

OSJ CANCELS PERFORMANCES, LAUNCHES OPERA SAN JOSÉ ARTIST AND MUSICIANS RELIEF FUND

SAN JOSE, CA (11 March 2020) – Opera San José has announced it will cancel all performances of Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, its 2019-20 season finale at the California Theatre, due to rising concerns about limiting the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and in accordance with Santa Clara County’s ban effective midnight tonight on all events with more than 1,000 attendees. At the same time, the company has launched the OPERA SAN JOSÉ ARTIST AND MUSICIANS RELIEF FUND to help the OSJ musicians, artists, and artisans who will be most affected by the sudden loss of work.

Said OSJ’s newly-appointed General Director Khori Dastoor, “I have spent the past few days in conversation with local artists and musicians whose livelihoods and security have been upended by this unimaginable crisis. As an incubator for world-class operatic talent, Opera San José’s mission is rooted in the support and development of the artists who make the Bay Area their home. We hope patrons will donate the cost of their cancelled tickets and/or make additional contributions to help create this emergency cash reserve that we will draw from in the months ahead to provide support to our musicians, singers, carpenters, stitchers, designers, and other hourly company members that make our productions possible and will be deeply affected by COVID-19.” Information on the fund can be found at OperaSJ.org.

The company was scheduled to present *The Magic Flute* April 18 through May 3 but has been monitoring closely the development of this outbreak, which today was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization. Said Dastoor, “It is vital that we play our part in combating the spread of COVID-19 and encourage others to do the same. It was incredibly difficult to cancel our performances, but of course we will always act to protect the best interests and well-being of the patrons, artists, musicians, and company members that make Opera San José what it is.” Dastoor remains optimistic about the future, noting, “I well remember being an OSJ resident

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artist in 2008 when, during performances for *L'elisir d'amore*, my colleagues and I watched from the stage of the California Theatre as our audiences dwindled from many hundreds to a few tens in the matter of days. In the years since, the company rebuilt itself and has come back stronger than ever. So, too, will the current crisis pass for Opera San José, and we will emerge more resilient, focused, and united. We are supporting one another as we always have, as a family.” Dastoor and Opera San José are already in the process of identifying programming opportunities for the coming summer, with plans to offer alternative opportunities to enjoy the music and voices audiences have come to expect from the 37-year-old company.

Patrons currently holding tickets to *The Magic Flute* will be contacted by the theatre and have the option of donating their value back to the non-profit organization for use in its OPERA SAN JOSÉ ARTIST AND MUSICIANS RELIEF FUND or may request a refund or exchange. The box office can also be contacted directly at (408) 437-4450 or email boxoffice@operasj.org.

Opera San José performs at the California Theatre, the elegant 1927 former movie palace meticulously restored to opulent splendor and now one of the world's most intimate opera houses.

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