

PITTSBURGH OPERA

December 17, 2018

Contact:

Chris Cox, Director of Marketing and Communications

Office: (412) 281-0912, ext. 217

Cell: (412) 427-7088

ccox@pittsburghopera.org

Pittsburgh Opera presents *Glory Denied* – The true story of America's longest-held POW

What:	Glory Denied - A chamber opera by Tom Cipullo. Based on the oral history by Tom Philpott.
Where:	Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, 2425 Liberty Avenue in the Strip District
When:	• Sat., Feb 23, 2019 * 8:00 PM • Tues., Feb 26, 2019 * 7:00 PM • Fri., March 1, 2019 * 7:30 PM • Sun., March 3, 2019 * 2:00 PM
Run Time:	1 hour, 18 minutes, with no intermission
Language:	Sung in English with English texts projected above the stage
Tickets:	Single tickets are \$40. Call 412-456-6666 or visit pittsburghopera.org/tickets . Group Discounts available for groups of six or more.
Media Events	Photo Call (Feb. 11, 12:30 PM) – location TBA Full Dress Rehearsal (Feb. 21, 7:00 PM), Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters
Related Events See pages 4-6 of this release.	Event at Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum (1/31) Free Brown Bag concert (2/9) Opera Up Close (2/10), and Sensory Workshop for patrons with visual impairments WQED Preview (2/16 & 2/22) Meet the Artists (2/26) Audio Commentary (2/26)

PITTSBURGH OPERA



Pittsburgh, PA...

Based on a book by Tom Philpott, [Glory Denied](#) tells the true story of US Army Colonel Jim Thompson, who was held captive as a prisoner of war longer than any other American in history. The opera deals not only with Thompson's suffering in the jungle of southeast Asia during the Vietnam War, but also with the tragic aftermath that followed his liberation.

Colonel Thompson endured his brutal captivity by doggedly clinging to memories of his loving wife Alyce and their children. Alyce, however, believed Jim was dead. She and her children moved to Massachusetts with another man, leading to a painful reunion after Jim's release.

Glory Denied is, above all, the story of an American family during one of our nation's most turbulent eras. In its review of Mr. Philpott's book, *The New York Times* declared:

Indeed it is not too much to say that Glory Denied and Colonel Thompson's mixed feelings about it encapsulate something of the moral essence of the Vietnam War and the imperishable bitterness of its legacy.

Performed in the intimate environs of Pittsburgh Opera's George R. White opera studio at its headquarters at 2425 Liberty Ave., **Glory Denied** is a gripping drama never before seen in Pittsburgh. Four performances only – February 23 and 26, and March 1 and 3, 2019.

Quick facts about *Glory Denied*

1. There are only four singers in **Glory Denied** – “Younger Thompson” and “Younger Alyce”, and “Older Thompson” and “Older Alyce”.
2. Like that of Tom Hanks's character in the movie **Castaway**, Colonel Thompson's return home was bittersweet.
3. These will be the first performances of **Glory Denied** ever in Pittsburgh.

PITTSBURGH OPERA

The story, in brief

Act I. Captain Thompson (Jim), America's longest-held prisoner of war, recalls episodes of his nine-year ordeal, which include escape attempts, torture, the overwhelming loneliness of five years in solitary confinement, and being forced to sign a propaganda statement. He finds the strength to survive in memories of his family, letters from his wife Alyce about their home and children, and thoughts of his elaborate plans to build his dream house.

Pregnant with their fourth child and only son, Alyce receives the news that Jim's plane has been shot down. Denied any reliable information about his status or whereabouts, she soon begins a relationship with another man (Harold), eventually moving with him to Massachusetts and telling her children that their father is dead. Alyce refuses to have Jim's name released to the public as Missing in Action, or inscribed on a POW bracelet, a popular solidarity symbol at the time. She consults a lawyer in an effort to have her husband declared legally dead. Thompson, in captivity, finds comfort in the 23rd Psalm.

Act II. A number of American POWs are released and Jim returns home, but the Pentagon honors another man, Everett Alvarez, as the longest-held prisoner. With the signing of the Paris Peace Accords, Jim receives a letter welcoming him back from President Richard Nixon, that says "some things about America may appear to have changed" since his departure. Alyce greets Jim and confesses her new relationship. She offers to go away if that is what he prefers, but Jim wants to reconcile. He notes how life has changed during his nine-year captivity and soon the couple begins to fight. Jim complains that Alyce is not the wife he left behind. Alyce asserts her independence and describes what her life has been like during his absence. Jim, considered a local hero, is asked to give a sermon at the church where he and Alyce were married, and recalls his idealized family life. But Alyce has moved on.

The years pass. Jim has suffered a stroke. Living alone, estranged from his family, he struggles with all that has occurred.

-From [Anchorage Opera](#)

For more information, including musical samples visit www.pittsburghopera.org/glory.

Ticketing Information

- Single tickets are \$40. They are available [online](#), by phone at 412-456-6666 or in person at the Theater Square Box Office, 665 Penn Ave., downtown.
- Group discounts, including student discounts, are available. Call 412-281-0912 ext. 213, or [learn more online](#).

