



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
April 30, 2008

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OPERA COLORADO ANNOUNCES ADAMS' "NIXON IN CHINA" JUNE 7-15 Marc Heller replaces Joseph Kaiser in Role of Chairman Mao

* = Opera Colorado Debut

Denver, Colo.— Opera Colorado's season closes with John Adams' enormously successful American opera, *Nixon in China*, which runs for four performances, **June 7-15, 2008**. Tickets are available for this captivating account of Nixon's historic visit to China in 1972. Featuring music reminiscent of American melodies and lyrical lines written in poetic styles native to China, this contemporary work is a prime example of the impressive capabilities of today's composers and librettists. Tenor **Joseph Kaiser** was originally slated to sing the role of Chairman Mao and has cancelled his commitment. Kaiser's management said on his behalf, "For personal reasons, Joseph Kaiser regrets having to withdraw from Opera Colorado's presentation of *Nixon in China*. Mr. Kaiser does, however, expect to fulfill the rest of his performance schedule and looks forward to returning to Colorado at another time."

Replacing him for all four performances will be **Marc Heller***. A versatile lyric tenor who has been critically acclaimed by the New York Times, Mr. Heller recently made his Metropolitan Opera debut as The Composer, Gao Jian Li, in Tan Dun's *The First Emperor*. Mr. Heller has also performed with Deutsche Oper Berlin, New York City Opera, and Glimmerglass Opera.

Opera Colorado General Director **Greg Carpenter** states, "Marc Heller is currently enjoying great success in his career. Opera Colorado is extremely pleased to invite him to make his role debut in this production and we are fortunate that he is available to learn this demanding role on short notice. I think he will be an exciting addition to the cast and offer a telling portrayal of Chairman Mao."

Debuted in 1987, Adams' *Nixon in China* is a captivating chronicle of Nixon's historic visit to China in 1972. The opera focuses on the six key players: the Nixons, Chairman and Madame Mao, and the close advisors to the two parties, Henry Kissinger and Chou En-lai. *Nixon in China* will feature an all-star cast that's sure to delight! President Richard Nixon will be sung by baritone **Robert Orth** (*Die Fledermaus*, 1996) opposite Opera Colorado favorite, soprano **Maria Kanyova** (*The Elixir of Love*, 2007). Nixon aide Henry Kissinger will be performed by bass-baritone **Thomas Hammons*** (Metropolitan Opera, Houston Grand Opera), who originated the role at Houston Grand Opera in 1987. Chairman Mao will be sung by tenor **Marc Heller*** (Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera). The Chairman's wife, Madame Mao, will be portrayed by soprano

Tracy Dahl* (Metropolitan Opera, Milan's Teatro alla Scala). The advisor to Mao, Chou Enlai, will be sung by baritone **Chenye Yuan*** (Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Houston Grand Opera).

Opera Colorado Artistic Director **James Robinson** (*The Elixir of Love*, 2007; *Abduction from the Seraglio*, 2006) will direct this production, which he created for Opera Theatre of St. Louis in 2004. The sets were designed by **Allen Moyer** (*Carmen*, 2005; *Abduction from the Seraglio*, 2006) with costumes designed by **James Schuette** (*Rigoletto*, 2005; *The Marriage of Figaro*, 2005). Maestro **Marin Alsop*** (Music Director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Principal Conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony, Conductor Laureate of the Colorado Symphony Orchestra) will conduct. Alsop directed this particular production's debut at Opera Theatre of St. Louis and recently won a MacArthur Foundation Genius Grant and the Classical Brit Award for Best Female Artist. This is a co-production with Opera Theater of St. Louis, Minnesota Opera, Portland Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, and Houston Grand Opera. Opera Colorado is proud to feature the Colorado Symphony Orchestra and the Opera Colorado Chorus.

All performances take place at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House at the Denver Performing Arts Complex in downtown Denver, 14th and Curtis Streets. Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday matinees begin at 2:00 p.m. For ticketing details, visit www.operacolorado.org or call **303-357-2787**. This production will be sung in English with subtitles provided on every seatback in English or Spanish. *Nixon in China* will be performed in three acts with one 25-minute intermission between Acts I and II and a 5-minute pause between Acts II and III.

***Nixon in China* Performance Schedule:**

Saturday, June 7, 7:30 pm

Tuesday, June 10, 7:30 pm

Friday, June 13, 7:30 pm

Sunday, June 15, 2:00 pm

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***Nixon in China* is sponsored by:**

Mr. and Mrs. Richard L. Robinson, the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation, and Paul and Linda Sinsar.

Tickets – Tickets are on sale now and are available through Ticketmaster via www.operacolorado.org, by phone at **303-357-ARTS**, or at a variety of walk-up locations posted on the Opera Colorado website. Ticket prices range from \$28 - \$157. Discount rates are available to groups of 10 or more.

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