



SAN FRANCISCO  
**OPERA** 2014-15 SEASON

# NORMA

By VINCENZO BELLINI



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**On the cover:**

Panel of the Gundestrup cauldron, a richly decorated silver vessel thought to date between 200 BC and 300 A.D. The cauldron is the largest known example of European Iron Age silver work (diameter: 69 cm, height: 42 cm). It was found in 1891 in a peat bog. Despite the fact that the vessel was found in Denmark, there has been a debate between a Gaulish origin and Thracian origin on account of the workmanship, metallurgy, and imagery.  
 Werner Forman Archive / Bridgeman Images

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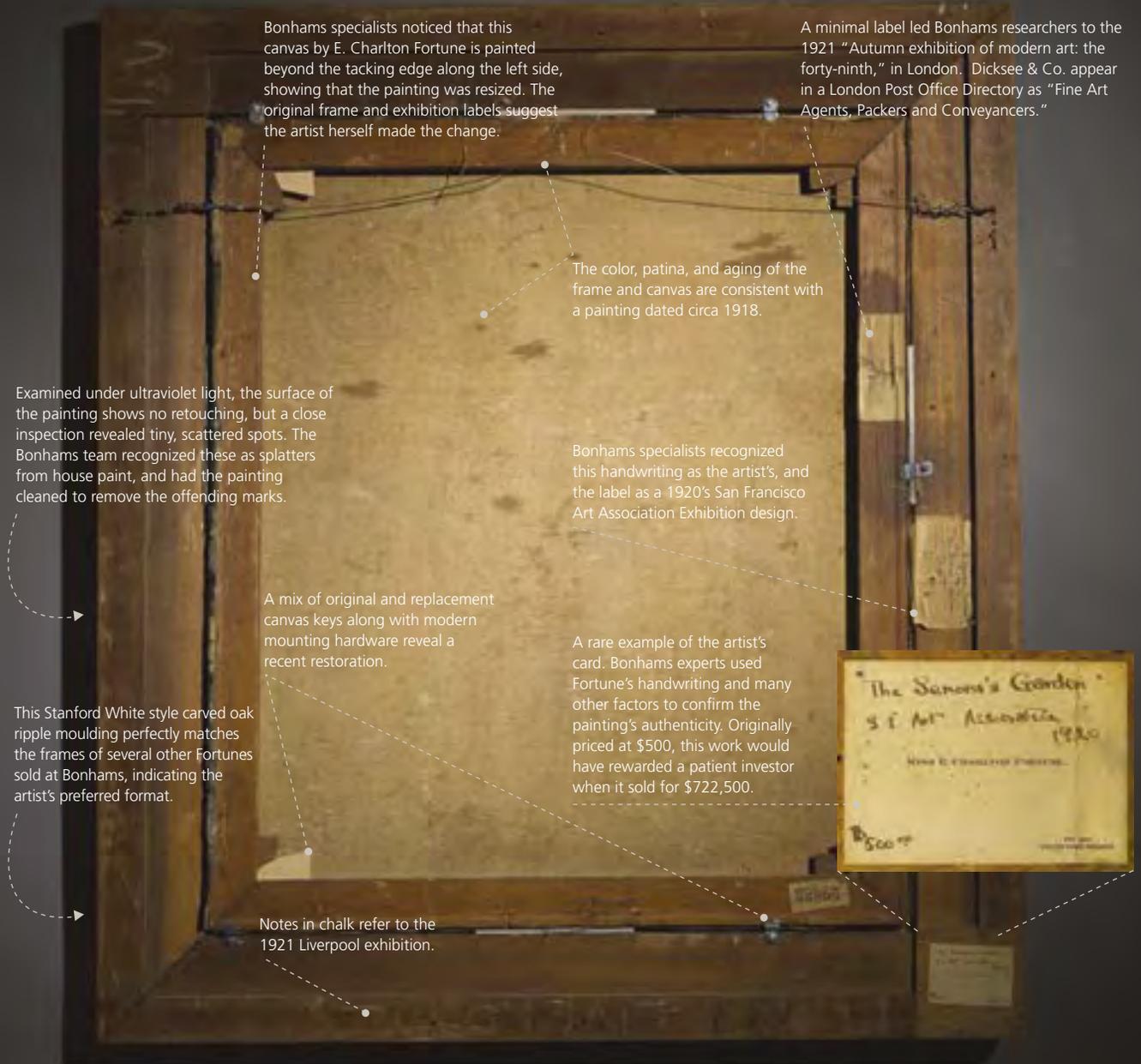
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Kurt Herbert Adler	Artistic Director, 1953-57; General Director, 1957-81
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Pamela Rosenberg	2001-05
David Gockley	2006-

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E. Charlton Fortune  
The Senora's Garden, circa 1918  
oil on canvas

## ...back to front.



Bonhams specialists noticed that this canvas by E. Charlton Fortune is painted beyond the tacking edge along the left side, showing that the painting was resized. The original frame and exhibition labels suggest the artist herself made the change.

A minimal label led Bonhams researchers to the 1921 "Autumn exhibition of modern art: the forty-ninth," in London. Dicksee & Co. appear in a London Post Office Directory as "Fine Art Agents, Packers and Conveyancers."

The color, patina, and aging of the frame and canvas are consistent with a painting dated circa 1918.

Examined under ultraviolet light, the surface of the painting shows no retouching, but a close inspection revealed tiny, scattered spots. The Bonhams team recognized these as splatters from house paint, and had the painting cleaned to remove the offending marks.

Bonhams specialists recognized this handwriting as the artist's, and the label as a 1920's San Francisco Art Association Exhibition design.

A mix of original and replacement canvas keys along with modern mounting hardware reveal a recent restoration.

A rare example of the artist's card. Bonhams experts used Fortune's handwriting and many other factors to confirm the painting's authenticity. Originally priced at \$500, this work would have rewarded a patient investor when it sold for \$722,500.

This Stanford White style carved oak ripple moulding perfectly matches the frames of several other Fortunes sold at Bonhams, indicating the artist's preferred format.

Notes in chalk refer to the 1921 Liverpool exhibition.

We never judge a book by its cover, or a painting by its front side alone. By the time this E. Charlton Fortune reached the auction block, our experts knew it inside and out.

Then they used Bonhams' global reach to put the painting in front of the right audience. Found in London, *The Senora's Garden* returned home to California to sell for \$722,500.

Having already set the world record for a Fortune at auction, they built on their experience by studying the painting's scribbled notes, exhibition labels and materials.

At Bonhams, starting at the back of each painting keeps our results out in front.

## A Message from the Leaders of San Francisco Opera

Dear opera-goers,

Welcome to the 92nd season of San Francisco Opera! For nearly a century, this Company has distinguished itself by presenting exciting programming and spectacular international artists, proudly standing as one of the leading opera companies in the United States. Our 2014–15 season continues this tradition with Company premieres of *Susannah* and *Partenope*, the world premiere of Marco Tutino’s *La Ciociara (Two Women)*, and the return of Berlioz’s epic *Les Troyens* after more than four decades—a rare, Herculean feat for any opera company.



From left to right: Keith B. Geeslin, David Gockley, John A. Gunn

Producing this complex art form is the very definition of “team effort.” Our dedicated orchestra, chorus, dancers, crew, and administration are the foundation of this great company. We also extend heartfelt thanks to our Company sponsors: Norby Anderson, the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn, Franklin and Catherine Johnson, the Edmund W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund, Steven M. Menzies, Bernard and Barbro Osher, Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem, Phyllis C. Wattis Endowment Funds, and Diane B. Wilsey. We are grateful to Wells Fargo Bank for its continuing leadership as our corporate season sponsor and express our appreciation to our corporate partners: Chevron and United.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the San Francisco Opera Guild. They have supported San Francisco Opera since 1939 through its fundraising efforts and by creating award-winning education programs that bring the opera experience to tens of thousands of children across the Bay Area.

Finally, we thank you, our loyal patrons and donors. Thanks to your support, the Bay Area is one of the most exciting and innovative musical communities in the world, with San Francisco Opera leading the way. Producing world-class opera, which enriches the lives of over 200,000 patrons each year, takes an immense investment of time, talent and resources. It would not be possible without your continued dedication and support, for which we are deeply grateful.

David Gockley  
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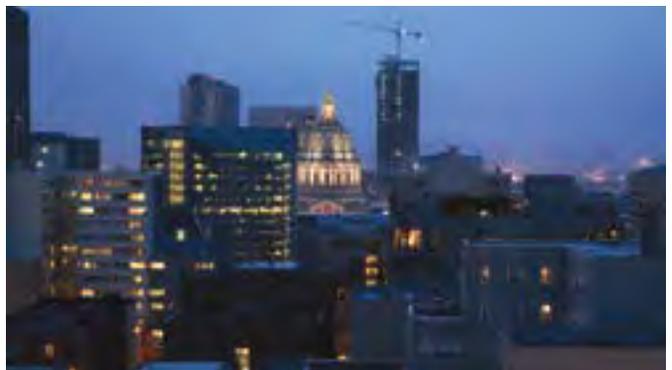
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## Insight Panels and Preview Lectures

San Francisco Opera Guild invites you to deepen your experience of the operas before you see them by joining us for Preview Lectures and Insight Panels.

Insight Panels feature renowned cast members and directors from productions, sharing behind-the-scenes experiences and inspirations during informal discussions. The next Insight Panel, on Handel's *Partenope*, occurs on October 13 from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Kanbar Performing Arts Center (home of the San Francisco Girls Chorus), Chorissima Hall, 44 Page Street in San Francisco. Free to San Francisco Opera subscribers and students with valid student ID; \$5 for the general public. visit [sfopera.com/insights](http://sfopera.com/insights) for more information.

San Francisco Opera Guild chapters throughout the Bay Area, as well as San Jose Opera Guild, also host a series of revealing lectures on the creation, performance, and fun facts about this season's operas. For complete information on schedules and lecturers, visit [sfopera.com/previews](http://sfopera.com/previews).



## Nicola Luisotti's 2014–15 Season

Following his riveting performances of *La Traviata* and *Madama Butterfly* with the Company this summer, San Francisco Opera Music Director Nicola Luisotti is setting out for another thrilling performance season. This fall, Maestro Luisotti conducts world-renowned casts in both *Norma* and *Un Ballo in Maschera* with the Company. In Naples, where he also serves as music director of the venerable Teatro di San Carlo, Europe's oldest opera house, Luisotti conducts Verdi's *Il Trovatore*. Other international dates on his performance schedule include conducting *Nabucco* at the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia, Spain; *Madama Butterfly* with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; and a concert with Rome's Accademia di Santa Cecilia. Luisotti will round out the current season by conducting the exciting world premiere of Marco Tutino's *La Ciociara (Two Women)* at San Francisco Opera in 2015.



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## Opera Shop Recommendations

The San Francisco Opera Shop carries many exciting recordings of favorite singers and conductors, complete operas, and opera highlights. With the start of the new opera season, consider getting better acquainted with these recommendations.

**Vincenzo Bellini's *Norma*:** The Opera Shop feature nearly fifteen different recordings of this early 19th-century masterpiece, but the three top standout CDs begin with the extraordinary **Maria Callas** in her most celebrated recording of the Druid priestess, joined by **Ebe Stignani** and tenor **Mario Fillepeschi**, with conductor **Tullio Serafin** and the Teatro alla Scala Orchestra (EMI). For **Joan Sutherland** fans, consider Dame Joan's *Norma* to **Montserrat Caballe's** spectacular *Adalgisa* and the then up-and-coming **Luciano Pavarotti** as Pollione led by conductor **Richard Bonyng** and the forces of the Welsh National Opera (Decca). And, in an interesting twist of voice types, last year's exciting release of mezzo-soprano **Cecilia Bartoli** in the title role along with soprano **Sumi Jo** (*Adalgisa*), and **Jon Osborne** (Pollione) conducted by **Giovanni Antonini** (Decca).

**Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*:** Listen to the original cast recording with **Phyllis Curtin** in the title role and **Norman Treigle** (Olin Blitch) and the New Orleans Opera.

Don't miss the newly published ***Falling Up: The Days and Nights of Carlisle Floyd, The Authorized Biography*** by Thomas Holliday.

**A – Z of Opera:** Thanks to the **NAXOS** label, this box set of 38 opera highlights and accompanying booklet features plot synopses, background details and cast lists for hundreds of operas.

The Opera Shop is located on the mezzanine level and open before curtain, during the intermission, and for 30-minutes after the performance.





## Notes from the General Director

### Welcome to the 2014–2015 Season

This fall, I am especially proud of the repertoire and artists we have assembled. After recent seasons were budgetarily stunted by the Great Recession, we are now poised to once again let out all the stops

and present a season that is the equal of the greatest this company has ever offered. This fall, we will present world-class casting and new productions of *Norma*, *Susannah*, and *La Bohème*; beloved stagings of *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Cenerentola*, and *Tosca*; and the Company premiere of the delightfully naughty *Partenope*.

#### **Norma**

There is no diva like a bel canto diva. She possesses a full arsenal of expressive techniques that get to the core of emotional experience, and *Norma* demands such a woman. In the last half century, luminaries like Callas and Sutherland essayed this role with its staggering vocal, emotional, and theatrical requirements, and this September we are setting out to create their heiress apparent. Sondra Radvanovsky has all the basic tools to be successful: a handsome, regal appearance and huge vocal range and agile technique, as evidenced by her debut here in 2009. Her role debut at the Metropolitan Opera last fall was a “Golden Age” event: bravos for twenty minutes, confetti drifting down from the balconies, bouquets being tossed over the orchestra pit. We expect nothing less here.

#### **Susannah**

I am so pleased to finally bring Carlisle Floyd’s *Susannah* before San Francisco Opera audiences. It is one of my favorite American operas and it has been absent here for far too long. Actually, the opera was performed in 1964 here at the War Memorial Opera House, with Floyd as the stage director, under the auspices of an affiliated—but separate—entity called Spring Opera Company. *Susannah* was inspired by the apocryphal biblical tale “Susanna and the Elders” and wherever it has been performed it has captivated audiences with its lyricism and directness

#### **Un Ballo in Maschera (A Masked Ball)**

Our handsome and traditional production most recently opened our 2006–07 season, and we are bringing it back this fall with a quartet of world renowned singers: tenor Ramón Vargas, baritone Thomas Hampson, and mezzo-soprano Dolora Zajick. Rounding out this all-star list is Julianna Di Giacomo as Amelia. The Merola Opera Program alumna’s recent debuts in several top international opera houses have earned her the reputation as one of the exciting young sopranos on the classical music scene

today. Add conductor Nicola Luisotti to the mix, and something very special is in store for us. While *Ballo* does not have the Verdi’s greatest hit numbers of *Rigoletto*, *Traviata*, and *Aida*, the music is much more than pleasing, and the piece is beautifully and efficiently structured; all in all a very satisfying evening.

#### **Partenope**

Baroque operas are finding their way in the world of American opera. The plots—usually convoluted with lots of erotic entanglements—put the characters into circumstances where they express strong emotions in a series of virtuosic arias. The audience, wowed by the vocal pyrotechnics, identifies with the emotion at a gut level because it resonates with something deep down in their experience. San Francisco Opera audiences have seen two Handel operas during my time: *Ariodante* in 2008 and *Xerxes* in 2011. We thought it was time for another, and we wanted to offer one that our audiences had not seen before, *Partenope*. Simultaneous to our decision to present the work, the adventurous English National Opera created a new production by American stage director Christopher Alden that was a huge success. The production moves the action from the mythological era to early twentieth-century Paris, where Freudian psychology helped to launch the Surrealist and Dadaist movements. I quote stage director Alden:

“In this production we took our inspiration from the Surrealists and their vision of the erotic nature of the psyche. Surrealist André Breton is quoted as saying, ‘desire is the sole motivating principle of the world, the only master that humans must recognize.’ It sounds like something composer Handel could have said in 1690. It shows why this updating really makes sense!”

#### **Tosca**

I am also excited about this season’s *Tosca* because we have a debut-ing soprano in the title role, the Armenian-born Lianna Haroutou-



*Un Ballo in Maschera*

nian, who has made several international splashes in the last year. She is an emerging talent, and I'm thrilled to have our audiences experience her artistry in our classic production.

**La Cenerentola**

She has many names: Cendrillon, Aschenputtel, Chernushka, Cenerentola, Cinderella. Cultures around the world have been fascinated with this charming orphan for hundreds of years, and her story—along with her wicked stepsisters and handsome prince—is still intriguing audiences. In the coming months, we will see her in a new film adaptation of *Sondheim's Into the Woods* and a live-action version of the Disney classic. This season, we are bringing Rossini's comic bel canto setting of her story to our stage with the brilliant young French mezzo-soprano Karine Deshayes, the latest in a series of charming personalities to have performed the role in this classic Jean-Pierre Ponelle production. Not to be missed!

**La Bohème**

*La Bohème* again?! "Why so soon?" you may ask. "It will have been almost six years," I answer. "You've got to be kidding!" you reply, "six years have really gone by?" Time flies.

In any case, many opera lovers are not necessarily resistant to frequent viewings of beloved works. Operas are more ritualistic than spoken plays. They lead us on a journey our hearts want to take again and again, reminding us of the basic truths of being human. The music in opera mythologizes the drama. It puts it inside us.

Our new production by John Caird features two young, incredibly attractive, and talented casts in a work that has bewitched opera lovers for more than a century.

Looking forward to our summer 2015 season, we will offer *Les Troyens*, the world premiere of *La Ciociara (Two Women)*, and *Le Nozze di Figaro*. More on them anon. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy our fall season! 🍷

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# SAN FRANCISCO OPERA *Profile*

## Jon Gossett

### *Chief Development Officer*



In March, Jon Gossett joined San Francisco Opera as its chief development officer and is responsible for the Company's contributed revenue: current operations, projects, capital, and endowment support from individuals, businesses, foundations, and government. Equipped with a master's degree in philanthropy and development, he has led development efforts at Boston Ballet, Guthrie Theater, American Public Media, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, and Houston Grand Opera.

#### **What is your fundraising philosophy?**

All of us at San Francisco Opera—our artists, board, volunteers, and staff—have a responsibility to inspire, engage, and animate our audiences. Believe me, those close to the center live for the passion and love we engender amongst our audiences. Beyond ticket and subscription sales, our fundraising activities ask people to place a financial value on the organization's work beyond sales transactions.

#### **How do you generate financial support?**

As fundraisers, our critical role is to seek financial support from those who have the ability to invest and to place a monetary value on the relationship and the work. We do that through requests on the internet and through mail, on the phone and in person. And we strive to build a stronger connection between individuals and the Company by connecting our constituents to aspects of opera that get them excited, through rehearsals, learning and engagement programs and other activities. I think the "behind the scenes" opportunities like we provided at select performances this past summer—leaving the curtain up during an intermission so patrons could witness the intricate process of changing from one scene to the next—are incredibly impactful. Opera is the most expensive art form, and the majority of our budget actually comes from voluntary gifts from generous individuals and families. The more people learn about opera, the more they understand what it takes to produce and present it.

