

# OPERA SAN JOSÉ UNVEILS LINEUP FOR 2024–2025 SEASON

SEASON INCLUDES REGIONAL PREMIERE,  
NEW PRODUCTIONS, OPERATIC CLASSICS  
September 14, 2024 – May 4, 2025

SAN JOSÉ, CA (13 March 2024) — **Opera San José** General Director/CEO **Shawna Lucey** has revealed the programming for the company’s 41st season, which will include a regional premiere, operatic favorites, and the second Spanish language opera on its mainstage. The 2024-2025 season will feature four productions, presented September 14, 2024 through May 4, 2025 at the majestic California Theatre in downtown San José.

“We will be offering a season of thrilling works that not only seasoned opera lovers will enjoy but will also entice new operagoers to experience this fabulous art form,” said Lucey. “These operas embody our mission at Opera San José, where we specialize in role debuts, serve as an artistic incubator for established and emerging artists, and produce world-class operatic performances that celebrate our diverse community.”

The 2024-2025 season launches with prodigy composer/conductor **Alma Deutscher** coming back to OSJ to conduct a family-friendly production of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s ***The Magic Flute*** (Sept. 14-29, 2024). Next up is Giacomo Puccini’s ***La bohème*** reset in post-WWI Paris, (Nov. 16-Dec. 1, 2024) marking the mainstage directorial debut for OSJ Resident Stage Director **Michelle Ainna Cuizon**. In 2025, Opera San José General Director/CEO **Shawna Lucey** will direct Béla Bartók’s spine-chilling one-act opera ***Bluebeard’s Castle*** (Feb. 15-Mar. 2, 2025) featuring OSJ Emeritus Artist-in-Residence soprano **Maria Natale** — returning after her recent triumphant appearances at OSJ as *Tosca* and The Countess in Mozart’s *The Marriage of Figaro* — in the role of the unsuspecting new bride Judith and bass-baritone **Jason Zacher** as Duke Bluebeard. The season will conclude with the Northern California premiere of Héctor Armienta’s ***Zorro*** (Apr. 19-May 4, 2025), a swashbuckling opera full of romance, humor, and suspense directed by Latino stage director **David Radamés Toro**. *Zorro* will be presented in collaboration with Kentucky Opera.

For more information or to purchase subscriptions (\$155–\$650) the public can visit [operasj.org](https://operasj.org) or call **408-437-4450** (open Monday through Friday, 9:00am–5:00pm). Subscriptions are on sale now; single tickets will go on sale on July 1, 2024.

## 2024–2025 SEASON

### THE MAGIC FLUTE

*Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder*

September 14-29, 2024

Sung in German, English/Spanish supertitles

Launching the company's 41st season is a family-friendly production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. **Alma Deutscher** — composer/conductor of OSJ's recent hit production of *Cinderella* — reunites with director **Brad Dalton** and returns to conduct this whimsical opera. In this fanciful work, audiences of all ages follow the fairytale story of handsome young prince Tamino and silly bird-catcher Papageno, who set out to free the clever princess Pamina. Equipped with a set of magical musical instruments, these two new friends face a vengeful Queen of the Night, a world of sorcerers and serpents, spirits and secrets, and more that will test their loyalty, love, and persistence.

Casting includes baritone **Ricardo José Rivera**, who delighted audiences with his portrayal of Figaro in this season's production of Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, returning as Papageno; tenor **WooYoung Yoon** as Tamino; OSJ's inaugural Wadhvani Chair for South Asian Artists soprano **Melissa Sondhi** as Pamina; soprano **Nicole Koh** as Papagena; and soprano **Emily Misch** as the Queen of the Night. Joining them are tenor **Nicolas Vasquez-Gerst** as Monostatos and bass **Younggwang Park** as Sarastro.

### LA BOHÈME

*Music by Giacomo Puccini, libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa  
based on *Scènes de la vie de bohème* by Henri Murger*

November 16 – December 1, 2024

Sung in Italian, English/Spanish supertitles

One of opera's greatest love stories, Puccini's *La bohème*, returns to Opera San José in a production set in Paris at Christmastime in the aftermath of the Great War. In this tantalizing tale of young artists living on the edge, poet Rodolfo is implored by his alluring and delicate neighbor Mimi to help light her last candle. Immediately infatuated, they embark on a dizzying relationship which ultimately turns tragic. From bustling cafés and raucous parties to spirited debates, this couple along with their artist friends chase happiness against impossible odds. Opera San José Resident Stage Director **Michelle Anna Cuizon** will make her mainstage directorial debut and Opera San José Music Director **Joseph Marcheso** is set to conduct this masterpiece.

Casting includes tenor **WooYoung Yoon** as Rodolfo and baritone **Kidon Choi**, who thrilled OSJ audiences as Scarpia in Puccini's *Tosca*, returning as Marcello. Also featured are sopranos **Kearstin Piper Brown** and **Mikayla Sager** as Mimi, and OSJ's inaugural Wadhvani Chair for South Asian Artists soprano **Melissa Sondhi** as Musetta. Additional casting includes bass-baritone **Jesús Vicente Murillo** as Shaunard and bass-baritone **Jason Zacher** as Colline.

