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OPERA 2015-16 SEASON



Carmen

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David Gockley	2006-16

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a long, flowing red halter-neck dress with a silver belt, stands in front of a classical building with columns. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, suggesting dusk or dawn. The woman is smiling and looking towards the camera.

Laura H.

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A Message from the Leaders of San Francisco Opera

Dear Opera-goers,

Welcome back to the War Memorial Opera House for our summer season.

For more than nine decades, San Francisco Opera has presented a balanced and diverse selection of masterpieces from the operatic canon. This summer season highlights the best of French, Italian, and Czech opera: three passionate stories

with thrilling, emotive music that highlight the great power of this art form. Bizet's *Carmen* is presented in a bold, updated staging by Spanish director Calixto Bieito. Our production of Verdi's *Don Carlo* brings together a dream cast of international singers including Michael Fabiano, Ana María Martínez, Mariusz Kwiecień, and René Pape, under the baton of Music Director Nicola Luisotti. Completing our summer season is Leoš Janáček's haunting *Jenůfa*, conducted by Jiří Bělohlávek and starring legendary Finnish soprano Karita Mattila who returns to San Francisco following her searing performance in the Company's 2010 production of Janáček's *The Makropulos Case*.

This summer we also bid farewell to retiring General Director David Gockley. We were extremely fortunate to attract David to San Francisco 10 years ago, and the artistic results over the last decade speak for themselves. David has brought us wonderful and varied seasons, attracting remarkable artists and productions to San Francisco. He has kept the Company in the forefront of Opera's evolution by championing several world premieres, including next fall's *Dream of the Red Chamber*, as well as the San Francisco premieres of important American operas such as *Susannah* and *Nixon in China*. He has brought out the operatic elements of great musicals, with terrific successes such as *Porgy and Bess*, *Show Boat*, and more recently *Sweeney Todd*. And who can forget our *Ring* in 2011 and last summer's blockbuster *Les Troyens*? The unifying element in all these productions is David's single-minded focus on artistic quality and his belief in the power of opera to touch an audience like no other art form can.

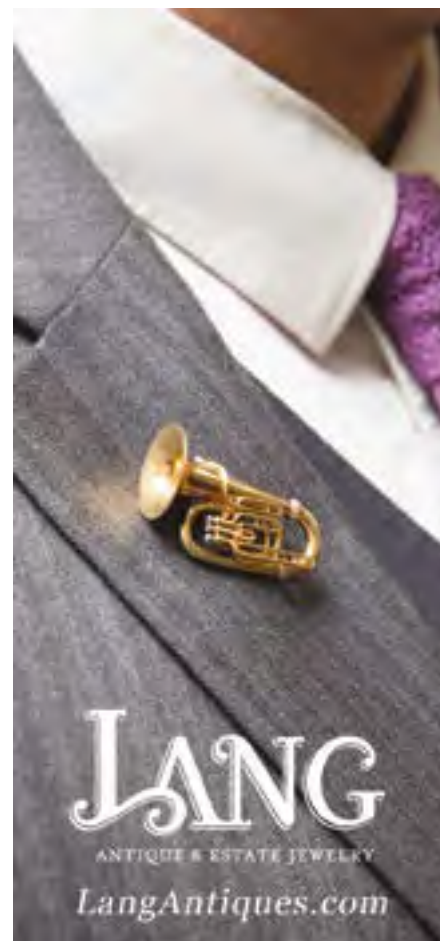
David leaves San Francisco Opera much stronger than he found it in many ways: artistically, financially, with a great new facility in the Wilsey Center for Opera and new programs that broaden our impact on our community. He has maintained and enhanced the pillars of strength that are the bedrock of this Company: grand opera produced to world-class standards, a terrific young singers fellowship program, and excellent education and community outreach initiatives.

On June 16, we will celebrate David's career with a gala concert featuring many of opera's most extraordinary artists. We invite you to join us for an unforgettable evening as we toast a visionary leader who, in his 45-year career as general director, is recognized by the opera community as single-handedly changing the direction of American opera.



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

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CORY WEAVER

Save the date of Friday, September 9 for San Francisco Opera's **Opera Ball 2016: *La Révolution et L'Amour***, a grand fête marking the opening of the Company's 94th season and inaugural season of General Director Matthew Shilvock. Produced by San Francisco Opera Guild and led by co-chairs Sandra Farris and Patricia Sprincin, this year's Opera Ball will unfold in a tented pavilion in the War Memorial Courtyard. Celebrated designer J. Riccardo Benavides returns to create for the 850 guests a festive atmosphere of Parisian élan inside the tent, where they will enjoy a sumptuous dinner by executive chef Josip Martinovic of McCall's Catering and Events. The evening includes a cocktail reception, the opening performance of Umberto Giordano's verismo opera *Andrea Chénier*, and a post-performance celebration with dancing. All proceeds benefit the Opera Association and Opera Guild's education programs. For tickets, visit sfopera.com/operaball2016.

BRAVO! Club's 25th Annual Opening Night Gala is a glamorous and fun-filled celebration ideal for young professionals. For details, visit sfopera.com/bravo.

OPERA TOURS

Explore the wonder that goes into creating an opera production with a backstage tour of the War Memorial Opera House led by an Opera Guild volunteer docent. The summer dates of the tours are June 4, 10, 18, 23, and 29. Tours begin at noon, 12:30 p.m. and 1 p.m. and last approximately an hour and a half. Visit the wig and make-up rooms, prompter's box, dressing rooms, laundry, orchestra library, practice rooms, costumes, media suite, and stage management console, among other attractions.

Advance reservations are required by either emailing tour.reserve@gmail.com or calling (415) 551-6353. Groups should contact sf.opera.tours@gmail.com. Cost is \$20 per person; donors and subscribers receive special discounts. Learn more at sfopera.com/discover-opera/tours.

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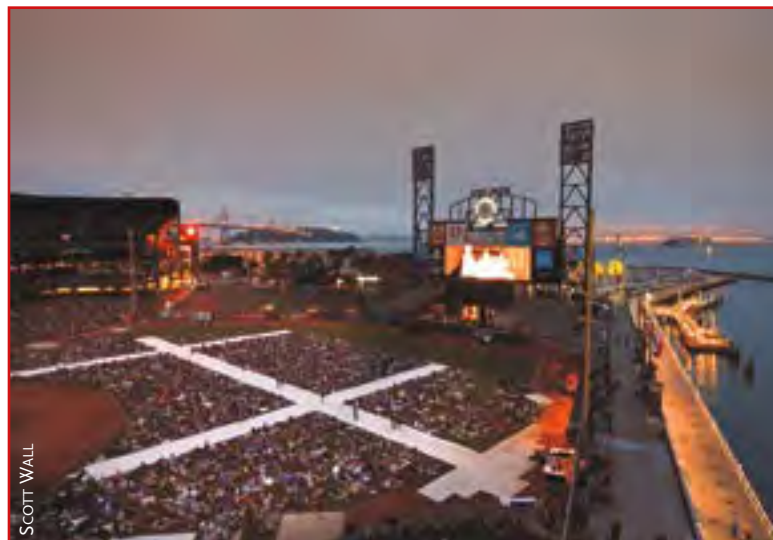
Opera at the Ballpark Turns 10

Celebrating the tenth free simulcast at AT&T Park, this year's *Opera at the Ballpark* takes place on **Saturday, July 2 at 7:30 p.m.** with the Company's sizzling new *Carmen*.

These annual live simulcasts, a partnership between San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Giants, were instituted as one of the first innovations of General Director David Gockley's tenure to bring opera into the community. They have drawn well over 250,000 people of all ages, and have become a beloved Bay Area tradition.

This year's offering features the American premiere of Calixto Bieito's bold *Carmen* production, set in modern Spain. The simulcast will feature English subtitles on the ballpark's HD screen. Online registration, which assures early entrance into the ballpark for preferred seating and entry into a special prize drawing, is available at sfopera.com/simulcast. Please note that parental discretion is advised as the production contains violence, nudity, and suggestive behavior.

The simulcast of *Carmen* is sponsored by Taube Philanthropies. *Opera at the Ballpark* is supported by Platinum Sponsor Chevron and Gold Sponsors United Airlines, Charles Schwab & Co., Inc., and PG&E. San Francisco Opera simulcasts are made possible through the pioneering technology of the Company's Koret/Taube Media Suite.



SCOTT WALL

Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, February 12, 2016

PHOTOS: KRISTEN LOKEN



David Gockley & Diane B. Wilsey



David Gockley & artist Domenico Monteforte



David Gockley, Susan Anderson-Norby & Doug Norby



Karen Kubin



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David Gockley & Barbara Moller Ward

Wilsey Center for Opera Dinner for Donors, March 3, 2016

PHOTOS: DREW ALTIZER



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Schubert's Winterreise
 Matthias Goerne, baritone;
 Markus Hinterhäuser, piano;
 William Kentridge, concept
 and video
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A New Era Begins

To great fanfare, San Francisco Opera's Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera opened in February. Occupying 38,000 square feet of the fourth floor and basement of the War Memorial Veterans Building, the center includes administrative offices, costume studio, two public exhibition galleries, Company archive, education studio, and the state-of-the-art Dianne and Tad Taube Atrium Theater featuring the Meyer Sound Constellation® acoustic system. The award-winning Bay Area architectural firm Mark Cavagnero Associates led the design and renovation of the Wilsey Center complex, creating a dynamic new space for performances and community events and consolidating most of the Company's operations into a single campus in the vibrant and emerging arts district of San Francisco's Civic Center.

This spring also saw at the Wilsey Center the inaugural season of SF Opera Lab, an experimental new forum for vocal music presented in an intimate theatrical context. SF Opera Lab began in March with South African artist William Kentridge's acclaimed production of Schubert's *Winterreise*—a West Coast premiere. Additionally, the Taube Atrium Theater was host to four Schwabacher Debut Recitals.

Ana Sokolović's Svadba-Wedding
 STEFAN COHEN



The Triplets of Belleville Cine-Concert with live music
 SCOTT WALL



Left to right: Laura Albino, Pauline Sikirdji, Andrea Ludwig, Jacqueline Woodley, Liesbeth Devos, Krisztina Szabó in *Svadba-Wedding*
 STEFAN COHEN

ARIA (Arts Resources in Action) Festival, an all-day, free community open house for families
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Backstage at the ARIA Festival
 SCOTT WALL





Notes from the General Director

Touchability

This is the last of these columns I will write after a decade at the San Francisco Opera and 33 years at the Houston Grand Opera. These words come from one who believes opera is a tremendously powerful and humanizing art form, and one who will remain passionately committed to its future well-being.

I was bitten by the opera bug by hearing arias sung by our greatest opera singers on *The Voice of Firestone*, *The Bell Telephone Hour*, and *The Ed Sullivan Show*. Sunday evenings on network prime time, if you can believe it! I also was very taken by the Mario Lanza film *The Great Caruso*. Something about those arias touched an indefinable core of my being, and tears came to my eyes.

So in college when my glee club director suggested I might have the vocal chops to be an opera singer, I already had a sense of what that “touching” meant. I took him up on his suggestion with a vengeance. A life in opera would be something to cherish! Over the next six years, I attended scores of complete opera performances, both at the old Met and the New York City Opera at the 55th Street mosque. I followed both companies’ moves to Lincoln Center and appreciated each one’s approach to the art form—one a great international company and one a struggling American company that did Floyd’s *Susannah*, Strauss’ *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and Kern’s *Show Boat* on adjacent nights. Does all this sound familiar? When my singing aspiration cratered, and I had the opportunity to be employed by Houston Grand Opera at age 28, the seeds of an opera company that could in one year offer *Susannah*, *Sweeney Todd*, *The Trojans* and *Die Meistersinger* took root. It did not flower until I came to San Francisco, because Houston could not handle *The Trojans* or the *Ring*, at least in my time.

Wotan’s Farewell from Wagner’s *Die Walküre* does me in, but so does “Bill” in *Show Boat*. What is common to these two “numbers”? The great Leonard Bernstein may have put his finger on it when he quipped, “There are two kinds of music: good and bad.” I embrace his lack of musical pretension. What is this “thing” that people feel in Wotan’s Farewell and “Bill”? What is this “touching” and who is “touchable”? My great concern is that the two generations who have been consumed with the sound of heavy-metal and rap music, and have had no formal music education, have a numb spot where this “touchability” should or could be. Or maybe it is there, deep inside, waiting for the right moment.

How do we get our music out there? How do we preempt the numbness?

This is what has to happen:

- Get our beautiful music “out there” any way that we can. At the ballpark, via email, on the internet, in the elevator! The great arias are our best calling cards.
- Offer introductory promotions and pricing to get people in to experience “the real thing” in the opera house. No empty seats should go unused.
- Collaborate with key artists and their publicists to “create stars” through all possible means and media.
- Create compelling productions that “make news” either through their artists or their subject matter, thereby driving people into the theater because the price of a ticket is considered “worth it.”
- Introduce family and friends to the opera experience at every opportunity.
- Advocate that classical music be taught and experienced from pre-K through Grade 12.

There are so many cultural changes at work out there that are serving to marginalize our beloved art form. First among them is the all-consuming pervasiveness and economic incentives of popular culture. We will survive only by being talked about and experienced, and by cultivating touchability among the public by those of us in charge with creating and producing the art form. At stake is nothing less than our capacity to empathize with others and ourselves. 🌱



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Saturday, July 9, 2 p.m.

