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Opera San José presents Verdi's thriller ***Il trovatore***

SAN JOSE, CA – **Opera San José** continues its 29th season with Giuseppe Verdi's powerful drama, ***Il trovatore***. Set in 15th-century Spain, Verdi's classic has it all: vengeance, war, jealousy, and passion, with an emotional, heart-stopping score. ***Il trovatore*** will be sung in Italian with English supertitles. Eight performances are scheduled from February 9 through 24 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. ***Il trovatore*** is made possible, in part, by a Cultural Affairs Grant from the City of San José. ***Il trovatore***, with libretto by Salvatore Cammarano, is a mesmerizing story of romance, obsession, and retribution. Verdi mixes together personal vendetta, a doomed love triangle and one gypsy's lifelong obsession for revenge, creating a compelling and dramatic love story. Based on the play *El Trovador (The Troubadour)* by Spanish playwright Antonio Garcia Gutiérrez, this powerful opera score features breathtakingly beautiful arias and one of the most famous choral melodies ever written, the "Anvil Chorus."

The opera was first performed in Rome in 1853 where it began a successful march throughout the operatic world with eleven productions in six theaters, totaling 190 performances in its first three years. Today, ***Il trovatore*** is a staple of the standard operatic repertoire worldwide.

David Rohrbaugh, Opera San José's founding music director and principal conductor, will conduct ***Il trovatore***. **Rohrbaugh** has conducted more than 60 productions and 600 performances with 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 **February 17 and 19** performances will be conducted by **Andrew Whitfield**, resident chorus master for Opera San José. **Whitfield** served as assistant conductor for *The Pearl Fishers* and *Pagliacci*. **Whitfield** was also Chorus Master for last season's productions of *Idomeneo*, *Pagliacci*, *La traviata* and *Faust*. He made his West Coast professional debut conducting *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Festival Opera.

International stage director **Brad Dalton** returns to **Opera San José** to direct *Il trovatore*. Dalton's previous credits with the company include *Faust*, *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.

Il trovatore features members of Opera San José's resident ensemble in the principal roles. Alternating in the role of Leonora, the lady-in-waiting to the princess in love with the troubadour, are sopranos **Cecilia Violetta López** and **Melody King**. They previously shared the role of Léïla in the company's production of *The Pearl Fishers* and more recently as Eisenstein's wife, Rosalinde, in *Die Fledermaus*. **King** made her company debut as Yvette in Opera San José's 2010 production of *La rondine*. Other roles performed 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.

Returning resident tenor **Alexander Boyer** will perform the role of Manrico, a troubadour and officer in the army of the Prince of Urgel. **Boyer** is in his fifth year as a resident artist. Previous credits include the title role in Opera San José's company premiere of *Idomeneo*, Canio in *Pagliacci* and the title role in *Faust*. He shares the role with tenor **James Callon**, who 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.

Resident baritones **Evan Brummel** and **Zachary Altman** share the role of Count di Luna, a nobleman in the service of the Prince of Aragon. **Brummel** returns for a second year as a member of the resident ensemble after appearing last season in the roles of Tonio (*Pagliacci*), Giorgio Germont (*La traviata*) and Valentin (*Faust*). **Altman** recently performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl as Herman Augusts and Second Inquisitor in Bernstein's *Candide*. He 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*.

Resident bass **Silas Elash** performs the role of Ferrando di Luna's officer. A resident artist with Opera San José since 2008, some of Elash's previous roles with the company include Frank (*Die Fledermaus*), 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 **Matthew Anchel** who makes his debut with Opera San José. Recent roles for **Anchel** include Saretski (*Eugene Onegin*) with Oper Leipzig, Alaska Wolf Joe (*The Rise and Fall of Mahagonny*), Marchese d'Obigny (*La traviata*), Harasta (*The Cunning Little Vixen*), and The Police Inspector (*Der Rosenkavalier*).

