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DANIEL CATÁN'S

# FLORENCIA

*en el Amazonas*

NASHVILLE  
**OPERA**

THE ANN & FRANK BUMSTEAD SEASON

# FLORENCIA EN EL AMAZONAS

I first discovered Daniel Catán's opera *Florencia en el Amazonas* sometime after its 1996 world premiere. I was unable to attend the premiere, so I originally came to the opera as I come to so many works: through the music itself in the form of a CD that was recorded shortly after the world premiere. The first time I listened, I knew I had found something beautiful, something emotionally overwhelming, something special. I also felt, from the first moment, that this was a show I'd like to produce in Nashville. Over the years, I have seen other, larger opera companies have great success with the work. *Florencia* was so successful for Seattle Opera that when the company offered the audience a survey asking them to rank the shows they had seen in the past ten years and which of those shows that they would most want to see again. *Florencia* won hands down, and Seattle revived the opera only a few years after its first production there. I knew I had to find a way to do it. The show haunted me.

I kept this feeling with me as the years passed. I kept returning to the show, musically as well as dramatically, trying to realize the best way to present the unique vision hidden in the depths of the piece. On the surface, there was the straightforward story of a handful of characters in 1910 taking a lazy journey down the Amazon River on a small steamboat. But just under the surface, the opera offered a very poignant, emotional, and human question as a subtext: If you had the chance to go back in time and change just one thing from your past, what would it be, and would you do it?

At the Opera America Conference in Los Angeles in 2010, I happened to attend a dinner party thrown as a part of the festivities. At that party was composer Daniel Catán and, for some reason (that I like to think was fate), he and I were seated side by side at the same dining table. I quickly introduced myself and I'm sure also babbled on about my love for his opera. Catán was incredibly polite (or nice) about my fandom. I heard later that he was one of the most elegant, friendly, and open people you could ever meet. I found out that night how true that was. I told him I wanted to produce his opera in Nashville, and his smile was genuine when he told me he would like that very much, and looked forward to coming to our city, meeting our audience, and sitting in our theatre to see our production of his work. At the end of the evening, we shook hands and agreed we would meet here in Nashville for the opening. I set to work on making it happen.

Life can sometimes play some dirty tricks on you.

Slightly over a year after our meeting, I received word that Daniel Catán had passed away suddenly at only 62 years old. The opera world had been robbed of many other operas that I'm sure he would have written, and I'm sorry he didn't get the chance to see our interpretation of his opera. Now, after all this time, it happened and in a very special way. We premiered our original production of his opera here in Nashville in 2015. We then were invited to present it at the Rose Theater at Lincoln Center in 2016 for the New York City premiere of the work. I know Daniel Catán would be proud and that smile of his would fill the room.

I'm so happy to bring this wonderful opera back to the Polk Theater. We are fortunate to have assembled an international cast, and the artistry of video designer Barry Steele will add a rich layer to the magical realism of its story. To offer more insight into this musical and theatrical event, I'd like to quote the composer:

*"In the opera, Florencia undertakes a journey that will bring her back to her origins. It is, I believe, the story of the return journey that we all undertake at a certain point in our lives: the moment when we look back at what we once dreamed of becoming, and then confront what we have now become. As Florencia sings her final aria, her voice, her song and she herself, become intertwined with the image of a butterfly. She breaks through her cocoon; her voice soars, her song acquires transparent wings. Love and beauty become indistinguishable from each other. The image of the butterfly, supremely beautiful from the moment of its birth, is overtly present at the end of Florencia. But it is an image that has been present in my mind as I composed several of my works. I have asked myself why. I think it is my way of understanding the moment when something is no more, my way of transforming it, like when I finish an opera and say good-bye to characters that have lived with me for so long and have taught me so much, that grew out of me so I could be born out of them, that are, in the end, indistinguishable from myself."*

JOHN HOOMES  
CEO & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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# FLORENCIA *en el Amazonas*

JANUARY 26 - 28, 2024

TPAC POLK THEATER

Music by **Daniel Catán**  
Libretto by **Marcela Fuentes-Berain**  
Premiered at Houston Grand Opera  
October 25, 1996

Directed by **John Hoomes**  
Conducted by **Dean Williamson**  
Featuring the Nashville Opera Orchestra

## CAST

FLORENCIA GRIMALDI..... **Elizabeth Caballero**  
ROSALBA..... **Evelyn Saavedra**  
PAULA..... **Sandra Eddy**  
RIOLOBO..... **Luis Orozco**  
ARCADIO..... **César Delgado**  
ALVARO..... **Mark Whatley**  
CAPITAN..... **Ricardo Lugo**  
CRISTOBAL RIBIERA DA SILVA..... **Omar Lopez**

