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**Opera Colorado and Denver Botanic Gardens Present
Canciones de Nuestras Tierras on May 14**

This festive outdoor evening features performances celebrating Latinx culture throughout the Denver Botanic Gardens

Denver, CO (April 6, 2021)—On Friday, May 14, from 5:30-8:30pm, Opera Colorado presents *Canciones de Nuestras Tierras* (*Songs of Our Homelands*) in partnership with Denver Botanic Gardens. This will be Opera Colorado’s first in-person event since September 2020.

Canciones de Nuestras Tierras invites audiences to explore the rich tapestry of Latinx music and culture at Denver Botanic Gardens through performances of opera, works by Latinx composers, mariachi, and baile folklórico. Led by renowned soprano **Cecilia Violetta López**, performers include baritone **Luis Ledesma**, pianist **Nathan Salazar**, musicians from the **Opera Colorado Orchestra**, and Denver’s own **Mariachi Sol De Mi Tierra** and **ArtistiCO Dance Company**.

“We look forward to this collaboration that celebrates the intersection of art and science with a fellow SCFD organization. The Gardens will be activated in creative and inspiring ways as musicians and singers use the botanical settings as backdrops for intimate performances,” says Sara Buys, Director of Events at Denver Botanic Gardens.

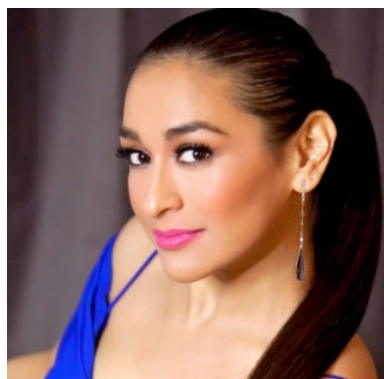
“As I thought about spring, being outdoors, and deepening our connection to the community, I immediately thought of three exceptionally talented artists: Cecilia Violetta López, Luis Ledesma, and Nathan Salazar. While they are all classically trained artists, they are also passionate about the folk music traditions of Mexico and Central and South America. I’m thrilled we are able to bring these two musical worlds together and partner with Denver Botanic Gardens, ArtistiCO, Mariachi Sol de mi Tierra, and the musicians of the Opera Colorado Orchestra to create a festive evening of music and dance surrounded by the beauty of the Gardens,” says Greg Carpenter, General & Artistic Director.

Tickets go on sale on Thursday, April 8 at 10:00 a.m. through the Denver Botanic Gardens website. Tickets are \$30, with special prices for Opera Colorado subscribers and Denver Botanic Gardens members.

Opera Colorado has launched the **Opera Colorado Amplified Resilience Fund** to raise the \$200,000 needed to produce our new digital content and execute creative, in-person programming like *Canciones de Nuestras Tierras*. Donations to the Resilience Fund can be made at operacolorado.org/resilience.

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

Artist Biographies



Celebrated soprano **Cecilia Violetta López** has been named one of opera's "25 Rising Stars" by *Opera News*. She has received accolades for her signature role of Violetta in *La Traviata*, which she has performed countless times throughout North America. Past roles include Maria in a concert production of *West Side Story* with Opera Idaho, Violetta in *La Traviata* with Minnesota Opera, Adina in *L'elisir d'amore* with Virginia Opera and Opera Las Vegas, and Marguerite in *Faust* with Opera Omaha. Other concert engagements include a performance for the opening of the Idaho State Museum and performing as a soloist in Madison Symphony's Christmas Concerts. She most recently appeared at Opera Colorado as Nedda in *Pagliacci*. Ms. López is the recipient

of an Idaho State Concurrent Resolution honoring her life as an Idahoan and her work in the world of opera.



