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OPERA
IN THE PARK PORTLAND
EST. 2003

Presents

**GIUSEPPE VERDI'S
LA TRAVIATA**

Sunday, August 4, 2024, 6 to 8pm, Peninsula Park, Portland, Oregon

Featuring



Aubry Ballarò
Soprano



César Delgado
Tenor



Luis Ledesma
Baritone



DeAndre Simmons
Base-baritone



Jocelyn Claire Thomas
Soprano



Brandon Michael
Tenor



Keith Clark
Artistic Director



Nicholas Fox
Conductor

With the
OPERA IN THE PARK Portland Chorus and Orchestra



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ARTIST PROFILES

KEITH CLARK, Artistic Director

Co-Founder of **OPERA IN THE PARK Portland**, Keith Clark is internationally active as a conductor, composer and recording artist. He was awarded the prestigious American Prize for Artistic Excellence for the Pacific Northwest premiere of Alban Berg's *Wozzeck*. In Russia, he was named Principal Guest Conductor of the Siberian State Philharmonic, where he led the prize-winning Russian premiere of *West Side Story*. His festival appearances include Bucharest, Budapest, Los Angeles, Salzburg, Seoul, Siena, Switzerland, and Vienna, and he is featured on recordings with the London Philharmonic, Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Slovak Philharmonic, Korean Symphony and others which have received Grammy nominations and numerous awards. Following many years in Europe, he returned to found the Pacific Symphony Orchestra in California and remains its Conductor Laureate.

NICHOLAS FOX, Conductor

Described by Oregon Arts Watch as "...a flipping genius," conductor Nicholas Fox has served as Assistant Conductor and Chorus Master at Portland Opera since the fall of 2013. During his tenure at Portland Opera, he has conducted five mainstage productions, numerous chamber opera performances, and countless concerts, in repertoire ranging from Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* to Philip Glass's *In The Penal Colony*. In 2019, Fox stepped in at the last moment, without rehearsal, to lead a triumphant opening night performance of Portland Opera's production of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. Upcoming engagements include Fox's debut with Oregon Ballet Theater, where he will conduct OBT's annual Christmastime production of Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*, and his debut at New Orleans Opera, where he will conduct its April, 2025 production of Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*. He will then immediately return to Oregon to conduct Portland Opera's May, 2025 production of Verdi's *Falstaff*, the opera after which Fox named his beloved cat.

AUBRY BALLARÒ, Soprano - Violetta Valéry

Quickly gaining attention as a lyric coloratura soprano with exceptional Bel Canto technique, Ms. Ballarò made her international debut in the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* with State Opera Stara Zagora in Bulgaria in 2022. She also joined The Princeton Festival as "Madame Herz" in Mozart's *L'impresario*. In 2023 she returned to State Opera Stara Zagora as "Violetta" in *La Traviata*, and debuted the role of "Gilda" in *Rigoletto* with Opera Columbus. She has appeared with Festival de Musique de Saint Barthélemy, as "Micaëla" in *Carmen*. Recent highlights include Mozart's *Mass in C minor* with the Columbus Symphony, Mozart's *Requiem* with Sofia Philharmonic, and "Konstanze" in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* with Opera Grand Rapids. For more, visit: aubryballaro.com

CÉSAR DELGADO, Tenor - Alfredo Germont

Mexican-born César Delgado has been praised for his "generous, lustrous tenor" and "committed, energetic acting" by Opera News. Past highlights include "Arcadio" cover in *Florencia en el Amazonas* at the Metropolitan Opera, "Edgardo" in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Regensburg Theater, "The Duke" in *Rigoletto* with New Orleans Opera, and "Pinkerton" in *Madama Butterfly* with Santander Theater. This season's engagements include "Rodolfo" in *La Bohème* with the Mexican National Opera Company and San Diego Opera, "Edgardo" in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Nashville Opera, and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* at the Santander Theater. He will also cover "Rodolfo" with the Bravo Vail Festival under the baton of maestro Yannick Nezet-Seguín. For more, visit: cesar-delgado.com

LUIS LEDESMA, Baritone - Giorgio Germont, his father

Baritone Luis Ledesma frequently portrays heroes and villains of Puccini, Verdi, and the Bel Canto masters, as well as new works including *Florencia en el Amazonas* and *El pasado nunca se termina* (Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, San Diego Opera, and New York City Opera). Recent engagements include "Scarpia" in *Tosca* with Opera Colorado, the title role in *Gianni Schicchi* with On Site Opera, the "Payador" in *Maria de Buenos Aires* with Kentucky Opera, and "Tonio" in *Pagliacci* with Sacramento Symphony. Last season, Mr. Ledesma sang the title role in *Rigoletto* with **OPERA IN THE PARK Portland**, in concert with Opera Omaha, and with South Florida Symphony for Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*. For more, visit: luisledesmabaritone.com, uiaalent.com/artists3/luis-ledesma

