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# CARMEN

BY GEORGES BIZET

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Vol. 96, No. 4 • 2018–19 Season • June 2019

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June 2019  
Volume 96, No. 4



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## A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

Welcome to the conclusion of San Francisco Opera's 96th season! We are delighted that you have joined us at the War Memorial Opera House.

We open the summer with Bizet's *Carmen*, a familiar favorite that features several important firsts: the role debuts of J'Nai Bridges and Matthew Polenzani, a riveting production by Francesca Zambello that is new to our stage, and the mainstage conducting debut of James Gaffigan, one of today's most exciting American conductors. The Company then presents English director Harry Fehr's fascinating interpretation of Handel's *Orlando*, which updates the story to the time of the London Blitz and features mezzo soprano Sasha Cooke following in Marilyn Horne's footsteps in the title role. We also present Dvořák's beautiful fairy tale *Rusalka*, not seen here for 24 years, with Rachel Willis-Sørensen making her role debut as the tragic water nymph and the house premiere of South Korean conductor Eun Sun Kim.

Beyond the mainstage, this June we welcome the annual OPERA America conference and its 600+ industry representatives from across North America back to San Francisco. It is a privilege to host this gathering for our national service organization. We also welcome 29 artists to the Merola Opera Program's 62nd season of professional training for young singers, coach accompanists and directors. The highlight of this summer's Merola offerings will be the world premiere of Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer's opera *If I Were You*.

This season is made possible by our talented guest artists, orchestra, chorus, dance corps, staff, and crew who collaborate to create the uniquely compelling art form that is opera. It is also made possible by you, our family of patrons and donors, whose loyal support keeps San Francisco Opera at the forefront of opera companies worldwide. We extend special thanks to our Company Sponsors for their extraordinary annual support, whose names are listed on page 35.

If you haven't yet joined our community of donors, now is a perfect time to do so thanks to a generous challenge gift from Ann and Gordon Getty. Between now and July 31st, any new or increased gift you make of \$75 or more will be matched two-to-one! It is a wonderful opportunity to leverage your support and help San Francisco Opera thrive.

We look forward to sharing opera's transformative power with you this summer!

Sincerely,



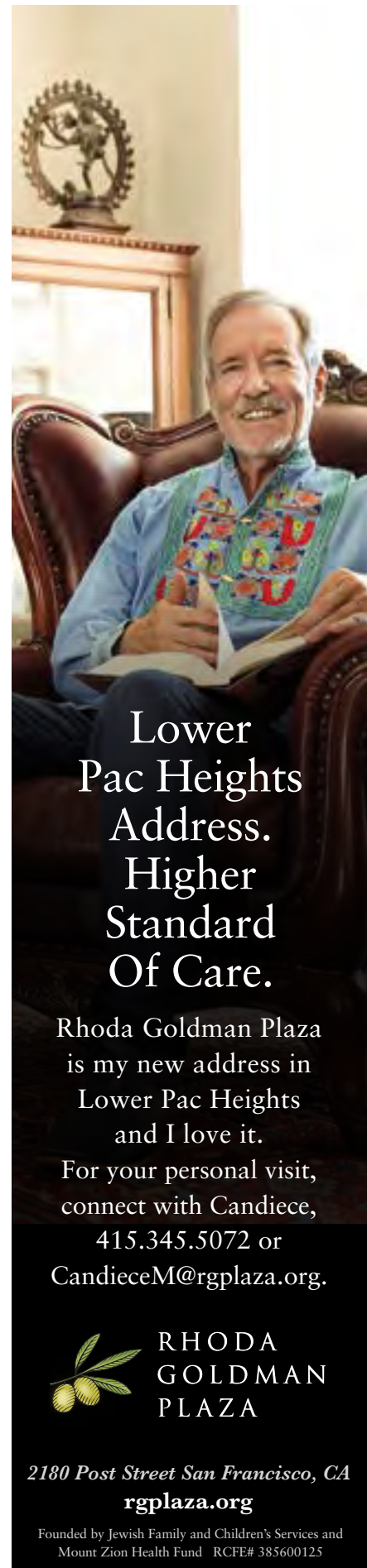
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# SAN FRANCISCO OPERA NEWS



PEDRO WALTER

## PLÁCIDO DOMINGO RETURNS OCTOBER 6

The incomparable Plácido Domingo returns to the War Memorial Opera House on Sunday, October 6 for a sold-out afternoon concert celebrating the 50th anniversary of his San Francisco Opera debut. World-renowned, Domingo is one of the finest and most influential singing actors in the history of opera with a repertory of 151 roles and more than 3,900 career performances. This multifaceted artist who has triumphed in both the tenor and baritone repertory, made his San Francisco Opera debut in 1969 replacing an ailing colleague as Rodolfo in Puccini's *La Bohème*. He appeared with the Company in over 100 performances of 14 different roles, including the lead in Alfano's *Cyrano de Bergerac*. His PBS telecasts from the War Memorial Opera House include *L'Africaine* and *Samson et Dalila*, and he appeared many times in concerts and recitals at the Opera House, Civic Auditorium, Stern Grove, and Golden Gate Park. In 1994, he was awarded the San Francisco Opera Medal, the Company's highest honor.

For his upcoming concert, Domingo will be under the baton of Spanish conductor Jordi Bernàcer with the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and guest artists to be announced.



DREW ALTIZER

On Friday, the 6th of September, San Francisco Opera Guild will produce Opera Ball, the iconic gala celebration that launches the new San Francisco Opera repertory season, the Company's 97th. For this special occasion, Guild President Mary Poland has invited Elizabeth Birka-White and Jane S. Mudge to co-chair this inaugural evening of extraordinary music, fine dining, couture fashion, and design all in support of opera education programs. Reflecting the opening night opera, Charles Gounod's romantic *Romeo and Juliet*, the theme of the Opera Ball is "The Capulets' Masked Ball," offering the perfect opportunity for attendees to wear an elegant mask. Acclaimed stylist J. Riccardo Benavides will curate the event design evoking the spirit of Renaissance Verona while McCalls Catering & Events will create the dinner and afterglow buffet to compliment the late-night dancing. For Opera Ball tickets, visit [sfopera.com/OperaBall2019](http://sfopera.com/OperaBall2019).

## OPERA GUILD SCOUTS & MADRIGALS

For the past 80 years, San Francisco Opera Guild has been offering education programs to students throughout the Bay Area. Working under the title of "Giving Voice to Potential," one of these successful activities is the ensemble-based Opera Scouts, a performing arts organization for boys and girls ages 12–18, providing a social, developmental, career, and artistic home base for arts-minded youth. Building on the success of last season's performance trip to Italy, the Scouts will travel to Austria in March 2020 for a 10-day performance itinerary in Salzburg, Melk, and Vienna.

New this year is the launch of the Opera Madrigals, a junior version of the Scouts for boys and girls ages 7–11. The Madrigals will focus on folk songs, composition, storytelling, and honing performance skills, providing an inspiring introduction to the world of opera.

Both programs launch in mid-September and conclude in May 2020. Interested students should enroll now through the end of August; limited scholarships are available. To apply, visit [sfoperaguild.com/programs](http://sfoperaguild.com/programs).



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# ARYEH NUSSBAUM COHEN

ADLER FELLOW COUNTERTENOR

BY JEFFERY MCMILLAN

**F**or nearly four decades, San Francisco Opera Center has shepherded talented young artists toward major operatic careers. Professional opportunities sometimes arise for the artists while they are still under the wing of their mentors in the Center's programs. This was certainly the case with Merola Opera Program graduate and second-year Adler Fellow Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen. In between coachings, language classes, and other training activities, the 25-year-old countertenor has experienced a rapid ascent, including a win at the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions, Grammy Award recognition, and rave reviews for performances in opera houses, on concert stages, and even an onstage role with San Francisco Ballet.

This month, Nussbaum Cohen makes his San Francisco Opera debut as Medoro in Handel's *Orlando*. Joining the cast as a late replacement, the Brooklyn-born countertenor integrated this thrilling assignment into an already packed schedule through strict planning. "I'm very type A," he said. "For every season I have a Google spreadsheet where I mark out every piece of music I have to know, how long it is going to take to learn and coach it, and the date I need it ready for rehearsals."

The preparation has really paid off. The year began with sessions for his first solo recording followed by six weeks with Lyric Opera of Chicago for Handel's *Ariodante*. The final performance was on a Sunday, and he flew to San Francisco on Monday to begin rehearsals with San Francisco Ballet on Tuesday. After a week of rehearsals and another week of performances, he went directly into rehearsals for Handel's *Saul* with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. Once *Saul* wrapped up, Nussbaum Cohen began *Orlando* rehearsals. "There hasn't been much breathing time, but I



DARIO ACOSTA

can't complain. This has truly been a dream for me."

Nussbaum Cohen feels a special kinship with his part in *Orlando*. "Medoro's affections and actions cause a lot of trouble and heartbreak for others, but he's fundamentally someone who loves very deeply and authentically. A lot of the characters in Handel's operas give the appearance of being pleasant, but they are usually scheming or playing people for political reasons. I'm excited to be portraying a character who is motivated by true love."

Though he has been a singer for most of his life, the opera bug bit Nussbaum Cohen when he was an undergraduate at Princeton and won free tickets to see Puccini's *La Bohème* at the Metropolitan Opera. "The Zeffirelli production," he emphasized. "My life has never been the same."

Nussbaum Cohen feels the countertenor's high vocal range has always suited him. "As a child, I had been singing soprano and treble in children's choir and my voice dropped when I was twelve. I didn't know what a countertenor was, but I wanted to keep singing in choir so I thought that if I sang alto, I could probably still finagle and hit the notes. That's how it started, and I've just always sung in that register. I didn't really choose to be a countertenor; it kind of chose me."

As an Adler Fellow, this rising star's operatic journey has progressed rapidly through the training he has received and from just being around world-class opera in San Francisco. "I've gained so much from watching opera being made at this level and on this scale. Watching the greatest singers of our time up close as they rehearse and perform, day after day, has been a great supplement to the education I have received. What a joy and honor it has been to soak that in."

# GET “IN THE KNOW”

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

## OPERA TALKS

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

*Carmen*: Laura Prichard

*Orlando*: Bruce Lamott

*Rusalka*: Peter Susskind

## OPERA PREVIEW LECTURES

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

## E-OPERA NEWSLETTER

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

## CHECK OUT SAN FRANCISCO OPERA’S BLOG

Our blog, *Backstage at San Francisco Opera*, offers unique insights into the Company, with entries from General Director Matthew Shilvock and others giving audiences an insider’s look at San Francisco Opera. Visit [sfopera.com/blog](http://sfopera.com/blog).

## OPERA HOUSE TOURS

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

## FAMILY PROGRAMS

San Francisco Opera invites you to join *All About Carmen*, an interactive exploration workshop for families with children ages 6 & up on June 23 at 11 am and 12.30 pm.

Next fall, join us for *All About Hansel & Gretel*, an exploration workshop for families on Nov. 30 at 11 am and 12.30 pm. Tickets \$10; visit [sfopera.com/discover-opera](http://sfopera.com/discover-opera).

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# HIDDEN MAESTRO

BY LISA HOUSTON



## MARK MORASH

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA CENTER'S DIRECTOR OF MUSICAL STUDIES

**W**hen a twenty-four-year-old Beverly Sills arrived in San Francisco for her first engagement with San Francisco Opera in 1953, she went straight to the home of Gaetano Merola, unaware he had passed away suddenly while conducting at Stern Grove the day before. What was to have been an apprenticeship under the wing of an illustrious maestro became a depressing stint in a strange city. Highlights of the trip included cooking frankfurters on the radiator of a questionable Market Street hotel, and jumping in for an ailing Gerhilde, only to suffer a wardrobe malfunction of Walküorean proportions. (A helmet mishap prompted Acting Artistic Director Kurt Herbert Adler to ask her if she was drunk.) Sills returned in 1971, a star in earnest, but that bumpy beginning is exactly what today's well-strung Merola Opera Program seeks to avoid.

Enter Mark Morash, Director of Musical Studies.

Even true fans of the opera may not know the name. When a story about the Merola program or the Adler Fellows goes to press, the spokesperson cited most often is Sheri Greenawald, a vivacious former diva who serves as director of the San Francisco Opera Center, coordinating the development of all the young singers brought under the Company's auspices. But followers of these burgeoning careers know Morash well. They've enjoyed his jovial emceeing at Merola galas, and admired his artful conducting and piano playing at countless performances spanning two decades. For these devotees, Morash is equal parts fixture and blessing.

Observing him in a recent coaching, the Nova Scotia-born Morash has a paradoxical quality, studious yet carefree, simultaneously giving the impression that every note matters intensely, and not at all. It is the nature of a coaching to stop and start, nevertheless he plays fluidly, reading music on an oversized iPad, deftly tapping his toe on an electronic page-turning device nestled beneath the piano.

An inconvenient comma begins to irritate one of the singers. "Oh that?" Morash says. "Don't worry about it. It's a mistake." (Most coaches know that scores are rife with errors. Few can tell you where they are.) A sustained note at the end of a long phrase becomes problematic. Morash appeases the singer's anxiety with a shrug. "You hold it for as long as you hold it."

Renowned collaborative pianist Martin Katz is familiar with this equanimity. "If he's stressed," Katz says, "he certainly doesn't show it, which is perhaps a prime prerequi-

site for working in opera. Stuff happens; Mark deals."

It was under Katz's tutelage at the University of Michigan that Morash first began to understand the niche he might occupy in the music world. It is a special talent to work well with singers, and Katz says Morash has got it. "Mark could probably charm birds out of trees, perhaps with only his smile and attitude as tools. He has an amazing ability to help people sing and play their best."

Bass-baritone Christian Pursell, a second-year Adler Fellow, agrees. Whether preparing an entire role, or a difficult passage in an audition aria, Pursell says Morash "knows the character of the piece. And he's not judgmental. If it's been a bad week and I'm behind on something, he's not mean about it. Mark really cares about each and every one of us," says Pursell, who will cover the role of Escamillo in this June's *Carmen*. "If we run into each other in the hallway, he always asks about my projects and how he can help. He's that kind of guy."

Morash exudes an unassuming, just-doing-my-job ethos that allows him to flourish in a building of creative personalities, where storms of temper may roll in as frequently as the afternoon fog. Morash brings his lunch every day, (and composts after, in large white bins that once contained pecans from the farm of the late pianist George Darden, a friend and colleague). Morash, along with his wife, Dallis, has raised two grown children. He has a dog. He likes to go to brunch. No surprise that around the opera house Morash is well liked.

