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ODYSSEY OPERA ANNOUNCES 2019-20 SEASON: AN EXPLORATION OF ENGLAND'S TUDOR DYNASTY

BOSTON, MA (For Release 06.27.19) — One of the nation's most adventurous opera companies, **Odyssey Opera**, today announced the company's 2019-20 season featuring concert and staged operas about the great English dynasty of the 16th century: the Tudors. Celebrating its seventh season, Odyssey Opera brings the drama of this famous family to life through six productions including the world premiere of Arnold Rosner's *The Chronicle of Nine*. (Please scroll down for complete details.)

“On television, in movies or on the stage, 500 years later we can't get enough of this family”, says Artistic and General Director **Gil Rose**. “Love triangles, political intrigue, banishment, imprisonment, beheadings; from the Queen's chambers to the Tower of London, there won't be a dull moment in our coming season. The reign of the Tudors has all the ingredients for fabulous opera!”

In what has become an Odyssey tradition, the season will begin with a concert performance of a rarely performed Grand Opera. This year the tradition continues with Camille Saint-Saëns's *Henry VIII* based on *El cisma en Inglaterra (The schism in England)* by Pedro Calderón de la Barca. It premiered in 1883 and received its North American premiere 100 years later in 1983. Baritone **Michael Chioldi** takes on the title role of Henry VIII. In November 2019, Odyssey Opera presents *Maria, Regina d'Inghilterra* by Giovanni Pacini. **Amy Shoremount-Obra** plays the role of Queen Mary I in a fully-staged production of this remarkable and largely forgotten opera.

Odyssey ushers in 2020 with the world premiere of Arnold Rosner's *The Chronicle of Nine*, a semi-staged co-production with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP). With soprano **Megan Pachecano** singing the lead role of Lady Jane Grey, this new work takes on the “nine-day queen”, Henry VII's great-granddaughter who has become an iconic Tudor victim: virginal, sweet and beheaded at the age of 16. The spring season begins with the fully-staged production of *Elisabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra*, the first of nine Rossini Neapolitan operas. An obscure offering probably because of its technically challenging, wide-ranging roles of two tenors and a soprano, Odyssey welcomes **Serena Farnocchia** as Queen Elizabeth I.

The season's final two operas hail from the 20th century: *Gloriana* (1953) by Benjamin Britten and *Merrie England* (1902) by Edward German. *Gloriana*, a co-production with New York City Opera, is

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in three acts based on Lytton Strachey's 1928 *Elizabeth and Essex: A Tragic History* retelling the unfolding relationship between Elizabeth I (played by soprano **Anna Caterina Antonacci**) and the Earl of Essex.

Merrie England ends Odyssey Opera's season with a satirical take on the love and rivalries at the court of Queen Elizabeth I (played by soprano **Claudia Waite**). The success of *Merrie England* established Edward German's position as heir apparent to Arthur Sullivan at the Savoy Theater in English comic opera.

All performances will be conducted by Gil Rose. Tickets are now on sale at OdysseyOpera.org or by calling 617.826.1626.

About Odyssey Opera

Founded in 2013 by artistic director/conductor Gil Rose, Odyssey Opera presents adventurous and eclectic works that affirm opera as a powerful expression of the human experience. Its world-class artists perform the operatic repertoire from its historic beginnings through lesser-known masterpieces to contemporary new works and commissions in varied formats and venues. Odyssey Opera sets standards of high musical and theatrical excellence and innovative programming to advance the operatic genre beyond the familiar and into undiscovered territory. Odyssey Opera takes its audience on a journey to places they've never been before. odysseyopera.org

ODYSSEY OPERA 2019-20 SEASON: THE TUDORS

Henry VIII (1883) by Camille Saint Saens

When: Saturday, September 21, 2019, 7:30 p.m.

Where: Jordan Hall, 30 Gainsborough Street, Boston

A dangerous monarch is determined to divorce Catherine of Aragon in favor of the beautiful, ambitious Anne Boleyn. This is one of history's most infamous love triangles and the beginning of the "King's Troubles". Saint-Saens's score brilliantly invokes an early Renaissance sensibility while remaining firmly rooted in the French grand opera tradition. Sweeping vocal melodies and rich orchestral writing bring this compelling tragedy to life.

