



HAWAI'I OPERA THEATRE

THE TRAGEDY OF CARMEN

At the Blaisdell Concert Hall
February 18 & 20, 2022



THE TRAGEDY OF CARMEN

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Please take a moment to silence your devices.

Flash photography or video recording of any kind is strictly prohibited.



Facemasks must be worn at all times.



Aloha

Welcome to Hawai'i Opera Theatre's 2022 Season!

It's difficult to believe that our last performance at the Neal S. Blaisdell Concert Hall took place on February 18, 2020—exactly two years prior to our opening performance this season. As the final curtain came down on our critically acclaimed production of Mozart's delightful *The Marriage of Figaro*, we had no way of knowing that the Covid pandemic would shut everything down for so long. Indeed, the first case of Covid in Hawai'i wasn't reported until early March.

Yet here we are—despite continuing bumps along the way—finally gearing up to bring live opera back to the Blaisdell stage.

None of this would have been possible without the amazing dedication of our staff and board, and the outpouring of support from you, our HOT 'Ohana. You sustained us with your kokua—demonstrated through thought, word and deed—and with your unwavering belief that live performance is a vital part of what makes a community strong and complete. You followed us through our two-year journey of imagining what opera and opera-based education programs could be in the digital sphere. And we are a stronger company because of that learning process.

A huge part of the kokua shown to HOT has been the willingness of staff, board, artists and artisans, and patrons to take safety protocols seriously. I said at the start that my primary objective throughout the pandemic would be

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the creation of engaging experiences while keeping everyone as safe as possible. We had hoped the situation would be such that our mainstage return could take place last fall, and then again in late-January. Yet if there's one thing we've learned these past two years, it's that this virus is unpredictable and ever-changing. So, we continue to adapt with the goal of learning to live with something that will likely be a part of everyday life for years to come.

Mahalo nui loa for believing in your Hawai'i Opera Theatre. The company was founded in 1961 with the belief that opera is a relevant, transformative art-form for everyone, and that belief lives on today. With your continued kokua, HOT will thrive through the next 60 years and beyond.

With much aloha,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Morgan', written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrew Morgan
General Director

About Us

Opera has been part of island culture for more than a century. Its history in Hawai'i, which dates back to the 1850s, includes stories of Queen Emma singing in the chorus of Verdi's *Il Trovatore* while her husband, King Kamehameha IV served as the stage manager! Today, **Hawai'i Opera Theatre** is known for its vibrant and creative productions and award-winning education programs.

Since 1961, HOT—founded as a division of the Honolulu Symphony Society and incorporated in 1980—has enhanced the quality of life in Hawai'i by presenting opera performances and education programs of the highest standards. Celebrating 60 years as the only professional opera company in Hawai'i, HOT is one of the largest performing arts organizations in the state with performances and education presentations on all of the main islands. Each season, HOT's opera productions provide 10,000 audience members annually with access to internationally renowned artists, innovative design & direction, and cultural experiences that enrich the quality of life for Hawai'i residents. HOT's year-round educational programs serve as both catalyst and active participant in the artistic education of Hawai'i's youth, serving over 20,000 students, parents, and teachers each year.

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invites you to join us
for a cocktail reception to view the
Spring 2022 Eveningwear Caravan

Friday, February 25
4 to 6pm

Dress Collections
Level Two

The Caravan will be available for viewing
and shopping from February 24 - 27

Please respond by February 21
to **808.948.7575**

In compliance with local mandate,
proof of vaccination against COVID-19 will be required

THE TRAGEDY OF CARMEN

*Music by Georges Bizet
Adapted by Peter Brook*

CAST

Ashley Dixon*

Carmen

Kyle van Schoonhoven*

Don José

Christian Pursell*

Escamillo

ARTISTIC TEAM

Emily Senturia

Conductor

Karen Tiller

Director

Ronny Michael Greenberg*

Répétiteur/Coach

Brian Shevelenko

Lighting Designer

David Hunt

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Costume Designer

Maria Valdes*

Micaëla

Benoît Weber

Zuniga & Garcia

Joshua Habermann*

Lillas Pastia

Supernumery

Stephanie Conching

Michelle “Mei” Chibana

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Jamie Sanborn

Orchestra Personnel Manager

Tony Pisculli

Stage Fight Choreographer

**HOT Debut*

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Synopsis

THE TRAGEDY OF CARMEN (LA TRAGÉDIE DE CARMEN)

Seville, Spain | 1918

Micaëla, a young country girl, arrives in Seville looking for her childhood sweetheart, Don José. She brings him a letter from his mother. A gypsy, Carmen, throws a flower to the young corporal and sings a seductive love song.

