

CNDINE

November 11 - 26, 2017



Larry Hancock
GENERAL DIRECTOR

## What's Next

The next thing up is *Cinderella*. The young Alma Deutscher will soon be in San José where she will perform her violin concerto with Symphony Silicon Valley (December 2 and 3) here in the California Theatre, after which she will go into rehearsal with Opera San José for the American premiere of her opera, *Cinderella*. How lucky for Opera San José that the Packard Humanities Institute chose us to help produce this astonishing work by this phenomenally gifted young composer who has credits across Europe for her compositions and performing skills as a violinist and a pianist. Her *Cinderella* 

received its world premiere in Vienna, with the support of famed conductor Zubin Mehta. The reviews were ecstatic: "Here, someone with a great deal of empathy delves into the characters. And she also understands how to build scenes, keep them in tension, and orchestrate dense atmospheres. Alma Deutscher proves talented at humor as well as melancholy" (*Der Standard*, Vienna). "This composer can capture wonderfully different moods of the soul. The sad ballad of *Cinderella*, which is constantly recurring as a leitmotiv, the despair of the unworldly prince-poet, who shows no interest at all in the affairs of government, the evil of the ladies' trio: everything is congenially cast into music. It all sounds truly inspired ... there is nothing arbitrary or left to chance" (*Der Neue Marker*). We are very much looking forward to opening the American premiere of this remarkable opera, composed by the even more remarkable Alma Deutscher.

On Friday evening, February 9, we will host our annual General Director's Dinner, which was established when Irene Dalis was General Director. This as-dressy-as-you-like (but not stuffy) dinner party takes place on the stage of the California Theatre, so space is limited. This season we will recognize Opera San José Board member Jeanne McCann for her decades of unflagging support. The entertainment will consist of the most delicious music in opera: those guilty pleasures that, even if a bit sentimental, are so beautiful you can't help but love them. Roomy tables of eight, white-glove service, unusual and delicious dishes and wines, superb singing, and the camaraderie of opera lovers make this a highlight of the year.

This February, The Flying Dutchman will feature more quest artists than any other opera in OSJ's history, four of them making their company debut. Noel Bouley has the title role. Though an American, he has been with the Deutsche Oper Berlin for four seasons, where he has garnered enthusiastic receptions for many roles, and has proven his worth as a Wagnerian. He is making his debut as The Dutchman with Opera San José, a role he will repeat on his return to Germany with Opernhaus Chemnitz, Kerrianne Otaño will sing Senta, a young woman obsessed with freeing The Dutchman from his eternal curse. Ms. Otaño has been hailed for her "Verdian richness, power, and expressivity" (The Dallas News), and has performed roles in several Wagner operas, though her dramatic range includes roles as wide ranging as the Countess in Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro for Opera Memphis and Micaëla in Carmen for Fort Worth Opera. Singing Senta's father, Daland, we have engaged Gustav Andreassen, a true bass. Opera News described him thus, "The extraordinary potent bass of Gustav Andreassen was all black tone — sonorous, distinctive, with fine musicianship and dramatic flair." The New York Times reported, "Gustav Andreassen was fabulous in the role of the Grand Inquisitor [in Verdi's Don Carlo]."

Just one more thing: Paula Poundstone's grand "Night at the Opera" as part of our fundraiser Casino Royale. Saturday, April 21. I can hardly wait!



PRESENTS

# LA RONDINE

Opera in three acts Music by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Giuseppe Adami

First performed March 27, 1917 at the Grand Théâtre de Monte Carlo in Monte Carlo, Monaco.

Sung in Italian with English supertitles.

Supported, in part, by a grant from the Applied Materials Foundation and a Cultural Affairs Grant from the City of San José.

Opening Night Performance Sponsor: Fred & Peggy Heiman

CONDUCTOR

Chistopher Larkin

STAGE DIRECTOR

Candace Evans

SET DESIGNER

Larry Hancock

COSTUME DESIGNER

Flizabeth Poindexter

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Kent Dorsey

WIG AND MAKEUP DESIGNER

Christina Martin

CHOREOGRAPHER

Michelle Klaers D'Alo

PROPERTIES MASTER

Lori Scheper-Kesel

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

John Draginoff

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Seamus Ricci

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

Nathan Erwin Brauner

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

Rebecca Bradlev

Rachel Nin

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Andrew Whitfield

MUSIC STAFF

Veronika Agranov-Dafoe Victoria Lington

SUPERTITLE CUEING

Nicholas Dold

The performance will run approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes. including one 15 minute intermission and one 20 minute intermission.

