**NEWS**

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WORLD-RENOWNED OPERA SINGER COMING TO UT MARTIN

MARTIN, Tenn. – Kallen Esperian will bring her world-renowned vocal talents to the campus of the University of Tennessee at Martin at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 12, in the Harriet Fulton Theatre in the Fine Arts Building.

The performance is the fall semester’s performance for the university’s Ed Sargent Guest Artist Series. There is no admission charge.

Steve Barnett, the interim chair of the department of music, said having such a famous singer come to Martin is an outstanding opportunity.

“It means the world to us to bring a world-class-caliber performance,” he said. “Kallen Esperian has toured all over the world and had recordings with some of the greatest opera singers of all time.”

Esperian catapulted to the world stage in 1985 at the age of 24 as a winner of the Luciano Pavarotti International Voice Competition, becoming one of the world’s leading sopranos.

Onstage, she has partnered many times in leading roles with Pavarotti – her teacher, mentor and friend – as well as with the other members of the famed Three Tenors, Placido Domingo and Jose Carreras, and has performed with renowned conductors such as James Conlon, Sir Colin Davis, James Levine, Zubin Mehta and Riccardo Muti.

She made her debut in 1987 at La Scala in Milan, Italy, and is said to hold the record for the greatest number of curtain calls, 17, after her performance of the title role in Verdi’s “Luisa Miller.”

That same year, she sang Mimi to Placido Domingo’s Rodolfo in Puccini’s “La Boheme” at the Metropolitan Opera in New York.

Esperian has performed at the Vienna Staatsoper, the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, Munich’s Bayerische Staatsoper, Berlin’s Deutsche Oper, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the San Francisco Opera, Opera National de Paris, Barcelona’s Gran Teatro de Liceu, Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Arena di Verona, Orange Festival France, Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, the Los Angeles Opera and the Washington National Opera.

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Esperian’s concerts have been recorded and televised throughout the world. She has sung for President George W. Bush, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of the United Kingdom, French President Francois Mitterrand and, with Luciano Pavarotti, for Queen Elizabeth II.

Esperian is a recipient of the prestigious Amphion Award, the Dorothy B. Chandler Performing Arts Award, the Mafalda Favero Award and, in 2017, the Tennessee Governor's Arts Award for Distinguished Artists.

Esperian gives generously of her time and her voice to children's charities. Her performance for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital at Memphis' Orpheum Theater was televised and aired nationally.

The guest artist series is named for UT Martin graduate Ed Sargent, who is originally from Bolivar. Sargent is a Grammy-nominated producer who also manages musical acts that tour extensively in the U.S., Canada and 38 other countries around the globe.

Sargent currently serves as tour coordinator for Rock and Roll Hall of Fame icon Joan Jett and the Blackhearts. Prior to the Blackhearts, Sargent spent 25 years as tour manager and director of operations for the late jazz trumpet player Maynard Ferguson and his orchestra.

Sargent’s musical career is directly linked to his time with the UT Martin jazz and concert band while Sargent was a student and artist liaison.

“Ed Sargent has been a real boost to all of our artistic events,” Barnett said. “He was a student here and wants to do what he can to promote a variety of top-name groups to give a great experience not only to our students and faculty but also to the Martin community and to the region.”

For more information about the UTM Department of Music or to make a donation to the Ed Sargent Guest Artist series, contact the department at 731-881-7402 or visit [www.utm.edu/departments/music/](https://www.utm.edu/departments/music/).

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Photo – KALLEN ESPERIAN – Renowned opera singer Kallen Esperian will perform at UT Martin’s Harriet Fulton Theatre at 7 p.m. Tuesday.

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