

## Opera San José Announces Resident Artists for 2019-20 Season Single Tickets on Sale June 3rd

SAN JOSE, CA — Opera San José is proud to introduce our new ensemble of resident artists. Conductor / Chorus Master / Principal Coach Christopher James Ray, Sopranos Kerriann Otaño and Elena Galván, mezzo-soprano Stephanie Sanchez, and baritone Eugene Brancoveanu will join returning tenor Mason Gates during the 2019-20 season.

Opera San José's 2019-20 season opens on September 14th with Strauss's *Die Fledermaus* and continues with Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, Verdi's *Il trovatore*, and concludes with Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. Single tickets to performances will go on sale to the public on June 3rd, ranging from \$55 to \$195, depending on seat location. All performances will be held at the California Theatre, 345 South First Street in downtown San José.

Formally inaugurated in 1988, Opera San José's resident ensemble is unique in the United States. The company seeks out unusually gifted, professional operatic artists in the first years of their singing careers and offers them annual contracts as artists. In addition to four mainstage productions, members of the resident ensemble perform for the community at large through educational programming for youth and adults.

### About the Artists

**Christopher James Ray** returns to Opera San José, having conducted performances of *Pagliacci* and *Moby-Dick* in the 2018-19 season. As resident conductor, he will conduct two performances of each production, act as principal coach, and oversee chorus preparation. For the past two seasons, Mr. Ray was on the music staff of the renowned Bayreuth Festival where he worked on productions of *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Lohengrin*, *Götterdämmerung*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, and *Parsifal*. Additional conducting credits include Handel's *Alcina* at the Pennsylvania State University, Nico Muhly's *Dark Sisters* at Texas Christian University, *Le nozze di Figaro* for Land of Enchantment Opera, and Florida State Opera's productions of Heggie's *Three Decembers*, Glass's *In the Penal Colony*, Menotti's *The Old Maid and the Thief*, and Britten's *The Beggar's Opera*.

Soprano **Kerriann Otaño** returns to Opera San José, following her performance as Senta in the 2017 production of *The Flying Dutchman*. Ms. Otaño will be heard this season in the roles of Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus*, Mother and Witch in *Hansel and Gretel*, Leonora in *Il trovatore*, and 1<sup>st</sup> Lady in *The Magic Flute*. Recently, she was with the Metropolitan Opera for their production of *Die Walküre*, and debuted the role of Mimi in *La bohème* with Pacific Opera. Other recent engagements include a return to Fort Worth Opera Festival in her role debut as Micaëla in Bizet's *Carmen*, Contessa Almaviva in her debut at Opera Memphis in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Kitty Hart in Jake Heggie's acclaimed *Dead Man Walking* in Washington National Opera.

Soprano **Elena Galván** returns to Opera San José after her house debut as Lisette in 2017's *La Rondine*. This coming season she will perform the roles of Adele in *Die Fledermaus*, Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel*, and Papagena in *The Magic Flute*. She returned to the mainstage of Florida Grand Opera in 2019 to perform the role of Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and made her role debut of Blondchen in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* with Livermore Valley Opera. Ms. Galván joined First Coast Opera for a *Bernstein Celebration* concert and performed Händel's *Messiah* with the Cayuga Chamber Orchestra, the Arts at Grace Series, and the Binghamton Downtown Singers.

Mezzo-soprano **Stephanie Sanchez** joins Opera San José as a resident artist performing the roles of Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*, Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel*, Ines in *Il trovatore*, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Lady in *The Magic Flute*. Ms. Sanchez's recent engagements include Flora in *La traviata* with St Petersburg Opera, Roggiero in *Tancredi* at Teatro Nuovo, Yesi in *Stomping Grounds* at the Glimmerglass Festival, and Zita in *Gianni Schicchi* at Opera Maine. Ms. Sanchez was recently chosen as the sole recipient of the prestigious 2018 Igor Gorin Memorial Competition, an award given yearly to a promising singer at the start of their careers.

Baritone **Eugene Brancoveanu** was last seen by Opera San José audiences as Stubb in our 2019 production of Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer's *Moby-Dick*. In our upcoming season Mr. Brancoveanu will perform Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*, Father in *Hansel and Gretel*, Count di Luna in *Il trovatore*, and Papageno in *The Magic Flute*. A Tony award winner for his portrayal as Marcello in Baz Luhrmann's production of Puccini's *La bohème* on Broadway, he performed in Michael Tilson Thomas's *The Thomashefskys*, which toured across the United States. The production was recorded for PBS and released on DVD by EMI Classics and Netflix. Mr. Brancoveanu graduated from both the Academy of music in Transylvania, Romania and the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria.

Tenor **Mason Gates** returns to Opera San José for his third season as a resident artist. In our next season Mr. Gates will perform the roles of Dr. Blind in *Die Fledermaus*, Ruiz in *Il trovatore*, and Monostatos in *The Magic Flute*. Last season, Mr. Gates appeared as Beppe in Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*, Flask in the company premiere of Heggie and Scheer's *Moby-Dick*, and Goro in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. A two-time recipient of the encouragement award from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Mr. Gates was named Top 10 in the 2018 Brava! Opera Vocal Competition, as well as a Vocal Fellow at the esteemed Music Academy of the West.

For full artist bios visit -- <https://www.operasj.org/about-us/2019-20-resident-company/>

## **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.

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