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***Good vs. Evil: Opera San José presents Gounod's French masterpiece
Faust***

SAN JOSE, CA— **Opera San José** continues its 28th season with Gounod's Romantic-era masterpiece, ***Faust***. Inspired by Goethe's legendary story of the old scholar who sells his soul to the devil for eternal youth, ***Faust*** is one of the most performed operas of all time. Opera San José founding music director, **David Rohrbaugh**, conducts with stage direction by **Brad Dalton**, who recently directed Opera San José's company premiere of Mozart's *Idomeneo*. ***Faust*** will be sung in French with English supertitles. Eight performances are scheduled from April 21 through May 6 at the California Theatre, 345 South First Street in downtown San José. Tickets are on sale at the Opera San José Box Office, by phone at (408) 437-4450 or online at www.operasj.org. ***Faust*** is made possible, in part, by a Cultural Affairs Grant from the City of San José.

Gounod's ***Faust***, with libretto by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré, is the timeless tale of the malevolent Méphistophélès, the devil in the flesh. He seduces the old scholar Faust, promising him the elixir of youth in exchange for his soul. Faust is transformed into a young, handsome man and sets out with his devious companion to experience the pleasures of the world. Faust charms the beautiful and innocent Marguerite, only to abandon her, unaware that she will give birth to his child. Her sanity is destroyed, but she is not beyond redemption. Marguerite calls upon the angels for salvation.

Faust premiered in Paris in 1859 and became one of the most performed operas world-wide. When Gounod died in 1893, the opera had been performed more than 1,000 times in Paris alone. It was selected to open the Metropolitan Opera in New York City in 1883 and has been presented there more

than 730 times, including the recent co-production with the English National Opera staged by Tony-award winning director, Des McAnuff.

David Rohrbaugh, Opera San José's founding music director and principal conductor, will conduct **Faust**. **Rohrbaugh** has conducted more than 60 productions and 600 performances, including company premieres of *La rondine*, *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Falstaff*, *Un ballo in maschera*, and *Werther*. He is a professor emeritus of voice and opera from San José State University, where he taught for 30 years and co-directed the Opera Workshop with Opera San José General Director, **Irene Dalis**. The April 29 and May 1 performances will be conducted by **Joseph Marcheso**. Previous Opera San José productions for **Marcheso** include *La traviata*, *La bohème*, *Manon*, *La Cenerentola*, *The Elixir of Love* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. **Marcheso** has conducted *La traviata* with Festival Opera and recently made his debut for Opera Theater St. Louis with *Joshua's Boots* by Adolphus Hailstork. Starting in the 2012 season, he will be joining the conducting staff of San Francisco Opera, principally working on and covering John Adams' *Nixon in China* and Jake Heggie's *Moby-Dick*.

International stage director **Brad Dalton** returns to **Opera San José** to direct **Faust**. Dalton's previous credits with the company include the company premiere of Mozart's *Idomeneo*, the West Coast premiere of David Carlson's *Anna Karenina*, *Così fan tutte* and *Madama Butterfly*. He has directed productions for opera companies throughout the United States and abroad, including San Francisco Opera, The Metropolitan Opera, Washington Opera, Opera Boston, San Diego Opera, Barbican in London, and the State Opera of South Australia. In 2004, Dalton received the prestigious Helpmann Award for "Best Director of an Opera" in Australia.

Faust features current members of Opera San José's resident company in principal roles as well as returning guest artists. Resident bass **Silas Elash** performs the role of the cunning Méphistophélès. Elash's previous roles with the company include Dr. Grenville (*La traviata*), the Voice of Nettuno (*Idomeneo*), Colline (*La bohème*), Bartolo (*The Barber of Seville*) and Scarpia (*Tosca*). He shares the role with guest artist **Branch Fields**, who appeared as Sparafucile in the company's 2001 production of *Rigoletto*. Fields has performed with New York City Opera, Utah Festival Opera, Asheville Lyric Opera and Opera Company of North Carolina to name a few and appeared on Broadway in the Lincoln Center revival of *South Pacific*. Resident tenors **Alexander Boyer** and **Michael Dailey** share the role of the old philosopher, Faust. They previously alternated in the role of Alfredo in Verdi's *La traviata*. Earlier this season, Boyer appeared in the title role in Opera San José's company premiere of Mozart's *Idomeneo*

and Canio in *Pagliacci*. Dailey appeared as Beppe in *Pagliacci* and thrilled audiences last season in *The Barber of Seville*. Resident sopranos **Jouvanca Jean-Baptiste** and **Jasmina Halimic** alternate in the role of Marguerite. Jean-Baptiste and Halimic previously shared the role of Nedda in Opera San José's production of *Pagliacci* and both earned rave reviews in the title role of David Carlson's *Anna Karenina* in the 2010-11 season. Sharing the role of Marguerite's brother, Valentin, are resident baritones **Evan Brummel** and **Krassen Karagiozov**, and taking on the "trouser" role of Siebel are resident mezzo-soprano **Betany Coffland** and guest artist **Cathleen Candia**. Rounding out the cast are **Heather Clemens** and **Tori Grayum** alternating as Marthe and **Sepp Hammer** and **Jo Vincent Parks** sharing the role of Wagner.

