

Scenes from Laitman's 'The Scarlet Letter' at Clinton Presidential Library

Scenes from renowned American composer **Lori Laitman's** opera, *The Scarlet Letter*, based on Nathaniel Hawthorne's 19th century American literary masterpiece, will be presented in recital at the **Great Hall of the Clinton Presidential Library** in Little Rock, AR, on February 8th, 2009 at 3:00 p.m. Vocalists from the original production, which premiered to critical acclaim last November, will perform two scenes and select signature arias.

The opera, commissioned by The University of Central Arkansas through Robert Holden and The UCA Opera Program, provided the prolific American composer, renowned for her masterful compositions for voice, an opportunity to collaborate with award-winning American poet **David Mason**.

*"Composer **Lori Laitman** has written gorgeous music that works hand-in-glove with the words of librettist David Mason and underpins the very essence of this psychological-social drama,"* wrote Ellis Widner of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette following the world premiere on November 6th, 2008. *"This great story seems to be on its way to becoming great opera..... It is mostly sung dialog, but the few arias are at key moments and are stunningly effective...**Laitman's** music can turn on an emotional dime, from the tense and emotionally complex confrontation between convicted adulteress Hester Prynne (soprano Christine Donahue) and Roger Chillingworth (baritone Robert Holden), the resurfaced husband determined to learn the identity of the child's father, to the achingly tender lullaby she sings to her daughter after Chillingworth departs. Laitman also shows great skill in the combination and repetition of motifs to heighten tension and revive a social-emotional subtext. At times, her music suggests the lushness of Stephen Sondheim."*

Performance Details:

Cast:
Baritone Robert Holden as Roger Chillingworth
Soprano Christine Donahue as Hester Prynne
Tenor John Garst as Arthur Dimmesdale
Carl Anthony - Piano

Date:

February 8th, 2009 at 3:00 p.m.

Place:

The Great Hall, Clinton Presidential Library and Museum

1200 President Clinton Avenue

Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Tel: (501) 374-4242

Admission is free to the public.