



Washington National Opera
The Kennedy Center

Timothy O'Leary
General Director

Francesca Zambello
Artistic Director

Press Release

October 24, 2018

Washington National Opera presents

Silent Night

Conductor Nicole Paiement returns while Director Tomer Zvulun makes his WNO debut in Kevin Puts's and Mark Campbell's Pulitzer Prize-winning opera

With gratitude for their sacrifice and service, Washington National Opera presents this production of *Silent Night* in honor of all Veterans and members of the U.S. Armed Forces

**November 10-25, 2018
in the Kennedy Center Eisenhower Theater**

(WASHINGTON)—Washington National Opera celebrates the centennial of the WWI Armistice with Kevin Puts's and Mark Campbell's Pulitzer Prize-winning opera [*Silent Night*](#), November 10-25, in the Kennedy Center Eisenhower Theater. Tickets start at \$35. Based on the true story of a wartime ceasefire, an event depicted by the 2005 film *Joyeux Noël*, ***Silent Night*** features music by Kevin Puts and libretto by Mark Campbell and stars a cast comprised entirely of WNO family—current members and alumni from the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program and WNO Chorus—with libretto in multiple languages that capture a powerful vision of humanity and hope. With gratitude for their sacrifice and service, Washington National Opera presents *Silent Night* in honor of all Veterans and members of the U.S. Armed Forces. In addition to hosting a Military Appreciation Day on Sunday, November 25, additional discounts to see the production will be offered for active-duty service members for select performances.

The year is 1914, and the Great War has just been declared, dividing nations and sending millions into battle. As Christmas Eve falls on a battlefield near Belgium, soldiers in French, German, and Scottish trenches begin recalling songs of home, stepping into no-man's-land for a spontaneous

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truce. Once sworn enemies, both sides laid down their arms for one miraculous “silent” night of peace, restoring humanity for a short time when the “other” was no longer a faceless combatant but an individual with similar wishes of returning to home and family.

As a testament to WNO’s dedication to training and artist-development, the cast of ***Silent Night*** is comprised almost entirely of accomplished artists from its Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. Graduates, who have gone on to perform at some of the world’s leading opera houses, feature prominently in this production and include [Raquel González](#) (Anna Sørensen), [Michael Adams](#) (Lt. Audebert), [Aleksey Bogdanov](#) (Lt. Horstmayer), [Norman Garrett](#) (Lt. Gordon), [Kenneth Kellogg](#) (Father Palmer), [Hunter Enoch](#) (William Dale), [Christian Bowers](#) (Ponchel), [Timothy J. Bruno](#) (French General), and [Michael Hewitt](#) (German General). Current members from the Young Artist roster also star in *Silent Night*, including [Alexander McKissick](#) (Nikolaus Sprink), [Arnold Livingston Geis](#) (Jonathan Dale), [Joshua Conyers](#) (British Major), and [Hannah Hagerty](#) (Madeleine Audebert) in her WNO debut.

In his WNO debut, General and Artistic Director of The Atlanta Opera [Tomer Zvulun](#) helms the production with conductor [Nicole Paiement](#) on the podium. WNO audiences last saw Paiement lead *Candide* in 2018. The creative team also features associate director Dan Wallace Miller (WNO debut), set and project designer Erhard Rom (WNO debut), costume designer Victoria Tzykun (WNO debut), lighting designer Robert Wierzel, fight master Joe Isenberg, and make-up designer Dave Bova (WNO debut).

The opera’s running time is approximately two hours plus one 25-minute intermission, and runs for seven performances. *Silent Night* is performed in English, French, German, Italian, and Latin with projected English titles. Visit WNO’s [website](#) for more information.

Washington National Opera’s 2018–2019 season continues with Tchaikovsky’s epic *Eugene Onegin* (March 9-29, 2019); Gounod’s devilishly entertaining *Faust* (March 16-30, 2019); and Puccini’s towering masterpiece *Tosca* (May 11-25, 2019). The season also features a revival of WNO’s hit holiday family opera *The Lion, the Unicorn, and Me* (December 14-16, 2018); new works to premiere during the American Opera Initiative Festival (January 11-13, 2019); a special Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist performance *A Concert of Comic Masterpieces* (May 24, 2019); and other exciting vocal events. [Tickets](#) are available now.

Silent Night Performance and Ticket Information

Saturday, November 10 at 7 p.m. ▪ Wednesday, November 14 at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, November 17 at 7 p.m. ▪ Sunday, November 18 at 2 p.m.
Tuesday, November 20 at 7:30 p.m. ▪ Friday, November 23 at 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, November 25 at 2 p.m.

Ticket Information

Tickets start at \$35 and are available [online](#), in person at the Kennedy Center Box Office, and by calling (202) 467-4600 or (800) 444-1324. Groups of 10 or more receive discounts up to 25% for *Silent Night* purchases. For all other ticket-related customer service inquiries, call the Advance Sales Box Office at (202) 416-8540.

Patrons 30 and under and active-duty members of the military are invited to join the Kennedy Center’s *MyTix* program for special discount offers and chances to win free tickets. *MyTix* discounts will be available for select performance of *Silent Night*. For more information, visit kennedy-center.org/mytix

Opera Insights before every performance, Kennedy Center Opera House

WNO presents a free pre-performance education event prior to every performance of *Silent Night*. These events begin one hour prior to curtain in the Opera House and last approximately 20–25 minutes. Musicologist Saul Lilienstein’s Opera Insights on Wednesday, November 14, begins at 6:15 p.m. and lasts approximately 35-40 minutes.

Silent Night Production Information

Music by Kevin Puts

Libretto by Mark Campbell

In English, French, German, Italian, and Latin with projected English titles.

This production of *Silent Night* is an original production of the Wexford Festival Opera in partnership with The Atlanta Opera and The Glimmerglass Festival.

