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Opera Colorado Announces Its 2023-24 Season

**Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* and Saint-Saëns’s *Samson and Delilah*
in grand, traditional productions at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House**

**A Brand-New Production of Wagner’s *The Flying Dutchman*
Designed by Alan E. Muraoka**

Denver, CO (January 26, 2023)—Opera Colorado announces its 2023-24 Season, featuring Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, a new production of Wagner’s *The Flying Dutchman*, and Saint Saëns’s *Samson and Delilah*.

“Our forty-first season offers something for opera lovers and the opera curious alike, including perennial favorites, epic tales, and evocative music,” says Greg Carpenter, The Ellie Caulkins General & Artistic Director. “I am thrilled to bring Wagner’s *The Flying Dutchman* to life for the first time since 1997 with a brand-new production and treat Opera Colorado audiences to the sensual beauty of Saint-Saëns’s *Samson and Delilah*, an opera that has not been presented by Opera Colorado in thirty-eight years. This is a season filled with great music that allows our Opera Colorado Orchestra and Chorus to share the spotlight with our incredible line-up of artists.”

“The 2023-24 Season brings such an outstanding variety of music to explore, each opera an incredible example of its genre,” says Ari Pelto, Music Director. “Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* is the quintessential classical masterpiece. Wagner marked the beginning of his epic orchestral output and first used his signature leitmotifs with *The Flying Dutchman*, and, finally, the lush romanticism of *Samson and Delilah* is unmatched. The upcoming season is a journey I am quite thrilled to take with our singers, musicians, and audiences.”

The season begins with an opulent production of Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* (November 4, 7, 10, and 12, 2023), conducted by Opera Colorado **Music Director Ari Pelto**. **Director David Lefkowich** returns to Opera Colorado with a take on this classic that seamlessly blends comedy and drama.

Full of Mozart's matchless music, *Don Giovanni* follows the devious schemes and hijinks of opera's most notorious womanizer. In the title role, returning to Opera Colorado after appearing as Figaro in *The Barber of Seville*, is **tenor Bruno Taddia**.

Bass Joshua Bloom, who the *New York Times* said, "lit up the stage whenever he was on it," appears as Don Giovanni's servant and sidekick Leporello. **Soprano Danielle Pastin**, "one of the most sheerly beautiful voices on the scene today" (*Opera News*), makes her Opera Colorado debut as Donna Anna and **soprano Ellie Dehn**, praised by critics as "a revelation" (*Chicago Sun-Times*), returns as Donna Elvira.

Singing the role of Don Ottavio, Donna Anna's noble fiancé, is **tenor Joshua Dennis**, who appeared as the Duke in Opera Colorado's 2022 production of *Rigoletto*. Rounding out the principal performers as the Commendatore is **bass Kevin Thompson**, making his Opera Colorado debut.

Don Giovanni was last performed at Opera Colorado in 2013. Sets for this production come from New Orleans Opera.

Following *Don Giovanni*, **Opera Colorado presents a new production of Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*** (February 24, 27, and March 1, 3, 2024) with Pelto on the podium. All-new sets and costumes will be designed by **Emmy-nominated art director E. Alan Muraoka**, with visuals inspired by graphic novels, and the production will be directed by Kathleen Belcher.

Icelandic baritone **Ólafur Sigurdarson**, who played the title role in Opera Colorado's 2018 production of *Falstaff*, returns to play the ghostly captain doomed to sail the ocean until he finds true love. In another Opera Colorado debut, **soprano Marcy Stonikas** brings her "huge, clear, commanding voice" (*Washington Times*) to the role of Senta, who believes she can break the Dutchman's curse.

The Flying Dutchman was last performed at Opera Colorado in 2008.

Closing our 2023-24 Season is Saint Saëns's epic *Samson and Delilah* (May 4, 7, 10, and 12, 2024), also **conducted by Pelto**, and directed by Keturah Stickann, who recently directed Opera Colorado's 2021 production of *Carmen*. Rachael Harding, who has choreographed several productions on our stage, lends her talents to the opera's epic dance sequences.

Samson, leader of the Hebrews, is a man of super-human strength. He has one true weakness, and it's the sultry Delilah's job to discover it and ensure victory for the Philistines. Leading the production in the two title roles are **tenor Rafael Davila**, who appeared as Cavaradossi in Opera Colorado's 2021 production of *Tosca*, and **mezzo-soprano Katharine Goeldner**, making her Opera Colorado debut.

Two Opera Colorado favorites return to round out the cast: **bass-baritone Nmon Ford** returns as the High Priest of Dagon after wowing audiences as Escamillo in Opera Colorado's 2022 production of *Carmen*, and **bass Christian Zarembo** returns as Abimelech off the heels of his portrayal of both Monterone and Sparafucile in our 2022 production of *Rigoletto*.

Samson and Delilah was last performed at Opera Colorado in 1987. The magnificent set comes to us from Pittsburgh Opera.

Season tickets for Opera Colorado's 2023-24 line-up are on sale now. To subscribe or renew, visit operacolorado.org or call the Opera Colorado Box Office at 303.468.2030.

Single ticket on-sale dates will be announced at a later time.

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ABOUT OPERA COLORADO

Opera Colorado has served as a cornerstone of Denver's cultural community since 1983. In addition to its mainstage performances at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House each season, the company affirms its commitment to the future of the art form by annually presenting new works; with its nationally recognized Artist in Residence Program that trains the next generation of opera performers; and in a typical season, reaching more than 45,000 students and adults through its many education and community engagement programs throughout the Rocky Mountain region. For more information, visit operacolorado.org.