



RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE

CRAIG BOHLER, COMPOSER | STEVEN MARK KOHN, LIBRETTIST

BASED ON THE ZANE GREY NOVEL

TUCSON

FEB 25 & 26, 2017

TUCSON MUSIC HALL

PHOENIX

MAR 3, 4 & 5, 2017

SYMPHONY HALL

ARIZONA OPERA

CLICK THIS PAGE FOR AN EXCLUSIVE
BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT ED MELL'S SCENIC
DESIGN FOR *RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE*



RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE

RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE

CRAIG BOHMLER, COMPOSER | STEVEN MARK KOHN, LIBRETTIST

Based on the bestselling novel of the same name by Zane Grey, *Riders of the Purple Sage* will be the first world premiere produced by Arizona Opera. Follow this Wild West adventure through the sweeping vistas and massive canyons of the Southwest, brought to life by the vibrant work of world-renowned Arizona artist, Ed Mell.

The World Premiere of Arizona Opera's production of *Riders of the Purple Sage* takes place on February 25 & 26, 2017 in the Tucson Music Hall and March 3, 4 & 5 in Symphony Hall in Phoenix.

RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
Judd & Billie Joe Herberger

CREATIVE TEAM

COMPOSER

Craig Bohmler

LIBRETTIST

Steven Mark Kohn

CONDUCTOR

Joseph Mechavich

STAGE DIRECTOR

Fenlon Lamb

SCENIC DESIGNER

Ed Mell

PROJECTION DESIGNER

Jake Pinholster

COSTUME DESIGNER

Kathleen Trott

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Greg Hirsch

**HAIR & MAKE-UP
DESIGNER**

Alita Camacho

CHORUS MASTER

Henri Venanzi

**COLLABORATING
PRODUCER**

Kristin Atwell

CAST

LASSITER

Morgan Smith
(Mar 3 & 5)

LASSITER

Joshua Jeremiah
(Mar 4)

JANE WITHERSTEEN

Karin Wolverton
(Mar 3 & 5)

JANE WITHERSTEEN

Laura Wilde (Mar 4)

