

FROM OUR GENERAL DIRECTOR

TO MY NEW OSJ FAMILY,

I am thrilled to be joining this gem of an opera company in the role of General Director & CEO. I was fortunate enough to have been a stage director here in the 17–18 season and cherished that experience. OSJ stands as a company where artists can do their best work — heartily embraced by this great OSJ family. In my fifteen years as a stage director of opera, my time at OSJ shone bright with fantastic artists onstage and engaged audiences in the theater. It is my great honor to serve this company in the footsteps of Irene Dalis, Larry Hancock and Khori Dastoor in this role. Their great examples have laid the groundwork for this phenomenal company and I am so excited to continue in their stead.

Therefore, it is with great excitement we are bringing Bizet's *Carmen* to the California Theatre in a classic production with a sizzling new staging. The most produced opera of all time, *Carmen* has been hailed as the perfect opera. In these challenging times when gathering together is not a simple experience, the power of Bizet's music speaks more deeply than ever. The power of music to bring us together to collectively experience the greatest of human emotions has been denied us for so many months. Being in the theater together to experience the incredible power of music and narrative is a fundamental need of all humanity. Our joy is that we are here today with you.

It is the great support from patrons like yourself that we are able to meet the challenges of this moment and our gratitude cannot be expressed in words. Only music can truly communicate our love and thanks for our OSJ family. When we think of what titles to bring to the stage, what the productions should be like, what we imagine they will communicate — we are thinking of you, our audience. Throughout the rehearsal process, we are dreaming of who will sit in the seats and live through the drama with us. We want to thrill and excite every person here and having the opportunity to do that with this production of *Carmen* means the world to us, and to me.

I hope you'll join me in raising a glass to our dedicated staff, orchestra, front of house team, our artists, production staff and crew, company members, volunteers, and community partners for making this production possible. Without their hard work and dedication, we couldn't bring *Carmen* to life. We are thrilled to be back at the beautiful California Theatre ready to make music together. Here's to many more delightful times together, full of song and passion, hope and joy, and every human emotion.

Please enjoy the show!

With gratitude,



SHAWNA LUCEY

GENERAL DIRECTOR & CEO

