

SEATTLE OPERA.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 27, 2022

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Seattle Opera appoints Michaella Calzaretta Chorus Master & Head of Music Staff

SEATTLE—Seattle Opera announced today its new chorus master & head of music staff is **Michaella Calzaretta**, an experienced conductor acclaimed for her high standards and superb preparation skills. Calzaretta will prepare the 36-member Seattle Opera Chorus, which will be featured during the 2022/23 season in [*The Elixir of Love*](#), [*Tristan and Isolde*](#), [*Samson and Delilah in Concert*](#), and [*La traviata*](#). Additionally, Calzaretta will oversee the company's musical activities, aiming for the highest standards in musical performance.

The appointment comes after an extensive search led by General Director Christina Schepplmann and Director of Artistic Administration & Planning Aren Der Hacopian. Calzaretta succeeds longtime Seattle Opera Chorus Master John Keene, who accepted a position as chorus director at San Francisco Opera in January.

Calzaretta will step into the role immediately to prepare the chorus for the company's upcoming production of [*The Elixir of Love*](#), which runs August 6–20 at McCaw Hall.

"I am thrilled to bring Michaella's energy and experience to work with Seattle Opera," said **Christina Schepplmann**. "Michaella connected immediately with our choristers, creating positive musical results right away. Her collaborative style and thoughtful approach fit perfectly with our company."

Aren Der Hacopian said: "We are elated to have Michaella join us as our new chorus master & head of music staff. Her positive demeanor and true passion for

creating art are infectious, and we are honored that she has agreed to join us as we build toward a thriving future.”

“Opera chorus masters often begin their careers as coaches, pianists, or conductors; I think it’s great that Michaella was first a singer and a choral conductor,” said **Jay Rozendaal, coach-accompanist and orchestra librarian.** “She brings a fresh perspective to the role that will be a real asset to the company in general and the chorus in particular.”

Calzaretta previously served as chorus master and assistant conductor at Utah Opera, where she recently completed her fifth season. Among her many achievements, Calzaretta was recognized for consistently delivering strong performances and a well-balanced ensemble sound. She made her main stage conducting debut in October 2020 with performances of *The Human Voice* and *Gentleman’s Island*. Other conducting credits include *Damn Yankees* and *The Merry Widow* with Pittsburgh Festival Opera, and *Patience* with the Indiana University Gilbert and Sullivan Society.

Calzaretta is a doctoral candidate (ABD) in choral conducting at Indiana University, and she holds a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, and a Master of Music in Choral Conducting from the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

“I am honored to be joining such an outstanding organization and cannot wait to get started,” said Calzaretta. “My audition time with the Seattle Opera Chorus was exhilarating and I am keen to dive into partnership with the wonderful music and artistic staff in executing this season and planning many more.”

Calzaretta brings a wealth of experience with both new operas and established favorites to the role, a foundation on which she plans to build in Seattle. “Seattle Opera is a leader in presenting high-quality traditional repertoire while also championing new works and prioritizing underrepresented stories that connect with audiences and performers alike. The future of opera in Seattle is bright and I am delighted to have a front row seat.”

About Seattle Opera

Established in 1963, Seattle Opera is committed to serving the people of the Pacific Northwest through music, storytelling, and programs for people of all ages. Each year, more than 80,000 people attend the company's performances, and more than 100,000 people are served through school performances, radio broadcasts, and more. The organization brings opera to life in a number of different ways, offering artistic excellence through national and international collaborations. Seattle Opera

strives to create an environment where artists, staff, behind-the-scenes workers, and members of the community feel a strong connection to the company, and to the art of opera. Follow Seattle Opera on Facebook, Twitter, SoundCloud, and on 98.1 Classical KING FM.

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