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Performed with English supertitles
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A thrilling program of scenes from beloved operas including *Lohengrin*, *Arabella*, *Le Comte Ory*, and *Dialogues des Carmélites*, among others.

Transformations by Conrad Susa,

with libretto by Anne Sexton

Thursday, July 21, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 23, 2 p.m.

San Francisco Conservatory of Music
Performed in English with English supertitles
\$65 and \$45

Così fan tutte

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart,
with libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte

Thursday, August 4, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, August 6, 2 p.m.

San Francisco Conservatory of Music
Performed in Italian with

English supertitles

\$65 and \$45

Merola Grand Finale

Saturday, August 20, 7:30 p.m.

War Memorial Opera House

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LAB

Support emerging artists and cutting-edge new works by joining **SF Opera Lab Partners**, a group of donors dedicated to shaping opera for the 21st century. In addition to nurturing adventurous programming and future talent, **Lab Partners** enjoy special perks during the SF Opera Lab season, from free drinks to complimentary guest tickets for pop-up opera events.

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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA *Profile*

Barbara Rominski *Director of Archives*



Barbara Rominski—as of February, San Francisco Opera’s first-ever director of archives—has always considered herself to be a curious person with a natural affinity for libraries and the arts. While pursuing an undergraduate degree in the history of art from UC Berkeley, she was encouraged to follow her interests with a career in libraries and archives. “It was quite a revelation to me that I could have a job that allowed me to combine books, history, and art—the things that I love most,” she says.

After 13 years as head of the library, archives, and records management at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Rominski feels fortunate to establish a public archive in another Bay Area cultural institution: the Edward Paul Braby San Francisco Opera Archive at the new Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera. The sunny office space and reading room connects directly into the public corridor on the fourth floor of the War Memorial Veterans Building and opens up the archives to public programming, open houses, and collaboration with other departments.

“The Wilsey Center was a significant draw in my coming to the Opera,” she says. “Archives are traditionally in a basement, back in a corner, in a warehouse, tucked away somewhere and almost forgotten. The fact that the Opera has positioned the archives physically within a public venue speaks volumes about the institution’s commitment to its history.”

Creating Greater Access

Among the records in Rominski’s purview are over nine decades of photographs, audio and video recordings, program books, correspondences, production blueprints, 3-D set replicas, and—perhaps her favorite objects—watercolors and pastel drawings of set designs and costumes. “They are quite beautiful in and of them-

selves with incredible attention to detail,” she says. “It truly highlights that opera is not one art form; there are many art forms up on the stage, with the visual arts playing a significant role.”

Preservation of these materials is Rominski’s highest priority. In particular, digitization of the Company’s oldest photographs and programs, as well as audio and video recordings dating from the 1930s that are in danger of being lost, will allow greater access to the materials by researchers and the broader public.

“The opera community is a devoted group that is as curious about the past as it is the present,” she says. “The more archival material we can make accessible in our public spaces—like the beautiful photographs installed in the Gockley and the Hume Family galleries at the

Wilsey Center—as well as digitally through the online performance database, the better!”

Voices for Posterity

One of Rominski’s most exciting challenges is the Opera’s 2022–23 centennial season. Similarly to how she established the SFMOMA archives in advance of the museum’s 75th anniversary, she will also help prepare for the Company’s big bash. Specifically, she would like to see her department take the lead in creating content, perhaps an oral history program focusing on those who have been connected to San Francisco Opera over the years. “SFMOMA ran a massive oral history program in advance of its 75th anniversary... incredibly rich interviews which were mined for publications, educational use, marketing, and ultimately offered up on the internet for free, in transcript form and in partial audio and video clips,” Rominski says. “I am certain that there are equally rich voices and stories from the Opera community that we would benefit from hearing and, in turn, preserving long into the future.”



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BRAVO, DAVID GOCKLEY!

“In David you see the perfect paradigm of someone who both lives and breathes the creativity of the art form but also exudes this great responsibility for how you make it happen.”

—Matthew Shilvock,
General Director Designate

David Gockley has surely seen more curtain calls than most anyone given the 45 years he has devoted to the world of opera. But this summer he'll be the recipient of bravos and bouquets when he takes his own curtain call at the War Memorial Opera House at a gala concert on June 16—*Celebrating David!* After more than ten years as the general director of San Francisco Opera, Gockley steps down at the end of the summer season. But his legacy—in San Francisco and across the opera world—is secure.

Gockley has reshaped American opera like no other impresario. Over four decades—as general director at Houston Grand Opera from 1972 to 2005 and at San Francisco Opera from 2006 to 2016—Gockley has presided over world premieres of 45 commissions from the greatest American composers, including groundbreaking works by John Adams, Leonard Bernstein, and Philip Glass. He has devoted his life to opera, nurturing and promoting artistic excellence on the stage while maintaining an astute grasp of the economics of this complex art form; he has pushed to broaden and diversify audiences with innovations such as free, outdoor simulcasts. On his watch, the 13 simulcasts in the Bay Area have collectively drawn more than 250,000 opera fans. Gockley also pioneered programs to cultivate new singers and oversaw the creation of the Wortham Theater Center in Houston and the Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera here in San Francisco, which opened earlier this season as a dynamic new venue for educational programs and smaller-scale chamber opera. On the eve of retirement, Gockley is still looking ahead to keep the tradition he loves alive and flourishing.

“David has found exquisite ways to balance the progression of the art form and the stability of that art form,” said Matthew Shilvock who takes over in August as San Francisco Opera’s new general director. “In David you see the perfect paradigm of someone who both lives and breathes the creativity of the art form but also exudes this great responsibility for how you make it happen.”

From his first season in charge at the Houston Grand Opera beginning in 1972, Gockley’s sense of assurance, his understanding of his mission, and his ability to articulate his vision seemed fully formed. Whether or not he was self-conscious about his relative youth at the age of 29, Gockley embraced the fact that he was an American trying to champion opera in a very American city, Houston, which in the early 1970s was about to boom as an oil town. Gockley recalls thinking to himself, *I’m going to prove that this city with its lack of tradition, its people from all over the world, its wildcatter mentality and image, could do something in the classic arts that would really be a jewel in its crown.* But where did Gockley develop this precocious confidence, this belief in American opera?

Born on July 13, 1943, Gockley grew up in Wayne, Pennsylvania, a middle-class suburb of Philadelphia. His father, Warren, inspired Gockley’s love of sports and competition, but it was his mother, Betty, who created a musical environment for her children: David and his younger sister, Joan. Betty played the piano and the Hammond organ at home, and was especially fond of musical comedy. The family also tuned into *The Voice of Firestone*, a television show that showcased classical and Broadway singers. In the late ‘50s no one seemed perturbed by the appearance of opera stars on prime time television. Gockley sang in his school chorus and found he

had a good voice. Later, during his years at Brown University, Gockley met a pivotal figure in his life, a young associate professor named Erich Kunzel who invited him to join the glee club. Kunzel recognized Gockley as a talented baritone and urged him to listen to more classical music. Gockley was hooked, and even sang an hour-long concert version of Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess* during the glee club’s spring tour. Gockley continued to pursue singing as a professional goal after he graduated. He spent three consecutive summers as an apprentice at the Santa Fe Opera where initially a singing career seemed to beckon. Meanwhile, his life in New York afforded him the opportunity to see just about everything on offer at the Metropolitan Opera and New York City Opera. Gockley recalls being particularly spellbound by the new theatrical work of the NYCO’s star directors, Frank Corsaro and Tito Capobianco. Gockley’s wife at that time, soprano Patricia Wise, sang regularly with the company. It was a cruel blow when one of Gockley’s singing teachers handed down the following verdict: “David, I think you need to take a break from this. A very long break.”

A crushing moment for an aspiring artist, yet Gockley managed to survive it. He took a graduate business degree at Columbia University, now setting his sights on a career in arts administration. When an opportunity opened up at the Houston Grand Opera in late 1970, Gockley jumped at the chance, left New York, and drove to Texas to become the business manager at the HGO, then a sleepy, 15-year-old company, modest in size and scope. But on Gockley’s watch all that would soon change. The city of Houston was undergoing a massive transformation: it was about to become the petroleum capital of the world, and as its wealth grew so did its desire for social and cultural legitimacy. By 1972, the dynamic Gockley had impressed the HGO board enough to land the top job as general manager. It took a young man’s confidence to take risks at the musical frontier, to “enter that risky, seldom-trod road of producing new opera,” as Gockley put it then.

Gockley defined his style from the beginning—programming and commissioning new work by American composers—no doubt inspired by what he’d seen and heard at Santa Fe Opera and NYCO. Early on, Gockley commissioned an opera from the composer Carlisle Floyd whose neo-Romantic, musically accessible operas epitomized what Gockley thought of as “audience-friendly.” It was the beginning of a long-running collaboration and friendship between the two men, which would result in several key works at HGO: *Bilby’s Doll* (1976), *Willie Stark* (1981), and *Cold Sassy Tree* (2000). “I loved the atmosphere in Houston because David created a lot of excitement and interest in the city, and also he raised the level of production markedly so that you would not mistake that company for the one he inherited,” recalled Floyd. “One of the things that David contributed to was the elevation of production standards for new operas. That fit right in with his idea that the first production of an American opera should be as well presented as a European opera. And nowadays we take that as a norm.”

Significantly, Gockley viewed opera through the lens of “music theater.” After all, he had grown up in a broad tradition where a musical

Damian Fowler is the author of the book American Impresario—David Gockley’s Life in Opera (Chronicle Books).



David Gockley has presided over world premieres of 45 commissions from the greatest American composers, including (left) Leonard Bernstein's *A Quiet Place* in 1983 and (right) Carlisle Floyd's *Willie Stark* in 1981.

god like Leonard Bernstein was lauded for his own musical *West Side Story* as well as his conducting of Mahler. “[David] was part of his own age,” said Fredericka Hunter, the longtime owner of the Texas Gallery, and one of Gockley’s closest friends. “He’d been a singer himself, loved musicals and opera, and he wasn’t a snob.” This attitude led to a number of important productions, including Scott Joplin’s *Treemonisha* in 1975, which in turn led to a sumptuous production of *Porgy and Bess* in 1976, conducted by the HGO’s music director, John DeMain. It was the first time an American opera company had staged the work. After a high-profile run on Broadway, the production toured the United States and Europe, winning a Grammy and a Tony Award. Gockley recognized that his company’s production of *Porgy* had become the national and international calling card for Houston Grand Opera. Meanwhile, the checkbooks opened back in Houston. Gockley had created a world-class company.

An important element of this success was Gockley’s commitment to American singers. Early on, he worked closely with the young artist agent Matthew Epstein who would help him select and sign up singers for HGO productions, including Catherine Malfitano, Frederica von Stade, Richard Stilwell, and Patricia Wells. And Gockley took this further, teaming up with Carlisle Floyd to create the Houston Opera Studio (later to become the Houston Grand Opera Studio), designed to provide a 40-week educational and professional training program for young singers. It also proved advantageous to the HGO by providing a colony of singers who would perform small roles and understudy the large roles. Over the years, the HGO Studio has created many prestigious alumni, including Joyce DiDonato, Denyce Graves, Ana María Martínez, Eric Owens,

and Heidi Stober. “Houston was the place where I really figured myself out as a singer,” said DiDonato who attended the HGO Studio from 1996–98. “It was during those years where I found my foundation and my voice as a person and a singer. Without that, I have no doubt that I would definitely not be where I am today.”

With momentum on his side, Gockley successfully orchestrated a push to build a new space in the middle of Houston. He insisted on two theaters, one smaller theater for chamber works and a larger one to be modeled to similar proportions as Covent Garden or Munich. The Gus. S. Wortham Theater Center opened on May 9, 1987—a \$72 million center built with entirely private funds—an impresario’s dream, perhaps, and, according to Gockley, one of his proudest achievements. The opening of the 1987–88 season showcased the range and ambition of the company with a mix of classic and brand-new. The main event, that traditional standard-bearer for an opening gala, was Verdi’s *Aida*, starring Mirella Freni and Plácido Domingo, with the smaller house offering an innovative take on Mozart’s *Abduction from the Seraglio*. But the talk of the town—indeed, of the opera intelligentsia—was a new work by John Adams called *Nixon in China*. Directed by Peter Sellars, Adams’ propulsive, minimalist work with its unlikely libretto by Alice Goodman proved to be mesmerizing, even if it failed to win over all the critics. Adams credits Gockley for taking a considerable risk on this “crazy idea.” “They say that with opera ‘anything that can go wrong will.’ But perhaps it was David’s amused curiosity and his wonderful lightness of touch that allowed *Nixon* to come into being with a minimum of trouble. I don’t recall the usual crisis atmosphere that normally accompanies a premiere,” said Adams. “He believed in us and believed in the project.” The relation-

“I realized a long time ago that his passions are actually channeled through the opera. He expresses his deepest feelings and emotions through the voices and characters of the opera usually on stage in front of you.”

—Director Francesca Zambello



BRAVO DAVID

For more than four decades, David Gockley's singular determination, constant innovation, and fierce passion have revolutionized opera in America. Even in times of daunting financial or artistic challenges, David has persevered with a twinkle in his eye, a savvy sense of business, and a wicked sense of humor.

We salute you. We thank you.



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David Gockley with Plácido Domingo in 1987

ship that was forged in the mid-1980s with Adams and Sellars continues to this day.

