

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Local Composer M. Ryan Taylor Lends His Musical Talent to Christmas Story, 'The Other Wise Man'

Photos: <http://vocalworks.org/owmphotos.htm> **URL:** <http://VocalWorks.org>
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Utah & Salt Lake Counties, UT - Local composer and singers team up to present a new vision of a classic Christmas story, one that travels.

The Other Wise Man

December 15th : Provo Tabernacle, 7:30 p.m.

December 16th, 22nd & 23rd : Salt Lake City Recital Hall, 7:30 p.m.

December 21st : American Fork Jr. High, 7:30 p.m.

January 6th (Three Kings Day) : Tahitian Noni Auditorium, 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$16 and are available at VocalWorks.org or by calling Brown Paper Tickets at 1-800-838-3006.

New Opera Works (NOW) and Utah based composer M. Ryan Taylor bring American author Henry Van Dyke's classic Christmas tale to life in drama and song. Join Artaban (the other wise man) as he discovers the sign of Christ's birth and travels to meet his fellow magi to offer gifts (a sapphire, a ruby and a pearl) to 'the king of light.' After stopping to help a sick stranger along the way, Artaban discovers he has missed the caravan and has been left behind. So begins a personal journey to find his king; a journey frustrated at every turn, one that will last his entire life.

One of the unique features of this production is that it travels, taking in three different locations during the month of December: Provo, Salt Lake City and American Fork. "Opera doesn't often travel, but we decided early on we wanted to 'take it to the people' as much as we could," says Taylor. "The soul of opera is great music, great stories and great voices. Take away the big sets and you can take it anywhere. This is the kind of experience you can't get in a movie or even in a large theater. I mean, here an actor stands right there beside you, singing to you. There really is nothing else like that around."

'The Other Wise Man' is Taylor's second opera. The first, 'Abinadi,' was BYU opera's mainstage production in 2003 and has since been seen numerous times on KBYU & BYUTV. "While 'Abinadi' was written in the grand opera tradition with a large ensemble, chorus and orchestra," says Taylor, "'The Other Wise Man' is much more down to earth and intimate. It requires only six singers who play a number of roles throughout the work. Instead of focusing on how big I could make it, I focused on how close I could get to the audience. I think the music reflects that, a desire to bring the audience together and really inspire them. Also, Van Dyke's story is timeless. Those who know it will enjoy re-living it. Those who are discovering it for the first time will hopefully discover something about themselves and come away refreshed."

NOW was organized in 2006 by Taylor to provide an intimate chamber opera experience in Utah. Members of the group include Brian Manternach, Gary Sorenson, Venicia Wilson, Lynnette Owens and Janilyn Anderson; all bring extensive performance credits and experience to this production. Manternach, who will be playing the title role, moved to Utah this year while finishing his doctorate in vocal performance at Indiana University's prestigious Jacobs School of Music. Sorenson recently sang in Utah Opera's workshop for the upcoming production of "The Grapes of Wrath." Wilson has performed in over a dozen productions with Utah Opera's Young Artists Program. Of Owens' Paradigm Concert performance, Jeff Manookian of the Salt Lake Tribune said, "The talent of Owens was a cornerstone of the success of this performance . . . [her] vocalizations were top-notch in every sense of the word." Anderson has performed with the Utah Symphony, Utah Lyric Opera Society and Sundance Summer Concert Series. Taylor, who sang the role of King Noah in BYU's stage production of his "Abinadi," completes the group.

To learn more about NOW, M. Ryan Taylor, or view and hear samples from "The Other Wise Man," visit <http://VocalWorks.org>

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