PRESS RELEASE

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Washington National Opera Announces $25 Tickets for Nov. 22 *"We the People" Concert*, Celebrating Artistic Freedom

Featuring Renée Fleming, Thomas Hampson, and Jonathan Tetelman,
plus Amber Monroe, who will receive the WNO Marian Anderson Vocal Award
from past winner Denyce Graves

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Washington National Opera (WNO) performs a special staged concert, *We the People*, on November 22, 2026 at 4 p.m. at DAR Constitution Hall. The one-night-only event stages excerpts from Verdi, Rossini, and Beethoven as well as American music ranging from Nkeiru Okoye to Rogers and Hammerstein, all with one theme in common – standing strong in the face of oppression.

In the spirit of these ideals, WNO invites the community to stand with the company and one another in a celebration of artistic freedom, civic engagement, and the power of the arts to bring people together, with all box and tier tickets priced at $25 to make this moment accessible to as many people as possible. ***For tickets, visit*** ***washnatopera.org/wethepeople*** *(fees apply).*

The concert offers an exceptional lineup of artists, including **Renée Fleming**, **Thomas Hampson, Jonathan Tetelman**, with the WNO Orchestra and singers from the Cafritz Young Artists Program. WNO Music Director **Robert Spano** conducts. Of special note, the program also features Washington National Opera Marian Anderson Award recipient and former Cafritz Young Artist **Amber Monroe**. Legendary mezzo-soprano **Denyce Graves**, a past winner, will confer the award.

"This concert is deeply personal for us at Washington National Opera. We have chosen our own path of artistic freedom. In this moment, the ideals of independence are not an abstraction—we have lived them," shares WNO General Director **Timothy O'Leary**. "On Jan. 9, 2026, WNO ended our affiliation with the Kennedy Center, a venue that had been our home for more than four decades. The new leadership imposed requirements on our programming that were at odds with our mission. For the sake of our art, we chose to return to full independence—the same independence on which this company was founded 70 years ago."

"Opera's greatest works have given voice for centuries to the struggle for independence that transcends cultures. Across time and cultures, people have risen to claim their independence—to insist on the right to determine their own lives and futures. We Italians have a word for that: *risorgimento*, literally, 'the rising up of a people.' That is what *We the People* celebrates: not simply an American ideal, but rather a universal call to uphold the human right of freedom for all," says Artistic Director **Francesca Zambello**.

Amber Monroe: Marian Anderson Award Winner

This season's Marian Anderson Award Winner is soprano Amber Monroe. As part of her Award and training, she will be featured in this special concert. Monroe is an alumna of WNO Cafritz Young Artist

Program and has performed leading roles in WNO productions, including the title role in *Aida* in 2025 and Serena in *Porgy and Bess* in 2024. In addition to WNO appearances, last season saw her make house debuts with Seattle Opera, San Diego Opera, and Portland Opera singing Mary Johnson in ***Fellow Travelers***, and covering the role of Sister Rose in ***Dead Man Walking*** with San Francisco Opera.

"To be recognized in connection with Marian Anderson's legacy and to celebrate at DAR Constitution Hall, a place so significant to her story and her fight against racial barriers in classical music, makes this moment feel incredibly powerful and full circle. It's set to be a beautiful occasion, featuring extraordinary artists from established legends to the next generation of talent," says Monroe.

DAR Constitution Hall is a significant venue in Marian Anderson's life. In 1939, she was denied the opportunity to perform there because of segregation policies of the era, a decision that led to her historic concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial—a meaningful moment in the Civil Rights movement. In the years and decades that followed, the Daughters of the American Revolution welcomed Anderson to its stage many times and became a dedicated steward of her legacy, establishing the DAR Marian Anderson Legacy Scholarship and celebrating her enduring contributions to American culture.

"The Daughters of the American Revolution is so pleased to welcome back the Washington National Opera to DAR Constitution Hall and especially honored to host the *We the People* concert," said DAR President General, Ginnie Sebastian Storage. "We are thrilled to celebrate Amber Monroe as this year's Marian Anderson Vocal Award winner. Hosting this event at Constitution Hall beautifully reflects the enduring impact Marian Anderson made on our nation. The change she sparked in both America and our organization inspires our ongoing commitment to preserve her legacy and share the extraordinary story of this American treasure."

About the WNO Marian Anderson Vocal Award

The Washington National Opera Marian Anderson Vocal Award celebrates excellence in performance by recognizing a young American singer who has achieved initial professional success in the area of opera, oratorio, or recital repertory, and who exhibits promise for a significant career. It is named to honor Marian Anderson's legacy as a groundbreaking American contralto who became an international opera star and a pioneering figure in the fight against racial discrimination in the arts.

The Award also recognizes the late singer's personal and humanitarian achievements, by encouraging Award-winners to continue in her example of service and educational achievement. In addition to receiving a $10,000 cash prize, award winners are given a significant performance opportunity, such as a dedicated recital or mainstage performance, and are asked to participate in a short residency at the opera workshop program of Washington's Duke Ellington School of the Arts.

