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**“THE PREMIERE OF THE NEXT GREAT MASTERWORK BY  
THE NEXT GREAT COMPOSER” AND/OR COLD BEER  
AT “OPERA GROWS IN BROOKLYN” - MONDAY OCT 18, 8 PM  
OPERA REDUX OF ELVIS PRESLEY SONGS MIX WITH NEW OPERA  
SCENES AND SONGS FROM COMPOSERS BURHANS, ENG, GARFEIN**

Two Brooklyn opera companies, **AMERICAN OPERA PROJECTS (AOP)** and **OPERA ON TAP (OOT)**, will present the sixth installment of their **Opera Grows in Brooklyn** series, a 90-minute evening of opera scenes and songs. The evening will feature *Opera Elvis: A Lament for the King*, a classical take on the works of Elvis Presley; scenes from *Henry's Wife* by composer **Randall Eng** and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, based on the play by **Tom Stoppard** and adapted as an opera by composer/librettist **Herschel Garfein**; and the monodrama *A Poem Written for the Concrete Beneath the Bridge* by **Caleb Burhans**. The show will be held on **Monday, October 18 at 8pm** at Galapagos Art Space in Brooklyn's DUMBO neighborhood. Tickets are \$20 in advance at [www.galapagosartspace.com](http://www.galapagosartspace.com) and \$25 at the door.

*Opera Grows in Brooklyn* is an ongoing collaboration between American Opera Projects, “known for bringing cutting-edge vocal production to the masses,” (*New York*), and Opera on Tap, “...raucous and sublime...un-elitist, imperfect, and fun...” (*NY Sun*), that presents 90 minutes of songs and scenes from contemporary composers in a hip, cabaret-style atmosphere. Audiences have a chance to meet the artists and composers after the performance.

**Opera on Tap**, New York's best and favorite divebar opera company pairs up with **Anti-Social Music**, New York's best punk-chamber orchestra/ composer consortium to bring Elvis (and opera?) back to life with **Opera Elvis: A Lament for the King**, a contemporary classically-influenced look at the works of America's first great monarch replete with opera singers, impersonators, costumes, and re-orchestrations. Arrangements by James Barry, Daniel Felsenfeld, Jeffrey Hudgins, Daniel Lasaga, David Mallamud, Mitch Marcus, Pat Muchmore, and Kamala Sankaram. With a special tribute film by Donald O'Finn of late great Freddy's Bar and Backroom fame.

**American Opera Projects** continues the evening with selections from two very different operas-in-development – *Henry's Wife* and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*. Composer/librettist Herschel Garfein's adaptation of the 1967 play of the same title by Tom Stoppard, *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*, retells the story of *Hamlet* from the point-of-view of two minor characters in the Shakespeare play. Baritones **Matthew Burns** and **Matthew Morris** sing the title roles. *Henry's Wife* by composer Randall Eng tells the tragic story of a widower who releases his wife and daughter into the arms of another man at the request of his late wife's ghost. Featuring performances by baritone **James Sasser** and mezzo-soprano **Carla Jablonski** under the direction of **David Herskovits** (Artistic Director, Target Margin Theatre). Pianist **Mila Henry** accompanies both pieces.

Composer/saxophonist and MacArthur fellow John Zorn recently stated, “Caleb Burhans typifies today's new musicianship in being a composer/performer who sings countertenor, plays violin/viola and specializes in contemporary music, early music, pop, rock and free improvisation. Twenty-five years ago there were only a handful of musicians with such a versatility but now it is becoming more and more the norm – a great sign for future directions in new music.” The evening will showcase Burhans' poly-stylistic song, “**A Poem Written for the**

**Concrete Beneath the Bridge**” based on Ellen Crow’s haunting poem about nature and the fragility of life. Performing the demanding work will be Mezzo-Soprano, **Virginia Warnken**. A full time member of the Trinity Wall Street choir, Ms. Warnken has been a soloist with the Masterworks Chorale, Clarion Music Society and the Oratorio Society of New York. She is also a member of the new music vocal octet Roomful of Teeth, of which Caleb Burhans was composer in residence in 2010. The composer will join her at the piano with stage direction by **Erin Stoneking**.

