Stage director Octavio Cardenas captivates audiences with his visionary, visceral, and physical style of directing. Born in the city of Guadalajara, Mexico, Opera News has praised him for creating “an immersive theater experience” while the Dallas Morning News hailed him for bringing “every character and situation to life.” Recent projects include *La boheme* for Des Moines Metro Opera, *Madame* *Butterfly* with Opera Santa Barbara, and the world premiere of the children’s opera *Frida Kahlo and the Bravest Girl in the World* for Fort Worth Opera.

Mr. Cardenas’ recent productions of *Silent Night* for Fort Worth Opera and Lyric Opera of Kansas City were described as “a breathtaking realization” with “many brilliant touches.” The Kansas City Star called the Lyric Opera’s production “one of its finest performances in recent memory.” Other recent productions include La boheme for Minnesota opera to which the Start Tribune acclaimed, “what makes the production a success, is Octavio Cardenas’ staging.” His production of *As* *One* for UrbanArias was acclaimed by MD Theater Guide, “Under the direction of Octavio Cardenas, the two stars playfully make great use of both stage and energetic space—it seemed the theatre condensed and expanded with Hannah’s journey.”

As the former Director of Opera for Baylor University, Mr. Cardenas directed productions of *L’elisir d’amore*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Man of La Mancha*, *La finta giardiniera, HMS Pinafore* and *Rita*. He has served as the Head of Directing Staff at Des Moines Metro Opera and has also been on the directing staff at Chautauqua Opera.

Mr. Cardenas received his Master of Fine Arts in Theatre from UCLA, a Master of Music from the University of South Carolina, and a Bachelor of Arts in Music from Centenary College in Louisiana.