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## **Opera Colorado Returns to a Three-Production Season in 2016-17 With Diverse Lineup of Both New and Classic Works including:**

**An inventive new staging of Giacomo Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West*  
The Colorado premiere of *As One*, a groundbreaking multimedia chamber opera by Laura  
Kaminsky; and Gaetano Donizetti's classic work *Lucia di Lammermoor***

DENVER, CO—November 9, 2015—Today, Opera Colorado announced the highly anticipated return to a three-production season that will broaden the scope of its programming and further extend the Company's reach into the community. Beginning in November 2016, the expanded new season launches Opera Colorado into an exciting new era in the Company's history, as it commences a five-year strategic plan to increase artistic and educational offerings throughout Denver and Colorado, generate new audience development initiatives, and establish a new artistic vision.

"Opera Colorado has been building towards this announcement over the past two years—our higher-than-anticipated ticket sales and sold-out performances confirm that there is a strong and growing audience for opera in Denver," said Greg Carpenter, General Director. "At the same time, we have been putting the building blocks in place to ensure a strong financial foundation for the company's future and an inspired artistic vision working with Ari Peltó, our first Music Director. The upcoming season is the beginning of a very new and progressive future for our Company, in which we give our audiences beloved classic productions while continuing to support new and rarely performed works, extending Opera's reach beyond the walls of the Ellie Caulkins Opera House."

The 2016-17 season embraces a new artistic vision that continues Opera Colorado's commitment to presenting contemporary and classic opera repertoire while expanding the Company's repertoire to include one production per year of a new or rarely performed work in a more intimate setting, where the audience can experience opera on a more personal level.

- An innovative new Opera Colorado production of Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West*—a work depicting a mining community during the California Gold Rush of the 1850s that is widely regarded for its impressive orchestration and intensely dramatic vocal writing—will set the work in Colorado. Opera Colorado will partner with History Colorado, and the Denver Public Library to



develop a video backdrop for the story that includes historical photos reflecting the state's rich mining history (November 2016, Ellie Caulkins Opera House);

- The Colorado premiere of Laura Kaminsky's unique production *As One* will bring a fully staged opera outside of the Company's walls for the first time with a presentation in the L2 Church in Denver's Congress Park neighborhood. This new, 75-minute chamber opera depicts the experiences of its sole transgender protagonist, Hannah, as she endeavors to resolve the discord between herself and the outside world. Two singers, a baritone and a mezzo-soprano, together portray the character Hannah. The work is inspired in part by the life experiences of acclaimed filmmaker Kimberly Reed. (January 2017, L2 Church); and
- The season will close with a traditional Grand Opera production of Gaetano Donizetti's dark and tragic *Lucia di Lammermoor*—following a young woman's decline into madness as a result of a feud between her family and the man she loves (May 2017, Ellie Caulkins Opera House).

"Opera is continuing to evolve and our new season embraces the widening expanse of the genre," said Ari Pelto, Opera Colorado Music Director. "We are thrilled to be showcasing works by three composers representing very different musical periods and styles, and are at the same time engaging with our community in deeper and more meaningful ways—whether through an examination of Colorado's mining history, or by creating an intimate connection between performers and audiences in intimate, non-traditional spaces."

Opera Colorado's return to a three-production season is yet another major milestone for the Company, which is continuing to see pivotal growth and success from the completion of a restructuring campaign in 2013. In May 2016, Opera Colorado will present the world premiere of *The Scarlet Letter*—a new American opera composed by Lori Laitman, with libretto by David Mason. Earlier this year, the Company also announced the appointment of Ari Pelto as the first Music Director in its history. Opera Colorado preemptively embarked on a reorganization initiative in 2012 to address an operating deficit from lower-than-anticipated ticket sales and fundraising shortfalls. The reorganization included postponing the premiere of *The Scarlet Letter* by two years and moving to a two-production season, as well as introducing other measures to reduce operating overhead. Since the restructuring, Opera Colorado has garnered valuable support from the community, achieved higher-than-anticipated ticket sales and sold-out performances, and ended both the 2013 and 2014 fiscal years with surpluses.

