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The Glimmerglass Festival and WFMT Radio Network Launch *Breaking Glass*, a Podcast About Social Justice and Opera

Glimmerglass and WFMT Radio Network collaborate with Paige Hernandez, Tazewell Thompson and other artists to examine what opera means in the 21st century

CHICAGO, IL and COOPERSTOWN, NY, AUGUST 2018 — *Breaking Glass* is a five-episode podcast that explores issues surrounding equity, diversity and inclusion through the lens of opera. Produced by The Glimmerglass Festival and the WFMT Radio Network, and distributed by PRX, this show challenges ideas of who opera is for and who should create it.

On *Breaking Glass*, host Paige Hernandez and contributor Tazewell Thompson discuss what stories are told in the world of opera and how they may look in the future. In candid conversations with guests from the opera and performing arts communities, *Breaking Glass* asks: Who decides what we see and hear on stage? Can opera rise out of its origins and touch communities of color?

“As a first time librettist, it was demanding to navigate the opera genre from a hip hop artist's perspective,” Hernandez said. “There were ups, downs, fruitful collaborations, new artistic relationships and ultimately, a brand new hip-opera that I'm so proud of! I'm thrilled that I get to share that journey as host of this podcast series. A lot of people ask about next steps in opera – toward progress, inclusivity. Why ask when you can take the next step with me? Listening to this podcast reinforces that opera is a genre that is still generating change. Here's to next steps – together.”

Breaking Glass offers any lover of art insight into how music and art can respond to issues we face as a society. The podcast is launching after a series of national forums in multiple major American cities discussing these important topics and people have a lot to say. Through its examination of diversity and inclusion in America, *Breaking Glass* is a community conversation designed to provoke thoughtful discourse.

ABOUT THE CO-PRODUCERS

The Glimmerglass Festival is a professional non-profit summer opera and musical theater company in Cooperstown, New York, dedicated to bringing new productions to the stage each season. The WFMT Radio Network, based in Chicago, is a premier, non-profit creator, marketer and distributor of radio and podcasts about arts and culture.

Breaking Glass and the development of Stomping Grounds and Blue are funded by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Glimmerglass' commissioning fees for Blue are funded in part by an OPERA America Female Composers Grant, and New Music USA. Further development of Blue is made possible by a Repertoire Development Grant from the Opera Fund of OPERA America, and with production support from the Amphion Foundation. The Breaking Glass podcast is a co-production of the Glimmerglass Festival and the WFMT Radio Network, a Chicago-based producer and distributor of radio programs and podcasts about the arts. The podcast is made possible by an OPERA America Innovation Grant supported by the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation.

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