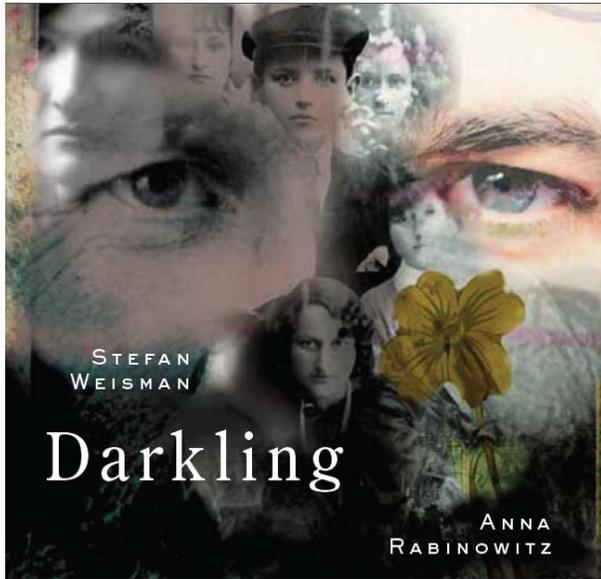


## ***DARKLING* (Albany Records) CD Release 11/1**

**An Experimental Opera-Theatre Work with Original Music by Stefan Weisman and Libretto by Anna Rabinowitz**



**Release Date:** 11/1/2011

**Label:** Albany Records

**Composed by:** Stefan Weisman

**Libretto by:** Anna Rabinowitz

**Produced/Engineered by:** Judith Sherman

**Performers:** Maeve Höglund (soprano), Hai-Ting Chinn mezzo-soprano), Jon Garrison (tenor), Mark Uhlemann bass-baritone), Tom Chiu (violin), Philip Patyon (violin), Kenji Bunch (viola), Raman Ramakrishnan (cello), + Brian DeMaris (conductor)

**TRT:** 1 hr 26 min 13 sec

**Media Contact:** April Thibeault | 212.861.0990 | [april@amtpublicrelations.com](mailto:april@amtpublicrelations.com)

*"...an intense aural stimulation... a controversial and ultimately important work." – Opera Today*

*"...brave, sensitive...and compelling." – New York Times*

*"...an unlikely collaboration of Wagner, Sally Bowles and Steven Spielberg" – Time Out New York*

*"...stretches the very definition of opera." – Steve Smith, music critic*

**NEW YORK (For Release 10/25/11)** — From a book-length poem to a multi-media experimental opera to its current incarnation as a CD, *DARKLING* gives a haunting portrayal of the emotions, terrors, and incalculable losses incurred during the period between the two World Wars and the Holocaust. Commissioned by American Opera Projects, *DARKLING* is based on Anna Rabinowitz's *Darkling: A Poem* (Tupelo Press, 2001) set to original music by post-classical composer Stefan Weisman. Featuring four singers (soprano / mezzo / tenor / baritone), a string quartet and 16 spoken-word artists, *DARKLING* movingly evokes the memory of the Holocaust as well as the human cost of cataclysmic events through a fusion of avant-garde theater, opera, cutting-edge technology and poignant language.

*DARKLING* is a remarkable story of love, loss, calamity and hope pieced together from bits of memorabilia such as fading photographs and yellowing letters found by the poet in a shoe box saved on a shelf in her deceased father's closet. Faceless, and mainly nameless, voices of *DARKLING* emerged for her from the old photos and letters – lost fragments of the Eastern European Jewish world destroyed by the Holocaust.

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In his musical process, Weisman emulated the poem's overarching acrostic structure. He also made efforts to capture the poetry's underlying emotionality. "My goal was to take the heartrending ideas which I found in Darkling's poetry and make them instantly clear and direct through music," explains Weisman.

The score, rich in Minimalist riffs, recalls Schoenberg, Bartok and Schostakovich, and hints at Jewish folk idioms. It "is personal moody and skillfully wrought...most compelling when...the harmonic language becomes astringent and a raw, fitful quality erupts." (*New York Times*)

*DARKLING* premiered to great acclaim at the Classic Stage Company in 2006 in New York City before it went to New York City Opera's VOX at NYU's Skirball Center. According to the *New York Resident*, "Darkling...courses with charged generosity..." and is "...acute in its musical reach and dead smart as theater." *DARKLING* was also included in the Guggenheim Museum's Works & Process series, toured Europe in 2007, and was performed by The Center City Opera Theatre at the Philadelphia Fringe Festival in 2009.

### **About Stefan Weisman**

Stefan Weisman is a composer living in New York City. His music in *Darkling* was described by Anthony Tommasini (*The New York Times*) as "personal, moody and skillfully wrought." His one-act opera *Fade*, commissioned by the British opera company Second Movement, premiered in London in 2008 and also had successful productions in Philadelphia, San Francisco and Brooklyn. His commissioned work for the Bang on a Can All Stars was mentioned in the *New York Times'* retrospective of 2007's best new music. Upcoming projects include a new chamber work for eighth blackbird, and a multimedia family opera, *The Scarlet Ibis*, which is being developed by the HERE Arts Center and American Opera Projects. [www.stefanweisman.com](http://www.stefanweisman.com)

### **About Anna Rabinowitz**

A National Endowment for the Arts Fellow, Anna Rabinowitz has published four volumes of poetry: *Present Tense*, *Omnidawn* (cited by the *Huffington Post* as one of the best poetry books of 2010), *The Wanton Sublime* (for which she has been commissioned by AOP to write a libretto for a monodrama of the same name, with music by British composer Tarik O'Regan), *Darkling*, and *At the Site of Inside Out*, (winner of the Juniper Prize). Her work has appeared widely in literary journals and in various anthologies. [www.annarabinowitz.com](http://www.annarabinowitz.com)

### **About American Opera Projects**

American Opera Projects' mission is to champion innovative works of music theater, to expand the art form, and to identify, develop and present new works by emerging and established talent. In addition to *Darkling*, operas to receive fully-staged premieres after passing through AOP's First Chance development program include *Séance on a Wet Afternoon* (New York City Opera, Opera Santa Barbara), *Before Night Falls* (Fort Worth Opera), and *Heart of Darkness* (London's Royal Opera House), among many others. [www.operaprojects.org](http://www.operaprojects.org)

***Darkling* is available for purchase at all major online retailers. For more info about the CD, visit [www.albanyrecords.com](http://www.albanyrecords.com).**