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Press contact: Matt Gray, AOP Company Manager, email: mgray@operaprojects.org, phone: 718-398-4024
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A 2500-YEAR-OLD MUSIC BATTLE OF THE GODS CONTINUES AS AN OPERA IN BROOKLYN THIS MAY

NEW YORK, NY, April 13, 2009 – **AMERICAN OPERA PROJECTS (AOP)** will present a concert workshop of scenes from *Judgment of Midas*, the first opera by Turkish-American composer **Kamran Ince**, on **Saturday, May 9, 8pm** and on **Monday, May 11, 7:30pm** at South Oxford Space, 138 South Oxford Street in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. The story of the mythical musical battle between Apollo and Pan, *Judgment of Midas* is slated for production in 2010 in Turkey to mark the 50th anniversary of the archaeological excavations of Sardis/Lydia where the musical contest was set. A post-show reception with the creators will take place after each performance. Tickets are \$10.

The piano-vocal workshop will include performances by tenor **John Duykers** (The Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera), mezzo-soprano **Abigail Fischer** (Bronx Opera, AOP) and tenor **Matt Morgan** (New York City Opera, New Orleans Opera) under the musical direction of J. David Jackson (5/9) and Jonathan Khuner (5/11) with Charity Wicks on piano.

Judgment of Midas features a libretto by Miriam Seidel (*Violet Fire* at BAM) and takes as its starting point a series of mythical musical contests described in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* between Pan, maker of "street" music—music of the people—and Apollo, maker of the Gods' music—the spiritual or "high" music and judged by King Midas on Mount Tmolus, near the current excavation site in Sardis, Turkey. The opera's musical language will exploit popular, ethnic, and folk musical styles side by side with serious music of epic proportions, creating a vivid blaze of musical contrasts.

The opera is being commissioned and developed to mark the **50th anniversary of the Sardis/Lydia excavations** (sponsored by Harvard and Cornell Universities) and is slated for production in 2010. It marks the first collaboration between American Opera Projects and Berkeley Opera in California, led by music director Jonathan Khuner.

Judgment of Midas is part of American Opera Projects' **First Chance** series, a seasonal program that allows composers and librettists to hear their work in part or in full for the first time before an audience, with live singers and accompaniment. AOP produced a libretto reading of the opera in November 2007 in Brooklyn.

Tickets to each performance are \$10 and may be reserved by calling 718-398-4024 or by visiting www.operaprojects.org.

AMERICAN OPERA PROJECTS, *Judgment of Midas*

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Kamran Ince (composer) has been hailed by *The Los Angeles Times* as “that rare composer able to sound connected with modern music, and yet still seem exotic.” Ince was born in Montana in 1960 to American and Turkish parents. He holds a Doctorate from Eastman School of Music, and currently serves as Co-Director of MIAM (Center for Advanced Research in Music) at the Istanbul Technical University and Professor of Composition at University of Memphis. His works are performed by the leading orchestras of the world. Concerts devoted to his music have recently been heard at the Holland Festival, CBC Encounter Series (Toronto), the Istanbul International Music Festival, Estoril Festival (Lisbon), TurkFest (London), and Cultural Influences in Globalization Festival (Ho Chi Minh City). His *Waves of Talya* was named one of the best chamber works of the 20th Century by a living composer in the Chamber Music Magazine. Among upcoming projects is an orchestral work commissioned to celebrate Istanbul’s 2010 European Capital of Culture tenure, and a Piano Quartet for the Los Angeles Piano Quartet commissioned by Arizona Friends of Chamber Music. www.kamranince.com

Miriam Seidel (librettist) conceived and wrote the libretto for *Violet Fire*, a multimedia opera about Nikola Tesla, with score by Jon Gibson. Following a workshop production at Temple University in Philadelphia, *Violet Fire* received its world premiere at the National Theater Belgrade, Serbia, and its U.S. premiere at the Brooklyn Academy of Music’s Next Wave Festival. Other dramatic works of hers include the radio play *Interference*, with sound score by John Phillips, broadcast by New American Radio; and *The Big Picture*, produced as part of the 2000 Voices series at InterAct Theater in Philadelphia. Seidel’s short fiction has been seen in *Exquisite Corpse*, *Washington Square*, *Phoebe*, *First Intensity* and elsewhere, and her writing on the arts has appeared in journals including *Art in America* (as a Corresponding Editor), *the Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Public Art Review* and *Dance Magazine*. She is also Curator of the Galleries at the Gershman Y, an arts and culture center in Philadelphia. www.miriamseidel.com

American Opera Projects (AOP) is a driving force behind the revitalization of contemporary opera and music theater in the United States through its exclusive devotion to creating, developing and present new American Opera and music theatre projects. AOP’s mission is to champion innovative works of music theater, to expand the art form, and to identify, develop and present new works by emerging and established talent. AOP productions have appeared at the Royal Opera House, London, the Lincoln Center Festival, Skirball Center at NYU, the Guggenheim Museum, Symphony Space, the Annenberg Center in Philadelphia, Berlin’s Stükke Theater and Max Kade Auditorium, Aleksander Fredro Teatr in Poland, the Ensemble Theater am Petersplatz in Vienna, TADA! Children’s theater, The Center for Jewish History, the Daryl Roth 2 Theatre, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and at many out-of-doors performances sponsored by the City of New York Department of Parks and Recreation. AOP won a 2006 *Encore* Award from the Arts & Business Council of NY for its innovative work and is a member of OPERA America. www.operaprojects.org

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