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NEWS RELEASE

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***FWOpera Creates a Six-Month Symposia Series
Leading to the World Premiere of JFK***

*JFK: 5 Decades of Progress explores social, political, and technological
advancements from JFK's Presidency to Now*

FORT WORTH, TX – Fort Worth Opera (FWOpera) proudly announced today program details for a six-month long community conversation series titled *JFK: 5 Decades of Progress*. Beginning in October 2015 and culminating in the world premiere of FWOpera's *JFK*, the series will include five unique events focused on the presidential platforms of John F. Kennedy and the progression of those topics during the 50 years since his presidency. *JFK: Five Decades of Progress* will highlight a variety of important topics, policies, and events that helped define President Kennedy's time in office. From issues like Civil Rights, U.S foreign policy, and the Space Race to the evolution of journalism and government support of the arts, *JFK: Five Decades of Progress* will show how far – or not so far in some instances – the U.S has come since the President's time in Texas.

"Fort Worth Opera prides itself on being an innovative leader on the stage, but with *JFK: Five Decades of Progress*, we hope to be a leader in the community as well, bringing relevant discussions to North Texas. It is my belief that art isn't just a form of entertainment, but a spark meant to ignite conversation and create change," stated General Director Darren K. Woods.

Cultural and community leaders across the Metroplex have shown incredible support of FWOpera in this endeavor to engage our larger community in conversations beyond the opera stage. The organization has partnered with businesses across the metroplex including The Sixth Floor Museum, KERA, Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce, Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and more in an effort to bring these panel discussions directly into the communities and neighborhoods of North Texas residents.

Symposia Line Up:

10/22/2015

Space Race: Advances in U.S. Science and Transportation Technology

6:30 pm – 8:00 pm

University of Texas at Arlington

Generously sponsored Hillwood Properties

President John F. Kennedy was committed to establishing the United States as a leader in space travel and transportation technology. His dedication to the mission of the exploration of outer space led to the development and expansion of NASA. Panelists will discuss the progression of NASA's programming and role in space technology throughout the past 50 years and where they are headed in the decades to come with special **guest speaker Dr. Wendell Mendell**, retired NASA scientist and instructor at International Space University. Tickets for this event are free, but RSVPs are strongly encouraged. Reserve your seat by contacting 817.288.1227 or online at www.fwopera.org/events.

11/18/2015

Civil Rights in Modern America

6:30 pm – 8:00 pm

The Potter's House (Dallas)

11/19/2015

Civil Rights in Modern America

6:30 pm – 8:00 pm.

I.M. Terrell High School Auditorium (Fort Worth)

Recent national events have brought to light the issue of deep civil unrest facing America's minority populations, proving that the topic of race relations is still at the forefront of media attention. **Led by Bob Ray Sanders**, a panel comprised of leaders from the African American community and presidential scholars will discuss the evolution of civil rights from JFK's presidency to now. Tickets for this event are free, but RSVPs are strongly encouraged. Reserve your seat by contacting 817.288.1227 or online at www.fwopera.org/events.

01/21/2016

Cuba and Immigration

6:30 pm – 8:00 pm

TCC Trinity River Campus, Energy Auditorium

With the recent restoration of ties between Cuba and America and the steps being taken towards removing the five-decade embargo against the Latin country, Fort Worth Opera will host a conversation evaluating JFK's decision to enforce the blockade, its economic impact during the past 50 years, and why both President Bush and President Obama have made strides to repair the relationship with our Southern neighbor. In extension, FWOpera will also introduce panelists, including **Congresswoman Kay Granger**, to discuss JFK's position on immigration and examine how the topic continues to affect our particular community. Tickets for this event are free, but RSVPs are strongly encouraged. Reserve your seat by contacting 817.288.1227 or online at www.fwopera.org/events.

02/18/2016

Journalism

6:30 pm – 8:00 pm

7th Floor at The Sixth Floor Museum

Generously sponsored by KERA

In partnership with North Texas public broadcast KERA, **a panel led by a KERA program favorite**, will explore the changes in news media throughout the past 50 years, and trends in news coverage of tragedies in particular. Moving from a time where newspapers were king and the world consumed media one day at a time, what considerations are made now in covering breaking news relevant in a 24/7 news cycle? Tickets for this event are free, but RSVPs are strongly encouraged. Reserve your seat by contacting 817.288.1227 or online at www.fwopera.org/events.

