

# American Opera Projects & Works & Process at the Guggenheim

For Immediate Release

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Tickets & Info: (212) 423-3587



## Arvo Pärt music staged as opera and dance at Guggenheim on January 11 & 12, 2009

Premiere performances and noted artists in opera, dance, and visual arts highlight sleek staging of Arvo Pärt and a new work from composer Tarik O'Regan

NEW YORK, NY, December 8, 2008 - While performing arts centers around the country struggle to stage high-budget standard productions, **American Opera Projects (AOP)**, the Brooklyn-based company "known for bringing cutting-edge vocal productions to the masses" (*New York Magazine*), and **Works & Process at the Guggenheim Museum** co-present three stream-lined music-theatre works featuring celebrated composers **Arvo Pärt** and **Tarik O'Regan**. The triple bill, which charts a new and timely course for opera and dance, will be performed at the Guggenheim Museum's Peter B. Lewis Theatre on **Sunday, January 11 and Monday, January 12, 2009 at 7:30 PM.**

The program will feature Estonian composer **Arvo Pärt's** *L'abbé Agathon* in the world premiere operatic version commissioned by AOP. *L'abbé Agathon*, originally composed for soprano Barbara Hendricks and the Ensemble de Violoncelles de Beauvais has been transformed by AOP, with Pärt's supervision, into a chamber opera. The opera will be premiered by soprano **Lauren Flanigan** in a commissioned English translation by **Cori Ellison**. *L'Abbé Agathon* will be re-imagined by French visual artist **Sophie Calle**, with a film installation by Ms. Calle. AOP's commissioning fund is comprised in part from a grant from the Peter Jay Sharp Foundation. The monodrama *L'abbé Agathon* marks the first completed opera in a series of monodrama projects that AOP will produce throughout 2009, entitled **The Peter Jay Sharp Solo Project**.

The program will also include a preview of music from AOP-Artistic Partner and current Grammy nominee (best classical and best choral album *Threshold of the Night*) **Tarik O'Regan**. AOP has commissioned O'Regan to set poet **Anna Rabinowitz's** book-length poem *The Wanton Sublime*. **J. David Jackson** conducts a string orchestra made of players from the MET Orchestra and The NY City and Opera orchestras, which have no performances during the rehearsal and performance dates. The program at the Guggenheim also boasts dancers from the New York City Ballet, **Wendy Whelan**, **Albert Evans** and **Sébastien Marcovici**, in choreographer **Christopher Wheeldon's** *Liturgy* set to Pärt's *Fratres* and *After the Rain* set to Pärt's *Spiegel im Spiegel*.

Focusing attention on the bare essentials in these belt-tightening times, the monodramas and pas de deux will emphasize the pure artistic beauty of Pärt's and O'Regan's compositions, avoiding grand sets and costumes. This production heralds the new and necessary direction for the performing arts in the years to come, focusing the audience's attention on the power of simplicity: words, movement, visuals, conspiring, without hierarchy, with music to make an opera.

Visit [www.operaprojects.org](http://www.operaprojects.org) for press photos and profiles on each of the artists above.

**American Opera Projects and Works & Process at the Guggenheim  
present an evening of new music and new visions featuring**

***L'abbé Agathon*** (operatic world premiere)

Music by Arvo Pärt

Performed by Lauren Flanigan

Directed by Sophie Calle

English translation by Cori Ellison

Film installation by Sophie Calle

Featuring AOP string ensemble

J. David Jackson, conductor

***After the Rain and Liturgy*** (two pas de deux dances)

Based on *Spiegel im Spiegel* and *Fratres* by Arvo Pärt

Performed by Wendy Whelan, Albert Evans and Sébastien Marcovici

Choreographed by Christopher Wheeldon

***The Wanton Sublime*** (excerpts from AOP-commissioned and developing opera)

Music by Tarik O'Regan

Libretto by Anna Rabinowitz, based on her book

Featuring AOP string ensemble

J. David Jackson, conductor

**Sun & Mon, January 11-12, 7:30pm**

**Location:** Peter B. Lewis Theater Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum 1071 Fifth Avenue at 89th Street Subway – 4,5,6 train to 86th Street Bus – M1, M2, M3, or M4 bus on Madison or Fifth Avenue

**Tickets:** \$30 General \$25 Guggenheim Members \$10 Students. \$50 w/ preshow lecture with the artists. The public may call (212) 423-3587, M-F, 1–5 PM to order tickets and for more information visit [worksandprocess.org](http://worksandprocess.org).

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

### American Opera Projects (AOP), producer

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.

### Works & Process at the Guggenheim, producer

Since 1984 and in over 300 productions, Works & Process at the Guggenheim has been a pioneer in creating groundbreaking and carefully crafted programs that provide unprecedented access to today's leading performing artists, choreographers, composers, writers, directors, poets, and minds. Each program uniquely blends performance, demonstration, and discussion among creative collaborators and explores the creative process. Following often sold-out performances in the intimate Frank Lloyd Wright-designed 285-seat theater, a reception for the audience and artists takes place in the museum's rotunda. Described by the *New York Times* as "a popular series devoted to shedding light on the creative process," by the *Village Voice* as "revelatory," and by the *New Yorker* as "exceptional," Works & Process has become well-respected by both artists and audiences alike and is produced by Mary Sharp Cronson.

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