

For Immediate Release

THE
SANTA FE
OPERA



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

15 June 2023

Contact: Emily Doyle Moore | media@santafeopera.org | 505-986-5908

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*
TyQuria Fountain, Maryland
Ava Francisco, Texas
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
Grigorii 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

Scenic Art

Sean Haffey, Ohio
Jasmine Hernandez, Florida
Emmaline Naud, Utah
Zachery Snow, Ohio
Jordan Taylor, Alabama

Stage Crew

Angel Bell, New Mexico*
William Blank, Ohio
Margo Buchanan, North Carolina
Carolina
Bobbie Buie, Iowa
Michael Coopriider, Kansas
Hannah Culwell, Texas
Chase M. Dietrich, Florida
Manuel Elizondo, Texas
Casey Fort, California
Garner Harsh, Georgia
Jamie Norris, Florida
William Peele, North Carolina*
Kaushik Raghavan, Iowa
Ava Stipe, Texas
Clint Sumalpong, Florida*
Hannah Tarr, Kentucky
Andrea Tuthill, Massachusetts
Eli Wallow, California
Jai Whitteker, New Mexico

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.

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.

Discover More: santafeopera.org

Connect: [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Podcasts](#) | [TikTok](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#)

###