## 2017 - 2018 Thirty-Fourth Season

Mozart's COSÌ FAN TUTTE September 9-24, 2017 Puccini's LA RONDINE November 11-26, 2017 Deutscher's CINDERELLA December 16-21, 2017 Wagner's THE FLYING DUTCHMAN February 10-25, 2018 Verdi's LA TRAVIATA April 14-29, 2018

## Cast in order of appearance

**Yvette** Bianca Prunier Magda Lisette Suzv Rambaldo Gobin Ruggero Rabonnier Maya Kherani **Katharine Gunnink Mason Gates Amanda Kingston** Elena Galván Teressa Foss Trevor Neal **Dane Suarez** Jason Slayden **Babatunde Akinboboye** 

## Chorus **SOPRANOS**

Nicole Cooper Rahel Erki Amy Goymerac Shaina Levin Erin O'Meally Lindsay Roush Jessica Williams Paulette Penzvalto

#### **ALTOS**

Jenny Hartshorn Michelle La Jeunesse Elizabeth Laus Amy Worden Savannah Swan Catherine Williams

## Supernumeraries

Case Bontrager Cameron Esfahani \*11/16 Performance Michael Mastre Chris Tucker Stephen Zilles

#### **TENORS**

Christian Barajas Josh Bongers Nic Gerst Dan Leal Andrew Metzger Nicholas Molle AJ Rodriguez

#### **BASS**

Babatunde Akinboboye Norman Espinoza Dario Johnson Malcolm Jones Gabe Manley Lazo Mihailovich Brandan Sanchez Brendan Stone

## Dancers

Ty Danzl Tristen Montesino Alvsa Reinhardt AJ Rodriguez

#### 2017-18 ARTIST FELLOWSHIP SPONSORS

Mason Gates Katharine Gunnink Amanda Kingston

Trevor Neal

Dane Suarez Brad Dalton

Mary and Clinton Gilliland \*Exclusive Sponsor Gibson Walters Memorial Fund Profs John Heineke &

Catherine Montfort Don & Jan Schmidek Amici di Musica Bella Doreen James San José Opera Guild Anonymous sponsor Anonymous sponsor San José Opera Guild

## Orchestra

#### **1ST VIOLIN**

Cynthia Baehr, Concertmaster Alice Talbot, Asst. Concertmaster Matthew Szemela Valerie Tisdel Chinh Le

Virginia Smedberg Rochelle Nguyen Daniel Flanagan

## **2ND VIOLIN**

Claudia Bloom, Principal Susan Stein. Assistant Principal Sue-Mi Shin Elizabeth Corner Serai Goldman-Hull Carol Kutsch

#### VIOLA

Chad Kaltinger, Principal Janet Doughty, Assistant Principal Melinda Ravne Ivo Bokulic

#### **CELLO**

Lucinda Breed Lenicheck, Principal Evan Kahn, Assistant Principal Paul Hale Kelley Maulbetsch