"In January 2015, we embarked upon a strategic planning process to consider the future of the Company and how we can continue to serve our community in today's changing cultural environment," said Michael Bock, Chairman of Opera Colorado's Board of Directors. "Now, after extensive internal planning and with the help of our partners the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation and consultants WolfBrown, we are thrilled to stand on the threshold of the next five years with a clear vision of how to achieve that goal. I look forward to seeing the evolution of the Company as it expands its programming, builds initiatives to reach new audiences, and grows both its board and staff."



## Opera Colorado 2015-16 Season

### ***La Fanciulla del West***

**By Giacomo Puccini**

An Opera Colorado Production

November 5, 7, 10, 13, 2016

Ellie Caulkins Opera House

**Creative team:**

Ari Peltó	Conductor
Emma Griffin	Director

**Cast:**

Melissa Citro	Minnie
Mark Rucker	Jack Rance
Jonathan Burton	Dick Johnson
Michael Corvino	Jake Wallace
Harold Wilson	Ashby
Matthew de Battista	Nick

### ***As One***

**Music & Concept by Laura Kaminsky**

**Libretto by Mark Campbell & Kimberly Reed**

**Film by Kimberly Reed**

Colorado Premiere

January 26, 27, 28, 2017

L2 Church

1477 Columbine Street

### ***Lucia di Lammermoor***

**By Gaetano Donizetti**

Traditional Grand Opera Production

May 6, 9, 12, 14, 2017

Ellie Caulkins Opera House

**Creative team:**

Ari Peltó	Conductor
Keturah Stickann	Director

**Cast:**

Anna Christy	Lucia
Eric Barry	Edgardo
Timothy Mix	Enrico
Matthew Trevino	Raimondo



### **About Ari Peltó**

Ari Peltó was appointed the Opera Colorado's Music Director in spring 2015. He recently conducted the Company's 2014 production of *Madama Butterfly* and 2015 production of *Aida*, and is also set to conduct the world premiere of the new American opera *The Scarlet Letter* in 2016. Peltó is in demand at elite opera houses, ballets, symphonies and conservatories throughout the United States. After his highly praised 2004 debut at New York City Opera with Verdi's *La Traviata*, Peltó was engaged as a regular guest there, returning for *Madama Butterfly*, Jennifer Griffith's *The Dream President*, *La bohème* and *Carmen*. Recent highlights include *La bohème* with the Opera Theatre of St. Louis and the St. Louis Symphony; *The Cunning Little Vixen* at Chautauqua; *Rusalka* and *La bohème* at Boston Lyric Opera; *Romeo et Juliet* at Minnesota Opera; *The Magic Flute*, *Figaro* and *Hansel and Gretel* at Portland Opera; as well as *Carmen* and *Hansel and Gretel* at Utah Opera. He has also been a regular guest conductor of the Atlanta Ballet. In 2012, he collaborated with Twyla Tharp on the premiere of her new ballet, *The Princess and the Goblin*. Peltó has conducted operas of Mozart and Stravinsky at the Curtis Institute of Music, Gluck and Mozart at the Juilliard School, Puccini and Massenet at San Francisco Conservatory, and Stephen Paulus and Raffaello de Banfield at the Manhattan School of Music. At the Oberlin Conservatory, he has led works of Mahler, Mozart, and Poulenc, and at New York University, works of Sibelius, Brahms, Dvořák, and Martinu. He has also conducted in Italy, Germany, and Bulgaria. Peltó studied violin performance at Oberlin and conducting at Indiana University.

### **About Greg Carpenter**

The fourth General Director in Opera Colorado's 33-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, DC. 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, 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 feature sold out performances of *Aida* (November 7-15, 2015) and the world premiere of a new American opera, *The Scarlet Letter* (May 7-15, 2016). [www.operacolorado.org](http://www.operacolorado.org).

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