Gockley's commitment to new work, productions, and singers has never waned over the years. From Leonard Bernstein's *A Quiet Place* to Rachel Portman's *The Little Prince*, from Philip Glass' *Appomattox* to Bright Sheng's upcoming *Dream of the Red Chamber*, Gockley continues to add to the impressive roster of commissions he started building in the '70s. "He conditioned his audience to expect a new opera every year," said Jake Heggie whose audience-friendly works have long appealed to Gockley. Gockley has commissioned Heggie's *The End of the Affair* and, in a co-commission with Dallas Opera, *Moby-Dick*.

When Gockley arrived in San Francisco to become its sixth general director in 2006, he brought with him this same commitment to the notion of building American opera, the same great ego-interest in the whole production, and the same populist inclinations to keep the core opera audience happy. Many will recall when Gockley made his first local appearance in San Francisco after his appointment was announced in 2005, he wore a San Francisco Giants baseball cap, an amusing sartorial touch that seemed to telegraph his understanding of opera as "a populist form of entertainment," as the writer Joshua Kosman observed in an in-depth *San Francisco Chronicle* profile. Gockley made good on this implicit promise when he inaugurated Opera at the Ballpark, an outdoor simul-

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cast of operas organized in partnership with the San Francisco Giants at their home at AT&T Park. “I think he reinstated the San Francisco Opera into the heart of the city,” said Matthew Shilvock. These HD simulcasts from the War Memorial Opera House were made possible by another innovation: a \$4 million in-house video production facility, the Koret/Taube Media Suite—the first of its kind in an American opera house.

Gockley has long maintained his connection to what he calls the “chestnuts” in the canon, the *Butterflys*, *Traviatas*, and *Toscas*, keeping them in the right proportion to the new works on offer. Gockley said it was a goal to reestablish Italian repertory into the San Francisco Opera season (more fully than it had been in prior years), to burnish the great Italian tradition of the company’s founder, Gaetano Merola, to connect the present with the past. With the appointment of Music Director Nicola Luisotti in 2009, Gockley signaled a shift in this direction. And the Italian commitment continues this summer with

the presentation of Verdi’s *Don Carlo*, one of Gockley’s favorite operas of all time (he ranks it in his top five), with Maestro Luisotti conducting a stellar international cast.

Over the course of his career, Gockley has managed to balance a necessary rational approach to staging these costly productions with his deep passion for the art form. He understands that opera is “an exotic and irrational entertainment”—citing Samuel Johnson—but that hasn’t stopped him from embracing the next opera and another one. So why do it? Gockley’s longtime friend and collaborator Francesca Zambello has a theory about what makes the man tick: “I realized a long time ago that his passions are actually channeled through the opera. He expresses his deepest feelings and emotions through the voices and characters of the opera usually on stage in front of you.” She may be right. To hear Gockley talk about his experience of producing Berlioz’s *The Trojans* at San Francisco Opera in 2015 is to hear a man mesmerized by the sheer power of



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WORLD PREMIERES & COMMISSIONS BY DAVID GOCKLEY

opera—"five hours of amazingly emotional experience," he called it. The impresario as opera fan. The mezzo-soprano Susan Graham who headlined in the opera agreed. "It was a harmonic convergence...underpinned all the way by David," she said.

Surely Gockley will miss all of this glorious show business—poring over new librettos, overseeing set designers and stagehands as they create fantastical sets, dealing with demanding divas. Won't he? "I have in my life had the luxury of being able to look forward, had the permanence in my work to continually build on what I've done before without a period of not being involved," said Gockley, as though analyzing his soon-to-be new status for the first time. "I'm concerned about what it will be like not to have this kind of burden, not to have this kind of responsibility, not to have this kind of ego boost when everything goes well and people say to you 'Oh, great production, great show!' To be out of that? I might miss it terribly—although I'm not there yet." ●

Clockwise: With Luciano Pavarotti in 1987; Meredith Monk in 1991; Tad Taube at 2015's Opera at the Ballpark; Richard Bonyng and Joan Sutherland in 1986

Right: Philip Glass and David Gockley



SCOTT WALL

San Francisco Opera World Premieres

- Dream of the Red Chamber*, Bright Sheng and David Henry Hwang, September 2016
- Two Women (La Ciociara)*, Marco Tutino and Fabio Ceresa, 2015
- Dolores Claiborne*, Tobias Picker and J.D. McClatchy, 2013
- The Gospel of Mary Magdalene*, Mark Adamo, 2013
- The Secret Garden*, Nolan Gasser and Carey Harrison, 2013
- Heart of a Soldier*, Christopher Theofanidis and Donna Di Novelli, 2011
- The Bonesetter's Daughter*, Stewart Wallace and Amy Tan, 2008
- Appomattox*, Philip Glass and Christopher Hampton, 2007

Houston Grand Opera World Premieres

- Send (who are you? I love you)*, Michael John LaChiusa, 2006
- Strega Nona*, Mary Carol Warwick and Mary Ann Pendino, 2006
- Lysistrata, or the Nude Goddess*, Mark Adamo, 2005
- The Princess and the Pea*, Mary Carol Warwick and Mary Ann Pendino, 2005
- Salsipuedes, a Tale of Love, War and Anchovies*, Daniel Catán and Eliseo Alberto / Francisco Hinojosa, 2004
- The End of the Affair*, Jake Heggie and Heather McDonald, 2004
- The Velveteen Rabbit*, Mary Carol Warwick and Kate Pogue, 2004
- The Little Prince*, Rachel Portman and Nicholas Wright, 2003
- Sibanda!*, Michael Remson, 2003
- The Emperor's New Clothes*, Mary Carol Warwick and Kate Pogue, 2001
- Cold Sassy Tree*, Carlisle Floyd, 2000
- Resurrection*, Tod Machover and Laura Harrington with additional materials by Braham Murray, 1999
- Little Women*, Mark Adamo, 1998
- Cinderella in Spain/Cinderella en España*, Mary Carol Warwick and Kate Pogue, 1998
- Jackie O*, Michael Daugherty and Wayne Koestenbaum, 1997
- Florencia en el Amazonas*, Daniel Catán and Marcela Fuentes-Berain, 1996
- The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, Ricky Ian Gordon and Jean-Claude van Itallie, 1996
- Puppy and the Big Guy*, Sterling Tinsley and Kate Pogue, 1995
- Harvey Milk*, Stewart Wallace and Michael Korie, 1995
- The Outcast* (fully realized version), Noa Ain, 1994
- The Dracula Diary*, Robert Moran and James Skofield, 1994
- TEXAS!*, Mary Carol Warwick and Kate Pogue, 1993
- The Achilles Heel*, Craig Bohmler and Mary Carol Warwick, 1993
- Desert of Roses*, Robert Moran and Michael John LaChiusa, 1992
- ATLAS: an opera in three parts*, Meredith Monk, 1991
- The Passion of Jonathan Wade* (new version), Carlisle Floyd, 1991
- New Year*, Sir Michael Tippett, 1989
- Where's Dick?*, Stewart Wallace and Michael Korie, 1989
- The Making of the Representative for Planet 8*, Philip Glass and Doris Lessing, 1988
- Nixon in China*, John Adams and Alice Goodman, 1987
- A Quiet Place*, Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Wadsworth, 1983
- Starbird*, Henry Mollicone and Kate Pogue, 1980
- Willie Stark*, Carlisle Floyd, 1981
- Bilby's Doll*, Carlisle Floyd, 1976
- The Seagull*, Thomas Pasatieri and Kenward Elmslie, 1974

TERRENCE MCCARTHY



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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.

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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.

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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.

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 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. \$20 for general admission.

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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.

Carmen: Emily Laurance

Don Carlo: Laura Stanfield Prichard

Jenùfa: Robert Hartwell

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Koret Foundation (Production Sponsor, *Jenůfa*)

San Francisco Opera is grateful to the Koret Foundation for its generous financial support of 15 mainstage productions, including *Jenůfa*. The Opera is also indebted to the Foundation for helping to bring OperaVision and simulcast programs to broader audiences, and for being the first private foundation funder of Orpheus, San Francisco Opera's next generation initiative. "Koret is proud to continue its partnership with the Opera, and to support their commitment to enriching the Bay Area's cultural landscape through exceptional programming," says Jeffrey A. Farber, Koret CEO.

Bernard and Barbro Osher (Production Sponsors, *Jenůfa*)

A native of Maine, Bernard Osher became involved with San Francisco Opera as a subscriber nearly fifty years ago, shortly after moving here from New York. He and his wife Barbro, a native of Sweden, have supported every aspect of the Company's work, from artist appearances to production facilities. Established in 1977, The Bernard Osher Foundation has funded virtually every major arts organization in the area, including youth programs. Higher education initiatives include community college support, Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes on 119 campuses nationwide, and Osher Centers for Integrative Medicine at several of the nation's leading teaching hospitals, and at the Karolinska institute in Stockholm, Sweden. Bernard is a longstanding member of the Opera's Board of Directors, serving on the Chairman's Council. Barbro is Honorary Consul General of Sweden in San Francisco, and serves as Chairman of the Board of the Osher Foundation.



RAY "SCOTTY" MORRIS

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Dianne and Tad Taube (Production Sponsors, *Jenůfa*)

"Tad and I are pleased to support San Francisco Opera's production of *Jenůfa* featuring the Company debut of Malin Byström in the title role, and the incomparable Karita Mattila making her role debut as one of the most vivid characters (*Kostelnička*) in all of opera" says Dianne Taube, a San Francisco Opera Board member since 2003. In partnership with the Koret Foundation, Dianne and Tad 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 POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews (Warsaw); 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. San Francisco Opera is deeply grateful to Dianne and Tad for their generous financial support of 15 mainstage productions, and for supporting the Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera through their naming of the Atrium Theater.

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After a career devoted to his publishing businesses in Japan and Europe, the creation of Clos Pegase Winery, and his art collection, Jan Shrem, in joyous partnership with his wife Maria Manetti Shrem, is bringing his focus and affection to philanthropic causes that advance education and the performing and visual arts. Though they grew up half-a-world apart, Jan and Maria both developed a love of opera at a young age. While their lives led them each around the globe, their individual passions eventually led them to San Francisco Opera, and to each other. With the renewal of another generous three-year commitment, Jan and Maria have expanded their support of opera artists through the establishment of two new funds in addition to the *Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund*. The *Conductors Fund* will help ensure the continued appearances of Maestro Nicola Luisotti and other Italian conductors, and the *Emerging Stars Fund* will help bring rising young talents to the stage.



DREW ALTIZER

DREW ALTIZER



Joan and David Traitel/Great Singers Fund

(Sponsors, Ana María Martínez and Mariusz Kwiecien, *Don Carlo*; Karita Mattila, *Jenůfa*)

“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 to attract the world’s best 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 2015–16 Season, Joan explains, “There are so many! Karita Mattila, Ana

María Martínez, and Mariusz Kwiecien will each bring their own special brand of musical beauty and artistry and dynamic stage presence to these productions. We are so pleased that the Fund can enable their appearance. 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.”

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Edmund W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund (Production Sponsor, *Don Carlo*)

San Francisco Opera lost a beloved champion in May 2013, with the passing of Jeannik Méquet Littlefield. As Board member, donor and subscriber, Mrs. Littlefield provided distinguished support and leadership for decades. The Littlefield name has become especially familiar to opera fans since she made her historic commitment to San Francisco Opera in October 2006. The announcement from the stage about her gift of \$35 million is a vivid memory for those in the audience, not to mention the standing ovation led by the opera orchestra. The creation of the Edmund W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Endowment Fund provided a permanent source of income for the Company and a legacy of support for generations to come. Mrs. Littlefield once related a story of how her life-long passion for opera began. "Opera was very popular in France when I was growing up, and my father often hummed the melodies. I liked opera even before I saw a production—I was just crazy about it!" Verdi's *Don Carlo* is firmly rooted in the 19th-century French culture so dear to her, in its glorious music and tragic subject based on important events in the history of France. The Littlefield family is delighted to support *Don Carlo*—their 20th production since 2002—as part of their Company Sponsorship.

Thomas* and Barbara Wolfe (Production Sponsor, *Don Carlo*)

Along with her late husband Tom, Barbara Wolfe has been a long time opera fan and supporter of the San Francisco Opera since 1985. Mozart, operas in the classical Italian tradition, and the works of Wagner are particular favorites. The Wolfes have sponsored many San Francisco productions, including *Tannhäuser*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *The Magic Flute*, *Mefistofele*, and *Norma*.

Barbara is a Trustee of Mills College and serves of the board of the San Francisco Opera Association. Through their private foundation and personally, the Wolfes have supported 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.



