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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Opera San José presents Verdi's harrowing

Rigoletto

SAN JOSE, CA – **Opera San José** opens its 31st season with Giuseppe Verdi's ***Rigoletto***. This tale of innocence lost and vengeance gone tragically awry will be conducted by **Joseph Marcheso**, with stage direction by **Brad Dalton**. ***Rigoletto*** will be sung in Italian with English supertitles. Six performances are scheduled from September 6 through 21 at the California Theatre, 345 South First Street in downtown San José. Tickets are on sale at the Opera San José Box Office, online at operasj.org or by phone at (408) 437-4450. The production of ***Rigoletto*** is made possible, in part, by a Cultural Affairs Grant from the City of San José.

Rigoletto, with libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, is a tragic tale of a deformed court jester who wants nothing more than to protect his virtuous daughter from a licentious duke who seduces her. Verdi's famous masterwork leads us on a chilling whirlwind of revenge that has entranced audiences since its first performance.

Joseph Marcheso, Opera San José's new music director and principal conductor, will conduct ***Rigoletto***. **Mr. Marcheso** has conducted 11 productions for OSJ, including *Madama Butterfly*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Suor Angelica/Gianni Schicchi*, *La traviata*, *Faust*, *La bohème*, *La Cenerentola*, *Manon*, *Carmen*, *The Elixir of Love*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. As a staff conductor and cover at the San Francisco Opera, **Mr. Marcheso** worked the productions of *Show Boat*, *The Flying Dutchman*, the San Francisco premieres of Jake Heggie's *Moby-Dick* and John Adams' *Nixon in China*, and the world premieres of Mark Adamo's *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene* and Tobias Picker's *Dolores Claiborne*.

Andrew Whitfield will conduct the September 19 and 21 performances. Last season **Mr. Whitfield** served as principal conductor for the company's production of *Falstaff*. **Mr. Whitfield** served as assistant conductor for *Hansel and Gretel*, *Il trovatore*, *The Pearl Fishers* and *Pagliacci*. **Mr. Whitfield** was also chorus master for the company's productions of *Suor Angelica*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Idomeneo*, *Pagliacci*, *La traviata* and *Faust*.

International stage director **Brad Dalton** returns to **Opera San José** to direct *Rigoletto*. **Mr. Dalton's** previous credits with the company include *Madama Butterfly*, *Il trovatore*, *Faust*, *Idomeneo*, the West Coast premiere of David Carlson's *Anna Karenina*, *Così fan tutte* and *Madama Butterfly*. He has directed productions for opera companies throughout the United States and abroad, including San Francisco Opera, The Metropolitan Opera, Washington Opera, Opera Boston, San Diego Opera, Barbican in London, and the State Opera of South Australia. In 2004, **Mr. Dalton** received the prestigious Helpmann Award for "Best Director of an Opera" in Australia.

Rigoletto features current members of Opera San José's resident ensemble in the principal roles. Baritones **Matthew Hanscom** and **Evan Brummel** will alternate in the role of Rigoletto. **Mr. Hanscom** makes his debut as a resident artist. Recent engagements for **Mr. Hanscom** include Comte de Toulouse in Verdi's *Jérusalem* and covering Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* for Sarasota Opera. **Mr. Brummel** is a former resident artist and will sing the September 7 and 19 performances.

Resident soprano **Isabella Ivy** makes her debut with OSJ in the role of Gilda, Rigoletto's daughter. **Ms. Ivy** has repeatedly been a featured artist with the AIMS Festival Orchestra in Graz, Austria and has also been a featured artist at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and the Las Vegas Academy.

Tenor **Kirk Dougherty** debuts as a member of the resident ensemble in the role of Duke of Mantua. Recent engagements for **Mr. Dougherty** include Manrico (*Il trovatore*) with Sarasota Opera and Baltimore Concert Opera.

Former resident bass **Silas Elash** returns to the OSJ resident ensemble in the role of Sparafucile and Monterone. Last season, **Mr. Elash** appeared as the Commissioner in *Madama Butterfly* and the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*.

