

OPERA

IN THE PARK PORTLAND

EST. 2003

Presents

GEORGES BIZET'S CARMEN

Sunday, July 27, 2025, 6 to 8pm, Peninsula Park, Portland, Oregon



With the
OPERA IN THE PARK Portland Chorus and Orchestra
and special guests
ESPACIO FLAMENCO

*This concert would not be possible without the vision and
dedication of our co-founder, Keith Clark*



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ARTIST PROFILES



SANDRA PIQUES EDDY, Mezzo-soprano - Carmen

Mezzo-soprano Sandra Piques Eddy is a 2000 New England Regional Winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and made her Metropolitan Opera debut in 2001, singing roles including “Cherubino” in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, “Lola” in *Cavalleria rusticana*, “Zulma” in *L’italiana in Algeri*, “Mercédès” in *Carmen*, “Olga” in *The Merry Widow*, and “Fiona” in *Two Boys*, among others. A highlight of Miss Eddy’s career is her work in Japan: invited by Maestro Seiji Ozawa, she appeared at his Tokyo Music Academy in the title role of *Carmen*, and toured with the production in two separate seasons. She made her UK debut at Opera North as “Carmen”, and appeared with New Zealand Opera as “Rosina” in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Recent appearances include “Desiree” in *A Little Night Music* at Opera North UK, “Maddalena” in *Rigoletto* at Opera Colorado, “Paula” in *Florença en el Amazonas* at Nashville Opera, and a role debut as “Dorothee” in *L’amant Anonyme* at Boston Lyric Opera. For more, visit: sandrapiqueseddy.com



AUBRY BALLARÒ, Soprano - Micaëla

Lyric coloratura soprano praised for her strong belcanto technique, Aubry Ballarò most recently reprised the role of Violetta in *La traviata* in Portland (Opera in the Park), made her role debuts as Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* (Princeton Festival), Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and Adina in *L’elisir d’amore* (Opera Grand Rapids). In 2022 she made her international debut as Lucia di Lammermoor with State Opera Zagora (Bulgaria), in 2023 she debuted Gilda in *Rigoletto* at Opera Columbus. She sang Micaëla in *Carmen* at Festival de Musique de Saint Barthélemy. Her latest performances include opera gala at Auditorio Nacional de Música in Madrid, Mozart’s *Mass in C minor* with Columbus Symphony. For more, visit: aubryballaro.com



LAWRENCE BARASA, Tenor - Don José

This season, tenor Lawrence Barasa made his Annapolis Opera debut as “Alfredo” in *La traviata*, joined Eugene Opera for a recital, and will sing “Don José” in *Carmen* with OPERA IN THE PARK Portland. In 2025-2026, Mr. Barasa joins the Metropolitan Opera roster, covering “Remendado” in *Carmen*. He was a recent Apprentice Artist with the Santa Fe Opera, and has appeared at Carnegie Hall in Joyce DiDonato’s Masterclass. Roles include “Spoletta” in *Tosca* with Eugene Opera, “Don Basilio” and “Don Curzio” in *Le nozze di Figaro* with the Astoria Music Festival, “Rodolfo” in *La bohème* and “Don Ottavio” in *Don Giovanni* with the Maryland Opera Studio, and the title role in *Les contes d’Hoffmann* and “Don José” in *La Tragedie de Carmen* with the University of Oregon. For more, visit: lawrencebarasa.com



LUIS LEDESMA, Baritone - Escamillo

Baritone Luis Ledesma has established a reputation worldwide as a “rich and controlled baritone” (Opera News). He has appeared at Teatro alla Scala, Liceu Barcelona, Klangbogen Festival, Koeln Oper, Bellas Artes Mexico City, Semperoper Dresden, Oviedo, Savonlinna Festival, Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Atlanta Opera, Washington National Opera and NYCO Opera. Mr. Ledesma’s repertoire includes over 65 roles. He frequently portrays the heroes and villains of Puccini, Verdi and the bel canto masters as well as roles in newer works in Spanish. Upcoming engagements include “Scarpia” in *Tosca* with The Princeton Festival. Mr. Ledesma is on the voice faculty of the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia, the Curtis Institute, and the Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Young Artist. For more, visit: luisledesmabaritone.com



