



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 1, 2017

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DOWNLOADABLE PRESS IMAGES: <https://seattleopera.smugmug.com/Past-Seasons-/1516/An-American-Dream/i-r7hZMSp> [Password: "press"]

***An American Dream* tells a Japanese American story through opera**

**Seattle Opera presents a community-engagement performance
at Washington Hall**

**Partner organizations include Japanese American Citizens
League & Densho**

Sept. 7–17, 2017

SEATTLE – In a time where those perceived as outsiders continue to face discrimination in the U.S., Seattle Opera presents an American story of justice denied. The forced removal of Japanese Americans during World War II is the subject of [*An American Dream*](#), composed by **Jack Perla** with libretto by **Jessica Murphy Moo**. At its 2015 premiere, *The Seattle Times* called *Dream* “a gripping piece of musical theater...it’s hard to think of a better way to teach local history.” *Dream* returns now in a brand-new production at Washington Hall—part of the company’s mission to introduce opera to new audiences.

“Presenting work that reflects our diverse community is crucial to the success of Seattle Opera,” said **General Director Aidan Lang**. “*An American Dream* comes at the end of a summer that’s included a larger conversation with Asian Americans

and Pacific Islanders on moving racial equity forward in the arts. This story comes from the lived experiences of people in our community. It is a cautionary tale for the world we live in today.”

Inspired by true stories from Puget Sound’s history, *Dream* depicts two intersecting narratives during World War II: a Japanese American family facing incarceration, and a German Jewish immigrant preoccupied by those she left behind.

The opera’s two presenting partners include local nonprofit **Densho**, who will provide moving, first-hand testimonials of people whose lives were impacted by the mass incarceration; as well as the **Japanese American Citizens League—Seattle Chapter**. Through post-show discussions, Seattle JACL will help take attendees deeper into the civil-rights implications of this story and its themes of wartime hysteria, racism, and xenophobia.

Returning from the original *Dream* production are singers **Nina Yoshida Nelsen** (Hiroko Kobayashi) and **D’Ana Lombard** (Eva Crowley), Stage Director **Peter Kazaras**, and Maestro **Judith Yan**. Making company debuts are **Yeonji Lee** (Setsuko Kobayashi) and **Ao Li** (Makoto Kobayashi). **Ryan Bede** returns following *Madame Butterfly* to sing the role of Jim Crowley.

Additional partner-organizations for *An American Dream* include **Amnesty International** and **ACLU**, who will offer information and social justice resources prior to every performance. **Densho**, **Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience**, **Japanese American National Museum**, **EduCulture**, **Bainbridge Island Historical Museum**, and **MOHAI** contributed to a pre-show exhibit that will provide historical context into this dark chapter in American history.

An American Dream opens Thursday, September 7 and runs through Sunday, September 17. Tickets are available online at seattleopera.org, by calling 206-389-7676, or in-person at the box office located at 1020 John Street (two blocks west of

Fairview). Box office hours are Monday-Friday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Tickets are \$45.

An American Dream

Music by Jack Perla

Libretto by Jessica Murphy Moo

In English

Washington Hall

153 14th Ave, Seattle

Performances: September 7, 8, 10m, 14. 15. 17m, 2017

Evening performances begin at 8:00 p.m., matinees at 2:00 p.m.

Premiere: Aug. 21, 2015, at Seattle Opera

Cast:

Eva Crowley

D'Ana Lombard (all dates)

Setsuko Kobayashi

Yeonji Lee* (all dates)

Hiroko Kobayashi

Nina Yoshida Nelsen (all dates)

Makoto Kobayahi

Ao Li* (all dates)

Jim Crowley

Ryan Bede (all dates)

Director

Peter Kazaras

Conductor

Judith Yan

Production Design

Julia Hayes Welch*

Costume Design

Chelsea Cook*

* Company Debut

Production Sponsors: The Wallace Foundation and True-Brown Foundation

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About Seattle Opera

Seattle Opera is a leading opera company, recognized both in the United States and around the world. The company is committed to advancing the cultural life in the Pacific Northwest with performances of the highest caliber, and through innovative education and community programs that take opera far beyond the McCaw Hall stage. Each year, more than 95,000 people attend Seattle Opera performances and the company's programs serve more than 400,000 people of all ages (including school performances, radio broadcasts and community engagement initiatives). Seattle Opera is especially known for its acclaimed works in the Richard Wagner canon, and has created an "international attraction" in its presentation of Wagner's epic *Ring*, according to *The New York Times*. Connect with Seattle Opera on Facebook, Twitter, SoundCloud and through the [Seattle Opera channel on Classical King FM. 98.1](#).