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**AUSTIN OPERA announces its  
2023-2024 SEASON  
and a new Residency Program**

*The season includes three operas at the Long Center  
and exciting developments for Opera ATX*

Long Center

***Pagliacci***

*A season-opening operatic carnival extends beyond the stage*

***Cruzar la Cara de la Luna***

*A new production and orchestration of the world's first mariachi opera*

***Carmen***

*The directorial debut of legendary Carmen Denyce Graves*

Opera ATX

**Ryan Speedo Green in Concert**

The all-Star bass-baritone at the all-new Austin PBS Media Center

Announcing

**Opera ATX Residency for Latinx Creatives**

(Austin, TX—January 26, 2023) Austin Opera today announces its 2023-2024 season, including three operas at the Long Center for the Performing Arts, an Opera ATX offering at the new Austin PBS Media Center, and the launch of the Opera ATX Residency for Latinx Creatives, an initiative to support the development of new operatic works. “We are thrilled about the artistic and organizational growth exemplified in our upcoming season,” said Annie Burrige, Austin Opera General Director and CEO.

“The 2023-2024 Season was designed to delight our current attendees and welcome new audiences with fresh rediscoveries of cherished works, a new production of a poignant contemporary work, and some of the most exciting voices working in opera today. Thanks to national and international collaborations, we will be able to bring an unprecedented level of artistic offerings to Austin at the Long Center and beyond.”

## **Austin Opera’s Long Center Season**

### **Leoncavallo’s *Pagliacci***

Austin Opera’s 2023-2024 season opens at the Long Center in November with *Pagliacci*, in which composer Ruggero Leoncavallo creates not the usual love triangle, but a love quadrangle, with three men all fighting for the love and attention of one woman. Using the classic ‘play within a play’ format, the composer sets up the real lives of his characters as a mirror to their parts in the play, with the two stories coming together in one final explosion of manipulation, jealousy, violence, and ultimately, of death.

Sad-faced and sad-hearted clown, Canio, is sung by tenor Jonathan Burton, returning to Austin Opera after his 2018 visit as Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Making her role debut as Nedda, the target of so much welcome and unwelcome attention, is soprano Hailey Clark, last seen at the Long Center in 2019 as Anna Sørensen in *Silent Night*. Troublemaker Tonio is sung by baritone Anthony Clark Evans, and Nedda’s lover Silvio is sung by baritone Ben Taylor, both making their Austin Opera debuts, as is character tenor Rodell Rosel, who also makes his role debut as Beppe. Austin Opera’s Sarah and Ernest Butler Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor, Timothy Myers, will conduct this powerful heartbreaker, collaborating with director Tara Faircloth who returns to Austin Opera after her last visit for *Rigoletto* in 2019. Scenic design is by Laura Fine Hawkes, with lighting design by Kathryn Eader.

The carnival setting onstage will extend out onto the Long Center’s H-E-B Terrace for a festive Season-Opening Celebration surrounding the Saturday evening performance. Patrons will enjoy themed cocktails, a three-course seated dinner, dancing, and mingling with the cast in a tented ballroom overlooking the Austin city skyline. Full gala tickets or afterparty-only tickets can be added to the *Pagliacci* performance.

### **Martinez and Foglia’s *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna***

The season continues in February with the world’s first-ever Mariachi opera, José ‘Pepe’ Martínez and Leonard Foglia’s *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna* (*Crossing the Face of the Moon*), in a new co-production by Austin Opera and Minnesota Opera directed by David Radamés Toro

with scenic and costume design by Tony Award nominee Arnulfo Maldonado. In a new orchestration by David Hanlon commissioned by Austin Opera, Minnesota Opera, and Houston Grand Opera, *Cruzar* marks the next phase of the significant, ongoing cultural collaboration between Austin Opera and Ópera de Bellas Artes, the national opera company of Mexico. This production of *Cruzar* is also the first opera at the Long Center supported by the new Butler Fund for Spanish Programming, created in 2022 with a donation of \$3.3 million from Austin philanthropists Sarah and Ernest Butler to expand Spanish language programming at Austin Opera.