The two girls fight and José's superior, Zuniga, appears. Unable to control Carmen, he orders José to take her to jail. En route, Carmen promises José that if he lets her escape she will meet him at the inn of her friend Lillias Pastia. José lets Carmen go, whereupon Zuniga locks him up and takes away the corporal's rank. Carmen arrives at the inn with stolen goods. Zuniga comes to see Carmen and offers money for her favors. Carmen accepts, but shortly thereafter José enters.

Carmen abandons Zuniga and sings for José. At this moment the bugles blow, summoning José back to the barracks. Carmen is furious and taunts him; the situation becomes tense. José discovers Zuniga, loses control and kills the officer.

The body is quickly hidden as Escamillo, a famous bullfighter, enters. Buying drinks all around, he announces that he, too, wants Carmen. José, jealous, picks a fight with Escamillo. Carmen separates them and Escamillo withdraws, inviting all to his next bullfight.



José, who has now killed for Carmen, sings of his love for her and they traverse to the mountains.

While they are sleeping, Garcia appears at the camp. He is Carmen's husband, though she has hidden his existence from José. The two men challenge each other and as they go off to fight, Carmen reads her tragic fate in the cards. The song ends, Garcia returns wounded and falls dead at Carmen's feet.

Micaëla appears again searching for José; the two women seem to understand each other. They sing while José, twice a murderer and abandoned by Carmen, flees. Carmen becomes Escamillo's mistress. José returns to persuade her to leave with him to start a new life. She refuses, knowing she is putting her life in jeopardy.

Escamillo is killed in the bullring. Carmen still refuses José's offer, but she goes with him as far as the place where the cards have foretold that she will die.

Director's Note

When Andrew and I first discussed *La Tragédie de Carmen*, I actually had never seen it. I knew about it, and thought, like many of you, that this version is just a “greatest hits” of the larger work by Bizet... no big chorus scenes, but all of the arias in a short, sweet package. As soon as I cracked the score, it was clear that I was mistaken...

Though familiar, the characters themselves are reimagined, and in many ways, go back to earlier sources of the tale of Carmen the Gypsy. José, Carmen, Micaëla...are all grittier, darker, more complex. Escamillo is not so self-assured and Pastia is no longer an affable tavern owner. There is a thread of desperation and death that snakes through all of these 90 minutes that doesn't truly appear until the end of Bizet's *Carmen*.

I kept coming back to the notion that *La Tragédie de Carmen* is more than a retelling, but is somehow a dramatic and musical deconstruction that forces us down an entirely different path...and this led me to the concept for this production.

We find ourselves in post-WWI Spain, the year 1918.

During the war, Spain remained neutral. Spain's military was in disarray, and there was, in certain sectors of the country, a “Wild West” feel to cities... with gun fire common in the streets. Spain had nothing to gain by entering into war, and with an already strained rule-of-law within its own borders,



politicians had no stomach to venture into the fray. The war did however, as throughout Europe, tear at the cultural fabric of society. Arms and munitions factories were quickly built and began feeding the weapons need of France. Traditional, simpler ways of life were rapidly dissolving into a thing of the past...crumbling into obscurity as the concept of the global stage was coming into being.

And, as we begin the third year of the COVID pandemic, we are all now aware that 1918 marked the official beginning of the global pandemic known as the Spanish Flu. Though it probably began earlier and elsewhere, spreading through the lingering field hospitals at the end of the war, the moniker has remained. This particular strain of virus truly decimated the youngest and healthiest of society. Many who survived the horrors of war succumbed to this terrible flu, with an estimated mortality of over fifty million worldwide.

It is within this historical context that we explore tonight's "opera noir." Societal structures and norms are crumbling, global economies are in disarray, and as we come to the end of our evening, a deadly virus stalks the streets of Seville.

I hope you will enjoy HOT's return to the Main Stage... I am deeply honored to be a part of such a momentous occasion.

Enjoy!



Karen Tiller
Stage Director





Shop new & gently used
designer clothing,
accessories &
household items.