BERN VENTERS

Joshua Dennis

BESS

Amanda Opuszynski

BISHOP DYER

Kristopher Irmiter

ELDER TULL

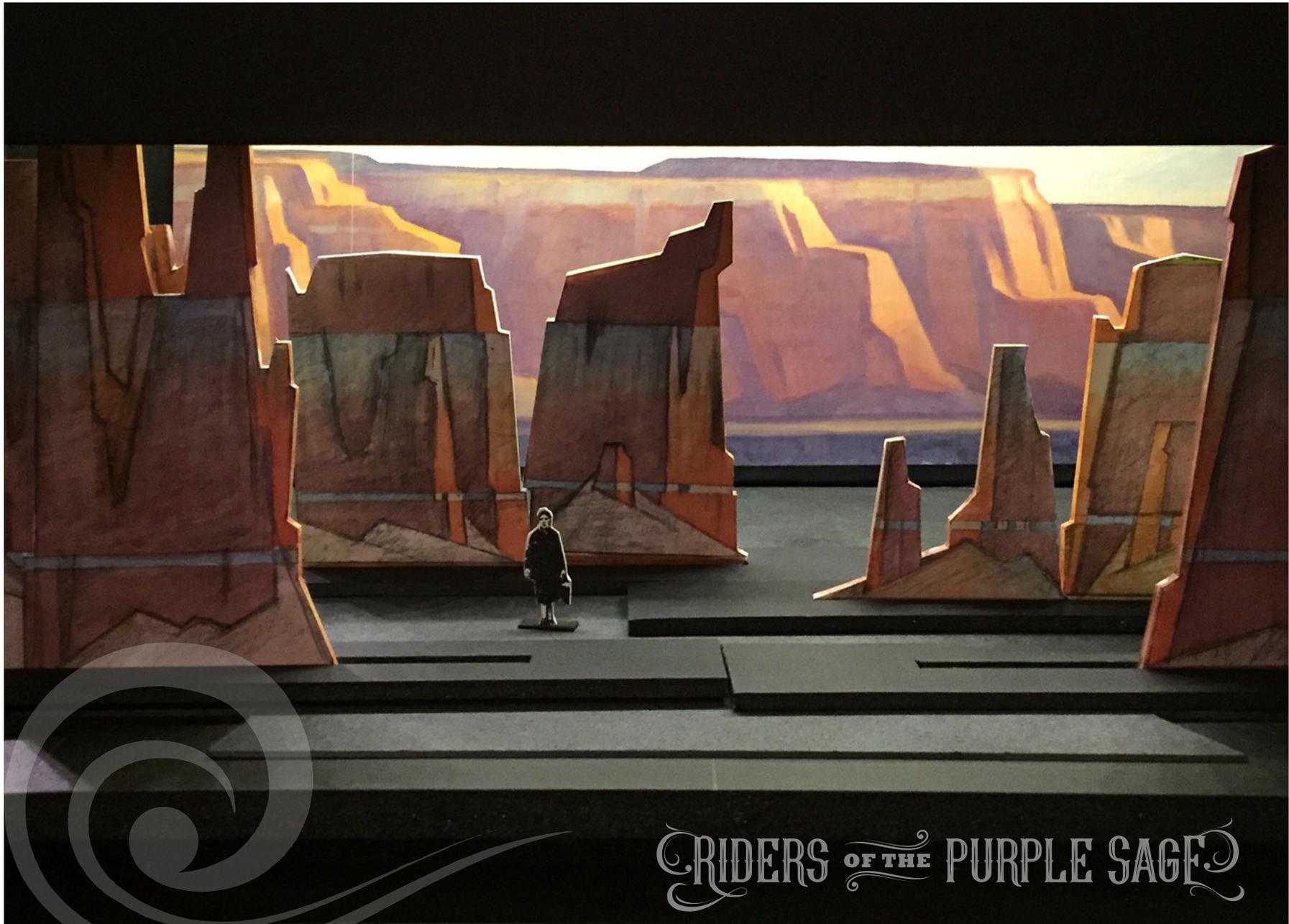
Keith Phares

JUDKINS

Hugo Vera



RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE

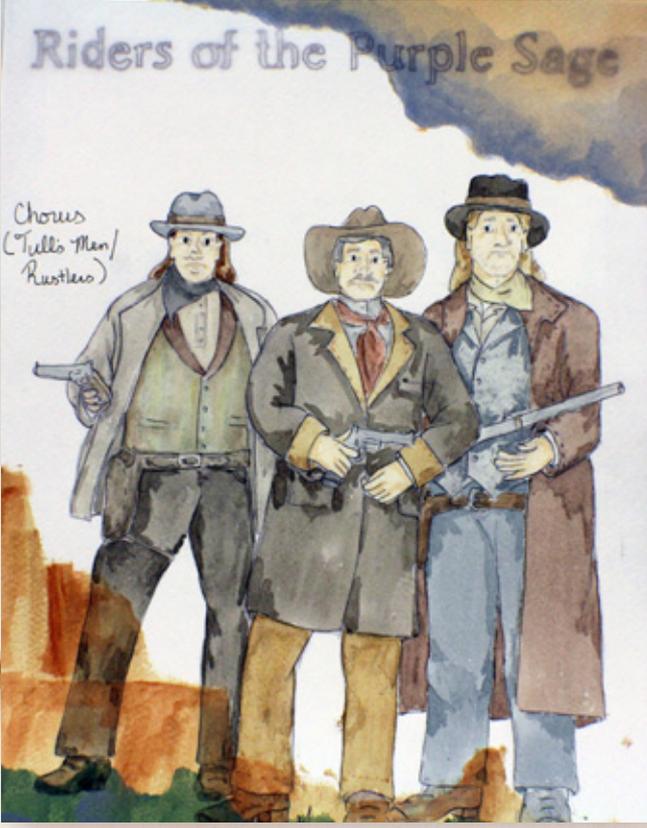


RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE

Riders of the Purple Sage

Riders of the Purple Sage

of the Purple Sage



Lassiter
(top of

RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE

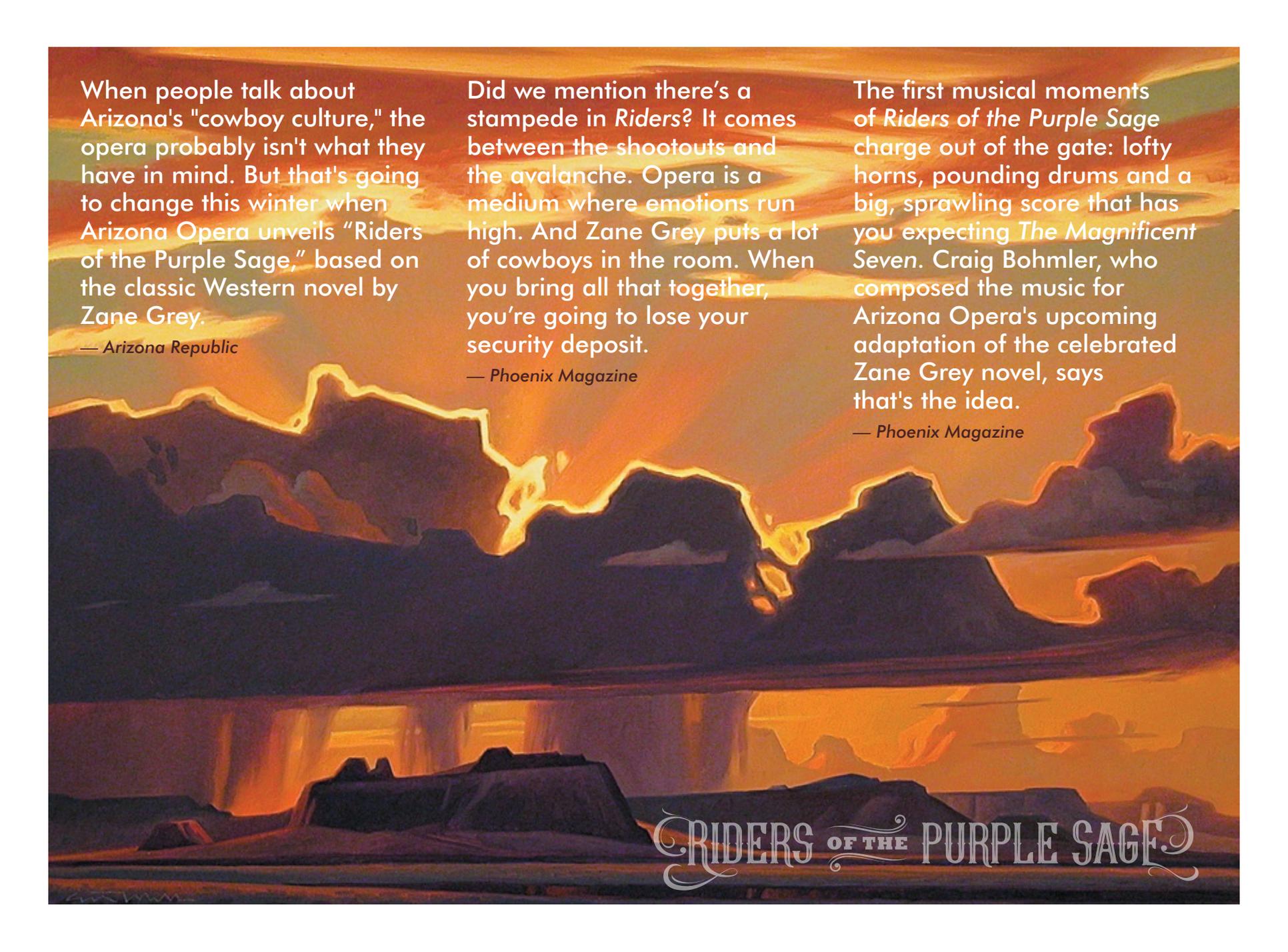


“#1 of Top 10
'Unmissable Events'
for 2016/17”

–*Arizona Republic*



RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE



When people talk about Arizona's "cowboy culture," the opera probably isn't what they have in mind. But that's going to change this winter when Arizona Opera unveils "Riders of the Purple Sage," based on the classic Western novel by Zane Grey.

