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**AUDITORIUM THEATRE OF ROOSEVELT UNIVERSITY PRESENTS A SPLENDID  
GALA TO CELEBRATE THE CHICAGO PREMIERE OF *MARGARET GARNER*  
SUNDAY, NOV. 2**

Gala to Feature Matinee Performance of **Toni Morrison** and **Richard Danielpour's**  
Acclaimed Opera starring world-renowned mezzo soprano **Denyce Graves**,  
followed by a Reception, Dinner and Entertainment at the Palmer House Hilton

CHICAGO – The Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University will host an unforgettable gala on Sunday, Nov. 2 to celebrate the Chicago premiere of ***Margaret Garner***, a new American opera based on one of the most significant and controversial fugitive slave stories in pre-Civil War America.

The gala begins at 3 p.m. at the Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Congress Parkway, where guests will gather to enjoy the epic opera. Internationally renowned mezzo-soprano **Denyce Graves** stars in the title role, a role written specifically with her in mind. The opera is directed by Broadway sensation **Kenny Leon** and features music by Grammy Award-winning composer **Richard Danielpour** and a libretto by Nobel and Pulitzer Prize-winning author **Toni Morrison**.



Pictured (L to R): Cheryl Washington; *Margaret Garner* Project co-chairs Tim Schwertfeger and Gail Waller; mezzo-soprano Tracie Luck; and *Margaret Garner* Gala co-chairs Andrea and William Zopp

Following the opera, the gala moves to the Palmer House Hilton, 17 E. Monroe, where guests can enjoy a cocktail reception in the beautifully restored and renovated Grand and State Ballrooms before enjoying a superb dinner with the opera's cast and creators. Live entertainment caps the extraordinary evening of music, powerful artistry and brilliant performances.

Tables of ten tickets to the gala are available for \$5,000, \$7,500 or \$10,000. Individual tickets are priced at \$500 or \$750. For more information, call (312) 922-2110 ext. 368 or e-mail [amartinez@auditoriumtheatre.org](mailto:amartinez@auditoriumtheatre.org).

The *Margaret Garner* Gala co-chairs are **Sandra and Timothy Rand** and **Andrea and William Zopp**. The Gala sponsor is **Exelon Corporation**.

The *Margaret Garner* Project co-chairs are **James and Mary Bell**, **Bob and Marjilee Blackwell** and **Gail Waller and Tim Schwertfeger**. The *Margaret Garner* Executive Committee chairs are **Amina Dickerson** and **Anna E. Roosevelt**.



Pictured (L to R): *Margaret Garner* Gala committee members Audrey Tuggle, Ronne Hartfield and Diane Dinkins-Carr; and *Margaret Garner* Gala co-chair Sandra Rand

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Pictured (L to R): Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University Board of Directors Chairperson Mel Katten; *Margaret Garner* Gala committee member Lester N. Coney; and Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University Executive Director Brett Batterson

The *Margaret Garner* Gala committee includes Virginia Bobins, Marcus Boggs, Bill and Peggy Brazley, Diane Dinkins-Carr, Lester N. Coney, Amina Dickerson, Sondra Berman Epstein, Margaret Garner, Erin Gilbert, Suzanne Griffith, Ronne Hartfield, Hermene Hartman, Judge Patricia Holmes, Twyler L. Jenkins, Mel Katten, James and Pauline Montgomery, Barbara Pace-Moody, Ann Nash, Isobel Neal, Andre and Dana Rice, Jane M. Saks, Audrey Tuggle and Nancy Yawitz.

*Margaret Garner* Gala sponsors include Best Portion Foundation, BET Networks, Kraft Foods, Inc., Mesirow Financial, Roosevelt University, Sara Lee Corporation, Schiff Hardin LLP, William Brazley & Associates, Ltd., Nicholas and Kathleen Amatangelo, Bruce and Ann Bachman, Maria Bechily and Scott Hodes, Norman R. and Virginia Bobins, Debbie Bricker, Sidney Epstein and Sondra Berman Epstein, Charles Gardner and Patti Eylar, Ronne Hartfield, Mel and Renee Katten, Jim and Kay Mabie, James and Linda Mitchell, James and Pauline Montgomery, Tom and Ann Nash, Isobel Neal, Sandra and Timothy Rand, George and Joan Segal, Seymour and Nancy Taxman, Ken and Marsha Tucker, Edward and Dia Weil, Robert and Sue Wieseneck and Ellen Stone Belic Institute for the Study of Women and Gender in the Arts and Media, Columbia College Chicago.