Second year resident mezzo-soprano **Lisa Chavez** performs the role of Maddalena. **Ms. Chavez** made her company debut last season appearing as Meg Page (*Falstaff*), Hansel (*Hansel and Gretel*), Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*) and Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*).

Opera San José's production of ***Rigoletto*** includes set designs by **Steven Kemp**, lighting design by **Pamila Gray**, and wig and makeup designs by **Vicky Martinez**.

About Opera San José

Opera San José, performing at the historic **California Theatre** in downtown San José, is a professional, regional opera company that is unique in the United States. Maintaining a resident company of principal artists, **Opera San José** specializes in showcasing the finest young professional singers in the nation. In addition to mainstage performances, **Opera San José** maintains extensive educational programs in schools and in the community at large, and offers *Preview* lectures and *Introduction to Opera* talks for all mainstage productions.

Rigoletto

In Italian with English Supertitles

Cast: September 6, 7, 11, 14, 19 and 21

Rigoletto	Matthew Hanscom•; Evan Brummel (9/7 and 9/19)
Gilda	Isabella Ivy•
Duke of Mantua	Kirk Dougherty•
Sparafucile	Silas Elash•
Maddalena	Lisa Chavez•
Marullo	Daniel Cilli
Borsa	Michael Boley
Count Ceprano	John Bischoff
Countess Ceprano	Chloe Smart
Count Monterone	Evan Brummel; Silas Elash (9/7 and 9/19)
Giovanna	Anna Yelizarova

• Resident Company

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

- What:** Opera San José opens its 31st season with Giuseppe Verdi's *Rigoletto*. This is a tragic tale about a deformed court jester who wants nothing more than to protect his virtuous daughter from a licentious duke who seduces her. Giuseppe Verdi's masterwork leads us on a chilling whirlwind of revenge that has entranced audiences since its first performance. *Rigoletto* will be sung in Italian with English supertitles. Six performances are scheduled from September 6 through 21 at the California Theatre, 345 South First Street in downtown San José. Tickets are on sale at the Opera San José Box Office, online at operasj.org or by phone at (408) 437-4450. The production of *Rigoletto* is made possible, in part, by a Cultural Affairs Grant from the City of San José.
- Who:** Composer: Giuseppe Verdi
Librettist: Francesco Maria Piave
Conductor: Joseph Marcheso
Assistant Conductor: Andrew Whitfield
Stage Director: Brad Dalton
Set Designer: Kent Dorsey
Costume Coordinator: Alyssa Oania
Lighting Designer: Pamila Gray
Wigs/Makeup: Vicky Martinez
- Dates:** Septemeber 6, 7m, 11, 14m, 19, 21m; 2014
- Time:** "m" indicates matinee at 3pm; all other performances are at 8pm
- Location:** California Theatre, 345 South First Street between San Carlos and San Salvador, San José, CA.
- Tickets:** \$51–\$111 (includes city facility usage fee) from Opera San José Box Office, 2149 Paragon Dr., San José, CA 95131; 408-437-4450; 408-437-4455 fax; operasj.org
Available 90 minutes prior to curtain at the California Theatre box office only: Seniors (65 and older) 10% discount; Students 25 and younger (with current student ID) \$11 (cash only)
- Photos:** www.operasj.org/news-events/press-room/press-photos/2014-2015-season/rigoletto/advance-photos/
- Press Room:** www.operasj.org/news-events/press-room

To learn more about *Rigoletto*, please visit operasj.org and consider these opportunities:

Rigoletto Special Preview: August 26, 2014 at 12pm, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, 150 East Fernando Street, Beethoven Center, 5th floor, downtown San José; Free vocal preview with members of the cast. For information, call 408-437-4450.

Introduction to Opera: Before each performance, General Director Larry Hancock will present a free 45-minute talk about the opera at the California Theatre, beginning at 6:30pm prior to evening performances (except for opening night of *Where Angels Fear to Tread*) and at 1:30pm prior to Sunday matinees. No reservations required.

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