This re-orchestration of *Silent Night* was commissioned by Opera Parallèle and Washington National Opera.

Orchestration by Jacques Desjardins

November 10, 14, 17, 18m, 20, 23, and 25m

Cast and Creative Team

(Cast in order of vocal appearance)

Anna Sørensen	Raquel González ‡	Conductor	Nicole Paiement
Nikolaus Sprink	Alexander McKissick ‡	Director	Tomer Zvulun*
German General	Michael Hewitt ‡	Associate Director	Dan Miller *
Father Palmer	Kenneth Kellogg ‡	Set and Production Designer	Erhard Rom *
Jonathan Dale	Arnold Livingston Geis ‡	Costume Designer	Victoria Tzykun*
William Dale	Hunter Enoch ‡		

Madeleine Audebert Lt. Audebert	Hannah Hagerty * ‡ Michael Adams ‡	Lighting Designer	Robert Wierzel
Lt. Gordon	Norman Garrett ‡	Fight Master	Joe Isenberg
French General	Timothy J. Bruno ‡	Make-up Designer	Dave Bova*
Ponchel	Christian Bowers ‡	Stage Manager	Laura Krause
Lt. Horstmayer	Aleksey Bogdanov ‡		
Kronprinz	Patrick Cook		
British Major	Joshua Conyers ‡		

* Washington National Opera Debut

‡ Alumnus of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program

‡ Current member of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program

Silent Night Related Programs and Events

Silent Night and the Music of World War I

Thursday, November 8 at 6 p.m., Kennedy Center Millennium Stage

In commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of the Armistice of World War I, this special program, designed and narrated by musicologist and historian Patrick Warfield, explores the subject matter of the Pulitzer Prize-winning opera, *Silent Night*. Depicting the famous Christmas Eve truce on the battlefields of 1914 Europe, Kevin Puts's and Mark Campbell's *Silent Night* has stunned and moved audiences around the globe. Through extracts from the opera, popular songs of the era, works by composers who gave their lives during the war, and other contemporary artistic reactions to the conflagration, members of WNO's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program will take audiences on a moving musical journey into this unprecedented period of global upheaval.

Artist Q&As: *Silent Night*

Following all performances (except November 10) in the Kennedy Center Eisenhower Theater, please join WNO artistic staff for a wide-ranging discussion with the artists for an inside scoop on the production. These events are free to patrons presenting a *Silent Night* ticket and begin immediately after the performance.

Military Appreciation Day

Sunday, November 25 at 2 p.m., Eisenhower Theater

Complimentary tickets to active-duty service members and their families will be given on a first-come, first served basis for the Sunday matinee performance of *Silent Night*. For more information, please contact Nikki Grizzle, Special Projects and Community Relations Manager, at 202-416-7841.

Silent Night is also presented as part of *The Human Journey*. *The Human Journey* is a collaboration between the Kennedy Center, National Geographic Society, and the National Gallery of Art, which invites audiences to investigate the powerful experiences of migration, exploration, identity, and resilience through the lenses of the performing arts, science, and visual art. For more information about *The Human Journey*, please visit the [web site](#).

ABOUT WASHINGTON NATIONAL OPERA

Washington National Opera (WNO) is one of the leading opera companies in the United States. Under the leadership of General Director Timothy O'Leary and world-renowned Artistic Director Francesca

Zambello, the company presents a diverse repertory of grand opera across three main venues of the Kennedy Center. From classic operas to more contemporary pieces each season, WNO's artistic output also includes several commissioned American works and a variety of special concerts, youth operas, and events.

Recent celebrated productions have included the world premiere of Philip Glass's reconceived *Appomattox*, presented in conjunction with cultural events throughout Washington, D.C.; the powerful performances of Kurt Weill's *Lost in the Stars*; and the massive feat of WNO's first-complete *Ring* cycle, which was helmed by Zambello and played to sold-out houses following international acclaim.

Founded in 1956 and an artistic affiliate of the Kennedy Center since 2011, WNO has a storied legacy of more than 100 new productions, plus world premieres, international tours, live recordings and radio broadcasts, as well as innovative education and community-engagement programs. Throughout its history, WNO has been led by titans in the opera field, including the legendary Plácido Domingo who headed the company for 15 years, as well as luminaries such as Music Director Heinz Fricke and Director of Artistic Operations Christina Scheppelmann.

Among the company's most successful programs is the *American Opera Initiative (AOI)*, a commissioning program that develops new one-act works for WNO's annual festival. By mentoring emerging composers and librettists, the Initiative works to expand the American operatic repertory and enhance its relevance to our time. Since its inception, AOI has commissioned 28 chamber opera world premieres, with some going on to future productions around the country.

With a commitment toward youth, WNO contributes to the future of opera through two signature artist-development programs. The Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, now in its 17th season, is one of the nation's most competitive professional training programs, providing two years of intensive study to a highly selective cadre of young singers and collaborative pianists. Alumni of the program have won major competitions and gone on to successful careers at major opera houses worldwide. The WNO Opera Institute nurtures the ambitions of high-school-age singers from across the nation during an intensive three-week summer program held at American University in Washington.

The most popular of WNO's community-engagement programs is *Opera in the Outfield*[®], a free Kennedy Center Opera House production broadcast on the high-definition scoreboard at Nationals Park. The company's other education programs include the Kids Create Opera program at local elementary schools, Look-In performances for students in grades 3–8, and the Student Dress Rehearsal Program for middle and high school students. The company also offers free Opera Insights programs before every performance in the Opera House.

Discover [Washington National Opera](#) on social media:



#SilentNightDC

FUNDING CREDITS

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WNO's Presenting Sponsor
General Dynamics

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TICKETS & INFORMATION

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