Sponsors

- [PNC](#) is the 2018-19 Pittsburgh Opera Season Sponsor
- [WQED-FM](#) is Pittsburgh Opera's Media Sponsor
- Tuesday sponsor: [Ambridge Regional Distribution and Manufacturing Center](#)

PITTSBURGH OPERA

Cast and Artistic Team: *Glory Denied*

Younger Thompson	Terrence Chin-Loy *
Older Thompson	Benjamin Taylor *
Younger Alyce	Ashley Fabian *
Older Alyce	Caitlin Gotimer *
Composer	Tom Cipullo
Conductor	James Lesniak
Stage Director	Matthew Haney *
Set Designer	Jiahui Shi+
Costume Designer	Jason Bray
Lighting Designer	Todd Nonn
Stage Manager	Alex W. Seidel
Prop Master	Johnmichael Bohach

Sets & Costumes created by Pittsburgh Opera

* Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist

+ Pittsburgh Opera debut

Related Events for *Glory Denied*

Glory Denied event at Soldiers & Sailors

Thursday, January 31, 2019, 6:30 PM

Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum, 4141 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Join us at Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum for a musical preview of **Glory Denied**, lively discussion about the opera's story and music, and insights on the Vietnam War and POW experience. Speakers will include members of the opera's cast and artistic team, as well as military experts. You can mingle with the panelists over refreshments.

The event is free and open to the public. For more information about the venue, parking, etc., please call Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum at 412-621-4253.

February Brown Bag concert

Saturday, February 9, Noon - 1:00 PM

George R. White Opera Studio, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)

Love (and war?) is in the air this February. You're invited to our free February Brown Bag concert for an afternoon of love songs and a preview of our upcoming production of **Glory Denied**. Bring your valentine, galentine, or entire family!

PITTSBURGH OPERA

Doors open at 11:30 AM. Handicapped parking is available by reservation. For more information: 412-281-0912 or <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/february-brown-bag-concert3>.

Opera Up Close: *Glory Denied*

Sunday, February 10, 2:00 - 3:30 PM

Founders' Room, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)

Join Robert Boldin, Artistic Administrator, and special guests from the production, for an in-depth look at Tom Cipullo's **Glory Denied**.

Admission is \$5; free to members of [FRIENDS of Pittsburgh Opera](#) and \$50+ donors. Handicapped parking is available by reservation. For more information: 412-281-0912 or <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/opera-up-close-glory-denied>.

Glory Denied - Sensory Workshop for patrons with visual impairments

Sunday, February 10, 4:00 - 6:00 PM

Founders' Room, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)

Pittsburgh Opera is proud to offer, free of charge, a unique sensory workshop about **Glory Denied**, prepared for our patrons with visual impairments.

WHO: Members of [Blind Outdoor Leisure Development](#), the [Blind and Vision Rehabilitation Services of Pittsburgh](#), and their companions.

WHAT: An examination of the story, the music, and the background of the opera. Participants will have a chance to meet artists and explore the set, props, and costumes. Light refreshments will be served.

To register, call Marilyn Egan at 412-281-0912 ext. 242. For more information see <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/glory-denied-sensory-workshop-for-patrons-with-visual-impairments>.

Glory Denied Previews on WQED-FM 89.3 and WQED.ORG

Saturday, February 16, Noon - 12:30 PM

Friday, February 22, 7:00 - 7:30 PM

Hosted by WQED's Anna Singer, and broadcast over the airwaves on WQED-FM 89.3 as well as the WQED website, WQED's preview of **Glory Denied** gives listeners an engaging introduction to the singers, music, and story of the opera. For more information: <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/wqed-preview-glory-denied>.

PITTSBURGH OPERA

Audio Commentary: *Glory Denied*

Tuesday, February 26, 7:00 PM

George R. White Opera Studio, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)

Ticketholders with visual impairments are invited to use [Pittsburgh Opera's Audio Description service](#) at our Tuesday performances. Trained volunteers describe the supertitles, scenery, costumes, and stage action. The listeners hear these descriptions via assistive listening devices. Those wishing to use Audio Description should reserve seats to the Tuesday, February 26, performance of **Glory Denied** by contacting Regina Connolly at 412-281-0912, ext. 213, or groups@pittsburghopera.org. Braille and large-print programs are available at all performances.

Meet the Artists of *Glory Denied*

Tuesday, February 26, immediately following the performance

George R. White Opera Studio, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)

Pittsburgh Opera [General Director Christopher Hahn](#) interviews the stars of **Glory Denied** after the Tuesday evening performance at Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters. You can ask your own questions and mingle with the artists too! Free to all Tuesday ticketholders.

"Meet the Artists" is generously sponsored by Ambridge Regional Distribution and Manufacturing Center.

Learn more at <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/meet-the-artists-glory-denied>.

COMING UP NEXT for Pittsburgh Opera:

[La bohème](#), Puccini's ultimate tear-jerker, March/April 2019

Pittsburgh Opera celebrates its 80th season in 2018-19. Established by five intrepid women in 1939, Pittsburgh Opera is viewed as one of the most vibrant opera organizations in the U.S., with a rich artistic tradition, outstanding educational programs, an acclaimed artist training program, and a progressive outlook toward the future. Its green initiative culminated in LEED® Silver certification for its Strip District headquarters, and its capacity as a true community partner has increased significantly under General Director Christopher Hahn's leadership.

###