#### **A BRIEF HISTORY OF MARGARET GARNER**

*Margaret Garner* is based on the true story of one of the most significant and controversial cases of all antebellum fugitive slave stories. Margaret Garner's love for her husband and children fueled her ongoing fight for survival as she endured unimaginable abuse and hardship. In 1856, Garner and her husband fled with their children to Ohio in an attempt to escape their lives as slaves at Kentucky's Maplewood Farm. Facing recapture, Garner made the chilling decision to attempt to kill herself and her two children, rather than see them return to the bonds of slavery. As her husband was dragged from their hiding place, Garner succeeded in killing her two-year-old daughter before being overpowered by a party of U.S. marshals. Margaret Garner's trial became the longest fugitive slave case of this era. An intense national debate – over whether Garner should be tried for “destruction of property” or murder – directly and blatantly addressed critical questions that fueled the Civil War.

#### **PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE**

*Margaret Garner* will be presented Nov. 1 – 9. The performance schedule is as follows:

Saturday, Nov. 1 at 7:30 p.m.\*  
Sunday, Nov. 2 at 3 p.m.\* – Gala performance  
Thursday, Nov. 6 at 7 p.m.\*\*  
Saturday, Nov. 8 at 7:30 p.m.\*\*  
Sunday, Nov. 9 at 3 p.m.\*\*  
\* featuring Denyce Graves  
\*\* featuring Tracie Luck

#### **TICKET INFORMATION**

Individual performance tickets are now on sale, and single ticket prices are \$40 / \$55 / \$85 / \$120 / \$150. For tickets, visit the Auditorium Theatre box office at 50 E. Congress Parkway, call (312) 902-1500 or log on to ticketmaster.com. For more information, visit [margaretgarnerchicago.org](http://margaretgarnerchicago.org) or [auditoriumtheatre.org](http://auditoriumtheatre.org).

Discounted *Margaret Garner* tickets are currently available for groups of 10 or more, including student groups for the Oct. 31 dress rehearsal. For more information, call (312) 431-2357 or e-mail [bbullock@auditoriumtheatre.org](mailto:bbullock@auditoriumtheatre.org).

*Margaret Garner* tickets are currently available as part of two Auditorium Theatre 2008-2009 subscription series. The American Series includes tickets to *Margaret Garner*, *Too Hot to Handel: The Jazz-Gospel Messiah* and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. The Arts Appreciation Series includes tickets to The Kirov Ballet & Orchestra, *Margaret Garner*, *Too Hot to Handel: The Jazz-Gospel Messiah*, Batsheva Dance Company, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Nederlands Dans Theater I. Subscribers receive a 10% discount on tickets, priority seating, invitations to special events, prepaid discounted parking and other benefits. For more information, call (312) 431-2357 or e-mail [bbullock@auditoriumtheatre.org](mailto:bbullock@auditoriumtheatre.org).

#### **SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS**

This enormous undertaking has met with significant leadership support from the Chicago community. The lead corporate sponsor of *Margaret Garner* is The Boeing Company and the lead individual sponsors are Bob and Marjilee Blackwell. The Chicago Community Trust is the lead foundation sponsor and the Louise H. Landau Foundation is the lead civic engagement partner. Kraft Foods, Inc. is the lead education sponsor and United Airlines is the official and exclusive airline of the Auditorium Theatre. The Palmer House Hilton is the official hotel partner. *Margaret Garner* Project co-chairs are James and Mary Bell, Bob and Marjilee Blackwell, Gail Waller and Tim Schwertfeger. *Margaret Garner* Gala co-chairs are Sandra and Timothy Rand and Andrea and William Zopp. The *Margaret Garner* Gala sponsor is Exelon Corporation. Additional corporate and foundation support is being provided by Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP, Best Portion Foundation, Polk Bros. Foundation, The Joyce Foundation, Sage Foundation, The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust, Merrill Lynch and The City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs - City Arts Program Grant.

#### **ABOUT THE AUDITORIUM THEATRE OF ROOSEVELT UNIVERSITY**

The Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, located at 50 E. Congress Parkway, is an independent, not-for-profit organization committed to presenting the finest in international, cultural and community programming to Chicago, and to the continued restoration and preservation of the National Historic Landmark Auditorium Theatre. For more information about programming, volunteer and donor opportunities or theater tours, call (312) 922-2110 or visit [auditoriumtheatre.org](http://auditoriumtheatre.org), now featuring *Chicago's Landmark Stage*, a comprehensive online history of the Auditorium from 1889 through today, made possible by the generous support of the American Express Performing Arts Fund.

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