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## **VIRGINIA OPERA CANCELS 2020–2021 SEASON IN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ONGOING RISKS OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**Hampton Roads, Richmond, Fairfax, VA (December 2, 2020)**—Today, **Virginia Opera**, *The Official Opera Company of the Commonwealth of Virginia*, announces cancellation of all scheduled 2020–2021 Season productions due to the public safety concerns caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The determination follows a complete VO staff and Board review affecting statewide presentations in the Hampton Roads, Central Virginia, and Northern Virginia markets scheduled to begin February 2021.

**VO General Director and CEO Peggy Kriha Dye:** “Taking into consideration the serious circumstances surrounding the pandemic, we regrettably acknowledge the impossibility of producing our 2020-2021 Season. Our dedication to following the necessary guidelines to ensure the safety of our patrons and artists overwhelms our immense desire to perform. In the coming months we will chart our path for the 2021-2022 Season and beyond, while doing all we can to stay connected to the communities we serve; digitally in the schools, virtually for everyone, and in safe environments.”

**Virginia Opera Artistic Director, Adam Turner:** “The performing arts have been particularly hard-hit by the pandemic. In the short-term we have compensated those artists affected by the season cancellation to the best of our ability. We now turn to providing new opportunities for much-needed work in our industry. This includes building on the success of our fall artist “Stayin’ Alive” residency, with a second initiative geared towards providing more outdoor performances and digital content beginning in spring 2021. We were able to reach a whole new audience this fall by taking opera out of the Opera House and to the streets, opening a door to this incredible art form for so many new faces, and we look forward to serving our communities again as soon as possible.”

Season ticketholders are already being contacted to address the disposition of their tickets with options that include early renewal for the 2021-2022 Season, the conversion of the fair value of the tickets to a donation in support of the VO, and a full-value refund of Season ticket purchases.

“Stayin’ Alive” – Virginia Opera’s Alternate Fall artist residency included multiple digital performance and artist-driven content to be shared by the VO throughout the coming winter months. Additional online programs will also be forthcoming and information and schedules on all will be updated at Virginia Opera’s website – [vaopera.org](http://vaopera.org), as well as on the company’s Social Media channels.

### **About Virginia Opera**

Virginia Opera Association, Inc., was founded in 1974, is known and respected nationwide for the identification and presentation of the finest young artists, for the musical and dramatic integrity of its productions, and for the ingenuity and variety of its education and outreach programs. Mainstage performances in three markets across the Commonwealth reach nearly 50,000 attendees annually. In March of 1994, by unanimous vote of the Virginia General Assembly, Virginia Opera was named “The Official Opera Company of the Commonwealth of Virginia” in recognition of the organization’s contribution to the state as well as to the world of opera. For information visit [vaopera.org](http://vaopera.org) or call 866.673.7282.

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