



San Diego Opera Presents [Carmen](#) at the San Diego Civic Theatre
March 27 – 29, 2026

SAN DIEGO (January 26, 2026) – On **March 27, 28 & 29, 2026**, [San Diego Opera](#) will present Georges Bizet's [Carmen](#) at the San Diego Civic Theatre. *Carmen* follows San Diego Opera's production of *Pagliacci*, which opened the company's 2025-26 season with an "auspicious start" (*Parterre*) and its "sensational production" (*San Diego Story*) of Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, presented February 13-15, which the *San Diego Union Tribune* praised for "shining both vocally and comedically." *Carmen* will be sung in French with projected translations in English and Spanish.

Georges Bizet's timeless tragedy *Carmen* has become one of the most popular and frequently performed operas today, due to its enduring themes of love, obsession and jealousy, and memorable melodies.

Set in Spain, the opera tells the story of the downfall of soldier Don José, who becomes obsessed with the femme fatale Carmen. Unable to resist the cigarette factory worker and free spirit, Don José abandons his post, his mother, and his childhood sweetheart Micaëla to join Carmen's band of smugglers. Don José and Carmen's torrid love affair ends abruptly when Carmen sets her sights on bullfighter Escamillo, leading to a fiery and violent conclusion.

Carmen hosts a score packed with opera classics, like Carmen's seductive "Habanera," ("L'amour est un oiseau rebelle") and flamenco styled "Séguidille," Escamillo's "Toreador Song," ("Votre toast"), and Don José's "Flower Song" ("La fleur que tu m'avais jetée"), plus one of the greatest overtures ever written. The instantly recognizable "Habanera" in particular has been immortalized in pop culture, from commercials for [Doritos](#) and [Pepsi \(starring Beyoncé\)](#) to [the Muppets](#).

San Diego Opera's production of *Carmen* boasts a world-renowned cast, featuring the "warm and dramatic" (*Broadway World*) mezzo-soprano **Melody Wilson** in her role debut; and the "vocal depth" and "interpretative dynamism" (*Pro Ópera Magazine*) of mezzo-soprano **Guadalupe Paz** singing the title role; along with rising star-tenors **Thomas Kinch** and **Jonny Kaufman** as Don José. Soprano – and recent winner of the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition – **Lydia Grindatto** makes her company and role debut as Micaëla while baritone **Aleksey Bogdanov** bows as the toreador Escamillo.

Louis Lohraseb, who has previously conducted productions for LA Opera and The Atlanta Opera will make his company debut conducting the **San Diego Symphony Orchestra** in *Carmen*. The production will be directed by **Keturah Stickann**, whose work has been seen in San Diego Opera's *La bohème*, both on the mainstage in 2024 and in the company's innovative drive-in production in 2020.

Audiences can whet their operatic appetite and hear more about *Carmen* at [Opera Uncorked](#) on **March 12 at 6 PM**. The lively, casual event includes an insightful presentation by Resident Conductor Bruce Stasyna and excerpts from the opera performed by brilliant local or visiting artists, all accompanied by wine and light bites. A **pre-performance talk** led by [Michael Gerdes](#) will take place 50 minutes prior to each show in the auditorium. Immediately following the performances on **Saturday and Sunday, March 28 & 29**, audiences are invited to join San Diego Opera staff and cast members for a **post-opera talk-back** in the Dress Circle.

FOR LISTINGS:

San Diego Opera Presents: *Carmen*

Music by Georges Bizet

Libretto by Ludovic Halévy and Henri Meilhac

Friday, March 27 at 7:30 PM

Saturday, March 28 at 7:30 PM

Sunday, March 29 at 2:00 PM

San Diego Civic Theatre – 1100 Third Ave, San Diego, CA 92101

A pre-concert talk led by [Michael Gerdes](#) will begin 50 minutes prior to curtain

Single ticket prices range from \$53 - \$356 (single ticket prices subject to change)

Visit [SDOpera.org](#) or call (619) 533-7000.

The venue provides accessible seating, assistive listening devices, and other accommodations for guests with disabilities.

Recommended for: Opera enthusiasts, first-time attendees, students, and families (parental guidance recommended due to mature themes).

The most fearless and indomitable heroine in all opera is back! When Carmen tosses a flower to the soldier Don José, he becomes obsessed, leaving his post to join her band of smugglers. But when she loses interest and sets her sights on a bullfighter, Don José may not be able to handle the rejection. With a score packed with opera classics, including the “Habanera,” the “Toreador Song,” and one of the greatest overtures ever written, you’ll be joining Don José as you fall under the spell of Carmen.

Sung in French with English and Spanish translations projected above the stage.

CAST LIST

Louis Lohraseb – Conductor

Keturah Stickann – Director

Melody Wilson – Carmen (Friday & Sunday)

Guadalupe Paz – Carmen (Saturday)

Thomas Kinch – Don José (Friday & Sunday)

Jonny Kaufman – Don José (Saturday)

Aleksey Bogdanov – Escamillo

Lydia Grindatto – Micaëla

Amanda Olea – Frasquita

Mariam Mouawad – Mercedes

DeAndre Simmons – Zuniga

Ryan Wolfe – Dancairo

Joel Sorensen – Remendado

Søren Pedersen – Morales

ABOUT SAN DIEGO OPERA

Founded in 1965, San Diego Opera has delivered exceptional performances and inspiring educational programs to a wide audience in San Diego for 60 seasons, with a strong focus on community partnerships and the transformative and expressive power of the human voice. With a commitment to innovative storytelling, lifelong learning and engagement, and an awareness of great music's power to bring audiences together, San Diego Opera provides a lasting cultural service to its community. To learn more, please visit www.sdopera.org or follow @sandiegoopera on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

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Artist headshots [HERE](#)