#### **BASS**

Andrew Butler, Principal William Everett, Assistant Principal

#### FLUTE

Isabelle Chapuis, Principal Laurie Camphouse

## **PICCOLO**

Mary Hargrove

#### OBOE

Patricia Mitchell, Principal Ryan Zwahlen

#### **ENGLISH HORN**

Pamela Hakl

#### **CLARINET**

Mark Brandenburg, Principal Ann Lavin

#### **BASS CLARINET**

Jeannie Psomas

#### **BASSOON**

Deborah Kramer, Principal Carolyn Lockhart

#### **FRENCH HORN**

Meredith Brown, Principal Beth Zare Eric Achen Caitlyn Smith

#### **TRUMPET**

William B. Harvev. Principal John Freeman Owen Miyoshi

#### **TROMBONE**

Kathryn Curran, Principal Bruce Chrisp Christian Behrens

#### **TIMPANI**

Mark Veregge, Principal

#### **PERCUSSION**

James Kassis

#### HARP

Karen Thielen, Principal

#### **ONSTAGE PIANO/CELESTE**

Veronika Agranov-Dafoe Victoria Lington

#### **ORCHESTRA MANAGER**

Mark Veregge

## **Synopsis**

## ACT I

### MAGDA'S SALON, PARIS

After a dinner party hosted by the courtesan Magda, the poet Prunier expounds his theories on love. Magda's friends Yvette, Bianca and Suzy playfully mock him, while Lisette, Magda's maid, tells him he doesn't know what he is talking about. Prunier maintains that no one is immune to romantic love and sings the first verse of his latest song about Doretta, a young woman who rejected a king's wealth because she yearned for true love. Uncertain of how to finish the song, Prunier encourages Magda to provide the second verse, which she does, praising true love over riches. The guests are charmed by her performance, but her long-term protector Rambaldo gives her a diamond bracelet; a reminder of what her priorities should be.

Lisette enters to announce the arrival of a young man - the son of an old school friend of Rambaldo. Suddenly nostalgic, Magda recalls her youthful dreams of love. Prunier, who insists that a woman's fate is apparent in her hand, reads Magda's palm, telling her that she is like a swallow, yearning for love, but destined to return to her nest

Lisette brings in a visitor, Ruggero, who admits that this is his first visit to Paris and asks where he may find the best place to spend an evening. After much lively discussion, Lisette intervenes, insisting that Bullier's is most preferred. Ruggero leaves with their list of recommendations.

The other guests depart and Magda tells Lisette that she will remain at home for the evening. Then, on a whim, she decides to disguise herself in simple apparel and go out for an adventure. Prunier returns in secret to meet Lisette, who has borrowed one of Magda's finest dresses, and they depart for their night out.

## Intermission (15 minutes)

### **ACT II**

#### **BULLIER'S, PARIS**

The nightclub is packed with students, artists, and flower sellers, singing and dancing. Magda enters and attracts the attention of several young students. To avoid them, she approaches a table where Ruggero is sitting alone. Apologizing for intruding, she says that she will leave as soon as the students stop watching her. Ruggero, who does not recognize Magda in her disguise, asks her to stay, telling her that she reminds him of the sweet girls from his home town. The two dance happily together. Prunier and Lisette enter, arguing about his desire to educate Lisette and turn her into a lady. Offended, Lisette sweeps out, with Prunier chasing after her.

Magda and Ruggero return to their table, where he asks for her name. She writes "Paulette" on the table and Ruggero adds his own beneath.

The attraction between them grows as they talk. Now reconciled, Lisette and Prunier return and Lisette suddenly recognizes Magda. Prunier tells Lisette she is mistaken and to prove his point, he introduces the two women to each other and Lisette is fooled. Amazed at her maid having borrowed her clothing, Magda then teases Prunier for dating her maid. The two couples laugh and drink a toast to love. Prunier realizes that Rambaldo has arrived, and Lisette quickly distracts Ruggero. Rambaldo demands an explanation from Magda for her behavior and disguise: she tells him that she has nothing to add to what he has already seen. When Rambaldo demands they leave together, she refuses and declares her love for another, apologizing for any pain she is causing him. Rambaldo tells her that he hopes she won't live to regret her decision. After Rambaldo leaves. Ruggero returns, and tells Magda that dawn is breaking. She impulsively declares her love for him and they leave together.

## Intermission (20 minutes)

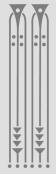
### ACT III

#### THE FRENCH RIVIERA

Magda and Ruggero have been living together on the French Riviera for some months. They talk about their first meeting and their happiness together, living quietly by the sea. Ruggero tells Magda that he has written to his parents to ask for money to pay their growing debts and for consent to their marriage. He imagines their happy married life and the child they may have. Magda knows that her past life as a courtesan would make her unacceptable to Ruggero's family, and after he leaves to see if his mother's response has arrived, she is torn between her desire to tell Ruggero everything and her fear of losing their relationship. Prunier and Lisette arrive. Lisette has had a brief and disastrous one-night career as a music-hall singer: her performance in Nice the previous evening was a catastrophe. She and Prunier are bickering when Magda appears, and Lisette begs for her old job, which Magda agrees to.