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Video & Lighting Design..... **Barry Steele**  
Asst. Video & Lighting Designer..... **Robert Helvey**  
Scenic Designer..... **Cara Schneider**  
Costume Designer & Coordinator..... **Pam Lisenby**  
Costumes..... **Glenn Avery Breed**  
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Wig & Makeup Designer..... **Sondra Nottingham**

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Assistant Technical Director..... **Kelly Scheuman**  
Props Master..... **Lucious Rhoads**  
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**Jayne Locke**  
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**Michealle Vanderpool**  
**Capri Biangardi**  
**Katarina Gimesh, Intern**  
Chorusmaster..... **Stephen Carey**  
Rehearsal Pianist..... **Andrew Pham**  
Supertitles..... **Hannah Marcoe**

# ARTISTS



Stage Director

## JOHN HOOMES

Nashville Opera CEO & Artistic Director

1995-Present

### Nashville Opera

*The Lighthouse, Samson and Delilah, Elmer Gantry, Aida, Don Giovanni, Andrea Chénier, The Fall of the House of Usber, The Girl of the Golden West, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat, Romulus Hunt, Florencia en el Amazonas, Hydrogen Jukebox, Così fan tutte, Glory Denied, Three Way, María de Buenos Aires, Tales of Hoffmann, The Cradle Will Rock, Beach Party Cinderella, Favorite Son, Rigoletto Noir, Das Rheingold, La Bohème, The Medium, Stuck Elevator, The Pirates of Penzance, Pagliacci, The Man Who Mistook His Wife For a Hat*

### Recent

*Florencia en el Amazonas* – New York City Opera and Pensacola Opera

*Elmer Gantry, Don Giovanni* – Florentine Opera

*Three Way* – American Opera Projects, Brooklyn Academy of Music

### Upcoming

*La Traviata* - Opera North Carolina

*Die Fledermaus* - Opera Pensacola

Hometown Mobile, Alabama

Residence Nashville, Tennessee



Conductor

## DEAN WILLIAMSON

Nashville Opera Music Director

2015-Present

### Nashville Opera

*Romeo and Juliet, Samson and Delilah, The Girl of the Golden West, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, Cinderella, The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat, The Barber of Seville, Romulus Hunt, Florencia en el Amazonas, Hydrogen Jukebox, Three Way, María de Buenos Aires, Madame Butterfly, Beach Party Cinderella, Rigoletto Noir, Das Rheingold, La Bohème, The Medium, Stuck Elevator, The Pirates of Penzance, Pagliacci, The Man Who Mistook His Wife For a Hat*

### Recent

*Florencia en el Amazonas* – New York City Opera

*La Cenerentola* – Arizona Opera

*Three Way* – American Opera Projects, Brooklyn Academy of Music

Merola Grand Finales Concert – San Francisco Opera

*Madama Butterfly* – Opera Idaho

*Le Nozze di Figaro* – Arizona Opera

*Il barbiere di Siviglia* - Opera Saratoga

*Don Giovanni* - Inland Opera Northwest

Hometown Taipei, Taiwan

Residence Seattle, Washington



Florencia Grimaldi

ELIZABETH CABALLERO

Soprano

**Nashville Opera**

*Madame Butterfly*, 2019

*Florencia en el Amazonas*, 2015

*Pagliacci*, 2011

*Don Giovanni*, 2008

**Recent**

Tosca in *Tosca* - Stadttheater Bern

Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro* - Madison Opera

Mimi in *La Bohème* - Seiji Ozawa Music Academy

**Upcoming**

Mimi in *La Bohème* - Fort Worth Opera

**Hometown** Havana, Cuba

**Residence** Fort Lauderdale, Florida



Rosalba

EVELYN SAAVEDRA

Soprano

**Nashville Opera**

*The Pirates of Penzance*, 2023

**Recent**

Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* - Vero Beach Opera

Musetta in *La Bohème* - Vero Beach Opera

Rosalba in *Florencia en el Amazonas* - Pensacola Opera

**Upcoming**

Vitellia in *La Clemenza di Tito* - Julliard Opera

Micaëla in *Carmen* - Julliard Opera

**Hometown** Miami, Florida

**Residence** New York City, New York



Paula

SANDRA EDDY

Mezzo-Soprano

**Nashville Opera**

*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, 2014

**Recent**

Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* - Wichita Grand Opera

Maddalena in *Rigoletto* - Opera Colorado

Desiree in *A Little Night Music* - Opera North (UK)

