

NEWS RELEASE

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New Jersey Opera Theater Presents *Turandot* Starring Sharon Sweet and Allan Glassman

PRINCETON, NJ - **New Jersey Opera Theater**, New Jersey's premier opera company, will launch its 2007 season with twin performances of Puccini's *Turandot* in renowned theaters in both Mercer and Middlesex counties. The first will be held on March 4 at the McCarter's Matthews Theatre in Princeton, the second on March 11 at State Theatre in New Brunswick, both at 3:00 p.m.

Noted stage director Ira Siff will create an inventive semi-staged version of Puccini's final opera to showcase the unique talents of an exceptional cast headed by Metropolitan Opera stars **Sharon Sweet** and **Allan Glassman**, who will assume the roles of the vengeful princess Turandot and her heroic suitor Calaf. Steven Mosteller, Music Director of New Jersey Opera Theater, will conduct both performances of *Turandot*.

Ms. Sweet has sung the role of Turandot in productions worldwide, including those at the Metropolitan Opera; at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; at the Bastille under James Conlon; in Florence under Zubin Mehta; at performances in the Forbidden City in Beijing and with filmmaker Zhang Yimou. Mr. Glassman has thrilled audiences throughout America and Europe with his vibrant tenor and committed interpretations of roles. *Turandot* marks his return to New Jersey Opera Theater, where he sang Manrico in Verdi's *Il Trovatore* in May 2005.

The gifted cast also includes Raymond Aceto of Covent Garden and Chicago Lyric Opera as Timur, Calaf's long-lost father, and Barbara Shirvis of New York City Opera in the heart-breakingly lovely role of Liù. The three Pekinese civil servants – Ping, Pang and Pong – will be sung by Anton Belov, who has interpreted Don Giovanni and the Count in *Le nozze di Figaro* for New Jersey Opera Theater in past seasons, and Metropolitan Opera favorites Jonathan Green and Joel Sorenson, who make their NJOT debuts. Rounding out the cast are New York City Opera's Matthew Burns as the Mandarin and Stephen Lavonier, who debuted with NJOT as Spinelloccio/The Magistrate in *Gianni Schicchi/Buoso's Ghost*, as the Emperor.

Tickets for *Turandot* are available through the McCarter Theatre Ticket Office at 609-258-2787 (www.mccarter.org) and through State Theatre Box Office at 732-246-7469 (www.statetheatre.org). Ticket prices range from \$65 to \$30 at State Theatre and \$65 to \$43 at McCarter. A \$90 ticket at both theaters is also available which includes a champagne reception with the artists after each performance. Call New Jersey Opera Theater 609-799-7700 for more information or visit www.njot.org.

This season is made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.



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About New Jersey Opera Theater

New Jersey Opera Theater (NJOT) is earning national recognition as a leader among regional opera companies, providing high quality opera performances, exceptional educational offerings and related activities. NJOT seeks to stimulate, promote and satisfy interest in opera, build a strong and diverse audience base for the art form and foster the development of emerging artists.

In 2006, during its first year of eligibility, **New Jersey Opera Theater** received the prestigious Citation of Excellence from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts (NJSCA). The Citation is NJSCA's highest honor and recognizes arts organizations that "exhibit the highest standards of excellence in artistry, operations, governance, public benefit and fulfillment of areas of Council priority" according to the Council.

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