ACT II

Hawai'i Opera Plaza

848 S. Beretania St., Suite 307
Thursdays 10am - 3pm

All proceeds support Hawai'i Opera Theatre

HOT Profiles

Ashley Dixon | Carmen

Hometown

Peachtree City, Georgia

Recent & Upcoming Productions

- Title Role, *Carmen* (Atlanta Opera)
- Title Role, *Lucrezia* (Opera Louisiane)
- Annio, *La clemenza di Tito* (The Ravinia Festival)
- Adalgisa, *Norma* (Festival Opera)

Career Highlights

- Sara, *Roberto Devereux* (Los Angeles Opera)
- Grand Finals winner of the 2018 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions
- San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship Program Alumna

HOT Debut

- Yes



Kyle van Schoonhoven | Don José

Hometown

Lockport, New York

Recent & Upcoming Productions

- Lancelot, *Le Roi Arthus* (Bard Music Festival)
- Loud Stone, *Eurydice* (The Metropolitan Opera)
- Laca, *Jenufa* (Opera de Rouen)
- Tenor Soloist, *Beethoven's 9th Symphony* (Oregon Symphony)

Career Highlights

- Grand Finals winner of the 2017 Metropolitan Opera National Council Competition
- Title Role, *Rienzi* (San Francisco Opera)
- San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship Program Alumnus

HOT Debut

- Yes



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Christian Pursell | Escamillo

Hometown: Santa Cruz, California

Recent & Upcoming Productions

- Escamillo, *Carmen* (Cincinnati Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis)
- Bass-Baritone, *Messiah* (San Francisco Symphony)
- Baritone, *Beethoven's 9th Symphony* (Arizona Musicfest)
- Lieutenant Ratcliffe, *Billy Budd* (San Francisco Opera)

Career Highlights

- 3rd Prize Winner in the 2021 James Toland Vocal Arts Competition
- Dandini, *La Cenerentola* (Merola Opera Program)
- San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship Program Alumnus

HOT Debut

- Yes



Maria Valdes | Micaëla

Hometown: Marietta, Georgia

Recent & Upcoming Productions

- Gilda, *Rigoletto* (Gulf Coast Symphony)
- Amy, *The Snowy Day* (Houston Grand Opera)
- Younger Alyce, *Glory Denied* (Atlanta Opera & Berkshire Opera Festival)
- Soprano Soloist, *Mahler's Symphony No. 4* (Georgia Symphony Orchestra)

Career Highlights

- San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship Program Alumna
- Doris Parker, *Yardbird* (Atlanta Opera)
- Diana, *Cruzar la cara de la luna* (New York City Opera)

HOT Debut

- Yes



Benoit Weber | Zuniga & Garcia

Hometown: Honolulu, Hawai'i

Recent & Upcoming Productions

- Nicky Arnstein, *Funny Girl* (Diamond Head Theatre)
- Head Servant, *La Traviata* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)

Career Highlights

- Hawaiian Airlines Pilot since 2019



- Music Teacher, Assets School, 2002-2014

HOT Debut

- *The Magic Flute* (February 2003)

Joshua Habermann | Lillas Pastia

Hometown: San Francisco, California

Recent & Upcoming Productions

- Chorus Director (Dallas Symphony Chorus)
- Artistic Director (The Desert Chorale, Santa Fe)
- Conductor, Mozart's *Requiem* (Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra)

Career Highlights

- GRAMMY® nominee, *Threshold of Night*, (Best Choral Recording & Best Classical Album)

HOT Debut

- Yes



Emily Senturia | Conductor

Hometown: San Francisco, California

Recent & Upcoming Productions

- Conductor, *La clemenza di Tito* (Opera Steamboat)
- Conductor, *Semele* (Opera Santa Barbara)
- Conductor, *Fellow Travelers* (Florida Grand Opera)
- Conductor, *Sky on Swings* (Opera Saratoga)

Career Highlights

- Music Director, *Denis & Katya* (Opera Philadelphia's O19 Festival)
- Mainstage Conducting Debut, *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Houston Grand Opera and Washington National Opera)
- Conductor, *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Wolf Trap Opera)

HOT Debut

- *La Traviata* (May 2019)



Karen Tiller | Director

Hometown: Honolulu, Hawai'i

Recent & Upcoming Productions

- Director, *Hometown to the World* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Director, *Three Decembers* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre, Livermore Valley Opera, and San Diego Opera)
- Commissioner-at-Large for the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts

Career Highlights

- Served as Executive Director of Opera Memphis & Hawai'i Opera Theatre
- Director, *The Turn of the Screw* (Opera Memphis)
- Director, *Orpheo et Euridice* (Opera Festival of New Jersey)

