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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE ATLANTA OPERA ANNOUNCES 2012-2013 SEASON

**Mainstage Productions at the Cobb Energy Centre to Include *Carmen*,
La traviata, and *The Italian Girl in Algiers* – Season Tickets on Sale Now**

Company to Launch New *My Opera* Donor Benefits Program

**Community Engagement Initiatives to Include 24-Hour Opera Project
and High School Opera Institute**

2012 Opera Ball to Feature *A Night in Seville* Theme

ATLANTA –Atlanta Opera Zurich General Director Dennis Hanthorn today announced the Atlanta Opera's 2012-2013 season. The Atlanta Opera's 2012-2013 mainstage productions at the [Cobb Energy Centre](#) will feature Bizet's popular classic *Carmen*, November 10-18, 2012; Verdi's tragic and romantic opera *La traviata*, March 2-10, 2013; and Rossini's comic opera *The Italian Girl in Algiers*, April 27-May 5, 2013. Season tickets are now on sale for the three Atlanta Opera mainstage productions at Cobb Energy Centre. Also announced were a donor benefits program called [MyOpera](#), a completely new approach to issuing donor benefits in the world of the performing arts; 2012-2013 community engagement initiatives, including the hugely successful [24-Hour Opera Project](#) and [High School Opera Institute](#); and the details of the 2012 Atlanta Opera Ball: *A Night in Seville*, a fundraiser supporting and sustaining the exceptional artistic quality of The Atlanta Opera. Production, casting, and season ticket information are

below, or can be found at atlantaopera.org. Season headshots and production images are available [here](#). Credit information is indicated on the digital file.

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Mainstage Productions

Carmen

November 10, 13, 16 and 18, 2012

The Atlanta Opera opens its 2012-2013 season at the [Cobb Energy Centre](#) on Saturday, November 10, with Bizet's classic, [Carmen](#). Other performances will be on November 13, 16 and 18, 2012. Set in Seville, the action pivots around Carmen, a gypsy who has the power to seduce any man who suits her fancy. Don José, a corporal, throws honor aside in pursuit of Carmen. Carmen soon casts off her ardent lover for the handsome toreador, Escamillo. Jealousy and passion seal Carmen's fate when Don José murders Carmen, while the crowd inside the bullring cheers for Escamillo. Debuting with The Atlanta Opera is mezzo-soprano [Maria José Montiel](#), who will be singing the role of Carmen. Ms. Montiel is no stranger to the "fiery gypsy," having sung the role in Italy, Switzerland, Germany, France, Spain, and Japan. Mexican tenor [Fernando de la Mora](#) returns to the Atlanta Opera stage in the role Don José. De la Mora last performed for Atlanta Opera audiences in 2007 in *Romeo & Juliet*, the Opera's final production at the Boisfeuillet Jones Atlanta Civic Center. In his Atlanta Opera debut, baritone [Aleksey Bogdanov](#) performs the role of the toreador, Escamillo. Soprano [Melissa Shippen](#), debuting with the Opera, will sing Micaëla. Conducting *Carmen* is The Carl and Sally Gable Music Director [Arthur Fagen](#). Stage direction will be provided by [Jeffrey Buchman](#), who will be working with The Atlanta Opera for the first time. Choreographer [Rosa Mercedes](#), who choreographed the Atlanta Opera's recent production of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, will be choreographing this opera. The Atlanta Opera purchased this set from Opera Company of Philadelphia, which was originally produced by Florida Grand Opera and designed by Allen Charles Klein. *Carmen* will be sung in French with projected English translations.

La traviata

March 2, 5, 8 and 10, 2013

In celebration of the bicentennial of Giuseppe Verdi's birth, the Atlanta Opera's second opera of the 2012-2013 season will be the tale of opera's most beloved "fallen woman," [La traviata](#). *La traviata* is based on *La dame aux Camélias* (1852), a play adapted from a novel by Alexandre Dumas, and was composed by Giuseppe Verdi using a libretto by Francesco Maria Piave. This will be the Atlanta Opera's fifth production of *La traviata*, and will be presented on March 2, 5,

