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**AMERICAN OPERA PROJECTS HOSTS AFTERNOON OF NEW & CLASSIC
SONGS CELEBRATING BROOKLYN'S INFLUENCE ON OPERA
SUNDAY JUNE 21, NOON TO 4 PM**

**3 SONGS BASED ON BROOKLYN TEENS' POETRY TO PREMIERE
OPERA ON TAP, RHYMES WITH OPERA, AND SONGS FROM
FELSENFELD, GRIFFITH, & ROSE FILL PROGRAM IN FT GREENE PARK**

AMERICAN OPERA PROJECTS (AOP), "known for bringing cutting-edge vocal production to the masses," (*New York*) will present **The Voice of Brooklyn: Opera and Song from the People's Republic**, a free outdoor concert of new songs and old standards that highlight Brooklyn's influence on opera. Included will be the world premiere of "**Songs from the F Train**," by composer **Gilda Lyons** based on poetry by three Brooklyn children. The program will be presented as part of the annual Make Music New York Festival on **Sunday, June 21 from Noon to 4pm** at Fort Greene Park in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. The event is free. A full schedule and details on the performances can be found by visiting www.operaprojects.org.

Songs by contemporary opera composers **Daniel Felsenfeld**, **Jennifer Griffith**, and **Michael Rose** will be featured alongside works from Brooklyn born composers **Aaron Copland** and **George Gershwin** among others. The afternoon will also include performances by **Rhymes with Opera** and **Opera on Tap**, whose recent collaboration with AOP at Galapagos Art Space was called "an exciting new level of work for these young companies. Brooklyn and the rest of the city will benefit from future collaborations like these." (*The Curator*)

The afternoon will feature the premiere of "**Songs from the F Train**," by composer **Gilda Lyons**, a co-commission from American Opera Projects, **Fort Greene Park Conservancy** and **The Walt Whitman Project**. "Songs from the F Train" is a setting of poems by Brooklyn youths Samori Covington (age 9), Alexis Cummings, and Najaya Royal (both age 12) that were written recently in a poetry workshop led by Brooklyn writer Angeli Rasbury. The piece will be performed by mezzo-soprano Nicole Mitchell (New York City Opera's *Margaret Garner*, AOP's *This Is the Rill Speaking*) and will be followed by settings of Brooklyn poet **Walt Whitman** by Ms. Lyons, **Jack Perla** and **Richard Brooks**.

For over 20 years, **American Opera Projects** (AOP) has been creating, developing and presenting exclusively new American opera and music theatre projects that have appeared at the Royal Opera House, London, the Lincoln Center Festival, Skirball Center at NYU, the Guggenheim Museum, Symphony Space, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and many other national and international venues. AOP, based in Fort Greene, Brooklyn, 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). Upcoming world premieres of AOP-developed projects include *Séance on a Wet Afternoon*, the first opera by Stephen Schwartz, at Opera Santa Barbara in 2009 and Jorge Martín's *Before Night Falls* at Fort Worth Opera in 2010.

Company info:

American Opera Projects: www.operaprojects.org

Fort Greene Park Conservancy: www.fortgreenepark.org

The Walt Whitman Project: www.whitmanproject.org

Make Music NY: www.makemusicny.org

Opera on Tap: www.operaontap.com

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