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Media Contact: Rex Fuller, Opera Colorado  
[rfuller@operacolorado.org](mailto:rfuller@operacolorado.org)  
303.778.0214



## **Czech it out!**

### **Opera Colorado launches “Czech Point Denver”**

*Festival of Czech cultural arts involves metro Denver non-profits  
Celebrates Opera Colorado’s first Czech opera*

DENVER, CO—Opera Colorado announced today the launch of “Czech Point Denver,” a city-wide cultural festival centered on the opera company’s production of Dvorak’s *Rusalka*, Opera Colorado’s first production of a Czech opera and the regional premiere of the work opening at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House in February 2011.

Czech Point Denver will be a far-ranging celebration of Czech arts and culture scheduled for January and February 2011, leading up to the performances of the opera. The festival is a cooperative project between several Denver non-profit arts and cultural organizations and will include classical music, theatre, visual arts, film, and multi-media experiences for the general public.

“The richness and diversity of Czech culture is far-reaching,” said Greg Carpenter, General Director of the opera. “As a world capital for over a thousand years, the Czech people have contributed to many major art movements and historical events over the centuries. As the organization that has spear-headed this project, we are thrilled with the enthusiastic response we have received from other cultural organizations in the metro area. We are proud to be a part of this group of excellent collaborators.”

Carpenter described the festival as the first step in a long-held goal for Opera Colorado, creating a multi-disciplinary festival around the company’s performances. “As a team, all of the collaborators are looking to engage new audiences by creating relevant and inspired programming. We hope that all members of the collaboration will see positive effects from working together.”

**[www.czechpointdenver.com](http://www.czechpointdenver.com)**

The public can learn about the festival by visiting the Czech Point Denver website at [www.czechpointdenver.com](http://www.czechpointdenver.com). The website will list planned activities for the festival as well as historical and cultural information about the Czech Republic. The website also features the festival’s blog, “Czech Mix,” which will chronicle developments around the festival as plans progress as well as cultural insights about a wide array of topics. “We hope to engage the Denver Metro community through multiple online platforms,” Carpenter continued. “In addition to hosting

the website and blog for this project, we are creating a Facebook fan page as well as utilizing other new media technologies as we go.”

Additional collaborators continue to join the project as it moves forward. However, the initial list of collaborators and their activities are already creating a diverse array of activities:

### **Buntport Theatre**

Buntport Theater is remounting *Kafka on Ice*, their dark comedy from 2004, a semi-fictionalized biography of the famous Czech author. They’re also integrating Czech culture into their quarterly program “The Great Debate,” which pits “experts” against one another who passionately argue the inane as they debate “Kafkaesque moments” versus “Freudian slips.” Buntport’s February Teacher’s Pet program is themed “My Life as a Cockroach—tales of the unbelievable and bizarre.”

### **The Children’s Museum of Denver**

The Children’s Museum of Denver and Opera Colorado are partnering to perform Opera Colorado’s touring opera *Hansel & Gretel* at the museum. Inspired by the fairytale nature of *Rusalka*, this performance will be part of the museum’s “Fairytale & Fables” theme during the month of February.

### **Colorado Public Radio**

As part of its expanded live broadcast season, Colorado Public Radio will air the closing performance of *Rusalka* on Sunday, February 20 live on its classical music stations statewide and online at CPR.org. The station will also highlight Czech classical music in advance of the performance.

### **Colorado Railroad Museum**

When not contemplating beautiful melodies, Czech composer Antonín Dvorák was obsessed with trains and train travel. The Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden and Opera Colorado will team up to present a special event on Saturday, January 15, where we will explore Dvorák’s music and the world he was writing in. In addition to learning more about Dvorák the man, guests will have the unique opportunity to ride in beautifully restored 1880’s passenger coaches, very similar to one that Dvorák himself might have ridden in. We invite you to step back in time and explore the 19th century at the Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden, Colorado.

### **The Colorado Symphony**

The Colorado Symphony will present two exciting programs in January. As part of their new "Inside the Score" series, the orchestra will perform Dvořák's Symphony No. 9, *From the New World*, one of the most popular pieces of orchestral music ever written in a program called "Dvořák's New World." The Colorado Symphony explores how this symphony grew out of Dvořák's American experience and reveals the inspiration he felt upon coming to these shores through his music, effective visuals, film clippings and the use of a narrator. The Symphony will also perform "Dvořák Comes to America," a part of their Family series and a Side-by-Side concert collaboration with the Denver Young Artists Orchestra that features Czech musical works, highlighting those by Dvořák.

### **Denver Art Museum**

Opera Colorado and the Denver Art Museum will join forces on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011 -- just in time for Valentine's day -- to present a tag team of visual and performing arts inspired by the classic themes of love, romantic tragedy and fairytales. Drawing on the classic love story *Rusalka* and DAM's paintings, photos, and sculptures; the two cultural institutions will collaborate to create a day-long bash that dances around themes of romance, unrequited love, broken hearts and fairy tales. Scheduled activities include touring the DAM's collections, detours, activities for the whole family and a dose of the unexpected.

### **Mizel Arts and Culture Center at the JCC and the Denver Jewish Film Festival**

The Denver Jewish Film Festival will host a screening of *Maharal*, a Czech film following the adventures of three children and a character described as "the Jewish Indiana Jones" as they search for Prague's mythical Golem and the legendary Philosopher's Stone.

### **Newman Center Presents**

The Newman Center welcomes A Far Cry, a conductorless string orchestra founded three years ago by 17 young musicians bent on making music according to their own rules. A Far Cry has enjoyed a quick ascent toward the highest ranks of the new generation of classical ensembles. They will be performing a variety of works, including Dvořák's Nocturne in B Major as part of a program that includes Tchaikovsky (Serenade for Strings), Mozart (Piano Concerto #11, with Joel Fan), and Lena-Frank ("Leyendas").

### **Opera Colorado**

In addition to performing the Czech opera *Rusalka*, Opera Colorado will host a variety of community educational opportunities. The popular Meet the Artists series will take place at Tattered Cover, where opera enthusiasts can meet cast of *Rusalka*. Opera Colorado will also

host a Women's Luncheon where an opera professional will speak about her career in opera. There will also be preview events and collaborations with other culturals to celebrate Czech culture throughout the months of January and February.

### **Paragon Theatre**

Paragon Theatre plans a staged reading of Tom Stoppard's important work *Rock 'N' Roll* for January 2011. While largely thought of as a British playwright, not many people are aware that Tom Stoppard was born Tomáš Straussler in the Moravia region of the Czech Republic. He has kept close contact with his heritage over the years and wrote the play *Rock 'N' Roll* in 2006. The play follows characters from the 1968 Prague Spring through to the 1989 Velvet Revolution.

### **Rocky Mountain PBS**

Rocky Mountain PBS is a proud media partner of Czech Point Denver and is committed to supporting the festival and celebrating the Czech cultural arts.

### **Performances of *Rusalka***

Dvorák's beloved fairytale opera *Rusalka* is based on the folk story of a water sprite, Rusalka, who out of love for a mortal man longs to become human. Rusalka sings the haunting "Song to the Moon," begging the celestial orb to tell the Prince of her love. The witch Jezibaba makes Rusalka's dreams come true. But when the Prince she loves is unfaithful, there are tragic results for all. *Rusalka* will star soprano Kelly Kaduce in the title role. This will be the first known performance of this work in the state of Colorado.

Performances are scheduled for February 12, 15, 18 and 20, 2011. Ticket prices range from \$20 to \$150 and are available at the Czech Point Denver website, [OperaColorado.org](http://OperaColorado.org) or by calling 800.982.ARTS.

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