QUINTON GARDNER, Bass-baritone - Zuniga/Moralès/Dancaire

Quinton Gardner is a bass-baritone, recording artist, producer, multi-instrumentalist, and heavy metal vocalist based in Portland, OR. He has sung with Portland Opera, Renegade Opera, Ping & Woof Opera, and Resonance Ensemble. In 2022 he performed in the world premiere of Damien Geter’s *An African American Requiem* with Resonance Ensemble, as well as the subsequent performance at the Kennedy Center. In 2023 he appeared as “Reverend Billy Noble” in Renegade Opera’s production *Adam’s Run*. In 2025, Mr. Gardner sang the role of “Dick Hallorann” in Portland Opera’s production of *The Shining*. Quinton studied voice under his father, bass-baritone Jake Gardner. He maintains a small, local, private voice teaching studio. For more, visit: gardnerianarts.com



JOCELYN CLAIRE THOMAS, Soprano - Frasquita

Praised for her “staggeringly brilliant...ethereal soprano” (The Source) Jocelyn Claire Thomas has engaged audiences with her haunting sound, musical intelligence, and unusual versatility. She has sung more than 40 operatic roles with Portland Opera, Tacoma Opera, Eugene Opera, Inland Northwest Opera, Puget Sound Concert Opera, Opera Theater Oregon, OperaBend, Brava Opera Theater, Cascadia Chamber Opera, Opera in the Park Portland, and others. Recent solo highlights include “Eliza” in *Dark Sisters* with Eugene Opera, Soprano Soloist in Dvorak’s *Stabat Mater* with Festival Chorale Oregon, “Amor” in *Paride ed Elena* with Puget Sound Concert Opera, and Soprano Soloist in Beethoven’s *Symphony No. 9 & Choral Fantasy* with the Willamette Master Chorus. For more, visit: jocelyncleithomas.com



ANNA JABLONSKI, Mezzo-soprano - Mercédès

American mezzo-soprano Anna Jablonski is known for her distinctive timbre, compelling stage presence, and interpretive depth. A former Resident Artist with Minnesota Opera and a San Francisco Opera Merola Program Studio Artist, she has performed roles with LA Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, and Glyndebourne Festival Opera, and appeared in the world premiere and recording of *The Grapes of Wrath* at Minnesota Opera. She has sung at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and the BBC Proms, and worked with renowned conductors including Plácido Domingo, Vladimir Jurowski, and Helmuth Rilling. A three-time Regional winner of the Metropolitan Opera Auditions, Anna now resides in Portland, Oregon, where she balances her love of performance with a full-time career as a Professional School Counselor.



JOHN BOELLING, Tenor - Remendado

John Boelling hails from Astoria, Oregon and has been living and growing a family in the NE Cully neighborhood since 2006. He is thrilled to be joining Opera in the Park for this wonderful community summer event. John is a voice teacher, tenor soloist, member of the Portland Opera Chorus, and director of two local choirs, The St. John’s Singers at Cathedral Park Performing Arts Collective, and the West Hills Unitarian Universalist Choristers. This year, John is excited to be performing the role of Dr. Cajus in Portland Opera’s production of *Falstaff*. Other favorite performances include the Mosquito & Schoolmaster in *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Opera Theater of Oregon), Kaspar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (Vancouver Children’s Opera), Dr. Blind in *Die Fledermaus* (Eugene Opera), and quartet member in *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris* (Key City Public Theater).



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 *Lelisir 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.



GEORGES BIZET, Composer (1838–1875)

Georges Bizet was a French composer best known for *Carmen*, one of the most frequently performed and influential operas in musical history. Born in Paris, Bizet was a child prodigy who entered the Conservatoire at age nine and won the Prix de Rome in 1857. Although he wrote several operas and orchestral works, most received little recognition during his lifetime. *Carmen*, with its bold realism and unforgettable melodies, was controversial at its 1875 premiere, but later became a staple of the operatic canon. Bizet died suddenly at age 36, unaware of the lasting impact his compositions would have on the world of music.