Presented as a concert performance in French with English subtitles. Libretto by Léonce Détroyat and Armand Silvestre. Cast includes Michael Chioldi (Henry VIII) Ellie Dehn (Catherine of Aragon), and Hilary Ginther (Anne Boleyn).

Maria, Regina d'Inghilterra (1843) by Giovanni Pacini

When: Friday, November 1, 2019, 7:30 p.m. + Sunday, November 3, 2019, 2:00 p.m.

Where: Huntington Avenue Theater, 264 Huntington Avenue, Boston

Queen Mary I is infatuated with the Scottish adventurer Fenimore, who is in love with Clothilde, who in turn loves Ernesto. Romance and political intrigue are treacherous bedfellows in this opera based on Victor Hugo's play about Mary Tudor. A remarkable and largely forgotten opera, its

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expressive vocal characterization paints an unforgettable portrait of a Queen and the repercussions of her indulgence in an unwise love.

Presented as a fully-staged production in Italian with English subtitles. Libretto by Leopoldo Tarantini. Cast includes Amy Shoremount-Obra (Queen Mary I).

The Chronicle of Nine *world premiere* by Arnold Rosner

When: Saturday, February 1, 2020, 7:30 p.m.

Where: Jordan Hall, 30 Gainsborough Street, Boston

The nine-day reign of Henry VII's great-granddaughter ended with one of English history's notorious beheadings when Mary Tudor's supporters claimed the crown in 1553. This co-production of Odyssey Opera and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project brings the poignant story of Lady Jane Grey to Boston audiences in a world premiere by Arnold Rosner, a composer whose work is both genre busting and intensely emotional.

Presented as a semi-staged performance in English. From the play by Florence Stevenson. Cast includes Megan Pachecano (Lady Jane Grey).

Elisabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra (1815) by Gioachino Rossini

When: Friday, March 13, 2020, 7:30 p.m. + Sunday, March 15, 2020, 2:00 p.m.

Where: Huntington Avenue Theater, 264 Huntington Avenue, Boston

Queen Elizabeth I is dismayed to learn her revered Leicester has secretly married Matilde, daughter of Mary, Queen of Scots. In court, the Duke of Norfolk is poised to take advantage of this political opportunity. A rare offering from one of opera's most beloved composers, this is the first of the nine Rossini Neapolitan operas. The drama of the Elizabethan court meets Rossini's luminous and virtuosic vocal writing in this neglected masterpiece.

Presented as a fully-staged production in Italian with English subtitles. Libretto by Giovanni Schmidt. Cast includes Serena Farnocchia (Queen Elizabeth I) and Lucia Cesaroni (Matilde).

Gloriana (1953) by Benjamin Britten

When: Saturday, April 11, 2020, 7:30 p.m.

Where: Jordan Hall, 30 Gainsborough Street, Boston

Written in honor of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation, *Gloriana* depicts the later years of Queen Elizabeth I's reign and her complicated relationship with the Earl of Essex. Britten's imaginative use of genres from the Tudor period mixes with his own distinctive style to create a world at once Elizabethan and contemporary. From the stately world of court to her private chambers, this is a powerful portrait of an aging monarch in a changing world.

Presented as a concert performance in English. Libretto by William Plomer. Co-production with New York City Opera. Cast includes Anna Caterina Antonacci (Regina Gloriana).

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Merrie England (1902) by Edward German

When: Friday, June 12, 2020, 7:30 p.m. + Sunday, June 14, 2020, 2:00 p.m.

Where: The Boston Conservatory at Berklee, 4099 8, Fenway, Boston

The Queen is foiled in romance, as her beloved Sir Walter Raleigh courts the beautiful Bessie Throckmorton. Our season ends with a satirical take on the love and rivalries at the court of Queen Elizabeth I. The success of *Merrie England* established Edward German's position as heir apparent to Arthur Sullivan at the Savoy Theater in English comic opera. This engaging and colorful score combined with a witty libretto has been performed more often than any other British operetta written in the 20th century.

Presented as a fully-staged performance in English. Book and Lyrics by Basil Hood. Cast includes Claudia Waite (Good Queen Bess) and Daniel Greenwood (Sir Walter Raleigh).

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