

Tove Alsterdal & Fredrik Hogberg

# DELIRIUM

The final days of Edgar Allan Poe

An opera no one yet dared to commission

Baltimore, October 1849. The author Edgar Allan Poe is found close to death in a dark alley in the middle of the night. He is taken to the nearest hospital where his fever brings him nightmares and puts him in a state of delirium. He dies a few days later just 40 years of age.

The opera *Delirium* is set in these mysterious days, in the limbo between life and death, in the very twilight-zone that Poe made into art. Where the dead rises again and summons the living and where the past and the present co-exist.

*Delirium* is an opera about the struggle to control darkness and become reconciled with an inevitable death. It is also about the writer's overwhelming fear of reality, the loan sharks, the rejections from the publishers, the repulsive establishment of authors and of course, the critic that seeks revenge after Poe's death.

The story also features the love of the three women in the poet's life – the mother who died when he was young, his under-age wife Virginia, who also suffered premature death and his mother-in-law, who sold him as a reviewer to poets in need of a good critic.

What finally killed Poe is hidden in the myths of time. Was it the election workers that got him drunk and dragged him around Baltimore to vote in all of the eleven districts? Was it the beast? Was it the darkness within him or was it simply love?

The libretto is partly based on Poe's own poems, letters and novels. As Poe's fictitious characters appear in his dreams alongside people from his real life, the drama unfolds into a complete nightmare where it is impossible to separate fiction from reality – it becomes a state of *Delirium*.

To commission this opera  
please contact Sofie Haag,  
From Sweden Productions

COMPOSER  
**Fredrik Högberg**

LIBRETTIST  
TOVE ALSTERDAL

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