



DENNIS HANTHORN - Zurich General Director

## IO-II NEWS

**Media Contacts:**

Cristina Vásconez Herrera  
[cvherrera@atlantaopera.org](mailto:cvherrera@atlantaopera.org)  
404-881-9194

Laura D. Soldati  
[lsoldati@atlantaopera.org](mailto:lsoldati@atlantaopera.org)  
404-591-2931

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### The Atlanta Opera Presents *Porgy and Bess* at the Cobb Energy Centre

#### Production to Feature New High-Definition Technology

The second opera in [The Atlanta Opera's](#) 2010-2011 season is George Gershwin's American classic *Porgy and Bess*. Set in Charleston, *Porgy and Bess* depicts the people of Catfish Row who are yearning for a better life and great love, and features some of the most popular tunes in opera including the lullaby, "Summertime." Boston Pops conductor [Keith Lockhart](#) will make his Atlanta Opera debut conducting The Atlanta Opera Orchestra, Chorus and cast. Performances are February 26, March 1, 4 and 6, 2011 at the [Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre](#).

This production will use an [innovative high-definition projection technology](#) developed by The University of Kentucky's Center for Visualization and Virtual Environments ([VIS Center](#)). The technology, originally used for a non-theatrical use, incorporates projections and screen units that will take the place of traditional scenery and sets.

#### **New production concept**

The projections used for this new production of *Porgy and Bess* will depict images of real locations in Charleston, South Carolina and the barrier islands off the coast of North Carolina. Actual hurricane footage from The Weather Channel will be used in the hurricane scene. Combining these images with a minimal amount of three-dimensional pieces of scenery will create a vibrant and exciting production.

### How the technology works

The VIS Center has developed a method of rear projection called SCRIBE (an acronym for self-contained rapidly integratable background environment) that creates very large rear projections using only minimal backstage area. The technology utilizes a software system that allows multiple projectors to re-create three-dimensional renderings. Multiple projectors, attached to two large movable fabric screen units, take up less than five feet of stage space, freeing the rest of the stage for singers, and ensuring that stage light will not be disrupted. The uniqueness of this technology lies in the fact that the rear-projection system utilizes such a small amount of stage space. Older rear-projection technologies required a great deal of backstage space or a complicated system of mirrors to create large images. Traditional front-projection systems often left performers “wearing the scenery.”

[SEE VIDEO ABOUT THIS PROJECT](#)

[SEE VIDEO OF REAR-PROJECTION UNITS BEING ASSEMBLED](#)

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### **PORGY AND BESS**

Music by George Gershwin  
Libretto by DuBose Heyward  
Lyrics by Ira Gershwin and DuBose Heyward

Sung in English with English Supertitles

Previous Atlanta Opera Performances: 2005  
Approximate Running Time: 3 hours 15 minutes

### **Four Performances at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre**

**Saturday, February 26, 2011 at 8 pm**

**Tuesday, March 1, 2011 at 7:30 pm**

**Friday, March 4, 2011 at 8 pm**

**Sunday, March 6, 2011 at 3 pm**

#### Creative Team

Conductor	Keith Lockhart*
Stage Director	Larry Marshall
Set Designer	Richard Kagey

#### Cast

Porgy	Michael Redding*
Bess	Laquita Mitchell*
Clara	NaGuanda Nobles*
Sportin' Life	Chauncey Packer
Crown	Eric Greene*
Serena	Aundi Marie Moore

### Description

Set in Charleston, *Porgy and Bess* depicts the struggling occupants of Catfish Row as they live a life of hard work and tough times, yearning for a better life and great love. You'll be drawn in by Porgy, Bess, Crown, Sportin' Life and Serena, the amazing characters in this quintessential American opera. Composed by the forever-young George Gershwin, *Porgy and Bess* features opera's most famous lullaby, "Summertime." This new Atlanta Opera production will use high-definition projection technology combined with three-dimensional scenery to create a vibrant and exciting performance experience. *Porgy and Bess* also features the company debut of Boston Pops conductor Keith Lockhart conducting The Atlanta Opera Orchestra and Chorus and a dazzling cast of young opera stars.

\*Denotes Atlanta Opera debut.

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### **TICKET INFORMATION**

#### **Single Tickets**

\$25 - \$125 plus tax, convenience and venue fees

**Online** -- Visit [www.atlantaopera.org](http://www.atlantaopera.org)

**By Phone** -- Call 404-881-8885 or 1-800-35-OPERA

**In-person** -- Visit the Bank of North Georgia Box Office at the Cobb Energy Centre (Mon-Fri, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; and one hour prior to a performance on day of show).

#### **Season Tickets – 2-Opera Subscriptions Still Available**

Season tickets to The Atlanta Opera's 2010-2011 Season at the Cobb Energy Centre are still available. Ticket prices for a two-opera package including *Porgy and Bess* and *Così fan tutte* range from \$50 to \$306.

**Online** -- Visit [www.atlantaopera.org](http://www.atlantaopera.org)

**By Phone** -- Call 404-881-8885 or 1-800-35-OPERA

**In-person** -- Visit The Atlanta Opera Center at 1575 Northside Drive NW, Building 300, Suite 350 (Mon-Fri, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.).

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#### **Atlanta Opera Sponsors**

**AT&T** is the Atlanta Opera's Season Sponsor. The Atlanta Opera is proud to recognize its other corporate partners: **The Coca-Cola Company**, the Official Beverage Sponsor of The Atlanta Opera and Opening Night Performance Sponsor, **Zurich**, the Official Insurance Sponsor of The Atlanta Opera, and **Delta Air Lines**, Official Airline of The Atlanta Opera. Generous production support also has been provided by Dr. and Mrs. James W. Bland, Bob and Cappa Woodward, the Sara Giles Moore Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Knobloch, Jr., Martha Thompson, the Atlanta Music Festival Association, and Mrs. Harry Willson.

### **About The Atlanta Opera**

Founded in 1979, The Atlanta Opera is one of the finest regional opera companies in the nation, drawing audiences from the entire metropolitan Atlanta area as well as from the Southeast region. Led by Zurich General Director Dennis Hanthorn, The Atlanta Opera strives to expand the experience of its patrons with memorable and exciting opera performances reflecting the highest musical and theatrical standards, while supporting community and educational programs. The company also works to attract the finest international, national, and regional singers, conductors, stage directors and designers. For the 2010-2011 season, The Atlanta Opera presents three productions with four performances each at the Cobb Energy Centre.

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