*Cruzar* is set in Texas and Mexico in both the past and the present. Its groundbreaking score by José ‘Pepe’ Martínez and libretto by Leonard Foglia blends the unique sound of a Mariachi trio with an opera orchestra, chorus, and cast in this new orchestration by David Hanlon. It follows the two families of Laurentino, a Mexican man who moved to the United States to work, even though that meant leaving behind his wife and son, with tragic consequences. Decades later, as he lies dying surrounded by his American family, Laurentino questions the true meaning of ‘family’ and ‘home’ after a life straddling two cultures.

The cast for *Cruzar* will include vocalists from the Ópera de Bellas Artes Studio performing alongside U.S.-based artists, the Austin Opera Orchestra, and the Mariachi musicians of Trío Chapultepec. The Trío comprises three much sought-after musicians from San Antonio—Vincent Pequeño, Israel Alcalá, and William Carlton Galvez. Trío Chapultepec and the members of the Ópera de Bellas Artes Studio will also perform together in Austin Opera’s forthcoming *Bella Noche de Música* concert at Waterloo Park in April 2023.

### **Bizet’s *Carmen***

The final Long Center opera of the season features arguably opera’s sexiest role in Georges Bizet’s lush and emotionally charged tragedy, *Carmen*. Carmen is a beautiful, free-spirited woman and yet, she despises any man who falls for her, including soldier, Don José. She rejects José to take up with a famous bullfighter. José spurns his childhood sweetheart, Micaëla, and as his love degenerates into morbid obsession, it is only a matter of time before he will punish Carmen for her desire for freedom.

Featuring two of opera’s most iconic tunes, the *Habanera* and the *Toreador’s March*, this production sees the directorial debut of Denyce Graves, the most iconic Carmen of her generation, who sang the role at major international houses such as the Metropolitan Opera and the Royal Opera House Covent Garden. The production is designed by Riccardo Hernández with costumes by Oana Botez. The tragedy is led by three singers making Austin Opera debuts. Sultry Carmen is sung by mezzo-soprano Virginie Verrez, a graduate of the Metropolitan Opera’s Lindemann Young Artist Development who made her role debut as Carmen to great acclaim at the Welsh National Opera. Tenor Robert Watson co-stars as her

all-too-brief love interest, Don José, a role he has sung in major houses across Europe and the United States. Flashy bullfighter, Escamillo, will be sung by bass-baritone Seth Caraco, in a rare visit to the U.S. Conducting opera's most popular title will be Timothy Myers, Austin Opera's Sarah & Ernest Butler Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor.

Austin Opera's production of *Carmen* aligns with the anticipated release of Austin Opera Trustee Jennifer M. Wilks' new book, *Carmen in Diaspora: Adaptation, Race, and Opera's Most Famous Character*. Under contract with Oxford University Press, *Carmen in Diaspora* is a cultural history of *Carmen* beginning with Prosper Mérimée's and Georges Bizet's novella and opera, respectively, and continuing through adaptations set in African diasporic contexts. Covering the genres of literature, opera, film, and musical theater, *Carmen in Diaspora* explores how and why opera's most famous character has exceeded the 19th-century French context in which she was created and taken on a life of her own. Jennifer Wilks is an Associate Professor of English, African and African Diaspora Studies, and Comparative Literature at the University of Texas at Austin, where she also serves as the Director of the John L. Warfield Center for African and African American Studies. Community events exploring the book and production will be scheduled throughout the 2023-2024 season.

### **Opera ATX: Ryan Speedo Green in Concert**

Austin Opera continues its practice of extending its programming beyond the Long Center by welcoming back internationally acclaimed bass-baritone, Ryan Speedo Green, for a concert at the new Austin PBS Media Center. Presented in partnership with Austin PBS, the concert will build on the hugely successful 2021 *An All-Star Concert*—in which Ryan Speedo Green also performed—which has aired on more than fifty PBS stations around the US, with an audience reach of 113 million. The concert will be recorded live for national distribution on public television.

In high demand at the world's leading opera houses, Ryan Speedo Green has received praise for his featured roles at the Metropolitan Opera in Terrence Blanchard's *Fire Shut up in my Bones* and in Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, an opera for which he won a GRAMMY Award. He also served as the Texas Opera Alliance's first-ever Artist in Residence in the 2021-22 season.

