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Opera San José presents Strauss' intoxicating operetta

Die Fledermaus

SAN JOSE, CA— **Opera San José** ushers in the holiday season with Johann Strauss' most celebrated operetta, ***Die Fledermaus***. This rousing evening of mistaken identities, flirtations, and light-hearted deceit will be conducted by Opera San José music director, **David Rohrbaugh**, with stage direction by award-winning Bay Area director, **Marc Jacobs**. ***Die Fledermaus*** will be sung in German with English supertitles. Eight performances are scheduled from November 10 through 25 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. ***Die Fledermaus*** is made possible, in part, by a Cultural Affairs Grant from the City of San José.

Strauss' ***Die Fledermaus*** ("The Bat") will be performed for the first time on the California Theatre stage. Based on a German comedy and French vaudeville play, with a libretto by Carl Haffner and Richard Gene, ***Die Fledermaus*** offers up a tale of class and morals as the tantalizing indiscretions of the elite are exposed through one man's elaborate plan to avenge a practical joke gone wrong. Set in 19th-century Vienna, this delightful farce is the perfect combination of broad humor, effervescent melodies, lilting waltzes, and charming sentiment. From the sparkling overture to a rollicking tribute to champagne finale, the Waltz King's madcap masterpiece is the jewel of the golden age of operetta.

David Rohrbaugh, Opera San José's founding music director and principal conductor, will conduct ***Die Fledermaus***. **Rohrbaugh** has conducted more than 60 productions and 600 performances at Opera San José, 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 **November 18 and 20** performances will be conducted by **Bryan Nies**, who

conducted last season's double bill of *Pagliacci* and *La voix humaine*. In previous seasons, he has conducted *The Barber of Seville* and *Eugene Onegin*, and shared conducting duties for the company's productions of *Anna Karenina*, *Manon*, *La rondine*, *Werther*, *The Barber of Seville* (2006), *The Crucible* and *A Masked Ball*. **Nies** is currently the Bruno Walter Memorial Foundation Assistant Conductor of the Oakland East Bay Symphony and the Resident Conductor of the Oakland Youth Orchestra. He is on faculty at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

Marc Jacobs makes his Opera San José debut as stage director of *Die Fledermaus*. **Jacobs** has directed plays, musicals, and operas for the American Shakespeare Festival, the Magic Theatre, New York City Opera, Houston Opera Center, Madison Opera, Los Angeles Music Center Opera, Broadway By the Bay, and American Musical Theatre of San Jose (AMTSJ). He was Associate Artistic Director of AMTSJ for nine years, where he received two "Ginny" Awards for directing.

Die Fledermaus features members of Opera San José's resident ensemble in the **principal roles**:

Alternating in the role of von Eisenstein, are resident tenors **James Callon** and **Alexander Boyer**. They previously shared the role of Nadir in the company's production of *The Pearl Fishers*. **Callon** joined the Opera San José resident ensemble this season after concluding his second year as a Studio Artist with Tulsa Opera, where he performed the role of Howard Boucher in the company's debut production of Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* to critical acclaim. **Boyer** is in his fifth year as resident artist. Previous credits include the title role in Opera San José's company premiere of Mozart's *Idomeneo*, Canio in *Pagliacci* and the title role in *Faust*.

Resident sopranos **Melody King** and **Cecilia Violetta López** share the role of Eisenstein's wife, Rosalinde. They both made their resident ensemble debuts as Léïla in *The Pearl Fishers*. **King** made her company debut as Yvette in Opera San José's 2010 production of *La rondine*. Other roles performed recently by **King** include Cio-Cio-San (*Madama Butterfly*), and Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*), both for Livermore Opera. Recent engagements for **López** include the title role in *Suor Angelica* for Opera San Luis Obispo, Micaëla (*Carmen*) and Gasparina (*La Canterina*) for UNLV Opera Theatre and Poppea (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*) for the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival.

Resident baritone **Zachary Altman** plays the role of Dr. Falke, alternating with guest artist **Jo Vincent Parks**. **Altman** made his debut with Opera San José this season as Zurga in *The Pearl Fishers*. He

recently performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl as Hermann Augustus and Second Inquisitor in Bernstein's *Candide* and spent three years as a fellow at the Music Academy of the West, where he sang the title role in *Don Giovanni*, Dr. Miracle in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, and Breedley in Bolcom's *A Wedding*. **Parks** previously performed the role of Wagner in *Faust* and Johann in *Werther* for Opera San José. He has performed with many Bay Area opera companies, including Bay Shore Lyric Opera, Berkeley Opera, and San Francisco Lyric Opera.

Resident mezzo soprano **Nicole Birkland** will make her Opera San José debut in the trouser role of Prince Orlofsky. Recent engagements include her San Francisco Opera debut as 3rd Secretary in *Nixon in China*, a return to Wichita Grand Opera as the Marquise of Berkenfeld in *La fille du régiment*, and debuts with Opera Cleveland and New Opera Saint Louis. **Birkland** shares the role with Opera San José affiliate artist, mezzo soprano **Rebecca Krouner**. She made her company debut last season in *La traviata* as Annina. Other recent appearances include Cherubino (*The Marriage of Figaro*) and Javotte (*Javotte*) for Pocket Opera, Meg (*Falstaff*) for North Bay Opera and Kate Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*) for Golden Gate Opera.

