



**Atlanta
Symphony
Orchestra**

news

aso.org/newsroom

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 4, 2012

Contacts: Melissa A.E. Sanders

404.733.4846, melissa.sanders@woodruffcenter.org

Kimberly Nogi

404.733.4105, kimberly.nogi@woodruffcenter.org

**MUSIC DIRECTOR ROBERT SPANO
TO LEAD ATLANTA SYMPHONY PREMIERE
AND THEATER OF A CONCERT PRESENTATION
OF JOHN ADAMS'S *A FLOWERING TREE*
June 7 and 9, 2012**

**Orchestra Will Be First To Use Symphony V.0 Technology
Provided By Clark of Alpharetta**

Atlantan Russell Thomas To Sing Role of The Prince

**Theater of a Concert Presentation
To Mark End of 2011-12 Season**

Music Director Robert Spano will lead the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in the Atlanta Symphony premiere and Theater of a Concert presentation of John Adams's *A Flowering Tree* June 7 and 9, 2012, at 8:00 p.m. in Atlanta Symphony Hall at the Woodruff Arts Center.

Of the opera, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Vice President for Artistic Planning Evans Mirageas said:

John Adams's latest opera, *A Flowering Tree*, is a love story with a very happy ending. Beneath this romantic surface is an equally powerful message that true love and wisdom are often gained only through sacrifice and trial. This fifth-century South Indian folktale was chosen by John Adams and his longtime collaborator Peter Sellars as a modern response to the message of Mozart's final opera masterpiece, *The Magic Flute*. In Mozart's opera, a prince and princess are separated by fate and duty. After a series of harrowing trials they are reunited, having gained newfound wisdom and tolerance for the ways of others. This powerful message of understanding that crosses class and race is central to both operas. In *A Flowering Tree*, John Adams has created his most romantic and luminous score to date with arias, duets, great choruses, and stunning writing for a full (unamplified) symphony orchestra. All the pageantry, color, and beauty of ancient South India come into life in the hands of the man who has been called our finest living composer and the most potent composer of opera today.

A Flowering Tree premiered on November 14, 2006, at the MuseumsQuartier in Vienna, and has also been performed in San Francisco, Berlin, and London.

This unique [Theater of a Concert](#) presentation of *A Flowering Tree*, with stage direction by James Alexander, will feature the unveiling of a brand-new staging experience, Symphony V.0 — an innovation venture between Clark, a technology solutions group in Alpharetta, GA, and James Alexander. With this production, the Atlanta Symphony will be the first orchestra to use this multi-dimensional technology, utilizing state-of-the-art HD capture techniques and a proprietary motion graphics content delivery system.

“This is an incredibly elegant use of technology and visual effects,” said Dorian Usherwood, who specializes in business development and live effects at Clark. “Essentially, we’re creating a juxtaposition between the greatest technology available and the exceptional musicality of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.”

In past seasons, Theater of a Concert presentations have included film and projected images synchronized with the music, lighting effects, art installations, and semi-staged performances of operas, creating a marriage of the auditory and the visual, and allowing concertgoers to connect with the music on multiple levels. Full English surtitles of the opera’s text will also be projected above the stage. Previous Theater of a Concert presentations have included *Doctor Atomic*, *Ainadamar*, Haydn’s *Creation*, Bach’s *St. John Passion* and *St. Matthew Passion*, and Puccini’s *La bohème* and *Madama Butterfly*, among others.

“Inherently, concerts are theatrical because they take place on a stage. Certain repertoire further invites theatrical treatment affording us an opportunity to enhance the concert experience in powerful ways,” Music Director Robert Spano has said. “That’s the philosophy behind the Theater of a Concert.”

The program will feature the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chorus, under the direction of Norman Mackenzie, and numerous guest artists, including the three vocalists who sang in the opera’s world premiere: soprano Jessica Rivera, bass-baritone Eric Owens, and tenor Russell Thomas, a resident of Atlanta.