Austin PBS CEO Luis Patiño says, "We're thrilled to partner with Austin Opera on this concert that will be captured live in our new state-of-the-art Media Studio. Austin PBS strives to serve the public using media that educates, inspires, entertains, and reflects a variety of perspectives, and Austin Opera is a great partner in developing content that fits that vision."

Ryan Speedo Green will be joined by pianist Adam Nielsen in this one-night-only concert underwritten by Jeff and Gail Kodosky.

## **Announcing the Opera ATX Residency for Latinx Creatives**

Today Austin Opera also announces the latest development for Opera ATX – the company’s boundary-pushing series championing innovative operatic experiences and the artists and creative teams that bring them to life. Beginning in the 2023-2024 Season, the Opera ATX Residency for Latinx Creatives will provide a unique workshopping space for Latinx composer/librettist teams to advance projects that will ultimately extend the scope of operatic storytelling.

“Opera ATX has given us a glimpse of the many ways in which the operatic experience can evolve to reach more people,” said Annie Burrige, Austin Opera General Director and CEO. “Through immersive experiences, unexpected performance sites, and genre-defying works, we’ve been able to engage an entirely new group of experience-seeking Austinites. The Opera ATX Residency for Latinx Creatives will serve as an important next step in supporting the creative teams responsible for driving these works and will ensure that our storytelling reflects the community that we serve.” “Furthermore, there is an essential demand throughout the industry to expand the operatic canon with Spanish-language operas or works inspired by the literature and history of Latin America. It is fitting that Austin Opera play a role in contributing to this new repertoire that, over time, the company hopes will reach communities all over the country.”

In 2022 Austin Opera announced the Butler Fund for Spanish Programming, a \$3 million endowment funded by Austin philanthropists Sarah and Ernest Butler to support Spanish-language programming at the company in perpetuity. The historic gift also funded the appointment of Claudia Chapa as the company’s first-ever Curator for Hispanic and Latinx Programming. “The past few months have been a whirlwind of discovery as we engage artists and program works from Latin America. We’re excited to get this residency program off the ground to bolster support for the development process of this repertoire,” says Chapa.

The residency will provide a composer and librettist team a ten-day residency in Austin to advance a new work or an existing work in progress through workshops with the Austin Opera artistic team, members of the Austin Opera Orchestra, the Austin Opera Teaching Artists, and members of the Austin Opera Chorus. “Timothy Myers (Sarah and Ernest Butler Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor) and Nathan DePoint (Chief Producing Officer) arrived at Austin Opera with considerable experience in new works development. Timothy has workshopped and conducted several world premieres, and Nathan has years of experience leading the commissioning process. I’m thrilled that we will be able to put this expertise to use in support of this residency,” said Burrige.

In addition to the workshopping resources and use of the Opera's digital media studio, the composer and librettist will each be provided with a \$5,000 stipend and all travel/housing expenses for the Austin residency. Applications will be made available on March 1.

### **Subscriptions and tickets**

Austin Opera recognizes that many of life's expenses have increased lately and is offering renewing and new subscribers the opportunity to purchase this exciting lineup of season tickets at last year's prices. While producing opera remains a formidable endeavor dependent on the generosity of the community, the company wants to ensure all of its loyal subscribers can keep the joy of opera in their lives.

2023-2024 Season subscriptions will go on sale on January 26, 2023. Current subscribers will receive renewal forms in the mail the week of January 30, 2023 so that they can renew their seats for the 2023-2024 Long Center Season and add the Ryan Speedo Green Concert to their package. Subscriptions must be purchased by April 14, 2023, to secure last season's pricing.

Individual tickets for the season will be available on September 6, 2023. Subscriptions and single tickets can be purchased at [www.austinopera.org](http://www.austinopera.org).

# **Austin Opera's 2023-2024 Season**

## **LONG CENTER SEASON**

### **PAGLIACCI**

Saturday, November 4, 2023 – 7:30 pm

Sunday, November 5, 2023 – 2:00 pm

Music and Libretto by Ruggero Leoncavallo

Conductor	Timothy Myers
Director	Tara Faircloth
Designer	Laura Fine Hawkes
Lighting Designer	Kathryn Eader

#### **Cast**

Canio	Jonathan Burton
Tonio	Anthony Clark Evans*
Nedda	Hailey Clark+
Silvio	Ben Taylor*
Beppe	Rodell Rosel*+

Featuring the Austin Opera Orchestra

Production and costumes owned by Utah Symphony and Opera.