His biggest admirer is Greenawald. Their friendship has stood the test of time, and travel. Morash began in 1998, Greenawald in 2002. Their schedule is grueling. January to April they're training the Adlers. May is prep time for Merola, which runs from Memorial Day to mid-August. Then it's time to get the Adlers ready for the fall season. "If there is a calm month in the Opera Center, and it doesn't ever feel very calm, it's September," Morash says. "But then the applications are coming in for Merola, and in October we go out on the road for auditions." That takes them to Thanksgiving, then on to the Adlers' "Future Is Now" concert. A couple of weeks off for Christmas, and they're ready to start the whole thing again in January.

Former San Francisco Opera General Director Kurt Herbert Adler once said, "If we can find one outstanding singer per year, that's OK. Someone who is really going to develop, who has star quality, then we have done our job."

In auditions, Greenawald listens mainly for what she



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*Mark Morash as a Merola Opera Program Apprentice Coach, 1987*

ALICE CUNNINGHAM



*Mark Morash coaching Adler Fellow Ashley Dixon*

MATTHEW WASHBURN

calls “the goo,” i.e., the intrinsic caliber of the voice itself, while Morash, who has perfect pitch and a love of musical minutia, listens for everything else. Both listen for someone they can feel good about putting on the main stage three weeks after arrival to sing for the general director. And both keep in mind how much will be asked of the singers.

The dial has moved over the years from a theoretical pedagogy to a highly practical approach. “It’s a fine line to walk when they’re asked to do too much, or if they’re sitting on their hands,” Morash says. “These singers are racehorses. They don’t get better sitting in the barn. You have to keep them challenged so they’re always upping their game, without overwhelming them.”

To Adler’s point, they also take the long view.

“We pride ourselves on taking voices that are unconventional for a young artist program,” Morash says. “It’s easy to take the nice, compact voices that can execute all the musical details everybody wants. But there’s somebody coming right down the pike who can do the same thing. We take voices for whom it’s a longer trajectory. Otherwise there’ll be nobody to sing the big roles. If it’s a voice that’s not going to really launch till it’s forty, if the material is there, we want it.”

In choosing Adlers from among the Merola, many minds come together. General Director Matthew Shil-

vock, Managing Director, Artistic, Gregory Henkel, and Head of Music Staff John Churchwell, as well as Administrative Director Chris Bragg, Greenawald, and Morash also receive input from Master Voice Teacher César Ulloa, and will in the future also have the counsel of mezzo-soprano Susanne Mentzer. “In a big opera company things tend to be by committee,” Morash says. Far from minding this communal aspect, it’s clear Morash thrives on the social synergy that makes opera.

Morash is a Merola alum, Class of ’87. For him, the summer was epiphanic. He left knowing what he wanted to do for the rest of his life. “I tell the Merola on their first day, ‘If we can do for you what Merola did for me, we’ll have succeeded.’”

“He loved the music,” says soprano Janet Williams, a Merola classmate from that summer who went on to an international career and now teaches at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin. “He’s one of my favorite memories of the Merola program,” she says, describing the young Morash as “serious, but fun.”

Music was fun for Morash from the beginning. At three or four he was picking out melodies on the piano by ear, emulating his mother, who played favorites and accompanied sing-alongs as a regular part of the family’s vibrant social life.



Mark Morash with Opera Center Director, Sheri Greenawald

MATTHEW WASHBURN

“As a child,” Morash says, “I was not the kid practicing two hours every day, but I probably played that much or more lots of days, for enjoyment.” Soon he was in demand, playing in churches and for the community.

Playing by ear is more than a parlor trick. It’s a core skill for someone who must enhance a perhaps antiseptic piano score into something that the singers will recognize when they perform with the more sonorous orchestra.

Playing violin in the Nova Scotia Youth Orchestra was Morash’s invitation to that world of sound. It also introduced him to “the first real musician I ever met,” a Czech violinist named Jan Wicha, who had settled in Canada after fleeing the Prague Spring.

Those early years of precocity left their mark. Morash is comfortable in front of an audience, possessing his own brand of warm-hearted stage charisma and a tasteful showmanship. At a recent recital of Adler Fellows Mary Evelyn Hangley and Christopher Oglesby, he gives a short but gripping introduction to Britten’s “Still Falls the Rain,” describing the Blitz to evoke a vivid wartime mood. “I wanted to drop everybody in it,” he tells me later, “to be ready at the down-beat.” For the brief instrumental outro of Fauré’s “En Sour-dine,” Morash’s light touch allows the beauty of the music to sneak up on the audience, much like the surprising, nocturnal song of the nightingale just mentioned in the lyric.

When I arrived at his studio for our first meeting, Morash is quick to say he cannot imagine what I will find to say about him. His comment is something more than humility. It is recognition that perhaps the most significant and lasting impact he will have on the art form he so cherishes, is not the man himself, but rather his influence on the musical minds of countless singers and colleagues. It is an artistic sensibility which once passed on, will be manifest in opera houses the world over for generations to come.

On that fateful moment when Merola died at the podium, the aria being sung was “Un bel di” from *Madama Butterfly*. The exact line was “Io senza dar risposta me ne starò nascosta.” *I give no answer, but remain hidden.* Like his foot moving swiftly under the piano, or the hours upon hours of preparation and encouragement he pours upon the stars of tomorrow, Morash’s contribution to the opera is made mostly in modest rooms, and in micro-installments, his quotidian importance vanishing almost magically as others take the curtain call. Perhaps in the end, an essential artist like Morash is as the nightingale: at the moment of greatest glory, he remains hidden. 🌸

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Lisa Houston is a feature contributor to Classical Singer magazine and San Francisco Classical Voice, and the founder of SingerSpirit.com, a website for singers.



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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, and have proudly continued that support for General Director Matthew Shilvock. This season, the Gunns' inspired generosity is helping make possible four productions—*Cavalleria Rusticana/Pagliacci*, the company's new production of *Tosca*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, and *Rusalka*. The Gunns hope that their support inspires others to give. John comments, "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 chairs the advisory board for the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research, is Vice Chairman of the Board of Stanford Hospital Care and is a former trustee of Stanford University. Cynthia currently serves as an overseer of Stanford's Hoover Institution and a trustee of the San Francisco Fine Arts Museums and has been a member of the advisory board of Family and Children Services and the board of the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health. 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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Carol Franc Buck has generously supported the arts for more than thirty years as a benefactor and a patron, and she claims her love of opera as the impetus for a commitment to the arts. With a mission to support the visual and performing arts in the western region of the country, the Carol Franc Buck Foundation was created in 1979, providing major underwriting and production grants to the opera companies of San Francisco, Houston, Portland, Nevada, and Arizona, as well as many others. She is the youngest child of Frank and Eva Buck, a well-known agricultural, entrepreneurial, and political family in California history, from whom she learned the values associated with contributing to and working in one's community. Born in San Francisco, Ms. Buck grew up in and around Vacaville at a time when it was a small rural ranching area. She attended Stanford University, graduating cum laude with a degree in history. She has served as the president of the Carol Franc Buck

Foundation since its inception, was an original director of the Frank and Eva Buck Foundation, and has served as a director of the Buck Center on Aging in Marin county, CA. She has also been a board member of San Francisco Opera since 1981. Ms. Buck has one son, Christian P. Erdman, also a trustee of the Nevada-based Foundation, who resides in Wyoming with his wife, Jacqui and daughter Mackenzie. Ms. Buck places value on the arts that flourish from her unwavering commitment: "The support that we have been able to give has absolutely enriched my life."

## **Bernard and Barbro Osher (Production Sponsor, *Orlando*)**

A native of Maine, Bernard Osher became involved with San Francisco Opera as a subscriber 50 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 scholarships for community college students in California and Maine and for baccalaureate students at universities in every state and the District of Columbia; Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes serving seasoned adults on 123 campuses nationwide; and Osher Centers for Integrative Medicine at six of the nation's leading medical schools 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 for California and serves as Chairman of the Board of the Osher Foundation.



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After a career devoted to his publishing businesses in Japan and Europe, the creation of Clos Pegase Winery in California's Napa Valley, 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. As Company Sponsors for nearly a decade, Jan and Maria have established four generous funds. The *Conductors Fund* helps ensure the continued appearances of noted Italian conductors in the orchestra pit. The *Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund* helps bring today's most compelling artists in Italian repertoire to San Francisco Opera, the *Emerging Stars Fund* supports the Company in showcasing exciting rising young stars on our stage throughout the season, and the *Luminaries Concert Fund* enables San Francisco Opera to bring legendary artists to the stage for special events and performances, beginning with Plácido Domingo in Concert this year.



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## **Joan and David Traitel/Great Singers Fund (Production Sponsor, *Orlando*/ Sponsor, Matthew Polenzani in *Carmen* and Brandon Jovanovich in *Rusalka*)**

“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, launched 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. “We are thrilled to sponsor Matthew Polenzani and Brandon Jovanovich. 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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Antonin Dvořák

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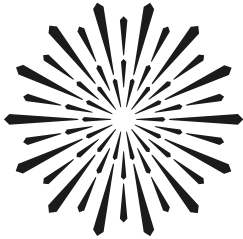
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**GEORGES BIZET**

# CARMEN



**SAN FRANCISCO  
OPERA**

This production is made possible, in part, by United Airlines.

Mr. Gaffigan's appearance is made possible by the Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Conductors Fund.

Ms. Bridges' appearance is made possible by the Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Emerging Stars Fund.

Mr. Polenzani's appearance is made possible by a gift to the Great Singers Fund by Joan and David Traitel.

Additional funding is provided by Jerome L. and Thao N. Dodson, and George and Patricia Locke.

# CARMEN

## ACT I

Outside a cigarette factory, soldiers alleviate their boredom by preying on the innocent Micaëla, who is searching for Don José, her childhood sweetheart. When the factory bell rings all the men press forward to see the infamous Gypsy Carmen. She sings the habanera which enchants the corporal José. The factory women go back to work and Micaëla returns bringing greetings from José's mother, who misses her son.

Suddenly a fight, started by Carmen, breaks out in the factory. Captain Zuniga, inflamed with jealousy at Carmen's flirtation with José, orders her arrest and commands José to escort her to prison. She promises José a rendezvous later that night if he lets her escape. José feigns being thrown to the ground, enabling Carmen to run off with the Gypsies. Zuniga sees through the ruse, and is happy to send him to prison so he can have Carmen to himself.

## ACT II

In a late night tavern Carmen dances with her friends Frasquita and Mercédès. Captain Zuniga watches, yearning to have a liaison with Carmen later. Escamillo, the famous toreador, arrives to entertain his fans. Carmen rejects his advances. She also wards off Zuniga's hopeful proposition, eager to get everyone out of the tavern.

Dancaïro, leader of the smugglers, urges Carmen to assist them in carrying contraband across the border, but she refuses, sending her friends away when she hears José approaching. Carmen owes José a debt of gratitude for her freedom and she dances alone for him. At the sound of the bugle call, José, who has been demoted, says he must return to the barracks. Carmen laughs at his obedience to authority. Zuniga bursts in hoping to finally have that rendezvous with Carmen. The jealous José flings himself at his superior officer, but the smugglers enter and separate them. José is left with no choice but to join them.

## ACT III

Forced into hiding with Carmen, José thinks with remorse of his mother. Carmen has grown tired of him, and they quarrel bitterly. Carmen refuses to be ruled by any man. She reads her future in a deck of cards and only sees death. The smugglers lead their women off to distract the border guards.

Micaëla has braved a dangerous journey to bring José news of his mother's illness. But before she can find him

Escamillo arrives, and she hides as Escamillo and José fight over who should possess Carmen. The returning smugglers pull them apart. Micaëla's presence is discovered and she tells José that his mother is dying. José, stricken with grief, tells Carmen that he is going away, but that they will see each other again.

## ACT IV

An excited crowd awaits the bullfight parade. Escamillo arrives with Carmen, resplendent as his consort. Frasquita and Mercédès warn Carmen that José is hiding, wild-eyed with jealousy, in the crowd. Carmen says that she will tell him that their relationship is over. The bullfight is about to start and everyone goes into the arena. Carmen deliberately waits to confront José. He begs her to come back to him. She defiantly declares that she was born free and will die free. Just as Escamillo defeats the bull, José finally possesses Carmen, in a fatal embrace. He falls sobbing over her corpse, admitting his guilt.

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**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 33 previous seasons at San Francisco Opera. For complete information on all past casts, visit [archive.sfopera.com](http://archive.sfopera.com)

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

**Onstage:** 1 cornet in costume

**Backstage:** 2 cornets, 3 trombones; **5 total**

**Personnel:** 10 principals, 52 chorus, 24 children's chorus, 8 dancers, 11 supernumeraries; **105 total**

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The children singing in today's performance (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 Valérie Sainte-Agathe. The San Francisco Boys Chorus is led by Artistic Director Ian Robertson.

Conductor

**James Gaffigan\***

**Michelle Merrill\*** (6/20)

Production

**Francesca Zambello**

Associate Director & Movement Director

**Denni Sayers**

Production Designer

**Tanya McCallin**

Original Lighting Designer

**Paule Constable**

Revival Lighting Designer

**Justin A. Partier**

Chorus Director

**Ian Robertson**

Assistant Conductor

**Michelle Merrill\***

Prompter

**Dennis Doubin**

Musical Preparation

**Maureen Zoltek, John Churchwell,**

**Kseniia Polstiankina Barrad\*†,**

**Fabrizio Corona**

Diction

**Patricia Kristof Moy**

Supertitles

**Christopher Bergen**

Assistant Director

**E. Reed Fisher**

Stage Manager

**Jennifer Harber**

Assistant Stage Managers

**Jayne O'Hara, Anna Reetz,**

**Jessica Barker, Rachel Garoon\***

Dance Master

**Lawrence Pech**

Fight Director

**Dave Maier**

Costume Supervisor

**Jai Alltizer**

Wig and Makeup

**Jeanna Parham**

A co-production of San Francisco Opera and Washington National Opera, originally created by Opera Australia based on the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and Norwegian National Opera co-production

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 2019 • 7:30 PM

TUESDAY, JUNE 11 • 7:30 PM

FRIDAY, JUNE 14 • 7:30 PM

THURSDAY, JUNE 20 • 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, JUNE 23 • 2 PM

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26 • 7:30 PM

SATURDAY, JUNE 29 • 7:30 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)

<i>Moralès</i>	<b>SeokJong Baek*†</b>
<i>Micaëla</i>	<b>Anita Hartig*</b>
<i>Zuniga</i>	<b>David Leigh*</b>
<i>Manuelita</i>	<b>Blanche Hampton</b>
<i>Carmen</i>	<b>J'Nai Bridges</b>
<i>Don José</i>	<b>Matthew Polenzani</b>
<i>Frasquita</i>	<b>Natalie Image*†</b>
<i>Mercédès</i>	<b>Ashley Dixon†</b>
<i>Escamillo</i>	<b>Kyle Ketelsen</b>
<i>Dancaïro</i>	<b>Christopher Oglesby*†</b>
<i>Remendado</i>	<b>Zhengyi Bai*†</b>
<i>Lillas Pastia</i>	<b>Valentina Simi</b>

*Soldiers, children, cigarette girls, Gypsies, smugglers*

\* San Francisco Opera debut † Current Adler Fellow

TIME AND PLACE: 1875, Seville

**ACT I:** A Plaza Outside a Cigarette Factory

**ACT II:** Lillas Pastia's Tavern

—INTERMISSION—

**ACT III:** A Mountain Gypsy Camp

**ACT IV:** Outside the Bullring

*The performance will last approximately two hours and fifty minutes.*

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

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

*The use of cameras, cell phones, and any kind of recording equipment is strictly forbidden.*

*Please turn off and refrain from using all electronic devices.*



The Death of Carmen (1890). Oil on canvas by Manuel Cabral y Aguado Bejarano.