HOT Debut

- *Susannah* (February 2005)



Ronny Michael Greenberg | Répétiteur

Hometown: Montreal, Québec, CA

Recent & Upcoming Productions

- *The Dream of the Red Chamber* (San Francisco Opera)
- Co-Chair, Collaborative Piano Program (Hawai'i Performing Arts Festival)
- Co-Producer & Music Director, 2021 *Merola Virtual Gala*

Career Highlights

- Full Time Member - Music Staff (San Francisco Opera)
- CEO & Artistic Director (Taste of Talent)

HOT Debut

- Yes



Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra

Violin 1
Iggy Jang
Judy Barrett
Maile Reeves

Violin 2
Hung Wu
Darel Stark
Ki Won Kim

Viola
Steve Flanter
Sandra Wong

Cello
Sung Chan Chang
Josh Nakazawa

Bass
Matt Love

Flute 1
Claire Butin

Oboe 1
Scott Janusch

Clarinet 1
Jim Moffitt

Basoon 1
Phil Gottling

French Horn 1
Anna Lenhart

Trumpet 1
Casey Tamanaha

Trombone 1
Jason Byerlotzer

Timpani
Brad Davis

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Becca Laurito

Harp
Connie Uejio

Librarian
Kim Kiyabu

Orchestra Personnel Manager
Jamie Sanborn



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Brian Shevelenko

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Carol Kasamoto

Stage Manager
Emily Rose Carr Hunt

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Stephanie Conching

Lead Carpenter
Al Omo

Lead Electrician
Sandy Sandelin

Lead Flyman
Alema Ryder

Props Manager
Gen Boyer

Sound
Charles Roberts

Video
Skye Yee

Wardrobe Mistress
Pamela Gossage

IATSE Union Steward
Al Omo, Local 665

Running Crew
I.A.T.S.E. Local 665

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Joe Uahinui

Backstage Security Coordinator
Miu Lan Olan

Supertitles
Keenan Dolan



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Director of Education Programs

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Director of Advancement

Jamie Offenbach
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Director of Finance
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Paula Ho
Keith Kalway
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Susan E. Stahl

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Re-Emerging

HOT LIVE IN CONCERT

Celebrate the return to live opera with a program featuring selections from the most beloved works of opera and musical theater, including including *Faust*, *Lakmé*, *Norma*, *Rusalka*, *Samson and Delilah*, *Sweeney Todd*, *West Side Story* and more!

Created & Directed by Jamie Offenbach | Musical Direction by Timothy Shaindlin

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

Call 808-596-7858 or visit Tickets.HawaiiOpera.org
to reserve your seats.

Friday, March 11
7:30pm

Sunday, March 13
4:00pm

Blaisdell Concert Hall

HOT Education Outreach

Explore all of the ways HOT's education team provides access to live performance and arts education to our community year-round! Interested in having HOT come to your school or community group? Contact Troy Apostol, Education Operations Manager, at t_apostol@hawaiiopera.org.

OPERA EXPRESS

Each year, HOT's touring show brings child-friendly versions of popular operas directly into schools, libraries, and community centers on Oahu and the Neighbor Islands. The 45-minute show features talented artists, live piano accompaniment, a set, costumes, props, opportunities for audience participation, and more.

OPERA RESIDENCY

Let HOT turn your class, grade level, or entire school into a mini opera-production company! Through our award-winning program led by HOT's skilled Teaching Artists, students, faculty, and staff are coached to develop their own opera from concept to performance integrated with curriculum themes.

OPERA FOR EVERYONE

Students from K-12 and college, plus their teachers and families, can enjoy the final full orchestra dress rehearsal of each mainstage opera for just \$7. Teachers can integrate the performance into the classroom through provided materials connecting opera to literature, language, history, science, and math.

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MAE Z. ORVIS OPERA STUDIO

Now in its 22nd year, HOT's Mae Z. Orvis Opera Studio provides meaningful training and performance opportunities to local singers. Studio artists work with opera professionals and master coaches to develop vocal mastery, artistic repertoire and musical styles, language facility, audition skills, and business acumen. 2022-2023 auditions will be held on Saturday, April 9.

ORVIS YOUNG VOICES STUDIO

HOT's Orvis Young Voices Studio provides high school age singers in Hawai'i with the unique opportunity to explore the world of solo voice performance. Students work with HOT's professional staff, as well as master guest artists to improve their skills as performers in workshops ranging from vocal technique, diction, and repertoire to acting, movement and more.

