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Opera Colorado Postpones Its 2020-21 Season and Announces New Programming Initiative, Opera Colorado Amplified

Tosca, The Shining, and Carmen now comprise the 2021-22 Season and Opera Colorado will present a slate of digital and in-person events in lieu of the 2020-21 mainstage season

Denver, CO (October 22, 2020)—In light of restrictions surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, Opera Colorado will postpone its 2020-21 Season, previously programmed as *Cavalleria Rusticana* in February, *Carmen* in May, and *The Shining* in June. The company plans to present all postponed operas during the 2021-22 Season and beyond. The 2021-22 Season will open on November 6, 2021 with *Tosca*—rescheduled after its cancellation in May 2020—followed by *The Shining* in February 2022 and *Carmen* in May 2022. Opera Colorado’s 40th anniversary celebration in the fall of 2022 will feature a concert performance of *Cavalleria Rusticana*.

“This challenging but necessary decision was made in consultation with our COVID-19 Response Taskforce and Board of Directors, along with the most recent state and local safety guidelines, placing the health and safety of our artists, production personnel, staff, and audience first,” says General and Artistic Director Greg Carpenter. “Rehearsing and performing grand opera takes hundreds of creative individuals working in close quarters, presenting it requires audience members to gather in our hall, and there is simply no way to do that safely at this time. While we miss welcoming audiences to the Ellie Caulkins Opera House, we wholeheartedly embrace this opportunity to showcase our innovative spirit, which has been at Opera Colorado’s core since its inception.”

In lieu of its 2020-21 mainstage season, Opera Colorado is pleased to present Opera Colorado Amplified, bringing local, national, and international audiences a host of digital and in-person programming featuring visiting artists, the Opera Colorado Artists in Residence, and our Opera Colorado Orchestra musicians. Full details will be announced in January 2021. In the meantime, get to know some of the exciting programs which have already been confirmed:

- Laquita Mitchell curates *The Promise of Living*, a multicultural program of opera and song featuring special guests Nmon Ford and Israel Gursky (digital premiere in March 2021)
- Catherine Cook becomes Julia Child in Lee Hoiby's *Bon Appetit!* and sings other French classics in *April in Paris* (digital premiere in April 2021)
- Cecilia Violetta López, Luis Ledesma, and Nathan Salazar star in a program celebrating Mexican-American and Latinx culture (May 2021)
- Music Director Ari Pelto curates a series of chamber music concerts featuring Opera Colorado Orchestra musicians (Winter 2020 - Summer 2021)
- Opera Colorado Artists in Residence shine in *An Afternoon of American Song*, a spring cabaret performance, digital educational programming, and more

“I am so looking forward to being back in our beloved Ellie Caulkins Opera House in the fall of 2021 for what I know will be a truly special season,” says Music Director Ari Pelto. “In the meantime, we will stay very much connected to our audiences through new programming, both digital and in person, which will continue to support and highlight our artists. In particular, I am excited to bring to the Denver community a series of chamber concerts featuring the exceptional musicians of the Opera Colorado Orchestra.”

Board Chairperson Elizabeth Caswell Dyer says, “On behalf of the Board of Directors, we are heartbroken to postpone the 2020-21 mainstage season. At the same time, our biggest focus remains community engagement. We are more committed than ever to sharing Opera Colorado with our current community, expanding and welcoming new members to our community, and supporting Opera Colorado as it embarks on this exciting new initiative.”

Opera Colorado’s Education & Community Engagement department will refocus its education programs, moving to a virtual format. Among this season’s offerings are *Storytime Sessions*, a program encouraging early literacy; a new program called *Brain Breaks* (working title), designed to engage creative thinking through the arts and presented in short, interactive segments; *Arias & Ensembles*, themed concerts featuring the Opera Colorado Artists in Residence; and classroom workshops, which are tailored to each specific request and will be done through a combination of pre-recorded and livestreamed content. As the school year progresses, Opera Colorado will continue to adapt its innovative and impactful programming to support Colorado’s teachers and students.

For more information about current and future programming at Opera Colorado, visit operacolorado.org or contact Jennifer Colgan at jcolgan@operacolorado.org or 303.468.2025.