SOTHEBY'S. LONDON/AGK-IMAGES

# THIEVES, GYPSIES, CIGAR-MAKERS

BY PAUL THOMASON

**W**hen Napoleon's French army invaded Egypt in 1798 it eventually brought about an important change in French culture, one that was repeated (albeit on a smaller scale) by the Peninsular War (1807-14).

One result of the four-year French occupation of Egypt was *Description de l'Égypte* which initially appeared in 1809 and eventually grew to include 24 volumes, lavishly documenting Egyptian culture in every aspect and profoundly influencing the arts in France. But the invasion also energized serious academic interests in religion, linguistics,

archeology, and anthropology among others. "Oriental" became the rage: in music, painting, literature, architecture, the decorative arts, fueled by travelers who could actually visit Egypt for themselves, and also the popular press. After the Peninsular War many Spaniards who had allied with France, thinking that would bring modernization and liberty to their country, including ending the Spanish Inquisition, were exiled to France, bringing their culture with them.

In the preface to his 1829 collections of poems, *Les Orientales*, Victor Hugo wrote that the Orient had become a "sort of general preoccupation," and done so without him



quite realizing it. (In other words, he had been seduced by the Orient, an important part of “Orientalism.”) “Oriental colors ... imprint themselves on all his [Hugo’s] thoughts, all his dreams; and his dreams and his thoughts found themselves, in turn, and almost without having wished it so, Hebraic, Turkish, Greek, Persian, Arab, even Spanish, because Spain is still the Orient; Spain is half African, Africa is half Asiatic.”

Since Egypt and the Near East are also the land of the Bible, Biblical stories became overlaid with the exotic (and often erotic) hue of this new obsession. For instance, the story of Salome dancing before Herod and demanding the head of John the Baptist was the basis for Gustave Moreau’s painting *L’Apparition* (1876), Flaubert’s story *Herodias* (1876–77), and Massenet’s opera *Hérodiade* (1881). Massenet’s *Esclarmonde* (1889) and *Thaïs* (1894) are further examples of Orientalist opera, as are Delibes’ *Lakmé* (1883) and Saint-Saëns’s *Samson et Dalila* (1877), to name just two. Though it is important to remember a quip leveled at Ravel’s 1911 opera *L’Heure Espagnole*, that it is “Spain seen from the heights of Montmartre.” However exotic this music, painting, and literature might seem, it was always *French* music, painting, and literature, tinged with some foreign color and designed to be enjoyed by French consumers.

One of the numerous publications that specialized in articles from or about exotic places was the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. In 1855 it published a few of Baudelaire’s *Les Fleurs du Mal* poems; Henri Murger, whose *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème* became the basis for the libretto of Puccini’s *La Bohème*, was an occasional contributor. And in 1845 the *Revue* published the first version of a novella by Prosper Mérimée called *Carmen*. Originally it produced only moderate interest, but over time it gained more admirers, one of whom was the composer Georges Bizet.

In 1872 the co-directors of the Opéra-Comique, Camille Du Locle and Adolph de Leuven, suggested that Bizet write an opera for them, collaborating with the experienced librettists Ludovic Halévy and Henri Meilhac whose work with Offenbach was so successful. The directors made several suggestions for possible subjects, but Bizet insisted on Mérimée’s *Carmen*. Halévy and Meilhac were enthusiastic and Du Locle approved, but de Leuven was scandalized. “*Carmen!*” he exploded. “Mérimée’s *Carmen*? Isn’t she killed by her lover?—And that background of thieves, gypsies, cigar-makers!—At the Opéra-Comique, a family theater! The theater where marriages are arranged! Every night five or six boxes are taken for that purpose. You will frighten off our audience.—It’s impossible!”

Halévy, who had been sent to cajole de Leuven into agree-

ing to the subject, quickly explained their *Carmen* would be “softened, toned down.” Among other changes they had introduced “a pure opéra-comique character, a very innocent, very chaste young girl.” (That was Micaëla who does not, in fact, appear in Mérimée’s story.) He also admitted that, yes, there were Gypsies but they would be “comic” Gypsies. And as for Carmen’s death, he claimed people would hardly notice it because, unlike Mérimée’s ending that happens in the woods with only Carmen and Don José present, in the opera it would be “sneaked in at the end of a very lively, very brilliant act, played in bright sunlight on a holiday with triumphal processions, ballets, and joyous fanfares.”

De Leuven was finally worn down and surrendered, but as Halévy left his office, the co-director begged, “Please try not to have her die. Death on the stage of the Opéra-Comique! Such a thing has never been seen! Never!” Six months later de Leuven resigned, largely because of his continued opposition to *Carmen*. As musicologist Susan McClary points out, the subject was about as sensational as possible at the time: “the humiliation and degradation of male, white authority at the hands of a woman of color.” And the woman of color not only smoked, she picked up and discarded lovers whenever she liked. She is both heroine and villain, another source of horror to the audience at the time. Like Mozart’s Don Giovanni, she is true to herself to the very end, even though she knows what it will cost her. That was, perhaps, her greatest sin for early audiences, her refusal to give up her freedom—either to society’s laws, or to a man.

There were numerous delays with the project but Bizet finished the orchestration during the summer of 1874 and rehearsals began that September. The soprano Célestine Galli-Marié had been invited to create the role after two other singers had turned it down. (“*Carmen*? What’s that?” she had asked at the time. She had never heard of Mérimée’s story.) A critic praised her debut in 1862 in Pergolesi’s *La Serva Padrona* by writing, “She is small and graceful, moves like a cat, has an impish, pert face, and her whole personality seems unruly and mischievous ... She sings in a full, fresh voice, piquant and mellow.”

She and the tenor creating Don José, Paul Lhérie, were ardent believers in the project, siding with *Carmen*’s creators against theater officials who constantly demanded the story be toned down. The chorus was used to walking on stage en masse and staring, motionless, at the conductor while they sang, and strongly resisted being asked to move while singing—to say nothing of smoking cigarettes and fighting. The orchestra pronounced parts of the score unplayable and it was only after extra rehearsals that they



La Carmencita by John Singer Sargent (1890)

MUSÉE D'ORSAY, PARIS; BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

(grudgingly) admitted Bizet might know what he was doing.

But Bizet's music *did* sound very new to audiences at the time. It was so specific in its color and tone that it could only have been written for *that* specific moment in the opera, something early listeners often found difficult to follow. American composer Ned Rorem once wrote, "Had I never heard the orchestration but only seen it [by looking at the score], I'd say it couldn't work. I would be wrong. The chances we are taught to avoid when scoring for voices with instruments seem not to be chances to Bizet. Balances or areas on the page that look top-heavy or empty are to the ear always right; the scoring is unstintingly crystalline."

Bizet, who never visited Spain, did try to bring some authenticity to the music he wrote for *Carmen*, for instance

in *Carmen*'s first aria, the "Habanera." The Habanera is actually a dance from Havana, and Bizet had based his music on a song by Sebastián Yradier, "El Arreglito." (Bizet had a copy of the song in his library.) Yradier was a popular figure in Paris. He was Spanish, but his pseudo-folk music compositions were largely drawn from what he called "Creole" music that he had heard in Latin America. What Bizet apparently thought was a Spanish folk song was actually African-Cuban. Yradier's music was a regular part of the programs sung by one of Bizet's neighbors, an extraordinarily interesting woman named Céleste Mogador, in the Parisian cabarets—another black mark against *Carmen*, that music from such sordid places would be performed at the Opéra-Comique.

The audience that attended *Carmen*'s first performance on March 3, 1875, was not the usual Opéra-Comique gathering. Du Locle had warned off the usual family parties. Composers Gounod, Thomas, Delibes, Offenbach, Massenet, Lecouq, and d'Indy (then a student) were there. Fans of Meilhac and Halévy's other work were there, along with various Offenbach stars, as were a number of singers from L'Opéra, including Jean-Baptiste Faure. There were numerous music publishers and a gaggle of *boulevardiers* who were hoping for the rumored scandal.

The first act was warmly received, with hearty applause greeting both *Carmen*'s "Habanera" and the duet for Don José and Micaëla. The entr'acte was encored and the second act began amid genuine enthusiasm. The Toreador's song was an enormous hit ("So they want trash? All right, I'll give them trash," Bizet had said when composing it), and the smuggler's quintet delighted the audience. But Don José's Flower Song and duet with *Carmen* were not well received, and the absence of a ballet disturbed the audience. In the third act only Micaëla's aria was applauded and act four flopped totally. The (now infamous) reviews were savage, in part because the director of the theater had not paid off the critics to ensure their enthusiastic praise. It is true *Carmen* had 48 performances during its first six months, but the attendance was poor and box-office receipts did not cover the cost of the production.

It was only when *Carmen* was given in Vienna on October 23, 1875, with recitatives rather than the original dialogue, that it found its audience and became the popular, enduring classic it is today. Bizet never knew of his (eventual) great success. He died on June 3, 1875 on the evening of *Carmen*'s thirty-third performance. He was 36 years old. ❀

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Writer, lecturer, and teacher Paul Thomason is currently writing a book on the music of Richard Strauss.

# IRRESISTIBLE CARMEN

BY FRANCESCA ZAMBELLO

**C**armen is one of my favorite characters, even after all these years. I directed my first production of Bizet's opera more than three decades ago, and it's been fascinating to keep revisiting her character, especially as the larger cultural conversation around gender, sexuality, and power continues to evolve. The #MeToo movement, which shines a spotlight on the prevalence of sexual harassment and assault, has been a call to reconsider the implicit messages around sexuality and consent in the standard repertory, which is full of predators and victims.

I find it fascinating that Carmen—who is neither predator nor victim—has been such a controversial figure. I would say that Carmen is a truly modern woman. She embraces her sexuality, she pursues her desires, and she achieves her ends using charm and wit alone. Unlike some of the more notorious #MeToo stories that have come to light, Carmen is not in a position of power over the men she pursues. In fact, the opposite is true.

Carmen is an outsider's outsider. She's affiliated with a band of roving thieves, which puts her outside the bounds of an ordered society. Outlaw societies operate by their own set of rules, yet Carmen refuses to play by these rules, as well. And to top it all off, she's a woman, which theoretically puts her in a disadvantage in any social hierarchy, "civilized" or not. However, other people's ideas about hierarchy are irrelevant to Carmen.

Carmen's relationship with Don José is complicated. Yes, to a certain extent she uses her sexuality to get him to do what she wants, but she is also guided by sheer intelligence and genuine—albeit shifting—feelings for José. I believe she does love him, at least for a while—enough to refuse an important job.

Another thing I find refreshing about Carmen is her honesty. If men are deceived by her, it's because they



*The original  
Carmen (1875).  
Célestine Galli-Marié.*  
BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

choose to be. In public and in private, she tells everyone exactly who she is and what they can expect. She does not set out to destroy Don José; in fact, she does her best to use the truth to free him from his obsession.

Carmen lives life on her own terms, even when she knows it will be her undoing. In this way, she is different from all those other female characters who die at the end of their operas. Carmen is not consumptive or kept or backed into a corner, physically or metaphorically. As the opera draws to a close in Act Four, a different kind of character might have heeded Frasquita's warning and fled to safety. Or perhaps she might have called on Escamillo, who have would undoubtedly delighted in confronting José.

But not Carmen. For every choice she makes, she is aware of the consequences, and she is fully prepared to face them on her own. "I was born free and I will die free," she says—and that's exactly what she does. I think she is the ultimate feminist. When you study the score, you see her strength, and it's her strength, her intelligence, her will, her honesty that I want to put center stage in this production.

In telling Carmen's story, I think it's important to land in a period where we can see the aspects of class and social hierarchy that are so important to Mérimée's novella. A setting with a certain elegance really puts the world of the Gypsies into relief and immediately establishes the "outsider" status of Carmen and the rest of her band. Certainly, Bizet does that in his music, with the children's military drills setting up a stark contrast to Carmen's "Habanera."

"Love is a wild bird that no one can tame," Carmen sings. "No use to call him if he doesn't want to come." Her description of love could just as well be a description of herself—maddening, powerful, and utterly irresistible. ❀

# THE ART OF THE BULLFIGHT



La plaza de Toros de la Real Maestranza, Seville (1855). Oil on canvas by Joaquín Domínguez Bécquer

MUSEO DE SAN TELMO, SPAIN/AGK-IMAGES

**I**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 myths

intrinsic to the bullfight—or *toro* 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.

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 bulldodgers 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



BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

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 López remarked, “Spain would be like any other place in the world. They are modern man's last connection to the ancient, heroic past.” ❁

*This story is reprinted from the 2016 San Francisco Opera Magazine.*

# ARTIST PROFILES



**JAMES GAFFIGAN**  
(New York, New York)  
**Conductor**

James Gaffigan first appeared with San Francisco Opera conducting *The Future Is Now: Adler Fellows Concert* in 2017. This month,

he makes his mainstage debut leading *Carmen*, and he will return next summer for *Ernani*. Gaffigan is currently Chief Conductor of the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra. In October, he will conduct the Richard Tucker Gala at Carnegie Hall. The 2018–19 season includes his debut with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and performances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. He also had his debut at the Metropolitan Opera with *La Bohème* and Dutch National Opera with *Porgy and Bess* and returns to Bavarian State Opera for *La Fanciulla del West* and *Don Giovanni*. Last season, he made his house debuts at Lyric Opera of Chicago with *Così fan tutte* and Santa Fe Opera with *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Gaffigan's concert credits include the London Philharmonic, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Orchestre de Paris, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Dresden Staatskapelle, Vienna Symphony, Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra, Zurich Tonhalle, Czech Philharmonic, Seoul Philharmonic, and Tokyo Metropolitan. In 2009, he completed a three-year tenure as Associate Conductor of the San Francisco Symphony.



