



## NEWS RELEASE

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Photos attached

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## LIVERMORE VALLEY OPERA PRESENTS *THE MAGIC FLUTE* *Magical World of Mozart's Imagination is a Fairy Tale for All Ages*

LIVERMORE, CALIF. – The Tri-Valley's own professional opera company, Livermore Valley Opera (LVO), celebrating its 32<sup>nd</sup> season, will present Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, a fairy tale for all ages, at the Bankhead Theater. It opens March 2, the first of four performances, offering an engaging opera experience that promises to take the audience on an unforgettable journey into a world of Mozart's incredible imagination.

The story follows Prince Tamino and Princess Pamina on a thrilling adventure in their quest for truth, love, beauty and enlightenment. This fairy tale, performed in English, is unique in its combination of sung and spoken words. *The Magic Flute* tells the classic tale of Prince Tamino, who is pursued by a dragon into a magical land of fantasy where, aided by three mysterious ladies, he seeks to rescue the beautiful Pamina, daughter of the Queen of the Night, from the powerful Sarastro. With the assistance of the bird-catcher Papageno, he finds that nothing is quite as it first seems. Stunning music and some of the most memorable arias in opera, paired with a cast of fanciful characters, make this Mozart's crowning operatic achievement.

LVO is pleased to welcome returning Stage Director Yefim Maizel, who has over 30 years of extensive opera experience, including directing productions at the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Opera Santa Fe, and in 2007, LVO's *La Boheme*. He will lead a talented principal cast, revealing how "...his love for interpreting the music score, his passion for theatre, and deep insight into human emotion and behavior transform opera into storytelling at its best."

Featured artists include Soprano **Phoebe Chee** as Pamina, tenor **Victor Cardamone** as Prince Tamino, Soprano **Shawnetter Sulker** as Queen of the Night, tenor **Alex DeSocio** as Papageno and bass **Kirk Eichelberger** as the evil Sarastro. "The Artistic Team of LVO chose *The Magic Flute* because it's a great opera, and it's never been performed in the Bankhead Theater, says Erie Mills, LVO Artistic Director. "There are many moving parts that contribute to making stellar performances that are becoming recognized and respected throughout the Bay Area," Mills notes. Opera is the one art form that encompasses all of the other performing arts elements: beautiful music, singing, drama, comedy, visually stunning scenery, lighting, costumes, hair, and makeup – "All in one ticket!"

Hailed by Spot Pocket Opera Theater as “one of Singapore’s most promising young sopranos,” newcomer **Phoebe Chee** continues to push vocal boundaries as she explores and masters a wide range of vocal repertoire from early music to more contemporary works. Tenor **Victor Cardamone** has garnered much attention and critical acclaim over the past decade, singing with a gorgeous voice that is “...thrilling...” (*SF Chronicle*) and “...a penetrating heroic quality and chiaroscuro that bodes well for his future success...” (*Sonoma Classical*)

Described by The New York Times as having a “buttery, booming baritone,” **Alex DeSocio** has been featured extensively with opera companies across the United States. Soprano **Shawnette Sulker**, a returning LVO artist, has been described as a singer “...displaying a bright, superbly controlled soprano with a perfectly placed coloratura.” A native of Guyana, Sulker has sung leading roles with other Bay Area companies of note, including San Francisco Opera and West Bay Opera.

Also returning to the LVO stage, bass **Kirk Eichelberger** has been praised for “commanding the stage at every turn” (*San Francisco Chronicle*) and for his “resonant bass and riveting stage presence” (*Dayton City Paper*). The performances will be expertly accompanied by the LVO orchestra, conducted by Music Director, Alexander Katsman.

Adds Mills, “It’s also a wonderful opera for the entire family, which is why we are performing it in English. It’s full of gorgeous music. It has dramatic moments and funny moments. It’s a fairy tale for all ages!”

### **Performance Details - *The Magic Flute* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

- March 2, 2024; 7:30 pm, Opening night
- March 3, 2024 2:00 pm
- March 9, 2024; 7:30 pm
- March 10, 2024 2:00 pm

**Bankhead Theater** 2400 First Street, Livermore, CA 94550

Bankhead Ticket Office: 925-373-6800

Hours: Wednesday through Saturday, 12 to 6 pm

### **Ticket Pricing**

Adults \$20-\$105. Tickets can be purchased through the LVO website at [www.LVOpera.com](http://www.LVOpera.com).

Special ticket pricing: \$20 for age 20 and younger; \$40 for ages 21 to 40.

### **Pre-opera talk**

Included in the ticket price are pre-opera talks held one hour prior to curtain time. LVO’s traditional artist’s reception is held in the lobby immediately following each performance.

### **About LVO**

Livermore Valley Opera (LVO) strives to enrich its community by producing world-class operas and fostering the careers of professional opera singers. LVO encourages a wider appreciation of opera and the associated arts through community and education engagement programs for students, families and seniors in the Tri-Valley region. Founded in 1992, Livermore Valley Opera presents fully-staged operas in the spring and fall at the Bankhead Theater, located in Livermore, just 45 miles east of San Francisco. The Bankhead Theatre features excellent lines of sight and acoustics, helping LVO to attract talented singers and stage directors. To attain its artistic goals, LVO combines the talents of professional musicians, stage directors, principal singers, and designers with the dedication and practical abilities of volunteers filling such critical roles as board members, chorus members, stage crew, and set builders.

LVO is a professional opera company and a 501(c) 3 non-profit charitable arts organization. For more information, visit [LVOpera.com](http://LVOpera.com).

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