

**OPERA SAN JOSÉ GENERAL DIRECTOR KHORI DASTOOR
SELECTED TO LEAD ONE OF THE
LARGEST OPERA COMPANIES IN THE US,
HOUSTON GRAND OPERA
Will assume new post in January 2022**

SAN JOSE, CA (29 June 2021) – Opera San José today announced that its General Director Khori Dastoor has been selected to become the next General Director and CEO of Houston Grand Opera beginning in January 2022, taking the helm of one of the country’s largest, most prestigious opera companies. In keeping with OSJ’s mission as an operatic incubator, Dastoor departs from OSJ after 14 years of service to the company, having served in numerous capacities since arriving as a Resident Artist in 2007. Dastoor joins a roster of OSJ alum - including singers, directors, conductors, and administrators - who have gone on to prestigious national and international careers.

Prior to assuming this new appointment, Dastoor will oversee Opera San José’s triumphant return to the California Theatre and launching the company’s much-anticipated 2021-22 season. Through Dastoor’s stalwart leadership and dynamic artistic vision, Opera San José successfully navigated the past year, emerging stronger and more vibrant than ever before. From creating one of the nation’s first artist and musician relief funds at the outset of the pandemic, to pioneering the production of digital programming for safe at-home viewing from the cutting-edge Heiman Digital Media Studio, Dastoor brought Opera San José to the forefront of its industry, and remained tirelessly inventive in finding ways to keep OSJ artists working, the company together, and its community well-served.

When the pandemic shuttered theaters across the country, Dastoor pivoted Opera San José into the production of world-class digital performances which have been enjoyed by audiences around the globe. OSJ’s production of Jake Heggie’s *Three Decembers* starring renowned mezzo-soprano Susan Graham was hailed as “a major achievement” by *Musical America*, and as “a knockout” by the *San Francisco Chronicle*, which went on to describe Opera San José’s recent digital release of *Love & Secrets: A Domestic Trilogy* as “First rate. A testament to what a company can accomplish even during a pandemic.” Dastoor, a champion of diversifying audiences and making opera more accessible for all, initiated programs such as offering Spanish and Vietnamese subtitles for all its digital productions, welcoming two of San Jose’s largest communities.

Opera San José is now preparing to launch Dastoor’s long-awaited 2021-22 season, featuring new productions, company premieres, artist debuts, and exciting collaborations, in four vivid productions

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– including one with Broadway roots, a company first. OSJ audiences will see Dastoor’s artistic vision realized this fall with a new digital production of Rimski-Korsakov’s *Mozart and Salieri* in September, followed in November on the California Theatre stage with Purcell’s *Dido and Aeneas*, featuring many of the nationally lauded artists seen throughout the pandemic in OSJ’s filmed productions.

“We have come full circle together,” says Dastoor. “I arrived at Opera San José in 2007 and immediately felt that I had found my artistic home. During my time working with this company, serving this community, I have been a singer, a producer, an artistic advisor, an arts administrator, a general director. I have lived, from start to finish, Opera San José’s mission, and the company will forever be a part of my artistic identity.” Noting that there is still work ahead, Dastoor adds, “We remain hard at work, preparing for our California Theatre return – artists are being cast, sets are being designed, music is being prepared. It will be an incredible season, celebrating the return of live performances and all the artists who make it possible.”

Dastoor has been affiliated with Opera San José since joining its resident ensemble of principal artists in 2007. While enjoying a vibrant international opera career as a lyric soprano, she continued her relationship with the company, serving as casting advisor to founder and General Director Irene Dalis. Dastoor joined the staff of Opera San José in 2013 as Artistic Advisor to the General Director. Upon Dalis’ retirement, she became Director of Artistic Planning under Larry Hancock, assuming primary responsibility for casting and artist recruitment. During her tenure with the company, Dastoor has prioritized offering audiences first looks at role debuts, and supporting artists who have gone on to international careers. Dastoor also served as Director of the San Francisco District of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. She was recently appointed to the Board of Directors of Opera America, where she will serve as co-chair of the Leadership and Learning Council. She is also one of three inaugural mentors in the Mentorship Program for Leaders of Color.

Dastoor will become the General Director and CEO of Houston Grand Opera beginning in January 2022. A transition committee has been formed to identify the next General Director for Opera San José, with the incoming selectee expected to be announced in the coming months. Said Opera San José Board Chair Gillian Moran, “We take great pride in Opera San José’s 37-year history as one of the world’s leading operatic incubators, and no one has embodied this mission more than Khori Dastoor. We are so thankful for all that she has done in service of our artists, our artform, and our community. As with all OSJ alum, her success is our success – we will be rooting for her. Opera San José is stronger than ever, and will continue to support incredible artists and produce world-class opera from the California Theatre stage, and digitally to patrons around the globe.”

Houston Grand Opera (HGO) is a Tony, Emmy, and Grammy Award-winning company – the only opera company to ever win all three honors. HGO was also the only American finalist for Opera

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Company of the Year at the 2019 International Opera Awards. With a \$27 million operating budget, the company oversees two theatre spaces with combined capacity of 3,300. It leads the field in commissioning and producing new works, almost exclusively from American composers, including 70 world premieres and seven American premieres to date.

Opera San José is an opera company located in the heart of Silicon Valley. Maintaining a resident company of artists, OSJ presents four mainstage productions annually in San Jose's historic California Theatre, while regularly broadcasting fully-produced productions from its state-of-the-art Heiman Digital Media Studio. Entering its 38th season, OSJ specializes in role debuts, serving as an artistic incubator for established and emerging artists alike, producing world-class operatic performances for diverse audiences throughout the Bay Area and around the globe. More information is available at www.operasj.org.

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PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here:
<http://www.cbpr.co/press/khoridastoor>