**MICHELLE MERRILL**  
(Dallas, Texas)  
**Conductor**

Making her San Francisco Opera debut on the podium with *Carmen* is conductor Michelle Merrill, the newly appointed Music

Director of the Coastal Symphony of Georgia. She recently completed four years as the Associate Conductor of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, where she also carried the title of Phillip and Lauren Fisher Community Ambassador. Merrill was a recipient of a 2016 Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award as well as the 2013 Ansbacher Conducting Fellowship as awarded by members of the Vienna Philharmonic and the American Austrian

Foundation, which enabled her to be in residence at the Salzburg Festival. Merrill's recent and upcoming engagements include the Orchestre National d'Île-de-France, Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Toledo Symphony Orchestra, Princeton Symphony Orchestra, Oklahoma City Philharmonic, West Virginia Symphony, Orlando Philharmonic, Symphonia (Syracuse), and Round Top Music Festival Institute. In past seasons, she has conducted concerts with the Jacksonville Symphony, Louisiana Philharmonic, Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera, Boise Philharmonic, New Music Detroit, and the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic, where she formerly served as Assistant Conductor.



**J'NAI BRIDGES**  
(Tacoma, Washington)  
**Carmen**

American mezzo-soprano J'Nai Bridges, known for her "rich, dark, exciting sound" (*Opera News*), is one of opera's fastest-rising talents, gracing the

world's top stages in repertoire ranging from traditional favorites and world premieres to spirituals and standards. She is a recipient of the prestigious 2018 Sphinx Medal of Excellence Award. She made her San Francisco Opera debut as Bersi in *Andrea Chénier* in 2016 and returned the following year to create the role of Josefa Segovia in John Adams' *Girls of the Golden West*. Bridges' 2018–19 season features her Carnegie Hall recital debut, a return to San Francisco Opera for her first professional *Carmen*, her role debut as Kasturbai in *Satyagraha* with LA Opera, her Los Angeles Master Chorale debut, and premiere engagements at Dutch National Opera and the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona. Other career highlights include her debut as Preziosilla in *La Forza del Destino* with Opernhaus Zürich, and the role of *Carmen* in the world premiere of Jimmy Lopez's *Bel Canto*, based on the novel by Ann Patchett, at Lyric Opera of Chicago. Her 2019–20 season includes three distinguished house debuts: Tanglewood Festival (Beethoven's Symphony No. 9), the Metropolitan Opera (*Nefertiti* in *Akhmaten*) and Washington National Opera (her role debut as Dalila in *Samson et Dalila*).



**MATTHEW POLENZANI**  
(Evanston, Illinois)  
**Don José**

American tenor Matthew Polenzani made his San Francisco Opera debut as Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere*

*di Siviglia* in 2003 and returned as Belmonte (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*) and in the title role of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. This season, he takes on Don José in *Carmen* for the first time in his career. Other engagements during the current season include a return to Lyric Opera of Chicago in the title role of *Idomeneo*; Rodolfo in *La Bohème* at the Teatro Massimo di Palermo; and the title role of *La Clemenza di Tito*, the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto*, and his role debut as Vaudémont in *Iolanta* at the Metropolitan Opera. He has starred in more than 350 performances at the Metropolitan Opera. Concert appearances this season have included Verdi's Requiem with the Orchestre Métropolitain Montréal, a concert series with the New World Symphony, and a recital at Carnegie Hall with pianist Julius Drake. Recent highlights include the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* and Nadir in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* in Chicago; his reprisal of Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at the Metropolitan Opera; his role debut as Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller* at Opernhaus Zürich; Fernand in *La Favorite* at the Bavarian State Opera; and Rodolfo in *La Bohème* at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. Concert credits include Haydn's Creation with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Ravinia Festival and his "A Night at the Opera" concert with the Philadelphia Orchestra, led by Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Polenzani was the recipient of the 2004 Richard Tucker Award, the Metropolitan Opera's 2008 Beverly Sills Artist Award, and a 2017 Opera News Award.



**KYLE KETELSEN**  
(Sun Prairie, Wisconsin)  
**Escamillo**

American bass-baritone Kyle Ketelsen made his San Francisco Opera debut in 2006 as Escamillo in *Carmen*,

which he recently performed with the Metropolitan Opera and will reprise this summer in San Francisco. In the current season, Ketelsen sang the role of Golaud in *Pelléas et Mélisande* with the Metropolitan Opera and appeared in concert with the Madison Symphony. He performed Rodolfo in *La Sonnambula* at Opernhaus Zurich

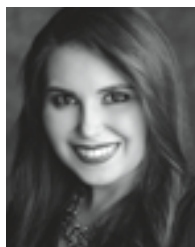
and the King of Scotland in the premiere of *Ariodante* at Lyric Opera of Chicago. He also sings Méphistophélès in Les Siècles' *La Damnation de Faust* throughout France. Recent highlights include Nick Shadow in Simon McBurney's production of *The Rake's Progress* at Dutch National Opera and his company debuts at the Dallas Opera, the Opéra National de Lyon, and the NHK Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo as Leporello in *Don Giovanni*. In addition, he reprised Escamillo with the Teatro Real Madrid, as well as Alidoro in *La Cenerentola* with Munich's Bavarian State Opera. Ketelsen has won First Prize at the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the Richard Tucker Music Foundation (Career Grant), the George London Foundation, the Licia Albanese Puccini Foundation, the Sullivan Foundation, Opera Index, the MacAllister Awards, Fort Worth Opera, National Opera Association, Connecticut Opera, and the Liederkrantz Foundation.



**ANITA HARTIG**  
(Bistrița, Romania)  
**Micaëla**  
Romanian soprano Anita Hartig makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Micaëla in *Carmen*. Hartig was a member of the ensemble at

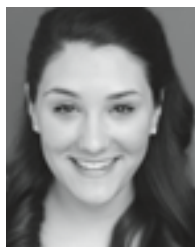
the Vienna State Opera for five seasons, where she made her professional opera debut as Musetta in *La Bohème*. In Vienna, she showcased Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, Despina in *Così fan tutte*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Mimi in *La Bohème*, Marzelline in *Fidelio*, Micaëla, and Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. In 2013 Hartig made her Royal Opera, Covent Garden debut as Mimi and the following year debuted at the Metropolitan Opera and Opera Bastille in the same role, before going on to make her house and role debuts as Violetta in *La Traviata* at Gran Teatre del Liceu. Highlights of recent seasons include Susanna at the Metropolitan Opera and Covent Garden; Mimi at the Metropolitan Opera, Vienna State Opera, Teatro Real Madrid, and the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin, and further appearances at the Metropolitan Opera as Liu in *Turandot*. Other notable performances include Marguerite in *Faust* in Zürich, Vienna, and Hamburg, and Antonia and Stella in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at the Metropolitan Opera. This season, Hartig returned to Vienna for Micaëla and performed Violetta at Théâtre du Capitole in Toulouse, a role which she repeated at the Metropolitan Opera this spring. Other highlights include her return to Opéra de Paris as Amelia Grimaldi in

*Simon Boccanegra* and performances of Bruckner's Mass in F Minor with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra.



**NATALIE IMAGE**  
(Tsawwassen, Canada)  
**Frasquita**  
A second-year San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow and 2017 Merola Opera Program participant, soprano Natalie Image makes her

San Francisco Opera and role debuts as Frasquita in *Carmen* and as First Wood Nymph in *Rusalka*. She was critically praised by the *New York Times* and *Operawire* when she appeared as a Metropolitan Opera National Council Grand Finalist. She recently was seen at the annual *The Future Is Now: Adler Fellows Concert* and with San Francisco Chamber Orchestra (SFCO) as Galatea in Handel's *Acis and Galatea*. Past appearances include Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* with SFCO, Schwabacher Recital Series, and touring Northern California and Oregon with the Adler Fellows in concert. Other highlights include the title role of Alma Deutscher's *Cinderella* with Opera San José as part of its North American premiere, Clorinda in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* with the Merola Opera Program, Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with the San Francisco Conservatory of Music (SFCM) Orchestra, *Aurore* in Massenet's *Le Portrait de Manon* (SFCM), Handel's *Messiah* with the Okanagan Symphony Orchestra, *Johanna* in *Sweeney Todd* (Opera on the Avalon), and Mrs. De Rocher in *Dead Man Walking* (Opera NUOVA).



**ASHLEY DIXON**  
(Peachtree City, Georgia)  
**Mercédès**  
A 2018 Grand Finals winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, mezzo-soprano and second-

year San Francisco Opera Fellow Ashley Dixon made her San Francisco Opera mainstage debut this past fall in Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer's *It's a Wonderful Life* as an Angel First Class. This summer, she returns to the Company as Mercédès in *Carmen* and Third Wood Nymph in *Rusalka*. As a participant of the 2017 Merola Opera Program, she sang the role of Popova in William Walton's *The Bear*. Her inaugural summer at the Merola Opera Program featured her as La Ciesca in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* and Mrs. Nolan in Menotti's *The Medium*. Dixon's 2016–17 season included



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# ARTIST PROFILES

her debut with Michigan Opera Theatre in Copland's *The Tender Land* as Mrs. Splinters. In concert, she has appeared on the Hill Auditorium stage as soloist in Mozart's Requiem and with the University of Michigan Men's Glee Club in Schubert's *Ständchen*, and the title role in a concert performance of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*.



**SEOKJONG BAEK**  
(Jeon-Ju, South Korea)  
**Moralès**  
Baritone and first-year San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow Seokjong Baek makes his San Francisco Opera and role debuts as Moralès in *Carmen*.

He was a participant of the 2018 Merola Opera Program, where he was featured in the Schwabacher Summer Concert. While a resident artist of the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, he performed the role of Yamadori (*Madama Butterfly*). Other credits include *La Traviata* (Germont) with Aspen Music Festival, *La Bohème* (Marcello, cover) with Martina Arroyo's Prelude to Performance Program, and *Das Land des Lächelns* (Tschang) and *Le Roi l'a Dit* (Gautru) with Manhattan School of Music. His many awards in 2018 include First Place in the Taub Ades Vocal competition, Third Place at the Gerda Lissner International Vocal Competition, a grant from the Giulio Gari competition, and special prize at the Sonora International Opera Competition Francisco Araiza in Mexico. Baek is a recipient of the Presser Foundation and Mae Zenke Orvis Scholarship in Opera Studies, and earned his bachelor and master's degrees from the Manhattan School of Music.



**DAVID LEIGH**  
(New York, New York)  
**Zuniga**  
A recent graduate of the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program, bass David Leigh makes his

San Francisco Opera and role debuts this summer as Zuniga in *Carmen*. In the 2018–19 season, he made his Canadian Opera Company debut as Turbo in the world premiere of Rufus Wainwright's *Hadrian*, and later this summer bows at Santa Fe Opera as the King in Poul Ruder's *The Thirteenth Child*. He returns to the Bolshoi Theatre as Colline in *La Bohème* and subsequently debuts with Kentucky Opera as Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* and Dallas Opera in *Manon Lescaut*. Last season saw his premiere engagements with Opéra National de Lorraine and Les

Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg as the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*. At the Metropolitan Opera, he appeared as the Surintendant des Plaisirs in *Cendrillon*, and was presented in a joint recital at the Park Avenue Armory with mezzo-soprano Emily D'Angelo. Career highlights include debuts at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and the Festival d'Opéra Baroque de Beaune as the Commendatore, Fafner in *Siegfried* with Cincinnati's Queen City Opera, and the Verdi Requiem with the Choral Society of Northeast Pennsylvania. A graduate of Yale and Mannes School of Music, he has received awards from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the McCammon Competition at Fort Worth Opera, the New York Foundation for the Arts, and the Wagner Society of New York.



**ZHENGYI BAI**  
(Linyi, China)  
**Remendado**  
Tenor and first-year San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow Zhengyi Bai makes his Company and role debuts as Remendado in *Carmen*. He was

a participant of the 2018 Merola Opera Program, where he appeared as Alessandro in *Il Re Pastore*. Bai has also performed Bénédict (*Béatrice et Bénédict*), Oronte (*Alcina*), Nemorino (*L'Elisir d'Amore*), Count Almaviva (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), and Mr. Owen (*Postcard from Morocco*). In 2017, Bai won the Los Angeles District of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Bai entered college as a piano major student, but it was not until his junior year in college that he discovered his true instrument—his voice. With a solid musical foundation of piano study, Bai flourished in his voice studies, completing his bachelor and master's degrees in Shandong, China and obtaining his graduate certificate from the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music.



**CHRISTOPHER OGLESBY**  
(Woodstock, Georgia)  
**Dancaïro**

Tenor and first-year San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow Christopher Oglesby makes his Company and role debuts as Dancaïro in *Carmen*. He was most recently a Resident Artist at Utah Opera where he sang Tybalt in *Roméo et Juliette* and was the tenor soloist for Handel's *Messiah* with the Utah Symphony. As a participant of the 2018 Merola Opera Program, he debuted as Tom Rakewell in Stravinsky's

*The Rake's Progress*. As an education artist at the Dallas Opera, he appeared in Mozart's *Bastien and Bastienne* and Davies' *The Three Little Pigs*. An active soloist and recitalist, Oglesby has performed with the Utah Symphony, Abilene Philharmonic, Dallas Puccini Society, and Opera Diversità. Other recent credits include Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*; Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*; and Box in *Cox and Box* with the Amalfi Coast Festival, University of North Texas, and Opera in Concert.



**BLANCHE HAMPTON**  
(Tampa, Florida)  
**Manuelita**  
Cuban-American Blanche Hampton is a tenured dancer of the San Francisco Opera Dance Corps. Coming to San Francisco from the

Metropolitan Opera, where she performed principal and ensemble roles, the New York City Ballet-trained SAB alumna has also performed and worked with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Washington National Opera, LA Opera, San Diego Opera, New York City Opera, and the Teatro Real in Madrid. Performances with other ballet companies include Pennsylvania Ballet, American Repertory and Aspen Ballet. She has also performed as a principal dancer in Plácido Domingo's Washington National Opera tour in Japan.



**FRANCESCA ZAMBELLO**  
(New York, New York)  
**Production**

A recipient of the San Francisco Opera Medal, Francesca Zambello is an internationally recognized director of opera and theater. Zambello is currently General Director of The Glimmerglass Festival and Artistic Director of Washington National Opera at the Kennedy Center. She has previously served as Artistic Advisor to San Francisco Opera and as Artistic Director of the Skylight Theater. Her recent work on the War Memorial Opera House stage includes *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, *Aida*, *Luisa Miller*, and the world premieres of *Heart of a Soldier* and *Two Women (La Ciociara)*, in addition to *Show Boat* and *Porgy and Bess*. Zambello's acclaimed production of *Carmen* originally premiered at London's Royal Opera, Covent Garden. Her American directing debut occurred at the Houston Grand Opera with *Fidelio*. She debuted in Europe at Venice's Teatro La Fenice with *Beatrice di Tenda* and has since staged new productions



at major theaters and opera houses internationally including the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Paris Opera, the Bolshoi, Bavarian State Opera, Covent Garden and Australian Opera. Zambello has been awarded the French government's Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres, the Russian Federation's medal for Service to Culture, three Olivier Awards from the Society of London Theatre, and two Evening Standard Awards for Best Musical and Best Opera.



