

## PRESS RELEASE

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**FORT WORTH MAYOR BETSY PRICE  
AND CONSUL GENERAL OF MEXICO IN DALLAS FRANCISCO DE LA TORRE  
JOIN FORT WORTH OPERA FOR THE FIRST LIBRETTO READING OF  
*THE LAST DREAM OF FRIDA AND DIEGO***

Living relatives of iconic Mexican artists Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo will attend FWOpera's private reception at Kahlo's historic house and art museum, Casa Azul, following the official announcement and press conference in Mexico City

**FORT WORTH, TX – Fort Worth Opera (FWOpera) will present the first full libretto reading of Nilo Cruz and Gabriela Lena Frank's *The Last Dream of Frida and Diego* on August 24, 2017, at the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City.**

Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price and Francisco de la Torre, Consul General of Mexico in Dallas, will be joining FWOpera for the official announcement. Following the press conference, renowned Mexican actors **Anna Silveti, Javier Díaz Dueñas, Evangelina Sosa, and Adrián Alarcón** will read the roles of Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, Catrina, the keeper of souls, and Leandro. This new co-commissioned work with San Diego Opera, the college of Fine Arts at The University of Texas at Austin, and DePauw University in Indiana, will receive further libretto, compositional, and orchestral workshops, as the opera evolves in the years preceding the **2020 world premiere in Fort Worth, Texas.**

Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price said, "For over 70 years, Fort Worth Opera has elevated the arts in our community, presenting innovative stories that reflect the incredible diversity of all North Texans. An investment in the future of our cultural institutions, is an investment in the future of Fort Worth. We are proud to host the 2020 world premiere of *The Last Dream of Frida and Diego*, and I am honored to join Fort Worth Opera as we make exciting new connections in Mexico City that will impact the city of 'Cowboys and Culture' for years to come."

Executive Director of Opera de Bellas Artes, Adriana Camarena, and Artistic Director Lourdes Ambriz, will join FWOpera General Director Tuomas Hiltunen, Artistic Director Joe Illick, and selected guests for an exclusive sneak peek of Nilo Cruz's vibrant celebration of life, death, and artistic immortality. Not only does *The Last Dream of Frida and Diego* explore the tumultuous relationship of these passionate provocateurs, but it takes audiences into the spirit world and inside the glorious paintings of Kahlo and Rivera.

"This piece has captivated me from the moment I heard about it," said FWOpera Artistic Director, Joe Illick. "Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera have become iconic throughout Mexico, the United States, and around the world for their life's work and their passionate relationship. This opera is a tribute to love, an homage to art, and a hymn to the freedom of spirit. Gabriella's music is gorgeous and she has a unique voice as a composer. Nilo's libretto is powerful and evocative, and its surreal nature allows the story to fully explore Frida and Diego's complex relationship and the marvelous paintings that it produced. I predict that *The Last Dream of Frida and Diego* will be an international sensation."

Donors, guests, and staff will attend a private reception in the garden of Kahlo's famous La Caza Azul (Blue House). Filmmaker Diego López Rivera, grandson of Diego Rivera, and photographer Cristina Kahlo, great-niece of Frida Kahlo, will be present for this festive event, complete with mariachi performers.

"Fort Worth Opera's *The Last Dream of Frida and Diego* is yet another bold, innovative *Noches de Ópera* project – the perfect bridge that connects Mexican and American cultures," says Consul General Francisco de la Torre G. "Initiatives like *Noches* are an important reminder that art is timeless and that it transcends languages and borders."

*The Last Dream of Frida and Diego* is part of the company's historic, four-year commitment to Spanish-language operas and community outreach programs, **Noches de Ópera**. After the premiere at Bass Performance Hall, the opera will be presented in San Diego Opera, DePauw Opera, and the Butler Opera Center with the College of Fine Arts at the University of Texas in Austin. The creative process is generously supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and OPERA America's Opera Grants for Female Composers to promote greater diversity in the creation of new operatic works.

**ABOUT FORT WORTH OPERA:** Founded in 1946, Fort Worth Opera is the oldest continually performing opera company in Texas, and one of the 14 oldest opera companies in the United States. The organization has received national attention from critics and audiences alike for its artistic excellence.

FWOpera has taken a leadership role in engaging audiences beyond the operatic stage, while producing cutting-edge, contemporary operas. Beginning in 2017, FWOpera launched the second phase of its landmark, 10-year *Opera of the Americas* initiative with *Noches de Ópera* (Nights of Opera), a groundbreaking campaign which introduces powerful operas, each reflecting the diverse cultures of new American audiences.

Fort Worth Opera is sponsored in part by awards from **The Arts Council of Fort Worth & Tarrant County**, **The City of Fort Worth**, and the **Texas Commission on the Arts**. Additional Fort Worth Opera sponsors include: the **Andrew W. Mellon Foundation**; the **Amon G. Carter Foundation**; **American Airlines**; **Art & Seek**; **Crystelle Waggoner Charitable Trust**, **Bank of America, Trustee**; **The Pangburn Foundation**, **J.P. Morgan Chase, Trustee**; the **Sid W. Richardson Foundation**; **Star-Telegram**; and **WFAA Channel 8**.

**ABOUT SAN DIEGO OPERA:** The mission of San Diego Opera is to deliver exceptional vocal performances and exciting, accessible programs to diverse audiences, focusing on community engagement and the transformative power of live performance. The Company's vision is that it will be recognized internationally as a leading example of adaptability, innovation and sustainability in the operatic arts, promoting diversified programming and unique performance venues with world-class and emerging talent. Through innovative programming and education, SDO provides a lasting cultural service to the community. Our tradition of excellence in fully staged opera is augmented with new models of opera and venues. Our unique and deep commitment to the community propels us to explore ways of increasing affordability and accessibility. Through fiscal responsibility and nimble adaptation to the changing marketplace, we will protect the future of San Diego Opera. Our educational and community involvement coupled with relevant programming will build the audience of the future.

**ABOUT THE COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN:** The College of Fine Arts at The University of Texas at Austin educates artists, scholars and future arts educators in a context that emphasizes artistic excellence, advanced technology, cultural diversity and best professional practices. The college places a high priority on research and the creation of new work through its many divisions and departments, including among others, the Butler School of Music, the Department of Art and Art History, the Department of Theatre and Dance, the Center for Arts and Entertainment Technologies, Texas Performing Arts, the university's arts presenting organization, and Landmarks, the university's public art program. A comprehensive visual and performing arts college, degree concentrations from the B.A. to Ph.D. are offered in classical music and composition to acting, dance and scenic design to studio art and design studies, as well as the scholarly study of the arts in a broad range of disciplines.

**ABOUT THE DEPAUW UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC:** The DePauw School of Music is a place that is home to a diverse group of faculty and students who have a variety of talents and interests. As a small, liberal arts university, we challenge students to acknowledge the skills, tools, and experiences necessary to be musicians of the future. Our 21st-Century Musician Initiative assists students in doing just that. At DePauw you will be able to push yourself intellectually and collaborate with others. We will give you the tools needed to discover who you are as a musician and how that translates into your future objectives. Mission: Revolutionizing the ways people engage through music, we envision a world connected, enriched and transformed by musical experiences.