DEANDRE SIMMONS, Bass-baritone - Marchese d'Obigny / Baron Douphol / Dottore Grenvil

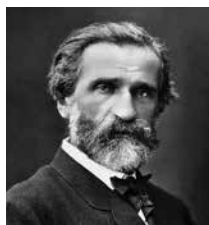
American bass-baritone DeAndre Simmons, has performed with opera houses and orchestras in the US, EU, CAN, and the UK, regularly performing the works of Handel, Mozart, Rossini, Verdi, and Wagner. In addition to operatic roles, DeAndre often performs in plays and musicals. Spending years under the tutelage of Barbara Cook, he frequently sings the music of the American Songbook in pops concerts and cabarets. DeAndre's 2024/2025 season includes the "Narrator" in *Every Brilliant Thing* (CCA Theatre), "Marchese/Baron" in *La Traviata* (OPP), "Sweeney Todd" in *Sweeney Todd* (SDMT), "Mr. Laurence" in *Little Women*, "First Soldier" in *Salome*, and "Marchese" in *La Traviata* (San Diego Opera). DeAndre is an alumnus of The Curtis Institute of Music, pupil of Fred Carama, and protégé of James Morris and Barbara Cook. For more, visit: DeAndreSimmons.org, Instagram: @DeAndresVoice

JOCELYN CLAIRE THOMAS, Soprano - Flora Bervoix / Annina

Praised for her "staggeringly brilliant...ethereal soprano" (The Source) Jocelyn Claire Thomas has engaged audiences with her haunting sound, musical intelligence, and unusual versatility. Recent highlights include Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with the Salem Philharmonia Orchestra, "Amore" in *Orpheus & Eurydice* with Inland Northwest Opera, and Soprano Soloist in Dvorak's *Stabat Mater* with Festival Chorale Oregon. Some upcoming engagements include "Adina" in *L'elisir d'amore* with Ping & Woof Opera, *Lovers & Lieder* with the Ascension Salon Series, and "Amor" in *Paride ed Elena* with Puget Sound Concert Opera. Ms. Thomas holds degrees in Vocal Performance from the Oberlin Conservatory (B.M.) and the Peabody Conservatory (M.M. & G.P.D.). For more, visit: jocelynclairethomas.com, @jocelynclairethomas

BRANDON MICHAEL, Tenor - Gastone

Brandon Michael has been recognized for his beautiful and versatile tenor voice. Brandon is regularly heard with Portland's Resonance Ensemble and the Portland Symphonic Choir. He was Tenor Soloist for Rachmaninov's *Vespers*, understudy for Puccini's *Messa Di Gloria* with Vancouver Symphony, and also appeared as the Tenor Soloist in Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the Spokane Symphony. He has been a chorus member with Portland Opera since 2022. In 2023, Brandon sang "Agenore" in Mozart's *Il Re Pastore* with Orpheus PDX. Upcoming engagements include "Nemorino" in Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore* with Ping & Woof Opera. For more, visit: brandonmichaeltenor.com



GIUSEPPE VERDI, Composer (1813–1901)

Verdi was one of the world's greatest operatic composers. His instincts for melody and thrilling drama have ensured the enduring popularity of many of his 28 operas. Three of his operas (*La Traviata*, *Rigoletto*, and *Aida*) are consistently performed 300 to 400 times a year worldwide. In Italy, Verdi is a national hero. “Va, pensiero” (Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves) from *Nabucco*, helped unify the population at the time it was written in 1842, and has become Italy's second, unofficial, national anthem. His funeral was attended by more people (300,000) than any event in the history of Italy.

ORCHESTRA

1st VIOLIN

Margaret Bichteler
Jeong Yoon Lee
Elizabeth Peyton
Lucie Zalesakova
Ann Medellin
Tatiana Kolchanova

2nd VIOLIN

Jennifer Estrin
Ainur Zabenova
Irene Gadeholt
Nicholas Price
Joy Fabos
Heather Mastel
Lipson

