

## ***IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE***

### **Maestro/Director Biography: Jake Heggie**



Jake Heggie is the American composer of the operas *Dead Man Walking* (libretto by Terrence McNally), *Moby-Dick* (libretto by Gene Scheer), *It's A Wonderful Life* (Scheer), *Great Scott* (McNally), *Three Decembers* (Scheer), *Out of Darkness: Two Remain* (Scheer), *To Hell and Back* (Scheer), *At the Statue of Venus* (McNally) and *The Radio Hour: A Choral Opera* (Scheer). He is currently at work on *If I Were You* (Scheer) a new opera based on the Faustian story by Julian Green, commissioned by the Merola Opera Program for Summer of 2019. Heggie has also composed nearly 300 art songs, as well as concerti, chamber music, choral and orchestral works, including the *Ahab Symphony*.

The operas – most created with the distinguished writers Terrence McNally or Gene Scheer – have been produced on five continents. In February 2018, *Dead Man Walking* received its 60th international production at London's Barbican Hall in a semi-staged production starring Joyce DiDonato and Michael Mayes directed by Leonard Foglia with the BBC Symphony and Chorus conducted by Mark Wigglesworth. Since its San Francisco Opera premiere in 2000, *Dead Man Walking* has been performed more than 300 times and recorded live twice (Erato Records in 2001; Virgin Classics in 2011). In addition to major productions throughout the USA, *Dead Man Walking* has been seen in Dresden, Vienna, London, Madrid, Sydney, Adelaide, Calgary, Montreal, Cape Town, Dublin, Copenhagen, and Malmö. *Moby-Dick* has received nine international productions since its 2010 premiere at The Dallas Opera with future productions set for Chicago and Barcelona. The San Francisco Opera production was telecast as part of Great Performances' 40th anniversary season and released on DVD (EuroArts). *Moby-Dick* received its East Coast premiere at the Kennedy Center in 2014. It is also the subject of a book by Robert Wallace, titled *Heggie & Scheer's Moby-Dick – A Grand opera for the 21st Century* (UNT Press). *Three Decembers*, Heggie & Scheer's three-character chamber opera, has received nearly two dozen productions internationally.

A Guggenheim Fellow, Heggie is currently a mentor for Washington National Opera's American Opera Initiative and CU Boulder's New Opera Workshop. In 2016, he was awarded the Eddie Medora King Prize by the UT Austin Butler School of Music. He was also the recipient of the Champion Award from the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus in a private concert that featured a performance by the great Patti LuPone. Heggie was the keynote speaker for the 2016 meeting of the National Association of Schools of Music in Dallas and, in 2017, gave commencement addresses at the Eastman School of Music and Northwestern's Bienen School of Music. He is a frequent guest artist and master teacher at universities and conservatories, including Boston University, Bucknell, Cincinnati Conservatory, Cornell, Eastman, CU Boulder, Northwestern, Peabody Conservatory, Roosevelt, The Royal Conservatory in Toronto, UNI, UNT, UT Austin, USC's Thornton School, Vanderbilt University, and at festivals such as SongFest at the Colburn School, Ravinia Festival, and VISI in Vancouver.

Source: [www.jakeheggie.com/biography](http://www.jakeheggie.com/biography)