**DENNI SAYERS**  
(London, England)  
**Associate Stage Director and Movement Director**  
One of today's leading choreographers, Denni Sayers made her U.S. and San Francisco Opera

debut in 2000 with *Parsifal*, and returned to the Company for the *Ring*, *Porgy and Bess*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, and *Arshak II*. Her current work includes the *Ring* and *Die Zauberflöte* for Lyric Opera Chicago; *Hamlet* for Glyndebourne Festival and Adelaide Festival; *Francesca da Rimini* at Milan's Teatro alla Scala; *The Cunning Little Vixen* for La Monnaie; and as director for *The Pearl Fishers* and *Don Giovanni* in Tulsa. Recent engagements as associate director and choreographer include the *Ring* for Washington National Opera; choreographer for *Der Fliegende Holländer* at LA Opera; *Porgy and Bess* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Chicago; *Don Carlos* at Houston Grand Opera; *Ariadne auf Naxos* for Canadian Opera Company; *La Fanciulla del West* at Opera Bastille; *Der Fliegende Holländer* at Royal Danish Opera; *Turandot* at Teatro alla Scala; *Hänsel und Gretel* for the Vienna State Opera; *Elektra* at Salzburg; *Salome* at Baden; *Manon Lescaut* for Royal Opera, Covent Garden and Bucharest; *Sweeney Todd* for the Chichester Festival and Adelphi Theatre, winner of an Olivier Award for Best Musical Revival and winner of Best Musical in The Evening Standard's Theatre Awards.



**TANYA MCCALLIN**  
(London, England)  
**Set and Costume Designer**  
Tanya McCallin made her San Francisco Opera debut as production designer of *Sweeney Todd* (2015), which was also seen

in Paris and Houston. She is a distinguished theater and opera designer who has worked internationally. Her extensive opera work includes: *The Barber of Seville* for

the English National Opera (ENO) and in Barcelona; *Carmen* for Royal Opera, Covent Garden, and in Oslo, Australia, and China; and *La Traviata* for the Bolshoi Theatre. In collaboration with David McVicar she designed *Rigoletto* for Savonlinna Festival; *Le Nozze di Figaro* for Covent Garden and Valencia; *Turn of the Screw* for ENO; *Macbeth* for the Mariinsky Theatre, and in London, Washington, D.C., and the Metropolitan Opera; *Manon* for ENO, and in Dallas, New Zealand, Houston, Chicago,


and Barcelona; *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* for Salzburg Festival; *La Traviata* for Scottish Opera, Welsh National Opera, Geneva, Barcelona, and Madrid; the sets for *Semele* at Théâtre des Champs-Élysées; costumes for *Così fan tutte* in Strasbourg; *Rigoletto* for Covent Garden and Madrid; and *Der Rosenkavalier* for Scottish Opera. She has been associated with theater works by Arthur Miller, Pam Gems, Mike Leigh, Chekhov, Sheridan, and Shakespeare.

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## ARTIST PROFILES



### PAULE CONSTABLE

(Brighton and Hove, England)

#### Original Lighting Designer

British lighting designer Paule Constable made her San Francisco Opera debut with her

designs for *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* in 2015. Her work for opera has also been seen in *Benvenuto Cellini*, *Medea*, and *Dr Dee* for English National Opera; *Billy Budd* and *Entführung aus dem Serail* for Glyndebourne; and *Roberto Devereux* and *Cavalleria Rusticana/Pagliacci* for the Metropolitan Opera. Her extensive work for the theater includes: *The Threepenny Opera*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *War Horse*, *Wolf Hall*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *The Chalk Garden*, *The Light Princess*, *Othello*, and, most recently, *Local Hero*, *Follies*, *Pericles*, *Nine Night*, *Pinocchio*, *Mosquitoes*, *Common*, and *Angels in America*. For dance, she has collaborated with choreographer Matthew Bourne on *Swan Lake*, *The Red Shoes*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Play Without Words*, and *Dorian Gray*. Paule Constable is the recipient of two Tony Awards, four Olivier Awards, a Helpmann Award, three LA Critics Circle Awards, and New York Drama Desk and Critics Circle awards.



### JUSTIN A. PARTIER

(New York, New York)

#### Revival Lighting Designer

Justin A. Partier is San Francisco Opera's Resident Lighting Director. His work for the Company was most recently seen

in *Plácido Domingo in Concert*, and he was also revival lighting designer for *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*. Prior to his current position, he was lighting designer for the Company's staging of Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* and Merola's *Postcard for Morocco*, as well as two seasons lighting the Merola Grand Finale. His other lighting design credits include: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Schloss Werdenberg – Buchs SG, Switzerland); *Red* (Arkansas Repertory Theater); *Fascinating Rhythm*, *Shall We Dance*, and *Big Top Dreamers* (Transcendence Theater Company); *Rich Girl* (Florida Studio Theater); *COLORED* (Kyle Marshall Choreography); *The Clearing* (Theater 808 at 59E59); *The Net Will Appear* (Mile Square Theater and 59E59 Theater); *Maybe Never Fell* (Axial Theater Company); *912OZ* (Sanctuary Theater Company); *Dourtine* (Blessed Unrest); *Mary Poppins*,

*Kiss Me Kate*, and *Singin' in the Rain* (Merry Go Round Playhouse); and *This Wonderful Life* (Luna Stage). He was also the lighting director for *Origins of Love* (National Tour 2019), *Aftermath* (International Tour 2012), and *How to Be a Rock Critic* (National Tour 2017–18). He received his Master of Fine Arts from Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University, and he is a member of United Scenic Artists, Local 829.



### IAN ROBERTSON

(Dundee, Scotland)

#### Chorus Director

Recipient of the San Francisco Opera Medal in 2012, Ian Robertson has been chorus director and conductor with San Francisco Opera

since 1987, having prepared more than 350 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 made his San Francisco Opera conducting debut with *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, and has since led performances of *Falstaff*, *Lohengrin*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, *Don Carlo*, *Turandot*, *Il Trovatore*, *The Abduction from the Seraglio* and *La Bohème*. In addition to his highly-praised work with the Opera Chorus, he has led the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus in many concerts, and has conducted *Così fan tutte*, *L'Italiana in Algeri*, *La Bohème*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and *La Périchole* for the San Francisco Opera Center. He has frequently led the Merola Opera Program's Grand Finale concerts. Other North American opera credits include *Don Giovanni* with Sarasota Opera, *The Magic Flute* and *Rigoletto* with Edmonton Opera in Canada, and *La Rondine*, *The Rake's Progress*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Iolanta*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Vanessa* with Philadelphia's Curtis Opera Theatre. Before joining San Francisco Opera, Robertson was Head of Music and Chorus Director with Scottish Opera where he led numerous productions, including *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *The Pearl Fishers*, *The Secret of Susanna*, *Rigoletto*, *The Magic Flute*, and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. A native of Scotland, he trained at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and the University of Glasgow and studied conducting under Scotland's revered maestro, Sir Alexander Gibson. Since 1996, Robertson has also served as Artistic Director and Concert Chorus Director of the GRAMMY® Award-winning San Francisco Boys Chorus, an iconic youth chorus founded in 1948.





**LAWRENCE PECH**

(San Francisco, California)

**Dance Master**

Lawrence Pech is in his 23rd season as Dance Master and Resident Choreographer for San Francisco Opera. He has created period

and interpretive dances on more than 110 productions with the Company. Pech received his formal training from American Ballet Theatre 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 50 ballets, 30 musicals, and numerous self-produced evenings of music and dance around the world. He received a Composition degree from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.



**DAVE MAIER**

(Great Neck, New York)

**Fight Director**

Resident Fight Director for San Francisco Opera, Dave Maier made his Company debut choreographing the fight scenes for *The*

*Tales of Hoffmann* in 2013. He also appeared as a swordsman in the Company's 2010 production of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Maier has directed for American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theater, San Jose Repertory, Aurora Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, and Magic Theatre. He is a five-time recipient of the San Francisco Bay Area Drama Critics Circle Award for Fight Direction and an eleven-time nominee, and he serves as Resident Fight Director at California Shakespeare Theatre and is a company member with the Shotgun Players. Maier is recognized as an instructor of theatrical combat by Dueling Arts International and a founding member of Dueling Arts San Francisco. He is an adjunct faculty member at the University of California Santa Cruz and St. Mary's College of California and teaches combat-related courses at Berkeley Repertory School of Theater.



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**Sara Lee,** *Programmer/Analyst*

### HUMAN RESOURCES

**Heidi Arcilla,** *Human Resources Generalist*

## ARTISTIC

### ARTISTIC AND MUSIC PLANNING

**Sean Waugh,** *Artistic Planning Manager*  
**DeAnna Sherer,** *Music Planning Manager*  
**John Churchwell,** *Head of Music Staff*  
**Ilana Rainero-de Haan,** *Associate to  
the Managing Director: Artistic*  
**Valentina Simi,** *Artist Services Coordinator*  
**Michael Bragg,** *Music Planning Associate and  
Opera Librarian*

### MUSIC STAFF

**John Churchwell,** **Dennis Doubin,** **Alden Gatt,**  
**Ronny Michael Greenberg,** **Bryndon Hassman,**  
**Anne Larlee,** **Noah Lindquist,** **Vito Lombardi,**  
**William Long,** **Joseph Marcheso,** **Michelle Merrill,**  
**Robert Mollicone,** **Sahar Nouri,** **Matthew Piatt,**  
**Laura Poe,** **Stephanie Rhodes Russell,**  
**Tamara Sanikidze,** **Maureen Zoltek**

**Kseniia Polstiankina Barrad,** **César Cañón,**  
*Adler Fellows*

### LANGUAGE COACHES

**Radoslava Biancalana,** *Czech*  
**Alessandra Cattani,** *Italian*  
**Patricia Kristof Moy,** *French*  
**Lynne Soffer,** *English Diction*

### SAN FRANCISCO OPERA CENTER

**Mark Morash,** *Director of Musical Studies*  
**Chris Bragg,** *Administrative Director*

## OPERATIONS

**Katherine Baltrush,** *Associate Operations Director*

### EDUCATION

**Charles Chip McNeal,**  
*Senior Curriculum and Programs Manager*  
**Imani Sims,**  
*Community Programs & Department Manager*  
**Ryan Marchand,** *School Programs Manager*  
**Clara Choi,** *School Programs Coordinator*  
**Juan Manzo,** *Evaluation Coordinator*  
**Patricia Drozda,** **Albert Montañez-Sanchez,**  
*Interim Community Programs Coordinators*

**Linda Baird,** **Nicholas Benavides,** **Tajma Beverly,**  
**Joshua Raoul Brody,** **Heidi Carlsen,** **Robert Chastain,**  
**Marcelle Dronkers,** **Patricia Drozda,** **Hannah Dworkin,**  
**Lisa Edsall Giglio,** **Kevin Gordon,** **Lua Hadar,**  
**Dave Maier,** **Albert Montañez-Sanchez,**  
**Steven Sven Olbash,** **Michael Orlinsky,** **Max Perkoff,**  
**Katherine Issel Pitre,** **Emily Shisko,** **Alyssa Stone,**  
**Christopher Street,** **Matthew Wolka,**  
*Teaching Artists*  
**Breanna Miller,** **Natalie Mitchell,** *Interns*

### MUSIC OPERATIONS

**Clifford Cranna,** *Dramaturg*  
**Kali Wilson,** *Music Operations Manager*

### CHORUS AND BALLET

**Ian Robertson,** *Chorus Director*  
**Fabrizio Corona,** *Associate Chorus Master*  
**Mary Finch,** *Chorus and Dance Personnel Manager*  
**Katelyn Tan,** *Ballet Pianist*

### ORCHESTRA

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

## PHILANTHROPY AND AUDIENCES

**David Odenkirchen,** *Director of Philanthropy and  
Audiences Operations*  
**Jess Levy,** *Patron Data Specialist*  
**Anamaria Ramey,** *Donor Services Manager*  
**Sarah Benjamin,** *Patron Data Assistant*  
**Chivly Krouch,** *Donor Records Coordinator*  
**Amir Magid,** *Donor Benefits Coordinator*  
**Bella Mello,** *Philanthropy and Audiences Associate*

### DEVELOPMENT

**Michael Hoke,** *Development Associate*

### ANNUAL GIVING

**Roya Clune,** *Director of Annual Giving*

### INDIVIDUAL AND LEADERSHIP GIVING

**Deborah Banks,** *Director of Individual and  
Leadership Giving*

Dana Gordon, *Leadership Giving Officer*  
Joo Eun Lee, *Leadership Giving Officer*  
Sandra Chien, *Senior Individual Giving Officer*  
Hans Cardenas, *Individual Giving Officer*  
Aileen Tat, *Individual Giving Officer*  
Madeline Bueter, *Individual and Leadership Giving Associate*

#### INSTITUTIONAL GIVING

Donna Batson, *Director of Institutional Giving*

#### PRINCIPAL GIVING

Kyle Polite, *Director of Principal Giving*  
Lisa Bordachar, *Director of Prospect Research and Strategy*  
Mandala Pham, *Director of Legacy Giving*  
Joanna Taber, *Principal Giving Manager*  
Barbara Lundy, *Principal Giving Associate*

#### SPECIAL EVENTS

Karman Pave, *Director of Special Events*  
Katie Cagampan, *Special Events Manager*

#### MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Farrah Hammond, *Marketing Associate*

#### AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

Kathryn Appleton, *Associate Director of Audience Development and Marketing*  
Stephanie Gianni, *Manager of New Audiences and Engagement*  
Amy Humke, *Web and Email Manager*  
Steven Shear, *Manager of Relationship Marketing*  
Megan Searcy, *Audience Development and Marketing Coordinator*

#### COMMUNICATIONS

Julia Inouye, *Associate Director of Communications*  
Jeffery McMillan, *Senior Manager, Communications*  
Teresa Concepcion, *Communications Manager*  
Allison Griner, *Communications Coordinator*

#### CREATIVE AND DIGITAL

Adam Snellings, *Graphic Designer*

#### RESEARCH AND ANALYTICS

Chi-Hsuan Yang, *Senior Manager, Research and Analytics*

#### BOX OFFICE

Mark Sackett, *Box Office Manager, Treasurer*  
Jessica Fauver, *Assistant Box Office Manager, First Assistant Treasurer*  
Rebecca Page, *Medallion Society Concierge Manager*  
Emily Tilles, *Subscriptions Manager, Assistant Treasurer*  
Jennifer Hughes, Roberto Bonilla, *Assistant Treasurers*  
Ruth Van Slyke, *Telephone Sales Manager*  
Khalil El-Kareh, Nick Gueli, Beverlee G. Hassid,  
Yasmine Love, Charles McGraw, Kyle Minor,  
Jennifer Pollack, Dale Whitmill,  
*Telephone Sales Assistants*