ORCHESTRA

1st VIOLIN

Keiko Araki
Jeong Yoon Lee
Lily Burton
Tatiana Kolchanova
Clarisse Atcherson
Irene Gadeholt

2nd VIOLIN

Janet Dubay
Casey Bozell
Ainur Zabenova
Nicholas Price
Lynne Finch
Jamie Chimchirian

VIOLA

Amanda Grimm
Maia Hoffman
Adam Hoornstra
Kim Burton

CELLO

Kenneth Finch
Toni Gan
David Eby
Jae Choi

DOUBLE BASS

Jason Schooler
Andrew Harmon

FLUTE

Alicia Paulsen
Sarah Tiedemann

OBOE

Victoria Racz

CLARINET

Todd Kuhns
Jennifer Crockett

BASSOON

Samuel Rhoton

HORN

Daniel Partridge
Rebecca Olason

TRUMPET

Bruce Dunn
James Smock

TROMBONE

Li Kuang

TIMPANI

Kevin Schlossman

PERCUSSION

Wanyue Ye
Gordon Rencher

HARP

Denise Fujikawa

CHORUS

SOPRANO

Gina Adorno
Kari Burgess
Maria Collinsworth
Megan Conroy
Emily Nelson DesRochers
Maria Ma
Cristina Marino
Dru Rutledge
Erin Mikelle Walker
Katie Wingo

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Annika Bell
Emma Cowell
Alishia Garcia
Sarah Maines
Rachel Mast Mohr
Mila Ortiz
Haley Reviere
Kate Strohecker
Michelle Talal
Sheryl Wood

ESPACIO FLAMENCO

Nela McGuire
Lillie Last

TENOR

Doug Bom
Jonah Braun
Jere Burkholder
Scot Crandal
Jim Jeppesen
Will Keene
Shane Magargal
Brandon Michael
Avesta Mirashrafi
Jared Young

BASS

Gregory Brumfield
Quinton Gardner
Arne Hartman
Tim Lafolette
Brian Langford
Pascal Matheis
Linh Nguyen
Paul Sadilek
Patrick Scofield
Lincoln Thomas

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Rehearsal Pianist

Agnieszka Laska

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Jason Schooler

Orchestra Manager

Jocelyn Claire Thomas

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SYNOPSIS OF CARMEN

ACT I

Outside a cigarette factory in Seville, soldiers lounge around while townspeople pass by. Enter Micaëla, a sweet village girl with a message (and a kiss) from Corporal Don José’s mother. But everything changes when Carmen, a bold and free-spirited factory worker, struts onto the scene. She sings the famous “Habanera” and has every man’s attention, including José’s. After Carmen gets into a fight at the factory, José is ordered to arrest her, but she flirts her way out of it, and he lets her escape.

ACT II

At a tavern, Carmen and her friends Frasquita and Mercédès are drinking and dancing. Enter Escamillo, a charismatic bullfighter who sings about his fame and flirts with Carmen. José shows up, freshly released from jail, and Carmen expects him to prove his love. He does, by abandoning his military post after a scuffle with his superior. Now on the run, José joins Carmen and a band of smugglers led by Le Dancaire and Le Remendado.

ACT III

In the mountains, tensions rise. Carmen and José are constantly arguing. He’s still head over heels while Carmen is getting bored. Frasquita and Mercédès use fortune-telling cards which show them fortune and love, while also hinting that Carmen’s fate might not be so sunny. Micaëla sneaks into the smugglers’ camp to find José, and begs him to return home to his dying mother. Meanwhile, Escamillo shows up looking for Carmen, and almost ends up in a duel with José. José eventually leaves with Micaëla, but not before vowing to come back.

ACT IV

Back in Seville, the crowd gathers to watch Escamillo’s bullfight. Carmen arrives on his arm, radiant and fearless. Her friends warn her that José is lurking nearby, but she refuses to hide. José confronts her outside the arena, begging her to come back. Carmen refuses. Rejected and desperate, José stabs her. The crowd cheers the bullfight as José confesses to Carmen’s murder.

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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.

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After over 20 years of performing in Washington Park, OPERA IN THE PARK Portland brings *Carmen* 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, Carmen t-shirts and Opera in the Park canvas bags, or to make a tax-deductible donation! 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

ENTER TO WIN A \$50 GIFT CARD!

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 3. Winners will be notified by email, August 10.



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