Appearing as the feisty chambermaid Adele are guest sopranos **Jillian Boye** and **Elisabeth Russ**. **Boye** recently appeared with Opera San José as Musetta (*La bohème*), Pousette (*Manon*), and Giannetta (*The Elixir of Love*) and has performed with other companies, including Livermore Valley Opera, Townsend Opera, Mendocino Music Festival, and Pocket Opera. **Russ** has appeared with opera companies throughout the United States, including Boston Lyric Opera, Opera New Jersey, West Bay Opera, Pacific Repertory Opera, the Janiec Opera Company, Mission City Opera, Santa Cruz Chamber Orchestra, Townsend Opera, New England Light Opera, Livermore Valley Opera, Pocket Opera, Intermezzo Opera, and Utah Festival Opera.

Opera San José affiliate artist **Tori Grayum** performs the role of Ida, Adele's sister. Previous roles performed with the company include Annina (*La traviata*), Marthe (*Faust*), Dolly (*Anna Karenina*), The Shepherd Boy (*Tosca*), Berta (*The Barber of Seville*), Tisbe (*La Cenerentola*), and Cherubino (*The Marriage of Figaro*). Alternating with Grayum is guest artist, mezzo soprano **Catherine Brady**. Last season she performed the role of Hansel in Opera San José's touring K-12 opera, *Hansel and Gretel*.

Resident bass **Silas Elash** plays the role of Frank, the prison warden. A resident artist with Opera San José since 2008, some of Elash's previous roles with the company include Méphistophélès (*Faust*),

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 former resident artist, bass-baritone **Isaiah Musik-Ayala**. In his three seasons with Opera San José he performed such notable roles as Alexei Karenin (*Anna Karenina*), Sacristan (*Tosca*), Basilio (*The Barber of Seville*), Colline (*La bohème*), Count Des Grieux (*Manon*), Don Magnifico (*La Cenerentola*), and Figaro (*The Marriage of Figaro*).

Returning to Opera San José after completing his fourth year of residency last season is tenor **Michael Dailey** as Alfred, Rosalinde's rekindled flame. Opera San José audiences will remember Dailey's memorable performances as Beppe (*Pagliacci*), Alfredo (*La traviata*), the title role in *Faust*, Konstantin Levin (*Anna Karenina*), Count Almaviva (*The Barber of Seville*), Des Grieux (*Manon*), among others.

Rounding out the cast is **Michael Mendelsohn** as Dr. Blind, Eisenstein's incompetent lawyer and **Kelly Houston** as Frosch, Frank's assistant. **Mendelsohn** most recently appeared with the company as Stiva in *Anna Karenina* and Spoletta in *Tosca* and entertained thousands of children in the Bay Area as the Witch in Opera San José's touring K-12 opera, *Hansel and Gretel*. Opera San José welcomes **Houston** back, having previously played the role of Frosch in the company's 2004 production of *Die Fledermaus*.

Opera San José's production of *Die Fledermaus* includes choreography by **Robyn Tribuzi**, set designs by **Charlie Smith**, costumes by **Cathleen Edwards**, lighting design by **Pamila Gray**, 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.

Die Fledermaus

In German with English Supertitles

<u>Cast:</u>	<u>November 10, 15, 18, 23</u>	<u>November 11, 17, 20, 25</u>
von Eisenstein	James Callon•	Alexander Boyer•

Rosalinde	Melody King•	Cecilia Violetta López •
Adele	Jillian Boye	Elizabeth Russ
Ida	Tori Grayum*	Catherine Brady†
Alfred	Michael Dailey	Michael Dailey
Dr. Falke	Zachary Altman•	Jo Vincent Parks
Dr. Blind	Michael Mendelsohn	Michael Mendelsohn
Frank	Silas Elash•	Isaiah Musik-Ayala
Prince Orlofsky	Nicole Birkland•†	Rebecca Krouner*
Frosch	Kelly Houston	Kelly Houston

• Resident Company *Affiliate Artist † Company Debut

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

What: **Opera San José** continues its 29th season with Johann Strauss' most celebrated operetta, **Die Fledermaus**. This rousing evening of mistaken identities, flirtations, and light-hearted deceit will be conducted by Opera San José music director, **David Rohrbaugh**, with stage direction by **Marc Jacobs**. **Die Fledermaus** will be sung in German with English supertitles. Eight performances are scheduled from November 10 through 25 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. **Die Fledermaus** is made possible, in part, by a Cultural Affairs Grant from the City of San José.

Who: Composer: Johann Strauss, Jr.
Librettist: Karl Haffner and Richard Genée
Conductor: David Rohrbaugh
Assistant Conductor: Bryan Nies (November 18 and 20)
Stage Director: Marc Jacobs
Choreographer: Robyn Tribuzi
Set Designer: Charlie Smith
Costume Designer: Cathleen Edwards
Lighting Designer: Pamila Gray
Wigs/Makeup: Jeanna Parham

Dates: November 10, 11m, 15, 17, 18m, 20, 23, 25m; 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–\$111 (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/die-fledermaus/advance-photos/>

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

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

Die Fledermaus Preview/Panel Discussion: October 30, 12 noon, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, 150 E Fernando Street (at 4th 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.

Die Fledermaus Preview/Lecture: October 30, The Fairmont Hotel, 170 South Market street, downtown San José. Program 7-8pm. Wine and light refreshments will be served from 6:30 pm. Vocal preview with members of the cast, followed by a lecture by General Manager, Larry Hancock. Tickets - \$50, call 408-437-4450 or visit operasj.org.

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.

Opening Night Dinner: Saturday, November 10 at 5 pm. A spectacular opening night event for *Die Fledermaus*. \$95 per person for a reception and three-course dinner at The Fairmont Hotel (Club Regent) in downtown San José. For menu and reservations, call the Opera San José Box Office at 408-437-4450.

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