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2016 REPERTORY

CARMEN

Georges Bizet

May 27, 28, 29, 31; June 1, 17, 23, 26, 30; July 2, 3

Production made possible by John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn

DON CARLO

Giuseppe Verdi

June 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 29

Production made possible, in part, by John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn, Edmund W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund, Leslie & George Hume, Thomas* & Barbara Wolfe

JENŮFA

Leoš Janáček

June 14, 19, 22, 25, 28; July 1

Production made possible, in part, by The Bernard Osher Endowment Fund, Koret Foundation, Dianne & Tad Taube, The Thomas Tilton Production Fund

ANDREA CHÉNIER

Umberto Giordano

September 9, 14, 17, 22, 25, 30

Production made possible, in part, by Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey, John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn

DREAM OF THE RED CHAMBER

WORLD PREMIERE

Music by Bright Sheng

Libretto by David Henry Hwang and Bright Sheng

September 10, 13, 18, 23, 27, 29

Production made possible, in part, by John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn, Edmund W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund, United Airlines, grants from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, funding from OPERA America's Opera Fund

Dream of the Red Chamber commission initiated and funded by the Chinese Heritage Foundation Friends of Minnesota, with leadership support from the Dr. Ming F. Tchou Memorial Fund of the Chinese Heritage Foundation, Benjamin Y. H. & Helen C. Liu, Ruth Stricker & Bruce Dayton*



DON PASQUALE

Gaetano Donizetti

September 28; October 2, 4, 7, 12, 15

Production made possible, in part, by Leslie & George Hume

THE MAKROPULOS CASE

Leoš Janáček

October 14, 18, 23, 26, 29

Production made possible, in part, by The Bernard Osher Endowment Fund and The Thomas Tilton Production Fund

AIDA

Giuseppe Verdi

November 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 27, 30; December 3, 6

Production made possible, in part, by John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn, the San Francisco Opera Guild, Chevron

MADAME BUTTERFLY

Giacomo Puccini

November 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 22, 26, 29; December 1, 4

Production made possible, in part, by the Burgess & Elizabeth Jamieson Fund

Major support also provided by

The Great Singers Fund, established by Joan & David Traitel

The Conductors Fund, The Emerging Stars Fund, and the Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund, all established by Jan Shrem & Maria Manetti Shrem

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Georges Bizet

CARMEN

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

David Gockley, General Director

Nicola Luisotti, Music Director
Caroline H. Hume Endowed Chair

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

Maestro Montanaro's appearance is made possible by the Conductors Fund, and Mr. Jagde's appearance is made possible by the Emerging Stars Fund, both established by Jan Shrem & Maria Manetti Shrem.

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CARMEN

ACT I

Outside a cigarette factory, men press forward to see the cigarette girls, especially the gypsy Carmen. She sings a habanera and throws a flower to Don José, a corporal in the Dragoons. He is perturbed, yet moved by her gesture. His fiancée Micaëla arrives, bringing greetings from his far-away mother. A furious fight, started by Carmen, breaks out in the factory. She is arrested and handed over to José. During the interrogation conducted by the lieutenant Zuniga, Carmen refuses to answer questions; instead, she cheekily sings to herself. Once alone with José, she promises him a rendezvous later that night—if he lets her escape. José feigns being thrown to the ground, enabling Carmen to run off. José's superiors see through his ruse, and he is taken to prison.

ACT II

Carmen sings and dances with two of her female friends, Frasquita and Mercédès. Later, the toreador Escamillo enters. Carmen rejects his advances, saying she is in love with José. The band of smugglers invites Carmen to join them on a heist, but she hears José approaching. Carmen shoos everyone out and dances for him. A bugle call is heard from the streets. José, who has been demoted to the rank of private, says he must now return to the barracks. Carmen derides and mocks him, which tortures José. In the meantime, Zuniga returns with hopes of seducing the beautiful gypsy. Blind with jealousy, José flings himself at his superior officer, but the smugglers enter and separate them. They urge José to join their band, and he has no choice but to do so.

ACT III

José, who has been forced to accompany Carmen into hiding, thinks with remorse of his aged mother. Carmen is tired of him. She engages in a tarot card reading with Frasquita and Mercédès. The cards reveal that her fate is sealed: it will be death for her and José. The smugglers go off with the women to do their shady business. Micaëla enters, looking for José. She hides waiting for him to return. Escamillo arrives looking for Carmen. The jealous José provokes a fight with the toreador as Carmen arrives just in time to separate them. Micaëla's presence is discovered, and she tells

José that his mother is dying and beseeches him to follow her. José, stricken with grief and jealousy, follows Micaëla out, but not before promising—and threatening—Carmen that he will return.

ACT IV

A square is filled by a noisy crowd awaiting the arrival of the bull-fighter. Escamillo enters with Carmen on his arm. Frasquita and Mercédès warn Carmen of José, whom they have seen lurking around. Carmen shuns their warnings, and says that she will confront José and end the relationship once and for all. After the crowd funnels into the arena, José implores Carmen to come back to him and love him again. She tosses away the ring which he had given her, and defiantly proclaims her love for Escamillo. Just as Escamillo defeats the bull, José stabs Carmen to death. He falls sobbing over her corpse, calling out her name in despair and admitting his guilt.

First performance: Paris, Opéra-Comique (Salle Favart); March 3, 1875

First performance in the United States: New York, Academy of Music; October 23, 1878

First San Francisco Opera performance: October 1, 1927

Carmen has been performed in 32 previous seasons at San Francisco Opera. For complete information on all past casts, visit archive.sfopera.com.

Orchestra: 2 flutes (both doubling on piccolo), 2 oboes (one doubling on English horn), 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 cornets, 3 trombones, 1 timpani, 3 percussion, 1 harp, 40 strings (12 first violins, 9 second violins, 7 violas, 7 cellos, 5 basses); **62 total**

Backstage: 2 trumpets, 2 trombones; **4 total**

Personnel: 11 principals, 52 choristers, 28 children choristers, 9 dancers; **100 total**

The children singing in this production (listed after the artist profiles) are members of the San Francisco Girls and Boys Choruses. The San Francisco Girls Chorus is led by Artistic Director Lisa Bielawa and Music Director and Principal Conductor Valérie Sainte-Agathe. The San Francisco Boys Chorus is led by Artistic Director Ian Robertson.

Conductor

Carlo Montanaro*

Jordi Bernàcer* (7/3)

Production

Calixto Bieito*

Revival Director

Joan Anton Rechi*

Set Designer

Alfons Flores*

Costume Designer

Mercè Paloma*

Lighting Designer

Gary Marder

Chorus Director

Ian Robertson

Assistant Conductor

Christopher Ocasek

Musical Preparation

Bryndon Hassman,

Ronny Michael Greenberg†,

Dennis Doubin, John Churchwell,

Fabrizio Corona, Emily Adams

Banda

Ronny Michael Greenberg†

Christopher Ocasek, Fabrizio Corona

Diction

Patricia Kristof Moy

Supertitles

Christopher Bergen

Assistant Directors

Jose Maria Condemí, E. Reed Fisher

Stage Manager

Darin Burnett

Dance Master

Lawrence Pech

Fight Director

Dave Maier

Costume Supervisor

Christopher Verdoschi

Wig and Makeup

Jeanna Parham

San Francisco Opera co-production with Boston Lyric Opera, based on Calixto Bieito's production which originated at El Festival de Peralada in Catalonia and Opera Zuid in the Netherlands.

FRIDAY, MAY 27, 2016 AT 7:30 PM

SATURDAY, MAY 28 AT 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, MAY 29 AT 2 PM

TUESDAY, MAY 31 AT 7:30 PM

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1 AT 7:30 PM

FRIDAY, JUNE 17 AT 7:30 PM

THURSDAY, JUNE 23 AT 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, JUNE 26 AT 2 PM

THURSDAY, JUNE 30 AT 7:30 PM

SATURDAY, JULY 2 AT 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, JULY 3 AT 2 PM

Opera in four acts by **Georges Bizet**

Text by **Henri Meilhac** and **Ludovic Halévy**

Based on the novella by **Prosper Mérimée**

CARMEN

(Sung in French with English supertitles)

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Lillas Pastia	Yusef Lambert
Moralès	Edward Nelson†
Micaëla	Ellie Dehn
	Erika Grimaldi* (5/28, 31; 6/17, 30; 7/3)
Zuniga	Brad Walker*†
Manuelita	Jamielyn Duggan
Carmen	Irene Roberts
	Ginger Costa-Jackson (5/28, 31; 6/17, 30; 7/3)
Don José	Brian Jagde
	Adam Diegel* (5/28)
Girl	Amalia Abecassis* (5/27, 29; 6/1, 23, 26)
	Saarika Gunapu* (5/28, 31; 6/17, 30; 7/2, 3)
Frasquita	Amina Edris*†
Mercédès	Renée Rapier
Escamillo	Zachary Nelson*
	Michael Sumuel (5/28, 31; 6/17, 30; 7/3)
El Dancairo	Daniel Cilli*
El Remendado	Alex Boyer*
Torero	Marcos Vedovetto*

Soldiers, children, cigarette girls, Gypsies, smugglers

*San Francisco Opera debut †Current Adler Fellow

TIME AND PLACE: Modern-day Ceuta (autonomous Spanish city in North Africa)

ACT I: A street in Ceuta

ACT II: At Lillas Pastia's

—INTERMISSION—

ACT III: A smugglers' enclave

ACT IV: Outside the bullfighting arena

Latecomers will not be seated during the performance after the lights have dimmed.

Patrons who leave during the performance will not be re-seated until intermission.

*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 and fifty minutes.

Unraveling the Enigma of *Carmen*



From Calixto Bieito's 2012 production of Carmen at the English National Opera.

Inset, above: The first Carmen, French mezzo-soprano Célestine Galli-Marié (1840–1905). After composer Georges Bizet's death in 1875, she championed the opera and took her interpretation all over Europe.



Carmen is a born entertainer. It may be her nature, for she is a creature of instinct. It may be a survival tool, to disarm a threat or entice a victim.

Each of her arias is a dance, an outlet, and a showcase for her vitality and white-hot energy. She introduces herself in the sleek, sultry Habanera, an exhibitionist's proclamation that love obeys no law. It is a standard *opéra-comique* song, two verses with backup chorus, but the vocal line entices in its slow chromatic descent, while the truth bites naughtily, "If I love you, watch out!" Her hands tied, she sways and taps out a breezy Séguidilla with promises of sex (even giving the address "chez Lillas Pastia") that gets her out of a prison stay. Her nightclub song accelerates from languid undulations to a frenzy of pounding and stomping. The lyrics describe the very act of performing, with burning, feverish intoxication, dissolving into a wild orgy of "tra-la-la"s. Later, three girls tell their fortune with cards, but Carmen's mounting vision of death pulses with the slow heartbeat of a ritual dance.

Who is this woman and what does she want? When is she most herself? She gets into a fight at the cigarette factory where she works and flirts with the restraining officer Don José, who consequently spends a month in prison for letting her go. She is amused and perhaps touched. How much further can she push him? She makes him beat up his own captain and then join her on a smuggling gig. It is no surprise that she soon gets bored with a guy so easily manipulated. He doesn't disappear, though, like her other discarded lovers, even though a sweet and simple girl waits for him back home. He comes back in pursuit of the one and only Carmen, who is now seeing the toreador Escamillo. When she finally convinces this groveling and raving ex-soldier it is over, he kills her.

It is hard to believe that this most popular of operas, with its familiar tunes and colorful dances, was a flop at its first performance in 1875. "*Carmen* is neither scenic nor dramatic," one critic wrote. Others claimed, "of melody, there is but little" and "if it were possible to imagine His Satanic Majesty writing an opera, *Carmen* would be the sort of work he might be expected to turn out."

Even with the experienced libretto team of Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, protests accompanied the work from its inception. The director of Paris' Opéra-Comique, where lighter fare balanced the grander works given at the Palais Garnier, was scandalized by the subject matter. "Bandits, gypsies, and girls working in a cigar factory? At a family theater?" The low-life setting was bad enough, but having the heroine die onstage was too much. "Death at the Opéra-Comique? This has never happened before. Don't let her die. I implore you!" The protesting opera director, Adolphe de Leuven, eventually resigned his post and librettist Halévy mutilated the pages from his diary that cover these stressful months.

The realistic setting, scandalous as it was, helped spark a musical equivalent of the verismo school in literature, with its true ("vero") and gritty stories of peasants, criminals, and the down-trod-



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BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

A 1970s-era photo of the Mediterranean port city of Ceuta, the setting for this current production of *Carmen*. Throughout history a trade and cultural nexus and gateway to Morocco, the seven-square-mile territory is one of two autonomous Spanish cities in North Africa.

den. Operas like *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *I Pagliacci*, and *La Bohème* replaced political, historical, and mythological plots with contemporary and often violent stories. As it was, *Carmen*'s libretto team had already sanitized the story and tamed the characters from Prosper Mérimée's novella, itself influenced by a poem by Alexander Pushkin. Mérimée's heroine viciously slashes the face of another girl at the cigarette factory, steals the narrator's watch as an alternative to cutting his throat, has multiple lovers, and is married to a one-eyed ex-con. The opera's Don José is elevated from a violent bandit-murderer to a Dragoon corporal tied to his mother's apron strings. The librettists even gave him a girlfriend back home in the form of the virtuous and chaste Micaëla, foil to the immoral and irresponsible Carmen. The critics objected nevertheless.

After the disastrous premiere Bizet, depressed and suffering from throat problems, left Paris and died of a heart attack just three months later, convinced he was a failure. He was 36 years old.

From the beginning, criticism centered on the depiction and performance of the title role. The first interpreter, Célestine Galli-Marié, had supported Bizet from the start, enlisting other members of the cast, and resisting demands to change the graphic ending. After Bizet's death, she championed the work and took her interpretation all over Europe, returning to the Opéra-Comique for a final performance as Carmen in a fundraiser for a statue memorializing the composer. But early critics found Galli-Marié's interpretation "trivial and brutal; she turns this feline girl into a cynical harlot."