03/24/2016

The Arts: An Evening Dedicated to Ruth Carter Stevenson

6:30 pm – 8:00 pm

Piano Pavilion, Kimbell Art Museum

Jack and Jackie Kennedy were avid supporters of the visual and performing arts, and under his presidency developed positions that empowered the arts and gave a voice to architecture. They hosted White House parties in honor of famous artists, and JFK supported the creation of the GSA Art in Architecture Program to oversee the commission of artwork for new Federal building, and created the position of Special Consultant on the Arts. The panelists for this evening will discuss how Fort Worth welcomed JFK with art 50 years ago and how governmental support affects the creation of art and architecture today. Tickets for this event are free, but RSVPs are strongly encouraged. Reserve your seat by contacting 817.288.1227 or online at www.fwopera.org/events.

OFFICIAL SYMPOSIA PARTNERS INCLUDE:

- The Sixth Floor Museum
- KERA
- Arlington Convention & Visitors Bureau
- University of Texas at Arlington
- Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce
- Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

OFFICIAL SYMPOSIA SPONSORS INCLUDE:

- Hillwood Properties

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. Under the leadership of General Director Darren K. Woods since 2001, the organization has gained national attention from critics and audiences alike for its artistic quality and willingness to take risks. Known throughout the operatic world as a champion of new and rarely-performed works, the company has taken a leadership role in producing contemporary operas. In 2007, when the company changed its fall/winter schedule to a condensed one-month long Festival in the spring, FWOpera staged its first world premiere, *Frau Margot*, and followed up the next season with *Angels in America*, *Dead Man Walking* in 2009, the world premiere of *Before Night Falls* in 2010, and *Hydrogen Jukebox* in 2011. The 2012 Festival staged the regional premieres of Mark Adamo's *Lysistrata* and Jake Heggie's *Three Decembers*, the first time the

two composers' works have been co-programmed, and the 2013 season featured the regional premiere of Tom Cipullo's *Glory Denied*, as well as the inaugural season of its new works showcase, *Frontiers*, featuring works by eight composers from the Americas. In 2014, the company presented the professional world premiere of Daniel Crozier and Peter M. Krask's *With Blood, With Ink*, as well as the regional premiere of Kevin Puts and Mark Campbell's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Silent Night*. Fort Worth Opera's CD recordings of *Frau Margot*, *Before Night Falls*, and *Glory Denied* are available on the Albany label. Fort Worth Opera's CD recordings of *Frau Margot*, *Before Night Falls*, and *Glory Denied*, and *With Blood, With Ink* are available on the Albany label.

The company's upcoming 2016 season, the culmination of part of Phase One of its recently announced ten-year artistic vision ***Opera of the Americas*** — funded in part by support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation — includes the world premiere of David T. Little and Royce Vavrek's commissioned opera ***JFK***, Rossini's hilarious comic romp ***The Barber of Seville***, as well as the regional premiere of two one-act operas ***Buried Alive | Embedded***, based on the short stories of Edgar Allan Poe.

Established in 2002, the Fort Worth Opera Studio is a year-round training program for emerging young artists who are cast from annual national auditions. In addition to receiving professional training while in Fort Worth, the singers also perform in the Children's Opera Theatre, the company's educational program that tours fully costumed, portable operas to elementary schools. COT performances span the whole state of Texas and reach thousands of children a year, many of whom have no other access to arts education.

Fort Worth Opera is sponsored in part by awards from **The Arts Council of Fort Worth & Tarrant County, The City of Fort Worth, the Fort Worth Promotion and Development Fund, The National Endowment for the Arts**, and the **Texas Commission on the Arts**. Additional Fort Worth Opera sponsors include: **American Airlines; Art & Seek; Crystelle Waggoner Charitable Trust, Bank of America, Trustee; The Pangburn Foundation, J.P. Morgan Chase, Trustee; Star-Telegram;** and **WFAA Channel 8**.

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