Prunier expresses doubt that Magda can be happy away from Paris, and delivers a message from Rambaldo: he would be happy to take her back. Magda refuses to listen, so Prunier takes his leave after arranging a rendezvous with Lisette for that evening. Ruggero returns with the letter from his mother, which says that if Ruggero's fiancée has all the virtues he has described, she will welcome the couple into her home.

Unable to keep her secret any longer, Magda tells Ruggero about her past and declares that she can never be his wife. Ruggero implores Magda not to abandon him, but Magda is adamant; Ruggero must return home. Like a swallow, she flies back to her old life, leaving Ruggero behind.



Dress to kill for Opera San José's Gala Fundraiser

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Saturday April 21st 3:30pm - 10pm \$200 per person California Theatre 345 South First Street. San Jose



A night of games of chance, dining, singing, and comedy await you at the intimate California Theatre. Eat in style at the gourmet food stations while you gamble the night away!



Entertainment starts at 8PM with the hilarious Paula Poundstone, as she hosts and entertains along with Opera San José soloists and chorus.

> For tickets call (408) 437-4450 or go to operasj.org







## **Program Notes**

#### By Larry Hancock

For American audiences Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924) is last in the long line of Italian opera composers that began with Jacopo Perri in 1600 when he premiered the very first opera, *Euridice*. For many Americans, Puccini is not only the last significant Italian opera composer, he is their absolute favorite. While most would likely agree that Verdi is the most respected and Rossini is perhaps the most entertaining, Puccini wins our hearts. He leaves us breathless with *Tosca* and *Turandot*, wringing out our handkerchiefs with *Suor Angelica*, chuckling with *Gianni Schicchi*, and heartbroken with *La bohème* and *Madama Butterfly*. We are genuinely moved by Puccini operas, and though he is America's favorite Italian composer, over the decades since his death we have neglected three of his operas, *Le villi*, *Edgar*, and *La rondine*.

Puccini's first and second operas, *Le villi* and *Edgar*, may not merit professional productions, but *La rondine* certainly deserves to be heard. This opera, about a summer romance, does not end in searing fury like *Tosca* or a tragic suicide like *Butterfly*, or a bitter, bitter death like *La bohème*; like *Turandot*, it has a kinder conclusion. *La rondine* has all the hallmarks of Puccini at his very best: it overflows with an unquenchable desire for joy, it is brimming with vitality and heartfelt passion, and it boasts Puccini's fluid, brilliant, even ecstatic musical language. However, even before its world premiere this opera was dealt a bad hand.

Puccini hated the very idea of war, and on hearing of the declaration of The Great War he is reported\* to have shouted, "War, war! It is the end of civilization!" On that same day, Puccini was horrified to receive a telegram from his son Antonio announcing that he had joined the armed forces, and to make it even worse, Puccini was in the throws of a love affair with a German countess who suddenly found herself an enemy alien and was forced to leave Italy. During this time of clamorous confusion Puccini was in the midst of a commission from the Viennese Carltheatre for *La rondine*. Of course, there was no possibility of executing a contract with enemy Austrians and the premiere of *La rondine* would not take place in Vienna.

During the course of the war Puccini experienced a precipitous fall from grace. He would not support this war with his words or his money, and he would not take part in fundraising efforts to support the conflict. He lost many of his best friends, including Arturo Toscanini. Artists from England, France, and Italy, as well as the international press, reviled his operas. After the war much was forgiven as Puccini donated a great deal of money for the care of injured veterans, but *La rondine* didn't premiere after the war, that opening took place even before the United States entered the conflict.

Puccini finished *La rondine* in October of 1915, as the war raged on, but his publisher, Ricordi, refused to publish the opera for a number of complicated reasons, not least that the commission was from an Austrian theatre, so Puccini turned to Casa Sonzogno, Ricordi's rival publishing house. Sonzogno published *La rondine* and sold the world premiere rights to Monte Carlo, a neutral state, and the premiere took place on March 27, 1917.