#### **What was your first opera?**

I was a church organist and choir assistant starting at age 12 and I studied organ in college. While at Michigan, I had the chance to sing *Carmina Burana* with the Detroit Symphony at Carnegie Hall, and was able to sneak away for a *Madama Butterfly* performance at the Metropolitan Opera. Words can't adequately express how blown away I was. And working with David Gockley at Houston Grand Opera from 1994 to 2003 only deepened my passion for the art form. Since the mid-1990s, I've been fortunate to experience a number of productions around the country and particularly here in San Francisco. It's such an honor, both personally and professionally, to be part of this extraordinary institution.



### *Step and Repeat* **Win Box Seats!**

Want an exclusive box seat experience? It's easy! Just snap a photo of yourself at the War Memorial Opera House this fall and post it to Twitter or Instagram with the hashtag **#SFOselfie**, or share it on our Facebook wall for a chance to win two box seats to an upcoming San Francisco Opera production.



AMANDA GORDON/BLOOMBERG

### **Sarah Billinghamurst** **Retires from the Met**

Sarah Billinghamurst, Assistant General Manager for Artistic Affairs at the Metropolitan Opera, recently retired after 20 years with that company. A native of New Zealand, Billinghamurst went to the Met after two decades with San Francisco Opera, where she began in the office of then General Director Kurt Herbert Adler and eventually became artistic administrator from 1982 to 1994. Upon her retirement, she recently told the *New York Times*, "I never ended up being prime minister of New Zealand—an early aspiration—and I never ended up running an opera company. But I like being behind the scenes."



Dr. Jasleen Kukreja is

# PIONEERING CARE

for Russell Colunga

Russell Colunga was a fitness instructor who started experiencing a sudden shortness of breath. He deteriorated quickly and needed answers fast. Dr. Jasleen Kukreja is the Surgical Director of the UCSF Medical Center Lung Transplant Program, which, in terms of overall patient survival, is one of the most successful programs in the country. Once Russell heard about the innovative transplant techniques Dr. Kukreja had pioneered, he was immediately put at ease. "I knew I was in good hands," said Russell. Today, he's back in the saddle, teaching spin classes five days a week. [Learn more at PioneeringCare.com](https://www.pioneeringcare.com)

**UCSF** Medical Center



# WAR MEMORIAL CAMPUS UPDATES

San Francisco has undoubtedly seen an explosion of new construction recently, with apartment buildings and office towers popping up all over town. This building boom has spilled over into the campus of the War Memorial Performing Arts Center, comprised of the War Memorial Opera House, Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall, Herbst Theatre, the Green Room, and Harold L. Zellerbach Rehearsal Hall.

## Wilsey Center for Opera

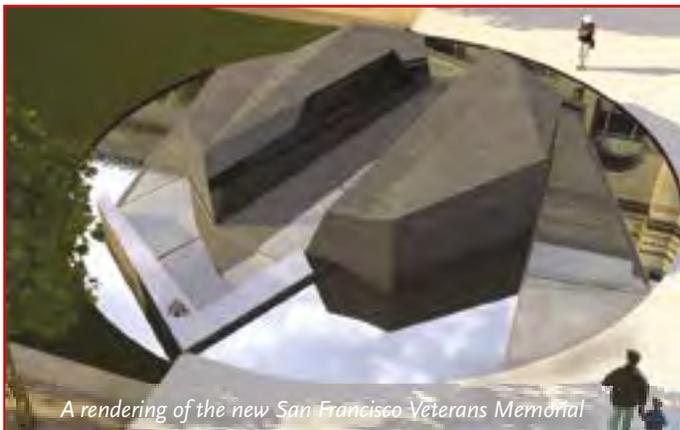
In July 2013, the War Memorial Opera House's "twin," the War Memorial Veterans Building, began undergoing its two-year seismic retrofit along with other building improvements. This project follows the seismic upgrades of City Hall and the War Memorial Opera House. As part of the retrofit, San Francisco Opera is establishing the Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera on the building's fourth floor that will centralize the Company's functions currently spread over seven venues throughout the City. The Wilsey Center, expected to open in early 2016, also features a 299-seat atrium theater that will be shared with the City of San Francisco. Please see page 32 of your program or visit [sfopera.com/wilseycenter](http://sfopera.com/wilseycenter) for more information on how you can be a part of Wilsey Center.



*The new Wilsey Center for Opera's 299-seat atrium theater*

## San Francisco Veterans Memorial

The San Francisco Veterans Memorial will honor a 75-year promise to our nation's military veterans by installing a veterans' memorial in the Memorial Court, located between the War Memorial Veterans Building and Opera House and made sacred by the interment of con-



*A rendering of the new San Francisco Veterans Memorial*

secrated soils from battlefields throughout the world. In 2010, the San Francisco Arts Commission (under the direction of the San Francisco Veterans Memorial Steering Committee) conducted a national design competition for the memorial, and ground was broken on March 20 of this year. The memorial is expected to be dedicated in October 2014. Visit [sfveteransmemorial.org](http://sfveteransmemorial.org) for more information.

## Café at the Opera

In the Lower Level of the War Memorial Opera House, the Patina Restaurant Group has instituted a number of exciting changes in terms of the space and the menu. While maintaining the historical integrity of the Opera House, Patina has updated the overall guest experience through new interior design features like banquet seating; dining room chairs, tabletops, and tabletop lamps; bar stools and lounge chairs; bar wall sconces and shelves; and drapery and hardware partitions. Innovations to the Grand Buffet feature a seasonal menu of cold appetizers, salads, entrées, and a rotating carvery. Reservations are recommended for this popular pre-performance dining venue and can be made on [opentable.com/cafe-at-the-opera](http://opentable.com/cafe-at-the-opera). Additionally the restored Café at the Opera House Bar offers a wide range of beer, wine, and cocktails along with a menu of small bites and appetizers.

## Dress Circle Lounge and Bar

The Lower Level isn't the only spot receiving an update. The Dress Circle now features a lounge and bar with plush sofas, banquettes, chairs, ottomans and tables. It also offers shareable snacks and platters, sandwiches, salads, and soup plus cocktails, wine, and beer in this unique lounge environment.

## North Box Restaurant (Mezzanine Level)

Beginning this fall, the North Box Restaurant on the Mezzanine Level offers a full-service dining option with an à la carte menu composed of dinner entrees and drink service. 🍷

These newly updated areas at the War Memorial Opera House will provide you with an exciting way to explore the upcoming season at San Francisco Opera. As always, intermission food and beverage is available at any of Patina's dining locations by pre-ordering with a server. Please visit the Patina Restaurant Group at [patinagroup.com](http://patinagroup.com) for more information.

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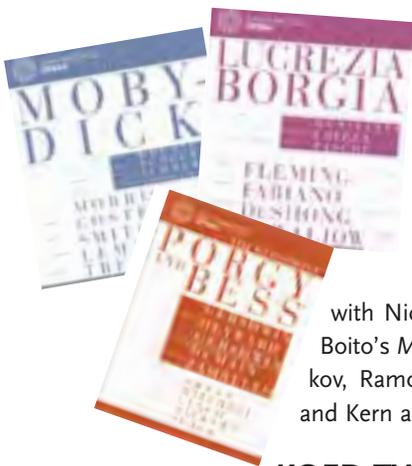
# SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MEDIA



In 2007, San Francisco Opera General Director David Gockley led the Company to the forefront of new media with the creation of the Koret-Taube Media Suite, the first permanent high-definition broadcast-standard video production facility installed in any American opera house. Since then, San Francisco Opera has been in the vanguard of bringing opera beyond the footlights to thousands of enthusiasts and new fans of the art form. Visit [sfopera.com/watch-listen](http://sfopera.com/watch-listen) to stay up-to-date on these and other media initiatives.

## SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ON DVD AND BLU-RAY

In 2013, San Francisco Opera forged a business partnership with EuroArts Music International, one of the world's leading and most prestigious distributors of classical programming, for international television and home video distribution of San Francisco Opera productions. The following titles (pictured at left)—recorded live in high definition at the War Memorial Opera House—are available at [sfopera.com](http://sfopera.com) and other retailers.



Opera productions. The following titles (pictured at left)—recorded live in high definition at the War Memorial Opera House—are available at [sfopera.com](http://sfopera.com) and other retailers.

Upcoming releases include Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, with Nicole Cabell and Joyce DiDonato; Boito's *Mefistofele*, featuring Ildar Abdrazakov, Ramón Vargas, and Patricia Racette; and Kern and Hammerstein II's *Show Boat*.

## KQED-TV

This fall, KQED TV broadcasts its fifth series of San Francisco Opera productions, hosted by Frederica von Stade, recorded in HD.

September 4 at 8 p.m.: *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*

September 11 at 8 p.m.: *Attila*

September 25 at 9 p.m.: *Mefistofele*

October 2 at 8 p.m.: *Rigoletto*

For more information on dates and times at [sfopera.com/broadcasts](http://sfopera.com/broadcasts).



## PORGY AND BESS ON PBS FALL ARTS FESTIVAL

On October 17, San Francisco Opera's production of *Porgy and Bess* will be broadcast on PBS's *Fall Arts Festival*. Visit [sfopera.com/broadcasts](http://sfopera.com/broadcasts) for complete information.

## GRAND OPERA CINEMA SERIES

Recorded live in high-definition, our series of popular operas in movie theaters will have you feeling like you are watching this performance from your favorite seat in the Opera House. Visit [sfopera.com/cinemaseries](http://sfopera.com/cinemaseries) for information on dates and locations.

## RADIO BROADCASTS

San Francisco Opera radio broadcasts are available locally each month on award-winning classical station KDFC as well as nationally on the WMFT Radio Network. For a schedule, visit [sfopera.com/broadcasts](http://sfopera.com/broadcasts).

# GET “IN THE KNOW”

San Francisco Opera and its affiliates are pleased to offer a wealth of educational resources to help you get “in the know” for each opera performance. For information on these and other resources, visit [sfopera.com/learn](http://sfopera.com/learn).

### E-OPERA NEWSLETTER

San Francisco E-Opera subscribers are the first to know about the latest performances, special events, and educational opportunities. Keep up-to-date on featured artists, special ticket offers, advance program notes, and other insider information by signing up at [sfopera.com/eopera](http://sfopera.com/eopera).

### INSIGHT PANELS

Renowned artists and personalities from the world of opera, including cast members and directors from the productions, share behind-the-scenes insights and experiences during informal panel discussions presented by San Francisco Opera Guild. Visit [sfopera.com/insights](http://sfopera.com/insights).

### OPERA PREVIEW LECTURES

San Francisco Opera Guild chapters present lectures that bring renowned musicologists to communities throughout the greater Bay Area, offering an in-depth look into the season’s upcoming operas. Visit [sfopera.com/previews](http://sfopera.com/previews).

### OVERTURE: OPERA WORKSHOPS FOR ADULTS

San Francisco Opera hosts a series of interactive workshops for adults about the journey of creating opera. Newcomers and seasoned opera-goers learn the process from the ground up and experience San Francisco Opera behind-the-scenes. Visit [sfopera.com/adult](http://sfopera.com/adult).

### FAMILY PROGRAMS

San Francisco Opera offers family programs, including movie screenings and interactive workshops, throughout the year. Visit [sfopera.com/family](http://sfopera.com/family).

### CHECK OUT SAN FRANCISCO OPERA’S BLOG

Our blog, *Backstage at San Francisco Opera*, offers unique insight into the Company, with entries from the principal singers, chorus, and orchestra musicians to the creative teams for each opera and the many talented people who don’t take a bow on stage. Visit [sfopera.com/blog](http://sfopera.com/blog).

### OPERA HOUSE TOURS

Discover the magic that goes into creating an opera production with a backstage tour of the War Memorial Opera House led by a Guild volunteer docent. Tours occur only on selected dates in small groups; reservations required. E-mail [tour.reserve@gmail.com](mailto:tour.reserve@gmail.com) or call the San Francisco Opera Guild at (415) 551-6353 to leave a message. For group tours contact Lynn Watson at [sf.opera.tours@gmail.com](mailto:sf.opera.tours@gmail.com). \$20 for general admission.

### OPERA TALKS

Before every performance, charismatic scholars present a 25-minute overview of the opera, with insights on the music, composer, and historical background. Talks begin 55 minutes prior to curtain. Visit [sfopera.com/operatalks](http://sfopera.com/operatalks).

*Norma*: Ron Gallman

*Susannah*: Desirée Mays

*Un Ballo in Maschera*: Marcia Green

*Partenope*: Alexandra Amati-Camperi

*Tosca*: Jonathan Khuner

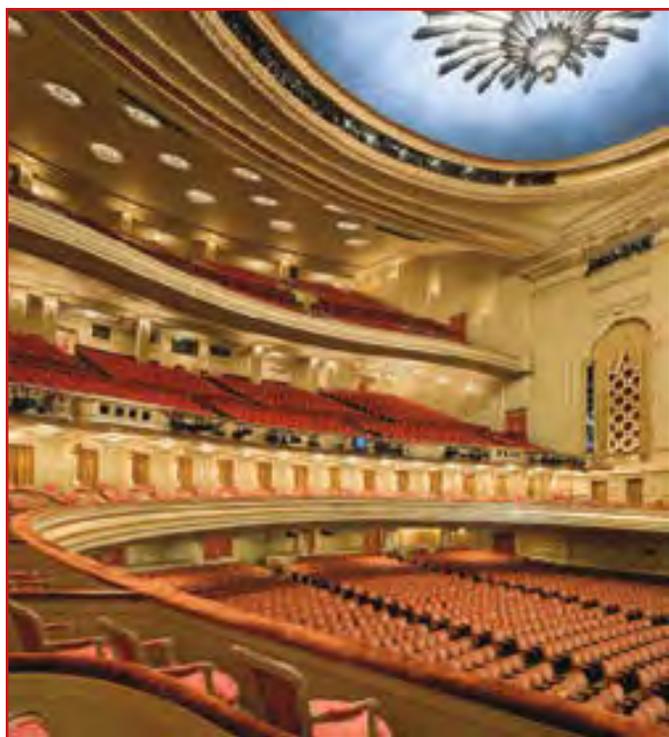
*La Cenerentola*: Giancarlo Aquilanti

*La Bohème*: Kip Cranna

### CONNECT WITH US ON FACEBOOK, TWITTER, AND YOUTUBE

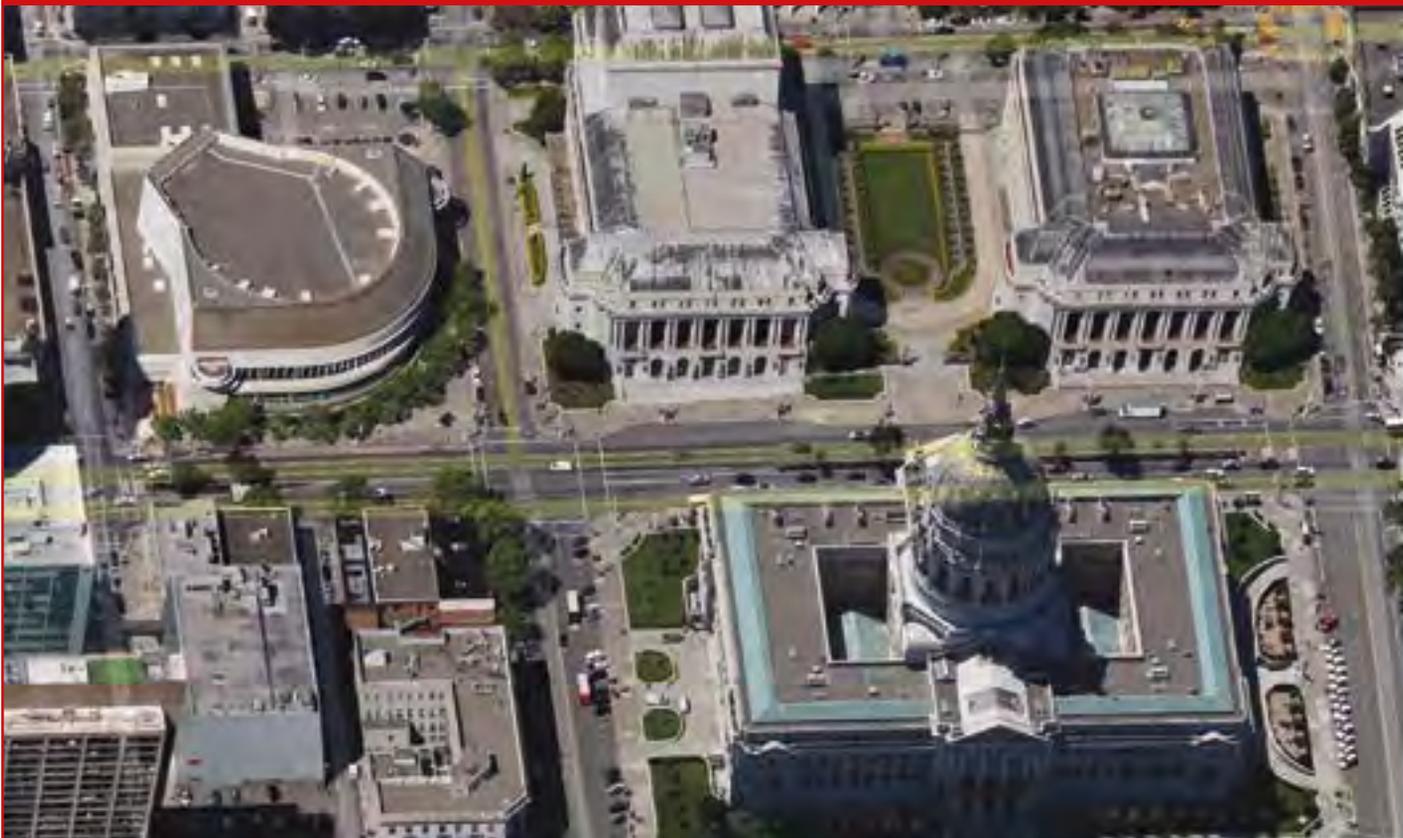


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DAVID WAKELY

# CIVIC CENTER SAFETY



**T**he Civic Center area of San Francisco is the vibrant heart of the City, a neighborhood home to many government and cultural institutions. The face of the neighborhood changes constantly throughout the day, from the people who work there during the day to the arts patrons who visit the area in the evening. Navigating such a dynamic area has its challenges, and San Francisco Opera remains committed to the improvements happening in Civic Center in order to ensure our home is safe and enjoyable for our audiences.

## COMMUNITY BENEFIT DISTRICT

San Francisco's Civic Center Community Benefit District (CBD) is a special assessment district created in 2011 by a group of concerned Civic Center property owners, arts organizations, government entities, and other stakeholders. The goal of the CBD is to improve coordination and communication around the management, image, safety, beautification, and cleanliness of the greater Civic Center area. It has given the many arts organizations within the neighborhood a forum to pool resources and effectively work together on issues that affect our patrons: parking, safety, and street lighting, to name a few.