Mexican baritone **Luis Ledesma** has established a reputation as a "rich and well controlled baritone" (*Opera News*). He frequently portrays the heroes and villains of Puccini, Verdi, and the bel canto masters, as well as roles in recent new works in Spanish including *Florencia en el Amazonas* and *El pasado nunca se termina*. His operatic and concert career has advanced in Europe, the United States, and South America and includes theaters such as Teatro alla Scala, the Liceu in Barcelona, Klangbogen Festival in Vienna, Wexford Festival, Teatro Municipal de Santiago, Semperoper in Dresden, Koeln Oper, Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, Bellas Artes in Mexico City and many more. He will appear in Opera Colorado's 2021/22 Season

as Scarpia in *Tosca*.



Nathan Salazar holds a Master's degree in Collaborative Piano from the University of Michigan, where he studied with Martin Katz, and received his vocal and piano performance degrees from the University of Kansas. Salazar has performed in England, Scotland, Italy, and Russia, as well as all over the United States. He performed in the International Festival of Spanish and Latin American Music with mezzo-soprano Teresa Berganza and has been featured at Hill Auditorium in Ann Arbor, Michigan, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., Symphony Hall in Boston, and Carnegie Hall in New York City.

He has worked with composers Jake Heggie, John Musto, William Bolcom, Poul Ruders, and Libby Larsen; with pianists John Wustman, Margo Garrett, Graham Johnson, and Martin Katz; and with such singers as Marilyn Horne, Susan Graham, Wolfgang Brendel, Neil Schicoff,

Christa Ludwig, Joyce Castle, and Jennifer Johnson Cano. He was invited by Marilyn Horne to perform at Carnegie Hall for *The Song Continues*. He has performed and coached with the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, the Santa Fe Opera, the Boston Lyric Opera, the Handel and Haydn Society, and the Boston Symphony. He serves on the voice faculty at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee and enjoys a full career as a tenor and pianist.



Mariachi Sol de mi Tierra is a Denver-based mariachi group. In 1999, four young music enthusiasts—Oscar Vaca, Jesus Ramirez, Raul Romero, and Vicente Romero— gave complete trust and hope to the leader of the group, Juventino Romero. With a lot of determination, practice and hard work, they decided to plan an exciting musical adventure. Throughout the years, more musicians joined, which led to the eight musicians who are a part of the group today. With a firm belief to keep demonstrating a beautiful part of the Mexican culture, Mariachi Sol De Mi Tierra is now more and better than ever, offering to their audience dedication, love, and passion for their music.



ArtisticO is a platform created as a bridge to connect professional artists to the community through dance. Founders, José Rosales & Alfonso (Poncho) Meraza Prudente are former principal soloists of the internationally renowned Ballet Folklórico De México de Amalia Hernández. Chepe & Poncho created the ArtisticO platform to offer a safe and inclusive space for artists to showcase their talent, passion and artistic experience with dance artists from all over the world. They have performed with the most prestigious orchestras in Mexico; the most famous mariachi in the world, Mariachi Vargas; in numerous international dance festivals while touring the world; and headlined more than 400 shows annually throughout Mexico. By far, their proudest moments took place in the Palace of Fine Arts in the heart of Mexico City.

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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 DENVER BOTANIC GARDENS

Green inside and out, Denver Botanic Gardens was founded in 1951 and is considered one of the top botanical gardens in the United States and a pioneer in water conservation. Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, the Gardens’ living collections encompass specimens from the tropics to the tundra, showcasing a plant palette chosen to thrive in Colorado’s semi-arid climate. The Gardens is a dynamic, 24-acre urban oasis in the heart of the city, offering unforgettable opportunities to flourish with unique garden experiences for the whole family – as well as world-class education and plant conservation research programs. Additional sites extend this experience throughout the Front Range: Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield Farms is a 700-

acre native plant refuge with an active farm in Jefferson County; Mount Goliath is a high-altitude trail and interpretive site on the Mount Evans Scenic Byway. The Gardens also manages programming at Plains Conservation Center in Aurora. For more information, visit us online at www.botanicgardens.org.