

OPERA SAN JOSÉ PARTICIPATES IN  
**SOUTH FIRST FRIDAY**

OFFERING FREE MUSIC AT CALIFORNIA THEATRE  
November 3, 2023

SAN JOSE, CA (26 October 2023) — **Opera San José** will present lively free entertainment for art lovers participating in the Downtown San Jose SoFA District’s evening art walk **South First Friday** taking place November 3. Joining in this celebration of the arts and culture of the city, Opera San José will open the doors of the historic California Theatre for an evening filled with music, a taste of the upcoming *The Barber of Seville*, barbershop quartet music, and more. Events will take place from 5:30pm to 8:30pm at the **California Theatre**, 345 South First Street, San Jose. For more information or to ensure a free seat the public can visit [operasj.org/event/first-friday](https://operasj.org/event/first-friday).

The entertainment begins at 5:45pm with performances by Opera San José singers mezzo soprano Joanne Evans, tenor Patrick Bessenbacher, and baritone Robert Balonek. The music continues with a bit of fun as The Peninsulaires Chorus’ The Children of the Chord will bring the barbershop to *The Barber of Seville* with their barbershop quartet music at 6:30pm, featuring Mike Cating, Rich Postal, Nathan Staples, and Mark Torrance. Then at 7:15pm, beloved organist Jerry Nagano will perform favorite tunes on the California Theatre’s mighty Wurlitzer organ. The night will conclude with music by a very special string quartet, formed of members of the Opera San José orchestra musicians, starting at 8pm.

“We are excited to put some operatic yay into this South First Friday. We can’t wait to share a few sneak peeks at our family-friendly comedic opera, *The Barber of Seville*, along with the delights of a Bay Area barbershop quartet. It should be a blast,” said Opera San José General Director/CEO Shawna Lucey. “South First Fridays are a fantastic way to spend the evening – highlighting the vibrancy our arts organizations bring to downtown. We hope folks stop in to see what we’re up to as they enjoy the artistic offerings of downtown.”

**Opera San José** will continue its 40th anniversary season with an upbeat comedy for operagoers of all ages with Gioachino Rossini’s *The Barber of Seville*, in a new production by internationally acclaimed director Stephen Lawless making his Opera San José debut November 11-26. Subtitled “The Useless Precaution,” this opera buffa introduces the rascalion barber Figaro (**Ricardo José Rivera**) who uses all his wiles to assist the love-struck Count Almaviva (**Joshua Sanders**) in liberating his true love Rosina (**Nikola Adele Printz**) from the clutches of her guardian, Dr. Bartolo (**Dale Travis**). Conducted by OSJ Director of Music **Joseph Marcheso**, this

comic masterpiece fizzing with entertaining hijinks and memorable melodies will play at the historic California Theatre in downtown San Jose for six performances. Filled with incomparable Italian music, a story featuring matchmaking, mistaken identities, and love at first sight, *The Barber of Seville* will be sung in Italian with English and Spanish supertitles. For more information or to purchase tickets (\$55–\$195), the public can visit [operasj.org](http://operasj.org) or call 408-437-4450 (open Monday through Friday, 9:00am–5:00pm).

**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, 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](http://operasj.org).

**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 20 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:**

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**WHEN:** 5:30pm, Friday, November 3

**WHERE:** **California Theatre**, 345 South First St., San Jose, CA

**TICKETS:** FREE

**INFO:** For more information or to ensure a free seat the public can visit [operasj.org/event/first-friday](http://operasj.org/event/first-friday)

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**PHOTOS:** Downloadable high-res photos are available here:  
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