Donald Savoie, Executive Director of the Civic Center Community Benefit District, relates the following story: "At a meeting with BART officials to discuss the conditions of the Civic Center Station, there were approximately 6 BART officials and more than fifty people from

the CBD, including members from all the arts organizations in the area. It was incredibly impactful for BART to see that, and now the station has been moved up on the priority list for improvements. We are working with the planner on the improvement designs for the station, including the UN Plaza entrance, lighting, and signage."

The population in San Francisco's Civic Center area changes daily. "There is a large group of people that work in the area, coming in around 8 a.m. and leaving around 6 p.m.," explains Savoie. "And then a second large group of people, arts patrons, enters the area from 6 p.m. until 11 p.m. It's completely different than anywhere else in the City." And with the recent construction boom in the neighborhood, the residential population—formerly a small percentage of the Civic Center—is going to triple in the next five years. "There are residential towers going up all over the place, and that is extremely positive in terms of neighborhood safety and community. Soon, we will have a third large population that lives in the area who are truly invested in the issues we work on, because it's their home," says Savoie.

## INVESTING IN PUBLIC SAFETY

San Francisco Supervisor London Breed, whose district includes the Civic Center area, recently helped finalize the City's new budget that puts 300 new police officers on the streets over the next two years, giving San Francisco the resources to get more officers walking the beat in our neighborhoods.

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The front deck and garage gives a nice sense of separation from the sidewalk and highlight the pretty facade. Truly a special home!

[www.2826Sacramento.com](http://www.2826Sacramento.com)

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In addition to the San Francisco Police Department, another resource for public safety in the Civic Center are the CBD's team of Community Service Ambassadors. Identifiable by their orange and grey uniforms, the Ambassadors patrol the area in shifts—four ambassadors daily from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and four on most evenings from 6:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.—to assist the public with information and direct them to destinations within the area, and serving as a deterrent to misdemeanor crime by reporting unsafe conditions or observations of criminal activity immediately to the police department. “Our Evening Ambassadors are in the main corridors of Grove and Van Ness as patrons are coming in for shows; patrolling the area, including parking garages during performances; and back in the most heavily trafficked corridors when patrons are heading home,” says Savoie.

With as many as 6,000 arts patrons in the area on a given night, these resources—while welcome—are easily taxed. Plans are in place to increase the number of Community Service Ambassadors as well as having a 24-hour presence and off-duty police officers to work with the CBD on patrolling the area.

## LIGHTING

A crucial element to pedestrian safety is lighting. The CBD recently conducted a public survey to gauge people's feelings and perceptions about the issue in the Civic Center. It determined that while street lighting in the area as fairly uniform (a detailed map of the survey's findings is available on the organization's website), the amount of light at the pedestrian level is affected by trees and other factors, such as the amount of lighting on building exteriors. Some of the group's activities in this arena are working with the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium to continue lighting the entrance on Grove Street after hours on certain evenings, and the Community Lighting Grants Program, which incentivizes local property owners to increase outdoor lighting on their properties with grants of \$1,000.

## PARKING

“Making sure our patrons have a safe, reliable place to park is one of our priorities,” says San Francisco Opera Chief Financial Officer Michael Simpson, who is tasked with working with the various City agencies on this complex issue. Many park in the Performing Arts Garage (on Grove Street) or attempt to find street parking, but Simpson emphasizes a third option: the Civic Center Garage, located underneath Civic Center Plaza (accessible via McAllister). “We know that the Performing Arts Garage can fill up quickly, so we want our patrons to know that there is another option close by. We meet quarterly with the San Francisco Municipal Transit Agency about the Civic Center Garage.”

## VAN NESS AVENUE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Van Ness Avenue, an important traffic artery in San Francisco, is also part of U.S. Highway 101 and can be very challenging to cross. A solution to the issue, the Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit project, is in the works. It will introduce a rapid transit bus line down the center of Van Ness, alleviating congestion and making it easier for pedestrians to get across the street by adding pedestrian bulb-

outs and other safety upgrades. The project is slated for completion in 2018, so pedestrians must remain vigilantly careful walking across Van Ness for the immediate future. For complete information on this project, visit [sfcta.org/vanness](http://sfcta.org/vanness).

## PROVIDE FEEDBACK

The time required for impactful change can be lengthy and frustrating, but remaining involved in the community is crucial to the success of programs like these. The most important and valuable thing patrons can do is engage with your surroundings and report issues to agencies like the CBD. “If you see anything that is concerning to you—lack of lighting, pedestrian safety, parking—call us or take a photo and text or e-mail it to us. We record and send that information directly to the City Hall, and that leads to improved services and attention to the Civic Center neighborhood. We're competing with other areas like Western Addition for City services, so having the data to back up our requests is vital,” says Savoie. 🍷

## USEFUL INFORMATION

For all emergencies, call **9-1-1**

Report safety concerns or problems with trash or graffiti, to the Civic Center Community Benefit District at (415) 781-4700 or visit [sfcciviccen.org](http://sfcciviccen.org) (also a mobile site, accessible on smart phones)



For non-emergency issues, call SFPD at **553-0123**

For all issues related to the San Francisco Department of Public Works, call **3-1-1**

Download the SFPark app or visit [sfpark.org](http://sfpark.org) to view real-time space availability and rates at area parking garages.

Homeless Transportation Patrol: **431-7400**

Mental Health Mobile Crisis Team: **970-4000**

MUNI Information: **673-6864**

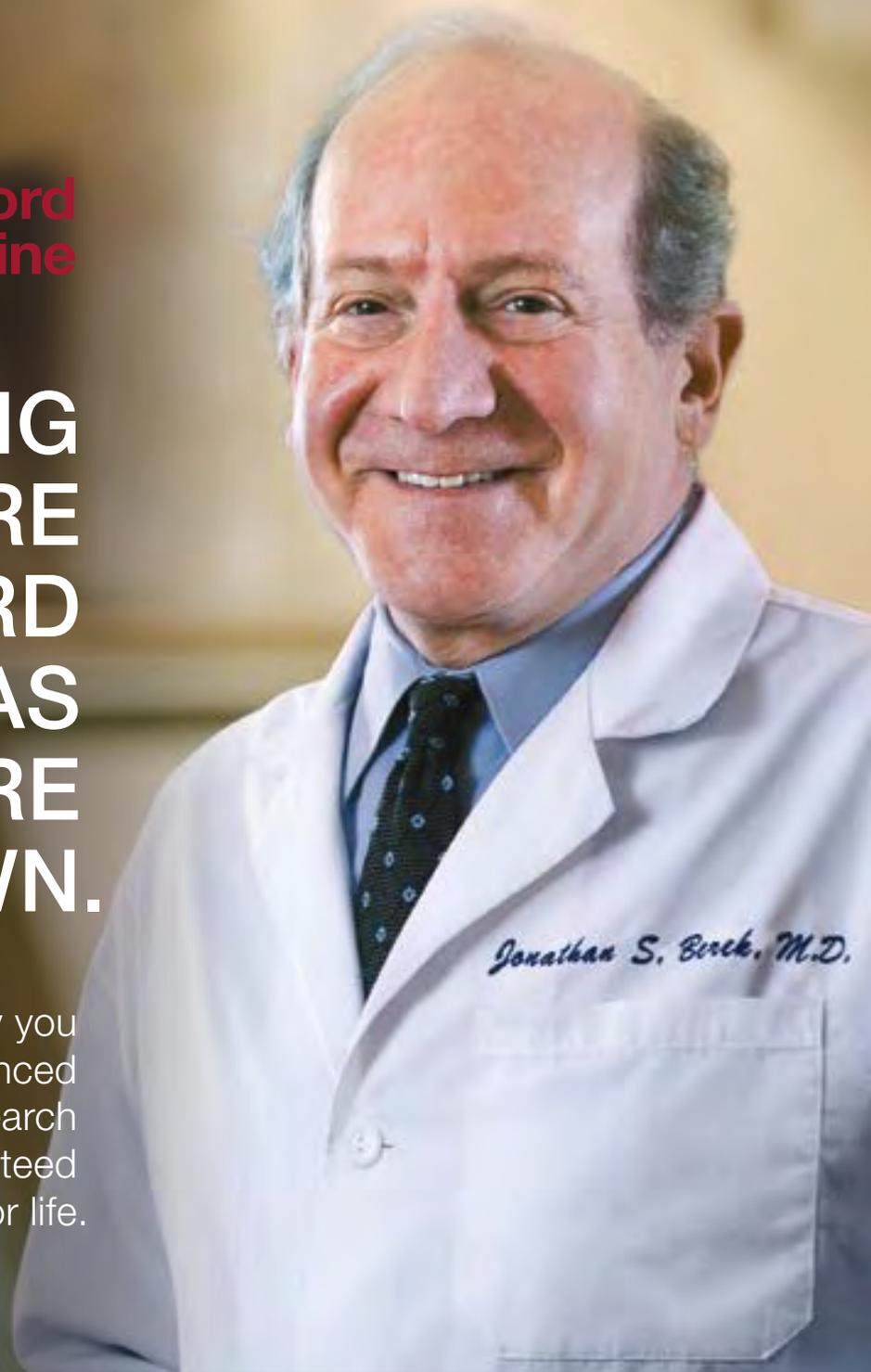
Parking Enforcement: **553-1200**

Towed Cars: **553-1235**



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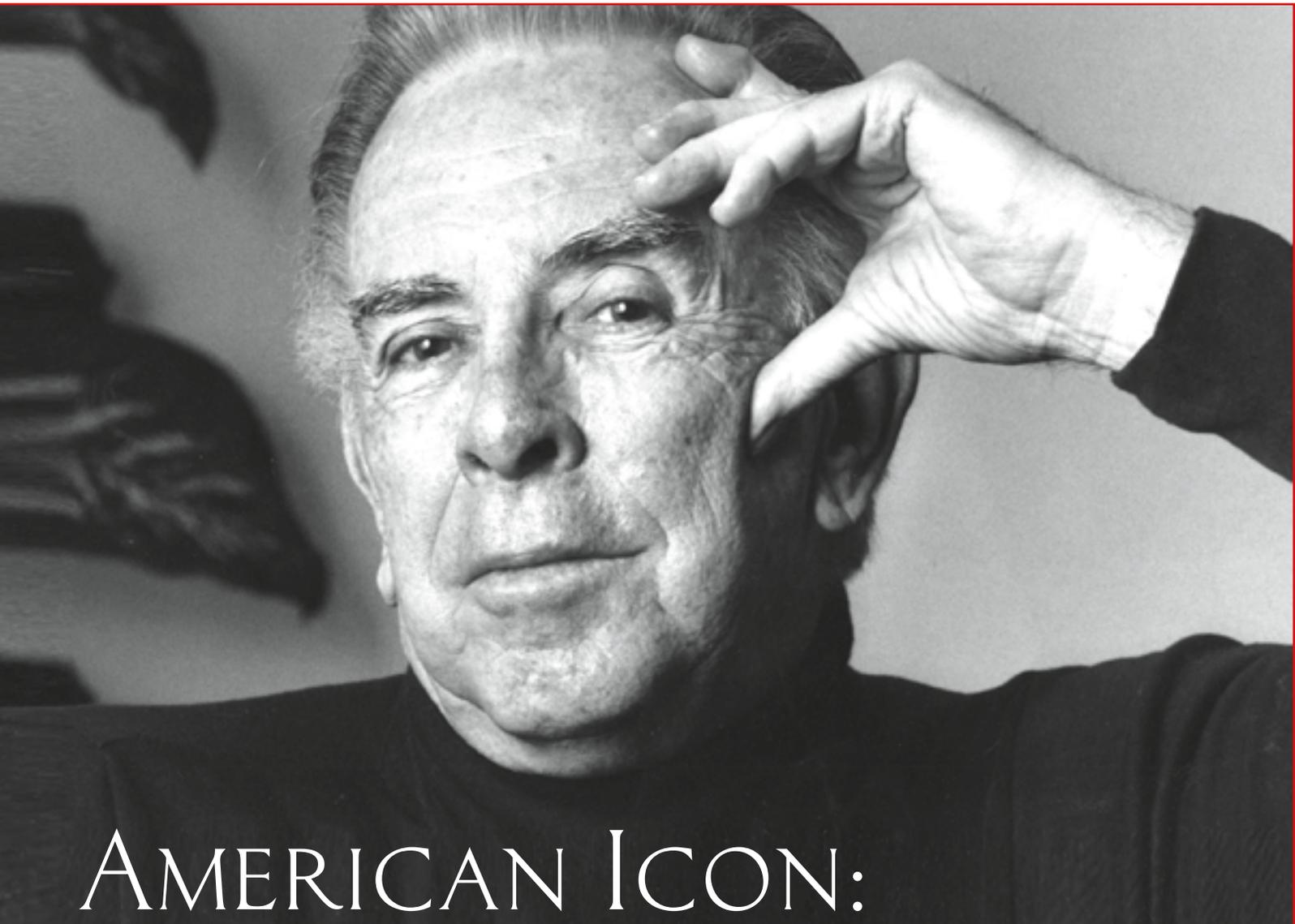
Blake Grossman, JD  
650.723.4661

pgmed@stanford.edu  
<http://pgmed.stanford.edu/medcenter>

**O**n February 24, 1955, when the final curtain came down on the world premiere of *Susannah*, Carlisle Floyd's life changed forever. Until then, the young pianist and assistant professor at Florida State University had no plans to devote himself to composing operas. But, with that moment, the disparate influences and events of his life came together to make his destiny impossible to ignore.

Methodist minister and the family obeyed Christian doctrine (as interpreted by Jack) to the letter. Church attendance was mandatory. There was no reading the newspaper funny pages on Sunday. Alcohol and cigarettes were forbidden. Idleness was a sin and work came first, though Carlisle's mother, Ida, put down her foot when it came to prioritizing piano-practicing time.

By the time Carlisle was in high school, Ida recognized her son's



# AMERICAN ICON:

## Carlisle Floyd Talks About Life and Opera

### Beginnings

Carlisle Floyd was born in 1926 in Latta, South Carolina. From an early age, he demonstrated creative leanings. At four, he showed exceptional skill in drawing; by seven he was writing short stories. At eleven, he turned his focus to the piano, though practicing had to compete with daily chores and football, basketball, baseball, and boxing. Carlisle's father, Carlisle, Sr., known as Jack, was a

talent and convinced Jack to trade in their old piano for a better model. Jack drove Carlisle eighty-five miles from Bethune, where the family had moved, to Orangeburg for weekly lessons, despite gas rationing imposed because of World War II. Around this time, Floyd saw his first opera, *Carmen*, performed by the touring Charles L. Wagner Company. He was far more impressed by Sergei Rachmaninoff's piano recital in Columbia a few weeks later.

Floyd earned a scholarship to Converse College, where he studied with Francis Bacon. “He came of that group in the 1930s and ‘40s,” said Floyd, “that we might say today was militantly American, which happens when a country is trying to establish its musical independence. He felt we should develop our own culture out of our own materials. I was indoctrinated with that early on and it never occurred to me to question it.” Bacon gave Floyd the best advice a young composer could hear: “Write what you want to write.”

On his first trips to New York in the 1940s and ‘50s, Floyd took in original Broadway productions of Inge’s *Picnic*, Miller’s *Death of a Salesman*, Williams’s *A Streetcar Named Desire*, among many others. “I loved the theater,” he said. “They all were writing in this super realistic manner, yet they were poetic also. I wanted to emulate that.

“Opera never attracted me in those days,” said Floyd. “I didn’t like how it was done. Drama had lost out. It was dominated by European artists; Americans were considered second-class. Yet, American singers started a revolution in opera, many of them under the tutelage of Boris Goldovsky [impresario, teacher, and founder of the New England Opera Theater]. Boris made singers conscious of their acting. That was part of the new emphasis on drama and theatrical realism. Up to that point, audiences thought of opera as the singer with the spear and the horned helmet.”

## Susannah

In 1952, Floyd met Nathan S. “Sam” Blount, a graduate English student at FSU. Blount suggested they team up as librettist and composer and offered the idea of an opera based on the biblical Apocrypha story of Susanna and the elders. Blount and Floyd identified with the story of a heroine who was wrongly accused, a timely parallel in that era of McCarthyism and patriotic paranoia.

Floyd was attracted to the subject because it focused on religious hypocrisy. “It struck fire immediately. We had the idea of updating the action and placing it in the remote Tennessee Valley during the summer revival meetings.” But, Blount procrastinated and did not present a draft of a libretto. Floyd was so anxious to get moving on the project, he wrote his own libretto in ten days.

Looking back on his life up to that point, Floyd seemed destined to write *Susannah*. “I suppose I was,” said Floyd. “I drew on many aspects of my own experience for it.” Floyd was well familiar with the conservative teachings of the Methodist church and had been forced to attend revival meetings as a child. He had grown up among self-righteous adults who were quick with a judgmental comment or a critical remark, his father providing the closest example.

Floyd completed the score in March, 1954. “With the confidence of a twenty-seven-year-old,” recalled Floyd, “I went to Karl Kuersteiner, dean of the School of Music at Florida State, and told him I’d written an opera and I’d like to see it done there. It’s the kind of brashness you have when you begin a career [he laughs].” Kuersteiner was impressed with *Susannah* and gave Floyd the authority to engage professionals in the lead roles.

“I was at the Aspen Festival that summer,” said Floyd, “and Phyllis Curtin and Mack Harrell were on the voice faculty. I knew of Phyllis’s career, her dedication to new music, and most recently, her sensational *Salome* at New York City Opera. I called her up one evening and she invited me over to play through *Susannah*.”

Curtin, who grew up in Clarksburg, West Virginia, less than a day’s drive from Floyd’s birthplace, had an immediate identification with the character of Susannah. “I remember I was tired when he asked me,” recalled Curtin, “but I told him I’d love to hear it. We read through *Susannah* and I fell in love with it. I didn’t grow up in the hill country of West Virginia for nothing! I called Mack and told him there was something he had to hear. Carlisle and I went through it again for him and he loved it as much as I did.” They found they both had the same two weeks free the following February and agreed to do the piece.

As preparations for the premiere got underway, FSU president Doak Campbell asked to read the *Susannah* libretto. After doing so, Campbell and his wife deemed the opera unsuitable for presentation. “That was a very unpleasant and troubling episode,” said Floyd. “They withdrew the funds and suddenly everything was uncertain. [Campbell] was vehement in making accusations that I had written it for the sexual excitement and objected that Susannah must have become pregnant as a result of the encounter with Blich. He didn’t understand the story at all. I finally called on him directly. I explained that the story was about Susannah’s innocence and he saw he was wrong and allowed the production to move forward.”

## Opening Night

“I won’t say that the success of *Susannah* was unexpected,” said Floyd, “but, it was on a scale I hadn’t planned for. My parents sat with the Governor and his wife at the performance. FSU President Campbell was not planning on attending, but when he found out the Governor and his wife were giving the opening night party at the Governor’s mansion, he and his wife were suddenly available.” Audience and critical reaction was nearly unanimous: *Susannah* was a success. Plans for a New York production began immediately. Erich Leinsdorf had just been appointed music director of



Carlisle Floyd received the National Medal for Arts, the highest honor specifically given for achievement in the arts by the U.S. government, from President George W. Bush in 2004. He is pictured here with one of his co-honorees, choreographer Twyla Tharp (center), and President Bush.

