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**“THE PREMIERE OF THE NEXT GREAT MASTERWORK BY
THE NEXT GREAT COMPOSER” AND/OR COLD BEER
AT “OPERA GROWS IN BROOKLYN” - FRIDAY JULY 9, 8 PM**

**COMPOSERS DARGEL, FELSENFELD, LYONS, STANILAND, MORE
PRESENTING LATEST COLLECTION OF NEW OPERA SCENES AND SONGS**

Two Brooklyn opera companies, **AMERICAN OPERA PROJECTS (AOP)** and **OPERA ON TAP (OOT)**, will present the fifth installment of their **Opera Grows in Brooklyn** series, an evening of three 30-minute opera scenes and songs. The evening will feature scenes from *Removable Parts*, a music-theater cycle from composer and singer/songwriter Corey Dargel; Daniel Felsenfeld’s new one-act opera *The Bloody Chamber*, based on an Angela Carter novella; and *Brooklyn Poets: Past and Present*, showcasing new songs based on the writings of neighborhood poets. The show will be held on **Friday, July 9 at 8pm** at Galapagos Art Space in Brooklyn’s DUMBO neighborhood. Tickets are \$20 (\$15 for students/seniors) in advance at www.galapagosartspace.com and \$25 at the door.

Opera Grows in Brooklyn is an ongoing collaboration between American Opera Projects, “known for bringing cutting-edge vocal production to the masses,” (*New York*), and Opera on Tap, “...raucous and sublime...un-elitist, imperfect, and fun...” (*NY Sun*), that presents three 30-minute selections of songs and scenes from contemporary composers in a hip, cabaret-style atmosphere. Audiences have a chance to meet the artists and composers after the performance.

“You never really know if you’ll be there for the premiere of the next great masterwork by the next great composer, and if you aren’t, well, the beer is still cold,” the opera blog *Parterrebox* declared at the last *Opera Grows in Brooklyn*. The inaugural performance of *Opera Grows in Brooklyn* at Galapagos in April 2009 was called “an exciting new level of work for these young companies. Brooklyn and the rest of the city will benefit from future collaborations like these.” (*The Curator*). Past *Opera Grows in Brooklyn* performances have featured music by Nico Muhly, Tom Cipullo, David T. Little, Christopher Berg, and Jack Perla and performances by David Adam Moore, Andrew Drost, Abigail Fischer, Lauren Worsham, Jonathan Hays, and Daisy Press.

American Opera Projects begins the evening with **Brooklyn Poets: Past and Present**, showcasing new songs based on the writings of neighborhood poets. The Calamus Edition of Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass* caused a sensation when it appeared in 1860. To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the publication of this revolutionary work of art, AOP and the Walt Whitman Project asked a select group of composers to create new songs set to these poems. Selections from *The Calamus Songs* by composers **Andrew Staniland** and **Daniel Felsenfeld** and sung by soprano **Adrienne Danrich**, will be followed by *Songs from Hood to Riches*, a selection of new songs by **Gilda Lyons** based on poetry by three Brooklyn boys – Keanu Stowe (age 7), Tristan Regist (10), and Tyler Forsythe (12). The songs, performed by mezzo **Nicole Mitchell** and pianist **Kelly Horsted**, are the second cycle of new works to come out of *I Hear America Singing*, a new initiative by AOP and the Walt Whitman Project that commissions composers to set to music the voices of ordinary Americans, and in particular Brooklynites.

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Composer and singer/songwriter Corey Dargel and pianist Kathleen Supové will perform songs from Dargel's ***Removable Parts***, a music-theater piece about love and voluntary amputation. Dargel based his original lyrics on documented case-studies of wannabe-amputees. His characters' idiosyncratic behaviors and strange desires are gradually subsumed into larger issues of disconnection and longing. As they sing their songs, you may be surprised to find your heart breaking for them. The *New York Times* theater and dance critic, Claudia LaRocco, calls *Removable Parts* "almost perversely pleasurable... Amputation, especially when it's self-imposed, is a loaded and problematic metaphor. Mr. Dargel and company handle it with an intelligent grace that is as moving as it is impressive." *Removable Parts* won the New York Innovative Theatre Award for Best Performance-Art Production and was nominated for Best Solo Performer (Corey Dargel) and Best Director (Emma Griffin).