The cast was impressive, featuring Tito Schipa as Ruggero and Gilda Dalla Rizza as Magda. Dalla Rizza was so impressive that she became Puccini's favored soprano for whom he wrote several more roles, including *Suor Angelica* and Liu, and she became

known as the Eleonora Duse of opera. Excellent casting aside, upon its premiere La rondine was attacked as an "enemy opera" by French newspapers, which made it impossible for other companies to take up the work. Puccini's defense, that the opera was set in France and written in Italian by an Italian librettist, Giuseppe Adami, that the composer was Italian, and that the publisher was an Italian firm, fell on deaf ears. La rondine was off to a bad start. However, that did not prevent the opera from traveling abroad, and by May it was seen in Buenos Aires to much success. It was next produced in Bologna and then the Teatro Dal Verme in Milan in October. Vienna did not see La rondine until 1920, but Puccini was not happy with the quality of the production. Puccini would be dead before the Metropolitan Opera and La Scala would mount the work.

One of Puccini's stated goals for this project was to write a romantic comedy in the style of *Der Rosenkavalier* (R. Strauss), which premiered in 1911 and was enormously successful, establishing Strauss as a leading opera composer (his earlier operas, Salome and Elektra, were shocking to many). While Puccini's score does reflect the high gloss of Der Rosenkavalier, as well as its waltzes and conversational moments, what impresses is Puccini's unmistakable musical language that is unabashedly influenced by the French impressionists, the oriental gestures of Butterfly, and the mayhem of the Café Momus scene in La bohème.

Adami's libretto, while filled with quick wit and surprising turns of phrase, especially in Act I, also gives vent to lively street talk and very romantic expressions of high-flying love poetry in Acts II and III. Puccini's conversational tone in much of the opera, while not surprising for Puccini who exercises this kind of intimate exchange in most of his operas, takes the natural flow of language to a new level in La rondine. The contrast between banter and impassioned melody emphasizes both, and may be a trick he learned from Strauss, as Rosenkavalier exhibits this same device that heightens the high moments by contrasting them with more subdued moments of conversation. This is particularly effective in communicating to the audience in a subtle way the deep unhappiness of Magda in her bought-and-paid-for relationship with the financier Rambaldo.

About a decade ago a Covent Garden production of La rondine toured the United States (San Francisco Opera and the Metropolitan Opera), and was simulcast internationally by the Met, but there have also been charming productions by Teatro La Fenice (Venice) and the Washington National Opera (D.C.), among others, that have clearly shown us that La rondine merits a place in the international repertoire. We are happy to revive our 2010 production for San José.

<sup>\*</sup> Puccini, a Biography, Mary Jane Phillips—Matz

## Cast and Artistic Team



Babatunde Akinboboye

BASS

HOMETOWN: LAGOS, NIGERIA

RECENT ENGAGEMENTS: British Major in Silent Night with Opera San José, Marcello in La bohème with Opera San José, and Schaunard in La bohème with Opera San Luis Obispo

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS: Daggoo in Moby Dick with Utah Opera in 2018

HIGHLIGHTS: Regional Finalist of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Audition. Finalist in the International Eisteddfod Vocal Solo Competition in Llangollen, Wales.



Teressa Foss

SOPRANO

HOMETOWN: CARMEL. CALIFORNIA

RECENT ENGAGEMENTS: Berta in The Barber of Seville with Opera San José, Anna/Ensemble in Rags with Theatreworks Silicon Valley, Soloist, Fresh Voices Festival XVII, and Goat Hall Productions.

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS: Soprano soloist, Silicon Valley Gay Men's Chorus, Dec. 2017

HIGHLIGHTS: Nominated for performing awards with Theatre Bay Area, Bay Area Critics Circle, AriZoni Theatre Awards and Broadwayworld.com. Theatre Bay Area Titan Award finalist, and Center for Cultural Innovation Quick Grant recipient.



Elena Galván

SOPRANO

HOMETOWN: ITHACA, NEW YORK

RECENT ENGAGEMENTS: Frasquita in Carmen with Florida Grand Opera, Oscar in Un ballo in maschera with Florida Grand Opera, and Konstanze in Abduction from the Seraglio with Opera Ithaca.

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS: Soloist with Out of the Box Opera in their Opera Diva Cage Match.

HIGHLIGHTS: Second Place in the Lois Alba Aria Competition in Houston, Texas.

Encouragement Award from the Los Angeles District and in the San Francisco District of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

## Cast and Artistic Team CONTINUED



Mason Gates

TENOR

HOMETOWN: SAN JOSÉ, CALIFORNIA

RECENT ENGAGEMENTS: Title role in Albert Herring with San Francisco Conservatory of Music Opera Theatre, Don Basilio in The Marriage of Figaro with Livermore Valley Opera, Jonathan Dale in Silent Night with Opera San José.