8 and 10, 2013. In this beautiful and tragic love story, Violetta Valery, mistress of a wealthy baron, gets swept away by Alfredo Germont. Though they leave Violetta's chaotic previous life, Alfredo's father, Giorgio Germont, convinces Violetta that their relationship must end for the good of the Germont family. She writes Alfredo a farewell letter, and returns to the baron, hoping to create enough distance between she and Alfredo. Misunderstanding her motives, Alfredo goes into a jealous rage, and by the time the lovers are reunited, Violetta dies of tuberculosis in Alfredo's arms. In her Atlanta Opera debut, soprano [Mary Dunleavy](#) will be singing the role of the high-spirited Violetta. Ms. Dunleavy has received critical acclaim for her "effortless" and "nuanced" portrayal of the role in more than 65 productions. Playing Alfredo, Violetta's lover, is Russian tenor [Boris Rudak](#), in his American and Atlanta Opera debut. Baritone [Weston Hurt](#) will be singing the role of Giorgio Germont. Mr. Hurt performed with The Atlanta Opera in *Madama Butterfly* in 2008. World-renowned conductor, [Joseph Rescigno](#), will be conducting. This production will use sets owned by The Atlanta Opera and designed by Claude Girard and Bernard Uzan. *La traviata* will be sung in Italian with projected English translations.

The Italian Girl in Algiers

April 27 and 30, and May 3 and 5, 2013

The Atlanta Opera closes its 2012-2013 season with [The Italian Girl in Algiers](#) by Gioachino Rossini on April 27 and 30, and May 3 and 5, 2013. This will be the first time The Atlanta Opera has performed *The Italian Girl in Algiers*. Directed by internationally acclaimed German stage director, [Chris Alexander](#), in his Atlanta Opera debut, this production will be set in the 1930's, and will feature Isabella as an aviator. The production also will feature a "pop-up book" set, through which audiences will be transported to a fairy tale landscape. The set, designed by Robert Innes Hopkins, was originally used in a production with Santa Fe Opera, and has been used subsequently in productions around the United States. Nicknamed "The Italian Mozart," Rossini wrote *The Italian Girl in Algiers* when he was only 21 years old, and it is considered one of his most successful comedies. This opera begins with Mustafà, the bey of Algiers, bored with his harem and wife. He orders his captain, Haly, to find an Italian girl for him. Through a twist of fate, the once distanced couple, Lindoro and Isabella, happen to find themselves together again in Algiers. Able to outsmart Mustafà, the couple finds a way to be together, and Mustafà realizes he truly loves his wife. Singing the role of the clever Isabella is mezzo-soprano [Sandra Piques Eddy](#), who delighted Atlanta audiences as Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro* in 2008. Tenor [Michele Angelini](#), debuting with The Atlanta Opera, plays Lindoro. In his Atlanta Opera debut, Turkish bass [Burak Bilgili](#) will be performing the role of Mustafà. Singing Taddeo, an elderly admirer of Isabella's, is [Bruno Praticò](#), also in his Atlanta Opera debut. Conducting *The Italian Girl in Algiers* is The Carl and Sally Gable Music Director [Arthur Fagen](#). *The Italian Girl in Algiers* will be sung in Italian with projected English translations.

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MyOpera Donor Benefits Program

The Atlanta Opera has altered its donor benefits program to provide enhanced service to all donors. The result is MyOpera, a completely new approach to issuing donor benefits in the world of the performing arts. Rather than simply assigning benefits as incentives for patrons to become donors, patrons will be given a menu of items from which to choose. Donors, at all levels, will have the opportunity to optimize experiences by choosing benefits usually reserved for higher-level donors. In addition, at the platinum level of \$2,500, each donor will be provided with a MyOpera Concierge – a dedicated member of the Atlanta Opera development staff assigned to assist them in choosing and administering their benefits. Starting at the MyOpera Gold Level (\$350), donors will be assigned a “MyOpera Card,” and allowed to choose their benefits a la carte. The convenience of using the MyOpera card will mitigate the inconvenience of keeping up with multiple vouchers. Members of the Society for Artistic Excellence, multi-year pledges beginning at \$20,000 over three years, will receive additional benefits for that commitment. The program will go live at the beginning of the 2012-2013 season, and the benefits selection process will begin this summer. Additional information can be found at atlantaopera.org or by calling Rebecca Bowden at 404.881.1035.