ASSOCIATED PRESS



The 1962 live recording of *Susannah*, featuring the title role's originator Phyllis Curtin, was described by NPR's Fresh Air critic Lloyd Schwartz: "This is a recording of such historical importance that it should be required listening for anyone interested in opera."

New York City Opera and scheduled the opera for the 1956 fall season.

In another twist of fate, Harrell and NYCO were in a dispute about the baritone's contract. Unwilling to wait for resolution, Harrell had accepted another engagement. "Norman Treigle took the role," said Floyd. "From that point he made it his own. He was Olin Blicht." *Susannah* won a New York Critics' Circle Award and was performed at NYCO for five consecutive seasons. As part of the United States' participation in the 1958 Brussels World Fair, NYCO and *Susannah* were selected to represent the American performing arts.

"I've been enormously pleased with *Susannah's* staying power over the years," said Floyd. "People always respond to something that is human and direct without apology. Certainly that's the staying power of the Williams and Miller plays. I don't think anybody nowadays talks about the expressionistic thrust of *Death of a Salesman*. What sustains it is the fact that it is profoundly human."

Did Floyd's complicated relationship with his father give him any hesitations about *Susannah*? "That's a logical question to ask. I have to say, it did not. My father was supportive of me from the time I started studying piano in high school," said Floyd. "Yet, he was also critical. He was in the opening night audiences at FSU and in New York and saw many performances in different places. He never said anything to me about his feelings on the opera. It wasn't until years later when [Floyd's wife] Kay asked him about his reaction the first time he saw the revival scene. He said, 'I almost left.' Kay adroitly responded that she could see how someone who felt seriously about revival meetings would react like that, which cooled things down. I believe he thought it was an accurate depiction of a revival scene. I still thunder on about that. I don't want even a hint of parody, with people screaming and rolling around on the floor. I want something solemn and frightening, which is the way I saw it through the eyes of a child. Anything else diminishes the power of the scene. It becomes easy for the audience to say, 'oh look at those poor, benighted people,' and not see themselves.

## A Fortunate Meeting

On July 9, 1971, Floyd attended a new production of his most recent opera, *Of Mice and Men*, and met David Gockley, the 28-year-old general director-designate of Houston Grand Opera. After the performance Gockley pitched his ideas to the composer over Jack Daniels at Floyd's hotel: new productions of *Susannah* and *Of Mice and Men*, to be followed by a new opera.

"When I met David, he looked like a college sophomore," recalled Floyd. "What impressed me was his seriousness and his strong intent. He wanted me to do an opera for HGO for the bicentennial. I had several offers from other companies, but had not committed myself yet. When David asked me, I decided to say 'yes.'"

"David has been a marvelous champion," said Floyd. "[He] wanted first crack at any opera I wrote and then always gave it a wonderful production. We've done six operas together [*Susannah*, *Of Mice and Men*, plus world premieres of *Bilby's Doll*, *Willie Stark*, the revised version of *The Passion of Jonathan Wade*, and *Cold Sassy Tree*]."

How does Floyd feel about being labeled an outsider throughout his career? "It depends on what you mean by outsider," he began. "If you mean someone who doesn't follow musical fashion, I would certainly plead guilty to that. I found a certain kind of music congenial to me; it never occurred to me to write music that was academically acceptable. I'm by no means the only so-called outsider. I think I have quite a bit of company these days. One of the first things young composers who come to work with me say is that they want to write music people will like, and that's a thoroughly commendable attitude if it doesn't mean pandering. Verdi and Handel wrote very likeable music for their publics."

It's impossible to deny that Floyd has spent his career working in a genre that exists on the sidelines of American culture. "The artist is something of an outsider in America. I have always felt that America does not value its artists. There is something inherent in our democracy that tends to want to level. We are a curious nation because on the one hand, there is no country that extols the nonconformist, the rugged individual, more than we do. Yet, there is huge pressure toward conformity. That same kind of duality exists in the oppression of the arts."

Floyd is working on a new opera based on the life of Edward Kynaston, the last British male actor to appear on stage as a woman during the 17-century English Restoration. He continues to be motivated by the possibility of communicating a story directly to an audience. "When I was starting out, I said I wanted to create operas in which the drama was tight and forward-moving, as you found in theater and film. I would hope an audience would be absorbed by what they are witnessing on stage and see what I am presenting as a deeply human experience.

"When *Willie Stark* had its premiere at the Kennedy Center, Illinois Congressman [Sidney R.] Yates was seated next to me. After the opera was over, he said to me, 'I was looking forward to having a doze at the opera. *I didn't blink.*' I told him he could not have given me a greater compliment." 🍷

*Robert Wilder Blue is a Bay Area writer and frequent contributor to San Francisco Opera Magazine.*

# John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn



**I**t was only fitting that San Francisco Opera Chairman John Gunn was asked to speak at the 2014 conference of OPERA America, the national service organization for opera. The theme of this year’s event, held in San Francisco this past June, was Audiences Reimagined—a topic John knows well.

“We’ve been captivated by a centuries-old art form, opera,” stated John as he took the podium at the conference. In the speech that followed, he reflected on the critical roles that boards and donors play in helping opera survive and thrive. He also spoke of the entrepreneurial activity required to seek fresh channels of engagement and cultivate new audiences. “For opera’s guardians, optimism is a key ingredient,” he emphasized. “We have to be fighters, not folders.”

John and his wife, Cynthia Fry Gunn, have long been the standard-bearers of that philosophy and stewards of its practice. Since 2002, when John joined the board of San Francisco Opera, the couple has underwritten numerous productions and provided generous support for many of the company’s innovative endeavors.

In September 2008, the Gunns made a historic commitment—believed to be the largest gift ever made by individuals to an American opera company—to help fund the signature projects of General Director David Gockley, including new operas and productions, multimedia projects, and outreach programs. This season, that gift is helping make four productions possible—*Norma*, *La Bohème*, *The Trojans*, and *Two Women (La Ciociara)*.

To John’s way of thinking, it’s all part of moving opera forward. As he reminded conference attendees, “Those of us here today are the art form’s custodians. It’s a difficult job because opera, which inspires us, is expensive. At San Francisco, we can get X dollars for a ticket and it takes three times that to put on the performance—a relationship that’s true across the country. How then should we proceed?”

John believes each opera company should assess its talents and core competencies, then establish goals for the next ten years that are realizable with the energy of its trustees. “Opera is a dynamic art form and all of us play a role in keeping it vital,” he said in closing. “We must expand our repertoire and our audiences, and strive for financial flexibility. And we depend on donors to keep opera alive.”

# SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

DREW ALTIZER



## **Diane B. Wilsey (Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor, *Norma*)**

Longtime San Francisco Opera board member and patron Dede Wilsey believes deeply in the transformative power of the arts, and sees opera as a prime example. “It’s a marvelous spectacle,” Dede says. “From the voices and pageantry to the scenery, costumes, and acting, opera fills the senses and takes you to another place.”

Dede also believes that such experiences should be available to all. “We work hard to make events open to the public at no cost,” she explains. “And because a love of any art form starts at a young age, we take opera to the schoolroom.”

Thanks to Dede’s generosity, opera enthusiasts of all ages have much to celebrate. As Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor for the ninth consecutive year, Dede is supporting the opening production of the 2014–15 Season, *Norma*; the sea of flowers that grace the War Memorial Opera House on September 5; and the free annual *Opera in the Park* concert at Sharon Meadow on September 7.

Dede’s lead support for San Francisco Opera’s renovation of the fourth floor of the historic Veteran Building is helping make another transformation possible—the consolidation of the Company’s activities from seven locations citywide to one. “This will save time and money,” Dede states. “And facilitate greater collaboration.”

Dede’s commitment to the arts and philanthropy extends to many organizations. To name a few, she is president of the Fine Arts Museums; she is on the boards of the San Francisco Ballet, Grace Cathedral, and the San Francisco War Memorial of Performing Arts Center; and she is leading the effort to build three hospitals for UCSF at Mission Bay.

## **Thomas and Barbara Wolfe (Production Sponsors, *Norma*)**

Tom and Barbara Wolfe have been longtime opera fans and supporters of San Francisco Opera since 1985. Mozart, operas in the classical Italian tradition, and the works of Wagner are their particular favorites. They have been sponsors of San Francisco productions of *Mephistopheles*, *The Magic Flute*, *Tannhäuser*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Arshak II*, and the 1999 *Ring* Festival.

Barbara is a Trustee of Mills College and serves on the board of the San Francisco Opera Association. Through their private foundation and personally, Barbara and Tom Wolfe support educational programs and scholarships at several primary and secondary schools, graduate scholarship programs at Mills College, UC Davis Veterinary School, The UCSF Foundation, and the ARCS program in Northern California.



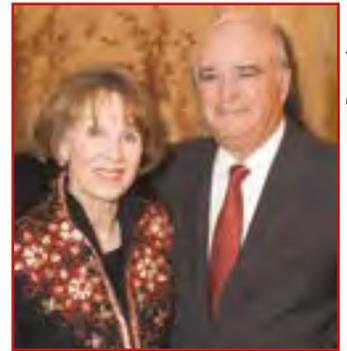
## **Wells Fargo (Season Sponsor)**

Wells Fargo is proud to have supported San Francisco Opera as the corporate Season Sponsor for more than a decade. Since 1852, Wells Fargo has had a proud history of serving its customers and communities in the Bay Area. Wells Fargo’s philosophy of investing in community institutions encourages a culture of artistic achievement and growth, which strengthens the communities in which we live and work. The company celebrates its 161st anniversary this year, and supporting arts and culture has been a part of its history since the days when Wells Fargo stagecoaches brought actors, musicians and other performing artists to the west. As the oldest and largest financial services company headquartered in California, Wells Fargo has top financial professionals providing business banking, investments, brokerage, trust, mortgage, insurance, consumer finance and much more. Wells Fargo has helped generations of families build, manage, preserve, and transfer wealth with personalized advice and services to satisfy all their customers’ financial needs and help them succeed financially.

## Joan and David Traitel/Great Singers Fund

(Sponsor, Marco Berti and Sondra Radvanovsky in *Norma* and Patricia Racette in *Susannah*)

“Without great singers, opera is not all it could be,” says San Francisco Opera board member Joan Traitel. “That’s why my husband and I approached David Gockley with the idea of creating a special way of supporting singers exclusively.” The result was the Great Singers Fund, inaugurated by the Traitels in 2008 to provide San Francisco Opera with enhanced support in attracting the world’s best-known singers. Joan, a member of the Opera’s board of directors since 1998, and her husband David were production sponsors for several years before founding the Great Singers Fund. “The Fund makes a difference in the quality of opera in San Francisco,” Joan explains. When asked to name a favorite artist in the 2014-15 Season, Joan simply can’t stop at one. “There are so many! Sondra Radvanovsky is the rare soprano who can do full justice to one of opera’s most dazzling and demanding roles in the season opener, *Norma*. I’m so pleased that the Fund can enable her appearance.” Joan and David and the Great Singers Fund are also supporting the appearances of Marco Berti in *Norma*, Patricia Racette in *Susannah*, Ramón Vargas, Thomas Hampson and Dolora Zajick in *A Masked Ball*, and Danielle de Niese and David Daniels in *Partenope*. Joan concludes, “I hope people see the relationship between the Great Singers Fund and this season’s fantastic lineup. Your support truly can make a difference! These amazing artists make an evening special, and at the end you walk away happy.”



DREW ALTIZER

## Dianne and Tad Taube (Production Sponsors, *Norma*)

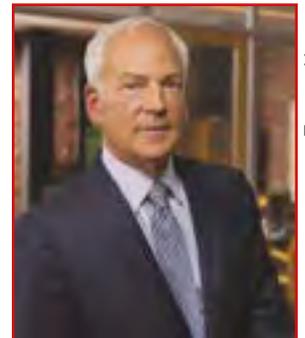
San Francisco Opera is grateful to Dianne and Tad for their generous financial support of over 13 mainstage productions, including the season’s opening production, *Norma*. In partnership with Koret Foundation, Tad and Dianne provided lead funding for the Opera’s Koret-Taube Media Suite, the first permanent high-definition, broadcast-standard facility installed in an American opera house. The Taubes are active philanthropists, providing significant cultural support to the Museum of the History of Polish Jews (Warsaw), opening October 2014; the Exploratorium; San Francisco Symphony; the San Francisco Zoo; and numerous academic institutions including Stanford University, the University of California, and the University of San Francisco.



DREW ALTIZER

## Koret Foundation (Production Sponsor, *Norma*)

San Francisco Opera is grateful to the Koret Foundation for its generous financial support of over 13 mainstage productions, including this season’s opening production, *Norma*. Koret has enjoyed its longstanding partnership with the Opera which has included helping to create the company’s Koret-Taube Media Suite, bringing OperaVision and simulcast programs to broader audiences, as well as being the first private foundation funder of Orpheus, San Francisco Opera’s next generation initiative. Koret is particularly interested in innovative projects that strengthen the Bay Area and enrich our cultural landscape. “Koret is proud to work with the Opera to expand the organization’s outreach and leverage the company’s ability to enhance Bay Area cultural life, especially during these difficult economic times,” said Jeffrey A. Farber, Koret CEO.



THOMAS HEINER

## The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (Production Sponsor, *Susannah*)

The Mellon Foundation supports scholarship and work in the humanities and the arts through grants to charitable institutions, including colleges and universities, performing arts organizations, museums, and libraries. The Foundation’s grantmaking philosophy is to build, strengthen and sustain institutions and their core capacities by developing thoughtful, long-term collaborations with grant recipients that achieve meaningful results. San Francisco Opera is grateful to The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for its generous support of *Susannah*, as well as its commitment to the Opera’s world-premiere productions in future seasons. Grants are awarded on the basis of artistic merit and leadership, and the Opera is honored to be the recipient of these grants.

## Jan Shrem & Maria Manetti Shrem

After pursuing a publishing career in Japan and Europe, founding Clos Pegase Winery, and building a major art collection, Jan Shrem, in joyous partnership with his wife Maria Manetti Shrem, now focuses on causes that advance education and the performing and visual arts.

Jan and Maria's lives led them each around the globe, but their individual passions—for music, the arts, food, and wine—eventually brought them to San Francisco Opera, and to each other.

Born in Florence, Italy, Maria says “Opera has been one of my greatest passions since I was 13 years old, when I saw Renata Tebaldi in *La Bohème*.” After moving to San Francisco, Maria pursued a fashion career and began attending San Francisco Opera. When she saw *Madama Butterfly* starring Renata Scottò, they had a memorable backstage meeting. Maria has since developed friendships with artists including Luciano Pavarotti, Renée Fleming, and Plácido Domingo. “I deeply respect the artists—their talent, dedication and sacrifice. I also had the privilege of being involved in early discussions surrounding Nicola's appointment as Music Director,” she says. “I am thrilled to see how he has taken Italian opera to new heights.”

Jan's introduction to opera began in 1948 when he came to Salt Lake City from his childhood in Colombia, South America, and Jerusalem. As a student, his housemates “played opera continuously on the radio,” and he was drawn to its beauty and drama.

Today, Maria and Jan share their passion and dedication to the future of the art form through their commitment of \$3 million to San Francisco Opera, in support of the *Amici di Nicola* of Camerata and the Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund. General Director David Gockley explains, “With this gift, Jan and Maria have assumed the volunteer leadership role of Chairs of the *Amici di Nicola* of Camerata, a group of visionary donors who help fund the projects that define the Company's international reputation. Jan and Maria have also established the Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund.”

Maria points out, “Being a great interpreter of Italian opera does not necessarily mean being Italian. It has everything to do with a certain style and depth of understanding needed for this repertoire. Sondra Radvanovsky is a tremendous example. She is an American who is considered one of the leading Verdi sopranos. In *Un*



*Ballo in Maschera* this season, we have the Mexican artist Ramón Vargas who is a richly Italianate tenor.”

Maestro Nicola Luisotti is considered by many to be one of the greatest interpreters of Italian opera today. As Chairs of *Amici di Nicola*, Jan and Maria are supporting Maestro Luisotti's work this season in *Norma*, *Un Ballo in Maschera* and *Two Women*.

Jan reflects, “*Two Women (La Ciociara)* is especially exciting to Maria and to me as it is a new commission showcasing the best of Italian talent. Not only does it feature the Italian soprano Anna Caterina Antonacci and Maestro Luisotti. The story was written by the renowned Italian author Alberto Moravia, with music composed by acclaimed operatic composer Marco Tutino. What could be better?”

“Becoming San Francisco Opera's music director was a dream come true,” adds Maestro Luisotti. “With Jan and Maria's help, we are bringing the finest artists to San Francisco to realize everything Italian opera can be.”

Additionally, Jan and Maria have selected *Norma* for major support from the Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund. Because of their generosity, San Francisco audiences will enjoy performances from renowned interpreters of Italian opera such as Sondra Radvanovsky, Daveda Karanas and Marco Berti.

Jan says, “Opera is an obsession, especially the great Italian works. It is a joy to share in Maria's overwhelming enthusiasm. Opera is what brought us together, and it will always be central to our lives. It is important to ensure that San Francisco Opera has the support and stability it deserves to continue its work.”

# Go Deeper

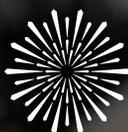


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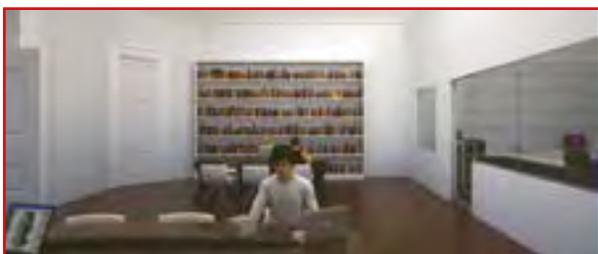
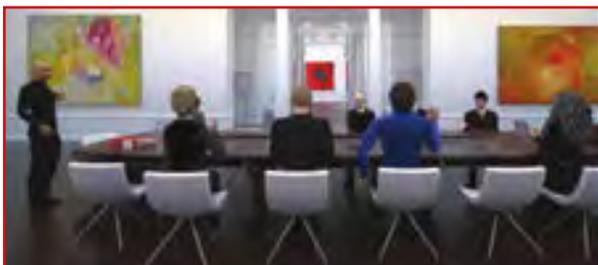


“I am convinced that this is the most elegant and efficient way the needs of the Opera can be met for the next fifty years.”—David Gockley

In 2010, General Director David Gockley announced the establishment of **The Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera** on the fourth floor of the Veterans Building, in the space formerly occupied by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. The Center, adding over 55,000 square feet to San Francisco Opera’s facilities on the War Memorial Campus, will centralize functions that are currently spread over seven different venues throughout the City. In addition to the conveniences this move affords, it will save San Francisco Opera over \$1 million in operating costs each year, allowing the Company to better focus its resources onto the stage and in the community.

