

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

 Press Contact:
 Bryan Ferraro
 408.437.2229
ferraro@operasj.org

Opera San José Presents Bizet's Most Loved Opera

Carmen

SAN JOSE, CA (January 13, 2016) – No man can resist Carmen's gypsy charms, though few men can tempt this fiercely independent woman. Don José, a naive soldier who is easily seduced by the wiles of this fiery gypsy, abandons his childhood sweetheart and deserts his military duties to have her, but his jealous possessiveness only sends Carmen into the arms of the glamorous toreador Escamillo. In the end, José can't endure his rage and desperation.

Carmen will be sung in French with English supertitles. Six performances are scheduled from February 13th through February 28th 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 and by phone at (408) 437-4450. Performances are supported, in part, by a grant from the San José Office of Cultural Affairs.

Joseph Marcheso, Opera San José's music director and principal conductor, will conduct *Carmen*. Mr. Marcheso most recently conducted *Tosca* and has conducted 15 productions for Opera San José. **Layna Chianakas** returns to Opera San José to direct *Carmen*. Ms. Chianakas recently served as stage director for Opera San José's recent production of *Hansel and Gretel* as well as the 2011-12 production of *La voix humaine*.

Mezzo-soprano **Lisa Chavez** returns this season to sing the title role of *Carmen*. While a member of Opera San José's resident ensemble in 2014-2015, Ms. Chavez appeared as Maddalena (*Rigoletto*), Isabella (*The Italian Girl in Algiers*), Harriet Herriton (*Where Angels Fear to Tread*), the Third Lady (*The Magic Flute*), Meg Page (*Falstaff*), Hansel (*Hansel and Gretel*), Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*), and Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*).

Resident baritone **Matthew Hanscom** will sing the role of Escamillo. Mr. Hanscom most recently appeared as Count Almaviva in *The Marriage of Figaro* and Scarpia in *Tosca*. He made his company debut as Rigoletto, followed with Taddeo (*The Italian Girl in Algiers*) and Gino Carella (*Where Angels Fear to Tread*) and Papageno (*The Magic Flute*).

Resident tenor **Kirk Dougherty** will sing the role of Don Jose. Mr. Dougherty recently sang the roles of Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, Tamino in *The Magic Flute* and Philip Herriton in the world premiere of *Where Angels Fear to Tread*. Tenor **John Lindsey** makes his Opera San José debut singing the role of Don José during the last two performances. Mr. Lindsey's past engagements include Third Jew in *Salome* by Strauss, Nick in *La Fanciulla del West*, and Marvin Heeno in the world premiere of the revised *Dream of Valentino* by Dominic Argento.

Soprano **Jennifer Forni** returns to perform the role of Micaela. Ms. Forni joined the Opera San José resident ensemble during the 2013-14 season, appearing as Alice Ford (*Falstaff*), Cio-Cio-san (*Madama Butterfly*), and Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*). Recent engagements for Ms. Forni include the role of Anna in Weill's *Street Scene* with Springfield Opera in Spring 2015.

Soprano **Christine Capsuto** is back to sing the role of Frasquita. Ms. Capsuto made her company debut as the Dew Fairy in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* during the 2013-14 season. Recent roles include Gilda (*Rigoletto*) for West Bay Opera, Miss Nordstrom (*A Little Night Music*) for American Conservatory Theater, and Clorinda (*La Cenerentola*) at Townsend Opera Company. Former resident and mezzo soprano **Cybele Gouverneur** also returns to sing the role of Mercedes. Recent engagements for Ms. Gouverneur include her role debut as Dulcinée in *Don Quichotte* with Festival Opera and the title role of *Carmen* with Livermore Valley Opera.

Tenor **Michael Boley** will appear as Le Remendado in *Carmen*. Mr. Boley most recently performed the role of Spoletta in *Tosca* last September and made his company debut as an associate member of the resident ensemble during the 2014-15 season singing the roles of Borsa (*Rigoletto*), the Sacristan (*Tosca*) and Edgardo (*Where Angels Fear to Tread*). Baritone **Eugene Brancoveanu** returns to sing the role of Le Dancaire. Mr. Brancoveanu recently performed the role of the Count during the final performance of *The Marriage of Figaro* and made his company debut during Opera San José's 2013-14 season as Leporello in *Don Giovanni*.

Bass **Kirk Eichelberger** returns to sing the role of Zuniga. Mr. Eichelberger was previously seen at Opera San José as Daland in *Der fliegende Holländer* during the 2004 – 2005 season and returned during the 2006 – 2007 season to perform the roles of Frère Laurent (*Roméo et Juliette*) and Basilio (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*). Bass **Daniel Cilli** will appear as Morales in *Carmen*. Mr. Cilli recently sang the role of Sciarrone in Opera San José's *Tosca* and appeared as Marullo in *Rigoletto*, and later reprised the role for Opera Santa Barbara's production of *Rigoletto* in November of 2014.

Opera San José's production of *Carmen* includes set designs by **Giulio Cesare Perrone**, lighting design by **York Kennedy**, costumes coordinated by **Alyssa Oania**, and wig and makeup designs by **Vicky Martinez**.

About Opera San José

Opera San José, performing at the beautiful 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.

Cast:

Carmen	Lisa Chavez
Don José	Kirk Dougherty • (13, 14, 18, 21)
Don José	John Lindsey (26, 28)
Escamillo	Matthew Hanscom •
Micaëla	Jennifer Forni
Zuniga	Kirk Eichelberger
Moralès	Daniel Cilli
Frasquita	Christine Capsuto
Mercedes	Cybele Gouverneur
Le Dancaire	Eugene Brancoveanu
Le Remendado	Michael Boley •

- Resident Company

Press Room: www.operasj.org/news-events/press-room



To learn more about **Carmen**, please visit operasj.org

Carmen Special Preview: February 2, 2016, at 12 p.m., 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: General Director Larry Hancock will present a free 45-minute talk to ticket holders about the opera at the California Theatre before each performance of **Carmen**. The talk begins at 6:30pm prior to evening performances and at 1:30pm prior to Sunday matinees. No reservations required.

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