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THE SANTA FE OPERA ANNOUNCES A CASTING UPDATE FOR *LA BOHÈME* OPENING JUNE 28

SANTA FE, NM — The Santa Fe Opera announces a casting update for *La bohème*, which opens the season on Friday, June 28. Nicaraguan-American soprano **Gabriella Reyes** will assume the role of Musetta, replacing **Kirsten MacKinnon**, who has withdrawn from the production for personal reasons. Reyes is a 2017 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions grand finalist and recently made her Metropolitan Opera debut as the High Priestess in *Aida*, followed by performances as First Lady in *The Magic Flute* and Nella in *Gianni Schicchi*. After Reyes's Santa Fe Opera debut, she will be heard as Liù in *Turandot* at the Metropolitan Opera and at the Bayerische Staatsoper in Marko Nikodijević and Marina Abramovic's *7 Deaths of Maria Callas*.

The cast of *La bohème* also features tenor **Mario Chang**, a native of Guatemala City in the role of Rodolfo, and the Colombian-American soprano **Vanessa Vasquez** in her company debut as Mimì. Chang made his Santa Fe Opera debut in 2017 as Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. He is a former member of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program at the Metropolitan Opera and holds an Advanced Diploma in Opera Studies from the Juilliard School. Vasquez is a winner of the 2017 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and completed a four-year residency at the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia. Additional cast members include baritone **Zachary Nelson** as Marcello and baritone **Will Liverman** in his company debut as Schaunard. Both are former Santa Fe Opera apprentice singers. Bass **Soloman Howard**, last seen on the Santa Fe Opera stage in 2018 as the Bonze in *Madame Butterfly*, returns in the role of Colline. Bass-baritone **Dale Travis** sings the roles of Benoit and Alcindoro.

Composed by Giacomo Puccini, *La bohème* tells the story of young bohemians searching for a sense of belonging in 19th century Paris. **Jader Bignamini** conducts this new production directed by **Mary Birnbaum**. Birnbaum, in her Santa Fe Opera debut, aims to capture authentic representations of the story's female bohemians. She notes, "As a woman, I'm thrilled to direct this, because I want the women to be complete characters, not symbols, who have a whole journey towards and away from social conventions."

THE 2019 SEASON

The 2019 Season, running from June 28 to August 24, presents five operas in 36 performances, a special Santa Fe Opera debut concert by celebrated American soprano **Renée Fleming** with the **Santa Fe Opera Orchestra** led by Music Director **Harry Bicket**, and two **Apprentice Scenes** performances. The 63rd Season, the first to be led by

General Director **Robert K. Meya**, Artistic Director **Alexander Neef**, and Music Director Harry Bicket, will explore classic works of the repertory as well as operas new to the Santa Fe Opera and the world's stage.

LA BOHÈME

MUSIC BY GIACOMO PUCCINI

LIBRETTO BY GIUSEPPE GIACOSA AND LUIGI ILICA

PREMIERED FEBRUARY 1, 1896, TEATRO REGIO, TURIN

12 PERFORMANCES: JUNE 28; JULY 3, 6, 12, 19 & 29; AUGUST 3, 7, 12, 17, 20 & 24, 2019

SUNG IN ITALIAN WITH OPERA TITLES IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH

A NEW SANTA FE OPERA PRODUCTION

LAST PERFORMED BY THE SANTA FE OPERA IN 2011

PRODUCTION SUPPORT GENEROUSLY PROVIDED BY JAMES R. SEITZ, JR.

CREATIVE TEAM

CONDUCTOR: **JADER BIGNAMINI**

DIRECTOR: **MARY BIRNBAUM***

SCENIC DESIGN: **GRACE LAUBACHER***

COSTUME DESIGN: **CAMELLIA KOO***

LIGHTING DESIGN: **ANSHUMAN BHATIA***

CHORUS MASTER: **SUSANNE SHESTON**

CAST

MIMI: **VANESSA VASQUEZ***

MUSETTA: **GABRIELLA REYES***

RODOLFO: **MARIO CHANG**

MARCELLO: **ZACHARY NELSON+**

SCHAUNARD: **WILL LIVERMAN*+**

COLLINE: **SOLOMAN HOWARD**

BENOIT/ALCINDORO: **DALE TRAVIS**

THE SANTA FE OPERA ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS

*Santa Fe Opera debut

+Former Santa Fe Opera Apprentice

2019 SEASON INFORMATION

PERFORMANCE START TIMES

June 28 — July 27, **8:30 PM** | July 29 — August 24, **8:00 PM**

APPRENTICE SCENES

Fully-staged scenes from the operatic repertory showcasing the remarkable talent of Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Singers and Technicians will be presented on two consecutive Sunday evenings, August 11 and 18, 2019.

FAMILY NIGHTS

Special performances of all five productions during the season are designated Family Nights, providing opportunities for families to attend mainstage performances. Prices for both adults and accompanying children are greatly discounted from regular ticket prices for the following performances: *The Pearl Fishers* on Saturday, June 29; *La bohème* on Saturday, July 6; *Jenůfa* on Friday, August 2; *Così fan tutte* on Tuesday, August 13; *The Thirteenth Child* on Wednesday, August 21. Visit [Family Nights](#) for more information.

2019 TICKETS & MORE

Tickets, Transportation, Tours, and Dining options are on sale online at santafeopera.org, by telephone 505-986-5900 (toll-free 800-280-4654), or in person at the Box Office.

The mission of the Santa Fe Opera is to advance the operatic art form by presenting ensemble performances of the highest quality in a unique setting with a varied repertory of new, rarely performed, and standard works; to ensure the excellence of opera's future through apprentice programs for singers, technicians, and arts administrators; and to foster an understanding and appreciation of opera among a diverse public.

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