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**AMERICAN OPERA PROJECTS PRESENTS:  
THE EUROPEAN PREMIERE OF  
*DARKLING***

**“This is a profound, provocative piece of musical theater—one that I hope will occasion a great many opera lovers to stray from habitual paths. As specific as the context of *Darkling* may be, its message is ultimately universal.”**

*(Time Out NY music critic Steve Smith)*

NEW YORK, NY, January 23rd, 2007— on **9 June and 11 June, 2007**, AMERICAN OPERA PROJECTS (AOP) in association with **FRIENDS OF FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN (FFUB)** and the **Aleksander Fredro Theatre** will present concert versions of **DARKLING**, AOP’s critically acclaimed production that premiered in New York City in the spring of 2006. With music by **Stefan Weisman** and an original song by **Lee Hoiby**, **DARKLING** is directed and adapted by **Michael Comlish** from the book by poet **Anna Rabinowitz**. The performances will be held in Berlin, Germany at **Freie Universität Berlin’s** newly renovated 1000 seat **Max Kade Auditorium** and in Gniezno, Poland at the **Aleksander Fredro Theatre**. Both performances will be at 8:00pm (20:00).

The Berlin performance will celebrate the establishment of a **Center for Jewish Studies at Freie Universität Berlin** and the opening of the **USC Shoah Foundation Institute’s first international Visual History archive**. Initiated by filmmaker **Steven Spielberg**, the archive contains nearly 52,000 testimonies from survivors and witnesses of the Holocaust, the largest in the world. The 9 June production will also take place as part of the annual German festival **Lange Nacht der Wissenschaften** (Long Night of the Sciences) that attracts 70,000 people each year. The **DARKLING** presentation will serve as an exhibition displaying an intersection in science and art where new technologies have facilitated the creation of an engrossing new kind of multi-media driven theater.

**DARKLING** will next perform at the **Aleksander Fredro Theatre** on 11 June in Gniezno, Poland. Named after the renowned Polish comic playwright from the Napoleon era, the **Aleksander Fredro Theatre** is one of the most important cultural institutions in Poland. Located in Gniezno (the cradle of the Polish nation and the first capital of the country) the theater has showcased Polish playwrights and performers since its inception in the mid-1900’s. Polish film star **Elzbieta Czyzewska** will return to the Polish theater as part of **DARKLING’s** seven-person ensemble of singers and actors. In 1968 Ms. Czyzewska was exiled from Poland and emigrated to The United States. In May of 2005 **The Polish Film Festival (NY)** honored her with a retrospective of her work in Polish cinema.

Praised during its 2006 Off-Broadway run as "**captivating.... brave and sensitive**" (*The New York Times*), "**absorbing**" and "**visually striking**" (*Time Out NY*), **DARKLING the opera**, brings to the stage award-winning New York poet Anna Rabinowitz’s acclaimed book of the same name that assembles narratives of the Holocaust derived from old letters and unidentified photos she found in a shoebox neglected for decades on a closet shelf in her parents’ home.

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**“I was trying to narrate something that couldn’t be narrated,” Rabinowitz says of her family’s destruction, “I was trying to make sense out of these shards, these fragments.”**

DARKLING is a work that speaks for those who did not survive to tell their stories or write their memories. The ensemble cast features Polish film star **Elzbieta Czyzewska** alongside singers **Tonna Miller, Hai-Ting Chinn, Mark Uhlemann** and **Jon Garrison**, with actor **Carol Monda** and a special performance by DARKLING author **Anna Rabinowitz**, the production recasts opera in a contemporary form by overlaying poetry with live music, interweaving the drama with a landscape of projected films and images, collages of spoken text and pre-recorded soundscapes.

Founded in 1988, **American Opera Projects (AOP)** has gained international recognition as an arts organization devoted to creating, developing, and presenting new American opera and experimental music theatre. AOP is led by Charles Jarden, Executive Director, and Steven Osgood, Artistic Director.

**Press material is available at: [www.operaprojects.org](http://www.operaprojects.org).** For more information on DARKLING or any other AOP projects in development, please visit the Projects page at [www.operaprojects.org](http://www.operaprojects.org). More information about FFUB and the 9 June performance can be found at <http://www.ffub.us/events/index.html>.

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