OPERA PREVIEWS & LANAI LECTURES

Learn about the creators, story, and history behind each show through HOT's free panel discussions and guided lectures! HOT's 15-minute Lanai Lectures are held twice on performance days at the Blaisdell Concert Hall's Ward Avenue lanai at 60 and 30 minutes before curtain.

MAHALO TO THE HOT EDUCATION PROGRAM SUPPORTERS:

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For more than 60 years, Hawai'i Opera Theatre has played an integral role in our local community—providing dynamic and innovative programming for more than 10,000 audience members annually, as well as vital exposure to the performing arts and arts education for over 20,000 keiki and their families across the entire state. HOT is grateful for the many generous individuals committed to the future artistic and financial strength of the organization through planned giving.



Help us plan for the next 60 years and beyond! There are several ways to provide support to HOT in your legacy planning—explore the planned giving vehicle that works best for you.

Give to the future.

Please contact Kristen Lau-Grover at [808-596-7372](tel:808-596-7372) or by email at k_laugrover@hawaiiopera.org for more information.

If you have already named HOT as a beneficiary of your estate, please let us know so that we can recognize you now as a member of our Legacy Society and thank you for your future support!





Invites you to the

2022 Opera Ball

The Butterfly Emerges

Saturday, March 26 | 6pm

Sheraton Waikiki

2255 Kalakaua Ave

Tables & Tickets
ON SALE NOW!

Call **808-596-7858**
to reserve by
March 14

Henry Akina Fund

Henry Akina served as HOT’s Artistic Director from 1996 to 2017. To mark his 20 year legacy with HOT, The Henry Akina Tribute Fund was established in his honor. The income generated from the fund is used each year to sponsor a visiting director or opera production in Henry’s name. We are grateful to the following individuals who established the fund:

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RETURN TO TOP





Madame Butterfly

HOT's season comes to a stunning close with Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, one of opera's most beloved works. Japanese-Canadian Director, Aria Umezawa, tells the tale through the eyes of Trouble, Cio-Cio-San's son, returning as an adult to explore his Japanese heritage. Puccini's haunting score filled with unforgettable music of beauty and pathos will linger long after.

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

Call [808-596-7858](tel:808-596-7858) or visit Tickets.HawaiiOpera.org
to reserve your seats.

Friday, April 8
7:30pm

Sunday, April 10
4:00pm

Tuesday, April 12
7:30pm

Blaisdell Concert Hall

Events

From grand operas to pop up performances, fashion shows & more, save the date for these exciting events!

Spring 2022 Eveningwear Caravan
Neiman Marcus | Ala Moana

Cocktail Reception + Shopping Preview Event
Friday, February 25 | 4-6pm
Free | RSVP by Feb 21 at 808.948.7575



Studio 101 Pop Up: Concert & Couture
Hawai'i Opera Plaza | 848 S. Beretania
Introducing Collection CHŌ by Anne Namba
Wednesday, March 2 | 6pm
\$40 | Tickets.HawaiiOpera.org



Re-Emerging: HOT Live in Concert
Blaisdell Concert Hall
90 minutes | No Intermission
Friday, March 11 | 7:30pm
Sunday, March 13 | 4pm
Tickets start at \$30 | Tickets.HawaiiOpera.org



Orvis Young Voices Recital
Location TBD
A showing of HOT's Young Artist Talent
Sunday, March 13 | 4pm
Free | RSVP by March 11 at _____



Miseno Jewelry Trunk Show
Neiman Marcus | Ala Moana
Portion of proceeds benefit Hawai'i Opera Theatre
Thursday, March 24 - Sunday, March 27
Free



2022 Opera Ball: The Butterfly Emerges
Sheraton Waikiki Hotel

Don't miss the cultural event of the spring!

Saturday, March 26 | 6pm

Single Tickets & Tables Available | Call 808. 596. 7858



Opera for Everyone: Madame Butterfly
Blaisdell Concert Hall

Full Orchestra Student Dress Rehearsal

Wednesday, April 6 | 7pm

\$7 Tickets for Student Groups | Call 808. 596. 7858



Madame Butterfly
Blaisdell Concert Hall

3 hours | One Intermission

Friday, April 8 | 7:30pm

Sunday, April 10 | 4pm & Tuesday, April 12 | 7:30pm

Tickets start at \$30 | Tickets.HawaiiOpera.org