Presented by **Opera on Tap**, *The Bloody Chamber* is composer **Daniel Felsenfeld**'s adaptation of the 1979 novella by Angela Carter, a feminist retelling of Bluebeard set in decadent fin de siècle France. The obsessed and murderous Marquis has married Dora, a young soprano, and spirited her away to his castle in Brittany. Over the course of the darkly humorous piece, Dora transforms from ingénue to infamously disobedient wife -- egged on by a ghostly chorus of her slaughtered predecessors. Pulitzer-Prize-Winning Composer John Corigliano writes: "Committed as strongly to freshness as to intelligibility, Daniel Felsenfeld composes music that's strong, unusual, intelligent, and considerably skilled." Libretto by Elizabeth Isadora Gold. Starring **Indre Viskontas**, **Ross Benoliel**, and **Amanda Villegas** with musical direction by **Jennifer Peterson** of operamission and stage direction by **Sarah Stern** of The Vineyard Theatre.

"Galapagos is about to become New York City's first LEED-certified, "green" cultural building. Director Robert Elmes is adding opera to a space known best for its Obie Award winning, progressive programming," says AOP General Director Charles Jarden. "We think it's not just cool for opera to be in a spectacular space like Galapagos, it's essential for creating new music that connects to audiences. Opera away from opera houses is the best way for the genre to thrive and grow. It is economically smart and creatively daring and the voices sound great to both new listeners and fans. If one audience member walks out with an interest in discovering music by living composers, we'll know we are on the right track."

*For over 20 years, **American Opera Projects (AOP)** has been creating, developing and presenting exclusively new American opera and music theatre projects that have appeared at the Royal Opera House, London, the Lincoln Center Festival, Skirball Center at NYU, the Guggenheim Museum, Symphony Space, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and many other national and international venues. AOP, based in Fort Greene, Brooklyn, has presented over 15 world premiere operas including Lee Hoiby's *This is the Rill Speaking* (2008), Stefan Weisman's *Darkling* (2006), and Paula Kimper's *Patience & Sarah* (1998). Upcoming productions of AOP-developed projects include *Séance on a Wet Afternoon*, the first opera by Stephen Schwartz, at New York City Opera in April 2011 and the world premieres of Jorge Martín's *Before Night Falls* at Fort Worth Opera in 2010 and Tarik O'Regan's *Heart of Darkness* at The Royal Opera House's Linbury Studio in 2011. www.operaprojects.org*

Opera on Tap's mission is to bring opera to new audiences by performing in bars, rock concert halls, and other alternative spaces. Born in the backroom of a Brooklyn divebar in 2005, Opera on Tap has gained national press recognition, several performance residencies across the city, and regional Chapters in New Orleans, Chicago, Ann Arbor, MI, and most recently Atlanta. In addition to Opera Grows in Brooklyn, OOT hosts a new music concert series called New Brew at Barbes in Brooklyn the first Friday of every other month and annually co-produces the critically acclaimed 21c *Liederabend* in collaboration with Beth Morrison Projects and VisionIntoArt. 21c *Liederabend* was named best of 2009 in TimeOut NY in opera and classical by music editor Steve Smith. www.operaontap.com

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CALENDAR LISTING INFORMATION



OPERA GROWS IN BROOKLYN

featuring

Brooklyn Poets: Past and Present

American Opera Projects presents new songs based on works by Brooklyn poets.

Music by Gilda Lyons, Daniel Felsenfeld, and Andrew Staniland

Text by Walt Whitman, Keanu Stowe, Tristan Regist, and Tyler Forsythe

Performed by Adrienne Danrich and Nicole Mitchell.

Kelly Horsted, piano. Hamilton Berry, cello.

Removable Parts

Selections from the music-theatre piece

Music by Corey Dargel

Performed by Corey Dargel and Kathleen Supové

The Bloody Chamber

Opera on Tap presents scenes from the new one-act opera

Music by Daniel Felsenfeld

Libretto by Elizabeth Isadora Gold

Based on the novella “The Bloody Chamber” by Angela Carter

Performed by Indre Viskontas, Ross Benoliel, and Amanda Villegas

Musical Director, Jennifer Peterson. Stage Director, Sarah Stern

Friday, July 9, 8:00pm

Location: Galapagos Art Space 16 Main Street at Water Street, DUMBO, Brooklyn, NY.

Subway – F train to York Street; A/C train to High Street.

Directions: www.galapagosartspace.com

Tickets: Advance: \$20 General / \$15 Students/Seniors; Door: \$25.

Tickets available at www.galapagosartspace.com

www.operaprojects.org for press material and profiles on this event’s featured artists.

ADDENDUM: Save the date! The next *Opera Grows in Brooklyn* event is Friday, October 15th!