

Opera San José General Director Larry Hancock Announces Retirement

SAN JOSE, CA (April 7, 2019) – After thirty-six years of service, Larry Hancock announced that he will retire as general director of Opera San José on June 30, 2020. He will be retained by the company in an advisory position after retiring as general director.

Also today, the Opera San José Board of Directors announced that they have selected Khori Dastoor as Opera San José's next general director, to take over leadership of the company on July 1, 2020.

Dastoor has been affiliated with Opera San José since joining their resident ensemble of principal artists in 2007 as a leading soprano. She was acting artistic administrator under company founder Irene Dalis, prior to Hancock taking over as general director in 2014. Hancock engaged Dastoor as artistic planning director, charged principally with singer auditions and casting. Since Hancock began his tenure as general director, Dastoor has been the agreed deputy general director. Music Director Joseph Marcheso, Dastoor, and Hancock are the drivers of artistic standards for Opera San José and have worked together in bringing a new level of talent to Opera San José, creating opportunities both for the next generation of singers as well as celebrated conductors, including Jane Glover, George Manahan, and Christian Reif.

Dastoor is currently engaged as the associate director at The Packard Humanities Institute and is the director of the San Francisco District Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Together, Hancock and Dastoor have streamlined Opera San José's resident system, prioritizing role debuts so that San José audiences are the first to hear exciting new artists, as well as encouraging new directors to put their visual and dramatic stamp on our seasons. Recent seasons have seen the creation of some of the biggest successes in the company's history including the world premiere of *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, the west coast premiere of *Silent Night* in an arresting new production, the American premiere of Alma Deutscher's *Cinderella*, and most recently the critically acclaimed new production of Jake Heggie's *Moby-Dick*.

Having received his Bachelor of Music Degree from Stetson University, Hancock came to San José in 1979 when he entered San José State University where he received a Master of Arts degree. At SJSU, he immediately became Dalis' graduate assistant. In 1983, when Dalis was forming Opera San José, Hancock was Dalis' first hire, helping her create Opera San José from the ground up. During his 36-year tenure at OSJ, Hancock was the marketing director, the artistic administrator, the director of marketing and development, and director of production, taking over as general director when Dalis retired in 2014.

Hancock plans to remain active as an Opera San José supporter and volunteer, continuing his acclaimed pre-performance talks for all main-stage productions.

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