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## **Seattle Opera announces new Resident Artist positions**

**Camille Ortiz and Michael J. Hawk  
selected for inaugural cohort beginning in July 2023**

SEATTLE—**General Director Christina Scheppelmann** announced today Seattle Opera's **Resident Artist** positions, new paid roles for emerging artists. The Resident Artist role gives opera singers salaried, full-season experience with Seattle Opera, where they will receive professional development, performance, and mentorship opportunities along with the stability of a long-term partnership.

"The Resident Artist position offers singers a supportive environment to expand their repertoire and grow as artists," said **Scheppelmann**. "Having a consistent, long-term relationship with a larger company will allow these artists to focus on their development while working alongside the company's staff. We are so excited to welcome Camille and Michael, our inaugural artists, who are already excellent singers with bright, promising futures."

The position will give audiences the chance to get to know performers over the course of a season, a welcome opportunity in an industry where singers typically travel to different companies for each role. Resident Artists will cover at least two full roles in mainstage and chamber productions at Seattle Opera, stepping in to perform principal roles as opportunities arise. The singers will also give a public recital in Tagney Jones Hall, perform in the **60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert & Gala** in May 2024, and participate in a range of Seattle Opera's public programs, making for a variety of chances to hear these exciting artists.

In addition to their public performances, Resident Artists will receive coaching from Seattle Opera's music staff and mentorship in opera administration from company management. Additionally, Seattle Opera's visiting artists will work with the Resident Artists as they prepare roles and develop their operatic careers.

"There has never been a more important time to introduce our new Resident Artists," said **Aren Der Hacopian, Director of Artistic Administration & Planning**. "The performing arts are in a period of uncertainty, so we are thrilled to be able to offer a stable home for early-career professionals as they further their careers. Our first Resident Artists, Camille and Michael, are both impressive singers who have already built significant operatic careers. We are excited for our audiences to follow them during their time with Seattle Opera and beyond."

The inaugural cohort comprises two exciting singers, soprano **Camille Ortiz** and baritone **Michael J. Hawk**, who both begin with the company in July 2023.

Camille Ortiz, who currently serves as Assistant Professor of Voice at the University of Oregon, has appeared recently with Opera Lafayette at the Kennedy Center, Opera Orlando, and Boston Baroque. In her time as a Resident Artist, which runs through December 2023, Ortiz will appear in the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert & Gala and will cover Freia and Woglinde in [\*Das Rheingold\*](#) and Morgana in [\*Alcina\*](#).

"I feel very lucky to have the opportunity to work with the amazing staff at Seattle Opera, who are a wealth of information," said Ortiz. "Although I have a lot of experience singing Handel, this will be my first experience singing Wagner. I'm looking forward to the chance to expand my repertoire, which will not only make me a better singer, but a better teacher as well."

Michael J. Hawk is a graduate of LA Opera's Young Artist Program, and his recent schedule has included appearances with LA Opera, Santa Fe Opera, and the Buffalo Philharmonic. Hawk will perform with Seattle Opera through the end of the 2023/24 season, singing in the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert & Gala and covering Donner in [\*Das Rheingold\*](#) and Figaro in [\*The Barber of Seville\*](#).

"I am so excited to be a Resident Artist in the position's first year," said Hawk. "The chance to work with a house for an extended period, to have a home base, is something I've always wanted. I think as the opera industry changes, programs like this one will be an important part of helping opera flourish as an art form. I hope I get the chance to continue with the program as it grows."

The Resident Artist role, which was made possible through a generous donation from Joan Watjen, in memory of Craig M. Watjen, joins [\*Creation Lab\*](#) and the

[Seattle Arts Fellowship](#) in Seattle Opera's lineup of professional development initiatives, which provide mentorship opportunities for early-stage opera administrators, composers, and librettists.

### **About Seattle Opera**

Established in 1963, Seattle Opera is committed to serving the people of the Pacific Northwest through music, storytelling, and programs for people of all ages. Each year, more than 50,000 people attend the company's performances, and more than 100,000 people are served through school performances, radio broadcasts, and more. The organization brings opera to life in a number of different ways, offering artistic excellence through national and international collaborations. Seattle Opera strives to create an environment where artists, staff, behind-the-scenes workers, and members of the community feel a strong connection to the company, and to the art of opera. Follow Seattle Opera on Facebook, Twitter, SoundCloud, and on Classical KING FM 98.1.

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