We are excited to report that **the capital campaign has achieved 90% of our fundraising goal of \$19 million**, including a \$5 million lead naming gift by Diane B. Wilsey.

**Be a part of this historic project!** Visit [sfopera.com/WilseyCenter](http://sfopera.com/WilseyCenter) for more information, or contact Andrew Morgan, Director of Individual and Leadership Giving, at (415) 565-3266 or [amorgan@sfopera.com](mailto:amorgan@sfopera.com).



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- Public Archive
- McAllister Foyer
- South Gallery
- Conference Rooms (2)

“The War Memorial Veterans Building is one of the beaux arts masterpieces in Civic Center and is of singular historic importance as the birthplace of the United Nations. This public/private partnership will rehabilitate, restore and revitalize this important building for all San Franciscans.” —Beth Murray, Managing Director of the War Memorial and Performing Arts Center

# Gifts to the Wilsey Center

Current as of August 11, 2014

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Norby Anderson  
Mr. & Mrs. William K. Bowes, Jr.  
The Hume Family  
Franklin & Catherine Johnson  
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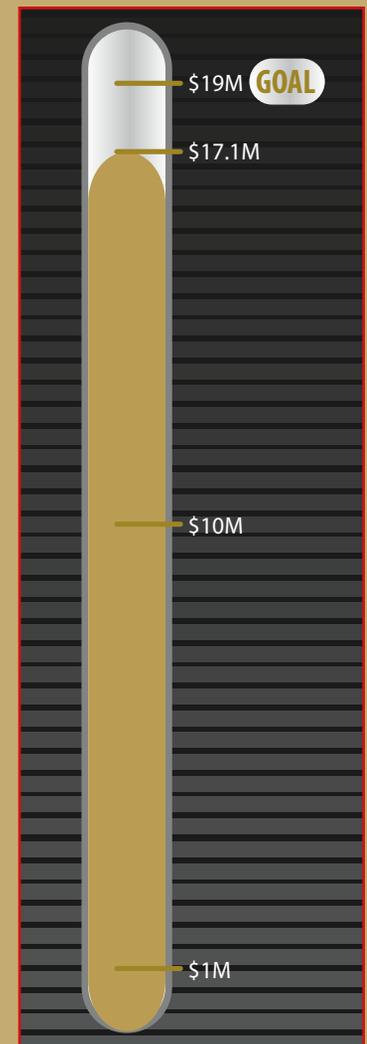
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# 2014–2015 REPERTOIRE

## NORMA

Vincenzo Bellini

**New Production**

September 5, 10, 14, 19, 23, 27, 30

Company Sponsors John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn are proud to support this production. This production is made possible, in part, by Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey, Thomas & Barbara Wolfe, Koret Foundation, and Tad & Dianne Taube. Major support for this production also provided by the Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund established by Jan Shrem & Maria Manetti Shrem.

## SUSANNAH

Carlisle Floyd

**Company Premiere**

September 6, 9, 12, 16, 21

This production is made possible, in part, by Leslie & George Hume and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

## A MASKED BALL

Giuseppe Verdi

October 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22

This production is made possible, in part, by The Bernard Osher Endowment Fund and The Thomas Tilton Production Fund.

## PARTENOPE

George Frideric Handel

**Company Premiere**

October 15, 18, 21, 24, 30; November 2

This production is made possible, in part, by The Bernard Osher Endowment Fund.

## TOSCA

Giacomo Puccini

October 23, 26; November 1, 4, 8

This production is made possible, in part, by the Burgess & Elizabeth Jamieson Fund.

## CINDERELLA

Gioachino Rossini

November 9, 13, 16, 18, 21, 26

This production is made possible, in part, by Chevron.

## LA BOHÈME

Giacomo Puccini

November 14, 15, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 29, 30; December 2, 3, 5, 7

Company Sponsors John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn are proud to support this production. This production is made possible, in part, by the Burgess & Elizabeth Jamieson Fund and San Francisco Opera Guild.

## LA BOHÈME FOR FAMILIES

November 22, 29

## THE TROJANS

Hector Berlioz

June 7, 12, 16, 20, 25; July 1, 2015

Company Sponsors John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn are proud to support this production. This production is made possible, in part, by The Goatie Foundation, the Edmund W. & Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund, Koret Foundation, and Tad & Dianne Taube. Additional support is provided by the Columbia Foundation and by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

## TWO WOMEN (LA CIOCIARA)

Music by Marco Tutino

Libretto by Marco Tutino and Fabio Ceresa

Adapted from a script by Luca Rossi

Based on the novel *La Ciociara* by Alberto Moravia

By arrangement with Studio Legale Cau Morandi Minutillo Turtur

**World Premiere • Commissioned by San Francisco Opera**

June 13, 19, 23, 28, 30, 2015

This production is made possible by the Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for New Productions. Company Sponsors John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn are proud to support the commission of *Two Women*. The world premiere is made possible, in part, by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and by an anonymous grant.

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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

June 14, 18, 21, 24, 27, 29; July 3, 5, 2015

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Giuseppe Finzi (*La Bohème*)

Riccardo Frizza (*Tosca*)

The following artist appearances are made possible by a gift to the Great Singers Fund by Joan & David Traitel:

Sondra Radvanovsky and Marco Berti (*Norma*)

Patricia Racette (*Susannah*)

Dolora Zajick, Ramón Vargas, and Thomas Hampson (*A Masked Ball*)

Danielle de Niese and David Daniels (*Partenope*)

Susan Graham (*The Trojans*)

Anna Caterina Antonacci (*The Trojans, Two Women*)

All performances feature English supertitles.

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Vincenzo Bellini

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## SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

**David Gockley**, General Director

**Nicola Luisotti**, Music Director  
*Caroline H. Hume Endowed Chair*



**Vincenzo Bellini**

# NORMA

Company Sponsors John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn are proud to support this production.

This production is made possible, in part, by Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey, Thomas & Barbara Wolfe, Koret Foundation, and Tad & Dianne Taube.

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Nicola Luisotti's appearance made possible by Jan Shrem & Maria Manetti Shrem, Chairs, Amici di Nicola of Camerata.

Ms. Radvanovsky's and Mr. Berti's appearances are made possible by a gift to the Great Singers Fund by Joan & David Traitel.

Additional support for this production provided by Affiliate Sponsors Dr. Susan Kroll & Mr. Mark R. Kroll.

# NORMA

## ACT I

*Gaul, 50 BCE, during the Roman occupation*

Near a forest at night, the priest Oroveso leads the Druids in a prayer for revenge against the conquering Romans. After they have left, the Roman proconsul Pollione admits to his friend Flavio that he no longer loves the high priestess Norma, Oroveso's daughter, with whom he has two children. He has fallen in love with a young novice priestess, Adalgisa, who returns his love. The Druids assemble and Norma prays to the moon goddess for peace. She tells her people that as soon as the moment for their uprising against the conquerors arrives, she herself will lead the revolt. At the same time, she realizes that she could never harm Pollione. When the grove is deserted, Adalgisa appears and asks for strength to resist Pollione, who finds her crying and urges her to flee with him to Rome.

Norma tells her confidante Clotilde that Pollione has been recalled to Rome. She is afraid that he will desert her and their children. Adalgisa confesses to Norma that she has a lover. Recalling the beginning of her own love affair, Norma is about to release Adalgisa from her vows and asks for the name of her lover. As Pollione appears, Adalgisa answers truthfully. Norma's kindness turns to fury. She tells Adalgisa about her own betrayal by the Roman soldier. Pollione confesses his love for Adalgisa and asks her again to come away with him, but she refuses and vows she would rather die than steal him from Norma.

## ACT II

Norma tries to bring herself to murder her children in their sleep to protect them from living in disgrace without a father. She changes her mind and summons Adalgisa, advising her to marry Pollione and take the children to Rome. Adalgisa refuses: she will go to Pollione, but only to persuade him to return to Norma and the women reaffirm their friendship. Oroveso announces that a new commander will replace Pollione and tells the Druids that they must be patient to ensure the success of the eventual revolt.

Norma is stunned to hear that Adalgisa's pleas have not persuaded Pollione, and in a rage she urges her people to attack the conquerors. Oroveso demands a sacrificial victim and Pollione is brought in. Alone with him, Norma promises him his freedom if he will leave Adalgisa and return to her. When he refuses, Norma threatens to kill him and their children. She tells the Druids that a guilty priestess must die, referring to herself. Moved by her nobility, Pollione asks to share her fate. Norma begs Oroveso to watch over her children and prepares to die with her lover.

**First performance:** Milan, La Scala, December 26, 1831

**First performance in the United States:** New Orleans, St. Charles Theatre, April 1, 1836

**First performance in San Francisco:** Adelphi Theater, February 27, 1851, presented by the Pellegrini Opera Troupe. *Norma* was the second opera ever performed in San Francisco; the first, Bellini's *La Sonnambula*, was performed earlier that month.

**First San Francisco Opera performance:** November 13, 1937

*Norma* has been performed in 7 previous seasons at San Francisco Opera.

For complete information on all past casts, visit [archive.sfopera.com](http://archive.sfopera.com).

**Personnel:** 6 principals, 60 choristers, 2 supernumeraries; **68 total**

**Orchestra:** 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, 1 cimballo, 1 timpani, 2 percussion, 1 harp; Regular (40) strings. **60 total**

**Backstage:** 1 flute, 1 oboe, 1 clarinet, 1 bassoon, 2 horns, 4 trumpets, 1 trombone, 1 timpani, 1 percussion

Opera in two acts by **Vincenzo Bellini**  
Text by **Felice Romani**  
Based on a play by **Alexandre Soumet**

# NORMA

(Sung in Italian with English supertitles)

*Conductor*

**Nicola Luisotti**

*Director*

**Kevin Newbury**

*Set Designer*

**David Korins**

*Costume Designer*

**Jessica Jahn\***

*Lighting Designer*

**D.M. Wood\***

*Chorus Director*

**Ian Robertson**

*Fight Director*

**Dave Maier**

*Assistant Conductor*

**Giuseppe Finzi**

*Musical Preparation*

**John Churchwell**

**Bryndon Hassman**

**Jonathan Khuner**

**Fabrizio Corona**

*Prompter*

**Vito Lombardi\***

*Supertitles*

**Christopher Bergen**

*Assistant Stage Directors*

**Shawna Lucey**

**Lisa-Marie Shuster**

*Stage Manager*

**Darin Burnett**

*Costume Supervisor*

**Christopher Verdosci**

*Wig and Makeup Designer*

**Jeanna Parham\***

Co-production with Gran Teatre del Liceu,  
Barcelona; Canadian Opera Company; and  
Lyric Opera of Chicago.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2014 AT 8 PM

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 AT 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 AT 2 PM

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 AT 7:30 PM

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23 AT 7:30 PM

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 AT 7:30 PM

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 AT 7:30 PM

## CAST

(in order of appearance)

*Oroveso* **Christian Van Horn**

*Pollione* **Marco Berti**

*Flavio* **A.J. Glueckert†**

*Norma* **Sondra Radvanovsky**

*Adalgisa* **Jamie Barton\***

*Clotilde* **Jacqueline Piccolino†**

*Norma's children* **Oliver Kuntz\***

**Miles Sperske**

*Priests, priestesses, warriors*

\*San Francisco Opera debut

†Current Adler Fellow

TIME AND PLACE: Gaul, during the Roman occupation in 50 BCE

ACT I

—INTERMISSION—

ACT II

*Latecomers will not be seated during the performance after the lights have dimmed.  
The use of cameras, cellular phones and any kind of recording equipment is strictly forbidden.  
PLEASE TURN OFF AND REFRAIN FROM USING ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES.  
The performance will last approximately two hours, fifty minutes.*

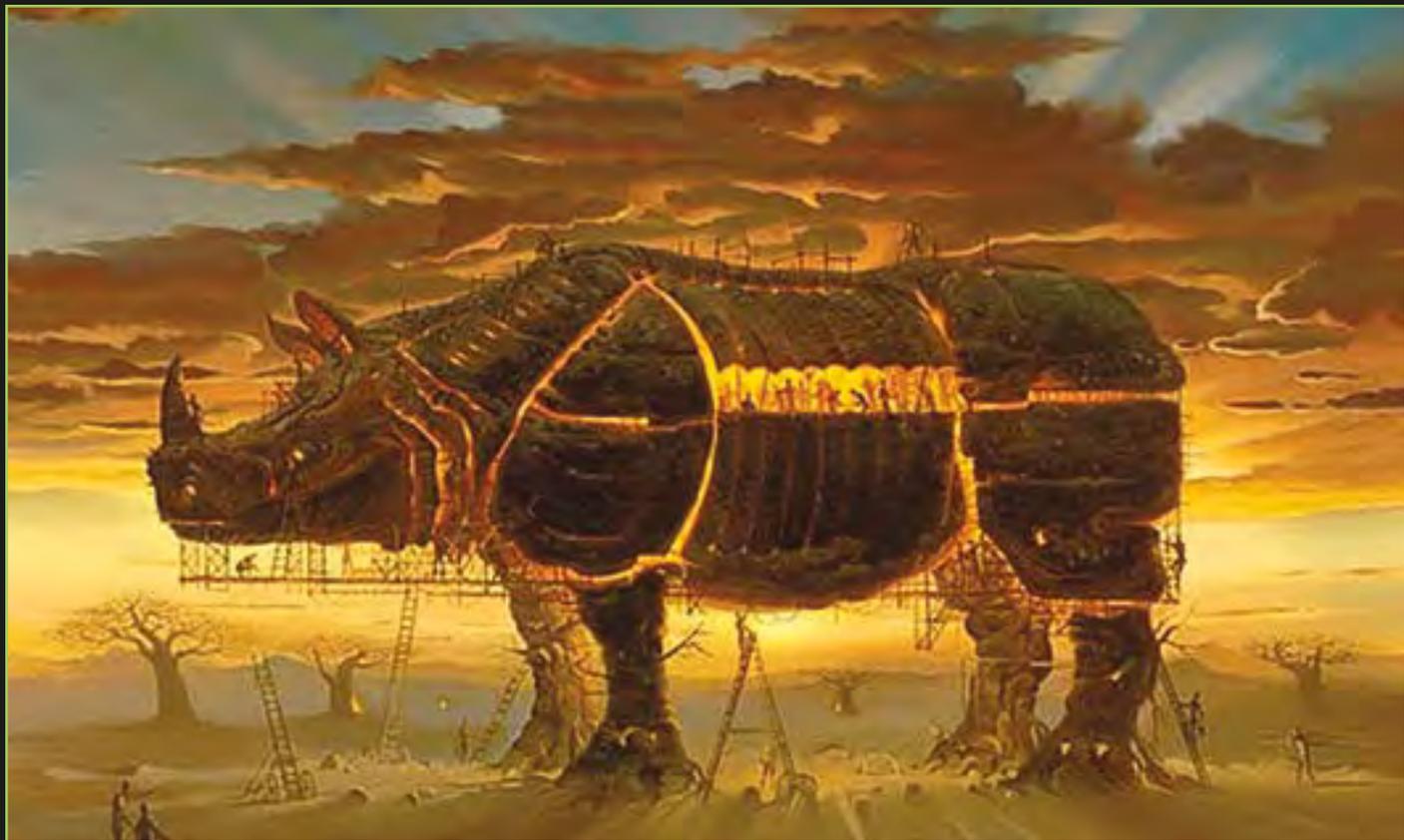
# DIRECTOR'S NOTES ON **NORMA**



Early inspirations for the Druid war machine (below), including a wicker man (top), purportedly used by ancient Druids.

**B**ellini's *Norma* is a story about the rituals of sacrifice, both public and private, and informs the entire opera: from the Druid community's collective sacrifice during wartime to Norma's threatened sacrifice of her own children and, ultimately, her own life. While little is known about actual Druid religious rituals, mythology suggests that human and animal sacrifice were central to the Druid ethos. In researching ancient Druid and Gaulish mythology, my design team and I were drawn to these images of sacrifice—like the Ritual of Oak and Mistletoe involving the slaughter of two white bulls, as described by Pliny the Elder in the first century A.D. We were also inspired by images of “sacred forests” and legends that envisaged trees as the physical manifestation of the Gods. As the opera illustrates, burning effigies seem to have been central to Druid rituals, often taking the form of a wooden or wicker man or other such sculptural representations of human beings or animals. The timing of our *Norma* seems especially appropriate since many San Franciscans are preparing for the annual Burning Man Festival.

The foreboding door to the outside world, the totem bullheads on the wall, and the miniature elements of war in Norma's children's nursery all reflect this world of sacrifice and conflict. Our space is both a temple and a war factory—as the Druids work to build a war machine to unleash upon the occupying Romans. In our production, the entire chorus is preparing the war effort: their distinct clothes, hair, and tattoos all augment the feeling of a unified community pursuing a common cause. Although we have set the production in a mythic, *Game of Thrones*-inspired milieu, *Norma* feels very contemporary to me. Norma's children are already being indoctrinated into a world of war, with its requisite betrayals and sacrifices. In rehearsals, the nursery has become the emotional heart of the opera. Especially in the hands of the gifted singing actress Sondra Radvanovsky, Norma's moments with her children are deeply moving. Her rumination about whether or not to kill her own children envisions both a Medea-like act of revenge and an act of protection from the violent world she knows awaits them (as in Toni Morrison's Pulitzer- and National Book Award-winning *Beloved*). *Norma* breaks the cycles of violence as she turns the war machine into an effigy and the instrument of her ultimate sacrifice. ●



# Setting *Norma*: Bellini and His Librettist

The Sacred Grove of the Druids from Bellini's *Norma*,  
19th-century engraving, French School / BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY

**M**any valid comparisons can be—and have been—made between the film industry and opera as it was practiced in the golden era of bel canto in nineteenth-century Italy: the popular appeal of these media, their value as art versus “mere” entertainment, the clout of star performers, or the grueling, nervous-breakdown-inducing production schedules to get a new work “in the can.”

Another comparison that is especially intriguing is the parallel between screenwriters and librettists. To create a commercially viable film or opera that aspires to be something more than the run-of-the-mill competition, the practitioners of these crafts must walk a fine line. The indispensable qualification for that goal: being able to negotiate a tricky balance between artistic ambition and originality, and generally understood conventions that define audience expectations.

And on top of that, the collaborative nature of both media requires a virtuosic level of flexibility. In *Divas and Scholars: Performing Italian Opera*, the acclaimed musicologist and opera histo-

rian Philip Gossett discusses the intimidating skill set essential for a reliable librettist working in the early nineteenth century, the period of Vincenzo Bellini's *Norma*. Gossett handily summarizes the parameters a librettist had to master just to shape the overall structure for an effective libretto: “The order of the pieces, proper and physically reasonable demands on the capacities of singers, a concern for brevity, an awareness of the difference between the requirements of spoken drama and opera, the clarity of structure of individual numbers [divisions of musical pieces such as arias, duets, etc., in an opera]—all were basic to the proper layout of a musical drama.”

