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## **Opera Colorado Appoints Andres Cladera Associate Conductor**

### **John Baril Steps Down From Position as Chorus Master**

Denver, CO — (April 1, 2016) Opera Colorado announces the appointment of Andres Cladera as Associate Conductor effective July 1, 2016. As a part of this new position, Andres Cladera will conduct Opera Colorado's 2017 production of *As One*, and fulfill the duties of the previous chorus master, John Baril, who served as Opera Colorado's chorus master for 13 years. In this new, seasonal position of Associate Conductor, Cladera will work collaboratively with members of Opera Colorado's staff in preparation for productions. He will oversee the Opera Colorado Chorus, assist the Music Director in rehearsals, conduct the student matinee performances, provide musical and language coaching to artists as needed and conduct community performances throughout the season.

"It is a pleasure to welcome Andres Cladera to our newly created position of Associate Conductor," stated General Director Greg Carpenter. "As Opera Colorado expands our programming beyond performances at the Opera House, we need a talented individual to support the work of Music Director Ari Pelto, to actively recruit and prepare the Opera Colorado Chorus and to conduct community based performances. Andres has the right talents and personality to fulfill this new position." Music Director Ari Pelto agrees that Cladera will be an asset to Opera Colorado in this new position, "I am immensely happy to have Andres as part of our musical team. I have been impressed by his musicianship and dedication to excellence from the first moment I saw him work."



A native of Uruguay, Andres Cladera comes to Opera Colorado with more than 10 years of experience. He is also the Artistic Director of Emerald City Opera.

“I am thrilled to join the distinguished Opera Colorado family as Associate Conductor,” said Cladera. “In addition to my responsibilities as chorus master, I am very excited about conducting *As One* by Laura Kaminsky. As Artistic Director of the Emerald City Opera, a new summer festival in Steamboat Springs, I look forward to working with Opera Colorado to expand opportunities for outreach beyond Denver and to find synergetic relationships with other American opera companies committed to opera of our time.”

John Baril has served as Opera Colorado’s chorus master for over a decade and will complete his tenure conducting the chorus for the world premiere of Lori Laitman’s *The Scarlet Letter*. “For the past 13 years, Opera Colorado has been the beneficiary of John Baril’s exceptional talent in leading the Opera Colorado Chorus,” stated Carpenter. “John also made his Opera Colorado conducting debut in our 2012 production of *The Marriage of Figaro* to great acclaim. He has been a major part of our artistic success and has been a true collaborator and friend. While we will miss John at the helm of our chorus, we wish him well as he takes on more conducting opportunities nationally and expands his career.”

“I have met so many friends and collaborators during my 13-year tenure as Opera Colorado Chorus Master and am grateful to all of them for having enriched my life,” stated Baril. “Greg [Carpenter] and I have been friends for years and it is a blessing to work with friends. Andres Cladera is a skilled and talented musician, equipped to lead the wonderful Opera Colorado Chorus to future successes; I wish him all the best.”

#### **About Andres Cladera**

Uruguayan conductor Andres Cladera, recently named Artistic Director of Emerald City Opera, is a versatile and cultivated artist in both the operatic and symphonic worlds. He has prior conducting experience with Opera San Antonio, Opera Colorado, Carnegie Mellon Philharmonic, Opera Theater of Pittsburgh, Edgewood Symphony, Pittsburgh Early Music Consort, Chatham Baroque and San Antonio Symphony. Cladera holds a Masters of Music degree from Carnegie Mellon University and Bachelors of Fine Arts degrees in Piano and Voice Performance from College of Charleston. Cladera was awarded the 2007 Outstanding Young Conductor of the year by the Association of Choral Directors of America, as well as first place in several international piano competitions including: Luis Troccoli International Piano Competition, Luis Cluzeau Mortet Piano Competition, as well as the Young Artist Encouragement Award



from the Metropolitan Opera House. With his own opera company in Pittsburgh, Cladera has produced and conducted important new productions of Tobias Picker's *Fantastic Mr. Fox* and *Therese Raquin*, Jake Heggie's *To Hell And Back* and *Three Decembers* and Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar*.

#### **About John Baril**

John Baril recently made his debut with Virginia Opera in *Romeo et Juliette* and returns there next fall for *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Earlier this spring he conducted *The Turn of the Screw* at UMKC Opera Theater, where he led *Così fan tutte* last season. As long-time Music Director of Central City Opera he has conducted *Die Sieben Todsünden*, *Les Mamelles de Tiresias*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Three Decembers*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *West Side Story*, *Cendrillon*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Dead Man Walking* and *La Traviata* among many others, and looks forward to leading both *Tosca* and *Musto's Later the Same Evening* this summer.