#### FRONT OF HOUSE

Jamye Divila, *House Manager*  
Marialice Dockus, *Head Usher*  
Rodney Anderson, Danica Burt, Frank Chow,  
Martin Dias, Dave Doering, Jonathan Drogin,  
Chip Heath, Elaine Kawasaki, Eileen Keremitsis,

Ryszard Koprowski, Bill Laschuk, Sharon Lee,  
Marilyn Leong, Lenore Long, Doug Luyendyk,  
Leontyne Mbele-Mbong, Sam Mesinger,  
Dale Nedelco, Wayne Noel, Beth Norris, Jan Padover,  
Julie Peck, Robert Remple, Bill Repp, Rilla Reynolds,  
Robyn Sandberg, Kelly Smith, Stephanie Somersille,  
Melissa Stern, Theresa Sun, Claire Tremblay,  
Richard Wagner, Steve Weiss, Elaine Yee,  
*Ushers*  
Hui Ming Wu, *Show Maid*

#### OPERA SHOP

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

#### PRODUCTION

\*Senior Production Staff Member

#### PRODUCTION ADMINISTRATION

Jeremy Patfield, *Production Finance Director\**  
Sylvia Jiang, *Production Finance Assistant*  
Celine Strouts, *Production Associate*  
Paul Dana, *Support Services Coordinator*

#### AUDIO

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

#### CARPENTRY

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

#### COSTUME DEPARTMENT

Jai Alltizer, *Costume Shop Manager*  
David Doré, *Senior Production Accountant*  
Galen Till, *Production Supervisor*  
Amy Ashton-Keller, *Master Draper*  
Sally Thomas, *Master Tailor*  
Irene Murray, *Senior Cutter*  
Michael Sloan, *Men's Draper*  
Kristen Tracy, Carol Wood, Santiago Suanes, *Cutters*  
Gillian Haratani, Emma Lehman, *Assistant Cutters*  
Manuel Gutierrez, *Production Coordinator*  
Paula Wheeler, *Senior Milliner*  
Amy Van Every, *Senior Dyer*  
Jersey McDermott, *Senior Craft Artisan*  
Nicole Diascenti, *Stock Coordinator*  
Lindsey Eifert, *Shopper*  
Eliza Ryus, *Production Assistant*  
Nikki Anderson-Joy, *Costume Assistant*  
Miriam Acosta, Julie Barner, Breanna Bayba,  
Adela Cantor, Alicia Castaneda, Danielle Deveaux,  
Hoa Lam Fong, Aries Limon, Xing-Fong Luo,  
Amanda Mitchell, Sonia Olivares, Lena Sage,  
*Costume Technician*

#### ELECTRICS

Leon Parsons, *Master Electrician*  
Michael Anderson, *Assistant Master Electrician*  
Russell E. Adamson III,  
*Lighting and Projection Systems Administrator*

#### FIGHT DIRECTION

Dave Maier, *Fight Director*

#### LIGHTING

Justin A. Partier, *Lighting Director\**  
Emily Clarkson, *Assistant Lighting Designer*  
Brian Elston, *Assistant Lighting Designer*  
Tony Stoeri, *Lighting Design Intern*

#### PROPERTIES

Lori Harrison, *Master of Properties*  
Frederick Wielandt, *Assistant Master of Properties*

#### REHEARSAL

Marin Venturi, *Rehearsal Department Director\**  
Trey Costerisan, *Rehearsal & Facilities Manager*  
Melanie Alameda, *Rehearsal Administrator*  
Savannah Criswell, Alexander Granito,  
*Rehearsal Assistants*

#### SCENE SHOP

John Del Bono, *Scene Shop Foreman*  
Steve McNally, *Scenic Artist in Charge*

#### STAGING STAFF

Darin Burnett, *Production Stage Manager\**  
Lawrence Pech, *Dance Master*  
Darin Burnett, Jennifer Harber, Andrew G. Landis,  
Jayme O'Hara, Thea Railey, *Stage Managers*  
Jose Maria Condemni, E. Reed Fisher, Shawna Lucey,  
Roy Rallo, Morgan Robinson,  
*Assistant Stage Directors*  
Jessica Barker, E. Reed Fisher, Rachel Garoon,  
Jennifer Harber, Andrew G. Landis, Shawna Lucey,  
Jimmy Marcheso, Jayme O'Hara, Thea Railey,  
Anna Reetz,  
*Assistant Stage Managers*

#### TECHNICAL DIRECTION

Erik Walstad, *Technical and Safety Director\**  
Ryan O'Steen, *Production Manager\**  
Chris Largent, *Associate Technical Director*

#### WARDROBE

Tony Gorzycki, *Head Of Department*  
Cynthia Fusco, Robert Horek, David McKain,  
Catherine Verdier, *Assistants*

#### WIG AND MAKEUP

Jeanna Parham, *Head of Department*  
Ashley J. Landis,  
*Assistant Head of Department*  
Christina Martin,  
*Administrative Assistant & Wig Assistant*  
Maura Sela, Sophia Smith, *Wig Assistants*

Dr. Myron Marx, *Company Medical Adviser*

Seyfarth Shaw LLP, *Counsel*

Armano LLP, *Independent Public Accountants*

Asero Insurance Services, *Insurance Brokers*

Cory Weaver, *Official Photographer*

Yamaha is the Official Piano of San Francisco Opera

Pianos supplied by Piedmont Piano

# 2018-19 ARTISTS

## PRINCIPAL ARTISTS

Hadleigh Adams † ♫  
Roberto Aronica  
Seokjong Baek † ♫  
Zhengyi Bai † ♫  
Jamie Barton  
Lilia Bernstein #  
Marco Berti  
Nicole Birkland #  
J'Nai Bridges  
William Burden ♫  
Sarah Cambidge † ♫  
Yolotzin Cervantes #  
Arturo Chacón-Cruz ♫  
Andriana Chuchman † ♫  
Christopher Colmenero † ♫  
Catherine Cook † ♫  
Sasha Cooke  
Ellie Dehn  
Helena Dix #  
Ashley Dixon † ♫  
Plácido Domingo  
Benjamin Drever \*  
Richard Paul Fink ♫  
Daryl Freedman #  
Christina Gansch \*\*  
Carmen Giannattasio \*  
Rod Gilfry  
Cadence Goblirsch \*  
Pablo Gracia \*  
Jill Grove ♫  
Mary Evelyn Hangle † ♫  
Lianna Haroutounian  
Anita Hartig \*  
Clay Hilley #  
Scott Hendricks  
Joshua Hopkins \*  
Philip Horst ♫  
Natalie Image † ♫  
Brian Jagde † ♫  
Keith Jameson \*  
Daniel Johansson \*  
Rhoslyn Jones # †  
Brandon Jovanovich  
Miles Kaludzinski \*  
Kyle Ketelsen  
Laura Krumm † ♫  
Hye Jung Lee ♫  
David Leigh  
Andrew Manea † ♫  
Megan Marino #  
Michaela Martens  
Ana María Martínez  
Simone McIntosh † ♫  
Brian Mulligan

Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen † ♫  
Christopher Oglesby † ♫  
Toni Marie Palmertree † ♫  
Joshua Partlow \*  
Violet Pasmooij \*  
Amitai Pati † ♫  
Pene Pati # † ♫  
David Pershall ♫  
Heather Phillips #  
Kearstin Piper Brown \*  
Dimitri Platanius \*\*  
Matthew Polenzani  
Christian Pursell † ♫  
Scott Quinn ♫  
Sondra Radvanovsky  
Golda Schultz \*  
Ekaterina Semenchuk  
Kristinn Sigmundsson  
Reginald Smith, Jr. #  
Joel Sorensen  
Heidi Stober  
Stacey Tappan #  
Russell Thomas  
Dale Travis † ♫  
Christian Van Horn  
Kyle van Schoonhoven † ♫  
Rachel Willis-Sorensen  
Zachary Zele \*

## CONDUCTORS

Marc Albrecht \*\*  
Jordi Bernàcer  
Daniele Callegari \*  
Christopher Franklin  
Riccardo Frizza  
James Gaffigan  
Leo Hussain \*  
Eun Sun Kim \*  
Michelle Merrill \*  
Christopher Moulds \*  
Patrick Summers

## STAGE DIRECTORS

Tim Albery \*  
Jose Maria Condemí † ♫  
José Cura \*  
Harry Fehr \*  
Leonard Foglia  
Leah Hausman  
Stephen Lawless  
Shawna Lucey  
David McVicar  
Francesca Zambello

## CHOREOGRAPHERS

Andrew George  
Lawrence Pech  
Denni Stayers  
Keturah Stickann

## SET DESIGNERS

Robert Brill  
José Cura \*  
Benoît Dugardyn \*  
Tobias Hoheisel  
Robert Innes Hopkins  
John MacFarlane  
Tanya McCallin  
Yannis Thavoris \*

## COSTUME DESIGNERS

Ingeborg Bernerth \*  
Tobias Hoheisel  
Robert Innes  
Hopkins Moritz Junge  
Tanya McCallin  
Fernand Ruiz \*  
Yannis Thavoris \*  
David C. Woolard

## LIGHTING DESIGNERS

Christopher Akerlind  
Michael Clark \*  
Paule Constable  
David Finn  
Tim van 't Hoff \*  
Brian Nason  
Justin A. Partier \*  
Anna Watson \*  
Olivier Wéry \*

## PROJECTION DESIGNER

Andrzej Goulding \*  
Elaine J. McCarthy

\* San Francisco Opera debut

\*\* U.S. debut

† = Former Adler Fellow

‡ = Current Adler Fellow

♫ = Merola Opera Program participant (past or present)

# = Cover Artist

# CHORUS

**Ian Robertson**, *Chorus Director*

**Fabrizio Corona**, *Associate Chorus Master*

**Mary Finch**, *Chorus and Dance Personnel Manager*

## REGULAR CHORUS

Nadima Avakian  
Buffy Baggott  
Elizabeth Baker  
Kathleen Bayler  
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 †  
Carole Schaffer  
Shelley Seitz  
Jesslyn Thomas  
Donna Turchi  
Mitzie Weiner

C. Michael Belle  
William Bryan  
Alan Cochran  
Chris Corley  
Anders Fröhlich  
Daniel Harper  
Christopher Jackson  
Ken Johnson  
David Kekuewa  
Bojan Knežević  
Frederick Matthews  
William O'Neill  
Phillip Pickens  
William Pickersgill  
Chester Pidduck  
Valery Portnov  
Colby Roberts  
Sigmund Seigel  
Dan Stanley  
Jere Torkelsen  
Andrew Truett  
Richard Walker †

† Chorus member on Leave of Absence

## EXTRA CHORUS

Ben Brady  
Christopher Filipowicz  
Kevin Gino  
Peter Girardôt  
Harlan Hays  
Michael Jankosky  
Mitchell Jones  
Bradley Kynard  
Alexander Taite



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# CORPS DANCERS

**Lawrence Pech**, *Dance Master*

Alysia Chang  
Brett Conway t \*  
Jamielyn Duggan  
Alexandra FitzGibbon\*  
Blanche Hampton t\*  
Bryan Ketron t  
Rachel Speidel Little t\*  
Beth Maslinoff\*  
Jackie McConnell  
Christopher Nachtrab\*  
Jekyngs Pelaez t  
Chiharu Shibata t\*  
Maxwell Simoes  
Marcos Vedovetto

† Leave of Absence  
\* Solo Dancer  
t Tenured

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San Francisco Opera extends its gratitude and appreciation to the following labor organizations whose members, artists, craftsmen, and crafts-women greatly contribute to our performances:

American Federation of Musicians, Local 6

American Guild of Musical Artists, Inc.

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Local 16

Theatrical Wardrobe Union, Local 784, I.a.t.s.e.

Make-Up Artists and Hair Stylists Union, Local 706, I.a.t.s.e.

The Art Directors Guild & Scenic, Title and Graphic Artists Local 800

United Scenic Artists Local Usa – 829, I.a.t.s.e.

Box Office and Front of House Employees Union, Local B-18



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# ORCHESTRA

## FIRST VIOLIN

Kay Stern, *Concertmaster*  
Laura Albers, *Associate Concertmaster\**  
Heidi Wilcox, *Assistant Concertmaster*  
Jennifer Cho  
Dawn Harms †  
Mariya Borozina  
Lev Rankov  
Barbara Riccardi  
Dian Zhang  
Leonid Igudesman  
Jennifer Hsieh  
Asuka Annie Yano  
Wenyi Shih\*\*

## SECOND VIOLIN

Jeremy Preston, *Principal*  
Martha Simonds, *Associate Principal*  
Beni Shinohara, *Assistant Principal*  
Eva Karasik  
Maya Cohon  
Leslie Ludena  
Craig Reiss  
Heeguen Song\*\*

## VIOLA

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

## CELLO

David Kadarauch, *Principal*  
Thalia Moore, *Associate Principal*  
Peter Myers, *Assistant Principal*  
Nora Pirquet  
Emil Miland  
Victoria Ehrlich  
Ruth Lane

## BASS

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

## FLUTE

Julie McKenzie, *Principal*  
Patricia Farrell†  
Barbara Chaffe\*\*  
Stephanie McNab

## PICCOLO

Stephanie McNab

## OBOE

Mingjia Liu, *Principal*  
Deborah Shidler\*\*  
Janet Popesco Archibald

## ENGLISH HORN

Janet Popesco Archibald

## CLARINET

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

## BASS CLARINET

Anthony Striplen

## BASSOON

Rufus Olivier, *Principal*  
Daniel MacNeill  
Michael Severance

## CONTRABASSOON

Michael Severance

## HORN

Kevin Rivard, *Co-Principal*  
Mark Almond, *Co-Principal*  
Keith Green  
Brian McCarty  
Lawrence Ragent

## TRUMPET

Adam Luftman, *Principal*  
William Holmes†  
Scott Macomber\*\*  
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 Fall season operas

† Leave of absence

\*\* Season substitute

# SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ORCHESTRA



**Kay Stern**  
Concertmaster



**Laura Albers**  
Associate  
Concertmaster



**Heidi Wilcox**  
Assistant  
Concertmaster



**Jennifer Cho**  
First Violin



**Dawn Harms**  
First Violin  
*Leave of Absence*



**Mariya Borozina**  
First Violin



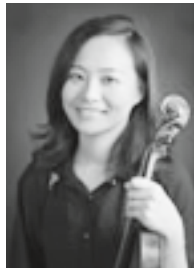
**Barbara Riccardi**  
First Violin



**Dian Zhang**  
First Violin



**Leonid Igudesman**  
First Violin



**Jennifer Hsieh**  
First Violin



**Asuka Annie Yano**  
First Violin



**Wenyi Shih**  
First Violin  
*Regular Substitute*



**Jeremy Preston**  
Principal  
Second Violin



**Martha Simonds**  
Associate Principal  
Second Violin



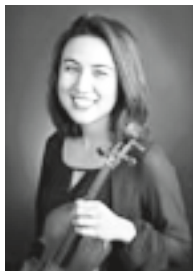
**Beni Shinohara**  
Assistant Principal  
Second Violin



