



NEWS

For Immediate Release: March 19, 2014

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SAN DIEGO OPERA TO CEASE OPERATIONS AFTER 2014 SEASON

IMMEDIATE ACTION TAKEN IN EFFORT TO AVERT BANKRUPTCY

TOMORROW NIGHT'S PERFORMANCE OF THE REQUIEM WILL BE PERFORMED AS PLANNED

DON QUIXOTE OPENS APRIL 5, 2014

SAN DIEGO – The San Diego Opera (Opera) will wind down operations upon the conclusion of its final performance of *Don Quixote* of the 2014 Season on April 13, according to Opera General & Artistic Director, CEO Ian D. Campbell. The sold-out performance of the Verdi Requiem will be performed tomorrow night as planned.

“After nearly 50 years as a San Diego cultural cornerstone providing world-class performances, we saw we faced an insurmountable financial hurdle going forward,” Campbell explained. “We had a choice of winding down with dignity and grace, making every effort to fulfill our financial obligations, or inevitably entering bankruptcy, as have several other opera companies.

“Our Board voted today to take the first choice. We will begin winding down operations after the last performance of *Don Quixote* on Sunday, April 13,” he added. “After that, it will take an indeterminate period of time to complete that process.”

Board Chair Karen S. Cohn described it as a heart-wrenching, but unavoidable decision. “After 28 consecutive years of balanced budgets, it was clear that we could not continue. In spite of excellent financial management, the Opera faced increasingly higher ticket-sale and fund-raising hurdles.”

The Opera, ranked among the top 10 opera companies in the nation by Opera America, and one of 13 Cornerstone Arts Organizations by the James Irving Foundation, exemplified product quality. The *U-T San Diego* arts writer James Chute recently wrote, “If you had to identify a single opera that embodied the values and aspirations of the San Diego Opera, you’d have to point to its exceptional production of Verdi’s *A Masked Ball*.”

But both the patron base and donor base for opera companies are diminishing. San Diego Opera is not an isolated example. Other opera companies that have gone out of business include the New York City Opera, Opera Boston, Opera Cleveland, Baltimore Opera, San Antonio Opera and, closer to home, Lyric Opera San Diego and Opera Pacific in Orange County, CA.

The Opera will stage one performance of Verdi’s *Requiem* March 20, and four performances of Massenet’s *Don Quixote* April 5, 8, 11 and 13 before ceasing operations.

“Although it is a sad day for San Diego culturally, we have to thank everyone who supported us for nearly 50 years,” Campbell added. “It is better to go out with dignity, on a high note with heads held high than to slip into the night, leaving creditors and community in the lurch.”

The Opera originated as the San Diego Opera Guild in 1950. The San Diego Opera Association was incorporated in 1965, and current General & Artistic Director, CEO Ian D. Campbell was hired from the Metropolitan Opera in 1983.