

# Joseph Bascetta, Stage Director

## *Selected Reviews*

### ***Aida* (Opera Columbus)**

“Aida sets a new standard for excellence at Opera Columbus.... One of the admirable aspects of this production is its consistency. Once voices warmed up and stage and orchestra got in synch, the opera climbed to even-higher levels of excitement. ...The stage direction by Joseph Bascetta looked so natural that one forgot it was an opera.”

The Columbus Dispatch

### ***La Traviata* (Fresno International Grand Opera)**

“The Fresno Grand Opera’s overall production was first rate. From the time the curtain rose in the first act to the final scene, we beheld a beautiful set with extravagant costumes.

Throughout the production, the visual elements matched the skill of the musicians. You don’t have to travel to San Francisco or Los Angeles to experience a night at the opera; the Fresno Grand Opera creates the total experience right here in Fresno.”

*The Fresno Bee*

### ***Rigoletto* (Fresno International Grand Opera)**

“Once again Fresno’s great opera company transcended the ordinary with a stunning production complete with first-rate vocalists and regal pageantry.

This production of Rigoletto combined great voices in duets and quartets and provided a rare cosmopolitan experience to our city. The Fresno International Grand Opera continues to be a jewel in Fresno’s crown.”

*The Fresno Bee*

### ***The Barber of Seville* (Fresno International Grand Opera)**

“With this shimmering cast, spectacular scenery and over-the-top comic detail, the Fresno International Grand Opera struck gold with ‘The Barber of Seville’. The opera company achieved the perfect balance of elements with its primary focus on the staging and delivery of the story and treated Fresno to a performance worthy of the best opera houses in the world.”

*The Fresno Bee*

### ***La Bohème* (Hawaii Opera Theatre)**

“H.O.T. triumphant with *La Boheme*. The Puccini classic comes to life in a refreshing staging...Stage Director Joseph Bascetta took full advantage of the visual assets; action took part on every part of the stage...The movement was natural and held the attention of the audience throughout.”

*Honolulu Star Bulletin*

“Lovely *La Boheme* hits mark...One of the greatest successes of this production is the perception that we, the audience, have been transported back a century to Paris. This is to the credit of stage director Joseph Bascetta. Bascetta has a keen eye for not only large-scale tableaux but also to...minor bits of stage business that greatly enhance the characterizations.”

*Honolulu Advertiser*

### ***La Bohème* (Dayton Opera)**

“When success occurs, it should be celebrated...In theatrical terms, director Joseph Bascetta has pumped up the intended comedic elements of the opera with physical humor that well serves the music and the spirit if the work, offsetting the tragedy without overshadowing it. The sets allowed for a variety of movements across the stage...which featured the creative use of stairways, gates and passages. The tableau at the opening of Act II which takes place on a busy street...inspired its own applause.”

*Dayton Daily News*

### ***La Bohème* (Opera Lyra Ottawa)**

“Bascetta, the stage director with a fondness for opera and musical theatre, is creating some lavish, blood-curdling passion in Opera Lyra’s production of *La Boheme*...”

*Ottawa Sun*

***Il Barbiere di Siviglia (Toledo Opera)***

“Joseph Bascetta created a first-rate piece of theater...what made this production an absolute winner from beginning to end was the joyful acting and cohesive directing. This was opera as it should be, vivacious and brilliant. The entire production flowed like a rising tide.”

*The Toledo Blade*

***The Barber of Seville (Berkshire Opera)***

“Stage Director Joseph Bascetta deserves bravos and accolades of his own. He brought to life not only the big three, but also the character roles.”

*Union News*

“...*Barber* - a rollicking good time...with attractive staging by Joseph Bascetta, makes for an evening of great fun. The production...done with style and good pacing, is highly recommendable.”

*Berkshire Eagle*

“Stage director, Joseph Bascetta knows how to use space and, more importantly understands how to maneuver characters to maximize the enjoyment couched in the Rossini score.”

*The Times Union*

***Turandot (Pula Opera Festival)***

“Joseph Bascetta evoked a remote China-fabulous, ferocious and mystic. With this the director has given life in a masterly way to the intention of the beloved Lucchese composer in the highest artistic expression.”

*La Voce del Popolo*

“This was an impressive production...with explicit detailed work by Joseph Bascetta. In Mr. Bascetta’s classic staging there is no surprising or superfluous direction. Mr. Bascetta’s direction is consistent and meticulously follows high standards which are not so often seen in opera today.”

*Vecernji List, Zagreb*

***Turandot (Hawaii Opera Theatre)***

“...a grand and authentic looking show...Joseph Bascetta moved his numerous forces effectively.”

*Opera*

“Hawaii Opera Theatre’s...season closed with an understated *Turandot*. Joseph Bascetta was able to move chorus and crowds with near-cinematic effect.”