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS: The Steersman in The Flying Dutchman with Opera San José and Gastone in La traviata with Opera San José.

HIGHLIGHTS: Two-time recipient of the encouragement award from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and San Francisco District Winner - Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.



Katharine Gunnink

SOPRANO

HOMETOWN: CLOVERDALE, CALIFORNIA

RECENT ENGAGEMENTS: Mimì in Puccini's La bohème with Opera San Luis Obispo. Lady with a Cake Box for Argento's Postcards from Morocco with Sin City Opera, and Student Matinee Performance of Anna Sorensen in Silent Night with Opera San José.

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS: Student Matinee Performance of Senta in The Flying Dutchman with Opera San José.

HIGHLIGHTS: 2013 Irene Dalis Competition First Place Winner.



Mava Kherani

SOPRANO

HOMETOWN: THE WOODLANDS, TEXAS

RECENT ENGAGEMENTS: Despina in Cosi fan tutte with Opera San José, Britomarte in The Chastity Tree with West Edge Opera, and Susanna in The Marriage of Figaro with West Bay Opera.

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS: Mahler's Symphony No. 4 with Espressivo Orchestra, Semele in Semele with Pocket Opera, TBA World Premiere with Opera Parallele.

HIGHLIGHTS: 1st place and Audience Favorite (Tier II) at the James Toland Vocal Arts Competition, McGlone Young Artist Award from Central City Opera, and two Encouragement Awards from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions (MONCA).



Amanda Kingston SOPRANO MADISON, WISCONSIN

RECENT ENGAGEMENTS: Fiordiliai in Cosi fan tutte with Opera San José, Erste dame in Die Zauberflote with Madison Opera, and Adina in L'elisir d'amore with Pacific Opera Project.

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS: Violetta in La traviata with Opera San José. Gala with Opera San Antonio, and Mimi in La bohème with Opera San Antonio.

HIGHLIGHTS: Winner of the Lois Alba Aria Competition, Winner of the Lucy Morgan Award in the Shreveport Singer of the Year Competition, and District Winner and Regional Finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.



Trevor Neal BARITONE DALLAS, TEXAS

RECENT ENGAGEMENTS: Killian in Der Freischutz with Virginia Opera, Sciarrone in Puccini's Tosca with Opera North, and Bonze in Puccini's Madame Butterfly with Ash Lawn Opera.

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS: Germont in Verdi's La traviata with Opera San José and Elijah with Dartmouth Symphony.

HIGHLIGHTS: Winner of San Francisco District of MET Opera auditions.



Jason Slavden TENOR NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK

RECENT ENGAGEMENTS: Tybalt in Roméo et Juliette with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Lt. BF Pinkerton in Madama Butterfly with Annapolis Opera, and Gabriele Adorno in Simon Boccanegra with Pacific Opera Victoria.

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS: Rodolfo in La bohème with Pacific Opera Victoria.

HIGHLIGHTS: Gerda Lissner Foundation First Prize, George London Foundation encouragement award, and Santa Fe Opera's Richard Tucker Memorial Award for apprentices.

## Cast and Artistic Team CONTINUED



Dane Suarez TENOR HOMETOWN: PRINCETON, ILLINOIS

RECENT ENGAGEMENTS: Elv Parker in Glass's Appomattox with Washington National Opera, Joe in La fanciulla del West with New York City Opera, and Don José in Carmen with Opera Memphis and Aspen Music Festival.

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS: Rodolfo in La bohème with Pacific Opera Project, Erik in The Flying Dutchman with Opera San José, and Alfredo in La traviata with Opera San José.

HIGHLIGHTS: National Semi-Finalist in the 2014 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, 2017 Semi-Finalist in Opera Birmingham Competition, 2017 Finalist in Giulio Gari International Vocal Competition.



Christopher Larkin CONDUCTOR

Christopher Larkin makes his company debut in 2017-18, conducting performances of Puccini's La rondine. Maestro Larkin's conducting credits include Washington National Opera's productions of Saint-Saëns' Samson et Dalila and Bellini's I puritani, New York City Opera's Don Giovanni (Mozart) and La bohème (Puccini). Verdi's La traviata with Santa Fe Opera. Puccini's Tosca, Gounod's Roméo et Juliette and Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro for Houston Grand Opera, Donizetti's La fille du regiment for Cincinnati Opera, and Rossini's // viaggio à Reims, Mozart's Abduction from the Seraglio, and Britten's Turn of the Screw for Portland Opera, among others.

