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**AMERICAN OPERA PROJECTS PRESENTS NEW MUSIC SCENES,  
FRIDAY TO SUNDAY MAY 29 TO 31**

**GREGORY SPEARS' OPERA "PAUL'S CASE" BASED ON WILLA CATHER  
STORY AND RICHARD WARGO'S "SHARON'S GRAVE" AT  
BROOKLYN'S SOUTH OXFORD SPACE AND PRINCETON UNIVERSITY.**

**AMERICAN OPERA PROJECTS (AOP)** "a valuable company [that] offers a chance to look in on operas in progress by talented composers." (*The New Yorker*) will present evenings of concert readings from two operas-in-development: *Paul's Case*, by **Gregory Spears**, who "fashioned a dreamy suspense" (*The New York Times*) with his instrumental work "Finishing" at Zankel Hall in November, and *Sharon's Grave* by **Richard Wargo**, hailed by *Opera News* as "a born opera composer." The program will be presented on **Friday, May 29 and Saturday, May 30, 8pm** at South Oxford Space, 138 South Oxford Street in Fort Greene, Brooklyn and **Sunday, May 31, 5pm** at McAlpin Recital Hall at Princeton University, NJ, sponsored by the Dept. of Music. Tickets to each performance are \$15 and may be reserved by calling 718-398-4024 or by visiting [www.operaprojects.org](http://www.operaprojects.org).

Based on Pulitzer Prize-winning author **Willia Cather's** story of the same name with a libretto by the composer and **Kathryn Walat**, *Paul's Case* chronicles the dissolution of a high school dandy living in sooty turn-of-the-century Pittsburgh. In Richard Wargo's *Sharon's Grave*, a dark comedy based on the play by **John B. Keane**, family members scheme to inherit the land of a dying patriarch against a backdrop of Irish folklore and legend.

Mr. Spears' instrumental music has been called "dreamy" (*The New York Times*) and "remarkable" (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*). He has had recent works premiered at Carnegie Hall and choreographed by such dance luminaries as Mark Morris and Christopher Williams. Mr. Spears began development on *Paul's Case* during the composer's 2007-08 tenure with the AOP series *Composers & the Voice*. Heralded by *The Philadelphia Enquirer* as "a fresh new voice in American opera," composer Richard Wargo's (*The Music Shop*) opera *Ballymore*, based on Brian Friel's play "Lovers," premiered in 1999 at the Skylight Opera Theatre, where it was recorded for PBS.

Singers slated to perform include New York City Opera baritone **Marcus DeLoach**, tenor **Chad Johnson** (BAM, Glimmerglass Opera) and mezzo-soprano **Hai-Ting Chinn** (The Wooster Group's *La Didone*, AOP's *Darkling*) under the musical direction of Jennifer Peterson (*Paul's Case*) and Steven Osgood (*Sharon's Grave*), with stage direction by Ned Canty. A panel discussion and post-show reception with both composers and the cast will take place after each performance.

Release date: April 21, 2009

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