



TOWNSEND OPERA ANNOUNCES
2017/18 SEASON REPERTOIRE AND ENDEAVORS

Modesto, California – March 30, 2017

Townsend Opera today announces the Company’s 2017/18 season repertoire and endeavors, featuring two main stage operas, recitals featuring local performers, and a return of the Kristina Townsend Memorial Competition. The 2017/18 season marks a renewed investment in the Modesto Community and a continuing love of bringing classic stories and music to the Central Valley.

In September 2017, Townsend Opera will present Gioachino Rossini’s comedic opera *The Barber of Seville*, based on the Pierre Beaumarchais’s French comedy of the same name. In April 2018, the company performs Giacomo Puccini’s opera *Madama Butterfly*.

Our Recital series continues in November 2017, where Liisa Davila will be featured in a recital performing works by Mozart and Schumann. Townsend Opera’s February Recital will feature crowd favored music, and a romantic dinner.

In January everyone will have an opportunity to showcase their talent at the Townsend Opera Soirée! Along with performances by professional singers, members of the community are invited to bring their talents to the stage; be it a musical performance, a dramatic soliloquy, or a dance routine, everyone is encouraged to participate.

March welcomes the return of the Kristina Townsend Memorial Competition. The competition is open to musicians aged 15-25, and will be judged by professionals from the Central Valley and offers cash prizes and performance opportunities for the winners of each age-based category.

To celebrate those who contribute to the arts Townsend Opera is offering two special events. In December the Townsend Opera Chorus will perform for the Holiday Celebration, and in May of 2018 audiences will be invited to a Year End Celebration and Preview for the 2018/19 season.

Casting and locations will be announced when subscriptions go on sale.

TOWNSEND OPERA’S 2017/18 SEASON

Main Stage Series

<i>Barber of Seville</i> A traditional opera by Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)	September 15-17, 2017 Gallo Center for the Arts	Conducted by Ryan Murray Director TBA Sung in Italian with supertitles
<i>Madama Butterfly</i> A traditional opera by Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)	April 27-29, 2018 Gallo Center for the Arts	Conducted by Ryan Murray Director TBA Sung in Italian with supertitles

Special Events!

Liisa Davila, soprano

November 2017

A recital featuring works by Mozart and Schumann.

Holiday Celebration

December 2017

Celebrating our donors and subscribers! Enjoy hearty hors d'oeuvres, wine and a performance by the Townsend Opera Chorus in holiday favorites.

Opera Soirée!

January 2018

Showcase your talent at the Opera Soirée. Members of the community and local professionals take the stage to perform.

February Recital

February 2018

Join Townsend Opera for a romantic dinner featuring a recital of music inspired by love.

**Kristina Townsend
Memorial Competition**

March 2018

Open to musicians aged 15-25, and will be judged by professionals from the Central Valley and offers cash prizes and performance opportunities for the winners of each age-based category.

**Year End Celebration &
Season Preview**

May 2018

An end of the year celebration to give donors a sneak-peek into the 2018/19 Season.

About Townsend Opera

Townsend Opera was founded in 1983 by Modesto native Erik Buck Townsend, a graduate of Modesto High School, who had a successful international career as an opera singer. Buck Townsend worked tirelessly to lead the company for 25 years, often directing, conducting, or singing in performances, building sets, and organizing costumes. After being diagnosed with cancer in 2007, Buck and then-Board President Carl Bengston led an initiative to establish second-generation leadership to ensure the company would continue beyond his lifetime and thrive in its new home at the Gallo Center for the Arts. In February 2008 the board appointed Matthew Buckman as the company's first Executive Director and Ryan Murray as Music Director. Both worked with Buck until his passing in September 2008 to secure the Company's place in the community. In the past month Townsend Opera has appointed Ryan Murray as Artistic Director and Charla Jeanne Lawson as Managing Director.

As its artistic profile has expanded over the past decade, the Company has been fortunate to welcome to our community some of the greatest artists and personalities in the field, including legendary composers Jake Heggie (*Dead Man Walking*) and Ricky Ian Gordon (*The Grapes of Wrath*), author and advocate Sister Helen Prejean, singers like Leah Crocetto and Irene Roberts, who are now gracing the stages of the finest opera houses in the world, and some of the leading stage directors working today.

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