## **BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE**

*Music by Béla Bartók, libretto by Béla Balázs*

February 15-March 2, 2025

Sung in English, English/Spanish supertitles

The season continues with an all-new production of Béla Bartók's chilling one-act opera ***Bluebeard's Castle***, directed by OSJ General Director/CEO **Shawna Lucey** and conducted by Opera San José Music Director **Joseph Marcheso**. This powerful work will feature OSJ Emeritus Artist-in-Residence soprano **Maria Natale**, returning after acclaimed portrayals in the 22-23 OSJ season as *Tosca* and The Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro*, as the unwitting bride Judith who comes to live in the haunted realm of a mysterious Duke. Bass-baritone **Jason Zacher** will portray Duke Bluebeard. This psychological thriller follows a woman discovering her new husband's dark past, unlocking rooms in his eerie home as she delves into the frightening corners of her husband's terrifyingly troubled imagination.

## **ZORRO**

*Music and libretto by Héctor Armienta*

*Presented in collaboration with Kentucky Opera*

April 19-May 4, 2025

Sung in Spanish, English/Spanish supertitles

Opera San José will conclude its 41st season with the Northern California premiere of Héctor Armienta's ***Zorro***, the second Spanish-language opera on its mainstage following the 2024 production of *Florencia en el Amazonas*. Inspired by the heroic masked vigilante created by Johnston McCulley, this swashbuckling opera is filled with ravishing romance, light-hearted humor, and sword-fighting suspense. Set in el pueblo de Los Angeles, still a colony of Spain, it follows the adventures of Diego de la Vega, a Spanish nobleman who hides his true identity to become the masked vigilante Zorro, the dashing defender of the less fortunate. With a lush score influenced by mariachi, flamenco, and corrido music, the caped crusader comes to operatic life, battling tyranny and corruption, juggling romantic interests of the beguiling daughter of the Governor, Carlotta de Obregón, and the brave and kind Ana María Soza, and taking on his nemesis, the oppressive General Moncada. Latino stage director **David Radamés Toro** will make his OSJ debut.

Announced casting includes soprano **Arianna Rodriguez** as Luisa, mezzo-soprano **Guadalupe Paz** — who will return to OSJ following her company debut as Paula in OSJ's *Florencia en el*

*Amazonas* — as Carlotta de Obragón, and soprano **Maria Brea** as Ana María Soza. OSJ Emeritus Artist-in-Residence baritone **Eugene Brancoveanu** — who won critical acclaim as the title role in this season's *Rigoletto* — returns as Octavio Rivera y Moncada, with mezzo-soprano **Raphaella Medina** as Toypurina, and bass-baritone **Jesús Vicente Murillo** as Sargeant Jose Maria Gomez. Additional casting to be announced.

Focused on uplifting artists of San José, Opera San José has collaborated once again with **Local Color**, a woman-powered, non-profit organization focused on keeping emerging and established artists active, employed, and engaged in San José, to create the 2024-2025 Opera San José season artwork. The brilliant collages of images that represent each opera were created by **Erin Salazar**, a San José-based artist, muralist, seamstress, community organizer, and public art curator. She was the Knight Foundation Inaugural Public Space Fellow in 2019, received California State Senator Jim Beall's Woman of the Year award for creative enterprise in 2018, and was named one of *KQED's* Bay Brilliant Women to Watch in 2017, among other accolades.

**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).

Opera San José performs at the **California Theatre**, 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 Theatre is comparable to England's Glyndebourne and Venice's historic Teatro La Fenice in the select ranks of the world's most intimate opera houses.

#### **FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:**

**WHAT:** Opera San José General Director/CEO **Shawna Lucey** has revealed the company's 41st season, which includes a regional premiere, operatic favorites, and the second Spanish language opera on its mainstage. The 2024-25 season will feature four mainstage productions launching with prodigy composer/conductor **Alma Deutscher** returning to OSJ to conduct a family-friendly production of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *The Magic Flute* (Sept. 14-29, 2024). Next up is Giacomo Puccini's *La bohème* reset in post WWI Paris, (Nov. 16-Dec. 1, 2024) marking the mainstage directorial debut for OSJ Resident Stage Director **Michelle Ainna Cuizon**. In 2025, Opera San José General Director/CEO **Shawna Lucey** will direct

Béla Bartók's spine-chilling one-act opera *Bluebeard's Castle* (Feb. 15-Mar. 2, 2025). The season will conclude with the Northern California premiere of Héctor Armienta's *Zorro* (Apr. 19-May 4, 2025), a swashbuckling opera full of romance, humor, and suspense directed by Latino stage director **David Radamés Toro**.

**WHEN: September 14, 2024 – May 4, 2025**

Sept. 14-29, 2024: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *The Magic Flute*

Nov. 16-Dec. 1, 2024: Giacomo Puccini's *La bohème*

Feb. 15-Mar. 2, 2025: Béla Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*

Apr. 19-May 4, 2025: Héctor Armienta's *Zorro*

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

**TICKETS:** Subscriptions (\$155–\$650) are on sale now; single tickets will go on sale July 1, 2024.

**INFO:** For more information or to purchase subscriptions, the public can visit [operasj.org](http://operasj.org) or call **408-437-4450** (open Monday through Friday, 9:00am–5:00pm).

**-30-**

**MEDIA:** Contact Courtney Heimbeck, Carla Befera & Co.  
[courtney@cb-pr.com](mailto:courtney@cb-pr.com) | 650-308-4390

**PHOTOS:** Downloadable high-res photos are available here:  
<http://www.cbpr.co/press/operasanjose24-25>