



Concert *Companion*

Your insiders guide to every concert



Bringing Exceptional Music to Reno, Carson Valley, and the Tahoe Area

Great music should be close to home.



Like Lake Tahoe, great music
invites us to pause, reflect, and see
the world with fresh eyes.

THE TAHOE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
AND CHORUS



Welcome to Nightz at Tahoe Opera

Whether this is your very first Tahoe Philharmonic concert or you've been enjoying live performances for years, we're delighted you're here.



Opera has a way of bringing together unforgettable music, powerful storytelling, and unforgettable emotion. You don't need to know the plots, speak Italian, or have any musical training to enjoy it. All you need is an open mind and a willingness to let the music take you on the journey. Tonight's program features some of opera's most beloved masterpieces by Mozart, Verdi, Puccini, Rossini, Bizet, and Massenet. You'll hear soaring melodies, dazzling vocal performances, stirring choruses, and beautiful orchestral music that have captivated audiences for generations. You may even recognize more music than you expect—many of these melodies have become part of popular culture through films, television, commercials, and major public events. This Concert Companion is designed to help you get even more from your experience. Inside, you'll discover the stories behind the music, learn what to listen for, and find a few "don't miss" moments that make this concert especially memorable.

Most of all, we hope this guide helps you relax, listen deeply, and simply enjoy the extraordinary experience of live music performed by the Tahoe Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus.

Welcome, and enjoy the performance!



What Makes Opera So Exciting?

**OPERA IS STORY TELLING AT IT'S MOST
POWERFUL!**

If you've never been to an opera, or think opera "isn't for you", you're in for a wonderful surprise.

At its heart, opera is simply storytelling through music. Every melody, every chorus, and every aria helps tell a story filled with unforgettable characters and powerful emotions.

Think about your favorite movie, Broadway musical, or television drama. Chances are it has a hero to cheer for, a villain to overcome, moments of romance, unexpected twists, laughter, heartbreak, and ultimately hope or triumph.

Opera has all of that.

Long before Broadway existed, composers were creating spectacular productions that combined music, drama, beautiful costumes, and unforgettable stories. Today's musicals owe much of their inspiration to the traditions established by opera centuries ago.

As you listen tonight, you'll hear music that celebrates courage, love, humor, longing, and joy. Even if you don't understand every word, the music itself tells the story. A soaring melody can express hope, a powerful chorus can create excitement, and a single voice can reveal emotions that words alone cannot.

You don't need to know every plot or recognize every composer to enjoy the performance. Simply listen, watch, and let the music carry you through the emotions of each piece.

EVERY GREAT
OPERA HAS...

HEROES



Courageous, flawed, and unforgettable characters who drive the story forward.

Villians



Compelling forces of conflict that challenge our heroes and keep us on the edge of our seats

Romances



Passionate love stories that inspire, delight, and sometimes breaks our hearts

Comedy



Wit, charm, and lighthearted moments that remind us to laugh, and balance the drama.

Triumph



Moments of hope, redemption, and celebration that leave us uplifted and inspired.

"Opera is where music and drama become one"

– Renee Fleming

Meet Your Maestro



"EVERY CONCERT BEGINS WITH A SIMPLE INVITATION..."

For more than four decades, Maestro James Rawie has been doing more than conducting orchestras, he's been building musical communities.

As the Founder and Artistic Director of the Tahoe Philharmonic Orchestra & Chorus, his vision has always been simple: great music should be welcoming, inspiring, and close to home.

From intimate chamber performances to grand orchestral concerts and opera productions, James believes music has the power to bring people together, spark curiosity, and create memories that last long after the final note.

His career has taken him throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, and Europe as a conductor, educator, and founder of several orchestras and choruses. Yet his greatest joy isn't found in prestigious concert halls, it's watching someone discover classical music for the very first time.

Whether you're a lifelong concertgoer or this is your very first performance, James hopes tonight's music leaves you inspired, uplifted, and eager to return.

"Music isn't meant to separate us by background or experience. It's meant to bring us together."

— Maestro James Rawie



James spent more than 40 years bringing orchestra music all over the world



He has led performances all over the US, Puerto Rico, and Europe



Xterra World Champion at Lake Molveno, Italy and is an Ironman.



Tonight's *Musical* *Journey*

Tonight's performance is filled with unforgettable moments. Whether you're experiencing these works for the first time or returning to them as old favorites, here are five musical highlights to listen for throughout the evening.



Nessun dorma
PUCCINI

One of the greatest melodies ever written. Wait for the final soaring note. You'll know why audiences erupt in applause.



Queen of the Night
MOZART

Listen for the impossible high notes. This aria is considered one of the most difficult ever written.



Meditation
THAÏS

Close your eyes. This violin solo is one of the most beautiful melodies ever composed. Your concertmaster, Kevin Matheson, performs this lyrical favorite.



Va, pensiero
VERDI

When the chorus enters, notice how the voices blend into one powerful sound. It's one of the world's most beautiful choral pieces.



Libiamo
LA TRAVIATA

The concert ends with one of opera's happiest celebrations. You'll probably leave humming and smiling.

"Music is the shortest distance between two people."
— Victor Borge

Meet the Composers

These extraordinary composers gave us the music you'll hear tonight, each with their unique voice, that continues to move and inspire us today.