Opera San José's production of *Faust* includes set designs by **Steven C. Kemp**, costumes by **Malabar** (designed by Earl Staley, Toni Businger), lighting design by **David Lee Cuthbert**, and wig and makeup designs by **Jeanna Parham**.

About Opera San José

Opera San José, performing at the historic **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.

Faust

In French with English Supertitles

<u>Cast:</u>	<u>April 21, 26, 29, May 4</u>	<u>April 22, 28, May 1, 6</u>
Faust	Michael Dailey•	Alexander Boyer•
Méphistophélès	Silas Elash•	Branch Fields
Marguerite	Jouvanca Jean-Baptiste•	Jasmina Halimic•
Valentin	Evan Brummel•	Krassen Karagiozov•
Marthe	Heather Clemens	Tori Grayum
Siebel	Betany Coffland•	Cathleen Candia
Wagner	Sepp Hammer	Jo Vincent Parks

• Resident Company † Company Debut

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

What: **Opera San José** continues its 28th season with Gounod's Romantic-era masterpiece, ***Faust***. Inspired by Goethe's legendary story of the old scholar who sells his soul to the devil for eternal youth, ***Faust*** is one of the most performed operas of all time. ***Faust*** will be sung in French with English supertitles. Eight performances are scheduled from April 21 through May 6 at the California Theatre, 345 South First Street in downtown San José. Tickets are on sale at the Opera San José Box Office, by phone at (408) 437-4450 or online at www.operasj.org. ***Faust*** is made possible, in part, by a Cultural Affairs Grant from the City of San José.

Who: Composer: Charles Gounod
Librettist: Jules Barbier and Michel Carré
Conductor: David Rohrbaugh
Assistant Conductor: Joseph Marcheso (April 29 and May 1 performances)
Stage Director: Brad Dalton
Set Designer: Steven C. Kemp
Costume Designer: Malabar (Earl Staley, Toni Businger)
Lighting Designer: David Lee Cuthbert
Wigs/Makeup: Jeanna Parham

Dates: April 21, 22m, 26, 28, 29m, May 1, 4, 6m; 2012

Time: "m" indicates matinee at 3pm; all other performances are at 8pm

Location: California Theatre, 345 South First Street between San Carlos and San Salvador streets, downtown San José

Tickets: \$51–\$101 (includes city facility usage fee) from Opera San José Box Office, 2149 Paragon Dr., San José, CA 95131; 408-437-4450; 408-437-4455 fax; www.operasj.org
Available 90 minutes prior to curtain at the California Theatre box office only: Seniors (65 and older) 10% discount; Students 25 and younger (with current student ID) \$11

Photo: <http://operasj.org/news-events/press-room/press-photos/faust/advance-photos/>

Press Room: <http://www.operasj.org/pressroom.html>

To learn more about *Faust* please visit www.operasj.org and consider these opportunities:

Faust Preview/Panel Discussion: April 10, 12 noon, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, 150 E Fernando Street, downtown San José. Free vocal preview with members of the cast, followed by a panel discussion with members of the creative team. For information, call 408-437-4450.

Faust Preview/Lecture: April 10, Eulipia Restaurant, 374 South First street, downtown San José. Doors open at 6:30pm; program 7-8pm. Wine and cheese will be served. Vocal preview with members of the

cast, followed by a lecture by General Manager, Larry Hancock. Advance tickets - \$25 (\$30 at the door), call 408-437-4450.

Introduction to Opera: Before each performance (except opening night), General Manager Larry Hancock will present a free 45-minute talk about the opera at the California Theatre, beginning at 6:30pm prior to evening performances (except opening night) and at 1:30pm prior to Sunday matinees. No reservations required.

Faust Opening Night Dinner: Saturday, April 21 at 5 pm. \$65 per person for a reception and three-course dinner at the Sainte Claire Hotel (Palm Room), 302 South Market street, downtown San José. For menu and reservations, call the Opera San José Box Office at 408-437-4450.

Meet the Artists: Meet members of the cast, the stage director, and the conductor immediately following the opening Sunday matinee, April 22, at the California Theatre. Free for matinee attendees.

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