*Opera News*

“*Turandot* opera shines visually. High theatrical standards elevate HOT’s production of *Turandot*. Sumptuous sets, costumes and staging were a delight for the eyes...stage director, Joseph Bascetta does wonders with the huge ensemble and makes excellent use of Peter Dean Beck’s splendid sets.”

*The Honolulu Advertiser*

“*Turandot*: a glorious finale for opera season. Animated spectacle teemed across the stage in HOT glorious *Turandot*. Exceptional production elements showcased moving drama. The sheer number of performers involved in staging Puccini’s last opera staggered the imagination. With these massive forces, stage director Joseph Bascetta used stillness as much as movement to create stunning visual tableaux and enhance the music’s drama.”

*Star Bulletin*

**Macbeth (Astra Theatre in Malta)**

“The most successful opera production in Malta ever, excellent...and inspired stage directions...thoroughly professional.”

**Aida (Astra Theatre in Malta)**

“Once again, the staging was quite dramatic and the whole plot was acted out with fervent reality.”

*The Times Music*

**Faust (Singapore Lyric Theatre)**

“An opera performance is one of the most difficult things to pull off successfully. It requires...great solo singing...effective choral and orchestral contributions, fluid stage design and lighting and a strong sense of theatre which melds all three elements into a dramatic whole...The Singapore Lyric Theatre’s production of Gounod’s *Faust*...staged by Joseph Bascetta...can therefore be reckoned as only a qualified success...There was certainly enough in this performance to satisfy.”

*The Straits Times*

**Faust (Dayton Opera)**

“The staging, directed by Joseph Bascetta, is inspired.”

*Dayton Daily News*

**Gianni Schicchi (Toledo Opera)**

“*Schicchi* Bubbles Over...*Gianni Schicchi* was a gem in its stage direction and literally bubbled with life. There was a sense throughout that the characters were delighting in both their roles and the actions that stage director Joseph Bascetta had given.”

*The Toledo Blade*

**Porgy & Bess (Toledo Opera)**

“Not enough can be said about the effectiveness of Bascetta’s directing. He brought out each juicy flavor in the multifaceted story and he had the cast willing and able to capture his vision.

Joseph Bascetta’s fabulous directing funneled the electric energy the large cast generated into dozens of moments of delightful stage business.”

*The Toledo Blade*

**Carmen (Toledo Opera)**

“Pulling all this wonderful talent together was first rate directing by Joseph Bascetta. Throughout one sensed Bascetta’s gentle touch in the way the singers seemed to be discovering their characters as they went along. The final scene, in its darkening abyss of emotional turmoil was utterly shattering, unlike any I have ever seen, and more powerful as well.”

*The Toledo Blade*

**La Traviata (Hawaii Opera Theatre)**

“A vibrant *La Traviata* capped the season, dynamically moving and intelligently shaded by...Joseph Bascetta’s...stage direction.”

*Opera News*

**La Traviata (Connecticut Grand Opera)**

“Director, Joseph Bascetta, a proven directorial talent, brought highly innovative ideas to the production.”

**Madama Butterfly (Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra)**

“Kalamazoo Symphony *Butterfly* a winner. *Madama Butterfly* excelled thanks to...marvelous staging...The walk bridge came from

off-stage to stage left allowing for effective entrances and exits. Guest stage director, Joseph Bascetta obviously had a splendid concept in mind to lend coherence and cohesiveness to the staging.”

*Kalamazoo Gazette*

***Madama Butterfly (Virginia Opera)***

“In fact, much of the credit for the dramatic success of this production goes to stage director Joseph Bascetta. He blocked the opening wedding scene expertly, maneuvering the crowd of relatives and guests on the tiny set, and brought real emotional power to Butterfly’s death scene.”

*Daily Press*

***Madama Butterfly (Toledo Opera)***

“Joseph Bascetta’s colorful traditional staging included a melodramatic rendition of Cio-Cio-Sans’ suicide; she came crashing through the screen before Pinkerton’s eyes.”

*Opera News*

***The Marriage of Figaro (Berkshire Opera)***

“Another strength of this production was Joseph Bascetta’s staging. Seldom have I seen the complex mixups of the final act developing with more clarity and focus than in this garden scene.”

*Berkshire Record*

***Cavalleria Rusticana & I Pagliacci***

“The impressive group of singing actors were skillfully directed by Joseph Bascetta.”

*The Times*

***Cavalleria Rusticana & I Pagliacci (Shubert New Haven Opera)***

“Stupendous is not too strong a word to describe Friday evening’s show at the Shubert...So consistently fine was the Shubert Opera double billing of...Cavalleria and Pagliacci, it’s hard to know in what order to dole out the compliments. Under the direction of Joseph Bascetta, chorus members did more than fill space. Every...worshipper...and onlooker in the Leoncavallo’s crowd of townsfolk seemed to lend special energy and soul to the opera stories.”

*New Haven Register*

***Cavalleria Rusticana (Buffalo Opera)***

“As directed by Joseph Bascetta...*Cavalleria Rusticana* was a knockout.”