions from Houston Grand Opera and Glimmerglass Festival. They will be part of a lobby display in the Kauffman Center’s Brandmeyer Great Hall during the Lyric Opera’s run of **West Side Story**, Sept. 22-30, 2018.

Four of the murals will then travel with the production to join work from other artists chosen by other companies presenting this production of **West Side Story**. These include Atlanta Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago. Unless otherwise requested for return, the murals will remain with the production, ready for other possible exhibitions.

The remaining two panels will be part of an Open Spaces exhibit of murals representing ten community centers in Kansas City.

Visit www.kcopera.org for more information about Lyric Opera of Kansas City 2018-2019 season and www.kauffmancenter.org for a downloadable media kit about the Kauffman Center.

2018-2019 Season at a Glance:

NEW PRODUCTION

West Side Story

Leonard Bernstein, 1957

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

Sung in English with English subtitles

Based on a conception of Jerome Robbins

Composer: Leonard Bernstein | Book: Arthur Laurents | Lyrics: Stephen Sondheim

Entire original production directed and choreographed by Jerome Robbins

Saturday, September 22, 2018 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, September 23, 2018 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday, September 26, 2018 7:30 p.m.

Friday, September 28, 2018 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, September 30, 2018 2:00 p.m.

Director: Francesca Zambello*

Conductor: David Charles Abell

Maria: Vanessa Becerra*

Tony: Andrew Bidlack

Anita: Gabrielle McClinton

Riff: Brian Vu*

Bernardo: D.J. Petrosino

Madama Butterfly

Giacomo Puccini, 1904

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

Saturday, November 3, 2018 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 7, 2018 7:30 p.m.

Friday, November 9, 2018 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, November 11, 2018 2:00 p.m.

Director: Ron Daniels*

Conductor: Ryan McAdams

Cio-Cio San: Karah Son*

Pinkerton: Georgy Vasiliev*

Sharpless: Daniel Belcher

Suzuki: Kristen Choi*

Goro: Julius Ahn*

Così fan tutte

Wolfgang A. Mozart, 1798

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

Saturday, March 16, 2019 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 20, 2019 7:30 p.m.

Friday, March 22, 2019 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 24, 2019 2:00 p.m.

Director: James Alexander

Conductor: Jane Glover *

Fiordiligi: Vanessa Vasquez*

Dorabella: Daniela Mack*

Ferrando: Alasdair Kent*

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

Guglielmo: John Viscardi
Despina: Maureen McKay
Don Alfonso: Patrick Carfizzi

The Pearl Fishers

George Bizet, 1863
Sung in French with English subtitles

Saturday, April 27, 2019 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:30 p.m.
Friday, May 3, 2019 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, May 5, 2019 2:00 p.m.

Director: Andrew Sinclair*
Conductor: Antony Walker*
Leila: Maeve Höglund*
Nadir: Sean Panikkar
Zurga: John Moore*
Nourabad: Christian Zaremba*

* Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut

About Lyric Opera of Kansas City

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. 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 Lyric Opera of Kansas City on Facebook or follow us on Twitter at @kcopera or on Instagram @kcopera.

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.

###

Please direct all media inquiries to Ellen McDonald, 816.213.4355.

For Tickets: kcopera.org or 816.471.7344