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Don Giovanni

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San Francisco Bay Area

From

06/01/2022

To

06/30/2022

GO!



Behind the scenes of In Song: Meigui Zhang

IN SONG: MEIGUI ZHANG RELEASED JUNE 7

San Francisco Opera's video series, *In Song*, a recent 2022 Webby People's Voice-winner, continues this month with a new episode, *In Song: Meigui Zhang*. The fast-rising soprano reflects on her journey far from Chengdu, China, where she grew up on the grounds of a music conservatory, raised by singer-teacher parents. Prior to her San Francisco Opera debut this month as Dai Yu in *Dream of the Red Chamber* (June 14–July 3), she performs a traditional Kazakh folk song and French art song.

Shot on location in cities ranging from Nashville and New York City to Auckland and Cairo, each *In Song* episode explores, through story and song, the diverse cultural traditions that inform the personal and musical journey of notable artists from the world of opera. The series has featured soprano Amina Edris, mezzo-sopranos Jamie Barton (with banjo virtuoso Béla Fleck) and J'Nai Bridges, and tenors Arturo Chacón-Cruz and Pene Pati.

Each *In Song* is free and available at sfopera.com/insong and on YouTube and Facebook, along with additional content including conversations between the artists and *In Song* director Elena Park about the making of each episode.

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What's on in Bay Area

06/01/2022 – 06/30/2022



Romeo y Juliet
May 25 – Jun 09

KEVIN BERNE



Ragtime
Jun 01 – 26



Don Giovanni
Jun 04 – Jul 02

ERHARD ROM



Hadestown
Jun 07 – Jul 3

T. CHARLES ERICKSON



Stravinsky's Oedipus rex
Jun 10 – 12



Dream of the Red Chamber
Jun 14 – Jul 03

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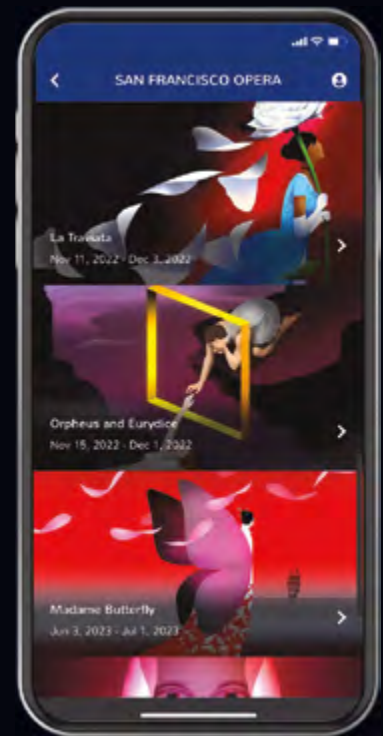
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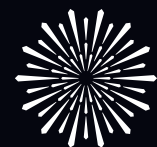
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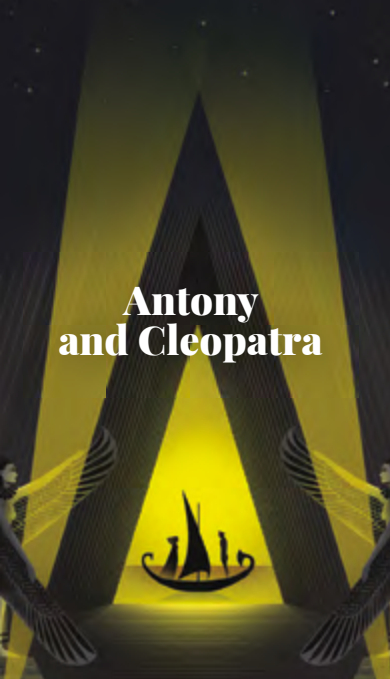
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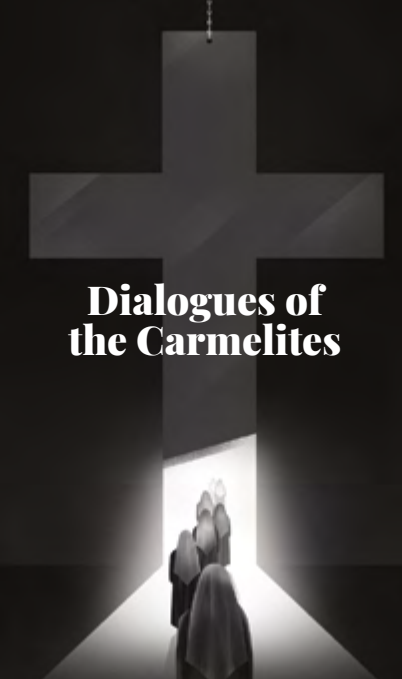
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**Antony
and Cleopatra**