Already the male gaze is at work, with men judging and often conflating the heroine and her impersonator. One writer is disgusted by what he sees as a progressive decline in the morals of heroines; he considers Carmen "a veritable prostitute of the gutter and the street-corner." To one, she is "heartless, lawless, devoid of honor," to another, "a wild animal who charges right into danger." One critic was infuriated by both Carmen and Galli-Marié, writing that he wanted "to put an end to her mad hip-swinging, confining her in a straitjacket after having refreshed her by pouring a tub of water over her head." Both Carmen and Galli-Marié's realistic performance were deemed unfit for the family-oriented theater.

By now pretty much everything has been tried with Carmen. Peter Brook's 1983 stripped-down *Tragédie de Carmen* eliminated the grand opera trappings to focus on the story's intimacy and fatalistic vision. In the filmed version, Zehava Gal's clear voice and direct gaze are more alluring than the cleavage and hiked-up skirts of a more traditional Carmen. Risë Stevens, the leading Carmen of the 1950s, was all hungry mouth and feline energy, while Marilyn Horne brought toughness and earthy humor. There is grand vocalism to showcase the verismo vocal talents of Giulietta Simionato and glittery set-pieces for the passionate intensity of Anna Caterina Antonacci. Régine Crespin so commanded the role that a friend remembers the night she kept kicking the knife away from Plácido Domingo—who had accidentally dropped it in their final, fatal duet—until he became genuinely angry at her teasing



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and taunting. She finally let him pick it up and “died” laughing, as she slowly slid down his body.

In some stagings, Carmen actually runs into the knife, proving that Don José lacks the guts. She has manipulated him all along and retains this power into her own death. It is telling that in this final scene she refers to herself in the third person, theatrically. Director Francesca Zambello agrees, insisting that like Don Giovanni, Carmen has a death wish, adding “today, we would have her on meds in a flash.” Some see a battle of the sexes, where Carmen must die for refusing to submit to her man. Others see conflict between a civilized and a wild society, where Carmen’s exotic, chromatic music eventually takes over Don José’s cultured and European singing. Some consider the tug between a good woman (Micaëla) and a bad woman (Carmen). Somewhere between critic Rodney Milnes’ “sluttish femme fatale who destroyed a decent, upright soldier” and the “honest, liberated woman murdered by a maternally dominated psychopath” is Carmen.

In her fascinating study of the opera, musicologist Susan McClary shines a light on the work within the context of exoticism and an orientalist fad in late 19th-century art and music. McClary sees the character of Carmen as an example of the dangerous alien, the “racial Other who has infiltrated home turf.” In literature, art, and music, gypsies and Jews often represented outsiders, free from social norms and strict codes of behavior. Gypsies in particular were seen to have an ability to assimilate the trappings of other cultures, and McClary notes this in Carmen’s ease at slipping between musical styles in her different musical numbers.

Zambello has directed the opera many times and sees, even admires, this adaptability. “She is actually amazing, as she is a smuggler, actress, dancer, singer, and smart little hustler. I imagine her like a lot of clever people who make it through the edges of society.”

Bizet might even have heard gypsies performing exotic songs and dances in Paris

She may be a victim, a seductress, a free spirit, or a demon, but Carmen lives by her own code of conduct.

nightclubs, and both he and his librettists knew the world of showgirls, entertainers, and artists’ models that fed a well-established prostitution industry. It is even possible that Bizet modeled Carmen on his patron Céleste Mogador, an illegitimate runaway-turned-prostitute and celebrity entertainer, who married a count and turned to writing. Under Carmen’s influence, Don José dips down into this underworld, where he is destroyed. Yet Bizet himself took the opposite route, giving up his womanizing and clubbing to marry a “good” girl. “No more soirées!” he writes jubilantly. “No more sprees! No more mistresses! I have met an adorable girl whom I love! The good has killed the evil!”

Opera director Beth Greenberg thinks that Carmen needs constant attention to feel powerful and in control over a life a low wages and societal disdain. Sex is her strongest weapon, so she dresses sensationally and moves “like a panther stalking the night—by instinct rather than reason.” In her stagings, Greenberg highlights Carmen’s skills as a singer and dancer, but always clarifies the character’s need to dominate and not merely entertain.

Tchaikovsky admired the vitality and charm of the title character, and found Galli-Marié an outstanding and spellbinding actress, overcoming vocal resources that were “far from first-rate.” Similarly, the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche appreciated what he called an “African” gaiety in the work, a “southern, tawny, sunburnt sensitiveness.” She may be a victim, a seductress, a free spirit, or a demon, but Carmen lives by her own code of conduct. “No, I will never give in to you!” she shouts before her death. In the ensemble that ends Act Two, she cries, “La liberté!” extolling the open sky, the wandering life, the entire universe spread out for the taking. But the most intoxicating thing, she insists, is freedom. 🌻

American mezzo-soprano Judith Malafrente is currently on the faculty at Yale University and writes regularly for Opera News.

Primal Instinct

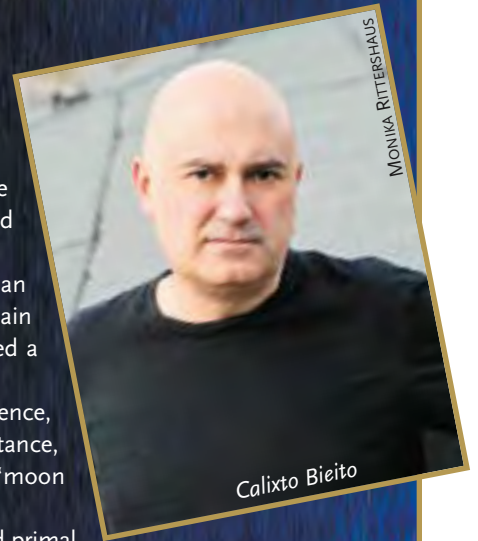
Called by some the “Quentin Tarantino of opera,” Catalan director Calixto Bieito first received international notoriety for his 2004 production of Mozart’s *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at Berlin’s Komische Oper. Depicting graphic scenes of rape, fellatio, and torture, the sold-out production established Bieito as one of Europe’s foremost opera directors, loved and hated for his shockingly contemporary visions of cruelty and sexuality.

With this current production of *Carmen*, Bieito is making his American operatic and San Francisco Opera debuts. Transporting the ramparts of 19th-century Seville to post-Franco Spain (and, specifically, the autonomous Spanish city of Ceuta in North Africa), Bieito has created a provocative—and compelling—staging that will undoubtedly challenge opera lovers.

According to revival director Joan Anton Rechi, the production’s few scenes of nudity, violence, and sensuality aren’t gratuitous but serve a well-defined dramatic purpose. He cites, for instance, the opening scene of Act III featuring a naked toreador as an allusion to the ritualistic “moon baptism” that superstitious bullfighters take part in the night before a bullfight.

“Calixto wanted a high level of realism to show a wild and cruel universe full of passions and primal virility,” says Rechi. “It was important not to fall into the folkloristic clichés of flamenco.” Rather, he says, this production is more faithful to the gritty and raw naturalism of the original Mérimée novel that Bizet and his co-librettists adapted.

In his interview with writer Judith Malafrente, Bieito delved deeper into aspects of character, *Carmen*’s universal themes, and the creative process.



Do you see Carmen as a feminist, a femme fatale, a victim, or maybe all three? Is she perhaps something else entirely?

The challenge with *Carmen* is that she doesn’t fall into any of those categories. She is a person of flesh and bone. She is a young woman in the context of a difficult life where she has had to survive. Like Lorca, I love characters whose blood you can see.

Who is Carmen today?

She is a person who loves life, and lives it without limits. She enjoys exploring the limits of other people and her own limits. But she does this naturally, without having to construct an artifice or a personality. She has no perspective on herself. She is intuitive, earthy, passionate, melancholy, sensitive: a young person with desires to drink up life.

Some people think that the fatalistic Carmen is looking all along for the man who will kill her. Do you think so?

No. She likes Don José. I think Carmen is a woman who has a strong connection with life and death. She thinks about her death, but she doesn’t want to die. Of course, she is living in a dangerous and violent society, and she knows Don José is a violent person. But I insist she doesn’t want to die.

To what extent is the opera about control?

This opera, from my point of view, deals with limits, the emotional and physical boundaries between people, and about freedom, love, violence, sorrow, desperation, solitude.

How do you answer those who complain that your production is not “Spanish” enough? How important is the Spanish setting or the gypsy milieu?

Carmen is not a Spanish opera. Like the works of Shakespeare or Cervantes, *Carmen* belongs to humanity. My *Carmen* is not picturesque, nor folkloric, nor a collection of engravings of a stereotypical old Spain. It is a *Carmen* that walks across the border.

Are you making any changes for this revival?

Each new production of this *Carmen* is filled with the singers’ authenticity. Each one of my *Carmens* is different and similar at the same time. However, the *Carmen* in San Francisco will be genuinely new.

What qualities do you most admire in the singers you work with?

Freedom, generosity, kindness, and most of all dramatic and vocal talent.

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1 f you want a more complete picture of Spanish culture, study bullfighting. Famous writers of various nationalities have eloquently expressed that sentiment from Federico García Lorca to Ernest Hemingway, most notably in the American author's *Death in the Afternoon*. "It is impossible to believe the emotional and spiritual intensity and the pure, classic beauty that can be produced by a man, an animal and a piece of scarlet serge," Hemingway wrote in 1932.

Although he never visited the country, Georges Bizet (along with *Carmen* co-librettists Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy) knew that no story set in Spain would be complete without channeling the passion and mythos intrinsic to the bullfight—or *toreo* as it is known in Spanish-speaking countries. That fascination continues today with films such as *Blood and Sand*, based on Vicente Blasco Ibáñez's best-selling novel, and Pedro Almodóvar's *Matador*.

Yet for outsiders there are still a number of misconceptions surrounding this vital aspect of Spanish culture. First, as Edward F. Stanton writes in his comprehensive *Handbook of Spanish Popular Culture*, bullfighting is neither sport nor entertainment. It is ceremony, a way of life deeply rooted in Spanish society—in effect, a solemn and sacred dance of life and death. What's more, bullfighting is theater, as cathartic as ancient Greek tragedy. Not a competition between man and bull, but, as Stanton writes, "a mutual participation in a prescribed ritual, or as some have suggested, a kind of sublimated lovemaking."

But isn't bullfighting inherently cruel and savage, in which the bull or (less likely) the man must die? Spaniards also fervently debate the question. "Take away the bull and we'll see what is left," wrote Spanish author Antonio Gala. "Would we recognize ourselves without the passion for and against the bull?" For the bull is the country's most identifiable symbol. As early as the first century A.D., the Iberian Peninsula was described by the Greek geographer Strabo as a dried, stretched bull's hide. Cattle still populate the Spanish countryside—in actuality and as 20-foot-tall, black billboards in the shape of a fighting bull (*toro bravo*). Originally advertisements for Soberano ("Sovereign") brandy, these billboards have become national artistic monuments.

Fans will trace the origins of Spanish bullfighting as far back as ancient cave paintings and Roman hunts, although the historical record isn't so certain. What we do know is that for centuries, the Catholic Church in Spain registered its displeasure with bullfighting's pagan associations, including one edict dating from 447 A.D. Two popes even attempted to outlaw the spectacles in the sixteenth century. During the age of the Enlightenment, Spanish monarchs also tried to prohibit the bulls, yet with little success. Government policy changed entirely during the dictatorship of Francisco Franco (1939–1975), when bullfighting was promoted owing to its strong connection to Spanish tradition. Today, in spite of protests by animal rights advocates and increasing government regulations, bullfighting remains popular.

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According to one count, there are approximately 8,000 bull-related events celebrated each year in Spain. These include not just the formal bullfight or *corrida de toros*, but the *encierro* or running of the bulls immortalized by Hemingway in *The Sun Also Rises*; *capeas*, the informal caping of calves, cows, or bulls during fiestas in thousands of town squares; and *recortadores* or competitions of bull-dodgers practiced by amateurs. In contrast, bullfighting is a centuries-old profession. Nowadays most bullfighters or *toreros* are trained in formal bullfighting schools, including one in San Diego. In 1976, it became legal for women to be professional bullfighters in Spain.

In Bizet's *Carmen*, there are notable inaccuracies about bullfighting, including the very term *toreador* which does not exist in Spanish. (It was purportedly invented by Bizet so that the syllables of the word would correspond with the music for the Toreador Song.) However, as Stanton notes in his history of bullfighting, "the most marginal ethnic group in all of Spain, the Gypsies, have made up a disproportionate percentage of matadores," particularly in more recent times. The hot-blooded Carmen has met her match not with the cool and aloof Don José but with the brave Escamillo.

In the end, passion, dignity, and tradition have become synonymous with Spanish bullfighting. Without bullfighters, as the aficionado Fernando Claramunt remarked, "Spain would be like any other place in the world. They are modern man's last connection to the ancient, heroic past." 🌸



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Left: The famous long-faced bullfighter Manolete, aka Manuel Rodríguez Sánchez, known best for his dangerous cape passes. The photo was taken on one of the most infamous days in the history of modern bullfighting, on August 28, 1947 in Andalusia, when Manolete was gored to death.

Right: A '60s era bullfighting poster.