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Community Engagement Initiatives

The Atlanta Opera will be auditioning high school students in grades 10-12 from throughout the metro-Atlanta area for the [High School Opera Institute](#) (HSOI) training program on **Saturday, September 8, 2012**. Currently in its third year, the High School Opera Institute provides focused training for high school students looking to continue music study at the collegiate level. Students attend vocal coachings with High School Opera Institute Music Director Walter Huff; diction and dramatic coachings with Ms. Beverly Blouin and [Dr. Stephanie Adrian](#); and informational workshops focused on selecting a music school and preparing for collegiate auditions. HSOI alumni are now studying at some of the top music schools in the country including Manhattan School of Music, Indiana University, Rice University, and Oberlin Conservatory. The 2011-2012 HSOI program will culminate with a showcase performance on Sunday, June 10 at 4:00 p.m. at [Morningside Presbyterian Church](#) and is free and open to the public. Applications for the 2012-2013 HSOI program will be accepted June 1 to August 24, 2012 and will be available for download on our website at www.atlantaopera.org.

The third annual [24-Hour Opera Project](#) (24HOP) will take place January 18-19, 2013. 24HOP has grown in popularity since it was first introduced for National Opera Week in 2010. With national attention, the project grew in scope this past January when five teams composed and presented works for a live audience of 200 and more than 760 viewing online via live webcast. The 24HOP provides an opportunity for composers, lyricists, stage directors, and singers from around the country to create new works around an assigned theme that is revealed at the project kick-off. The Project will culminate at the end of the 24 hours with a showcase performance on

Saturday, January 19 at 7:00 p.m. at [The Atlanta Opera Center](#). This event is free and open to the public. Video highlights from the 2012 24HOP, including the five short operas from last season, are available for viewing at www.atlantaopera.org.

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2012 Atlanta Opera Ball: A Night in Seville

The 2012 Atlanta Opera Ball: *A Night in Seville*, a fundraiser supporting and sustaining the exceptional artistic quality of The Atlanta Opera, will be held on Saturday, September 15 at the [St. Regis Atlanta](#) in Buckhead. The evening will feature elements and festive surprises themed after the season's opening production, *Carmen*. The St. Regis will be transformed into a beautiful Spanish-style courtyard and dining room, with a decadent dinner, and luxury items in the silent and live auctions. The Opera Ball Honorary Chair is Jane Willson, one of the Atlanta Opera's most generous donors, and Heather Flint will serve as Chair. Patron tickets start at \$1,500. Single tickets are \$300 per person, and will be available beginning August 1, 2012. To purchase tickets, please contact Amanda Wilborn at 404-591-2928, amandaw@atlantaopera.org, or visit atlantaopera.org.

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THE ATLANTA OPERA: 2012-2013 SEASON

CASTING AND CALENDAR INFORMATION

Season headshots and production images are available [here](#). Credit information is indicated on the digital file.

*Denotes Atlanta Opera debut

CARMEN

Music by Georges Bizet

Libretto by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy

Sung in French with Projected English Translations

Sets from The Atlanta Opera

Previous Atlanta Opera Performances: 1992, 2004

Approximate Running Time: 3 hours, with two intermissions

Four Performances at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre

Saturday, November 10, 2012 at 8 pm

Tuesday, November 13, 2012 at 7:30 pm

Friday, November 16, 2012 at 8 pm
Sunday, November 18, 2012 at 3 pm

Creative Team

Conductor	Arthur Fagen
Stage Director	Jeffrey Buchman*
Choreographer	Rosa Mercedes
Set Designer	Allen Charles Klein

Cast

Carmen	Maria José Montiel*
Don José	Fernando de la Mora
Escamillo	Aleksey Bogdanov*
Micaëla	Melissa Shippen*
Moralès	Scott Hogsed
Zuniga	Tyler Simpson*
Frasquita	Rebecca Nathanson*
Mercédès	Kaitlyn Costello*
El Remendado	Adam Kirkpatrick
El Dancaïro	Adam Cannedy*

Description

Bizet's immensely popular opera set in sultry Spain traces Don José's ill-fated attraction to the alluring gypsy, Carmen. When Carmen does not reciprocate his feelings, intense jealousy turns to vengeance and dooms the fiery romance to a tragic end. *Carmen* is full of sizzling opera hits, including the famous "Habanera" and the irresistible Toreador's song.