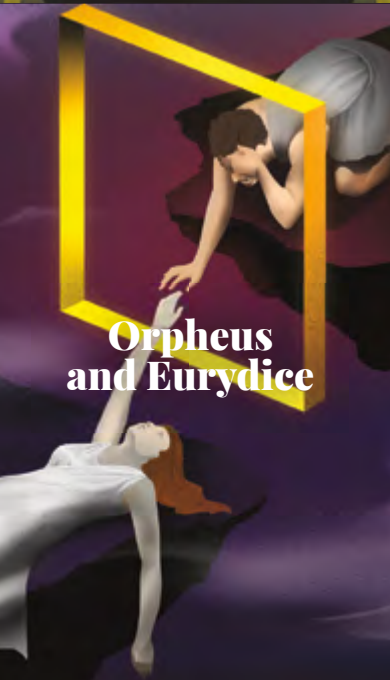
Eugene Onegin



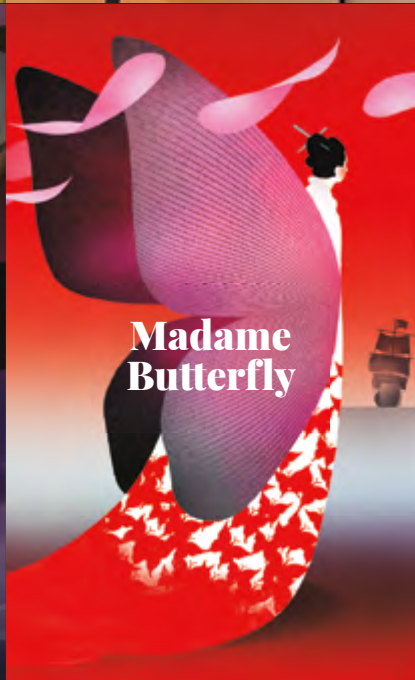
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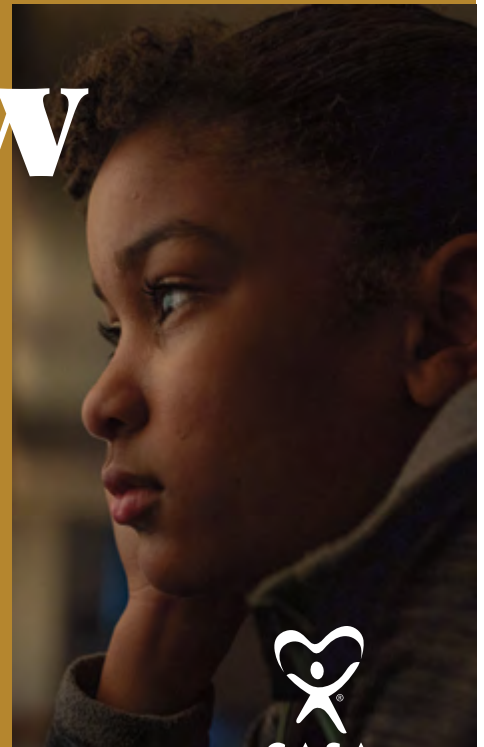
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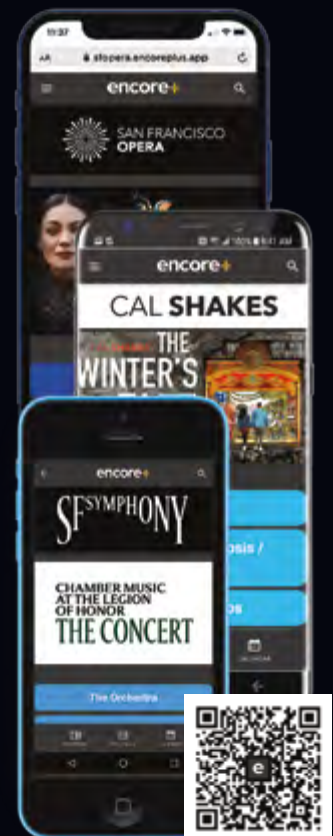
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A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

Welcome to San Francisco Opera's 2022 Summer Season!

We are delighted to return to the War Memorial Opera House and the immersive power of grand opera. Because of you and our incredible community of patrons, we are emerging from the dark days of COVID to this moment of artistic opportunity and potential.



Keith B. Geeslin and John A. Gunn
DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

In true San Francisco Opera fashion, the final operas of our 99th season are both innovative and deeply rooted in tradition. We begin with a new staging of the Mozart classic *Don Giovanni* followed by the return of Bright Sheng's internationally-acclaimed *Dream of the Red Chamber*, a San Francisco Opera commission based on one of China's greatest literary masterworks. The summer concludes with a "can't miss" Verdi extravaganza with our incomparable Music Director Eun Sun Kim, conducting our San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus.

We are preparing a spectacular Centennial Season featuring the world premiere of Bay Area composer John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra*, new productions of favorites like Verdi's *La Traviata* and Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, a star-studded *Opera Ball* and *100th Anniversary Concert*, and much more. We cannot wait to share the magic of our Centennial Season with all of you!

