



NSO
Symphony Orchestra
ان.اس.او. الأوركسترا السيمفونية

TwoFour54 Media Free zone • P.O. Box 77923, Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.
E: info@nsouae.org • W: www.nsouae.org

PRESS RELEASE

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NSO OPERA DEBUTS STELLAR CAST OF SINGERS FOR UPLIFTING FAMILY OPERA "AM AHL & THE NIGHT VISITORS"

CONTACT:

FRANCES BARTON, NSO MEDIA DIRECTOR
media@nsouae.org • Mobile: 050 650 3900

22 & 23 Jan at Brighton College, Abu Dhabi

In support of the worldwide eradication of polio

Abu Dhabi, UAE. 18 January 2015 - NSO Opera will debut an impressive cast of both international and UAE-based singers for "Amahl & the Night Visitors", Gian-Carlo Menotti's uplifting family opera.

The fully staged, one-act performance will run from 22 to 23 January 2015 at Abu Dhabi's Brighton College, with a Friday afternoon matinee, and supported by the NSO Chamber Orchestra and Chorus, conducted by American music professional Ron Malanga.





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Set in the Holy Land, "Amahl & the Night Visitors" is the heart-warming story of a poor, crippled shepherd boy and his widowed mother who are visited by the Three Kings on their way to Bethlehem.

Music-lovers can have a sneak-preview of the opera on Monday 19 January at 7.30pm at Brighton College in Abu Dhabi, when the singers will perform highlighted excerpts, as well popular opera arias and art songs, treating the capital to opera at its best.

Bass-Baritone Thomas Isherwood, who has been flown in from London for the performances, is cast as King Balthazar. Currently studying for his master's at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, he is the recipient of the 2013 Alexander Young prize at his former college, the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM), in addition to the 2011 Oncken Song Prize.

Abu Dhabi-based Tenor Domenico Cannizzaro, acclaimed for singing roles in both dramatic and lyrical style, will play the role of King Kasper.

Dubai-based Baritone Jerzy Olsson-Nagorski, who is cast as King Melchior, is well known to UAE audiences as a regular performer with the Emirates Opera Project and the Dubai Singers.





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Young Sopranos Daniella Stewart and Lameece Bouarroudj take the role of Amahl on alternate nights, while American Soprano Gretchen Hewitt is cast as the Mother. The young Tenor, Carlos Páez, rounds off the cast as the Page.

Janet Hassounah, NSO Founder and Executive Director, said: "The UAE is blessed with wonderful musical talent and it's an honour for NSO to call on musicians of such calibre for this charming opera.

"We are also welcoming the promising Bass-Baritone Thomas Isherwood, who is making his debut in the UAE. The performances, with the support of the NSO Chamber Orchestra and Chorus will surely prove a big hit with families who enjoy a great story, presented by great singers and musicians!"

As an introductory highlight, Emirati young people will perform a charming sketch in English beforehand to explain the story of the opera. Emirati filmmaker Manahel Al Badah performs the role of the Mother and is joined onstage by Zayed Al Nauwis (the boy) and Omayya Al Kudsi (the girl).

A percentage of the proceeds are being donated to Rotary International to help in their efforts in the worldwide eradication of polio.

The performances on 22 and 23 January 2015 start at 7.30pm, with the Friday matinée at 4.30pm. Tickets are available on www.timeouttickets.com, ticketing@nsouae.org and Spinneys Khalidiya.

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ABOUT NSO • WWW.NSO UAE.ORG

NSO comprises the NSO Symphony Orchestra, the NSO Chamber Orchestra, the NSO Symphonic Pops Orchestra and NSO Opera & Chorus.

More than 100 musicians of some 20 nationalities, who live in six of the seven emirates, make up the various formations of NSO and are professional musicians and musical educators who have performed regularly for their own national orchestras.

NSO performs numerous major symphonic and operatic works, as well as a more popular classical and music theatre repertoire. Every concert endeavours to feature musical contributions from the UAE, whether a composer, solo singer or musician, such as a pianist or Oud player. NSO presents concerts throughout the year for the general public and is regularly called upon to perform for private, corporate and government events. NSO also outsources, through its NSO Music Agency, smaller groups such as the NSO Symphonic Brass, the NSO Big Band, the NSO String Quartet, the NSO Three Tenors and the NSO Three Sopranos.

Entrepreneur and former Opera Singer Janet Hassounah founded NSO in 2011 to meet the region's cultural aspirations. Originally from the USA, where she obtained her master's in musical performance, she has worked in the music business in the UAE for the past 30 years, performing, teaching and organising music theatre and opera concerts featuring international guest artists from New York and London. Numerous performances were staged for charitable causes, under the auspices of the UAE authorities. NSO UAE was formed to reciprocate the government's hospitality.