**Eva Karasik**  
Second Violin



**Leslie Ludena**  
Second Violin



**Maya Cohon**  
Second Violin



**Craig Reiss**  
Second Violin



**Heeguen Song**  
Second Violin  
*Regular Substitute*



**Carla Maria Rodrigues**  
Principal  
Viola



**Sergey Rakitchenkov**  
Associate Principal  
Viola



**Paul Nahhas**  
Assistant Principal Viola  
*Leave of Absence*



**Patricia Heller**  
Viola



**Jonna Hervig**  
Viola



**Natalia Vershilova**  
Viola



**Joy Fellows**  
Viola



**Caroline Lee**  
Viola  
*Regular Substitute*



**David Kadarauich**  
Principal  
Cello



**Thalia Moore**  
Associate Principal  
Cello



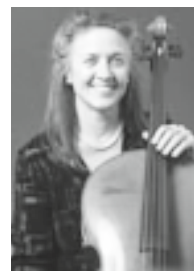
**Peter Myers**  
Assistant Principal  
Cello



**Nora Pirquet**  
Cello



**Emil Miland**  
Cello



**Victoria Ehrlich**  
Cello



**Ruth Lane**  
Cello

**SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ORCHESTRA CONTINUED**



**Joseph Lescher**  
Principal  
Bass



**Jonathan Lancelle**  
Associate Principal  
Bass



**Steven D'Amico**  
Assistant Principal  
Bass



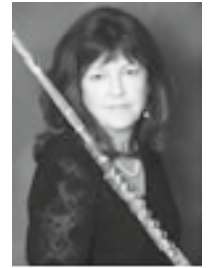
**Shinji Eshima**  
Bass



**Mark Drury**  
Bass



**Julie McKenzie**  
Principal  
Flute



**Patricia Farrell**  
Flute  
*Leave of Absence*



**Stephanie McNab**  
Flute & Piccolo



**Barbara Chaffe**  
Flute  
*Regular Substitute*



**Mingjia Liu**  
Principal  
Oboe



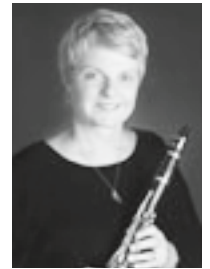
**Janet Popesco  
Archibald**  
Oboe & English Horn



**Deborah Shidler**  
Oboe  
*Regular Substitute*



**Jose Gonzalez  
Granero**  
Principal Clarinet



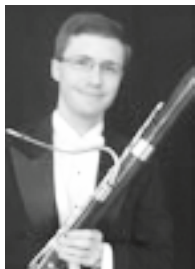
**Joanne Burke Eisler**  
Assistant Principal  
Clarinet



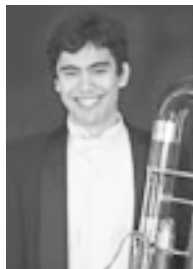
**Anthony Striplen**  
Clarinet &  
Bass Clarinet



**Rufus Olivier**  
Principal  
Bassoon



**Daniel MacNeill**  
Bassoon



**Michael Severance**  
Bassoon &  
Contrabassoon



**Kevin Rivard**  
Co-Principal  
Horn



**Mark Almond**  
Co-Principal  
Horn



**Keith Green**  
Horn



**Brian McCarty**  
Horn



**Lawrence Ragent**  
Horn



**Adam Luftman**  
Principal  
Trumpet



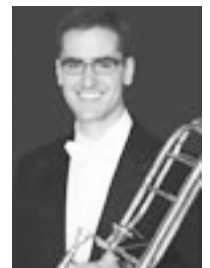
**William Holmes**  
Trumpet  
*Leave of Absence*



**John Pearson**  
Trumpet



**Scott Macomber**  
Trumpet  
*Regular Substitute*



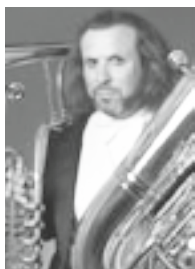
**Samuel Schlosser**  
Principal Trombone



**Donald Kennelly**  
Trombone



**David Ridge**  
Trombone &  
Bass Trombone



**Zachariah Spellman**  
Tuba/Cimbasso



**John Burgardt**  
Timpani



**Richard Kvistad**  
Principal Percussion &  
Associate Timpani



**Patricia Niemi**  
Percussion



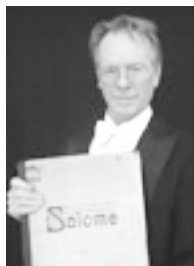
**Olga Ortenberg  
Rakitchenkova**  
Harp



**Tracy Davis**  
Orchestra Manager



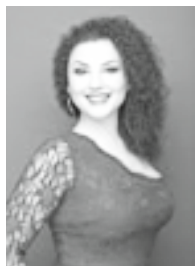
**Carrie Weick**  
Librarian



**Timothy Spears**  
Assistant Orchestra  
Manager & Librarian

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

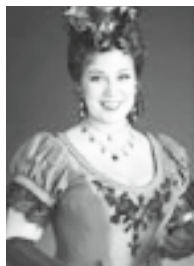
# SAN FRANCISCO OPERA REGULAR CHORUS



**Nadima Avakian**  
Soprano



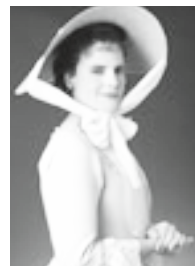
**Kathleen Bayler**  
Soprano



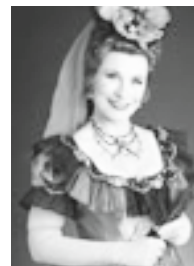
**Sara Colburn**  
Soprano



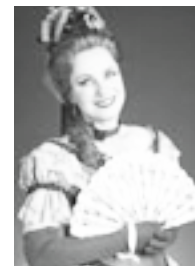
**Dvora Djoraev**  
Soprano



**Mary Finch**  
Soprano



**Claire Kelm**  
Soprano



**Elisabeth Rom Lucio**  
Soprano



**Angela Eden Moser**  
Soprano



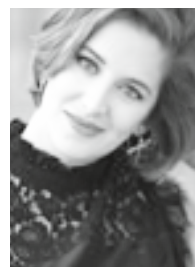
**Rachelle Perry**  
Soprano



**Virginia Pluth**  
Soprano  
*Leave of Absence*



**Carole Schaffer**  
Soprano



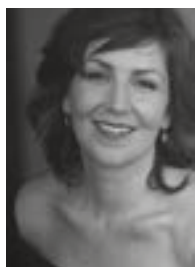
**Jesslyn Thomas**  
Soprano



**Mitzie Weiner**  
Soprano



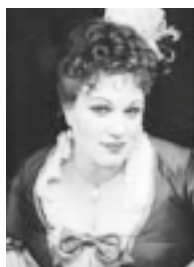
**Buffy Baggott**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Elizabeth Baker**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Janet Campbell**  
Mezzo-Soprano



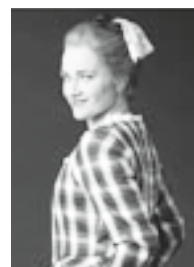
**Claudia Haider**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Sally Mouzon**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Sally Porter Munro**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Erin Neff**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Laurel Cameron  
Porter**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Laurel Rice**  
Mezzo-Soprano  
*Leave of Absence*



**Shelley Seitz**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Donna Turchi**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**C. Michael Belle**  
Tenor



**Alan Cochran**  
Tenor



**Chris Corley**  
Tenor



**Daniel Harper**  
Tenor

**SAN FRANCISCO OPERA REGULAR CHORUS CONTINUED**



**Christopher Jackson**  
Tenor



**Phillip Pickens**  
Tenor



**Chester Pidduck**  
Tenor



**Colby Roberts**  
Tenor



**Sigmund Seigel**  
Tenor



**Dan Stanley**  
Tenor



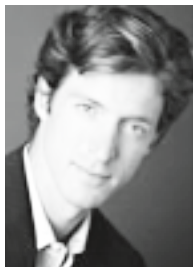
**Andrew Truett**  
Tenor



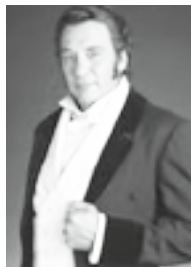
**Richard Walker**  
Tenor  
*Leave of Absence*



**William Bryan**  
Baritone



**Anders Fröhlich**  
Baritone



**Ken Johnson**  
Baritone



**David Kekuewa**  
Baritone



**Frederick Matthews**  
Baritone



**Jere Torkelsen**  
Baritone



**Bojan Knežević**  
Bass



**William O'Neill**  
Bass



**William Pickersgill**  
Bass



**Valery Portnov**  
Bass

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

**SAN FRANCISCO OPERA CORPS DANCERS**



**Brett Conway**



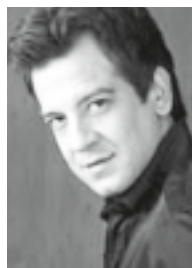
**Blanche Hampton**



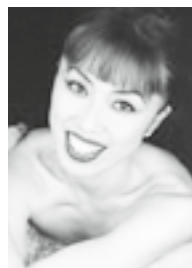
**Bryan Ketron**



**Rachel Speidel Little**



**Jekyns Pelaez**



**Chiharu Shibata**

# COMPANY

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.

## **COSTUME SHOP**

Jai Alltizer,  
*Costume Shop Manager* (18)  
David Doré,  
*Senior Production Accountant* (20)  
Galen Till, *Production Supervisor* (14)  
Amy Ashton-Keller, *Master Draper* (25)  
Sally Thomas, *Master Tailor* (19)  
Irene Murray (34), *Senior Cutter*  
Santiago Suanes, *Cutter*  
Gillian Haratani, Emma Lehman,  
Kristen Tracy, Carol Wood,  
*Assistant Cutters*  
Manuel Gutierrez,  
*Production Coordinator* (19)  
Paula Wheeler, *Senior Milliner* (27)  
Amy Van Every, *Senior Dyer* (34)  
Jersey McDermott,  
*Senior Craft Artisan* (19)  
Eliza Ryus, *Production Assistant*  
Nicole Diascenti, *Stock Coordinator*  
Lindsey Eifert, *Shopper*  
Nikki Anderson-Joy,  
*Costume Assistant*

## **COSTUME TECHNICIANS**

Miriam Acosta (21), Breanna Bayba,  
Adela Cantor (35), Alicia Castaneda (23),  
Danielle Deveaux, Hoa Lam Fong (20),  
Aries Limon, Xing-Fong Luo (26),  
Amanda Mitchell, Sonia Olivares (29),  
Lena Sage

## **WARDROBE DEPARTMENT**

Tony Gorzycki,  
*Head of Wardrobe*  
Cynthia Fusco (30), Robert Horek (14),  
David McKain, Catherine Verdier (27)  
*Wardrobe Assistants*

## **DRESSERS**

Kathleen Blake, Tom Carter (30),  
Milt Commons, Louise Connors,  
Diane Cornelius, David Croker (13),  
Linda Edwards (20), Ed Fonseca,  
Thom Hoffman, Claudia Holaday (39),  
Carol Horaitis (21), Larry Jeane,  
Nicole Tatjana Jessee,  
Charlynn Knighton, Jeffery Larsen,  
John Lewis, Lorraine Lewis,  
Demetrius Martin, Barbara Nicholas (20),  
Rachell Nichols, Jennifer O'Niell,  
Nina Parker, Phil Perry (21),  
Patrick Sanchez, Todd Siewert (22),  
Donald M. Smith (22), Scott Stewart (18),  
Monica Tse, Kirsten Tucker (15),  
Dennis Vanta.

## **WIG AND MAKEUP DEPARTMENT**

Ashley Joyce Landis,  
*Assistant Head of Department*  
Christina Martin, *Administrative Assistant*  
& *Wig Assistant*  
Sophia Smith, Maur Sela, *Wig Assistants*

## **FOREMEN**

Karalynne Fiebig  
Christina Martin  
Sophia Smith

## **PRINCIPAL MAKEUP ARTISTS**

Richard Battle, Melanie Birch,  
Karalynne Fiebig, Christina Martin,  
Betty Poindexter, Maurisa Rondeau,  
Tim Santry, Sophia Smith, Connie Strayer

## **JOURNEYMEN**

Richard Battle, Melanie Birch, Tim Bohle,  
Rick Burns, Sarah Coy, Gretchen Davis,  
Karalynne Fiebig, Denise Gutierrez,  
Christina Martin, Toby Mayer,  
Lisa Patnoe, Betty Poindexter,  
Tim Santry, Sophia Smith, Connie Strayer

## **ASSOCIATES**

Tara Escobedo  
Tatyana Fateyeva  
Chri Holmgren Greene  
Sharon Peng  
Maurisa Rondeau

## **SAN FRANCISCO OPERA SCENE SHOP**

Dylan Maxson, Fred Wielandt,  
Dennis Forry, Victor Sanchez,  
Christian Martinez, Hilary Engelman,  
Cyrus Sindich

## **SCENIC ART DEPARTMENT**

Lauren Abrams, Robert Burg (19),  
David Dunn (19), Carrie Nardello,  
Wayne Olds

## **STAGE CREW CARPENTRY DEPARTMENT**

Michael A. Accurso,  
*Night Crew Foreman* (26)  
Neil Biagio, *Key Man*  
Michael Cartwright, *Assistant Key Man*  
Dominic Casazza,  
*Assistant Key Flyman* (13)  
Gabriel Castellani, *Automation Key Man*  
Mike Chapman  
Christopher Davis, *House Head* (28)  
Paul Delatorre, *Key Man* (17)  
Tony Garcia

Jeff Hansen  
Greg Harsha, *Key Man* (17)  
David Heron, *Automation Layout*  
Geoff R. Heron  
Geoffrey W. Heron, *Key Man* (22)  
Philip Heron,  
*Automation and Rigging Foreman* (14)  
Ed Joe, *Warehouse Foreman*  
Nicholas Kukielka  
Angelo Montague (20)  
Harry Niedzwetzki (22)  
John O'Donnell, *Key Flyman* (28)  
Enrique Pronio  
Mike Ramirez  
Matthew Ramos  
Bart Ryan  
Ken Ryan (34)  
Gregory W. Shaff, *Key Man* (28)  
Cyrus Sindich  
Sean Walden  
Randy Walsh, *Assistant Key Man* (14)

## **PROPERTY DEPARTMENT**

Scott J. Barringer, *Assistant Key* (19)  
Christy Carter  
Charles R. Del Valle, *Key* (31)  
Jim Eldredge, *Shop Mechanic*  
Hilary Engelman  
Andrea Falkner  
Oris Fry  
Burke Gardner  
Patricia Hewett,  
*Assistant Out of House Key* (12)  
Jim Holden (29)  
Myron Seth Isaacs (18)  
David Kinney, *Key* (29)  
Mark Kotschnig, *Key* (17)  
Harri Olavi Kouvonen (32)  
Beth Ozarow, *Out of House Key* (23)  
Sarah Shores, *Shop Mechanic* (12)  
Turk Vasilieff, *Assistant Key* (19)  
Cian Quattrin  
John Matlock

