

THE CANTICLE OF THE BLACK MADONNA

A SOLDIER'S JOURNEY FROM THE DESOLATION OF WAR
TO THE HEALING EMBRACE OF LOVE

A New Opera Premiering at the Newmark Theatre
Portland, Oregon September 5 & 6, 2014

PROJECT MISSION

- To foster mutual understanding between the veteran and civilian communities
- To facilitate the healthy and productive reintegration of returning combat veterans
- To provide a vehicle of hope, healing, and self-reflection for those suffering from combat-related PTSD
- To offer support, education, and healing to the spouses and families of combat veterans with PTSD

PROJECT DEFINITION

The Canticle of the Black Madonna is a new opera that addresses the thousands of U.S. veterans suffering from combat-related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which will afflict an estimated 20% of the more than 30,000 servicemen and women returning from Afghanistan this year. Set in coastal Louisiana amidst the economic and environmental devastation of the 2010

Gulf Oil Spill, it tells the story of a fictional soldier and his wife who ultimately find solace in the transformative love embodied in the mysterious character of the Black Madonna. Combat veterans who have seen the work have been profoundly moved and have hailed it as “Something that Hollywood can’t show in its true light: the true heart and soul of a family and a man shattered by war.”

“You honor me, and my brothers and sisters in arms, with this opera. Please know that as a combat veteran, I am truly and deeply touched that you have undertaken such an elusive and misunderstood issue as combat-related PTSD in America today. I am thankful to you all for what you do, and I know my fallen friends would be as well.”

Miah Washburn, 1SG, U.S. Army Infantry



MORE THAN AN OPERA

The premiere of a new opera at the Portland Center for the Performing Arts is a high-profile event that brings much-needed attention to one of the most urgent challenges we face today. But the positive community healing of *The Canticle of the Black Madonna* reaches far beyond the opera house, including:

- A free private live showing of the opera for veterans and their families, including free transportation to the Newmark, a free facilitated workshop, and access to educational and counseling resources.
- A guest lecture event and panel discussion, featuring experts on combat-related PTSD.
- Free art therapy workshops for veterans and their families.
- The hiring and casting of veterans to work on and appear in the opera.
- The creation of marketing and sales opportunities for veteran-owned businesses.
- The opportunity for veterans to give their input at each stage of the production.

“The Canticle of the Black Madonna is that very special kind of art that genuinely helps people who have fallen into desperate isolation. It grabs you and says, ‘You’re not alone; you’re not misunderstood after all; there’s still hope.’ This is the kind of art that saved my life.”

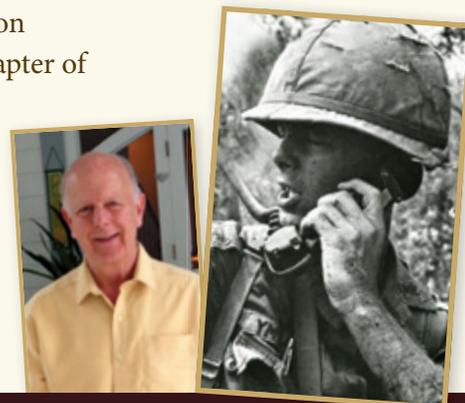
Sean Davis, former SFC, Army Infantry

A BROAD ALLIANCE DEDICATED TO A WORTHY CAUSE

For the September, 2014 professional premiere of the opera, we are partnering with a wide variety of businesses, organizations, and individuals that span the veteran, arts, and social service communities.

These include, among others:

- The Haines Philanthropic Foundation, *Ashland Oregon*
- The Returning Veterans Project, *Portland, Oregon*
- A Rock or Something Productions, *Portland, Oregon*
- Capers Restaurant, *Medford, Oregon*
- Total Coordination Professionals, *Chicago, Illinois*
- 4 Spirits Distillery, *Corvallis, Oregon*
- Pink Olive Design, *Diamondhead, Mississippi*
- Paschal Winery, *Talent, Oregon*
- Oregon Cultural Trust, *Salem, Oregon*
- Six Days Art Gallery, *Portland, Oregon*
- Total Coordination Professionals, *Chicago, Illinois*
- Sanctuary One, *Jacksonville, Oregon*
- Richard Gordon Creative Productions, *Baton Rouge, Louisiana*
- The National Opera Association’s *The Sacred in Opera* quarterly publication
- The Northwest Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing



“The Canticle of the Black Madonna opened my heart and brought new healing to me, 44 years after I returned from Vietnam. This is a gift that should be shared with the world.”

Bill Ritch, combat veteran, former West Point instructor

THE LONG-TERM IMPACT OF YOUR INVESTMENT

Your contribution to *The Canticle of the Black Madonna* is a tax-deductible investment in Anima Mundi Productions, a 501(c)(3) non-profit arts initiative.

Anima Mundi Productions is dedicated to creating and producing original projects that harness the power of art to stir the soul, foster community, and address urgent social problems:

- Following the world premiere of *The Canticle of the Black Madonna* in Portland, Anima Mundi Productions will leverage the strong artistic, social, and financial support generated to take the opera to Chicago, Austin, New Orleans, and New York.
- With each successive performance, we intend to create a larger groundswell of support for the veteran and environmental issues addressed in the work.
- Additionally, Anima Mundi Productions founders and creative directors Ethan Gans-Morse and Tiziana DellaRovere will use *The Canticle of the Black Madonna* as a model for a series of operas that will address the crucial, high-profile social issues of our times, including human trafficking, immigration, domestic violence, and economic sustainability.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE VISIT CBMOPERA.COM



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The Canticle of the Black Madonna



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