

OPERA SAN JOSÉ ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF NEW GENERAL DIRECTOR SHAWNA LUCEY NATIONALLY ACCLAIMED DIRECTOR WILL ASSUME POST IN JANUARY 2022

SAN JOSE, CA (7 December 2021) – **Opera San José (OSJ)** has announced the appointment of nationally acclaimed opera and theater director **Shawna Lucey** as its new General Director and CEO. Lucey, who will officially join Opera San José in January 2022, brings both a wealth of opera experience and an exciting artistic vision to the Northern California-based company which has captured a national reputation for its development of opera talent through its residency program, as well as international acclaim for its inventive digital offerings. “I am thrilled to be joining the Opera San José family as the next General Director,” said Lucey. “Opera San José’s vibrant energy, support for emerging talent, and artistic excellence drew me to the company as a stage director in 2018. It is now my honor to carry forward the mission of this innovative company into our operatic future.”

With over 15 years of industry experience, Lucey steps into the post recently vacated by Khori Dastoor, who is assuming the General Director and CEO role at Houston Grand Opera. Said Opera San José Board of Directors Chair Gillian Moran, “After conducting an extensive national search, we could not be more delighted in welcoming Shawna Lucey to launch our next chapter at Opera San José. When we began our search five months ago, we knew we were looking for a charismatic leader whose passion and vision would help us continue to grow and expand upon the incredible work and programs OSJ has to offer. Shawna more than fits the bill — her experience directing productions at America’s leading opera houses, her passion for infusing new resonance into classics, and her crystalline view of vibrant contemporary works will be enormous assets, propelling our company into a thrilling future.”

Lucey is familiar to Bay Area audiences primarily for her work with San Francisco Opera. Her legacy production of *Tosca* was chosen to launch the company’s 99th season in August of 2021. Lucey made her directorial debut with Opera San José in 2018 with *La traviata*, brilliantly staged with skill and imagination, and offering a compelling contemporary viewpoint. Her directorial work has been seen across the US, from The Metropolitan Opera to Dallas Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Santa Fe Opera, and many others. She also boasts an international reputation, staging works in Spain, Russia,

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and Germany, at the Gran Teatre del Liceu, the Bolshoi Theater, and Schauspiel Hannover, among many others, and has assisted esteemed directors, including Stephen Lawless, Lee Blakeley, John Caird, Peter Schumann, and Francesca Zambello.

In addition to opera, Lucey steps outside the canon into theatre and musicals, staging works such as Gilbert & Sullivan's rollicking *The Pirates of Penzance*, which *BroadwayWorld* lauded for its "contemporary flair, dousing the classic with a touch of modern Monty Python alongside Carol Burnett Show moments. A true contemporary comic delight faithful to the original Gilbert and Sullivan intent."

Originally from Houston, Texas, Lucey credits much of her directorial influences to Russia, where she lived and studied for five years. She spent years working with the world-famous Bread & Puppet Theatre as both a touring performer and staff member, and then 11 seasons with Santa Fe Opera, working her way from technical apprentice to stage director. She holds BAs in Theater and Italian from the University of Texas at Austin and received her MFA in Directing & Movement from the Boris Shchukin Theatre Institute of the Vakhtangov Theater in Moscow. Most recently residing in New York City, Lucey is currently enrolled in Columbia University's Master of Science program for Non-Profit Management and has served as an adjunct professor in Speech and Theater at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, encouraging the next generation of artists while teaching courses on acting, design, stage management, and directing.

Lucey's appointment as the fourth General Director in OSJ's history will begin midway through the company's critically acclaimed 38th season and long-awaited return to the California Theatre. She will be overseeing the upcoming productions of Bizet's *Carmen* and Bernstein's *West Side Story*, as well as the return of the Irene Dalis Vocal Competition.

Said Opera San José Music Director and Principal Conductor Joseph Marcheso, who conducted her 2018 production of *La traviata*, "This is an exciting moment in our company's history. The creativity and energy that Shawna brings to her work is incredibly inspiring, and I am very much looking forward to collaborating with her in the coming months and years. Her approach of exciting innovation, a healthy respect for tradition, and steadfast commitment to artistic excellence make her absolutely ideal for this post, and I think our audiences will be thrilled to see what she brings to our stage and to our whole community."

Opera San José is a flagship arts organization of Silicon Valley. Maintaining a resident company of artists, OSJ presents four mainstage productions annually in San Jose's beautifully restored, magnificent California Theatre. It also regularly broadcasts fully produced productions from its state-of-the-art Heiman Digital Media Studio. Now in its 38th season, OSJ specializes in role debuts, serving

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as an artistic incubator for established and emerging artists and administrators, producing world-class operatic performances for diverse audiences throughout the Bay Area and around the globe. More information is available at www.operasj.org.

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