## **ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT**

Andrew Sproule, *Key Stage Left* (19)  
Bernie Honigman,  
*Key Light Board Operator* (19)  
David Hartenstein,  
*Key Data Administrator* (15)  
Will Grunig, *Key Stage Right* (16)  
Rick Tayerle,  
*Assistant Key Stage Right* (15)  
Roger Lambert,  
*Assistant Key Stage Left* (16)  
Tim Wilson,  
*Asst. Key Light Board Operator* (12)  
Paul Puppo, *Electric Shop Foreman*  
Brendan Kierans, *Electric Shop Mechanic*

Norris Fong (29)  
Marie Farestveit, *Gel Room* (24)  
Peter Dahl (19)  
Jim Eldredge, *Effects* (15)  
Juan Aldana (14)  
Jewel Aquarian  
Eugene Ahn  
Sophie Landau  
Victor Scocca  
Glenn Quilici  
Ariel Bott  
Jamie Beard  
Stephen Echerd  
John Boatwright,  
*House Head Electrician* (31)  
Maria Mendoza,  
*Projection Coordinator* (30)  
Erik Docktor, *Projection Programmer*  
Geoff Heron, *Pyro Technician*

## **AUDIO DEPARTMENT**

Tod Nixon, *Key* (20)  
Alva Thompson, *Key* (25)  
Kim Griess

## **MEDIA DEPARTMENT**

Josh Lubensky  
Uwe Willenbacher

## **STUDIO TEACHERS**

Eloisa Alarcon-McPeck,  
Donnell Barnes, Carolyn Crimley,  
Susan Gill, Dana Gray, Lua Hadar,  
Bonnie Hughes, Karen Kindig,  
Victoria Northridge

## **WRANGLERS**

Sadie Black,  
Katie Carlson Cartwright,  
Alexander Granito,  
Sergey Khalikulov, Liz Pasha

## **LIGHTWALKERS**

Tatiana Bookbinder, Jim Bowes,  
Kay Cheatham, James Crow, Darcy Fink,  
Joe Friedman, Jonathan Garzoli,  
Bob Hemstock, Sherman Lee,  
Helen Lew, Evelyn Martinez,  
Lynn Meinhardt, Andrew Melomet,  
Matt Miller, Jack Mona, Steve Mullin,  
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Liz Pasha, Bruce Powell, Leo Pribble,  
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*Employees who have served the Company for more than ten years are listed with their years of service.*

# BARBARA FRACCHIA

Fine Art Paintings of Opera and Ballet



*Waiting for Don José, 24 x 24, oil on canvas*

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San Francisco Opera extends its deepest appreciation to the many individuals whose generous support keeps the powerfully thrilling and transformative experience of great opera alive in the Bay Area. Each year, support from individuals—including Company Sponsors, Producers Circle, Leadership Circle, Medallion Society and Members—accounts for 80% of the contributed revenue that sustains the Company’s activities.

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Anonymous

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Roselyne Chroman Swig<sup>A</sup>  
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James & Beth Wintersteen  
Anonymous (3)

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Mr. Michael D. Moradzadeh  
Bernice Lindstrom,  
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<sup>\*</sup> deceased    <sup>A</sup> indicates Series A Box Holder



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2013–2018

Cathy MacNaughton,  
2008–2013

Mrs. Harry Wetzel\*,  
1995–2003

Diane B. Wilsey,  
1988–1994

Harriet Meyer Quarré\*,  
*Founding President*,  
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Peter & Donna Zuber  
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in memory of Rolf Gille

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Ms. Miranda Leonard

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in memory of his wife, Anne  
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Heidi Munzinger & John Shott  
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Yvonne von Hartel AM

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Deborah & Paul Sagues  
Michael & Gini Savage

Vandana & Arvind Sharma  
Dr. Stephen Sherwin &  
Merrill Randol Sherwin

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 Isobel & Roger Sturgeon  
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 William & Mikiko Walker  
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 Lucie & Jerry Weissman  
 Daniel & Marie Welch  
 Linda A. Whittaker  
 The Brayton Wilbur Foundation  
 Mr. & Mrs. Y. Wood Wong  
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 in memory of  
 Dr. Charles Yanofsky  
 Tatyana & Lev Yurovsky  
 Kenneth & Anna Zankel,  
 The Grove  
 Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Zilles  
 Zuni Café  
 Anonymous (7)

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 Melissa & Laurence Lasky  
 Kurt Latta  
 Catherine Lehmann  
 Cynthia & Richard Livermore  
 Dr. Britt-Marie Ljung  
 James & Deborah Lyerla  
 Dr. & Mrs. Laurence R. Lyons  
 Marco Magarelli &  
 Geraldine Martinez-Magarelli  
 Deborah Marion, Tax CPA &  
 Joe Losch  
 Mrs. Constance Marvin  
 Mr. Robert E. McCleskey  
 Ernie Mieger  
 Mr. David Moreton  
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 Jim Newman & Jane Ivory  
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 Linda Dembo  
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 Mr. George Roth  
 Dr. Heidi H. Cary  
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 Ms. Monica Lopez  
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 Mr. Rich Gerhardt  
 Dorothy Gietzen  
 Mr. Stephen P. Gill &  
 Mrs. Margaret Gill  
 Mr. & Mrs. Dane Gillette  
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 Simone Haas & Scott Zumsteg  
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 Mr. David S. Hugle &  
 Mr. Haggai Niv  
 Victor & Kathy Hymes  
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 in memory of Lottie Ilg  
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 Donald &  
 Jacqueline Jacobberger  
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 Mrs. Jo Jagoda  
 Mr. Keith Jantzen &  
 Mr. Scott Beth  
 Alfred & Sally Jones  
 Barbara E. Jones,  
 in memory of  
 William E. Jones  
 Thomas & Elisabeth Jones  
 Mr. David A. Kadish

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 Ms. Kathryn Kersey  
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 Mehrzad Khajenoori  
 Mr. Sven E. Kjaersgaard  
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 Tomas van der Haase  
 John & A.M. Larue  
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 Ms. Patricia Lee-Hoffmann  
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 Anthony Leuin & Jean Bertrand  
 Cathy Lindahl  
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 Elkhannah Pulitzer  
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 Patricia Rees-Miller  
 Randall E. Reynoso &  
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Anne Scantlan-Rohrer  
Ms. Heli Roiha &  
Ms. Therissa McKelvey  
Mr. Arthur S. Roosa &  
Ms. Keiko Kiyuna  
Mr. George E. Rossmann  
Mr. Charles W. Roth  
Richard E. Rowland  
Mr. M. Duane Rutledge  
Barbara Sahm & Steven Winkel  
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Rev. Gerard K. Moran  
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Mrs. Frances Slate  
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Bob & Gail Walker  
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Helena Troy Wasp  
Rosalie V. Weaver  
Mr. Phil Wennhold

Matthew Williams &  
Amanda Maystead  
Vivian W. Wing, M.D. &  
Elizabeth Grace Wickersham  
Mr. Harvey Yaverbaum  
Florette Yen  
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Mr. Sean M. SeLegue  
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Malcolm H. Bowles  
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Agnes Chen Brown,  
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Robert Elliott Brown  
Eleanor & Theodore Brown  
Timothy & Margaret Brown  
Don Buhman &  
Wray Humphrey  
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Mag Dimond  
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Gregory & Anne M. Evans  
Pauline Eveillard & Doug Gould  
Patricia & Richard Farnsworth  
Drs. Bette & James Felton  
Jan & Bob Fenwick  
Ms. Karin Fetherston

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Dandelion, in honor of	Rosemary Joyce & Russell Sheptak	Ronald & Judith McWilliams	Robert Ripps & Steven Spector	Ms. Susan Sweet
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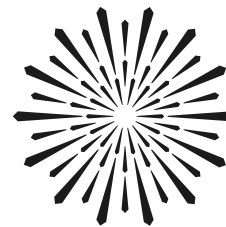
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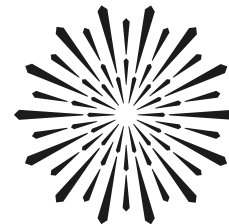
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# YOUR OPERA EXPERIENCE

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- No cameras or recording equipment are permitted in the Opera House.
- As a courtesy to those who may have fragrance allergies, please avoid wearing perfume or cologne.
- 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.**

The **OPERA BOX OFFICE** is located in the Opera House, 301 Van Ness Avenue, and is open Monday 10 AM–5 PM, Tuesday through Saturday 10 AM–6 PM, and through the first intermission on performance days. Tickets may also be charged by phone at (415) 864-3330 or ordered online at [sfopera.com](http://sfopera.com). We accept American Express, VISA, MasterCard, and Discover.

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.

**ACCESSIBILITY** San Francisco Opera is committed to providing easy access for all of our patrons. Please contact the Opera Box Office prior to your visit so that we can ensure your comfort.

**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.

**LIVE TITLES: TEXT-TO-VOICE SUPERTITLES** Headsets that provide a spoken version of the supertitles are available at the North Lobby coat check.

**DINING & REFRESHMENTS** Global Gourmet operates pre-show and intermission food and beverage concession services in lobby areas. Beginning two hours prior to all performances, Prelude at the Opera House in the lower lounge offers a changing seasonal buffet, as well as elevated *à la carte* dishes for pre-performance dining and intermission. The North Box Restaurant on the North Mezzanine (Box) level features locally sourced California cuisine with global influences.

Audiences may enjoy purchased beverages inside the auditorium in the appropriate containers. Outside food and drink are prohibited.

The **SAN FRANCISCO OPERA SHOP**, located in the South Mezzanine lobby, front lobby, and North Dress Circle of the Opera House, sells opera CDs, DVDs, SF Opera merchandise, and gift items. The Shop is open 90 minutes before performances, at intermissions, and afterward. All proceeds benefit San Francisco Opera.

**COAT CHECK** A coat check for your convenience is located at the North and South ends of the main lobby. For the safety and comfort of our audience, large bags are strongly discouraged and are subject to search.

**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.

**OPERA GLASSES** may be rented for \$5 at the North Lobby coat check. ID deposit is requested.

**LARGE-PRINT CAST SHEETS AND SYNOPSES** are available at the coat check stations in the main lobby.

**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).

**TAXI SERVICE** Patrons desiring a taxi after a performance should come to the Grove Street Taxi Ramp located on the south side of the Opera House. Accommodations are provided on a first-come, first-served basis, and cannot be guaranteed as service is based on availability of licensed taxis. Staff will be on hand to assist.

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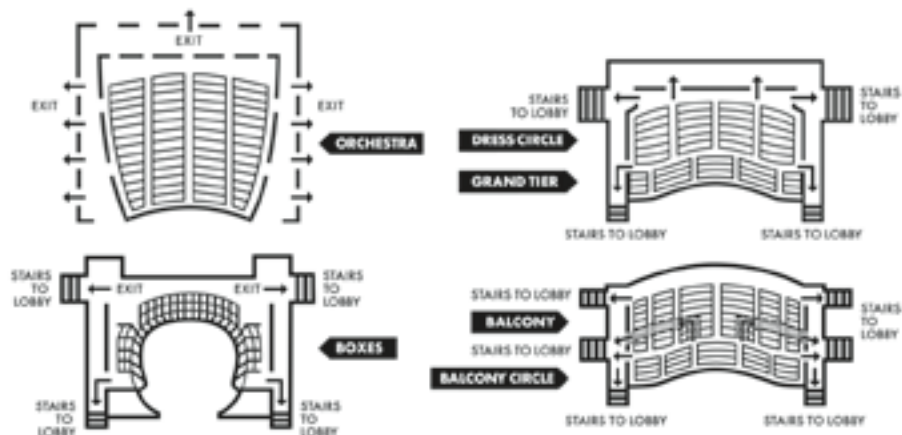
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# TRUSTING IN THE FUTURE OF OPERA

BY GENERAL DIRECTOR MATTHEW SHILVOCK

**O**pera companies should exist in a symbiotic relationship with the communities they serve: they have over time been the beating heart of cities, the gathering place for peoples, and an expression of the zeitgeist of a community. However, such a relationship between opera and community is not a given. It only happens when the community trusts that the company is producing work of meaning and value.



SIMON PAULY

As we approach our centennial in 2022–23, it is imperative that we build trust between opera and community. To that end, the board and staff, headed by the board’s Vice President, Lisa Erdberg, have been working on the creation of a new mission and vision for San Francisco Opera—a clear expression of why we exist and what we value. I’m so excited by what has transpired—a strategic framework to guide us into our next century.

Our new mission statement is a credo, a heartfelt expression of our essential purpose:

*We believe opera is a uniquely compelling, entertaining and emotionally thrilling art form. Our mission is to bring together growing audiences to experience opera’s transformative power.*

It’s a celebration of the power of opera to move people to deep emotions, to thrill with spectacle, and to connect audiences, existing and new, in singular moments of soaring art. This is the fundamental promise of our art form.

Then comes our new vision statement. This is an aspirational expression of where we’re heading in the coming decade. It is bold and succinct:

*To crack the code on producing big art in the 21st century.*

It expresses a fundamental need: how do we ensure that the “big art” uniqueness of what we do is sustained and furthered in this new century? We tell big stories on a big stage with big emotions and a big impact. We are privileged to produce opera on one of the largest canvasses

in the world and we need to find the replicable way to do that in the 21st century.

Being successful in this vision will require both respect for the legacy of excellence that has so defined our first hundred years, and a vision and courage for what we can become in a new century.

The mission and the vision are the key elements of our strategic framework. But we also articulated six values that will guide our priorities in the course of the next decade:

- **Pioneering new approaches to producing large-scale opera**
- **Striving for the highest standards of artistic integrity and excellence**
- **Fostering a positive, collaborative, diverse, inclusive organization**
- **Developing new audiences and creating dynamic audience relationships**
- **Creating impactful reciprocal connections with the community through education and engagement**
- **Upholding fiscal rigor and sound management as prerequisites for creativity**

Finally, and something I’m particularly excited about, is an expression of our personality: what we stand for, what defines our identity as an organization, and what guides every interaction we have:

**Creative, Bold, Inspiring, Welcoming, Excellent**

These are the personality traits that you should expect from us at all times and I urge you to let us know if we’re falling short in any area, or if you experience something that you feel particularly exemplifies these traits.

This is just the beginning of our journey. There is much exciting art and work ahead as we look to ensure that we are the beating heart of our community. This new strategic framework is a wonderful encapsulation of our commitment to forge a bold new path ahead and I look forward to being on this thrilling journey with you. 🌟

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it starts with a dream

