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Opera Colorado Presents *April in Paris* April 15-29

The free, hour-long digital program features Catherine Cook in three delightful segments that celebrate all things French

Denver, CO (April 1, 2021)—On Thursday, April 15, at 7:30pm, Opera Colorado presents the premiere of its second digital concert, *April in Paris*. The program will remain available on demand until 11:59pm on April 29. *April in Paris* is free, but audiences are required to register. Registrations are available now at operacolorado.org/april.

In this original program directed by **David Lefkowich** and filmed in partnership with **Rocky Mountain Public Media**, mezzo-soprano **Catherine Cook** transforms into three intriguing personas. The first chapter features Cook as a guest on an Ed Sullivan-like program, singing French cabaret. Then, Cook sings other French-inspired American cabaret selections as host of a 1950s variety show inspired by *The Wendy Barrie Show*. Finally, she appears as Julia Child for Lee Hoiby's comic culinary amuse bouche *Bon Appetit!*, in which the renowned chef prepares a chocolate cake. Pianist and conductor **Sahar Nouri** provides accompaniment throughout.

“At a time where there is so much stress in our lives, it has been tremendously gratifying to work with Catherine Cook, Sahar Nouri, and David Lefkowich to create this lighthearted program that features opera, French song, and cabaret selections. The golden age for TV variety shows inspired these three vignettes. **If there is one thing we need right now, it's a good dose of humor, beauty, and great melodies, and *April in Paris* delivers just that,**” says Greg Carpenter, General & Artistic Director.

Opera Colorado launched the **Opera Colorado Amplified Resilience Fund** to raise the \$200,000 needed to produce new digital content and execute creative in-person programming, when it is safe to do so. Donations to the Resilience Fund can be made at operacolorado.org/resilience.

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.

Artist Biographies



Mezzo-soprano **Catherine Cook** has excelled in a wide range of roles with companies all over the United States including The Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Santa Fe Opera, Houston Grand Opera, and the San Francisco Opera, where she has been featured in over 50 productions in over 300 performances. Recent highlights include Marcellina in *The Marriage of Figaro* and Mother Bailey in *It's a Wonderful Life*, both with San Francisco Opera, and her debut with Sun Valley Music Festival as Julia Child in *Bon Appetit!*, a role she also performed with Opera Parallele.

A champion of new music, Ms. Cook has sung in several world premieres including *Dead Man Walking*, *Dolores Claiborne*, *After Life*, and *Bonesetter's Daughter*. Future engagements include Berta in a newly-imagined *The Barber of Seville* with San Francisco Opera. In addition to a busy performing schedule, Ms. Cook is a Professor of Voice at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music where she holds the Frederica Von Stade Distinguished Chair in Voice.



Iranian pianist and conductor **Sahar Nouri** serves as Opera Colorado's chorus master, assistant conductor, and pianist coach. Ms. Nouri is the music director of the Lamont Opera Theatre at Denver University. While based in Denver, she continues to serve as guest coach/faculty with various organizations including San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Opera North Carolina, Opera Steamboat and more.

Previously, Ms. Nouri has been a member of the music staff at Houston Grand Opera, Dallas Opera, Glimmerglass Festival, Utah Opera, Aspen Opera Center, Opera Parallele, and Opera in the Heights. Her repertoire includes numerous classic operas as well as many world premieres such as *Prince of Players*, *O Columbia!*, *Steal a Pencil for Me*, and *Today It Rains*. A multi-lingual, Nouri has done studies in the Czech Republic, Italy, and Austria, and is frequently in demand as a language coach and recitalist.



David Lefkowich is an accomplished stage director and fight choreographer who has worked with the Metropolitan Opera, Teatre alla Scala, San Francisco Opera, New York City Opera, Minnesota Opera, and Glimmerglass Opera, among others. Recent directing engagements include *Don Giovanni* at L'Opéra de Montréal and *Don Giovanni*, *Idomeneo*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, and *L'Histoire du Soldat* at the Ravinia Music Festival with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Maestro James Conlon.

David made his European debut directing *Le Portrait de Manon* at the Gran Teatre Liceu in Barcelona and followed with *The Rake's Progress* at La Monnaie in Brussels. Other engagements include directing and choreographing new productions of *La Traviata* (Austin

Opera, Opera Birmingham, San Francisco Opera, Lake George Opera), *Carmen* (Fort Worth Opera, Anchorage Opera), and *Lucia de Lammermoor* (Eugene Opera).

A graduate from Northwestern University with a Bachelor's of Science in Theatre, David has a certificate from École Jacques-Lecoq in Paris, France. He served as the Artistic Director of the Mill City Summer Opera where he directed *Pagliacci*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Tosca*, *Daughter of the Regiment*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *Maria de Buenos Aires*. Currently, he is the Artistic Director of Out of the Box Opera in Minneapolis, a company dedicated to creating high-quality operatic experiences in site-specific locations, most notably with *Diva Cage Match*, an epic battle of voices, egos, and talent in a boxing gym.

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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.

ABOUT ROCKY MOUNTAIN PUBLIC MEDIA

Rocky Mountain Public Media (RMPM) is Colorado's largest statewide, member-supported, multimedia organization and the parent company of Rocky Mountain PBS (RMPBS), KUVO JAZZ and THE DROP. Rocky Mountain Public Media has more than 90,000 members representing every county in Colorado and reaches 98 percent of the state's citizens through television, radio and digital platforms. A non-commercial media organization by and for the people of Colorado, RMPM creates high-quality local and multimedia content through Regional Innovation Centers in Denver, Colorado Springs, Durango, Grand Junction and Pueblo. RMPBS, started in Denver in 1956 as Colorado's first public television station, is now a statewide television network, with stations in Denver (KRMA), Pueblo/Colorado Springs (KTSC), Steamboat Springs (KRMZ), Grand Junction (KRMJ) and Durango (KRMU). In its 35th year, KUVO JAZZ broadcasts jazz, blues, and a lineup of locally produced diverse music programs. Launched in 2019, THE DROP is the People's Station for R&B and Hip Hop. In 2020, RMPM relocated to the Buell Public Media Center. For information about the Center, RMPBS, KUVO JAZZ and THE DROP, visit the [media kit](#).