**Upcoming**

Dorothee in *The Anonymous Lover* - Boston Lyric Opera

Carmen in *Carmen* - Vancouver Opera

**Hometown** Boston, Massachusetts

**Residence** North Eastern, Massachusetts



Riolobo

## LUIS OROZCO

Baritone

### Nashville Opera

*Stuck Elevator*, 2023

*La Bohème*, 2022

*María de Buenos Aires*, 2017

### Recent

Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* - Opera Omaha

Flemish Deputy in *Don Carlos* - Metropolitan Opera

Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* - Wichita Grand Opera

### Upcoming

Maximilian in *Candide* - Madison Opera

George in *Sunday in the Park with George* - El Paso Opera

Hometown El Paso, Texas

Residence Madison, Wisconsin



Arcadio

## CÉSAR DELGADO

Tenor

### Nashville Opera

Debut

### Recent

Arcadio (Cover) in *Florencia en el Amazonas* - Metropolitan Opera

Duca di Mantova in *Rigoletto* - Opera in the Park, Portland

Zorro in *Zorro* (World Premiere) - Fort Worth Opera

### Upcoming

Arcadio in *Florencia en el Amazonas* - San Jose Opera

Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* - Conjunto Santander

Rodolfo in *La Bohème* - Mazatlan Opera

Hometown Guadalajara, Mexico

Residence Guadalajara / New York City



Alvaro

## MARK WHATLEY

Baritone

### Nashville Opera

*La Bohème*, 2022

*Rigoletto*, 2022

*La Traviata*, 2018

*Tosca*, 2017

*Iolanthe*, 2006

*Salome*, 2004

*Tosca*, 2003

*The Mikado*, 2001

Mary Ragland Emerging Artist, 2001

### Recent

*Messiah* - Concert Chorale of Nashville

*Schubert's Winterreise* - Belmont University

*Carmina Burana* - Nashville Ballet

### Upcoming

Faculty Concert, Belmont University

Coordinator of Classical Voice and Professor of Music, Belmont University

Hometown Newnan, Georgia

Residence Brentwood, Tennessee



Capitan

RICARDO LUGO

Bass

Nashville Opera

*Das Rheingold*, 2022

Recent

Dr. Dulcamara in *L'elisir d'amore* - Ópera de Puerto Rico

Fafner in *Siegfried* - Virginia Opera

Simone in *Gianni Schicchi* - Hawaii Opera Theater

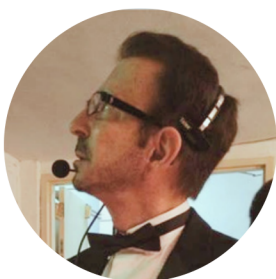
Upcoming

Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* - New Orleans Opera

Hometown Ponce, Puerto Rico

Residence Lansing, New York

# PRODUCTION



Stage Manager

JOE GLADSTONE

Nashville Opera

*Pagliacci*, 2023

*The Pirates of Penzance*, 2023

*The Medium*, 2022

*Das Rheingold*, 2022

Recent

*La Traviata* - North Carolina Opera

*La Cenerentola* - Opera Maine

*The Medium* and *Sāvitrī* - First Coast Opera

Upcoming

*Die Fledermaus* - Pensacola Opera

*Aida* - Opera Maine

Residence Greenlawn, New York



Chorusmaster

STEPHEN  
CAREY

Nashville Opera

Director of Engagement

Opera on Wheels



Supertitles

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MARCOE

Nashville Opera

Education Manager

Nashville Opera on Tour



Lighting and Video Designer

## BARRY STEELE

### Nashville Opera

*Der Rosenkavalier, Salome, The Lighthouse, La Voix Humaine, Lucia di Lammermoor, Faust, Surrender Road, Turandot (2006, 2015), Romeo and Juliet, Madame Butterfly, Samson and Delilah, The Fall of the House of Usher, Andrea Chénier, The Girl of the Golden West, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat, Otello, La Bobème (2014), Romulus Hunt, Florencia en el Amazonas, Hydrogen Jukebox, Don Giovanni, Glory Denied, Three Way, Carmen, Maria de Buenos Aires, Susannah, Tales of Hoffmann, The Cradle Will Rock, Rigoletto Noir, Das Rheingold, La Bobème, The Medium, Stuck Elevator, The Pirates of Penzance, Pagliacci*