Opera Colorado Amplified

Full details will be announced in January 2021

The Trial of Susan B. Anthony

Digital Premiere on October 26

Co-commission with ADA Artist Management, Austin Opera, Berkshire Opera Festival, Minnesota Opera, and San Diego Opera

Adriana Zabala | mezzo-soprano

Myra Huang | piano

Mark Kohn | composer

Chamber Music Series

Winter 2020 - Summer 2021

Ari Pelto | Curator

Musicians from the Opera Colorado Orchestra

An Afternoon of American Song

Digital Concert in February 2021

Catherine Swindle | soprano

Kendra Broom | mezzo-soprano

Devin Eatmon | tenor

Isaiah Feken | baritone

Thomas Lynch | baritone

Timothy Madden | bass-baritone

Stephen Variames | piano

The Promise of Living

Digital Concert in March 2021

Laquita Mitchell | soprano

Nmon Ford | baritone

Israel Gursky | piano

Cabaret Concert

March 2021

Catherine Swindle | soprano

Kendra Broom | mezzo-soprano

Devin Eatmon | tenor

Isaiah Feken | baritone

Thomas Lynch | baritone

Timothy Madden | bass-baritone

Stephen Variames | piano

April in Paris

Digital Concert in April 2021

Catherine Cook | mezzo-soprano

Spring Program

May 2021

Cecilia Violetta López | soprano

Luis Ledesma | baritone

Nathan Salazar | piano

2021-22 Season

Tosca

Music by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa

November 6, 9, 12, 14 | 2021

Ellie Caulkins Opera House at the Denver Performing Arts Complex

Performed in Italian, with English and Spanish subtitles at every seat

A High-Stakes Thriller

A corrupt chief of police has a cruel ultimatum for Rome's most celebrated prima donna, Tosca: submit to his lustful desires or trigger the execution of her beloved. Who will survive this web of betrayal and revenge?

Cast

Tosca | Melissa Citro

Cavaradossi | Rafael Davila

Scarpia | Luis Ledesma

Sacristan | Stefano De Peppo

Creative Team

Conductor | Ari Pelto
Stage Director | Louisa Muller
Scenic Design | R. Keith Brumley
Lighting Design | Lucas Krech
Sets provided by Lyric Opera of Kansas City
Costumes provided by Malabar Ltd./Sarasota Opera

The Shining

Music by Paul Moravec
Libretto by Mark Campbell
Based on the novel by Stephen King

February 26, March 1, 3, 4, 6 | 2022

Ellie Caulkins Opera House at the Denver Performing Arts Complex
Performed in English, with English and Spanish subtitles at every seat

Room 217 Is Calling

Based on Stephen King's spine-chilling novel, *The Shining* comes to the Ellie Caulkins stage as an opera, written by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Paul Moravec and librettist Mark Campbell. Hoping for a fresh start, the Torrance family takes up the care of Colorado's infamous Overlook Hotel. Little do they know that the isolation and the hotel's corrupting spirits will spark an inevitable descent into madness.

Cast

Jack Torrance | Edward Parks
Wendy Torrance | Kelly Kaduce
Dick Hallorann | Arthur Woodley
Delbert Grady | Vale Rideout
Mark Torrance | Troy Cook
Stuart Ullman | Joseph Gaines

Creative Team

Conductor | Ari Pelto
Original Production | Eric Simonson
Stage Director | David Radamés Toro
Scenic Design | Erhard Rom
Animation and Projection Design | 59Productions
Costume Design | Karin Kopischke
Lighting Design | Robert Wierzel
Sound Design | C. Andrew Mayer
Sets provided by Minnesota Opera

Carmen

Music by Georges Bizet

Libretto by Ludovic Halévy and Henri Meilhac

May 7, 10, 13, 15, 19, 21 | 2022

Ellie Caulkins Opera House at the Denver Performing Arts Complex

Performed in French, with English and Spanish subtitles at every seat

Seduction—Obsession—Murder

We conclude Opera Colorado's grandest season to date with Bizet's smoldering drama, *Carmen*, filled with some of opera's most iconic melodies—including Carmen's "Habanera" and the rousing Toreador song. Not a soul alive can resist Carmen's seductive charm, not even the naïve Don Jose. But when she leaves him for a charismatic bullfighter, Don Jose's infatuation turns obsessive. What fate, or choice, waits for the woman no man can tame?

Cast

Carmen | Kate Aldrich

Don Jose | Bruce Sledge

Micaëla | Susannah Biller

Escamillo | Nmon Ford

Creative Team

Conductor | Ari Pelto

Director | Keturah Stickann

Scenic Design | Allen Charles Klein

Lighting Design | Lucas Krech

Costume Design | James Schuette & Heidi Zamora

Sets provided by Lyric Opera of Kansas City

Costumes provided by Seattle Opera

Subscriptions for the 2021-22 Season are on sale now. Three-opera packages start at just \$84 and are available now by visiting operacolorado.org or calling Opera Colorado's Patron Services team at 303.468.2030 (press 1).

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ABOUT OPERA COLORADO

Opera Colorado has served as a cornerstone of Denver's cultural community since 1981. In addition to its mainstage performances at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House each season, the company affirms its commitment to the future of the art form by annually presenting new works; with its nationally recognized Artist in Residence Program that trains the next generation of opera performers; and by each year reaching more than 45,000 students and adults through its many education and community engagement programs throughout the Rocky Mountain region. For more information, visit operacolorado.org.