About the Repertoire

JOHN ADAMS

A Flowering Tree

John Adams’s opera, *A Flowering Tree*, was a co-commission by New Crowned Hope Festival, the Berlin Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, the Barbican Center and Lincoln Center... ([more](#))

About the Artists

Music Director Robert Spano, currently in his 11th season as music director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, is recognized internationally as one of the most imaginative conductors today... ([more](#))

A Flowering Tree represents **James Alexander’s** sixth collaboration with The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Previous stagings with the orchestra include *Madama Butterfly*, *La Bohème*, Stravinsky’s *Nightingale*, *Bernstein on Broadway*, and *Dr. Atomic*... ([more](#))

Possessing a voice praised by the San Francisco Chronicle for its “effortless precision and tonal luster,” **Jessica Rivera** is established as one of the most creatively inspired vocal artists ... ([more](#))

A native of Miami, **Tenor Russell Thomas** is quickly establishing himself as one of the most exciting vocal and dramatic talents on the international opera and concert scene, most recently as the First-Prize winner of the prestigious “Competizione dell’Opera” in Dresden... ([more](#))

Acclaimed for his commanding stage presence and inventive artistry, American bass-baritone **Eric Owens** has carved a unique place in the contemporary opera world as both an esteemed interpreter of classic works and a champion of new music... ([more](#))

The **Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chorus** is regularly acclaimed for the beauty and expressiveness of its singing. The Chorus, comprising 200 volunteer voices, performs with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra throughout each season, and is featured on many of the Orchestra's recordings... ([more](#))

Norman Mackenzie's abilities as musical collaborator, conductor, and concert organist have brought him international recognition... ([more](#))

About the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

The **Atlanta Symphony Orchestra**, currently in its 67th season, consistently affirms its position as one of America's leading Orchestras by performing great music, presenting great artists, educating, and engaging... ([more](#))

About Clark

Clark isn't just about the latest technology. Discovering greater innovation and creativity through limitations is one of our passions. This is why Clark's offerings go beyond audio, video and lighting systems, to include strategic services and facility planning to help you reach your intended audience... ([more](#))

Concert Previews

Audiences have the opportunity to learn more about the music they'll be hearing at concerts with free [Concert Previews](#) given by composers, conductors, educators, and musical experts, all hosted by [ASO Insider and Program Annotator Ken Meltzer](#). Thursday evenings, 7:00–7:30 p.m. in Symphony Hall (unless otherwise noted). Concerts previews are **free and open to all concert ticket holders**. Speakers and locations are subject to change.

Fanfare Pre-Concert Dinner Buffet

An Atlanta Symphony tradition returns in the 2011–2012 season — *Fanfare*, the pre-concert buffet-style dining by Legendary Partners, will be available to all concertgoers at all evening Delta Classical, Superpops!, and the Cola-Cola Holiday concert performances from 6:00–8:00 p.m. ... ([more](#))

* * *

This concert is presented by Delta Air Lines and Turner Broadcasting System.

Delta Air Lines is the Official Airline of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

* * *

Single tickets for these performances are \$21 to \$79. All single tickets for the 2011–2012 season are on sale now, and available online at atlantasymphony.org, or by calling (404) 733-5000. Tickets may also be purchased at the [Woodruff Arts Center Box Office](#), located in the Woodruff Arts Center at 15th and Peachtree Streets. Box office hours are Monday 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Tuesday through Friday 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Saturday 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; and Sunday 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

* * *

**ROBERT SPANO AND THE ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS
PERFORM JOHN ADAMS'S *A FLOWERING TREE***

THEATER OF A CONCERT

Delta Classical Series

Atlanta Symphony Hall, Memorial Arts Building, Woodruff Arts Center

Thursday, June 7, 2012, 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, June 9, 2012, 8:00 p.m.

Robert Spano, conductor
Jessica Rivera, Kumuhda
Russell Thomas, The Prince
Eric Owens, The Storyteller
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chorus
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

JOHN ADAMS

A Flowering Tree ‡

‡ denotes Atlanta Symphony Orchestra premiere

###