

OPERA SAN JOSÉ OFFERS FREE
DIGITAL VIEWING OF ALMA DEUTSCHER'S
CINDERELLA

Lavish staged production will be available for free viewing online,
beginning 10:30am (PDT)/6:30pm (London)/19:30 (CET), Saturday, July 22, 2023

SAN JOSE, CA (7 July 2023) – **Opera San José's** opulent staging of **Alma Deutscher's** *Cinderella* will be made available for free viewing beginning July 22, made possible due to the generous support of the **Packard Humanities Institute**. The production, filmed at the magnificent California Theatre in San Jose last fall, featured the international conducting debut of prodigy composer/musician Deutscher, who led the Opera San José Orchestra in a critically acclaimed performance, staged by Brad Dalton. Based on the classic fairytale, this family-friendly work is reset at an opera company run by a scheming stepmother, in which the title character is a brilliant composer laboring as a lowly copyist. In this production, Cinderella is united with her prince not because a glass slipper fits, but with the beginning of a melody only she knows how to continue. In 2017, OSJ audiences experienced the sold-out American premiere of the already internationally acclaimed *Cinderella* by the then 13-year-old composer, in a production supported by PHI. Five years later, OSJ and PHI again joined forces to welcome the 17-year-old Deutscher back as she took the baton in this pivotal moment in her career – marking Alma as the youngest person since Mozart to conduct her own opera. *Cinderella* is sung in English, with subtitles (closed captions) in English, German, and other languages, and will remain available for free viewing. For more information, the public can visit operasj.org/event/cinderella-digital-premiere.

“Through the generous support and leadership of the Packard Humanities Institute, we are so proud to share with a worldwide audience this production featuring Alma conducting her own opera, as captured in performance with Opera San José in 2022,” said Opera San José General Director Shawna Lucey. “Her opera transports parents and children alike with humor and brilliance. When Alma picked up her baton to conduct her gem of an opera, supported by an incredible cast,

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sparkling orchestra, witty direction, and gorgeous settings, we knew our audiences were in for an absolute treat. It is now such a thrill to offer this experience to viewers everywhere."

Casting features **Natalia Santaliz** as Cinderella, **Joey Hammod-Leppek** as The Prince, **Ben Brady** as The King, **Stacey Tappan** as Griselda, **Julia Dawson** as Zibaldona, **Rena Harms** as The Stepmother, **Megan Esther Grey** as Fairy, and **Joshua Hughes** as The Minister. The creative team for this lavish production includes **Alma Deutscher** (Conductor), **Brad Dalton** (Director), **Richard Powers** (Choreographer), **Steven C. Kemp** (Scenic Designer), **David Cuthbert** (Lighting Designer), **Johann Stegmeier** (Costume Design), **Y. Sharon Peng** (Wig Designer), **Sophia Smith** (Makeup Designer, Assistant Hair Designer), **Andrew Whitfield** (Chorus Master), and **Jolie O'Dell** (Assistant Director).

Alma Deutscher composed her opera *Cinderella* in 2015, at the age of 13. It was first produced in 2016 in Vienna, followed in 2017 with a US premiere at Opera San José, and remounted in 2020 for a new production at the Salzburg State Theatre. Deutscher revised the original work for its return to Opera San José's in 2022, where she also made her international conducting debut at the age of 18. From the first production, international critics applauded Deutscher for writing an "opera of astounding wit, craft, and musical beauty" (*The New Criterion*), highlighting this moment in her career as "a young talent's sensational burst to prominence" (*Opera Today*). Said *OperaWire*, "Deutscher is a genius to behold. In a time of doubt and suspicion, hate and war-mongering, to find a voice as original and as uplifting as Alma Deutscher's is more than a gift — it is hope." The 2021 Salzburg State Theatre production was called a "feast for the eyes and ears" by *Orpheus Magazine*, "*Cinderella* is exhilarating, enchanting, moving, and spiced with finely ground comedy, and it was deservedly honored with a standing ovation at the end." In San José reviewers greeted it as "sumptuous, a dream come to life," (*Opera Tattler*) and "unapologetically beautiful and vastly entertaining. A breath of fresh air" (*Operaville*).

ABOUT OPERA SAN JOSÉ

Opera San José (OSJ) is a flagship arts organization of Silicon Valley. Maintaining a resident company of artists, OSJ presents four mainstage productions annually in San José's beautifully restored,

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magnificent California Theatre. It also regularly broadcasts fully produced productions from its state-of-the-art Heiman Digital Media Studio. OSJ specializes in role debuts, serving 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 operasj.org.

ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA THEATRE

The California Theatre is one of the most magnificent, best-preserved examples of 1920s-era lavish motion picture palaces. Lovingly restored at the turn of the 21st century, its opulently ornamented interiors were completely refurbished, including the elaborately stenciled entry foyer ceiling and magnificent gallery. With only twenty rows of seats in the orchestra section, five rows in the grand tier, and six in the mezzanine, every seat has an excellent view of the stage. With just over 1,100 seats, the California is comparable to England's Glyndebourne and Venice's historic Teatro la fenice and is in the select ranks of the world's most intimate opera houses.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: **Opera San José's** opulent staging of **Alma Deutscher's *Cinderella*** will be made available for free viewing beginning July 22, made possible due to the generous support of the **Packard Humanities Institute**. The production, filmed at the magnificent California Theatre in San Jose last fall, featured the international conducting debut of prodigy composer/musician Deutscher, who led the Opera San José Orchestra in a critically acclaimed performance, staged by Brad Dalton. Based on the classic fairytale, this family-friendly work is reset at an opera company run by a scheming stepmother, in which the title character is a brilliant composer laboring as a lowly copyist. In this production, Cinderella is united with her prince not because a glass slipper fits, but with the beginning of a melody only she knows how to continue. In 2017, OSJ audiences experienced the sold-out American premiere of the already internationally acclaimed *Cinderella* by the then 13-year-old composer, in a production supported by PHI. Five years later, OSJ and PHI again joined forces to welcome the 17-year-old Deutscher back as she took the baton in this pivotal moment in her career – marking Alma as the youngest person since Mozart to conduct her own opera. *Cinderella* is sung in English, with subtitles (closed captions) in English, German, and other languages, and will remain available for free viewing.

WHEN: Available to view online beginning **10:30am (PDT), Saturday, July 22**

TICKETS: FREE

INFO: For more information, the public can visit operasj.org/event/cinderella-digital-premiere or call 408-437-4450.

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MEDIA: Contact Sydney Albin, Carla Befera & Co.
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PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here:
<http://www.cbpr.co/press/osjcinderella>