

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT Selina Rajani, 604-331-4824
srajani@vancouveropera.ca

VO ANNOUNCES NEW DETAILS ABOUT NIXON IN CHINA
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SERIES
CBC Radio's Alison Smith to interview Margaret MacMillan

Vancouver, BC ~ Vancouver Opera announces new details about the *Nixon in China* Community Engagement Series, a major program of events surrounding the Canadian premiere of John Adams's modern masterpiece. VO has partnered with several groups to create this series that explores the historic 1972 meeting between Richard Nixon and Mao Zedong, the opera it inspired and the establishment of the Chinese community in Vancouver.

On Wednesday, March 17th, **Margaret MacMillan**, author of "The Uses and Abuses of History" and "Nixon in China: The Week that Changed the World" will talk with CBC's "World at Six" host **Alison Smith** at a public event presented with the Vancouver International Writers Festival. Alison Smith is a well regarded senior correspondent and news anchor with CBC News who has covered a wide range of stories, including federal and provincial elections, the first Gulf War, the deaths of Pope John Paul II and Princess Diana and the Olympics in Atlanta, Athens and currently Vancouver. For four years before joining The World At Six, she was the Washington Correspondent for CBC Television. She spent four years travelling through the U.S. covering the election of President Barack Obama. (Alison Smith replaces Eleanor Wachtel, who is unable to attend due to a scheduling conflict.)

Other highlights of the *Nixon in China* Community Engagement Series include a Literary Lunch with **Margaret MacMillan** and **Alexandre Trudeau**, as well as a special *Opera Speaks @ VPL* event, "Chinese Vancouver Then & Now: 1972 – 2010", with architect **Bing Thom**, UBC historian **Henry Yu** and filmmaker **Colleen Leung**. Full details are set out below.

Former US Ambassador to the UN to Attend *Nixon in China*

At the invitation of the US Consul General in Vancouver and Vancouver Opera, former US Ambassador to the United Nations **John Negroponte**, whose early career included working at the National Security Council with Henry Kissinger in the early 1970s, will visit Vancouver to attend private functions and the Canadian premiere of *Nixon in China*.

Community Engagement Series Details

Inside the Music of John Adams

Tuesday, March 2nd 7:00pm

Vancouver Academy of Music

1270 Chestnut Street, Vancouver

Free Admission

An exploration of the music and career of Pulitzer Prize-winning composer John Adams. Presenters include writer and educator **Thomas May**, editor of *The John Adams Reader*, conductor **John DeMain**, who conducted the original 1987 production of *Nixon in China*, and Vancouver composer/conductor **Owen Underhill**.

Opera Speaks @ VPL - Chinese Vancouver Then & Now: 1972-2010

Tuesday, March 9th 7:00 – 9:00 pm

Vancouver Public Library – Central Branch

Alice MacKay Room

Free Admission – seating is limited

Explore the history of the Chinese in Vancouver, with emphasis on the Chinese communities' emergence and development since 1972, the year of Nixon's momentous trip to China. Discover how our city has been shaped and transformed by Chinese culture over the past 38 years. Moderated by UBC historian **Henry Yu**. Speakers include eminent architect **Bing Thom** and filmmaker **Colleen Leung**.

Presented in partnership with the Vancouver Public Library.

Opera Speaks @ VPL is sponsored by Omni BC Diversity Television.

In China: Comparing the Nixon, Trudeau and Harper Visits

Friday, March 12th 4:00pm – 5:30pm

Choi Building Conference Room, 1855 West Mall, UBC

Free Admission

A panel discussion exploring the past and future of Canada-China Relations, which closes a two-day colloquium hosted by the Institute of Asian Research. For more information see www.iar.ubc.ca.

Presented in partnership with the Institute of Asian Research, University of British Columbia.

Literary Lunch with Margaret MacMillan and Alexandre Trudeau

Tuesday, March 16th 12:30pm – 2:30pm

Seasons at Four Seasons Hotel Vancouver

Tickets: \$50 through the VO Box Office: 604-683-0222.

An intimate encounter with acclaimed Canadian historian **Margaret MacMillan** and journalist and filmmaker **Alexandre Trudeau** (son of Pierre Elliott Trudeau) as they take us behind the headlines of history. Hosted by **Hal Wake**, Artistic Director of Vancouver International Writers & Readers Festival.

Presented in partnership with Vancouver International Writers & Readers Festival.

Margaret MacMillan in conversation with CBC's Alison Smith

Wednesday, March 17th 7:30pm

Granville Island Stage

Tickets: \$18 through VancouverTix: 604-629-8849. www.vancouvertix.com

Margaret MacMillan talks with CBC's "World at Six" host Alison Smith about her most recent book "The Uses and Abuses of History" and her earlier chronicle "Nixon in China: The Week that Changed the World".

Presented in partnership with Vancouver International Writers & Readers Festival.

About *Nixon in China*

In 1972, Richard Nixon and Chairman Mao Zedong shook hands and changed the course of human events. West and East looked into each other's eyes and discovered a vast mystery of differences and desires. Henry Kissinger, Chou En-lai, Pat Nixon and Madame Mao all play pivotal roles in this fascinating drama of psychology and global politics. John Adams's richly textured and lyrical score pulses with rhythm and Alice Goodman's literate libretto resonates with poetry. *Nixon in China* is irresistible and gripping from beginning to end.

Presented with Vancouver 2010 Cultural Olympiad

In English with SURTITLES™

March 13, 16, 18, 20, 2010.

All performances 7:30 pm at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre.

Tickets starting at \$29 are available exclusively at the **Vancouver Opera Ticket Centre**, online at www.vancouveropera.ca or by telephone (604-683-0222).

Background

Nixon in China, composed by **John Adams** to a libretto by poet and scholar **Alice Goodman**, was written during the period 1985 to 1987 and is considered by many to be a modern masterpiece and one of the cornerstones of American minimalist music. John Adams is part of a contemporary movement to create opera that explores current events. This movement includes Stewart Wallace and Anthony Davis, the composers of

1995's *Milk* and 1986's *X*, about Harvey Milk and Malcolm X, respectively.

Both the music and libretto are admired for their sophistication and accessibility, and *Nixon in China* is acclaimed as one of the few late-20th-century English-language operas that will likely attain a prominent place in the canon for decades to come.

Learn More

Music tracks, podcasts, a full synopsis and extensive background information are available at www.vancouveropera.ca.

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