



Martile Rowland, Founder/Artistic Director

Christopher Wilkins, Music Advisor

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Opera Theatre of the Rockies** presents Bizet's **Carmen** to celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on March 1 & 2

- Who:** **Opera Theatre of the Rockies** –  
**Martile Rowland** Stage Director and **James Allbritten** conductor.
- What:** *Carmen* by George Bizet: The great operatic favorite sung in French with English Supertitles projected above the stage.
- When:** Two performances: Saturday, March 1, 7:30 pm **and** Sunday, March 2, 3:00 pm.  
*Pre-Performance Presentation for ticket holders hosted by Maestro Allbritten and Mrs. Rowland will be held in the Mezzanine Lobby one hour before curtain.*
- Where:** Pikes Peak Center for the Performing Arts, 190 South Cascade Avenue: Colorado Springs, Colorado.
- Tickets:** **\$25-\$75:** Available at Pikes Peak Center Box Office, all TicketsWest outlets; by calling 520-SHOW (7469) or 866- 464-2626 (toll free); or online at [www.ticketwest.com](http://www.ticketwest.com). Group, student, senior citizen and military discounts available.  
**Visit [www.operatheatreoftherockies.org](http://www.operatheatreoftherockies.org) for full details** **-MORE-**

**Opera Theatre of the Rockies** has found an ideal way to hold a party in celebration of its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: a production of what many consider to be the most exciting opera of all time – Carmen. A grand operatic production is scheduled for Sat. March 1, 2008 at 7:30 pm and Sun. March 2, 2008 at 3:00 pm in the Pikes Peak Center for the Performing Arts at 190 South Cascade Ave. in downtown Colorado Springs on Sat. March 1, 2008 at 7:30 pm and Sun. March 2, 2008. Tickets are available through all TicketsWest outlets, online at [ticketswest.com](http://ticketswest.com) and by phone at 520-SHOW or 866-464-2626.

“It was obvious that it had to be Carmen to celebrate this momentous achievement for our Company,” said Opera Theatre’s Founder and Artistic Director **Martile Rowland**. “It embodies everything that is great about our art form. I felt certain we could put together a great cast to capture the passion of this exciting work. My expectations were actually exceeded.”

*Carmen*, the inspired work of Georges Bizet (1838-1875), was premiered at the Opéra Comique of Paris on March 3, 1875. For a year after its premiere, it was considered a failure, denounced by critics as "immoral" and "superficial". Eventually, its beauty and genius sent it to the top of the operatic repertoire, a place it has occupied ever since. However, Bizet did not live to see its success as he died from a heart attack at the age of 36 on his third wedding anniversary, only a few months after *Carmen's* first performances.

The story is set in Seville, Spain, circa 1830, and is centered around Carmen, a beautiful gypsy with a fiery temper and equally expressive passion for love. The music is beloved world-wide with at least the Prélude (overture), the *Toréador Song*, and the *Habanera* easily recognized everywhere.

**Jennifer DeDominici** will perform the opera’s title role. A resident of Denver, she was awarded first prize in the 2007 *Denver Lyric Opera Guild Competition*, has performed for **Opera Colorado**, **Central City Opera** and the **Santa Fe Opera**. She performed the role of Hänsel in Opera Theatre’s March, 2007 performances of *Hänsel and Gretel* and the title role 2005’s *La Cenerentola*. Two tenors will attempt to woo her as Don José. Boulder’s **Jason Baldwin**, making his Opera Theatre debut, will perform for the Sat. March 1 performance and Aurora’s **Brian Stinar** will offer his interpretation of the Spanish soldier on Sun. March 2. Littleton soprano **Désirée Dodson** will portray the childhood sweetheart of Don José, Micaëla and **Peter Tuff**, a resident of Colorado Springs, will be heard as the Toreador, Escamillo. The complete cast list appears at the end of this release.