LA TRAVIATA

Music by Giuseppe Verdi

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave

Sung in Italian with Projected English Translations
Sets from The Atlanta Opera

Previous Atlanta Opera Performances: 1980, 1989, 1998, 2005
Approximate Running Time: 3 hours, with intermission

Four Performances at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre

Saturday, March 2, 2013 at 8 pm

Tuesday, March 5, 2013 at 7:30 pm

Friday, March 8, 2013 at 8 pm

Sunday, March 10, 2013 at 3 pm

Creative Team

Conductor	Joseph Rescigno
Stage Director	David Gately
Set Designers	Claude Girard & Bernard Uzan

Cast

Violetta Valery	Mary Dunleavy*
Alfredo Germont	Boris Rudak*
Giorgio Germont	Weston Hurt
Flora Bervoix	Maria McDaniel

Description

Violetta, a worldly Parisian courtesan, is forced to give up the love of her life in this tale of lavish revelry, family strife, unfortunate misunderstanding and selfless sacrifice. Verdi's beloved *La traviata* is a treasured classic overflowing with memorable music. Both longtime opera lovers and first-timers will be touched by this romantic tragedy.

THE ITALIAN GIRL IN ALGIERS

Music by Gioachino Rossini

Libretto by Angelo Anelli

Sung in Italian with Projected English Translations

Sets from Santa Fe Opera

Atlanta Opera Premiere

Approximate Running Time: 2 hours, 45 minutes, with intermission

Four Performances at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre

Saturday, April 27, 2013 at 8 pm

Tuesday, April 30, 2013 at 7:30 pm

Friday, May 3, 2013 at 8 pm

Sunday, May 5, 2013 at 3 pm

Creative Team

Conductor	Arthur Fagen
Stage Director	Chris Alexander
Set Designer	Robert Innes Hopkins
Costume Designer	David C. Woolard

Cast

Isabella	Sandra Piques Eddy
Lindoro	Michele Angelini*
Mustafà	Burak Bilgili*
Taddeo	Bruno Praticò*

Elvira
Zulma
Haly

Ashley Emerson
Maria McDaniel
Frederick Jackson

Description

In this whimsical, madcap adventure set in a 1930's pop-up book, Isabella is captured by an Algerian ruler who dreams of adding an Italian wife to his harem. Once imprisoned, Isabella turns the tables and rescues the man of her dreams. With more belly laughs than any opera should reasonably permit, Rossini's *The Italian Girl in Algiers* will charm your socks off!

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Tickets

Season Tickets

Season tickets to the Atlanta Opera's 2012-2013 season at the Cobb Energy Centre are on sale now. Ticket prices for a full, 3-opera subscription package range from \$75 to \$465 plus handling. To purchase, visit www.atlantaopera.org or call 404-881-8885 (Mon-Fri, 9 am-5 pm). Subscribers enjoy many benefits, including premium seats at significant savings, no-hassle ticket exchanges, and ticket insurance. Interest-free payment plans are available.

Single Tickets

Single tickets for the Atlanta Opera's 2012-2013 season at Cobb Energy Centre will go on sale in October. Ticket prices will start at \$25 plus convenience fees.

2012 Atlanta Opera Ball: *A Night in Seville*

Patron tickets start at \$1,500. Single tickets are \$300 per person – available beginning August 1, 2012. To purchase tickets and for further information, please contact Amanda Wilborn at 404-591-2928, amandaw@atlantaopera.org, or visit www.atlantaopera.org.

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Sponsors

The Atlanta Opera is proud to recognize Delta Air Lines, the Official Airline of The Atlanta Opera. Generous production support also has been provided by the Estate of Barbara D. Stewart, and the Atlanta Music Festival Association.

About The Atlanta Opera

Founded in 1979, The Atlanta Opera is one of the finest regional opera companies in the nation, drawing audiences from the entire metropolitan Atlanta area as well as from the Southeast region. Led by General Director Dennis Hanthorn, The Atlanta Opera strives to expand the experience of its patrons with memorable and exciting opera performances reflecting the highest musical and theatrical standards, while supporting community and educational programs. The

Opera also works to attract the finest international, national, and regional singers, conductors, stage directors and designers. The Atlanta Opera presents three productions with four performances each at the Cobb Energy Centre. For more information on The Atlanta Opera, please visit www.atlantaopera.org.

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All programs, artists, dates and prices are subject to change.