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Odyssey Opera Presents TROIKA: The American Premiere of Rachmaninoff's Trilogy of Operas

What: Three One-Act Operas by Sergei Rachmaninoff

When: Sunday, September 25, 2022, at 3:00 p.m.

Where: NEC's Jordan Hall, 30 Gainsborough Street, Boston |

Subway: Green to Symphony, Orange to Mass Ave

Tickets: \$25 and Up. To purchase, visit odysseyopera.org
or call 617.826.1626.

Boston, MA (For Release 08.05.22) — Hailed by *The New York Times* as “one of the nation’s most intriguing opera companies,” **Odyssey Opera** returns to live performance with TROIKA, a concert performance of the complete operatic output of **Sergei Rachmaninoff**. Though Rachmaninoff is one of the most beloved Russian composers, no American company has ever showcased Rachmaninoff’s trio of one-act operas—*Aleko*, *The Miserly Knight*, and *Francesca da Rimini*—in a single evening. Inspired by timeless tales by Alexander Pushkin and Dante’s *Inferno*, all three works demonstrate Rachmaninov’s gift for yearning melodies, as well as his mastery of orchestral color and drama. The cast line-up includes two Ukrainian-born singers—soprano **Yelena Dyacheck** and baritone **Aleksey Bogdanov**—along with Armenian tenor **Yeghishe Manucharyan**, American tenors **Andrew Bidlack** and **Spencer Hamlin**, Russian bass **Mikhail Svetlov**, and American bass **Kevin Thompson**.

“Rachmaninoff’s music is a spectacular way to return to live performance,” says Artistic and General Director **Gil Rose**. “Though he devoted most of his attention to a career as a piano and orchestral composer, his operatic output was equally impressive. Odyssey Opera hopes to provide long overdue exposure of Rachmaninoff’s operatic works to American audiences.”

The evening begins with *Aleko*, the first of three completed operas by Rachmaninoff. The Russian libretto, written by Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, is an adaptation of Alexander Pushkin’s poem *The Gypsies*. The opera recounts the wrenching love story of the exiled Aleko and the free-spirited Zemfira. Written in 1892 by a 19-year-old Rachmaninoff as a graduation work at the Moscow Conservatory, *Aleko* won the Conservatory’s gold medal for composition that year.

Completing the trilogy are two operas that Rachmaninoff completed relatively early in his career: *The Miserly Knight* and *Francesca da Rimini*. Both premiered in 1906 in Moscow in a double-bill performance, with the composer himself conducting. Based on Pushkin’s tragic drama of the same name, *The Miserly Knight* is an intense, one-hour psychological study of monetary obsession and alienation featuring five male singers. Mikhail Svetlov takes up the lead role as the Baron, while tenor Spencer Hamlin returns to Odyssey Opera to portray the Baron’s son.

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Francesca da Rimini turns the story of *Canto V* from Dante's *Inferno* into a "symphonic opera," as described by the composer himself. For this Odyssey Opera production, Yeghishe Manucharyan plays the role of the poet Dante who meets two young lovers—Francesca, played by Yelena Dyacheck, and Paolo, played by Andrew Bidlack—who are murdered and consigned to the Second Circle of Hell after a stolen kiss.

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 takes its audience on a journey to places they've never been before. odysseyopera.org

TROIKA: Three One-Act Operas by Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

presented in Russian with English supertitles

Aleko (1892)

Libretto: Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko inspired by Alexander Pushkin's *The Gypsies*

Aleko: Aleksey Bogdanov (baritone)

Zemfira: Yelena Dyacheck (soprano)

A young man: Andrew Bidlack (tenor)

An old man, Zemfira's father: Kevin Thompson (bass)

The Miserly Knight (1903-5)

Libretto: From a short story by Alexander Pushkin

Albert: Spencer Hamlin (tenor)

The Baron: Mikhail Svetlov (bass)

The Duke: Aleksey Bogdanov (baritone)

The Moneylender: Yeghise Manucharyan (tenor)

Servant: Kevin Thompson (bass)

Francesca Da Rimini (1906)

Libretto: Modest Tchaikovsky after Dante Alighieri

Dante: Yeghishe Manucharyan (tenor)

Francesca: Yelena Dyacheck (soprano)

Paolo: Andrew Bidlack (tenor)

Lanciotto: Aleksey Bogdanov (baritone)

Virgil's Shade: Kevin Thompson (bass)

Conductor: Gil Rose

Odyssey Opera Orchestra and Chorus

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