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NASHVILLE OPERA ANNOUNCES 2021.22 SEASON, OPENING WITH WORLD PREMIERE OF NEW MARCUS HUMMON PIECE AND CLOSING AT BELMONT UNIVERSITY WITH WAGNER'S DAS RHEINGOLD

Nashville, TN—Nashville Opera returns to the theater in 2022 with a world premiere, a new take on a beloved classic, and the first fully staged production of Wagner's DAS RHEINGOLD in Music City.

The season opens in January 2022 at the Noah Liff Opera Center with the world premiere of **FAVORITE SON**, composed by **GRAMMY-winning songwriter Marcus Hummon**. Drawing from experiences in the composer's own life, the poignant FAVORITE SON journeys through one man's memories to find the essence of truth. The cast includes singer, songwriter, session musician, and four-time GRAMMY-nominated artist **Darrell Scott**, popular opera crossover tenor (and minor league baseball player) **John Riesen**, and **Emma Grimsley**, who led the North American touring company of *The Phantom of the Opera* as Christine through its closing in February 2020. Hummon, who previously collaborated with Nashville Opera to produce his work *SURRENDER ROAD*, is best known for penning songs including *The Chicks' Cowboy Take Me Away*, *Tim McGraw's One Of These Days*, *Wynonna Judd's Only Love*, and *Bless the Broken Road* for Rascal Flatts.



Marcus Hummon

April brings Nashville Opera back to TPAC's Jackson Hall for John Hoomes' edgy film-noir staging of Verdi's classic **RIGOLETTO**. Making his Nashville Opera debut in the title role is **baritone Aleksey Bogdanov**, a powerhouse known for his "piercing intensity" (*Chicago Sun-Times*) and "star quality in every way" (*Opera News*). **Soprano Sarah Coburn**, "a budding prima donna of exceptional promise" (*The New York Post*), will make her company debut in the role of Gilda. **Tenor Daniel Montenegro**, recently seen at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, and San Diego Opera, makes his company debut in the role of Duke. **RIGOLETTO** will feature the fruits of the partnership between Nashville Opera and Nashville Film Festival—the winning film entry of the Nashville Opera Noir Filmfest will be showcased as a part of the production, with live orchestra accompaniment.



Lester Lynch, baritone

The season closes in the new **Belmont University Performing Arts Center** with May performances of Richard Wagner's masterwork, **DAS RHEINGOLD**, the first of four operas comprising *The Ring Cycle*. Wagner's music is seared into the pop psyche as the soundtrack for the famous helicopter scene in *Apocalypse Now*, and that same power infuses **DAS RHEINGOLD** (*The Gold of the Rhine River*). Wagner's intense, extended one-act draws from Norse mythology and German folklore to weave a story of gods, giants and an epic heist of precious gold—for the forging of an all-powerful magic ring. **Dramatic Baritone Lester Lynch** returns to the Nashville Opera stage in the role of Wotan, the King of the Gods. Lynch will be joined by a stellar international cast including mezzo-soprano **Renée Tatum** as Fricka, dramatic soprano **Othalie Graham** as Freia, and bass **Zachary James** as Fafner the Giant.

Season tickets will go on sale September 7, 2021. Full cast and production information will be released on July 9 at nashvilleopera.org.

FAVORITE SON by Marcus Hummon

Noah Liff Opera Center | January 21, 22, 23, 2022

RIGOLETTO by Giuseppe Verdi

TPAC, Jackson Hall | April 7 & 9, 2022

DAS RHEINGOLD by Richard Wagner

Belmont University Performing Arts Center | May 6 & 8, 2022

About Nashville Opera

Nashville Opera, Tennessee's largest professional opera company, creates artistic experiences that elevate our world. Among the most successful regional companies in the country, Nashville Opera has presented three different world premiere operas since its inception in 1981. Mainstage performances are presented at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center and the Noah Liff Opera Center, playing to over 10,000 people annually. Each year, Nashville Opera's extensive education and outreach touring program reaches approximately 25,000 students throughout Middle Tennessee. Visit nashvilleopera.org for more information.

About Marcus Hummon

A GRAMMY winner and recent inductee into the Nashville Songwriter's Hall of Fame, Marcus Hummon has enjoyed a successful career as a songwriter, recording artist, composer, playwright and author. His songs have been recorded in many genres -Pop, R&B, gospel - and most notably in country music, where he has written some of the genre's most iconic songs.

Hummon has received 7 BMI Awards, and 5 BMI #1 Awards; for Rascal Flatts' 'Bless The Broken Road' (winner of the Grammy for Best Country Song 2005, nominated for Song Of The Year in all genres 2005, two-time NSAI Song Of The Year Award 2005 and 2007, nominated for a Dove Award for Song Of The Year 2007); The Chicks' 'Cowboy Take Me Away'; Sara Evans' 'Born To Fly' (nominated for CMA Song Of The Year 2001, won CMA Video Of The Year 2001), Tim McGraw's 'One Of These Days'; Wynonna Judd's 'Only Love' (nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Country Vocal Performance, Female). Another Hummon co-written song, the Chicks' 'Ready To Run', was nominated for a Grammy For Country Song Of The Year, and won the Grammy for Best Country Performance By A Group Or A Duo, off the Grammy winning Country Album Of The Year, 'Fly' in 2000. In addition, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band was nominated for a Grammy for Best Country Performance By A Group Or Duo With Vocal for 'Roll The Stone Away' co-written by Hummon.

As a recording artist and instrumentalist, Marcus released a critically acclaimed country record for Columbia Records in 1995, 'All In Good Time'. In 1998, Marcus and Scottish 'Big Country' front-man, Stuart Adamson, released their duo album 'Supernatural', as 'The Raphaels', with Track Records out of London. He has also released several independent records.

Hummon has scored two films: 'Lost Boy Home' narrated by Sam Waterston, winner of Best Shorts Award for the Palm Beach International Film Festival 2013; and 'The Last Songwriter' (a documentary he co-produced, featuring Garth Brooks and Jason Isbell), winner of the Audience Award at the Nashville Film Festival 2017.

Turning to theatre, Hummon has written 6 musicals and two operas. His through composed work, 'Favorite Son' will premiere January 2022 at Nashville Opera. His musical 'American Prophet' about the life of Frederick Douglass will premiere at Washington DC's Arena Stage Theater, the summer of 2022 under the direction of co-writer, Charles Randolph-Wright (Motown). His new opera, 'Favorite Son' will premiere, at Nashville Opera January of 2022, with John Hoopes directing.

In literature, Hummon's children's book, 'Anytime, Anywhere', was published by Athenium Press, a division of Simon and Schuster, in 2009. In 2017 his book, 'The Passion', a book co-written with his wife Rev. Becca Stevens, was published by Church Publishing, reflecting his cantata of the same name, released on CTM Records.

Marcus lives in Nashville, TN, with his wife Becca and their 3 sons...Levi, Caney and Moses. More information at marcushummon.net