


# TRAGEDY OF CARMEN



**THE GROVE THEATRE**

**JUNE 18 & 20, 2026**

# THE TRAGEDY OF CARMEN

*Bizet's Music*

*Adapted by Peter Brook*

Carmen & Co-Stage Director	Kathryn Frady
Don Jose	Edward Brennan
Micaela	Jacque Reynolds
Escamillo	Geoffrey Peterson
Zuniga	Maurice Hendricks
Lilas Pastia	Oliver Hassall
Frasquita & Assistant Stage Manager	Faith Nevarez
Co-Stage Director	Marya Barry
Conductor	Andy Anderson
Stage Manager	Martin Hennessee
Rehearsal Pianists	Dustin Lin & Brandon Coffey

## *Special Thanks*

### Cathedral Concert Series

The Cathedral Concert Series, in coordination with the Cathedral Academy of Music, is committed to enriching the cultural life of East Tennessee by presenting outstanding performances from premier local, regional, national, and international music ensembles. In

addition to its concert offerings, the series extends its impact through outreach by supporting a wide range of performing ensembles, helping to nurture musical talent and strengthen the community's artistic spirit. Through these efforts, the series promotes community performing arts and fosters a deeper appreciation for music across the region.

For more information, please visit [shcathedral.org/cathedral-concert-series/](http://shcathedral.org/cathedral-concert-series/)

# ORCHESTRA

Flute & Piccolo	Jessi Piso
Clarinet	Deidre Ford
Oboe	Lydia Schoen
Bassoon	Andrew Carroll
French Horn	Kelsey Donovan
Trumpet	Keith Kirk
Bass Trombone	Matthew Walker
Percussion	Steven Rogers
Harp	Dustin Lin
Piano	Brandon Coffey
Violin 1	Mei Lla White
Violin 1	Hunter Wilburn
Violin 2	Heidi Mollers
Viola	Robyn James
Cello	Ian McClure
Bass	Daniel Bates

# *Synopsis*

A dreamlike vision opens the opera. Carmen is confronted by the cards that will ultimately reveal her destiny. As she gazes into the future, images of love, passion, and death emerge, setting the course for the tragedy to come.

Micaëla arrives searching for Don José, bringing news from home and hopes for their future together. When Don José and Micaëla reunite, they share a tender duet that reflects their affection and the simple life that awaits him should he choose to return home.

The arrival of Carmen changes everything, she sings the famous Habanera, declaring that love cannot be controlled or possessed. Drawn to her independence and magnetism, Don José finds himself increasingly captivated. Tensions between Carmen and Micaëla erupt into a confrontation that must be broken up by Zuniga. When Carmen is arrested for her role in the disturbance, she turns her powers of persuasion on Don José. During the Seguidilla, she seduces him with promises of freedom and romance, convincing him to help her escape. Though Zuniga ultimately allows Don José his freedom, he warns the young soldier that his actions have consequences and that he should proceed with caution.

The scene shifts to Lilas Pastia's bar where Carmen joins her companions in the spirited Gypsy Song. Don José arrives, eager to be reunited with her, and the two share a passionate duet. Their attraction remains powerful, but so do their differences. What begins as intimacy quickly turns to conflict as Carmen resists Don José's attempts to control her. When Zuniga appears and attempts to reassert his authority, tensions boil over. A violent struggle ensues between the two men, ending with Zuniga's death and severing Don José's final ties to his former life. Bullfighter Escamillo arrives to the admiration of all. With the Toreador Song, he proudly describes the glory and danger of the bullring. His confidence and charisma immediately capture Carmen's attention. Don José, recognizing a rival, challenges Escamillo. The confrontation reveals the growing conflict between the two men and foreshadows the struggle that will define Carmen's future. Escamillo departs, leaving Don José alone with his thoughts. In the Flower Aria, he recalls the flower Carmen once threw to him and confesses the depth of his love and devotion.

# *Synopsis*

Some time later, Carmen and Don José have reconciled and remain together, but their relationship is increasingly strained. Their reunion is passionate, yet old arguments quickly resurface. Carmen finally admits what Don José fears most: her love for him has faded. Refusing to pretend otherwise, she declares her desire to live freely, regardless of the consequences.

As smugglers prepare for their next venture, Lilas Pastia warns of the danger posed by approaching guards. Left alone with her thoughts, Carmen turns once again to the cards. In the haunting Card Aria, she sees the same message she has seen before: death awaits her. Though she accepts the prophecy, she refuses to alter her course.

Micaëla arrives in a final effort to save Don José. Her aria expresses both courage and compassion as she pleads with him to leave behind the violence and obsession that have consumed him. As Micaëla's voice intertwines with Carmen's continuing meditation on the cards, hope and fate collide. Yet neither woman can alter the path Don José has chosen.

In the final scene, Escamillo and Carmen celebrate their love as crowds gather for the bullfight. Escamillo prepares to enter the arena, while Carmen looks forward to a future free from fear and constraint. Frasquita and Lilas Pastia warn her that Don José is nearby and urge her to leave, but Carmen refuses. She will not hide, and she will not surrender her freedom.

Alone together for the final time, Carmen and Don José confront one another outside the bullring. Don José begs her to return to him and abandon Escamillo. Carmen steadfastly refuses. The dreamlike vision from the opening returns. Recognizing that the hour foretold by the cards has arrived, Carmen accepts her fate without fear. Unable to possess the woman he loves, Don José fulfills the prophecy, bringing the tragedy to its devastating conclusion.

## *Audience Advisory:*

This performance contains themes and content related to domestic violence. Marble City Opera wants to ensure that all members of our audience are aware of the sensitive nature of the subject matter and are given the opportunity to make an informed decision about whether they wish to continue with the performance. The play explores complex and often difficult topics, which may be distressing for some individuals.

If you or someone you know is experiencing emotional distress or domestic violence, we encourage you to seek help. Support is available. Please reach out to a mental health professional or contact a suicide prevention hotline immediately. You are not alone and help is available.

We are fortunate to have wonderful resources in Knoxville through the McNabb Center. For more information visit [www.mcnabbcenter.org](http://www.mcnabbcenter.org) or call their 24-hour hotline: 865-637-8000





## Kathryn Frady

### Carmen, Stage Director, & Artistic Director

Critically acclaimed soprano Kathryn Frady has worked throughout the United States, Europe, and South Africa. Frady has been widely praised for her vocal range, dramatic talent, and immersive and creative direction. Frady received Most Memorable Opera Performance Awards for her vocal and dramatic portrayals of the title roles in *Tosca*, *Suor Angelica*, *Susannah*, Violetta in *La Traviata*, and Amelia in the World Premiere of *Amelia Lost*.

Arts Knoxville's review of *Tosca* said, "In addition to having those requisite vocal and dramatic qualities that make for great melodrama, Frady, appropriately costumed and coiffed, simply looked and sounded like the *Tosca* that one carries around in their mind's eye." Of her previous performance of Poulenc's *The Human Voice*, Arts Knoxville noted "Frady's brilliance as a soprano capable of riveting the audience's attention - in vocal depth, in lyrical beauty, and in a marvelously conceived ebb and flow of posture and attitude - was as rewarding as it gets in theater." TN Today called the same performance "nothing short of a tour de force."

A fierce advocate for new American works, Frady has produced, sung, and directed in over 20 premieres. Frady's production of the world premiere of Larry Delinger's *Shadowlight*, was called "a stunning celebration of the art and life of Beauford Delaney" in a "marvelously immersive" production by Arts Knoxville.

Frady has a Bachelor of Music and Master of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of North Texas and is the Founding Executive Artistic Director & CEO of Marble City Opera.

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