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ARTIST PROFILES



CARLO MONTANARO
(Cecina, Italy)
Conductor
The music director at Teatr Wielki in Warsaw from 2011 to 2014, Italian conductor Carlo Montanaro makes his San Francisco

Opera debut leading *Carmen*. Since 2001, Montanaro has conducted opera and concerts in major venues including Teatro dell'Opera in Rome, Teatro Massimo in Palermo, Fondazione Arena in Verona, Deutsche Oper in Berlin, Teatro Comunale in Florence, Fondazione Arturo Toscanini in Parma, and Teatro Verdi in Trieste (a collaboration which led to a Japanese tour with the Orchestra). The 2015–16 season opened with his debut at Opéra de Monte Carlo with *Tosca*, followed by *Rigoletto* at Warsaw Opera, *Maria Stuarda* at Seattle Opera, and his debut at the Sydney Opera House with *La Bohème*. Upcoming performances include *Rigoletto* at Oper Frankfurt and *La Traviata* at Dallas Opera. He is scheduled to return to San Francisco Opera next season to lead *La Bohème*.



JORDI BERNÀCER
(Alcoi, Spain)
Conductor
Spanish conductor Jordi Bernàcer joined the Company in August 2015. As resident conductor, he serves as musical assistant

to Music Director Nicola Luisotti, in addition to participating in a wide range of musical and rehearsal activities. Bernàcer's conducting credits include *Rigoletto* at the Teatro Real in Madrid; *Tosca* and *Cavalleria Rusticana* at the Teatro di San Carlo in Naples; *Manon*, *Manon Lescaut*, *Luisa Fernanda*, and *Simon Boccanegra* (the latter two with Plácido Domingo) at Valencia's Palau de les Arts Reina Sofía; *Tosca* for Los Angeles Opera; *Carmen* at Teatr Wielki in Poland; and operas and concerts at festivals in Italy, Spain, and the Castleton Festival in Virginia.



IRENE ROBERTS
(Sacramento, California)
Carmen
Mezzo-soprano Irene Roberts made her San Francisco Opera debut as Giulietta in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*

in 2013. More recently, during the 2015–16 season, Roberts joined the ensemble of the Deutsche Oper Berlin where she appeared as *Carmen*, *Rosina* in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and *Cherubino* in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. She also returned to Palm Beach Opera for her role debut as the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and made her debut at London's Wigmore Hall in recital with tenor Bryan Hymel and pianist Julius Drake. Past seasons have seen Roberts at the Metropolitan Opera (*Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Parsifal*), Palm Beach Opera (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Don Giovanni*, *Madama Butterfly*), Lyric Opera of Kansas City (*L'Italiana in Algeri*), and Atlanta Opera (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*). On the concert stage, Roberts has appeared as a soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Duke University Orchestra.



GINGER COSTA-JACKSON
(Palermo, Sicily)
Carmen
Italian-American mezzo-soprano Ginger Costa-Jackson made her San Francisco Opera debut in 2012

as Nancy T'ang, First Secretary to Mao in *Nixon in China*. Recent highlights of the past two seasons include Metropolitan Opera performances as *Rosina* in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Lola* in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, and debuts at Vancouver Opera, Virginia Opera, and Opera Grand Rapids in the title role of *Carmen*. A 2012 graduate of the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Program, Costa-Jackson debuted the role of *Carmen* with the Glimmerglass Festival in 2011, and made her European debut as *Lola* with Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu. Next season, Costa-Jackson will appear as *Carmen* at Michigan Opera Theatre and as *Despina* in *Così fan tutte* with the Opéra national de Paris.

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BRIAN JAGDE
(New York, New York)
Don José

Tenor Brian Jagde made his San Francisco Opera debut in 2010 as Joe in *La Fanciulla del West* and returned as the Messenger in *Aida*, Janek in *The Makropulos Case*, Vitellozzo in *Lucrezia Borgia*, Lt. B.F. Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, and Mario Cavaradossi in *Tosca*. An alumnus of the 2009 Merola Opera Program and former San Francisco Opera

Adler Fellow, Jagde recently made house debuts at the Teatro San Carlo as Don José (led by Zubin Mehta), at Houston Grand Opera as the Prince in *Rusalka*, at Palm Beach Opera as Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden as Pinkerton. Jagde makes several highly anticipated role debuts in the 2016–17 season, including Radames in a new production of *Aida* at San Francisco Opera, Maurizio in *Adriana Lecouvreur* at Covent Garden, and Froh in *Das Rheingold* in his first appearance with the New York Philharmonic.



ADAM DIEGEL
(Memphis, Tennessee)
Don José

Tenor Adam Diegel is making his San Francisco Opera debut as Don José in *Carmen*. He has sung the role at Arizona Opera, Glimmerglass Festival, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Florida Grand Opera, Madison Opera, and in the Calixto Bieito production at English National Opera. Other recent successes include his Metropolitan Opera debut as Froh in *Das Rheingold* and Lieutenant B.F. Pinkerton at Opera San Antonio and Opera Hong Kong. Next season, Diegel will sing Ismaele in *Nabucco* at the Metropolitan Opera, Don José at Opera San Antonio, Pinkerton at Palm Beach Opera, and Ruggiero in *La Rondine* at Opera Santa Barbara.



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ELLIE DEHN
(Anoka, Minnesota)
Micaëla

Soprano Ellie Dehn has previously appeared at San Francisco Opera in the roles of the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, and Musetta in *La Bohème*. Recent successes include her Royal Opera, Covent Garden debut as the Countess, the title role in *Rusalka* with Lyric Opera of Kansas City, her Oper Köln debut as Donna Anna, and her La Scala debut as Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. She has also returned to the Metropolitan Opera to perform Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* and Musetta. Dehn enjoys being a regular guest on *A Prairie Home Companion*. Scheduled upcoming performances include Musetta at San Francisco Opera next summer.



ERIKA GRIMALDI
(Asti, Italy)
Micaëla

Soprano Erika Grimaldi is making her San Francisco Opera debut as Micaëla in *Carmen*. This past year her appearances have included the title role of *Giovanna d'Arco* at La Scala, Mimi in *La Bohème* at Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, and Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at Deutsche Oper Berlin. She also recently joined Jonas Kaufmann in a scene from *Il Trovatore* on the tenor's all-Verdi CD for Sony Classical. Grimaldi has frequently performed at the Teatro Regio di Torino under the baton of its music director

Gianandrea Noseda, including the roles of Desdemona in *Otello*, Maria in *Simon Boccanegra*, and the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. She is scheduled to appear next season with San Francisco Opera as Mimi in *La Bohème*.



ZACHARY NELSON
(Annapolis, Maryland)
Escamillo

Baritone Zachary Nelson is making his San Francisco Opera debut as Escamillo in *Carmen*, the same role he performed this past season with Palm Beach Opera and the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto. In addition, he returned to the Semperoper Dresden to perform Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Other recent successes include performances of Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus* with the Seiji Ozawa Music Academy Opera Project in Japan; the title role of *Le Nozze di Figaro* with the Aix-en-Provence Festival on tour in Manama, Bahrain; and at Santa Fe Opera. Next season, Nelson debuts at the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Donner in *Das Rheingold* and Norwegian National Opera as Escamillo. He will also return to Santa Fe Opera as Enrico Ashton in *Lucia di Lammermoor*.



MICHAEL SUMUEL
(Odessa, Texas)
Escamillo

Bass-baritone Michael Sumuel made his San Francisco Opera debut in 2011 with the world premiere of Christopher Theofanidis' *Heart of a Soldier* and Handel's *Xerxes*. Highlights of recent seasons include his Lyric Opera of Chicago debut as Masetto in a new production of *Don Giovanni*, Papageno in *The Magic Flute* at Houston Grand Opera, and as Junius in *The Rape of Lucretia* at Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Later this summer, he returns to Glyndebourne to perform as Theseus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Sumuel is an alumnus of the Merola Opera Program (2009) and Houston Grand Opera Studio, as well as a winner of a 2015 Richard Tucker career grant.



AMINA EDRIS
(Christchurch, New Zealand)
Frasquita

Egyptian-born, New Zealand soprano Amina Edris is making her San Francisco Opera debut as

Frasquita in *Carmen*. She is a first-year San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow and a participant of the 2015 Merola Opera Program where she performed the role of Norina in *Don Pasquale*. Roles in her repertory include Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Serpina in *La Serva Padrona*, Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and Gilda in *Rigoletto*. Edris is a winner of the Sydney Eisteddfod McDonald's Operatic Aria Competition and the Deborah Reidel award in the Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonyngel Bel Canto Award Competition 2013, as well as a recipient of the Western Regional Special Encouragement Award in the

2014 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.



RENÉE RAPIERT
(Marion, Iowa)
Mercédès

After receiving her training as a San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow (2012–13) and LA Opera Domingo Thornton Young Artist, mezzo-soprano Renée Rapiert has gone on to make debuts at LA Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, the

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Ravinia Festival, and Seattle Opera. Her 2016–17 season includes returns to Seattle Opera, Opera Parallèle, and a debut with the LA Philharmonic. Rapier was the 2012 winner of the Palm Springs Opera Guild Competition, and the 2013 Brava! Opera Theater and James M. Collier Young Artist Program Vocal Competition. She also was a 2011 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions national semifinalist, a finalist of the 2013 Seoul International Music Competition, and a semifinalist at Operalia 2015.



EDWARD NELSON
(Santa Clarita, California)

Moralès

A second-year San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow, baritone Edward Nelson is a graduate of the 2014

Merola Opera Program, where he sang the title role of *Don Giovanni*. Earlier in San Francisco Opera's 2015–16 season, he

performed the roles of the Second Priest in *The Magic Flute*, Hermann Ortel in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Fiorello in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and L'Ami in Debussy's *La Chute de la Maison Usher*. In 2015, he created the role of Lieutenant John Buckley in the world premiere of Marco Tutino's *Two Women*. Nelson is a national semi-finalist in the 2013 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and the 2014 Naumburg International Voice Competition, First Prize winner of the 2014 Corbett Opera Competition at CCM, and a winner in the 2013 Opera Columbus and 2014 Mildred Miller International Voice Competition.



BRAD WALKER

(Lake Zurich, Illinois)

Zuniga

Making his San Francisco Opera debut as Zuniga in *Carmen*, bass-baritone Brad Walker is a first-year San Francisco Opera

Adler Fellow and graduate of the 2015 Merola Opera Program, where he appeared as Betto di Signa in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*. He has performed the title role of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola*, and Colline in *La Bohème* with Yale Opera where he received an Artist Diploma from the Yale School of Music. While earning a Master of Music from the University of Kansas, he appeared as Mr. Peachum in *The Beggar's Opera*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, and Orgon in Kirke Mechem's *Tartuffe*. On the concert stage, he has sung Handel's *Messiah*, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, and debuted at Lincoln Center in Dvorak's *Stabat Mater*.



ALEX BOYER

(New York, New York)

El Remendado

Tenor Alexander Boyer is making his San Francisco Opera debut as El Remendado in *Carmen*. He has most recently performed

the roles of Rodolfo in *La Bohème* and the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* with Island City Opera, Marcello in Leoncavallo's *La Bohème* and Alwa in *Lulu* with West Edge Opera, Lt. B.F. Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* with Livermore Valley Opera, Lensky in *Eugene Onegin* with Opera Idaho, and Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Manrico in *Il Trovatore* with Island City Opera. During his residency at Opera San José from 2008–2013, Boyer performed the roles of Nadir in *The Pearl Fishers*, Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*, Manrico,

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and Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*. He has participated in the Merola Opera Program (2007) and Santa Fe Opera's Apprenticeship Program for Singers.



DANIEL CILLI

(San Francisco, California)

El Dancairo

Making his San Francisco Opera debut as El Dancairo in *Carmen*, baritone Daniel Cilli regularly

performs with San Francisco-based Opera Parallèle, including as the Thames Captain in the 2015 North American premiere of *Heart of Darkness* by Tarik O'Regan, Billy in *Mahagonny Songspiel*, Le Directeur/Mr. Presto in *Les mamelles de Tirésias*, and the title role in the 2013 premiere of *Gesualdo: Prince of Madness*, a graphic opera by Dante DeSilva. During recent seasons, he has also performed the roles of The Cellist in Kurt Rhode's *Death with Interruptions* with Left Coast Chamber Ensemble, Burton in Jack Perla's *River of Light* at Festival Opera, and a debut as Javert in *Les Misérables* at Utah Festival. While as a principal baritone at Opera San José from 2006–2010, Cilli performed fifteen leading roles including Onegin in *Eugene Onegin* and Mercutio in *Roméo et Juliette*.



YUSEF LAMBERT

(San Francisco, California)

Lillas Pastia

Yusef Lambert made his San Francisco Opera debut in 2011 in the role of Lillas Pastia in *Carmen*. He

has performed in the Bay Area for the past decade in productions at the San Francisco Playhouse, American Conservatory Theater, TheatreWorks, the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, and Shakespeare at Stinson. Recently, he starred in the independent Kung fu film *The Mandarin Contract* as well as the award-winning silent short *The Magic Man*. He is also a founding member of Tongue and Groove Theatre, an award-winning *commedia dell'arte* theater in Austin, Texas.



MARCOS VEDOVETTO

(Tupi Paulista, Brazil)
Torero

Marcos Vedovetto is making his San Francisco Opera debut as the dancer Torero in this production

of *Carmen*. After completing his dance studies in Brazil, he came to this country and has danced with and choreographed for Connecticut Ballet and Santa Clara Ballet. In San Francisco, Vedovetto has performed with the Sarah Berges Dance, Labayen Dance, Zhukov Dance Theater, and Dance Theatre of San Francisco. In New York City, he has performed with Alpha Omega, Lydia Johnson Dance, Regina Nejman and Company, and Haiti Dansco Company.