Appearing as Ines, Leonora's confidante, is **Tori Grayum**. Her previous roles with the company include Ida (*Die Fledermaus*) and La Ciesca (*Gianni Schicchi*). Alternating in the role of Azucena, a mysterious gypsy, are mezzo-sopranos **Nicole Birkland** and **Rebecca Krouner**. They previously shared the role of Prince Orlofsky in the company's production of *Die Fledermaus*. **Birkland** joined the Opera San José resident ensemble this season and will also appear as the Principessa (*Suor Angelica*) and Zita (*Gianni Schicchi*). **Krouner** made her company debut last season in *La traviata* as Annina and appeared as the Monitress in *Suor Angelica*.

Rounding out the cast is **Mete Tasin** and **Michael Jankosky** sharing the role of Manrico's fellow soldier Ruis. **Donn Bradley** plays the role of an old gypsy and **David Zelenka** and **Hector Naranjo** alternate in the role of the messenger.

Opera San José's production of *Il trovatore* includes set designs by **Steven C. Kemp**, costumes by **Elizabeth Poindexter**, 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.

Il Trovatore

In Italian with English Supertitles

<u>Cast:</u>	<u>February 9, 14, 17, 22</u>	<u>February 10, 16, 19, 24</u>
Leonora	Cecilia Violetta López •	Melody King•
Manrico	Alexander Boyer•	James Callon•
Count di Luna	Zachary Altman•	Evan Brummel•
Ferrando	Silas Elash•	Silas Elash•
Azucena	Nicole Birkland•	Rebecca Krouner•
Ines	Tori Grayum•	Tori Grayum•
Ruis	Mete Tasin	Michael Jankosky
Old Gypsy	Bradley Kynard	Jo Vincent Parks
Messenger	David Zelenka	Hector Naranjo

• Resident Company

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

What: **Opera San José** continues its 29th season with Giuseppe Verdi's powerful drama, ***Il trovatore***. Set in 15th-century Spain, Verdi's classic has it all: vengeance, war, jealousy, and passion with an emotional, heart-stopping score including one of the most famous choral melodies ever written, the "Anvil Chorus." ***Il trovatore*** will be sung in Italian with English supertitles. Eight performances are scheduled from February 9 through 24 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. ***Il trovatore*** is made possible, in part, by a Cultural Affairs Grant from the City of San José.

Who: Composer: Giuseppe Verdi
Librettist: Salvatore Cammarano
Conductor: David Rohrbaugh
Assistant Conductor: Andrew Whitfield
Stage Director: Brad Dalton
Set Designer: Steven C. Kemp
Costume Designer: Elizabeth Poindexter
Lighting Designer: David Lee Cuthbert
Wigs/Makeup: Jeanna Parham

- Dates:** February 9, 10m, 14, 16, 17m, 19, 22, 24m, 2013
- Time:** "m" indicates matinee at 3:00pm; all other performances are at 8:00pm
- 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 (cash only)
- Photo:** <http://operasj.org/news-events/press-room/press-photos/il-trovatore/advance-photos/>
- Press Room:** <http://www.operasj.org/pressroom.html>

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

Il trovatore Preview/Panel Discussion: January 29, 12-1:00pm, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, 150 E Fernando Street, 2nd floor of the library in room 225/229, 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.

Il trovatore Preview/Lecture: January 29, Bella Mia, 58 South First Street, downtown San José. Reception at 6:30pm; program 7-8:00pm. Wine and light refreshments will be served; Vocal preview from members of the cast, followed by a lecture by General Manager Larry Hancock. Tickets - \$30.00, 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.

Opening Night Gala Dinner: Saturday, February 9 at 5:00pm, a spectacular opening night event for *Il trovatore*. \$75.00 per person for a three-course dinner at the Sainte Claire Hotel in downtown San José, including vocal presentation and post-performance champagne reception with the artists at the Sainte Claire Hotel. For menu and reservations, call the Opera San José Box Office at 408-437-4450.

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