Training and developing young singers has always been of tremendous importance to Maestro Larkin, as shown by his work with the Houston Opera Studio, Wolf Trap Opera, Manhattan School of Music, San Francisco Conservatory, Indiana University, The New England Conservatory of Music, and Oberlin Conservatory. For several summers he has conducted a program of opera scenes with the young singers at the New National Theatre in Tokyo and has twice been invited by Marilyn Horne to conduct at The Music Academy of the West, leading // viaggio á Reims and La bohème for that program.



Andrew Whitfield

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR / CHORUS MASTER

During the 2017-18 season, OSJ's resident conductor and chorus master Andrew Whitfield serves as assistant conductor. and chorus master for Mozart's Così fan tutte, Puccini's La rondine, Wagner's The Flying Dutchman and Verdi's La traviata. Last season. Mr. Whitfield conducted Rossini's The Barber of Seville, was assistant conductor of Puccini's La bohème and chorus master for all four 2016-17 season productions.

He recently conducted a concert of opera arias and scenes for Monterey Opera, Donizetti's Lucia di Lammermoor at Festival Opera. Puccini's La bohème and Verdi's La traviata at the Virago Theatre. Last fall he participated in San Francisco Opera's production of Wagner's Lohengrin. He assisted Ian Robertson in the preparation of the choruses for the *Verdi* Requiem at the The Grand Teton Music Festival, conducted by Donald Runnicles.



Candace Evans STAGE DIRECTOR

Candace Evans makes her directorial debut with OSJ in the company's 2017-18 production of Puccini's La rondine. Recent engagements for Ms. Evans include directing Richard Strauss' Salome for Opera San Antonio, an abridged version of Catalani's La Wally for Dallas Opera in tandem with the world premiere. Everest. Three Decembers for the Fort Worth Opera Festival, and her new production of Rossini's The Italian Girl in Algiers for Opera Southwest. Ms. Evans was recently honored by the legendary Teatro Colón, when her production of La Viuda Alegre was voted in the top three operas of the season by the Argentinian National Music Critics Association.

Her directing of Bizet's Carmen and Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin for Madison Opera, as well as Lehar's The Merry Widow for Dallas Opera, also received critical acclaim. Relocating to Dallas from New York City, Ms. Evans taught for the theatre/music department at Southern Methodist University from 1994-2000. She now lectures nationally, with an essential component of her work including the use of neutral and character masks to encourage physical connection for opera singers.

## Cast and Artistic Team CONTINUED



Elizabeth Poindexter COSTUME DESIGNER

Elizabeth Poindexter serves as costume designer for the 2017-18 productions of Mozart's Così fan tutte, Puccini's La rondine, and Verdi's La traviata. Previous OSJ design credits include Puccini's Tosca, the world premiere of Weiser's Where Angels Fear to Tread, and Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel. Costume design credits for other companies include work for American Musical Theatre of San José, California Shakespeare Festival, and the San Jose Repertory Theatre.

As a member of the design faculty of the Television, Radio, Film and Theatre Department of SJSU she designed over 150 productions. She is an active member of the Costume Commission of the United States Institute for Theatre Technology and a founding member of the Bay Area Costumers' Alliance.



Michelle Klaers D'Alo CHOREOGRAPHER

Michelle Klaers D'Alo makes her company debut in the 2017-18 season as choreographer for Puccini's La rondine. Ms. D'Alo attended both the San Francisco Ballet School and American Ballet Theater ABT® School. She received her B.A. in Dance from University of California, Irvine in 2002 under the William J. Gillespie Scholarship, Ms. D'Alo danced for Inland Pacific Ballet, Redlands Festival Ballet and Inland Dance Theater. In 2004, she joined the original cast of Disney's Snow White directed by Eric Shaeffer and choreographed by Karma Camp, in the role of the "Bluebird". She continued to perform for Disney for many years. She joined the faculty of The New Ballet School, teaching the ABT® American Ballet Theater Curriculum and became an ABT® Affiliate exam teacher in March of 2016.