“You never really know if you’ll be there for the premiere of the next great masterwork by the next great composer, and if you aren’t, well, the beer is still cold,” the opera blog *Parterrebox* declared about *Opera Grows in Brooklyn*. The inaugural performance of the series at Galapagos in April 2009 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*). Past *Opera Grows in Brooklyn* performances have featured music by Nico Muhly, Tom Cipullo, David T. Little, Corey Dargel, Christopher Berg, and Jack Perla and performances by David Adam Moore, Andrew Drost, Abigail Fischer, Lauren Worsham, Jonathan Hays, and Daisy Press.

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 and recent productions of AOP-developed projects include *Séance on a Wet Afternoon*, the first opera by Stephen Schwartz, at New York City Opera in April 2011 and the world premieres of Jorge Martín’s *Before Night Falls* at Fort Worth Opera in 2010 and Tarik O'Regan's *Heart of Darkness* at The Royal Opera House's Linbury Studio in 2011. [www.operaprojects.org](http://www.operaprojects.org)

**Opera on Tap**’s mission is to bring opera to new audiences by performing in bars, rock concert halls, and other alternative spaces. Born in the backroom of a Brooklyn divebar in 2005, *Opera on Tap* has gained national press recognition, several performance residencies across the city, and regional Chapters in New Orleans, Chicago, Ann Arbor, MI, and most recently Atlanta. In addition to *Opera Grows in Brooklyn*, OOT hosts a new music concert series called *New Brew* at Barbes in Brooklyn the first Friday of every other month and annually co-produces the critically acclaimed *21c Liederabend* in collaboration with *Beth Morrison Projects* and *VisionIntoArt*. *21c Liederabend* was named best of 2009 in *TimeOut NY* in opera and classical by music editor Steve Smith. [www.operaontap.com](http://www.operaontap.com)

## PHOTO GALLERY

Photos: [www.flickr.com/photos/americanoperaprojects/collections/72157622798061705/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/americanoperaprojects/collections/72157622798061705/)



## CALENDAR LISTING INFORMATION

### OPERA GROWS IN BROOKLYN

featuring

#### **Opera Elvis: A Lament for the King**

Opera on Tap and Anti-Social Music present a hunka burnin' opera love

Music by Elvis Presley

Arrangements by James Barry, Daniel Felsenfeld, Jeffrey Hudgins, Daniel Lasaga, David Mallamud, Mitch Marcus, Pat Muchmore, and Kamala Sankaram.

Performances by Delea Shand, Seth Gilman, Barbara Staffen, Alissa Hunnicutt, Vaughn Lindquist, Annie Ricci, Kamala Sankaram, and David Schmidt.

With a special tribute film by Donald O'Finn of late great Freddy's Bar and Backroom fame.

#### **Henry's Wife and Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead**

American Opera Projects presents songs and scenes from two new operas

**Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead** (excerpts)

Music and libretto by Herschel Garfein

Based on the play by Tom Stoppard

Performed by Matthew Burns, Matthew Morris, Carla Jablonski

Mila Henry, musical director/piano

**Henry's Wife** (excerpts)

Music and libretto by Herschel Garfein

Based on the play by Tom Stoppard

Performed by James Sasser, Carla Jablonski

David Herskovits, stage director; Mila Henry, musical director/piano

#### **A Poem Written for the Concrete Beneath the Bridge**

Music by Caleb Burhans

Performed by Virginia Warnken

Caleb Burhans, musical director/piano; Erin Stoneking, stage director

Monday, October 18, 8:00pm

Location: Galapagos Art Space 16 Main Street at Water Street, DUMBO, Brooklyn, NY.  
Subway – F train to York Street; A/C train to High Street.

Directions: [www.galapagosartspace.com](http://www.galapagosartspace.com)

Tickets: Advance: \$20 General / \$15 Students/Seniors; Door: \$25.

Tickets available at [www.galapagosartspace.com](http://www.galapagosartspace.com)

[www.operaprojects.org](http://www.operaprojects.org) for press material and profiles on this event's featured artists.