However, one area where the librettist–screenwriter analogy breaks down has to do with the relative invisibility of this role. True, the sense in which a screenwriter complains about being taken for granted might apply equally well to librettists as far as most of today's audiences are concerned. (How many opera fans can immediately name the librettists of *The Barber of Seville*, *Rigoletto*, or *Tosca*?) But such thanklessness was not necessarily the case during Bellini's own era—and certainly not when it comes to the man who penned the verse for *Norma*'s libretto, Felice Romani (1788–1865).

---

Thomas May writes frequently for San Francisco Opera and blogs at memeteria.com.

Portraits of Felice Romani, Vincenzo Bellini, and soprano Giuditta Pasta, originator of the role of Norma.

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While contemporary audiences generally experience a libretto as a CNN-like ticker of formless text via titles, Romani and his peers wrote their librettos with the expectation that they would be printed for audiences in formats that preserved the integrity of the meter and layout of their verses. Composers, too, didn't just "set" random groupings of words. "By purely poetic means, then (the use of different meters, the use of stanzas of verse for a single character, the use of dialogue, etc.)," Gossett explains, "librettists—often in consultation with the composer—materially influenced the structure and character of both the entire opera and each individual piece." A poet like Romani, in short, structured the opera's story in poetry that in turn "shaped important musical decisions" (such as where the mood of an aria or duet will alter dramatically).

Musicologist Alessandro Roccatagliati, an expert on Romani, points out that the librettist was regarded as a "great poet" who enjoyed a "longstanding and illustrious reputation." Bellini, a native of Catania, Sicily, was thirteen years younger than Romani and had just turned thirty before *Norma* premiered in 1831, at La Scala in Milan—but he was already at the peak of his sadly short-lived career. Only two of the ten operas that became his legacy were yet to be composed. *Norma* has long been considered the crown jewel not only of Bellini's oeuvre but of bel canto tragedy in general. And along with the beauty and dramatic potency of Bellini's score, credit for that longevity must also be ascribed to Romani's achievement with his libretto for *Norma*.

Because of radical changes in the development of opera, the vast majority of the bel canto literature took a nosedive into obscurity within a few decades, but *Norma* never fell completely out of the repertory. Whatever distortions or abuse—dramatic as well as musical—*Norma* suffered as the older performance traditions altered or died out, Bellini's masterpiece remained a lone flame preserving the memory of one of the most glorious periods in the history of this art form.

And thanks to the legendary interpretations of the title role by artists like Rosa Ponselle and, above all, Maria Callas, *Norma* helped

spur the spectacular revival of interest in neglected operas by Bellini and his peers—a revival that started gaining serious momentum in the middle of the last century and that continues in the present.

Within a few years of the launch of Bellini's professional career, Gioachino Rossini—the reigning giant of Italian bel canto opera—had retired. Soon Bellini stood out from a crowded field of fellow contenders (including at first, the slightly older Gaetano Donizetti), and he was able to establish close-knit working relationships with such leading collaborators as Romani and the soprano Giuditta Pasta, who created the role of Norma.

In the recent *A History of Opera*, jointly written by Carolyn Abbate and Roger Parker, the authors describe the quality that was Bellini's "unique marker" and that made him stand out from his contemporaries: "His gift was to imagine melody, extended arcs and lines that could poise human voices to break hearts on the turn of the smallest creative phrase."

Bellini's great fortune was to find in the already acclaimed Romani the ideal collaborator who could understand that gift for its potential to create genuinely thrilling music drama. Evidence for their special working relationship, which began with the opera *Il Pirata* in 1827 (the composer's first big success in Milan), can be seen by way of negation in the unfortunate rift that broke up their partnership. With *Beatrice di Tenda*, the opera that followed *Norma*, Romani was unable to summon the enthusiasm for the plot shared by Bellini and Pasta. Deadlines were missed, to the point of endangering the premiere and necessitating last-minute compromises, and the outraged composer broke off from his librettist.

Reports of the genesis of operas during this period are replete with nail-biting episodes of composers anxiously waiting for agreed-upon librettos to be able to compose in time for a production's scheduled opening. Yet as in so many other ways, the situation with *Norma* was different. Because Bellini and Romani lived in close proximity in Milan during its genesis, we lack the kinds of revealing aesthetic declarations that a regular correspondence might have prompted—as with Verdi and his librettists. But we can glean a sense of the specialness of this project from Bellini's excited initial

A photograph of an ornate theater interior with a large audience clapping. A screen on the stage displays the text "SUPPORTING THE ARTS INSPIRES OUR COMMUNITY." The text is in a bold, sans-serif font, with "INSPIRES OUR" and "COMMUNITY." each on a new line, separated by two horizontal red lines. The background of the text is white, and the entire scene is lit with warm, golden light.

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Photos (clockwise from left): Erhard Rom; Terrence McCarthy/San Francisco Opera; ©ENO/Catherine Ashmore; Michael Cooper/Michael Cooper Photographic/Canadian Opera Company; Marty Sohl/San Francisco Opera; Bill Cooper/Royal Opera House/ArenaPAL

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report of it to Pasta, who had not yet appeared at La Scala and would make her debut there as Norma.

“Romani believes it will be very effective, and absolutely ideal for your encyclopedic character, because that’s the sort of character Norma has. He will design the scenes that bear no resemblance to other subjects, and touch up the characters, and even change them, if that proves necessary to get the best effect.” The phrase “encyclopedic character”—it applies equally to Norma and to her interpreter—is often cited, but the promised uniqueness of the subject as opera material is also worth noting. *Norma* smashes the stereotypes apt to come up in any discussion of bel canto opera: that it’s ruled by simple formulas; the music and librettos have no organic connection; the librettos are hackwork, easily interchangeable with each other; the stars cast in a production might as well be singing from the telephone book, so irrelevant are the actual texts.

Although Bellini did develop a habit of writing down melodies on their own—what he called his “morning exercises”—to be assigned to particular texts later, there is no question of his preoccupation with getting the words just right. ““His preferred method was to involve himself extensively in the making of the libretto,”

warriors, bards,” and the like in the first act are defined as a “a group of Druids who spent their time in the contemplation of the mysteries of nature” or “seers” in short. The masculine god Irminsul, who functions as the polar opposite of the peaceful moon goddess invoked by Norma in her celebrated entrance, may have been a god of war or “the famous Irmin, whom the Romans called Arminio, the conqueror of Varus and the avenger of German liberty.” Elsewhere he is associated with “nothing but the trunk of a tree stripped of its branches” (trees being worshipped by the “ancient Saxons”). Romani had even penned a libretto in 1820 for another composer that was titled *La Sacerdotessa d’Irminsul* (*The Priestess of Irminsul*).

Romani’s scholarly work in comparative mythology would have primed him for the “otherness” of *Norma*, which straddles various worlds. There are obvious echoes of the harrowing ancient Greek myth of Medea (who in fact does murder her children, in contrast to the passionate but ultimately self-controlled Druid priestess), references to the ancient Rome from which Pollione and his fellow invaders have come, and traces of the classic Roman historians of the Northern campaigns. Yet the familiar Mediterranean terrain in which so many tragic operas before the emergence of Romanti-

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*“The words are so enmeshed in the notes and the notes in the words that together they form a complete and perfect whole.”*  
—Gioachino Rossini on *Norma*

---

write Abbate and Parker, “frequently insisting on revisions and ensuring that the text was precisely what his music needed.” Rossini himself praised the pivotal second-act duet between Norma and Pollione for Bellini’s sensitive treatment of the text: “The words are so enmeshed in the notes and the notes in the words that together they form a complete and perfect whole.”

But Romani had reasons of his own to become so wrapped up in this subject matter. The immediate source was a recently produced stage work he had selected to adapt: the five-act verse tragedy *Norma* by French playwright Alexandre Soumet. Such adaptations were frequent in this era of loose-to-nonexistent intellectual property law. And Pasta, Bellini assumes, would have already been familiar with the material from Soumet’s play, since it had just opened in April 1831 in Paris, where she was singing.

In his excellent study of *Norma* for the Cambridge Opera Handbooks series, David Kimbell teases out multiple strands braided together by Soumet’s play that must have had special resonance for Romani. The librettist spent an earlier chapter of his life as a professional classical scholar and even collaborated on a six-volume *Dictionary of Every Mythology and Antiquity*, whose scope goes well beyond the familiar ancient classical domain to consider other societies like the Druids and the Celtic world.

Kimbell combs from this other encyclopedic work to cite definitions of terms used in *Norma*’s libretto. The mysterious *eubagi* (“eubages”) mentioned in the procession of “Druids, priestesses,

cism were anchored is here replaced by something new: “the opera as a whole is very differently located, amid the impenetrable forests of northern Europe, bathed in moonlight rather than sun-drenched,” writes Kimbell.

*Norma* is a masterpiece not because of any revolutionary shattering of conventions but precisely because of its brilliant synthesis of bel canto operatic practice with Bellini’s unique musical gift and Romani’s sensitive shaping of his text to sustain that gift at its highest level. The perfectionism of composer and librettist here becomes mutually reinforcing.

Richard Wagner took notorious aim at the weaknesses he singled out in bel canto opera, thereby perpetuating the commonly held perception of the disconnect between words and music in the opera of this period. But *Norma*, which he conducted early in his career, always held a special place in his heart—even after bel canto had virtually vanished. “In his *Norma*,” Wagner acknowledged, “indisputably his most successful creation, Bellini provides a demonstration of how serviceable this style [the “style of the Italians”] can be, particularly with some operatic subjects. Here, where even the poetry raises itself to the tragic heights of the ancient Greeks, this [Italian] sense of form, which Bellini most decidedly ennobles, serves only to heighten the solemn and grandiose character of the whole. All the passions, transfigured in so singular a fashion by his song, derive therefrom a majestic solidity and well-foundedness.”

# NORMA

## Past Casts at San Francisco Opera

Clockwise from top right:  
Gina Cigna was our first  
Norma, in 1937;  
Shirley Verrett sang the title  
role in 1978;  
Michael Sylvester (Pollione),  
Carol Vaness (Norma), and  
Anna Caterina Antonacci  
(Adalgisa) in the 1998  
production;  
The legendary team of Joan  
Sutherland (Norma) and  
Marilyn Horne (Adalgisa) in  
1982.

Background: Act I of the  
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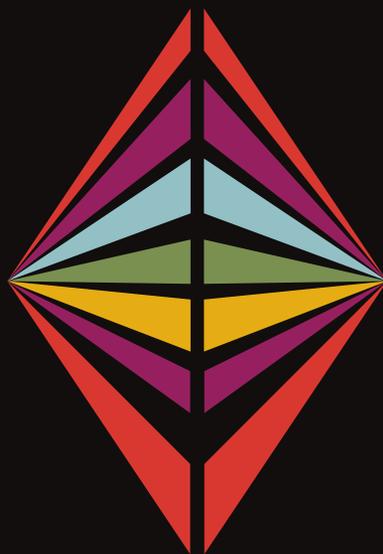
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**SONDRA  
RADVANSKY**  
(Berwyn, Illinois)

**Norma**  
Sondra Radvanovsky made her San Francisco Opera debut in 2009 as

Leonora in *Il Trovatore*, a role she has also performed at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Paris Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, the Metropolitan Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Houston Grand Opera, and in Bilbao, Lisbon, and Florence. Her recent engagements include the title roles of *Norma* and *Tosca* at the Met; *Tosca* at Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu and the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; *Amelia (Un Ballo in Maschera)* at the Vienna State Opera; and *Queen Elizabeth (Roberto Devereux)* with Toronto's Canadian Opera Company. Radvanovsky's other career highlights include the title role of *Suor Angelica* at Los Angeles Opera; the title role of *Lucrezia Borgia* with Washington National Opera; returns to both the Met and the Royal Opera, Covent Garden as Leonora; *Hélène (Les Vêpres Siciliennes)* at the Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa and the Vienna State Opera; *Elvira (Ernani)* at Trieste's Teatro Verdi, which she later reprised at the Met and Lyric Opera of Chicago; her La Scala debut as Roxanne (*Cyrano de Bergerac*), which she also performed in New York and London; the title role of *Susannah* with Lyric Opera of Chicago; the title role of *Manon Lescaut* at Leipzig Opera; and *Elisabetta (Don Carlos)* at Paris Opera. The soprano is a former winner of the George London Foundation Competition, the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and the Loren L. Zachary Society Competition.



**JAMIE BARTON**  
(Rome, Georgia)

**Adalgisa**  
A winner of the 2007 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the 2013 BBC Cardiff

*Singer of the World* Competition, and a Grammy nominee, mezzo-soprano Jamie Barton makes her San Francisco Opera debut in a role she recently sang at the Metropolitan Opera. Her engagements in the current season include *Giovanna Seymour (Anna Bolena)* with Lyric Opera of Chicago, *Fricka (Die Walküre)* with Houston Grand Opera, and performances with the orchestras of Atlanta, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and Toronto. Other career highlights include *Magdalene (Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg)* and roles in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Boris Godunov*, and *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Lyric Opera of Chicago; *Grandma Josephine* and *Mrs. Teavee (The Golden Ticket)* with Atlanta Opera; the *Second Norn (Götterdämmerung)* and *Mère Marie (Dialogues des Carmélites)* with Munich's Bavarian State Opera; the *Second Lady (Die Zauberflöte)* with the Metropolitan Opera; *Suzuki (Madama Butterfly)* and *Marcellina (Le Nozze di Figaro)* with Opera Theatre of St. Louis; *Emilia (Otello)* with the Canadian Opera Company; and roles in *Faust* and *Menotti's The Last Savage* with Santa Fe Opera. A former member of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, her roles with that company include *Ursula (Béatrice et Bénédicte)*, *Giovanna (Rigoletto)*, and *Mrs. Rolandson* in the world premiere of Previn's *Brief Encounter*. Future projects include returns to the Metropolitan Opera and Houston Grand Opera and debuts at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; Oper Frankfurt; Deutsche Oper Berlin; Los Angeles Opera; and Washington National Opera, all in leading roles.



**MARCO BERTI**  
(Como, Italy)

**Pollione**  
Marco Berti made his San Francisco Opera debut as *Don José (Carmen)* in 2006, a role he has

also performed at the Metropolitan Opera; the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; and in Verona, Turin, Cagliari,

and Copenhagen. His most recent San Francisco Opera appearances were in the title role of *Il Trovatore* in 2009 and as Calaf (*Turandot*) in 2011. Berti launched his international career at Milan's La Scala, where he made his debut as Arturo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and subsequently appeared there in productions of *Beatrice di Tenda*, *La Bohème*, *La Rondine*, and *Macbeth*, among others. Other career highlights include Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*) at the Metropolitan Opera, Covent Garden, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and in Paris, Naples, and Florence; Gabriele Adorno (*Simon Boccanegra*) and Radames (*Aida*) at Houston Grand Opera and in Verona and Florence; Radames at the Arena di Verona as well as in Tokyo and Florence; the title role of *Don Carlos* in Athens; Riccardo (*Un Ballo in Maschera*) in Bari, Vienna, Trieste, and at the Bregenz Festival; Manrico in Barcelona; Calaf at La Scala and in Parma, Barcelona, and Valencia; Luigi (*Il Tabarro*) with Paris Opera; Dick Johnson (*La Fanciulla del West*) in Seville; and Cavaradossi (*Tosca*) at La Scala, the Vienna State Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Florence's Maggio Musicale Festival, and Madrid's *Teatro Real*. Recent engagements include Radames at La Scala and the Arena di Verona; Calaf at Covent Garden and in Dresden; Cavaradossi at Deutsche Oper Berlin and in Turin; Dick with Paris Opera; and the title role of *Otello* in Naples.



**CHRISTIAN VAN HORN**

(Rockville Centre, New York)

**Oroveso**

Bass-baritone  
Christian Van Horn made his San

Francisco Opera debut in 2010 as the King of Egypt (*Aida*) and returned later that fall as the Bailiff (*Werther*), the Bonze (*Madama Butterfly*), and Timur (*Turandot*). His most recent Company appearances were as Angelotti (*Tosca*) in 2012 and the Four Villains (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*) in 2013. A graduate of Lyric Opera of Chicago's Ryan

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Center, his roles with that company include Nourabad (*Les Pêcheurs de Perles*), Brander (*La Damnation de Faust*), Crespel (*Tales of Hoffmann*), and Raimondo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*). Recently, Van Horn appeared as Pistola (*Falstaff*) and Colline at the Metropolitan Opera, Publio (*La Clemenza di Tito*) with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Colline (*La Bohème*) at Bavarian State Opera and the Santa Fe Opera, Zuniga (*Carmen*) at the Salzburg Festival and with the Berlin Philharmonic, Banquo (*Macbeth*) in

Geneva, and the title role of *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Russia's Perm Opera. Other career highlights include the title role of *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Stuttgart, Colline at Los Angeles Opera, Timur with the Dallas Opera, and creating the roles of Karenin in David Carlson's *Anna Karenina* with Florida Grand Opera and the Emperor in Tan Dun's *Tea: A Mirror of the Soul* at Santa Fe Opera. He appears with San Francisco Opera this season as Count Ribbing (*Un Ballo in Maschera*), Alidoro (*La Cenerentola*),

Colline (*La Bohème*), and Narbal (*Les Troyens*).



**JACQUELINE PICCOLINO**

(Palatine, Illinois)  
**Clotilde**

Jacqueline Piccolino is a first-year Adler Fellow who made her San Francisco Opera debut in 2013 as Stella in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and returned as a maid in the world premiere of *Dolores Claiborne* and as Kate Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*). As a participant in the 2012 and 2013 Merola Opera Program, the soprano appeared as Countess Almaviva (*Le Nozze di Figaro*) and Arminda (*La Finta Giardiniera*). As a studio artist with Wolf Trap Opera Company, she has appeared in that company's productions of *The Inquisitive Women*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. Other career highlights include appearing in the Napa Festival del Sole's Bouchaine Young Artist Concert Series and participating in the Houston Grand Opera Young Artist Vocal Academy. Piccolino is a recipient of the Richard F. Gold Career Grant from the Shoshana Foundation and winner of the New York Lyric Opera Theatre Competition and the Bel Canto Competition.



**A.J. GLUECKERT**  
(Portland, Oregon)  
**Flavio**

Tenor A.J. Glueckert is a second-year Adler Fellow who made his Company debut in *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene* in 2013 and appeared as Mr. Knox in the world premiere of *Dolores Claiborne*, the Steersman (*Der Fliegende Holländer*), and Ambrogio (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*) in the 2013–14 season. He is an alumnus of the 2012 Merola Opera Program, where he performed Mr. Owen in Argento's *Postcard from Morocco*. As a resident artist with Minnesota Opera, he was heard as Arturo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*)

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Images clockwise from top left: John Wootton, *Sir Robert Walpole*, ca. 1725. Oil on canvas. One of a pair of armchairs, ca. 1730. Designed by William Kent; probably made by James Richards. Partially gilded mahogany, beech, oak, and original velvet upholstery. Vase, 1765. Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory, painted by Jean Louis Morin. Soft-paste porcelain. John Singer Sargent, *Portrait of Sybil, Countess of Rocksavage*, 1913. Oil on canvas. All objects Marquess of Cholmondeley, Houghton Hall. Photos: Pete Huggins, by kind permission of Houghton Hall. Exterior view of Houghton Hall, Norfolk, England. Photo courtesy Houghton Hall

in addition to creating the role of the Crown Prince in the world premiere of Puccini's *Silent Night*. Upcoming engagements include his European debut at Frankfurt Opera as the Prince in *Rusalka*, a role he will also sing at New Orleans Opera, and Don José (*Carmen*) at Pittsburgh Opera. He holds two degrees from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.



