



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**BROOKLYN'S AMERICAN OPERA PROJECTS
SELECTS COMPOSERS & LIBRETTISTS FOR 2011-12 SEASON;
FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM OFFERS FREE TRAINING
IN THE FUNDAMENTALS OF OPERA**

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Composers & the Voice

BROOKLYN, NY – American Opera Projects (AOP) is proud to announce its selection of composers and librettists for the 2011-2012 season of its popular *Composers & the Voice* program. Chosen by *Composers & the Voice* Artistic Director Steven Osgood, the 2011-2012 season will include composers **Mikael Karlsson**, **Robert Paterson**, **Rachel Peters**, and **Ronnie Reshef** and composer/librettist teams **Zach Redler/Sara Cooper** and **Sidney Marquez Boquiren/Daniel Neer**. The primary focus of *Composers & the Voice* is to give composers and librettists experience working collaboratively with singers on writing for the voice and contemporary opera stage.

The composers and librettists will begin their year-long fellowship in September, working with the company's Resident Ensemble of Singers – sopranos **Amy Shoremount-Obra** and **Andrea Arias Martin**, mezzo-soprano **Rebecca Ringle**, tenor **Brandon Snook**, baritone **Jorell Williams**, and bass-baritone **Justin Hopkins** – and an Artistic Team of music directors, guest composers, and a new partnership with Irondale Ensemble Project for training in drama and improv. All sessions will be in Fort Greene, Brooklyn, home of AOP and Irondale.

At the end of the program, American Opera Projects will present the results of the participants' work in public performances – *First Glimpse*, a concert of songs in Spring 2012, and *Six Scenes*, an evening of short opera scenes in Fall 2012. One of these operas-in-progress will be selected to receive a staged reading at Manhattan School of Music in Spring 2013. Additional information can be found at AOP's website www.operaprojects.org.

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is supporting AOP's *Composer & the Voice* program through 2014 as part of a two hundred thousand (\$200,000) grant award, which also covers artistic personnel and other program activities. AOP General Director Charles Jarden writes, "The Mellon Foundation's input and perspective was invaluable in expanding on AOP's first five years of *Composers & the Voice*, now easily making it one of the strongest opera artist training programs in the country. We eagerly await the innovative works that will emerge from our next two seasons of composers."

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Composers & Librettists:

Sidney Marquez Boquiren, composer - multi-disciplinary compositions include *The Civilized Captivity of a Primitive Existence* (2008), *Four Songs* (2009), *We Will Not Be Silent* (2010), and *Odes to Earth and Air* (2010), a multi-media chamber opera with lyrics by Daniel Neer, and video and direction by Ted Gorodetzky.

Sara Cooper, librettist – Graduate of the Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program at Tisch (NYU). As an educator, Sara has worked for Lincoln Center, CUNY City College, and Theater for the New City. Dramatists Guild and ASCAP. <http://saracooper.weebly.com>

Daniel Neer, librettist – Playwright, librettist and poet with a diverse performance career in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, The Guggenheim Museum, Apollo Theater, Radio City Music Hall, and in the original casts of two Broadway productions. <http://danielneer.com>

Mikael Karlsson, composer – Compositions for the concert stage, ballet, films, television and pop singers. He is a co-founder and artistic director of Please MusicWorks. www.mikaelk.com

Robert Paterson, composer – Classical Recording Foundation Composer of the Year and Music Alive composer-in-residence with the Vermont Youth Orchestra. He has received fellowships to the MacDowell Colony and Aspen, and is a co-founder of the American Modern Ensemble. www.robpaterson.com.

Ronnie Reshef, composer – Composer and performer of concert music and music for theatre and films. Works commissioned and performed by the *Israeli Chamber Project*, NY *Szygy Ensemble*, and the *Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra*, throughout the US and Israel. www.ronniereshef.com

Zach Redler, composer – Composer, pianist, copyist, musicologist and musical director. Graduate of NYU Tisch's Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program. www.zachredler.com

Rachel Peters, composer – 2010 New Dramatists Composer-Librettist Studio. Member of ASCAP and Dramatists Guild. Double B.A. from Brandeis University and MFA from NYU. www.racheljpeters.com

Singers:

Amy Shoremount-Obra, soprano – Appearances at Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, David H. Koch Theater (Lincoln Center), Oslo Konserthus (Norway), amongst others. www.amyshoremount-obra.com

Andrea Arias Martin, soprano – Glimmerglass Opera 2011 as Micaela in *Carmen* (cover) and Elaine in *Later the Same Evening*. Graduate of Manhattan School of Music Masters program. www.andreaarias-martin.com

Rebecca Ringle, mezzo-soprano - A graduate of Oberlin Conservatory and The Yale School of Music, Rebecca has been praised by Opera News for her "richly focused voice." www.rebeccaringle.com

Brandon Snook, tenor – 2010-11 Sarasota opera Apprentice Program, Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville* (Cincinnati Opera). Graduate of University of Michigan Masters program.

Jorell Williams, baritone – A graduate of SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Music and Manhattan School of Music "A solid vocal core and easy, natural production" – Opera News. www.myspace.com/jorellwilliams

Justin Hopkins, bass-baritone – 2010-11 productions include *Roméo et Juliette* (Frère Laurent) with Opera Company of Philadelphia and Philip Glass' *Hydrogen Jukebox* with Fort Worth Opera. www.robert-gilder.com

Steven Osgood, Composers & the Voice Artistic Director – Former Artistic Director of American Opera Projects (2001-2008), during which time he created the Composers and the Voice Workshop series. He most recently made his debut at Fort Worth Opera conducting Philip Glass' *Hydrogen Jukebox*. <http://srosgood.com>

FULL BIOS AND PROJECT INFO at www.operaprojects.org

ABOUT AMERICAN OPERA PROJECTS

American Opera Projects (AOP), located in Fort Greene, Brooklyn, is an opera company devoted to the development of innovative opera and to supporting the work of living composers and librettists. AOP has presented over 15 world premiere operas including Lee Hoiby's *This is the Rill Speaking* (2008), Stefan Weisman's *Darkling* (2006), and Paula Kimper's *Patience & Sarah* (1998). Recent productions of AOP-developed projects include *Séance on a Wet Afternoon* at New York City Opera (2011) and the world premiere of *Before Night Falls* at Fort Worth Opera (2010). Upcoming in 2011: AOP-developed "Peter Quince at the Clavier" at Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, World Premiere of Tarik O'Regan's *Heart of Darkness* at The Royal Opera House's Linbury Studio and *Opera Grows in Brooklyn* at Galapagos Art Space in September. www.operaprojects.org.

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