#### **About Ari Pelto**

With performances that have been called poetic, earthy, vigorous and highly individual, Ari Pelto is in demand in opera houses and with symphony orchestras throughout the United States. Making a highly-praised debut in 2004 at New York City Opera with *La Traviata*, he became their regular guest conductor returning for *Madama Butterfly*, *La Bohème*, and *Carmen*. This year, Ari was appointed Music Director Designate at Opera Colorado following an acclaimed debut conducting *Don Giovanni* for the company. Productions in Denver included *Aida* and will include the world premiere of Lori Laitman's *The Scarlett Letter*. Additionally, he conducted *Aida* at Utah Symphony and Opera and made return appearances at Atlanta Ballet and at Opera Memphis, Omaha Symphony, Lamont Symphony and the NYU Symphony. Recent highlights include *La Rondine* in Cortona (Italy), *A Streetcar named Desire* and *Salome* at Virginia Opera for which he won outstanding reviews, *The Rake's Progress* at Portland Opera, *Rigoletto*, *Don Pasquale*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Don Giovanni* at Opera Memphis where he serves as Principal Guest Conductor; *La Bohème* at Opera Theatre of St. Louis, *The Cunning Little Vixen* at Chautauqua, *Rusalka* and *La Bohème* at Boston Lyric Opera, *Romeo et Juliette* at Minnesota Opera, *The Magic Flute*, *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Portland Opera and *Hansel und Gretel* at Utah Opera. Ari Pelto conducts on main stages world-wide, and recently premiered new productions of *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Falstaff* at New National Theatre of Tokyo and *Faust* at the Teatro Nacional Sucre in Ecuador. He led tours of Western Opera Theatre (the former touring company of San Francisco Opera) conducting *La Bohème* and *Così fan tutti* in over 20 states. For San Francisco Opera's Merola showcase last season, he conducted *Così fan tutte* and *The Rape of Lucretia* to great acclaim.

#### **About Greg Carpenter**

The fourth General Director in Opera Colorado's 32-year history, Greg Carpenter guides both the artistic and administrative operations of the company. His role as General Director began in 2007, prior to which he served as Opera Colorado's Director of Development from 2004 – 2007, overseeing all fundraising and Board of Directors activities. Prior to joining Opera Colorado, he worked for four years for the National Symphony Orchestra at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. His work there included Special Projects Manager for the President of the National Symphony Orchestra from 2000 – 2001 and Manager of Development from 2001 – 2004. Carpenter's extensive experience working in the arts also includes two years as the Artist and Event Services Manager for the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland and Special Projects



Coordinator for the University of Maryland School of Music. From 1986 – 1998, Greg Carpenter performed as a professional opera singer. His work as an opera singer included both lead and supporting roles at Glimmerglass Opera, Central City Opera, Sarasota Opera, Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia, Cleveland Opera and Lyric Opera Cleveland. Carpenter currently serves on the Board of Directors for OPERA America, the national service organization for the opera industry. For the 2008 National Performing Arts Convention held in Denver, he served as Chairman of the Fundraising Committee. In 2009 Carpenter received a Livingston Fellowship Award in Leadership from the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation. He also regularly serves as a judge for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and has served as a judge for the Fritz and Lavinia Jensen Foundation Competition. Greg Carpenter received a Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance from Wittenberg University, a Master of Music degree in vocal performance from Michigan State University, and he completed post-graduate studies at the University of Maryland School of Music.

### **About Opera Colorado**

A great city needs great art, and for more than three decades Opera Colorado has brought world-class performing arts to Colorado audiences. Today Opera Colorado serves as a cornerstone of Denver’s cultural community, bringing live opera experiences to audiences throughout the state of Colorado and at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House, its Denver home since the grand opening in 2005. Each season, the company reaches more than 35,500 students and adults through its many education and community engagement programs. Opera Colorado’s Young Artists, singers at the beginning stages of their careers, perform during their eight-month residency with the company in schools and community centers across the State – including an annual tour on the Western Slope. Recognized nationally for its excellence, the Young Artists program provides training for the next generation of American opera singers. Opera Colorado’s Inside OC initiative for young professionals brings together like-minded individuals for networking, learning and attending opera performances. Presenting new works and productions, alongside standard repertoire in the grand opera tradition, Opera Colorado contributes artistically to the advancement of the art form. The 2015-2016 Season productions at the Opera House featured sold out performances of *Aida* (November 7-15, 2015) and will feature the world premiere of a new American opera, *The Scarlet Letter* (May 7-15, 2016). [www.operacolorado.org](http://www.operacolorado.org)

### ***The Scarlet Letter* World Premiere | Tickets Still on Sale**

Tickets are on sale for Opera Colorado’s world premiere of *The Scarlet Letter* (May 7-15). More information at [operacolorado.org](http://operacolorado.org) or call 303.468.2030

*Opera Colorado’s 2015-2016 season is sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth T. Barrow. Season sponsors for the 2015-2016 Season include the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), The Denver Post, 5280 Magazine, Yellow Scene Magazine, Magnolia Hotels, KCNC-TV CBS4, 9News and Rassman Design.*

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