Mozart

**BRILLIANT. PLAYFUL.
INVENTIVE.**

A genius of melody and drama, Mozart's music sparkles with both elegance and emotion. His operas reveal the full range of the human heart.



Verdi

**BIG EMOTIONS.
POWERFUL CHORUSES.**

Verdi's music celebrates love, freedom, and the human spirit. His memorable melodies and stirring choruses can move us to joy, tears, or triumphant exhilaration.



Puccini

**MASTER OF
UNFORGETTABLE MELODIES.**

Puccini's music speaks directly to the heart. With lush, soaring melodies and deeply emotional stories, he remains one of opera's most beloved composers. If you've heard *Nessun dorma*, you've already met Puccini.



Rossini

**COMEDY WITH
INCREDIBLE ENERGY.**

Rossini's operas sparkle with wit, charm, and joyful surprises. His music is brilliantly crafted and impossible not to enjoy.



Bizet

PASSION AND DRAMA.

Bizet had a gift for melody and an ear for the rhythms of life. His music is vivid, sensuous, and filled with drama that continues to captivate audiences around the world.



Massenet

**ELEGANCE AND
LYRIC BEAUTY.**

Massenet's music flows with grace and tenderness. His gift for melody and orchestration creates moments of exquisite beauty and deep emotion.

Did You know?

Fascinating Facts About Opera That May Surprise You.

Opera is full of history, heart, and hidden gems. Opera combines music, theater, costumes, and storytelling. Here are a few things you may not know.



Audience applause is part of the fun

When a singer finishes an especially difficult or moving aria, it is perfectly appropriate to applaud enthusiastically.



Many famous songs are from opera

Some of opera's most familiar melodies appear in movies, television, commercials, and cartoons.



Nessun dorma became famous worldwide during the 1990 FIFA World Cup.

Although Nessun dorma was written in 1926 as part of Puccini's opera *Turandot*, it became a worldwide sensation during the 1990 FIFA World Cup in Italy. Luciano Pavarotti's unforgettable recording was used as the BBC's tournament theme, introducing millions of people to opera for the very first time. The aria's triumphant final word—"Vincerò!" ("I will win!")—made it the perfect soundtrack for the world's greatest sporting competition.



Opera is a total team effort.

The word "opera" comes from Italian and means "work." It reflects the way opera combines many art forms, music, theater, poetry, costumes, and stage design into one complete experience.



Opera is centuries old.

Many of the world's most famous operas were written more than 100 years ago, yet their stories of love, jealousy, ambition, humor, and heartbreak still feel surprisingly modern.



The Magic Flute was one of Mozart's final operas

And includes both comedy and profound themes. Selections in this concert are performed in English to make them especially accessible.



Opera singers usually perform without microphones.

Their voices are trained to carry over a full orchestra



How to Listen Like a Pro

Listen For The Melody



Think of the melody as the song you'll remember on the drive home. It's the musical "voice" that tells the story. Sometimes you'll hear it sung by a soloist, and other times it will be played by the violins or another instrument.

(Hint: There's No Wrong Way!)

You Don't Need to Know Music to Enjoy It

Forget everything you think you need to know about classical music or opera. You don't have to recognize every composer, understand Italian, or know anything about music theory. Just listen for the moments that make you feel something.

If a melody gives you goosebumps, makes you smile, or stirs an emotion, you've already "got it."

Pay Attention To The Voices



Compelling forces of conflict that challenge our heroes and keep us on the edge of our seats

Pay Attention to the Conductor



The conductor does much more than keep time. Every gesture shapes the music - guiding when it should be soft or powerful, slow or fast, joyful or dramatic. Think of the conductor as a storyteller.

Use these simple tips to get even more from tonight's performance.

Notice the Story Unfold



You don't need every detail or even a language you understand to follow along. Listen for the way the music makes you feel. Watch the expression, the staging, they all tell a story.

Enjoy the Orchestra



The orchestra sets the mood, builds the excitement and brings every scene to life. Listen for the melody, the chorus, the breathtaking notes.



Most importantly – relax and enjoy!



Don't worry about listening "correctly." Let the music wash over you. There are no wrong answers.

Continue the Journey

The music doesn't end here. We invite you to join us for more unforgettable performances.

Whether it's your first concert or your fiftieth, there's always something new to discover.

We can't wait to see you again!



UPCOMING CONCERTS

Check out website for updated dates, times, and locations

DAY	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Friday	September 11, 2026	4:00pm	Reno: TBA
Sunday	September 13, 2026	7:00pm	South Lake Tahoe: St Theresa Catholic Church
Friday	September 18, 2026	7:00pm	Caron City Boldrick Theater
Saturday	September 19, 2026	4:00pm	Truckee: Soiree Fundraiser Host: Jeff & Ursula Heffernon



*"Every concert
is a new beginning.
Every note is an
invitation to connect"*



NEXT CONCERT **MESSIAH** • Selections/Seasonal Favorites
Selections of Parts 1 & 3 plus O Holy Night — Holiday Carols

DATES

Dec. 7, 2026 - Dec. 21, 2026



@atahoe.orchestra



@Tahoe Philharmonic



@Tahoe Philharmonic

LOCATIONS

Gardenville: St Gail Catholic Church

Reno: St Luke's Lutheran Church

Reno: St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church



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