JAMIELYN DUGGAN

(San Francisco)
Manuelita

Jamielyn Duggan made her San Francisco Opera solo dancing debut earlier this season as Madeline Usher in Gordon

Getty's *Usher House*. This is her sixteenth production with San Francisco Opera. She began her career with Capacitor, Liss Fain Dance, and California Contemporary Dancers. Her guest artist engagements

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include Diablo Ballet, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, and as a principal dancer in San Diego Opera's *The Pearl Fishers*. Most recently she has danced with Oakland Ballet Company, Amy Seiwert's Imagery, MFDPSF, and is a founding member of the Milissa Payne Project and Dance Theatre of San Francisco.



CALIXTO BIEITO

(Burgos, Spain)

Production

Making both his San Francisco Opera and American operatic debuts, Calixto Bieito created the original version of this

production of *Carmen* in 1999 at El Festival de Peralada in Catalonia and in 2000 at Opera Zuid in the Netherlands. He began his directing career at Teatro Romea in Barcelona, which he led between 1999 and 2011. Significant productions include *Così fan tutte* at the Welsh National Opera and *Un Ballo in Maschera* at Barcelona's Gran Teatre Liceu in 2000; *Don Giovanni* in Hanover in 2002, co-produced with English National Opera and Gran Teatre Liceu; followed by a widely scandalized production of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at Berlin's Komische Oper in 2004, establishing his fame as one of Europe's foremost—and controversial—opera directors. His successful 2015 ENO production of *La Forza del Destino* will appear at the Metropolitan Opera in 2017 and then in Toronto in 2020. Among his current and upcoming projects are Reimann's *Lear* at the Paris Opéra, *La Juive* at the Bavarian State Opera, *Otello* at Hamburg State Opera, and *Tosca* at the Norwegian National Opera in Oslo. From 2013 to 2015 he was an artist-in-residence at the Theater Basel.



JOAN ANTON RECHI

(Andorra)

Revival Director

Joan Anton Rechi is making his San Francisco Opera debut with *Carmen*. He acted in theaters and on television

before starting to work as a production assistant for directors, including Calixto Bieito, Robert Carsen, and Willy Decker. He began his own work as a director in 2003 with a theatrical adaptation of Offenbach's *Orphée aux enfers* at Barcelona's Romea Theater. Recent engagements include a new production of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in Darmstadt, Germany and the premiere of *Salome* in Bogotá, Colombia. Upcoming

engagements include Monteverdi's *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* in Peralada, Spain; Verdi's *Il Trovatore* at Barcelona's Grand Teatre del Liceu; and Strauss' *Die schweigsame Frau* in Aachen, Germany.



ALFONS FLORES
(Barcelona, Spain)

Set Designer

Making his San Francisco Opera debut, Alfons Flores has collaborated with leading directors Alex Ollé, Carlus

Padrissa, Mario Gas, Ferrán Madico, Joan Lluís Bozzo, Josep Maria Mestres, Carlos Wagner, Stephan Märki, and Calixto Bieito. With Bieito he has designed sets for *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Don Giovanni*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Die Fledermaus*, and *Wozzeck*. His work with Barcelona's La Fura dels Baus has included sets for *Le Grand Macabre*, *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, and Enescu's *Oedipe*. He has also designed sets for the world premiere of Francesconi's *Quartett* at La Scala. Flores has been awarded critics' prizes in Dublin and Barcelona.



MERCÈ PALOMA

(Barcelona, Spain)

Costume Designer

Making her San Francisco Opera debut, Mercè Paloma has collaborated with Calixto Bieito in *Barbaric Comedies*

at the Edinburgh Festival; *Life is a Dream* in Barcelona and the Edinburgh Festival; *La Casa de Bernada Alba*, *El Barberillo de Lavapies*, and *The Tempest* in Madrid; Shakespeare's *Macbeth* at the Salzburg Festival; and *Pierrot Lunaire* in Barcelona. Opera credits include *Così fan tutte* and *Die Fledermaus* with Welsh National Opera; *Don Giovanni* and *Un Ballo in Maschera* for English National Opera and Royal Danish Opera; and *Tosca*, *Wozzeck*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and *La Cabeza del Bautista* for Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu. She has also designed extensively for Spanish and Catalan television and film.



GARY MARDER

(San Diego, California)

Lighting Designer

Resident lighting designer for San Francisco Opera, Gary Marder made his Company debut with

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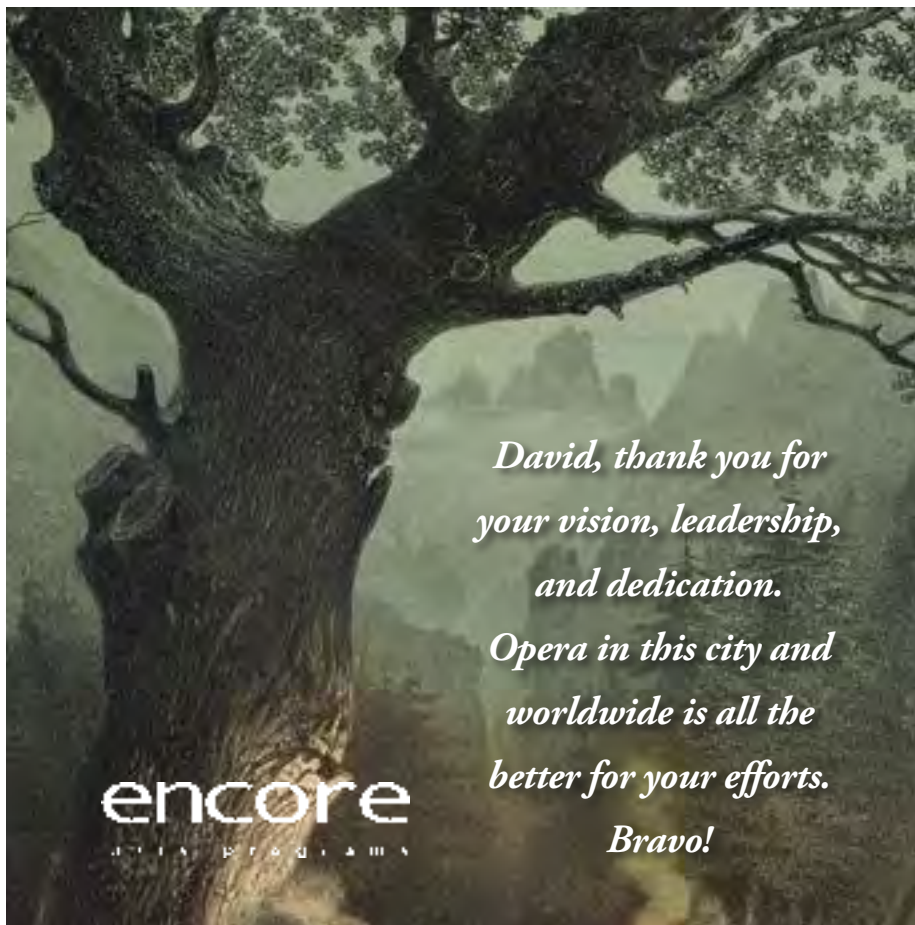
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Mefistofele in 2013 and his lighting designs most recently appeared in the Company's *Luisa Miller*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Marder's other work includes *The Magic Flute* in Sydney; *La Traviata* at Turin's Teatro Regio as well as in Tokyo; *The Makropulos Case* and *Samson et Dalila* at Houston Grand Opera; and *Samson et Dalila*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Carmen*, *Peter Grimes*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and *Norma* at San Diego Opera. Marder previously served as assistant resident lighting designer for the Metropolitan Opera for twelve seasons and

associate resident lighting designer at New York City Opera for five years.



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 ten 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. He currently serves as artistic director of the San Francisco Boys Chorus.



LAWRENCE PECH
(San Francisco, California)
Dance Master

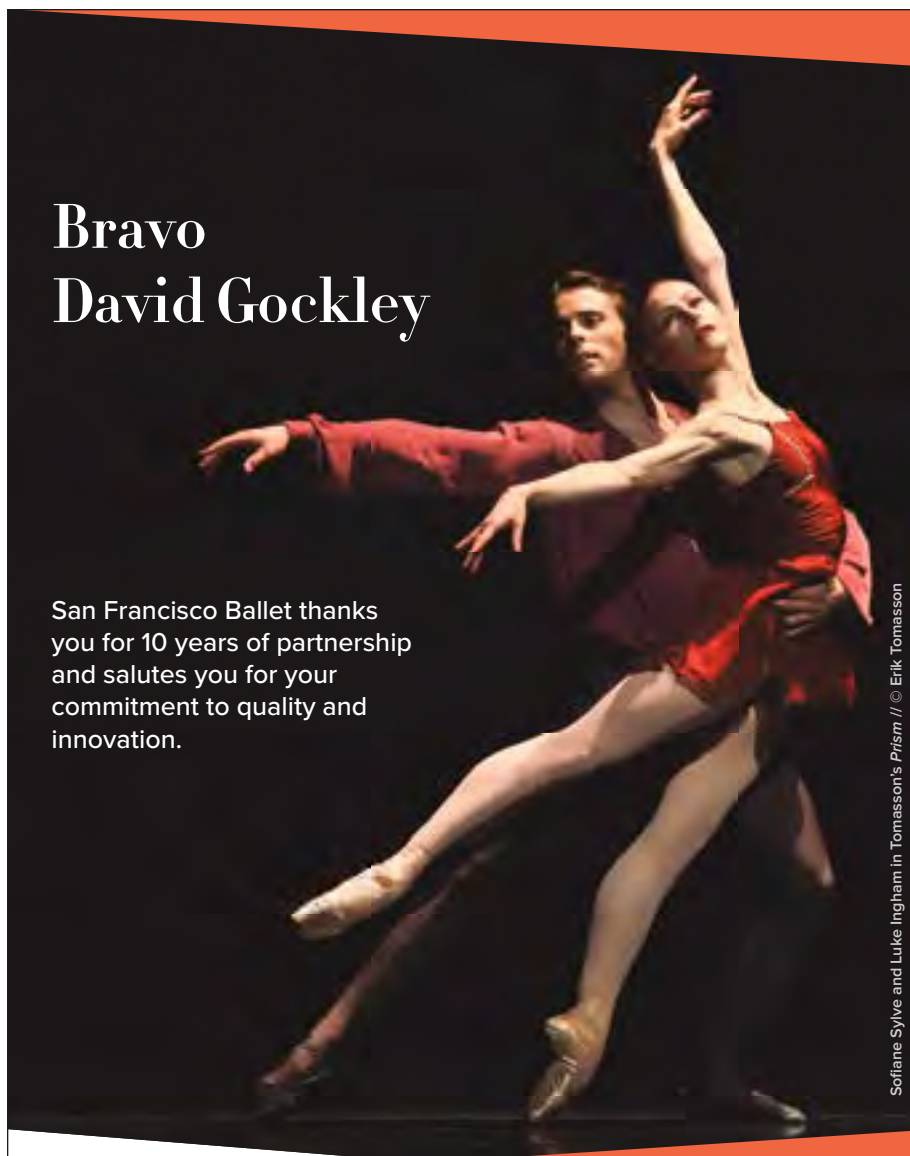
Lawrence Pech is in his nineteenth season as dance master and resident choreographer for San Francisco Opera. He has created period and interpretive dances on more than sixty productions with the Company. Pech received his formal training from American Ballet Theatre (ABT) and was invited by Mikhail Baryshnikov to join that company in 1980. In 1986, he joined San Francisco Ballet, where he became a principal dancer in 1989. Pech founded two of his own dance companies and has choreographed more than fifty ballets, thirty musicals, and numerous self-produced evenings of music and dance around the world.



DAVE MAIER
(Great Neck, New York)

Fight Director
Resident fight director for San Francisco Opera, Dave Maier made his Company debut in 2013 with

Les Contes d'Hoffmann. His work has most recently appeared in the Company's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Luisa Miller*, *The Magic Flute*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Maier has directed fight scenes for American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theater, San Jose Repertory, Aurora Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, and Magic Theatre, among others. He is a five-time recipient of the San Francisco Bay Area Drama Critics Circle Award for Fight Direction, as well as an adjunct faculty member at the University of California Santa Cruz and St. Mary's College of California. He currently teaches combat-related courses at Berkeley Repertory School of Theater.



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Sofiane Sylve and Luke Ingham in Tomasson's *Prism* // © Erik Tomasson



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John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn



Once again, the unprecedented generosity of Cynthia and John Gunn has set the stage for a dazzling season at San Francisco Opera. Since 2002, when John joined the Opera Board, the couple has underwritten numerous productions and provided exceptional 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, the Gunns' inspired generosity is helping make possible four productions—*Sweeney Todd*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Carmen*, and *Don Carlo*.

John shared his considerable insights at the 2014 conference of OPERA America, the national service organization for opera. As he told attendees, "Opera is a dynamic art form and all of us play a role in keeping it vital. We must expand our repertoire and our audiences, and strive for financial flexibility. And we depend on donors to keep opera alive."

