



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
ADVANCE LISTING
September 5, 2008

Tapestry new opera works announces its 2008-2009 subscription season of world premieres

TORONTO, ON...Tapestry new opera works announces its very first subscription season. The Tapestry Journey, a world premiere subscription series includes *Opera Briefs*, *Opera To Go* and *The Shadow*, written by Alex Poch-Goldin and composed by Omar Daniel. Poch-Goldin and Daniel's collaboration began during Tapestry's first *Opera To Go* in 2002.

*I'm very excited to share the Tapestry creative journey with our growing audience. Each event is truly one-of-a-kind, an opportunity to engage with our artists and to play an integral part in new opera invention in North America. In addition to Tapestry Studio Company favourites, our 2008-09 performer roster includes coveted artists more frequently seen in "big houses": soprano Sally Dibblee and mezzo-soprano Krizstina Szabo bring a whole world of opera to the season. The long awaited premiere of *The Shadow*, with the incomparable countertenor Scott Belluz in the title role, promises to be a stunningly beautiful show.*

...Wayne Strongman

All productions in the 2008/2009 season will be directed by Company Resident Director Tom Diamond:

*I am delighted to be spending this entire season at Tapestry directing a wonderful panoply of operatic treats, created in what I believe to be the North American epicentre of new opera creation. This will be my first time directing all of *Opera Briefs*, a veritable buffet of tantalizing morsels from the freshest of operatic imaginations; the most recent international graduates of Tapestry's Composer-Librettist Laboratory (LibLab).*

***Opera to Go** has traditionally been a showcase for those recent LibLab graduates, but this season we have opened it up to all our former LibLab participants. (In total, 94 composers and librettists have passed through 12 years of the annual opera boot camp). We received 20 submissions and are currently developing 5 short operas; 4 'traditional' roughly 20-minute works and a singular one act gem. Wayne Strongman and I are continually developing what this project 'looks' like, so continue to expect the unexpected!*

*And finally, the ultimate result of our development machine: the premiere of a glorious full length work, **The Shadow**, Omar Daniel and Alex Poch-Goldin's yarn set in early 20th century Barcelona. **The Shadow** has been in our 'cooker' for 5 years. Great works take time and tender-loving development!*

These productions will be performed by members of our brilliant Studio Company, some of Canada's finest operatic talents. This season promises to be a major treat.

...Tom Diamond

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions series are now on sale for the Tapestry Journey: *Opera Briefs*, *Opera to Go*, *The Shadow* \$99 for series / \$199 for Friday night gala series. Call 416.537.6066 x221 for subscription inquiries.

PERFORMANCE DETAILS:

Opera Briefs

September 26 & 27 at 8pm and September 28 at 3pm, 2008

Ernest Balmer Studio at Tapestry, 55 Mill Street, Building 58, The Cannery, Studio 315

Writers: David Brock, Spy Denomme-Welch, Ken Gass, Andrew Moodie

Composers: Scott Brubacher, Justine Chen, Teresa Conners, Jack Perla

Director: Tom Diamond



Music Directors: Christopher Foley and Jennifer Tung

Cast: Scott Belluz, Carla Huhtanen, Keith Klassen, Lauren Phillips, Justin Welsh

Fast-forward your introduction to new opera with a string of 5-minute rough-cut gems, just mined from the Composer-Librettist Laboratory. Get to know the art form and its newest creators at the earliest stage of Tapestry's creative process.

Presented in the intimacy of The Ernest Balmer Studio at Tapestry, this is the eighth incarnation of *Opera Briefs*.

Opera to Go

March 27 – 29, 2009

Enwave Theatre, Harbourfront Centre, 235 Queens Quay West

Writers: Alexis Diamond, Kico Gonzales-Risso, Taylor Graham, Marcia Johnson, Sandy Pool

Composers: Glenn James, Njo Kong Kie, Abigail Richardson, William Rowson, Stephen Andrew Taylor

Director: Tom Diamond

Music Director: Wayne Strongman

Cast: Scott Belluz, Sally Dibblee, Keith Klassen, Peter McGillivray, Krisztina Szabo

Opera to Go is an exciting evening of provocative, often hilarious bite-sized operas. Intercepting contemporary stories, *Opera to Go* takes us inside the making of opera – today.

Presented in a revitalized, interactive format, this is the fifth incarnation of *Opera to Go*.

The Shadow

May 21 – 30, 2009

Berkeley Street Theatre, Downstairs, 26 Berkeley Street

Written by Alex Poch-Goldin and composed by Omar Daniel

Director: Tom Diamond

Music Director: Wayne Strongman

Cast: Scott Belluz, Carla Huhtanen, Keith Klassen, Peter McGillivray.

Poch-Goldin and Daniel create a world of duplicity in which a humble postman assumes the identity of a wealthy suitor to win a woman's love. Determined to maintain the ruse at all costs, he is haunted by the Shadow as he spirals deeper into debt.

The Shadow was presented as a workshop production in the Ernest Balmer Studio in March 2007.