Alyssa Oania

COSTUME COORDINATOR

Alvssa Oania serves as costume coordinator for the 2017-18 productions of Puccini's La rondine, the North American premiere of Alma Deutscher's Cinderella and Verdi's La traviata. Ms. Oania has been designing and creating costumes for OSJ since 2002. Her work has been featured in Carmen, The Marriage of Figaro, La Cenerentola, Manon, La bohème, The Barber of Seville, Tosca, La voix humaine, The Pearl Fishers, and Madama Butterfly. Other costume credits include work for Ballet San José, San José Repertory Theatre and American Musical Theatre of San José.

## Cast and Artistic Team CONTINUED



Kent Dorsev LIGHTING DESIGNER

Kent Dorsey returns to Opera San José in the 2017-18 season as the lighting designer for Puccini's La rondine. Previously, Mr. Dorsey's designs have been featured in OSJ's productions of Rossini's The Barber of Seville. Puccini's Madama Butterfly. Suor Angelica and Gianni Schicchi, and all four productions of the company's 2010-11 season: David Carlson's Anna Karenina, Puccini's Tosca. The Barber of Seville and Puccini's La bohéme. His opera work includes Scenery, Projection and Lighting Design for the world premiere of Myron Fink's The Conquistador (San Diego Opera). Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' The Lighthouse directed by Jack O'Brien (San Diego Opera & Chicago Opera Theatre), La bohéme and Saint-Saen's Samson et Dalila (Palm Beach Opera) Wagner's The Flying Dutchman directed by Lillian Garret-Groag (Virginia Opera) and Donizetti's Lucia di Lammermoor directed by Colin Graham (Greensboro Opera).



Christina Martin WIG AND MAKEUP DESIGNER

Christina Martin returns during the 2017-18 season as wig/ make-up designer for Mozart's Così fan tutte, Puccini's La rondine, Wagner's The Flying Dutchman and Verdi's La traviata. Ms. Martin made her company debut the previous season, designing wigs and makeup for Rossini's The Barber of Seville, Kevin Puts and Mark Campbell's Silent Night, and Puccini's La bohème.

Ms. Martin graduated from San Jose State University in 2007, and began working for Opera San José the same year. She is a Bay Area native who has been working in the wig and makeup industry throughout Northern California for such companies as the San Francisco Ballet, American Conservatory Theater, and Opera Parallele. She is currently employed with the San Francisco Opera as a principal makeup artist, show foreman, and a wig shop artisan. As a Regional Member of Hollywood's Makeup Artists and Hairstylists guild IATSE Local 706, Ms. Martin has had the pleasure of working for film, television, and multimedia, along with opera and theater.

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Founded in 1984, Opera San José is unique in that it is the only year-long resident opera company in the nation. Members of the resident company form the core of the artistic staff for main-stage productions as well as educational programs.

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·ALMA DEUTSCHER ·

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#### Sir Simon Rattle on Alma Deutscher

"Alma really is a force of nature. I don't know that I've come across anyone of that age with quite such an astonishing range of gifts. It's natural for her, it's play, and I think it was play for certain brilliant young composers, like Mozart, like Korngold. These are very unusual people who have this. There is a sense of phrasing which many people two or three or four times her age would be lucky to have. There is a sense of what the harmony does that seems to be completely inborn to her. This is not something you can teach. And I haven't really seen anything like it."

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"One of the greatest musical talents today."

## Sir Simon Rattle on Alma Deutscher

"Alma really is a force of nature. I don't know that I've come across anyone of that age with quite such an astonishing range of gifts. It's natural for her, it's play, and I think it was play for certain brilliant young composers, like Mozart, like Korngold. These are very unusual people who have this. There is a sense of phrasing which many people two or three or four times her age would be lucky to have. There is a sense of what the harmony does that seems to be completely inborn to her. This is not something you can teach. And I haven't really seen anything like it."

## Daniel Barenboim on Alma Deutscher

"Everything that cannot be learnt, she has already."

## Anne-Sophie Mutter on Alma Deutscher

"It is absolutely extraordinary what this young girl has managed to achieve on the violin, the piano, and in her compositions. Her musical sensitivity and her powers of expression already at this age underline her exceptional talent."





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