**NICOLA LUISOTTI**  
(Massarosa, Italy)

**Conductor**

Nicola Luisotti has been music director of San Francisco Opera since September 2009

and he holds the Caroline H. Hume Endowed Chair. In the current season he conducts *Norma*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and the world premiere of Marco Tutino's *La Ciociara*. In 2012,

Luisotti was appointed music director of the Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, and in the 2014–15 season he leads *Il Trovatore* there. Luisotti's other engagements during the current season include *Madama Butterfly* with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; *Nabucco* in Valencia; and a concert with Rome's Accademia di Santa Cecilia. Called "both an original thinker and a great respecter of tradition" by *Opera News*, Luisotti made his San Francisco Opera debut in 2005 conducting *La Forza del Destino* and has by now led more than twenty other productions with the Company. He has garnered enthusiastic praise from both audiences and critics for his work at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; the Metropolitan Opera; Paris Opera; the Vienna State Opera; Milan's La Scala; Genoa's Teatro Carlo Felice; Venice's La Fenice; Munich's Bavarian State Opera; Madrid's Teatro Real; Los Angeles Opera; Toronto's Canadian Opera Company; Seattle Opera; Bologna's Teatro Comunale; and in Tokyo's Suntory Hall. Maestro Luisotti was awarded the 39th Premio Puccini Award in conjunction with the historic 100th anniversary of Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West* at the Metropolitan Opera, which he conducted in 2010. Equally at home on the concert stage, Luisotti served as principal guest conductor of the Tokyo Symphony from 2009 to 2012 and has established growing relationships with the orchestras of London (Philharmonia Orchestra), Genoa, Budapest, Turin, and Munich (Bavarian Radio Orchestra), as well as the Berlin Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, and the Atlanta Symphony. Other recent career highlights include a new production of *Nabucco* at Milan's La Scala and the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, and *Don Giovanni* and *Turandot* at Covent Garden, in addition to concerts with the Orchestre de Paris, La Scala's Filarmonica della Scala, and the Cleveland and Philadelphia Orchestras.



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**KEVIN NEWBURY**  
(Auburn, Maine)

**Director**

Kevin Newbury made his San Francisco Opera debut in 2013 directing the world premiere of *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene*. His work has been produced throughout North America and Europe. Recent opera credits include *Anna Bolena*, *Werther*, and the world premiere of *Doubt* (Minnesota Opera); *Maria Stuarda* (Houston Grand Opera, Minnesota Opera); *Die Liebe der Danae* and *Euryanthe* (Bard Summerscape); *Roberto Devereux* (L'Opéra de Montreal, Minnesota Opera); *Falstaff* and the world premieres of *Life is a Dream* and *Oscar* (Santa Fe Opera); *Galileo Galilei* (Portland Opera); *Virginia* (Wexford Opera Festival, winner *Irish Times* award for Best Opera Production); *Eugene Onegin* (Opera Theatre of St. Louis); *El Niño* (San Francisco Symphony); the world premiere of *Rappahannock County* for the Virginia Arts Festival; *La Cenerentola* (Glimmerglass Opera); and Bernstein's *Mass* (Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center, which received a Grammy award nomination). Recent New York theater credits include *Candy and Dorothy* (GLAAD winner: Best Play, Drama Desk Nominee). Upcoming new productions include: *Don Bucefalo* (Wexford Opera Festival), *Anna Bolena* (Lyric Opera of Chicago), and the world premieres of *The Manchurian Candidate* (Minnesota Opera) and *Bel Canto* (Lyric Opera of Chicago). Newbury's first film, *Monsura is Waiting*, is currently screening at film festivals around the world and he recently completed production on his second film, *Stag*.

**DAVID KORINS**  
(New York City, New York)  
**Set Designer**

David Korins is an award-winning scenic and production designer. His company, David Korins Design, is a multi-faceted firm that crafts inventive solutions to design challenges in disciplines as varied as Broadway,

opera, film and TV, rock concerts, music festivals, interiors and restaurants, and art exhibits all over the world. Opera credits include the world premieres of *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene* with San Francisco Opera, and *Oscar* and *Life is a Dream* with Santa Fe Opera as well as *La Boheme* (Central City Opera). His work on Broadway includes *Motown*, *Annie*, *Bring It On*, *Vanya and Sonia* and *Masha and Spike*, *Chinglish*, *An*

*Evening With Patti LuPone and Mandy Patinkin*, *Magic/Bird*, *Godspell*, *The Pee-Wee Herman Show*, *Lombardi*, *Passing Strange* and *Bridge & Tunnel*. Korins served as Kanye West's creative director, designing several concerts in the U.S. and abroad. He is the recipient of a Drama Desk Award, Lucille Lortel Award, three Henry Hewes Awards and an Obie Award for Sustained Excellence in Design.



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**JESSICA JAHN**

(New York City, New York)

**Costume Designer**

Jessica Jahn makes her San Francisco Opera debut with this production, which will also be seen at Barcelona’s Gran Teatre del Liceu, Toronto’s Canadian Opera Company, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. Previous works include: *Love, Loss and What I Wore*, at the Westside Theatre; *Die Mommie Die!* at New World Stages (Winner of the Lucille Lortel Award); *The Tutors* at 2ST Uptown; *Once On This Island* at Papermill Playhouse; *Roberto Devereux*, *Maria Stuarda*, *Anna Bolena*, and *Werther* at Minnesota Opera; *Maria Stuarda* at Houston Grand Opera; *Life Is A Dream* (world premiere) at Santa Fe Opera; *Carousel* at Glimmerglass Festival; *Monodramas*, and *Mose in Egitto* at New York City Opera; and *Die Leibe der Danae* and *Euryanthe* at Bard Summerscape. Upcoming engagements include *Anna Bolena* at Lyric Opera of Chicago and *The Manchurian Candidate* and *Carmen* at Minnesota Opera.

**D.M. WOOD**

(Toronto, Ontario, Canada)

**Lighting Designer**

Making her San Francisco Opera debut with this production, D.M. Wood has designed lighting for productions around the world. Her recent credits include *La Favorite* with Oper Graz (Austria); *Il Trittico* and the world premiere of *Anna Nicole* at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; *L’Enfant et les Sortilèges* at the Bolshoi Theatre; *Candide* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* at Opéra National de Lorraine (France); *Anna Bolena*, *Maria Stuarda*, and *Roberto Devereux* with Minnesota Opera; and *Euryanthe* and *Die Liebe der Danae* at Bard Summerscape. Upcoming engagements include: *Salomé*, *Don Bucefalo*, and *Silent Night* at Wexford Festival Opera, *Anna Bolena* with Lyric Opera of Chicago, and *Don Giovanni* in Bergen, Norway. Wood received the 2012 Knight of Illuminica award for her design for *Suor Angelica* at Covent Garden.

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**IAN ROBERTSON**

(Dundee, Scotland)

**Chorus Director**

Recipient of the 2012 San Francisco Opera Medal, Ian Robertson has been chorus director and conductor with San Francisco Opera since 1987, having prepared more than 300 productions for the Company. He was awarded the Olivier Messiaen Foundation Prize in 2003 for his artistic contribution to the preparation of the Company's North American premiere of *Saint François d'Assise*. Robertson has also conducted nine main-stage productions with the Company. Other North American opera credits include productions with Sarasota Opera, Edmonton Opera, and Philadelphia's Curtis Opera Theatre. Before joining San Francisco Opera, Robertson was head of music and chorus director of Scottish Opera.




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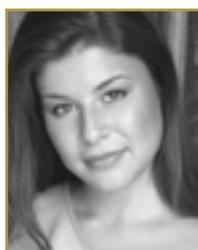


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BETSY KERSHNER



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**GREAT PERKS:** Join us for networking opportunities with fellow young opera fans, private luncheons with artistic staff, backstage tours, and VIP seating at events like Opera at the Ballpark.

**DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT:** Members receive a matching gift (generously provided by Ben & Marina Nelson, as well as additional support from Soo & Raj Venkatesan and the Koret Foundation), bringing them up to the \$3,000 Founder level of the Medallion Society. Depending on your age, you could be eligible for up to a 5-to-1 match for your charitable gift.

#### ADDITIONAL BENEFITS:

Medallion Society concierge ticket service, invitations to exclusive Medallion Society events, and invitations to three Final Dress Rehearsals per season.



For more information or to join, please contact Sandra Chien at (415) 551-6393 or [schien@sfopera.com](mailto:schien@sfopera.com).

[sfopera.com/Orpheus](http://sfopera.com/Orpheus)

# ADMINISTRATION

**David Gockley**

*General Director*

**Nicola Luisotti**

*Music Director*

*Caroline H. Hume Endowed Chair*

**Patrick Summers**

*Principal Guest Conductor*

**Giuseppe Finzi**

*Resident Conductor*

**Jon Finck**

*Director of Communications and Public Affairs*

**Jon Gossett**

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**Gregory Henkel**

*Director of Artistic and Music Planning*

**Marcia Lazer**

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**Michael Simpson**

*Director of Finance and Administration/CFO*

**Greg Weber**

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**Jarrold Bell**

*Chief Information Officer*

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*Opera Center Director*

**Kristen Jones**

*Director of Audience Engagement*

**Jessica Koplos**

*Director of Electronic Media*

**Daniele McCartan\***

*Costume Director*

**Ruth Nott**

*Director of Education*

**Teri Xavier**

*Director of Human Resources*

**ARTISTIC AND MUSIC PLANNING**

Sean Waugh, *Artistic Planning Manager*  
Valentina Simi, *Artist Services*

*Coordinator and Assistant to the Music Director*

Manuela Galindo, *Contracts and Accommodations Assistant*

Steven White, *Music Librarian/ Chorus Librarian*

Bella Mello, *Intern*

**MUSIC STAFF**

John Churchwell, *Head of Music Staff*

Lydia Brown, Dennis Doubin, Peter Grunberg, Bryndon Hassman, Jonathan Khuner, Vito Lombardi, Joseph Marcheso, Robert Mollicone, Matthew Piatt, Tamara Sanikidze, Insun Suh, Noah Lindquist, Sun Ha Yoon, *Adler Fellows*

**LANGUAGE COACHES**

Alessandra Cattani, *Italian*

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Julia Inouye, *Associate Director of Communications*

Micah Standley, *Editor*

Robin Freeman, *Communications Manager*

Gelane Pearson, *Communications Associate*

Ann Farris, *Archive Volunteer Coordinator*

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Jess Levy, *Operations and Process Manager*

Kathleen Esselstyn, *Gift Acknowledgment Coordinator*

Leela Krishnan, *Development Services Coordinator*

Chivly Krouch, *Gift Processing Coordinator*

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Randi Paul, *Annual Giving Manager*

Roya Clune, *Annual Giving Associate*

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Michelle La Pierre Bell, *Director of Corporate Giving*

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**GIVING**

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Mandala Pham, *Legacy Giving Officer*

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**GIVING**

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Lisa Bordachar, *Prospect Research Manager*

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Derek Lance, *Principal Giving Associate*

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Julia Petraglia, *Community Programs Coordinator*

Hector Armienta, John Bischoff, Erin Bregman, Joshua Brody, Robert

Chastain, Danny Clay, Joseph

Colombo, Hannah Dworkin,

Lisa Edsall Giglio, Lua Hadar, G.

Scott Lacy, Carla Lucero, Virginia

Nichols, Steven Sven Olbash,

Aaron Pike, Alex Stein, Alyssa

Stone, Christopher Street, Adrienne

Verhoeven-deLanda, Matthew

Wolka, *Teaching Artists*

Fan Zhang, *Intern*

**EXECUTIVE OFFICES**

Linda Steenman, *Assistant to the General Director*

Claire Padien-Havens, *Administrative Assistant to the Executive Offices & Board of Directors*

Eliza Fox, *Receptionist/ Administrative Assistant*

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Christopher Tom, *Controller*  
Mingsy Yan-Lau, *Senior Accountant*  
Elaine Quan, *Senior Accountant*  
Linda Rodriguez, *Senior Accountant*  
Gracie Tang, *Senior Accountant*  
Annabella Tam, *Payroll Administrator*

## HUMAN RESOURCES

Elysse Jimenez, *Human Resources Coordinator*

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Sapna Patel, *Business Process Improvement Manager*  
Paul Goetz, *Systems Administrator*  
Steve Long, *Network & Systems Administrator*  
Porter Venn, *Database Analyst*  
Sara Lee, *Programmer/Analyst*

## MARKETING

Valerie York, *Associate Director of Marketing*  
Chi-Hsuan Yang, *Marketing Analyst*  
Kathryn Appleton, *Marketing Manager, Subscriptions*  
Genevieve Neumuth, *Marketing Manager, New Audiences, BRAVO! Club, & Special Events*  
Pamela Sevilla, *Marketing Manager, Single Tickets*  
Ted Schaller, *Marketing Associate, Web Content & Social Media*  
Megan Coss, *Marketing Coordinator, Subscriptions*  
Elisabeth Morgan, *Marketing Coordinator, Single Tickets*  
Tanya Grant, *Data Entry*

## BOX OFFICE

Mark Sackett, *Box Office Manager, Treasurer*  
Marcella Bastiani, *Medallion Society Concierge Manager*  
Jessica Fauver, *Assistant Box Office Manager, First Assistant Treasurer*  
Emily Tilles, *Subscriptions Manager, Assistant Treasurer*  
Jennifer Hughes, Rebecca Page, *Assistant Treasurers*  
Ruth Van Slyke, *Telephone Sales Manager*  
Roberto Bonilla, Gillian Eichenberger, Khalil El-Kareh, Beverlee G. Hassid, Kyle Minor, Jennifer Pollack, Kristin Reyda, *Telephone Sales Assistants*

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George Windstrup, *Head Usher*  
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Jan Padover, Julie Peck, Robert Remple, Bill Repp, Rilla Reynolds, Joe Savin, Kelly Smith, Tom Taffel, Richard Wagner, Steve Weiss, JoAnne Westfall, *Ushers*  
Hui Ming Wu, *Show Maid*

## OPERA SHOP

Jay Stebley, *Retail Manager*  
Karen Topp, *Assistant Manager*

## MEDIA

Jessica Shown-Morgan, *Media Coordinator*  
Jeremy Patfield, *Media Administrator*

## MUSIC OPERATIONS

Clifford Cranna, *Dramaturg*  
Brett Wesner, *Artistic Assistant*

## CHORUS AND BALLET

Ian Robertson, *Chorus Director*  
Fabrizio Corona, *Associate Chorus Master*  
Jim Meyer, *Chorus and Dance Manager*  
Mary Finch, *Assistant Chorus Manager/Chorus Librarian*  
Michael Dolman, *Ballet Pianist*

## ORCHESTRA

Carrie Weick, *Orchestra Librarian*  
Tracy Davis, *Orchestra Manager*  
Timothy Spears, *Assistant Orchestra Librarian/Assistant Orchestra Manager*

## PRODUCTION

\* Senior Production Staff Member

## PRODUCTION ADMINISTRATION

David Steiner, *Production Administration and Facility Director\**  
Paul Dana, *Support Services Coordinator*

Lee Helms, *Production Operations Manager*

Arsène Longuelé, *Senior Production Accountant*

Joshua D. O'Malley, *Production Administrative Assistant*

## AUDIO

Doug Mitchell, *Master Audio/Video Engineer*  
Ziggy Tomcich, *Assistant Master Audio/Video Engineer*

## CARPENTRY

David Hatch, *Master Carpenter*  
Mark Baumann, *Assistant Master Carpenter*

## COSTUME DEPARTMENT

Christopher Verdosci, *Assistant Costume Director*  
David Doré, *Senior Production Accountant*  
Amy Ashton-Keller, *Master Draper*  
Irene Murray, *Star Rabinowitz, Senior Cutters*  
Sally Thomas, *Senior Tailor*

Cheryl Mennen, *Cutter*  
Carol Wood, Gillian Haratani, Lisa Angback, *Assistant Cutters*  
Kristen Eiden, *Santiago Suanes, First Hands*

Jai Alltizer, *Senior Production Supervisor*  
Kristi Johnson, *Production Supervisor*  
Manuel Gutierrez, *Production Coordinator*  
Paula Wheeler, *Senior Milliner*  
Amy Van Every, *Senior Dyer*  
Jersey McDermott, *Senior Craft Artisan*  
Nicole Diascenti, *Junior Workroom Assistant*  
Ashley Rogers, *Shopper*  
Alexandra Leon, *Production Assistant*

## ELECTRICS

Leon Parsons, *Master Electrician*  
Michael Anderson, *Assistant Master Electrician*  
Maria T. Mendoza, *Projection Coordinator*  
Erik Docktor, *Projection Programmer*

## FIGHT DIRECTION

Dave Maier, *Fight Director*

## LIGHTING

Gary Marder, *Resident Lighting Designer\**  
Eric Furbish, Sarah Tundermann, *Assistant Lighting Designers*  
Erika Johnson, Gilbert V. Hemsley, Jr., *Lighting Intern*  
Clayton Van Winkle, *Lighting Intern*

## PROPERTIES

Lori Harrison, *Master of Properties*  
John Del Bono, *Assistant Master of Properties*

## SCENE SHOP

Rodney Armanino, *Carpentry Shop Foreman*  
Dale Haugo, *Scenic Artist in Charge*

## STAGING STAFF

Jennifer Good, *Associate Director of Production and Head of Staging\**  
Lawrence Pech, *Dance Master*  
Lisa Anderson, Darin Burnett, Gina Hays, Rachel Henneberry, Lisa-Marie Shuster, *Stage Managers*  
Jose Maria Condemi, E. Reed Fisher, Shawna Lucey, Roy Rallo, Morgan Robinson, Lisa-Marie Shuster, *Assistant Stage Directors*  
Lisa Anderson, Sarah Bingel, Darin Burnett, Gina Hays, Rachel Henneberry, Andrew G. Landis, Shawna Lucey, Jimmy Marcheso, Thea Railey, Lisa-Marie Shuster, *Assistant Stage Managers*

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Erik Walstad, *Technical and Safety Director\**  
Ryan O'Steen, *Assistant Technical Director*

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Geoffry M. Craig, *Wardrobe Head*  
Cynthia Fusco, Robert Horek, José Téllez Ponce, Catherine Verdier, *Assistants*