NON-SUBSCRIPTION PROGRAMMING:

I. The Perfect Match

Tapestry's first short film, directed by Tom Diamond, and written by Krista Dalby and Anthony Young, is part of the 2008 Miami Short Film Festival. It premiered at *Opera to Go* in 2008 and will be broadcast on Bravo! Television after it finishes the festival circuit. *The Perfect Match* was created at the Composer-Librettist Laboratory in 2006.

II. Opera Briefs at The Word on the Street

September 28, 2008 at 1p.m. Tapestry will present a selection of *Opera Briefs*, free, at The Word on the Street Festival in Queen's Park as part of the New Music in New Places Program with the Canadian Music Centre.

III. Get Stuffed

Get Stuffed is a co-production with Canadian Diabetes Association and Words in Motion and has been selected for presentation in the Ontario Contact 2008 Young Audience Showcase taking place Saturday, October 25, 2008 at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. It will also tour schools in the GTA from October 20-24, 2008. *Get Stuffed* is a children's opera focusing on making healthy food choices. Includes a food fight!



Writer: Alexis Diamond
Composer: Richard Payne
Director: Emma Tibaldo
Music Director: Wayne Strongman

IV. Opera to Go Preview

Mississauga Living Arts Centre

March 26, 2009 at 8 pm

Opera to Go will preview in Mississauga before heading to Harbourfront Centre as part of Tapestry's subscription series.

V. Inside Opera Education Programme

Tapestry will continue partnerships with the Regent Park School of Music and City Hope in St. Jamestown.

This programme is sponsored by BMO Financial Group with support from the Laidlaw Foundation.

ARTISTIC BIOS

Wayne Strongman, Managing Artistic Director - One of Canada's most distinguished music directors, Wayne Strongman is a champion of Canadian writers and composers. As Managing Artistic Director of Tapestry new opera works, he has commissioned and premiered over 30 new Canadian operas including the Cantonese-English *Iron Road* in 2001 (Brownell/Chan), *Facing South* (Hannah/Smith), *The Shadow* (Poch-Goldin/Daniel) and *Nigredo Hotel* (MacDonald/Gotham) which is the most frequently produced opera in Canadian history. In 2006 he premiered *Elijah's Kite* (Chai/Rolfe) in New York City in collaboration with the Manhattan School of Music. Music Director/Dramaturge of Tapestry's Composer-Librettist Laboratory, Mr. Strongman has created a truly collaborative environment for an international roster of composers and writers. His commitment to a contemporary practice within the operatic art form has made Strongman a mentor to many Canadian singers. In 2007 he established the Tapestry New Work Studio Company as a performing resource for the new work creation process which has become Tapestry's unique calling. In 2008, in addition to the 7 new short operas for *Opera to Go* as part of Harbourfront Centre's World Stage he conducted the premiere of *Sanctuary Song* (Chan/Richardson) for Toronto's Luminato Festival. Mr. Strongman sits on the Ontario Region and National Council of the Canadian Music Centre and also volunteers as choral conductor for the Regent Park School of Music.

Tom Diamond, Resident Director - Tom Diamond begins his third season as Tapestry's Studio Company Resident Director/Dramaturg. Past productions include the Dora Award winning *Iron Road*, the national tour of *Still the Night* and two versions of *Opera to Go*. His first short film, *The Perfect Match*, premiered to unanimous critical raves as part of last season's *Opera to Go* and will be featured this November in Miami's 7th Annual Short Film Festival. Highlights of his acclaimed productions include world premieres of Timothy Sullivan's *Florence and the Lady With the Lamp* for the Elora Festival (Chalmers Award), five productions for Pacific Opera Victoria and nine operas for the Canadian Opera Company, most recently the obscure *Don Giovanni* by Giuseppe Gazzaniga (the inspiration for Mozart's masterpiece). His production of *Squonk* was an off Broadway hit and transferred to Broadway where it won the prestigious Hewes Award. For two seasons Mr. Diamond 'moonlighted' as a reality television personality in Bravo's hit series *Bathroom Divas* which won the Gemini Award.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Tapestry - Tapestry is dedicated to the creation, development and performance of new opera works through its unique and highly collaborative work process. Under the leadership of Managing Artistic Director Wayne Strongman, Tapestry engages the hearts and minds of artists and audiences on subjects relevant to contemporary society. The Tapestry process begins at the annual Composer-Librettist Laboratory where writers and composers are introduced to collaborative creation. Successful partnerships move on to create 15-minute operas for our annual *Opera to Go* production and graduate to full-length works. Our Inside Opera Education Programme gives students the chance to discover their own stories and engage in the creation of new opera. Our new children's opera, *Elijah's Kite* by Camyar Chai & James Rolfe has already toured to over 20,000 students across Ontario. Tapestry productions which have premiered to critical and popular acclaim include *Sanctuary Song* by Abigail Richardson & Marjorie Chan (with Theatre Direct in partnership with Luminato), *Nigredo Hotel* by Ann-Marie MacDonald & Nic Gotham, *Elsewhereless* by Atom Egoyan & Rodney Sharman, *Still the Night* by Theresa Tova, *Facing South* by Don Hannah & Linda C. Smith and the Dora Award-winning *Iron Road* by composer Chan Ka Nin & librettist Mark Brownell. www.tapestrynewopera.com