“It’s a dream come true for me to bring this incredible woman and spirit to musical and theatrical life,” said DeDominici. “This will be my first Carmen and there’s a part of me that feels that a little bit of destiny is at play here, having covered the role for internationally-famous Denyce Graves for Opera Colorado’s first production in the Ellie Caulkins Opera House. I know that having Martile (Rowland) as stage director is the perfect situation for me.” DeDominici is soon to compete in the regional finals of the Rocky Mountain Region Finals for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

While Carmen is almost certain to have significant artistic waves for the future of Ms. DeDominici, it has already played a big part in the life of Rowland, even though the internationally-renowned soprano never performed in the opera. “Carmen has great reverberations in my life on the other side of the footlights. When I directed it for the **Colorado Opera Festival** ten years ago, it was a magical experience for me and, I’m proud to say, for the audience and cast as well. That production fanned the flames that ignited a new passion in me as an operatic stage director.”

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Rowland will assume in the same role for the March production. Joining her as artistic leadership are her most personally prized and frequent collaborators: **James Allbritten** will be Conductor; **Daniel Brink** will serve as both Music Director and Vocal Coach; and **Deborah Jenkins Teske** will serve as Chorus Master.

“Carmen is built upon everything we prize the most at Opera Theatre,” said Rowland. “We were able to assemble a fabulous cast without compromise, all from regional talent –young, attractive, and theatrical – while blessed with superb vocal gifts. The opera itself will be quite ‘grand’ with our excellent professional orchestra, exciting sets, rich costumes, flamenco dance and our always fabulous chorus – all designed to bring new audience to the art form and hopefully make them fans for the rest of their lives.”

The performance venue will also play a big role in the success of Carmen. Besides being a beautiful house, the Pikes Peak Center for the Performing Arts is an ideal space in which to hear an opera. Its acoustics allow orchestral sound to retain its richness and dynamic excitement while singers can still be easily heard and understood. This production will be performed in the original French using the version of Carmen with sung recitative. English Supertitles will be projected above the stage.

Sponsors for Carmen and all the *Carmen Collection* events leading to the production include the Gazette, News First 5&30, KCME-FM 88.7, The Colorado Springs School, the Sound Shop and Patsy’s Candy. Foundation supporters include Bee Vradenburg Foundation, the Hester E. and Edwin W. Giddings Foundation, the Cowan-Fouts Foundation, and the Pikes Peak Opera League

Tickets for the Pikes Peak Center performances of Carmen are currently on sale at all TicketsWest outlets including Pikes Peak Center Box Office (no fees), by calling 520-SHOW or (866) 464-2626 or online at [www.ticketwest.com](http://www.ticketwest.com). Group, student, senior citizen and military discounts are also being offered. More information is available at [www.operatheatreoftherockies.org](http://www.operatheatreoftherockies.org). Additional information about the opera and all other associated events is available at (719) 633-9373 or [alacarteproductions@msn.com](mailto:alacarteproductions@msn.com).

## *The Carmen Cast*

**Carmen**

**Carmen (cover/Student Performance)**

**Don José (March 1)**

**Don José (March 2 and Student Performance)**

**Micaëla**

**Micaëla (cover/Student Performance)**

**Escamillo**

**Morales**

**Zuniga**

**Frasquita**

**Mercedes**

**El Dancaïro**

**El Remendado**

**Opera Theatre of the Rockies Orchestra and Chorus**

**Pikes Peak Singers of the Colorado Springs Children's Chorale**

**Jennifer DeDominici**

**Sarah Barber**

**Jason Baldwin**

**Brian Stinar**

**Desirée Dodson**

**Sarah Stone**

**Peter Tuff**

**Christopher Ervin**

**Christopher Roselli**

**Annamarie Zmolek**

**Regina Davis**

**Erik Bryan**

**Antonio Albores**

**Conductor**

**Stage Director**

**Music Director/Coach/Piano**

**Chorus Master**

**Children's Chorus Master**

**Choreographer/Principal Dancer**

**James Allbritten**

**Martile Rowland**

**Daniel S. Brink**

**Deborah Jenkins Teske**

**Lori Bammesberger**

**Peter Strand**