## WIG AND MAKEUP

Jeanna Parham, *Head of Department*  
Susan E. Stone, *Assistant Head of Department*  
Marcelo Donari, *First Assistant*  
Vicky Martinez, *First Assistant*  
Jessica McGinty, *Second Assistant*  
Richard Battle, Marcelo Donari, Denise Gutierrez, Linda Magarian, William Stewart Jones, Kerry Rider-Kuhn, Melanie Birch, Karalynne Fiebig, Tim Santry, Susan E. Stone, *Principal Make-up Artists*  
Judith Disbrow, William Stewart Jones, Richard Battle, Melanie Birch, *Foremen*  
Melanie Birch, Rick Burns, Denise Gutierrez, Monica Maka, Vicky Martinez, Toby Mayer, Connie Strayer, Robert Mrazik, Karalynne Fiebig, Pat Polen, Andrea Pino, Lisa Patno, *Journeymen*  
Sarah Coy, Jakey Hicks, Christina Martin, Sophia Smith, Mary Still, Jessica McGinty, *Associates*

## REHEARSAL

Marin Venturi, *Rehearsal Department Director*  
Kali Wilson, *Rehearsal Administrator*  
Trey Costerisan, *Rehearsal Assistant and Supernumeraries Coordinator*  
Ellen Presley, *Rehearsal Assistant and Merola Scheduler*  
Jeff Dittmer, *Rehearsal Assistant*

## SAN FRANCISCO OPERA CENTER

Mark Morash, *Director of Musical Studies*  
Chris Bragg, *Administrative Director*  
Karen Jine, *Company Manager*  
Jo Ann McStravick, *Artists' Services and Auditions Administrator*  
Cesar Ulloa, *Master Voice Teacher*

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Dr. Myron Marx, *Company Medical Adviser*  
Seyfarth Shaw LLP, *Counsel*  
Armanino LLP, *Independent Public Accountants*  
Y.A. Tittle and Associates, *Insurance Brokers*  
Cory Weaver, *Official Photographer*

Yamaha is the Official Piano of San Francisco Opera  
Pianos supplied by Music Exchange

ORCHESTRA



Kay Stern  
Concertmaster



Laura Albers  
Associate Concertmaster



Heidi Wilcox  
Assistant Concertmaster



Jennifer Cho  
First Violin



Dawn Harms  
First Violin



Mariya Borozina  
First Violin



Barbara Riccardi  
First Violin



Leonid Igudesman  
First Violin



Asuka Annie Yano  
First Violin



Wenyi Shih  
First Violin  
Regular Substitute



Robin Hansen  
First Violin  
Regular Substitute



Martha Simonds  
Associate Principal  
Second Violin



Beni Shinohara  
Assistant Principal  
Second Violin



Eva Karasik  
Second Violin



Leslie Ludena  
Second Violin



Gerard Svazlian  
Second Violin



Linda Deutsch  
Second Violin



Craig Reiss  
Second Violin



Joseph Edelberg  
Second Violin  
Regular Substitute



Carla Maria Rodrigues  
Principal  
Viola



Sergey Rakitchenkov  
Associate Principal  
Viola



Paul Nahhas  
Assistant Principal  
Viola



Patricia Heller  
Viola



Jonna Hervig  
Viola



Natalia Vershilova  
Viola



Joy Fellows  
Viola



David Kadarach  
Principal  
Cello



Thalia Moore  
Associate Principal  
Cello



Nora Pirquet  
Associate Principal  
Cello



Emil Miland  
Cello



Victoria Ehrlich  
Cello



Ruth Lane  
Cello



Joseph Lescher  
Principal  
Bass



Jonathan Lancelle  
Associate Principal  
Bass



Steven D'Amico  
Assistant Principal  
Bass

# SAN FRANCISCO ORCHESTRA CONTINUED



Shinji Eshima  
Bass



Mark Drury  
Bass



Julie McKenzie  
Principal  
Flute



Patricia Farrell  
Flute



Stephanie McNab  
Flute & Piccolo



Mingjia Liu  
Principal  
Oboe



Deborah Henry  
Assistant Principal  
Oboe



Janet Popesco  
Archibald  
Oboe & English Horn



Deborah Shidler  
Oboe  
Regular Substitute



Jose Gonzalez  
Granero  
Principal Clarinet



Joanne Burke Eisler  
Assistant Principal  
Clarinet



Anthony Striplen  
Clarinet &  
Bass Clarinet



Rufus Olivier  
Principal  
Bassoon



Daniel MacNeill  
Bassoon



Kevin Rivard  
Co-Principal  
Horn



Keith Green  
Horn



Brian McCarty  
Horn



Lawrence Ragent  
Horn



Adam Luftman  
Principal  
Trumpet



William Holmes  
Trumpet



John Pearson  
Trumpet



Samuel Schlosser  
Principal Trombone



Donald Kennelly  
Trombone



David Ridge  
Trombone &  
Bass Trombone



Zachariah Spellman  
Tuba/Cimbasso



John Burgardt  
Timpani



Richard Kvistad  
Principal Percussion &  
Associate Timpani



Patricia Niemi  
Percussion



Olga Ortenberg  
Rakitchenkov  
Harp



Tracy Davis  
Orchestra Manager



Carrie Weick  
Librarian



Timothy Spears  
Assistant Orchestra  
Manager & Librarian

**Not pictured:**

Lev Rankov, *First Violin*;  
Jeremy Preston, *Principal Second Violin*;  
Eric Sung, *Cello, Regular Substitute*;  
Michael Severance, *Bassoon and Contrabassoon*;  
Christopher Cooper, *Co-Principal Horn, Regular Substitute*

Most photos by John Martin

# REGULAR CHORUS



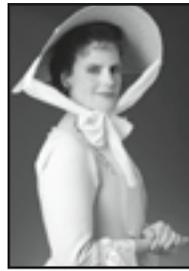
Kathleen Bayler  
*Soprano*



Sara Colburn  
*Soprano*



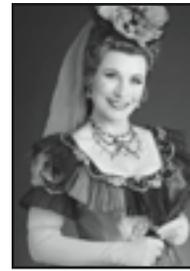
Dvora Djoraev  
*Soprano*



Mary Finch  
*Soprano*



Ann Hughes  
*Soprano*



Claire Kelm  
*Soprano*



Elisabeth Rom Lucio  
*Soprano*



Rachelle Perry  
*Soprano*



Virginia Pluth  
*Soprano*



Carole Schaffer  
*Soprano*



Mitzie Kay Weiner  
*Soprano*



Roberta Bowman  
*Mezzo-Soprano*



Janet Campbell  
*Mezzo-Soprano*



Joy Graham  
*Mezzo-Soprano*



Sally Mouzon  
*Mezzo-Soprano*



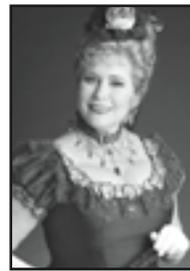
Sally Munro  
*Mezzo-Soprano*



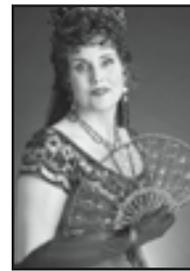
Erin Neff  
*Mezzo-Soprano*



Laurel Porter  
*Mezzo-Soprano*



Laurel Rice  
*Mezzo-Soprano*



Shelley Seitz  
*Mezzo-Soprano*



Claudia Siefer  
*Mezzo-Soprano*



Donna Turchi  
*Mezzo-Soprano*



C. Michael Belle  
*Tenor*



Alan Cochran  
*Tenor*



Chris Corley  
*Tenor*



Daniel Harper  
*Tenor*



Christopher Jackson  
*Tenor*



Phillip Pickens  
*Tenor*



Chester Pidduck  
*Tenor*



Colby Roberts  
*Tenor*



Sigmund Seigel  
*Tenor*



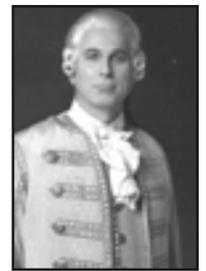
Dan Stanley  
*Tenor*



Alexander Taite  
*Tenor*



Andrew Truett  
*Tenor*



Richard Walker  
*Tenor*

## SAN FRANCISCO OPERA REGULAR CHORUS CONTINUED



Torlef Borsting  
*Baritone*



Frank Daniels  
*Baritone*  
*Leave of Absence*



Henryk De Rewenda  
*Bass*  
*Leave of Absence*



Cameron Henley  
*Baritone*



Ken Johnson  
*Baritone*



David Kekuewa  
*Baritone*



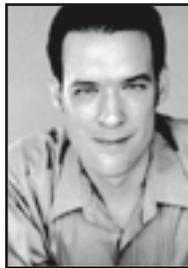
Bojan Knežević  
*Bass*



Frederick Matthews  
*Baritone*



Jim Meyer  
*Bass*



William O'Neill  
*Bass*



William Pickersgill  
*Bass*



Valery Portnov  
*Bass*



Ken Rafanan  
*Baritone*



Michael Rogers  
*Baritone*



Jere Torkelsen  
*Baritone*

## SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

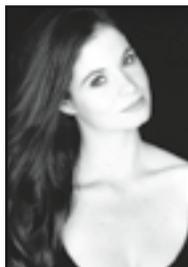
## CORPS DANCERS



David Bier



Brook Broughton



Blanche Hampton



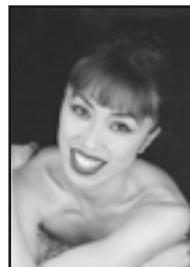
Bryan Ketron



Michael Kruzich



Michael Levine



Chiharu Shibata

*Most photos by John Martin.  
Carole Schaffer and Claudia Siefer photos by Pamela Dale.*

**ARTISTS**

Raymond Aceto  
 Hadleigh Adams ‡ ♪  
 Anna Caterina Antonacci  
 René Barbera\* ♪  
 Ryan Belongie † ♪  
 Giorgio Berrugi\*  
 Marco Berti  
 Andrew Bidlack † ♪  
 Angela Brower  
 Fabio Capitanucci  
 Carlos Chausson\*  
 Jennifer Check\*  
 Scott Conner\*  
 Catherine Cook † ♪  
 Sasha Cooke  
 Anthony Roth Costanzo\*  
 Stephen Costello  
 Leah Crocetto † ♪  
 David Daniels  
 Danielle De Niese  
 John Del Carlo ♪  
 Ellie Dehn † ♪  
 Mark Delavan † ♪  
 Karine Deshayes\*  
 Julianna Di Giacomo\* ♪  
 Michael Fabiano  
 Greg Fedderly  
 A.J. Glueckert ‡ ♪  
 Susan Graham ♪  
 Lianna Haroutounian\*  
 Thomas Hampson † ♪  
 Suzanne Hendrix ♪  
 Bryan Hymel\* ♪  
 Brian Jagde † ♪  
 Erin Johnson ‡ ♪  
 Brandon Jovanovich  
 Joo Won Kang † ♪  
 Daveda Karanas † ♪  
 Laura Krumm † ♪  
 James Kryshak\*  
 Kate Lindsey  
 Daniela Mack † ♪  
 Megan Marino\*  
 Alexey Markov\*  
 Timothy Mix  
 Brian Mulligan  
 Andrey Nemzer\*  
 Lisette Oropesa  
 Jacqueline Piccolino ‡ ♪  
 Luca Pisaroni

Patricia Racette † ♪  
 Sondra Radvanovsky  
 Sarah Shafer  
 Alek Shrader † ♪  
 Nadine Sierra † ♪  
 Philippe Sly ‡ ♪  
 Efraín Solís ‡ ♪  
 Joel Sorensen  
 Heidi Stober  
 Zanda Švėdė ‡ ♪  
 Stacey Tappan  
 Russell Thomas\*  
 Dale Travis † ♪  
 Maria Valdes\* ‡ ♪  
 Ramón Vargas  
 Christian Van Horn  
 Alexia Voulgaridou\*  
 Dolora Zajick † ♪

**CONDUCTORS**

Christian Curnyn\*  
 Riccardo Frizza  
 Karen Kamensek\*  
 Jesús López-Cobos  
 Nicola Luisotti  
 Donald Runnicles  
 Patrick Summers ♪

**DIRECTORS**

Christopher Alden  
 John Caird\*  
 Michael Cavanagh  
 Jose Maria Condemí † ♪  
 Gregory Fortner\*  
 Robin Guarino\*  
 David McVicar  
 Kevin Newbury  
 Francesca Zambello

**PRODUCTION DESIGNERS**

Thierry Bosquet  
 David Farley\*  
 Jean-Pierre Ponnelle

**SET DESIGNERS**

Peter Davison  
 Es Devlin\*  
 David Korins  
 Andrew Lieberman\*  
 Erhard Rom

**COSTUME DESIGNERS**

John Conklin  
 Jess Goldstein  
 Jessica Jahn\*  
 Moritz Junge\*  
 Jon Morrell\*  
 Michael Yeargan

**LIGHTING DESIGNERS**

Michael James Clark  
 Wolfgang Göbbel  
 Gary Marder  
 Mark McCullough  
 Adam Silverman  
 Pia Virolainen\*  
 D.M. Wood\*

**CHOREOGRAPHER**

Lawrence Pech

**PROJECTION DESIGNER**

S. Katy Tucker

\*\* U.S. opera debut  
 \* San Francisco Opera debut

† = Former Adler Fellow  
 ‡ = Current Adler Fellow  
 ♪ = Merola Opera Program participant (past or present)

**Ian Robertson**, *Chorus Director*  
**Fabrizio Corona**, *Associate Chorus Master*  
**Jim Meyer**, *Chorus and Dance Manager*  
**Mary Finch**, *Assistant Chorus Manager/Chorus Librarian*

**REGULAR CHORUS**

Kathleen Bayler  
 Roberta Bowman  
 Janet Campbell  
 Sara Colburn  
 Dvora Djoraev  
 Mary Finch  
 Joy Graham  
 Claudia Haider  
 Ann Hughes  
 Claire Kelm  
 Elisabeth Rom Lucio  
 Sally Mouzon  
 Sally Porter Munro  
 Erin Neff  
 Rachele Perry  
 Virginia Pluth  
 Laurel Porter  
 Laurel Rice  
 Shelley Seitz  
 Carole Schaffer  
 Donna Turchi  
 Mitzie Weiner

C. Michael Belle  
 Torlef Borsting\*  
 Alan Cochran  
 Chris Corley  
 Frank Daniels †  
 Henryk De Rewenda †  
 Daniel Harper  
 Cameron Henley  
 Christopher Jackson\*  
 Ken Johnson  
 David Kekuewa  
 Bojan Knežević\*  
 Frederick Matthews  
 Jim Meyer  
 William O'Neill\*  
 Phillip Pickens  
 William Pickersgill  
 Chester Pidduck\*  
 Valery Portnov  
 Ken Rafanan  
 Colby Roberts\*  
 Michael Rogers  
 Sigmund Seigel  
 Dan Stanley  
 Alexander Taite  
 Jere Torkelsen\*  
 Andrew Truett  
 Richard Walker

†leave of absence  
 \*appears in a solo role

**EXTRA CHORUS**

Buffy Baggott  
 Angela Cadelago  
 Greta Feeny  
 Eileen Meredith  
 Angela Moser  
 Aimée Puentes  
 Nicole Takesono

Thomas Hart  
 Tom Reed  
 Pedro Rodelas  
 Alfredo Rodriguez  
 Michael Taylor  
 Peter J. Tuff

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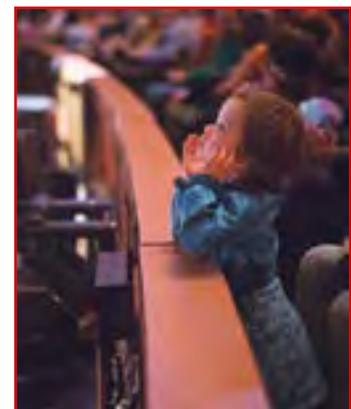
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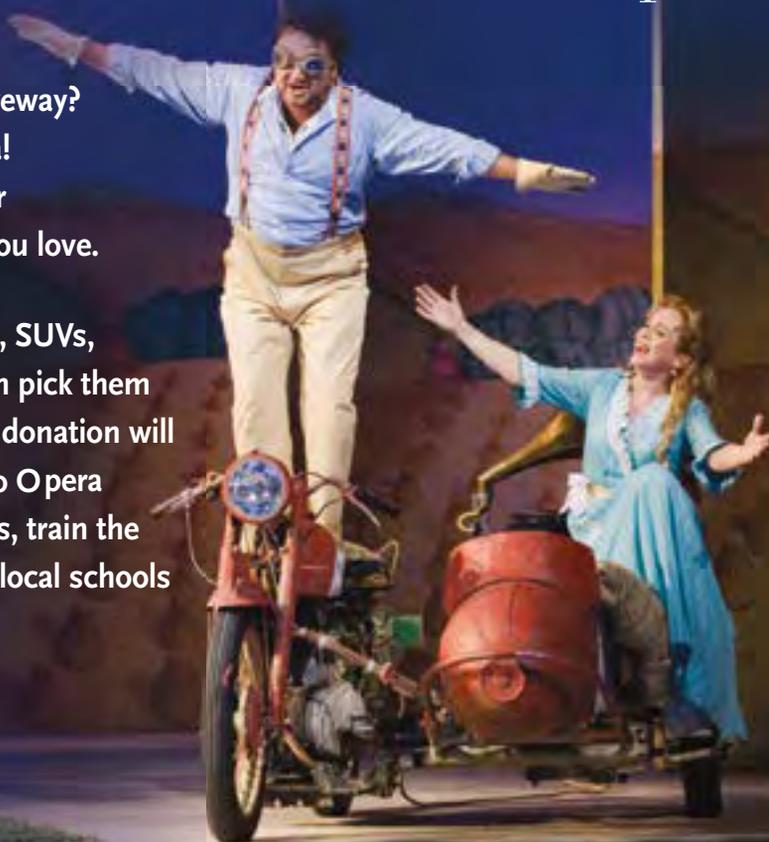
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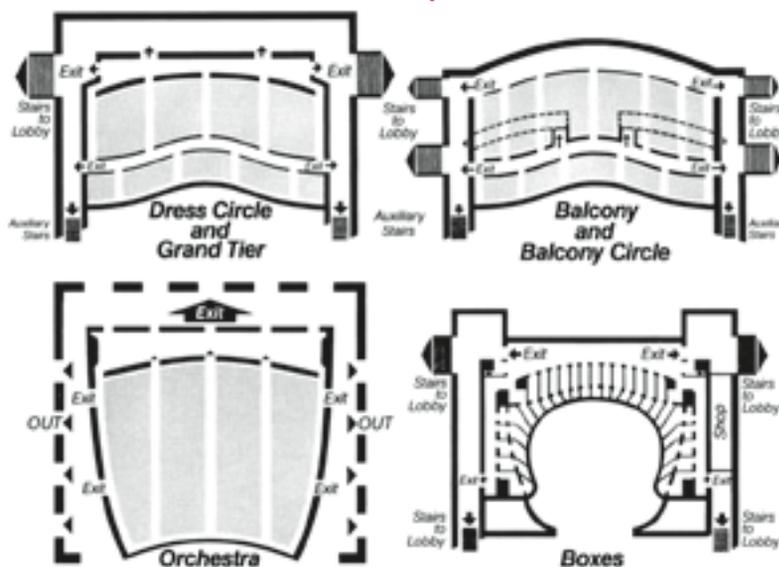
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