### Upcoming

*The Barber of Seville* - Arizona Opera

*Roméo et Juliette* - Arizona Opera

*La Bobème* - Florida Grand Opera

Hometown / Residence St Petersburg, Florida



Costume Designer & Coordinator

## PAM LISENBY

### Nashville Opera

*Susannah, The Pearl Fishers, Salome, Amahl and the Night Visitors, Hansel and Gretel, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat (2013), Romulus Hunt, Hydrogen Jukebox, Maria de Buenos Aires.*

### Recent

*Taylor Swift Eras Tour (2023), Brandy Clark - Americana Awards (2023), Brenda Lee & Trisha Yearwood - ABC Opry Christmas Special (2023), Ken Marlowe - People's Choice Country Music Awards (2023), High Valley - Canadian Country Music Awards (2023), Meghan Patrick - Canadian Country Music Awards (2023), Parker McCollum - ACM Awards (2023), David Lee Murphy - Songwriters' Honors Awards (2023), Maren Morris - CMA Awards (2022), Carolyn Dawn Johnson - Ryman (2022), Brett Eldridge "Songs About You" Album Cover (2022), Luke Combs' Middle of Somewhere Tour (2022)*

Hometown / Residence Nashville, Tennessee



Wig & Makeup Designer

## SONDRA NOTTINGHAM

### Nashville Opera

*La Bobème, Florencia en el Amazonas, Salome, Elmer Gantry, Il Trovatore, The Student Prince, The Fall of the House of Usher, Rigoletto, The Girl of the Golden West, Madama Butterfly, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat, Romulus Hunt, Glory Denied, Tales of Hoffmann, The Cradle Will Rock, Madama Butterfly, Pepito, Amahl and the Night Visitors, Turn of the Screw, Beach Party Cinderella, One Vote Won, Favorite Son, Rigoletto Noir, Das Rheingold, La Bobème, The Medium, Stuck Elevator, The Pirates of Penzance, Pagliacci, The Pearl Fishers, Salome, Amahl and the Night Visitors, Hansel and Gretel, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat (2013), Romulus Hunt, Hydrogen Jukebox, Maria de Buenos Aires.*

### Recent

*Abduction from the Seraglio, Ariadne auf Naxos* - St. Petersburg Opera

*Das Rheingold, La Traviata* - North Carolina Opera

*Turandot, Dead Man Walking* - Shreveport Opera

*Witches of Venice, Il Postino, Figaro. The Long Walk* - Opera Saratoga

*Carmen, Un Ballo in Maschera* - Opera Tampa

*Three Way* - American Opera Projects, Brooklyn Academy of Music

Hometown Hardinsburg, Kentucky

Residence Nashville, Tennessee

## NASHVILLE OPERA ORCHESTRA

Dean Williamson, Conductor  
Anne Dickson Rogers, Contractor

### FIRST VIOLIN

Christina McGann, CM  
Ching-Yi Lin  
George Meyer  
Deidre Fominaya Bacco

### SECOND VIOLIN

Carolyn Wann Bailey  
Zoya Leybin  
Eliza Cho  
Mia Hagarty

### VIOLA

Elizabeth Lamb  
Carl Larson  
Razvan Berindean  
Cristina Micci-Barreca

### CELLO

Sari Reist  
Meghan Berindean  
Kaitlyn Vest  
Christopher Stenstrom

### BASS

Craig E. Nelson  
Quentin Flowers  
Tiffany Freeman

### FLUTE & PICCOLO

Deanna Little  
Julie Ditzel

### OBOE

Jared Hauser  
Michael Adduci

### CLARINET

Todd Waldecker  
Mark J. Cramer  
Emily Bowland, bass

### BASSOON

James Lotz  
Laura A. Hauser, contra

### FRENCH HORN

Jennifer Kummer  
Harry F. Ditzel  
Tara Johnson

### TRUMPET

Joel Treybig  
Jeff Bailey

### TROMBONE

David L. Loucky  
Jacob Marlow

### TUBA

Neil Konouchi

### TIMPANI

Ron Sorbo

### PERCUSSION

Scot Corey  
David Steinquest  
W. Lee Vinson

### HARP

Rachel Miller

### KEYBOARD

Andrew Pham

## NASHVILLE OPERA CHORUS

Stephen Carey, Chorusmaster

### SOPRANO

Ivory Bodnar  
Claire Paschal  
Krista Adams Santilli  
Mary Katherine Stewart

### MEZZO SOPRANO

Vinéecia Buchanan  
Jada Duff  
Belinda Leslie  
Sarah LePage Parker

### TENOR

Alex Baldwin  
Stefan Biller  
Larry Cotton Jr.  
Vincent Davis

### BASS

Ben Kahan  
TJ Morin  
Warren Quandt  
Blake Ryan

