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For Immediate Release

**ARIZONA OPERA TO PREMIERE NEW CONCERT SERIES, ARIZONA ARIAS,
ON SUNDAY, MARCH 14 AT 6 PM PDT**

First Broadcast to Feature Performances by operatic baritone and Tony Award-winner, Paulo Szot, Grammy-nominated soprano Chelsea Basler, and Members of the Marion Roose Pullin Opera Studio

Those who purchase the program will also be able to view it online 24/7 at Arizona Opera OnDemand, the Company's Primary Streaming Channel

As part of Arizona Opera's Reimagined 2020/21 Season, the company is proud to announce details of its exciting, upcoming spring program, Arizona Arias.

The first of two Arizona Arias presentations will premiere virtually on Sunday, March 14 at 6 PM PDT, and then be available for viewing 24/7 on Arizona Opera's online channel, Arizona Opera OnDemand (ondemand.azopera.org). Purchase of a virtual ticket will be \$20.

"It is a joy to share the talents of Chelsea Basler, Paulo Szot, and our extraordinary Pullin Studio Artists, together with the Arizona Opera Orchestra under the baton of Maestro Cal Kellogg, in this inaugural Arizona Arias performance," said Arizona Opera's President and General Director, Joe Specter. "Given the challenges of COVID that have been with us for almost a year, it's almost impossible to describe the emotional experience of having the opportunity to bring this group of incredibly talented artists together for our viewers in a soaring program of Puccini and Verdi."

Specter continued: "Originally planned and announced as an outdoor, socially-distanced series, Arizona Opera has made a 'pivot within a pivot,' moving the Arizona Arias programs to a virtual-only setting that acknowledges the improving, but still prevalent virus, while carefully creating a safe environment for these musicians to showcase their extraordinary artistry."

Christopher Cano, Arizona Opera’s Head of Music & Director of the Marion Roose Pullin Opera Studio, said, “Given the reality of COVID, being able to produce this concert together – and with members of the Arizona Opera Orchestra, no less – was potentially unthinkable even several months ago. That is why this entire experience of bringing such rapturous music to life is so joyous for all of us. And, of course, giving members of the Pullin Opera Studio the opportunity to perform with such world-class talents as Paulo Szot and Chelsea Basler is something that I know each one of them truly cherishes. We can’t wait to share this wonderful program with all of our fans and supporters.”

A second Arizona Arias engagement will premiere in April, with the specific date, time, artists and program to be announced in the beginning of March.

The program for the March 14 premiere Arizona Arias concert, which will run approximately 60 minutes, is as follows:

From *La Traviata*
Duet of Violetta and Germont Act II
G. Verdi
Chelsea Basler and Paulo Szot

From *Madama Butterfly*
Flower Duet Act II
G. Puccini
Caitlin Gotimer and Mack Wolz

From *Gianni Schicchi*
O mio babbino caro
G. Puccini
Cheyanne Coss

From *Rigoletto*
Caro Nome
Ms. Basler

From *Edgar*
Questo amor, vergogna mia
G. Puccini
Rob McGinness

Ella mi fu rapita!... Parmi veder le lagrime
Terrence Chin-Loy

Cortigiani, vil razza dannata
Mr. Szot

Duet and Finale of Rigoletto and Gilda Act II
Ms. Basler and Mr. Szot

Those planning to watch may pre-order this event by visiting Arizona Opera OnDemand at ondemand.azopera.org starting Monday, March 1, 2021.

Orders may also be placed once the premiere debuts, and on a going-forward basis at ondemand.azopera.org

ABOUT PAULO SZOT

Paulo Szot is one of the most acclaimed and versatile baritones in the world, having garnered international acclaim as an opera singer, an award-winning musical theatre star, a consummate concert performer and an actor. He has appeared with most major opera companies throughout the world in Europe, the U.S., Australia and Brazil, with over 70 opera productions on his resumé. He was awarded the Tony Award, Drama Desk, Outer Critic’s Circle and Theater World Awards for his role in the Lincoln Center Theatre production of *South*

Pacific, and has also appeared in solo engagements at Jazz at Lincoln Center, Café Carlyle and 54 Below in New York.

ABOUT CHELSEA BASLER

Given her unique combination of vocal appeal and artistry, Grammy Award-nominated soprano, Chelsea Basler, continues to make her mark in an extensive array of operatic roles, praised for her “luminous voice” with its “easy soaring range”. She has appeared at The Metropolitan Opera, with Boston Lyric Opera (having performed multiple roles), Nashville Opera, Santa Fe Opera, and Sarasota Opera, among others. She is also an accomplished concert and recital performer. Originally slated to appear in Arizona Opera’s production of *The Copper Queen* (delayed due to COVID and now scheduled to premiere as a film in the fall of 2021), the organization is instead delighted to have Ms. Basler appear as part of the first Arizona Arias program.

THE MARION ROOSE PULLIN ARIZONA OPERA STUDIO

In residence all season, members of the Marion Roose Pullin Arizona Opera Studio may be seen performing in a number of the company’s productions throughout the year, in addition to engagements throughout Arizona. Overseen by Christopher Cano, Arizona Opera’s Head of Music and Director of the Marion Roose Pullin Opera Studio, the Studio also provides well-rounded, personalized instruction that works diligently to propel each artist to their next level, helping to bridge the gap between academic studies and a professional career.

Arizona Opera is deeply grateful to our 2020/21 Reimagined Season Lead Digital Sponsors, Ron and Kay McDougall.

Arizona Arias

Arizona Arias is generously sponsored by Ron and Kay McDougall. Additional support provided by the National Endowment for the Arts and Bankers Trust.

Marion Roose Pullin Arizona Opera Studio

Christopher Cano, Director of the Marion Roose Pullin Opera Studio

Sponsored by Karen Fruen

Cheyenne Coss, soprano

Sponsored by Norman C. and Donna L. Harbert

Caitlin Gotimer, soprano

Sponsored by Peter and Lee Larson

Mack Wolz, mezzo-soprano

Sponsored by Drs. Tom and Ginger Collier

Terrence Chin-Loy, tenor

Sponsored by Don Williams and Dan A. Klingenberg*, and Alan and Linda Englander

Rob McGinness, baritone
Sponsored by Roma Wittcoff

Robert Bosworth, pianist
Sponsored by Karen Fruen

Haley Stamats, assistant stage director
Sponsored by Helen Pierson, Shoshana B. Tancer, and Ole and Teresa Thienhaus

#azostudio

For further information about this release, please contact Tom Michel, Director of Marketing, Communications & PR at tmichel@azopera.org or 702.533.0075.

ABOUT ARIZONA OPERA

Arizona Opera, now in its 49th season, produces fully staged operas, concerts, and collaborative programs throughout the state of Arizona each season, and is among only a handful of companies in the U.S. that performs annually in more than one city. Arizona Opera elevates the transformative power of storytelling through music, cultivating community and strengthening a state and people as adventurous and diverse as the place they call home. Since its inaugural year in 1971, Arizona Opera has produced more than 175 fully staged operas and concerts. The company's artistic history is rich with a blend of opera's traditional repertoire featuring baroque, bel canto, and verismo works, turn-of-the-century masterpieces, operettas, and contemporary operas.