— Arizona Republic

Did we mention there's a stampede in *Riders*? It comes between the shootouts and the avalanche. Opera is a medium where emotions run high. And Zane Grey puts a lot of cowboys in the room. When you bring all that together, you're going to lose your security deposit.

— Phoenix Magazine

The first musical moments of *Riders of the Purple Sage* charge out of the gate: lofty horns, pounding drums and a big, sprawling score that has you expecting *The Magnificent Seven*. Craig Bohmler, who composed the music for Arizona Opera's upcoming adaptation of the celebrated Zane Grey novel, says that's the idea.

— Phoenix Magazine

RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE

RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE

ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

Based in Phoenix, **Craig Bohmler** is a devoted composer for the stage whose works have been widely performed in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Japan. His musical, *Enter the Guardsman*, was nominated by the Olivier Awards for Best Musical, while his *Gunmetal Blues* had over 200 productions in the U.S. Canada and Japan. His work, *The Achilles Heel*, which was commissioned by Houston Grand Opera for the Houston Grand Opera Studio and won first prize in the 1995 National Opera Association Competition and he has received awards from ASCAP, Dramatist Guild, and BMI, and has received grants from Meet the Composer and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Librettist **Steven Mark Kohn**'s creative output as a composer, arranger, and writer spans the gamut from folk song arrangements premiering at Carnegie Hall to television jingles for Fortune 500 companies and Disney Channel film scores. Kohn's involvement in *Riders* is a natural outgrowth of his love

affair with American musical folklore. His three-volume set of American folk song arrangements premiered at Carnegie Hall by David Daniels and Martin Katz, and recorded on Azica Records by Andrew Garland. This style of music also permeates his dramatic art song cycle based on the diaries of Mary Chesnut, a confederate woman of the Civil War era. Kohn has composed scores for several award-winning animated children's films for PBS, ABC, and the Disney Channel, including *Frog and Toad Together*, *Uncle Elephant*, *Cousin Kevin*, *Commander Toad in Space*, *Morris Goes to School*, *Ralph S. Mouse*, and the Emmy-nominated *Runaway Ralph*.

In *Riders of the Purple Sage*, the landscape is a character unto itself—an epic backdrop of mesas and mountains filled with danger, beauty, and surprises. Bringing this crucial character to life is famed Southwest landscape artist **Ed Mell**, whose work will be seen on a large scale for the first time. Mell's work is featured in many corporate and private collections around the world, including those of Diane Keaton, the Forbes Collection, and the Anschutz Collection. His work is also permanently installed in several western museums, including the Phoenix Art Museum,

the Tucson Museum of Art, and the Denver Art Museum. Several large-scale public works have also been commissioned, including an eight and a half foot tall bucking bronco, a mural-esque painting for the visitor's center of Kartchner Caverns, and a bronze of a rising phoenix for Phoenix City Hall. His life as an artist is chronicled in the Northland Press book "Beyond the Visible Terrain: The Art of Ed Mell."

Opera News called **Fenlon Lamb** "moving and convincing" and Seen and Heard International complemented her "well-honed theatrical sensibility." Ms. Lamb brings these qualities of experience and perspective as an outstanding singing actress to her work as a stage director. Ms. Lamb is the new Director of Opera at UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance where she will direct *The Magic Flute* and *The Turn of the Screw* this season. Currently, she is also the Director of Opera and Vocal Programming at Bar Harbor Music Festival. She has designed and directed engaging productions of *Carmen*, *The Elixir of Love*, *Madama Butterfly*, *The Barber of Seville*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *La bohème* and *La Cenerentola* while she continues to program innovative recitals and pops concerts each festival season.



Principals.....	7
Male Chorus	16
Female Supers	7
Male Supers	4

Riders of the Purple Sage

This work presents the opportunity to change the way audiences around the world think about opera, bringing the history, legends and landscape of the Southwest to brilliant life.

RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE

ARIZONA OPERA

we tell stories worth singing

Joseph Specter, President and General Director