



PO BOX 277 ~ OLD CHELSEA STATION  
NEW YORK NY 10113-0277

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CONTACT: KLAY-JAMES ENOS  
212-260-1796  
KENOS@CHELSEAOPERA.COM  
WWW.CHELSEAOPERA.ORG

**Chelsea Opera presents**  
**Tom Cipullo's *Josephine and After Life***

On December 1st at 7:00pm, Chelsea Opera will present the New York City premieres of Tom Cipullo's one-act operas, *Josephine and After Life*. Both pieces are portraits of artists coming to terms with their legacies and place in history. *Josephine*, written and composed by Cipullo, and featuring a solo performance by soprano Melissa Wimbish as Josephine Baker (reprising the role for which she gave the world premiere), captures Baker at the end of her career, granting one last interview from her dressing room. In the course of her solo, the Jazz Age star's magnetic personality comes forward, her heroic deeds as a spy in wartime, and later brushes with political controversy. *After Life*, with a libretto by David Mason and music by Tom Cipullo, conjures the spirits of Gertrude Stein and Pablo Picasso reflecting on their towering artistic successes. They are brought into a reckoning with a darker side of history by the apparition of a young girl caught up in the horrors of the Holocaust. Both short operas capture an authentic sense of the artistic personalities on the stage by drawing from their own words. Fragments from compositions of the time lend Cipullo's original score a spirit of experimentalism that harmonizes with the originality of these masters of 20th century art. *After Life* features mezzo-soprano Jennifer Beattie as Gertrude Stein, baritone Steven Eddy as Picasso, and soprano Sara Paar as the young girl. Both operas are stage directed by Dean Anthony and music directed by Benjamin Grow, conducting the Chelsea Opera Chamber Orchestra. This is the third presentation of Tom Cipullo's work produced by Chelsea Opera (co-founded by Leonarda Priore and Lynne Hayden-Findlay), following two productions of his full-length opera, *Glory Denied* in 2010 and 2015. There will be one performance only on Saturday, December 1st, 2018, at 7:00pm at Christ and St. Stephen's Church (120 West 69<sup>th</sup> Street, between Broadway and Columbus) NYC. Tickets: Preferred seats: \$35 in advance/\$45 at the door (limited supply). General admission: \$30 in advance/\$40 at the door, Seniors general admission: \$20 in advance/\$25 at the door, students/children (any section): \$20 in advance/\$25 at the door. For further information visit <http://www.chelseaopera.org/season.html>, call 212-260-1796 or write to [kenos@chelseaopera.org](mailto:kenos@chelseaopera.org).

Chelsea Opera is a professional company presenting fully staged operas with chamber orchestra. The company provides a nationally recognized venue for professional singers to advance their careers while making opera affordable and accessible to a broad spectrum of the community. The fine acoustics of the space provide excellent hearing, and its intimacy allows the audience to feel involved in the opera's story. Of Chelsea Opera's sustainability, Anthony Tommasini of The New York Times noted in June 2009: "With American opera companies large and small struggling financially and a few going under, [Chelsea Opera is] a patch of encouraging news..." Following its production of Aaron Copland's *The Tender Land* last year celebrating the opera's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, writer Jon Sobel declared that Chelsea Opera "certainly ranks as one of the country's preeminent 'small' opera companies."

Formed in 2004 by singers, Lynne Hayden-Findlay and Leonarda Priore, Chelsea Opera was launched with an all-volunteer production of *Suor Angelica*. Initially, Ms. Priore and Ms. Hayden-Findlay had only intended to produce this one opera. However, artist and audience response was so compelling that they agreed to move forward, incorporating the company and obtaining their IRS non-profit designation in a record eight days. They have since produced an extensive range of standard repertory and contemporary operas, garnering critical acclaim at each outing. Despite its size, Chelsea Opera is the recipient of two grants from the National Endowment for the Arts – Artworks program, most recently for its production of Tom Cipullo's *Glory Denied*.

Chelsea Opera has received funding from The Barbara Bell Cumming Foundation, The Bettina Baruch Foundation, The Tow Foundation, The Amphion Foundation, the H.O. Peet Foundation, the NYU Community Fund, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). In-kind support has been provided by JetBlue Airways, the official airline of Chelsea Opera.

For further information, visit [www.chelseaopera.org](http://www.chelseaopera.org) or write to [kenos@chelseaopera.org](mailto:kenos@chelseaopera.org)

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