VIOLA

Amanda Grimm
Matt Ross
Hillary Oseas
Maia Hoffman

CELLO

Kenneth Finch
Seth Biagini
David Eby
Toni Gan

DOUBLE BASS

Jason Schooler
Christopher Kim

FLUTE/PICCOLO

Emily Stanek

OBOE

Victoria Racz

CLARINET

Todd Kuhns
Jennifer Crockett

BASSOON

Daniel Yim

HORN

Jennifer Harrison
Rebecca Olason

TRUMPET

Logan Brown

TROMBONE

Li Kuang

TIMPANI

Ian Kerr

PERCUSSION

Kevin Schlossman

CHORUS

SOPRANO

Kari Burgess
Aimee Chalfant
Maria Collinsworth
Megan Conroy
Lindsey Leffer
Maria Ma
Emily Nelson DesRochers
Lily Pounders
Dru Rutledge
Erin Mikelle Walker

MEZZO

Annika Bell
Barbara Berger
Nan Haemer
Anna Jablonski
Allison Knotts
Kate Maresh
Lisa Neher
Mila Ortiz
Haley Reviere
Grace Weaver

TENOR

Doug Bom
Jonah Braun
Jere Burkholder
Jim Jeppesen
Jackson Keene
Will Keene
Aaron Lange
Michael McDonald
Avesta Mirashrafi
Paul Wright

BASS

Gregory Brumfield
Quinton Gardner
Dan Gibbs
Arne Hartmann
Tim Lafolette
Brian Langford
Pascal Matheis
Linh Nguyen
Paul Sadilek
Lincoln Thomas

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Jason Schooler
Jocelyn Claire Thomas
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Librarians

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Production Manager

Agnieszka Laska
Stage Manager

Evan Paul
Rehearsal Pianist

Jason Schooler
Orchestra Manager

Jocelyn Claire Thomas
Chorus Manager

SYNOPSIS OF LA TRAVIATA

ACT I

Violetta meets Alfredo at a party she is hosting. Apparently he has been enquiring after her health every day while she has been ill. She asks him to give a toast. He sings of true love, while Violetta responds in praise of freedom. She is touched by his candid manner and honesty, but believes there is no place for such feelings in her life. Alone, Violetta is torn by conflicting emotions—she doesn't want to give up her way of life, but feels Alfredo has awakened her desire to be truly loved.

ACT II

Violetta has chosen a country life with Alfredo. She receives an invitation to Flora's party, but no longer cares for such distractions. In Alfredo's absence, his father, Giorgio Germont, pays her a visit. He demands that she separate from his son. He slowly convinces her that their relationship has no future, and she finally agrees to leave Alfredo. She accepts the invitation to Flora's party and writes a goodbye letter to Alfredo. He returns, and while he is reading the letter, his father appears to console him. However, all the memories of home can't prevent jealous Alfredo from seeking revenge for Violetta's betrayal.

INTERMISSION

At Flora's party, news has spread of Violetta and Alfredo's separation. Violetta and her new lover, Baron Douphol, arrive. Alfredo and the Baron battle at the gaming table and Alfredo wins a fortune. Alone, Alfredo confronts Violetta, who claims to be in love with the Baron. Enraged, Alfredo calls everyone in and declares that he doesn't owe Violetta anything, throwing his winnings at her. Germont, who has witnessed the scene, rebukes his son for his behavior. The Baron challenges Alfredo to a duel.

ACT III

Violetta is dying. Her last remaining friends, Annina and Doctor Grenvil, know she has only a few hours to live. Germont has written to Violetta, informing her that he told Alfredo about her sacrifice. Alfredo plans to return, but Violetta fears he will be too late. He arrives in time and the reunion fills Violetta with a final euphoria. Her energy and exuberant joy of life return. All sorrow and suffering seem to have left her—a final illusion, before death claims her.

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OPERA IN THE PARK Portland's mission is to enrich the cultural life of the Portland community by providing professional opera performances of high artistic quality to the public free of charge.

OPERA IS FOR EVERYONE!

After over 20 years of performing in Washington Park, OPERA IN THE PARK Portland brings *La Traviata* to THE EAST SIDE this year in the historic Peninsula Park. Since 2003, we have presented FREE opera to 60,000 in the metro area.

OPERA IN THE PARK Portland is a non-profit 501(c)3 and relies on donations from supporters like you.

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Visit our Information Tent for programs or to make a tax-deductible donation to help us continue to bring FREE opera to our community. Donor envelopes are available and credit cards are accepted. Or you can use PayPal on our website: operaintheparkportland.org

Opera in the Park Portland, PO Box 4084, Portland OR 97208

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Fill out a survey and enter a drawing to win one of three (3) \$50 Visa Gift Cards! Surveys can be found at the OPERA IN THE PARK Portland Info Tent or online. Survey closes at midnight, August 11. Winners will be notified by email, August 14.



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