In keeping with its mission to develop programs and initiatives that connect exemplary artists with the community, Washington National Opera will mentor the Marian Anderson Vocal Award recipients to create an education program aligning with the singer's skills and interests aimed to positively impact vocal music students at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts through master classes or workshops. The school offers a pre-college preparatory and comprehensive arts curriculum that includes a major in vocal music. Prior recipients of the Marian Anderson Vocal Award include Ryan Speedo Green, John Holiday, Sylvia McNair, Denyce Graves, Philip Zawisza, Nancy Maultsby, Patricia Racette, Michelle DeYoung, Nathan Gunn, Marguerite Krull, Eric Owens, Lawrence Brownlee, Indira Mahajan, Sasha Cooke, J'Nai Bridges, Jamie Barton, Janai Brugger, Justin Austin, and Key'mon Murrah.

About Washington National Opera

(WNO) is one of the world's leading opera companies. Led by General Director Timothy O'Leary, Artistic Director Francesca Zambello, and Music Director Robert Spano, WNO presents a wide-ranging repertory spanning beloved classics, contemporary works, and newly commissioned operas, collaborating with many of opera's greatest luminaries, including Christine Goerke, Denyce Graves, Renée Fleming, J'Nai Bridges, and Ryan McKinny. Founded in 1956, WNO celebrates its 70th anniversary in 2026, a year that also marks its return to operating as a fully independent company. Recent seasons have featured acclaimed productions of *Aida, The Marriage of Figaro*, and a landmark *Turandot* with a newly commissioned ending by Christopher Tin and Susan Soon He Stanton. WNO's legacy includes Zambello's internationally celebrated Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* cycle, the D.C. premiere of Jeanine Tesori's *Blue* and *Grounded*—a WNO co-commission—and the world premiere of Philip Glass' revised *Appomattox*.

WNO is also internationally recognized for its education and community engagement initiatives, including the American Opera Initiative, the Cafritz Young Artist Program, the WNO Opera Institute, and Opera in the Outfield, which advance its mission to make opera vital, accessible, and artistically ambitious in the nation's capital. Beyond the main stage, WNO artists bring opera into the community through initiatives such as workshops with incarcerated youth at the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Center, educational programs at the Library of Congress exploring themes from the season's repertory, and performances and musical events in venues throughout the Washington region.

Sincere thanks to the following Season Sponsors:

GENERAL DYNAMICS
Jacqueline Badger Mars
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Media Contact: press@washnatopera.org

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COMPLETE EVENT DETAILS

We the People

Daughters of the American Revolution Constitution Hall – 1776 D Street NW, Washington D.C., 20006
The concert is approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.

Sunday, November 22, 2026 at 4 p.m.

CAST

Robert Spano	Conductor
Renée Fleming	Soprano
Amber Monroe	Soprano
Jonathan Tetelman	Tenor
Thomas Hampson	Baritone
Robert Spano	Conductor
Washington National Opera Orchestra	
Singers from Cafritz Young Artists Program	

CREATIVES

Peter McClintock	Director
A.J. Guban	Lighting Designer
Alexander Nichols	Projection Designer
Mark Grey	Sound Designer
Corinne M. Hayes	Surtitle Creator

PROGRAM

Beethoven: Overture to *Egmont*, Op. 84
Orchestra

Verdi: "Ah, la paterna mano" from Macbeth
Jonathan Tetelman, tenor

Verdi: *O patria mia* from *Aida*
Amber Monroe, soprano

Rossini: *Sois immobile* from *Guillaume Tell*
Thomas Hampson, baritone

Cilèa: *Io son l'umile ancella* from *Adriana Lecouvreur*
Renée Fleming, soprano

Verdi: *Va, pensiero* from *Nabucco*
Orchestra

Verdi: *Dio, che nell'alma infondere* from *Don Carlo*
Thomas Hampson, baritone
Jonathan Tetelman, tenor

Nkeiru Okoye: *I am Harriet Tubman* from *Harriet Tubman: When I Crossed That Line to Freedom*
Amber Monroe, soprano

Musto / Langston Hughes: *Litany*
Thomas Hampson, baritone

Rodgers / Hammerstein: *Oklahoma!*
Cafritz Young Artists Program, tutti
Edwards: *The Egg* from *1776*
Gnepper, Benn, Rego

Rogers/Hammerstein: "You'll never walk alone" from *Carousel*
Jonathan Tetelman, tenor
Renée Fleming, soprano

Flaherty: *Wheels of a Dream* from *Ragtime*
Amber Monroe, soprano
Thandolwethu Mamba, baritone

Margaret Bonds: VI. *Lament* from *Montgomery Variations*
Orchestra

Copland: *At the River*
Thomas Hampson, baritone

Lara: *Granada*
Jonathan Tetelman, tenor

Traditional, orch. Moody: *In the Pines*
Renée Fleming, soprano

Johnson: *Lift Every Voice and Sing*
Amber Monroe, soprano

Copland: *The Promise of Living* from *The Tender Land*
Cafritz Young Artists Program, tutti