John is the former chairman and CEO of Dodge & Cox

Investment Managers. He joined the firm in 1972, the year he received his MBA from Stanford Business School and married Cynthia, who graduated from Stanford with an A.B. in political science in 1970. Early in her career, Cynthia was the editor and director of The Portable Stanford book series for ten years. She edited twenty-eight books by Stanford professors on a vast array of topics, including *Economic Policy Beyond the Headlines* by George Shultz and Ken Dam.

In addition to their support of San Francisco Opera, the Gunns are active members of the community. John is the chair of the advisory board for the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research (SIEPR), serves as a trustee of Stanford University, and is Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of Stanford Hospital Care. Cynthia is an overseer of Stanford's Hoover Institution, a member of the advisory board of Family and Children Services, and serves on the boards of the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health and the San Francisco Fine Arts Museums.

Opera lovers are grateful to Cynthia and John, and applaud their commitment to keeping San Francisco Opera a leading-edge company.



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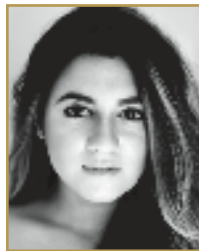
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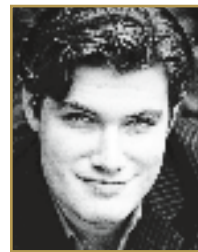


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Laura Albers
Associate Concertmaster



Heidi Wilcox
Assistant Concertmaster



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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



Jeremy Preston
Principal
Second Violin



Martha Simonds
Associate Principal
Second Violin



Beni Shinohara
Assistant Principal
Second Violin



Eva Karasik
Second Violin



Leslie Ludena
Second Violin



Linda Deutsch
Second Violin



Craig Reiss
Second Violin



Joseph Edelberg
Second Violin
Regular Substitute



Marianne Wagner
Second Violin
Regular Substitute



Carla Maria Rodrigues
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Viola



Sergey Rakitchenkov
Associate Principal
Viola



Paul Nahhas
Assistant Principal
Viola



Patricia Heller
Viola



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Bass



Steven D'Amico
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Shinji Eshima
Bass



Mark Drury
Bass



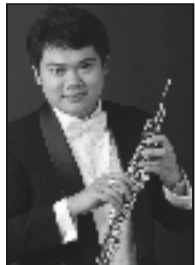
Julie McKenzie
Principal
Flute



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



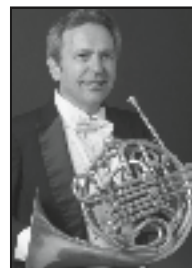
Michael Severance
Bassoon &
Contrabassoon



Kevin Rivard
Co-Principal
Horn



Christopher Cooper
Acting 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



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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

Most photos by John Martin. Not pictured: Lev Rankov, First Violin.



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Librarian



Timothy Spears
*Assistant Orchestra
Manager & Librarian*

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Soprano



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Soprano



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Soprano



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Soprano



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Soprano



Elisabeth Rom Lucio
Soprano



Angela Eden Moser
Soprano



Rachelle Perry
Soprano



Virginia Pluth
Soprano



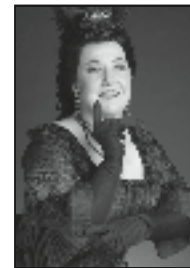
Carole Schaffer
Soprano



Mitzie Kay Weiner
Soprano



Buffy Baggott
Mezzo-Soprano



Roberta Bowman
Mezzo-Soprano



Janet Campbell
Mezzo-Soprano



Sally Mouzon
Mezzo-Soprano



Sally Munro
Mezzo-Soprano



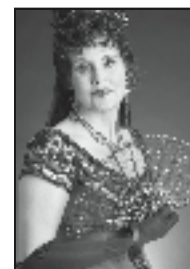
Erin Neff
Mezzo-Soprano



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



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Tenor



Daniel Harper
Tenor



Christopher Jackson
Tenor



Phillip Pickens
Tenor

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Tenor



Colby Roberts
Tenor



Sigmund Seigel
Tenor



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Tenor



Alexander Taite
Tenor



Andrew Truett
Tenor



Richard Walker
Tenor



Torlef Borsting
Baritone



Anders Fröhlich
Baritone



Cameron Henley
Baritone



Ken Johnson
Baritone



David Kekuewa
Baritone



Frederick Matthews
Baritone



Ken Rafanan
Baritone
Leave of Absence



Michael Rogers
Baritone



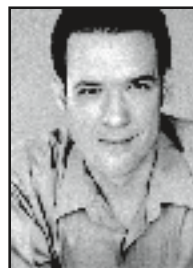
Jere Torkelsen
Baritone



Bojan Knežević
Bass



Jim Meyer
Bass



William O'Neill
Bass



William Pickersgill
Bass



Valery Portnov
Bass

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

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

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Brook Broughton



Blanche Hampton



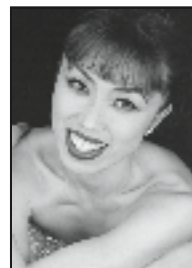
Bryan Ketron



Michael Levine



Rachel Speidel Little



Chiharu Shibata

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 Amina Edris* † †
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 Colm Seery*

* = San Francisco Opera debut
 † = Former Adler Fellow
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Fabrizio Corona, *Associate Chorus Master*

Jim Meyer, *Chorus and Dance Manager*

Mary Finch, *Assistant Chorus Manager/*

Chorus Librarian

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Buffy Baggott *
 Kathleen Bayler
 Roberta Bowman
 Janet Campbell
 Sara Colburn
 Dvora Djoraev
 Mary Finch
 Claudia Haider
 Claire Kelm
 Elisabeth Rom Lucio
 Angela Eden Moser *
 Sally Mouzon
 Sally Porter Munro
 Erin Neff
 Rachelle Perry
 Virginia Pluth
 Laurel Cameron Porter
 Laurel Rice
 Shelley Seitz
 Carole Schaffer
 Donna Turchi
 Mitzie Weiner

C. Michael Belle
 Torlef Borsting
 Alan Cochran
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 Phillip Pickens
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 Chester Pidduck
 Valery Portnov
 Ken Rafanan †
 Colby Roberts
 Michael Rogers
 Sigmund Seigel
 Dan Stanley
 Alexander Taite
 Jere Torkelsen *
 Andrew Truett
 Richard Walker

† Chorus member on Leave of Absence

* Chorus member appearing in a Solo Role

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 Katie Carlson
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Jordi Bernàcer, *Resident Conductor*

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Laura Albers, *Associate Concertmaster*
Heidi Wilcox, *Assistant Concertmaster*
Jennifer Cho
Dawn Harms
Mariya Borozina
Lev Rankov
Barbara Riccardi
Leonid Igudesman
Asuka Annie Yano
Wenyi Shih **
Robin Hansen **

SECOND VIOLIN

Jeremy Preston, *Principal*
Martha Simonds, *Associate Principal*
Beni Shinohara, *Assistant Principal*
Eva Karasik
Leslie Ludena
Linda Deutsch Twohy †
Craig Reiss
Joseph Edelberg**
Marianne Wagner **

VIOLA

Carla Maria Rodrigues, *Principal*
Sergey Rakitchenkov, *Associate Principal*
Paul Nahhas, *Assistant Principal*
Patricia Heller
Jonna Hervig
Natalia Vershilova
Joy Fellows

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David Kadarauach, *Principal*
Thalia Moore, *Associate Principal* *
Nora Pirquet, *Acting Assistant Principal*
Emil Miland
Victoria Ehrlich
Ruth Lane
Eric Sung **

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Jonathan Lancelle, *Associate Principal*
Steven D'Amico, *Assistant Principal*
Shinji Eshima
Mark Drury

FLUTE

Julie McKenzie, *Principal*
Patricia Farrell
Stephanie McNab

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Stephanie McNab

OBOE

Mingjia Liu, *Principal*
Deborah Henry, *Assistant Principal* †
Deborah Shidler **
Janet Popesco Archibald

ENGLISH HORN

Janet Popesco Archibald

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Jose Gonzalez Granero, *Principal*
Joanne Burke Eisler, *Assistant Principal*
Anthony Striplen

BASS CLARINET

Anthony Striplen

BASSOON

Rufus Olivier, *Principal*
Daniel MacNeill
Michael Severance

CONTRABASSOON

Michael Severance

HORN

Kevin Rivard, *Co-Principal*
Christopher Cooper, *Co Principal* **
Keith Green
Brian McCarty
Lawrence Ragent

TRUMPET

Adam Luftman, *Principal*
William Holmes
John Pearson *

TROMBONE

Samuel Schlosser, *Principal*
Donald Kennelly
David Ridge

TUBA/CIMBASSO

Zachariah Spellman

TIMPANI

John Burgardt

PERCUSSION

Richard Kvistad, *Principal/Associate Timpani*
Patricia Niemi *

HARP

Olga Ortenberg-Rakitchenkov

LIBRARIAN

Carrie Weick
Timothy Spears, *Assistant*

ORCHESTRA MANAGER

Tracy Davis
Timothy Spears, *Assistant*

* Principal for one or more Summer season operas

† Leave of absence

** Season substitute



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Daniela Mack in the 2015 San Francisco Opera production of The Barber of Seville



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Although the program magazines regularly list members of the administration and Company, we know that those lists are by necessity incomplete. To give recognition to the many skilled professionals whose work has contributed so greatly to the quality of San Francisco Opera productions, we provide once every year a list of everyone involved with our season.

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THE MEROLA OPERA PROGRAM is dedicated to the continuing education and professional training of the finest young operatic talent and the development of this talent into professional opera singers, coaches and stage directors of the highest artistic caliber. Merola operates in close artistic collaboration with San Francisco Opera but is an independent nonprofit organization, governed by a separate board of directors. Merola is responsible for its own fundraising, primarily from loyal members and foundations.

Young artists participating in Merola's intensive training program benefit from its association with San Francisco Opera, often returning to appear on the main stage. In any given season, over 30% of all San Francisco Opera roles, including cover roles, are performed by former Merola artists. Graduates of the Merola Opera Program include Joyce DiDonato, Susan Graham, Thomas Hampson, Anna Netrebko, Patricia Racette, John Relyea, Patrick Summers, Ruth Ann Swenson, Carol Vaness, Rolando Villazón, Deborah Voigt, and Dolora Zajick.

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If you are unable to use your tickets to a particular performance, you may exchange them for tickets to another performance, subject to availability, or donate them back to the Opera. Ticket exchanges for future performances can be accommodated up to one hour before curtain or during the first intermission. No refunds are associated with ticket exchanges, and a fee (plus any price differential) may apply.

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For Patrons in Wheelchairs, San Francisco Opera offers wheelchair-accessible seats at a range of prices. All entrances at the War Memorial Opera House are wheelchair accessible. Wheelchair-accessible stalls in restrooms can be found on all floors (except the Main Lobby and 5th floor Balcony levels). Accessible drinking fountains are located on all floors except the Balcony level.

LISTENING DEVICES Assistive listening devices are available at the North and South Lobby coat checks. ID deposit required.

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- Please turn off and refrain from using all electronic devices before the performance, including digital watches and cell phones.
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- As a courtesy to those who may have fragrance allergies, please avoid wearing perfume or cologne.
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- Children of any age attending a performance must have a ticket; no babes in arms.

Management reserves the right to remove any patron creating a disturbance.

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COAT CHECK For the safety and comfort of our audience, all large parcels, backpacks, luggage, etc. must be checked at the Opera House coat check, located at the North and South ends of the Main Lobby.

COURTESY TELEPHONE, for local calls only, is located in the main lobby across from the South passenger elevator

DRINKING FOUNTAINS are available on all levels except the Lower level, where there is a courtesy water station on the north side. Water bottles are permitted in the auditorium.

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FIRST AID STATION is located on the South Lower level. In case of emergency, please ask the nearest usher to assist you.

LOST AND FOUND items may be claimed at the North coat check during the performance. All unclaimed items are delivered to the War Memorial Performing Arts Center at 401 Van Ness Ave., Room 110, (415) 621-6600 (8 AM–5 PM, Monday–Friday).

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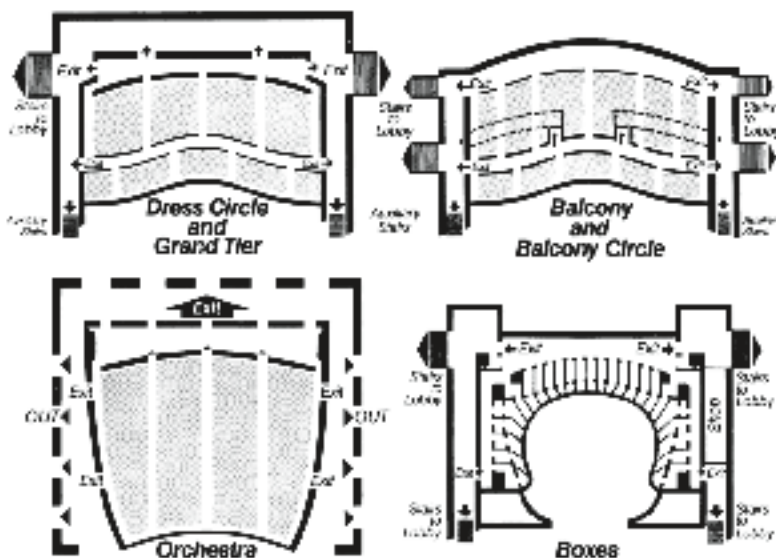
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