For Immediate Release

THE SANTA FE OPERA

The Santa Fe Opera Announces
86 Exceptional Apprentice Technicians
for the 2023 Season

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Santa Fe, NM — The Santa Fe Opera is pleased to announce the 86 members of its 2023 Apprentice Program for Theater Technicians. Selected from a pool of exceptional international candidates, these young artists bring a wave of fresh creativity and technical expertise to the opera industry. Each season at the SFO, the Apprentice Technicians perform backstage functions within one of eight separate crews: Audio/Visual, Costumes, Electrics, Production/Music Services, Properties, Scenic Arts, Stage Crew, and Wigs and Makeup. The crews carry out the majority of work on daily changeovers between the season’s operas and fill positions crucial to the live-running of productions. With their collective passion, skill and unwavering commitment, the Santa Fe Opera stage is set for an extraordinary 2023 Festival Season of five new productions. Tracy Armagost, Santa Fe Opera Production and Recruiting Coordinator, facilitates the program including recruitment, hiring and programming numerous masterclasses, director/designer presentations, and an annual portfolio fair. Tracy says, “We are delighted to welcome the class of 2023 technical apprentices to the Santa Fe Opera. The future of live performance is in good hands with these talented artists and technicians who are willing to learn, work hard and contribute daily. It is an honor to work with them and watch them grow into their roles as part of our production team.”

In addition to mainstage opera presentations, the technical and singing apprentices will produce two special evenings of Apprentice Scenes on August 13 and 20, 2023, at 8:00 pm, in which they showcase their artistry to the public. Each technical apprentice also has the opportunity to work with the company's production staff of experienced designers, master technicians and craftspeople from theaters, opera companies and universities across the globe.
2023 Technical Apprentices

Audio Visual
Rubysella Erickson, Texas
Sam Henry, North Carolina
Ringisai Anesu Anselem
Mapondera, Zimbabwe
Bennett Riley, New Mexico

Costumes
Jordan Augusto, Florida
Aurora Azbill, Ohio
Gray Covert, Colorado
Ember E. Cuddy, Montana*
TyQuia Fountain, Maryland
Ava Francisco, New Mexico
Rebecca Gardner, Minnesota*
Emma Rose Harrison, New Mexico
Courtney Hatch, Arizona
Maddie James, Colorado
HuiXue (Diana) Kang, China
Cullen Keogh, North Carolina
Kate Larson, Minnesota
Alex Ledbetter, Oklahoma
Grigori Malakhov, Poland
Kaia Mortensen, Texas
Sebastian Newell, New York
Michael O’Herron, Massachusetts
Matthew Palacios, Virginia
Azaria Jade Rubio, Maryland
Zoe Selesnick, New Jersey
Shelby Smith, Kentucky
Asia Weiss, Florida*
Caroline A. Zaltron, Brazil*

Electrics
Eric Dahlgren, Michigan
Micah Dominguez-Schatz, Canada
Gabriel J. Hrin, Ohio*
Will Loconto, Texas
Amelia Ludt, California*
Brianna Maruco, Missouri
Braden Pauley, Oklahoma
Emily Poole, Washington
Josie Rocca, Ohio
Maddy Uecker, North Dakota

Production Services
Liam Hurley, New Mexico
Olivia Kaye, New York
Jordyn Paul, Texas
Kordelia Taylor, Iowa
Grace Wright, North Dakota

Properties
Brittany Conyers, Texas
Vance Cook, Arizona
Lauren Eckard, North Carolina*
Sam Forrest, New Jersey
Jared W. Hansen, Illinois
Adam Hawley, Maryland
Annie Hennen, Colorado
Tori Kershaw, Georgia
Lydia Konings, Wisconsin
McKenna Leach, Texas
Chloe Lupini, Wisconsin
Erin McNeley-Phelps, Kansas
Frank Scarnaty Jr., New Jersey
Adrian Speth, Utah

Scene Shop
Celeste Bontumasi, Illinois

Wigs and Makeup
Jax Cornett, Louisiana
Yamilet Lopez Ramirez, Nevada
Cat Modica, North Carolina
Joshua N. Wisham, Colorado*
*second-year apprentice

About The Santa Fe Opera’s Apprentice Program for Theater Technicians – Established in 1965, the Apprentice Program for Theater Technicians has since provided intermediate and advanced instruction and practical experience to young technicians in elements of stage operations. Among the first of its kind in America, more than 3,500 aspiring technicians have since participated in the internationally recognized program. Former Technical Apprentices have gone on to careers as professional technicians and designers for stage and film work; others work in production at opera, theater and ballet companies worldwide.

This year, Production and Recruiting Coordinator Tracy Armagost traveled on 23 planes and drove over 1,200 miles to meet applicants at the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festivals (KCACTF), the United States Institute of Theater Technology (USITT) conference and numerous other regional festivals,
carefully considering thousands of resumes and each applicant's unique background and skill set. Tracy and the SFO production team were recently honored with a prestigious Kennedy Center Gold Medallion Award; a recognition bestowed upon individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to the teaching and production of theater, displaying dedication, artistry and enthusiasm in their work.

The 2023 Season – Scheduled in the Santa Fe Opera's 66th Festival Season are 38 performances including two evenings of Apprentice Scenes. The company holds to its mission and time-tested programming model: a balanced and varied repertory of new, lesser-performed and standard works. Opening on June 30 and July 1 are two standard works, Tosca and The Flying Dutchman, followed by two lesser-performed works, Pelléas et Mélisande and Rusalka, on July 15 and July 22. Rounding out the season and presented for the first time on July 29 will be Monteverdi’s seminal Orfeo with a world premiere orchestration by American composer Nico Muhly. Tickets are on sale now at santafeopera.org.

About The Santa Fe Opera – The Santa Fe Opera annually draws 85,000 people from New Mexico and around the globe. Nestled atop a mountain vista in northern New Mexico, the company's iconic Crosby Theatre is open on three sides, allowing visitors to enjoy performances complemented by the elements. Since 1957 the company has presented over 2,000 performances of 179 operas by 91 composers spanning five centuries of opera, creating a legacy of 45 American premieres and 18 world premieres. In November 2022, the company was recognized as “Festival of the Year” at the International Opera Awards.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility at the Santa Fe Opera – Opera has the power to speak truth, broaden perspectives and invite empathy. The Santa Fe Opera is committed to the continuous work of becoming an antiracist and anti-oppressive organization and incorporating the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility. Our goal is to create a joyful and engaging environment in which a diverse community of artists, staff, volunteers and audiences alike belong.

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