In Italian with projected English titles  
Approximately 75 minutes

### **CRUZAR LA CARA DE LA LUNA**

Thursday, February 1, 2024 – 7:30 pm

Saturday, February 3, 2024 – 7:30 pm

Sunday, February 4, 2024 – 2:00 pm

Music by José 'Pepe' Martínez  
Libretto by Leonard Foglia and José 'Pepe' Martínez  
Book by Leonard Foglia

Conductor	TBA
Director	David Radamés Toro

Scenic &                      Arnulfo Maldonado  
Costume Designer  
Orchestration              David Hanlon

**Cast**

Members of the Ópera de Bellas Artes Studio\* – details to be announced

Featuring Trío Chapultepec\*: Vincent Pequeño, Israel Alcala, William Carlton Galvez, and the Austin Opera Orchestra

New co-production with Minnesota Opera. New orchestration by Austin Opera, Houston Grand Opera, and Minnesota Opera.

In Spanish and English with projected English titles  
Approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes in length

**CARMEN**

Saturday, April 27, 2024 – 7:30 pm  
Thursday, May 2, 2024 – 7:30 pm  
Sunday, May 5, 2024 – 2:00 pm

Music by Georges Bizet  
Libretto by Henri Meilac and Ludovic Halévy

Conductor                      Timothy Myers  
Director                         Denyce Graves  
Scenic designer              Riccardo Hernández  
Costume designer             Oana Botez

**Cast**

Carmen                         Virginie Verrez \*  
Don Jose                       Robert Watson \*  
Escamillo                      Seth Carico \*+

Featuring the Austin Opera Orchestra

Scenery and costumes owned by Minnesota Opera and The Glimmerglass Festival.

In French with projected English titles  
Approximately 3 hours and 5 minutes in length, including one 20-minute intermission

Long Center Season Debut \*  
Role Debut +



# Opera ATX

## Ryan Speedo Green in Concert

Saturday, November 11, 2023 – 7:30 p.m.

Austin Media Center, Pfluger Keller Community Soundstage

Ryan Speedo Green, bass-baritone

Adam Nielsen, pianist

Underwriters: Jeff and Gail Kodosky

## About Austin Opera

Serving Central Texas since 1986, Austin Opera inspires audiences with its trademark blend of innovation and artistic excellence. With the leadership of General Director & CEO Annie Burrige and the Sarah and Ernest Butler Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor Timothy Myers, Austin Opera presents a curated season of grand opera productions at the Long Center, the crown jewel of Austin performing arts venues. Combining the finest American and international stars with the outstanding local talent of our Orchestra and Chorus, Austin Opera's productions include accessible takes on classic operas as well as challenging new works that reinforce the continuing relevance of opera.

Opera ATX, powered by Austin Opera, brings groundbreaking new works, emerging artists, exciting composers, and dynamic directors to Austin. By tapping into the city's live music DNA, Opera ATX reflects the spirit of the city and the pioneering image it is known for. The Company creates the conditions for operatic experiences completely new to Austin—and perhaps completely new to the art form—by exploring alternative venues and unique local partnerships. Driven by Austin Opera's love of opera, love of audiences, and love of Austin, Opera ATX shows how Austin is shaping its opera company and inspiring innovative experiences.

*Live from Indy Terrace*, Austin Opera's digital channel is the home of original content free to patrons and includes recitals, interviews, fan-favorite programs like *Conductor Cues* and *Opera Overtures*, and broadcasts of the company's new series *Concerts at the Consulate*. *Concerts at the Consulate*, programmed in partnership with the Consulate General of Mexico in Austin, spotlight Latinx composers and performers and celebrate Hispanic culture.

Austin Opera is also a force in hundreds of classrooms across Central Texas, nurturing the next generation of opera audiences through its award-winning education programs. Austin Opera works directly with educators, community leaders, students, and parents to make opera relevant, educational, and entertaining for students of all ages.

In 2020, Austin Opera was voted “Opera Company of the Year”—and Timothy Myers was named “Conductor of the Year”—in the [BroadwayWorld Opera Awards](#).

To learn more about Austin Opera, visit [austinopera.org](http://austinopera.org) or follow along on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), or [Twitter](#) at @austinopera.

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