As we prepare for our 100th season, we are reminded of our history and how far we've come together. San Francisco Opera has remained one of our nations's most important opera companies through earthquakes, recessions, and global pandemics because of the amazing support of our community.

Thank you for continuing to be a part of our opera family, and please enjoy this spectacular summer season!

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Keith B. Geeslin.

Keith B. Geeslin
President

San Francisco Opera Association

Handwritten signature of John A. Gunn.

John A. Gunn
Chairman of the Board
San Francisco Opera Association



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San Francisco Opera News



SASHA ARUTYUNOVA

VERDIAN FINALE

San Francisco Opera's 99th season concludes with the Company's amassed forces of orchestra, chorus, soloists, and music director performing the immortal music of Giuseppe Verdi. The June 30 concert, which marks the culmination of Eun Sun Kim's first season as music director, features soloists Nicole Car, Arturo Chacón-Cruz, Etienne Dupuis, Soloman Howard, and San Francisco Opera Adler Fellows in selections and scenes from three Verdi masterworks: *Luisa Miller*, *Il Trovatore*, and *Don Carlo*. Following the concert, after-party ticketholders are invited to raise a glass with the artists in a special event at the stunning Beaux Arts Green Room in the Veterans Building. For tickets to *Eun Sun Kim Conducts Verdi*, visit sfopera.com or call (415) 864-3330. After-Party tickets can be added for \$250.



DREW ALTIZER

San Francisco Opera Is Proud

Pride Night at the Opera returns! After the final curtain falls on Mozart's *Don Giovanni* on Saturday, June 18, the party begins. Join fellow opera lovers and special guests at an after-party on the Dress Circle level of the Opera House. All ticket holders to the performance are invited to attend this celebration of San Francisco's diverse LGBTQ+ community and enjoy drinks, dancing, and jubilation. On Sunday, June 26, the Company will march in the 52nd San Francisco Pride Parade. We look forward to marching together!



KRISTEN LOKEN

Schwabacher Recital Series Concludes in July

The final Schwabacher Recital Series presentation of the season shines the spotlight on the artistry of baritone Sidney Outlaw and esteemed pianist Warren Jones. The July 28 recital in the Caroline H. Hume Concert Hall at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music will feature an intimate program inspired by the artists' 2022 recorded collaboration, *Lament*, which includes works by Ricky Ian Gordon, Robert Owens, Dorothy Rudd Moore, Harry T. Burleigh, and the words of Langston Hughes.



Sidney Outlaw, baritone



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A portrait of Eun Sun Kim, a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, wearing a dark blue blazer. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a soft expression. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Year One.

EUN
SUN
KIM

Eun Sun Kim's first season as music director of San Francisco Opera has been filled with significant "firsts," new productions, and memorable musical connections. As Kim returns to the War Memorial for the June 30 all-Verdi spectacular, we look back at our music director's stunning season in San Francisco, around North America, and abroad. With this whirlwind season of acclaimed music-making, it is no wonder the *New York Times* named her a "2021 Breakout Star."

PHOTOS: (THIS PAGE) KIM TAE-HWAN; (OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) KRISTEN LOKEN, SUZANNA MITCHELL, MARTY SOHL, CORY WEAVER, KRISTEN LOKEN, CORY WEAVER.



August 2021

PUCCINI'S TOSCA San Francisco Opera

"New music director Eun Sun Kim seized control of the score and led a performance of heaving intensity, subtle mood shifts and piquant details."
— *San Francisco Chronicle*



September 2021

THE HOMECOMING CONCERT & OPERA AT THE BALLPARK SIMULCAST San Francisco Opera

With San Francisco Giants Manager Gabe Kapler.



October 2021

BEETHOVEN'S FIDELIO San Francisco Opera (New Production)

"... [Eun Sun Kim] led a propulsive, judiciously paced performance, properly closer to the stylistic realm of Mozart than to Beethoven's romantic successors."
— *Opera News*

November–December 2021 May 2022

PUCCINI'S LA BOHÈME Metropolitan Opera (Debut)

"Even in a good performance of this well-known staple, it's hard for a conductor's work to stand out against the singer's voices, which usually claim our attention. But on Tuesday ... the star of the evening was the conductor Eun Sun Kim, in her Met debut."
— *New York Times*



January 2022

PUCCINI'S LA BOHÈME Vienna State Opera (Debut)

March 2022

PUCCINI'S TOSCA Lyric Opera of Chicago (Debut)

"She is generating considerable buzz in the opera world, and it isn't difficult to understand why."
— *Chicago Tribune*

April–May 2022

PUCCINI'S TURANDOT Houston Grand Opera

June 2022

EUN SUN KIM CONDUCTS VERDI San Francisco Opera

Additionally, Kim has conducted many symphony orchestras throughout the season, including the Philadelphia Orchestra, Oregon Symphony, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and Toronto Symphony Orchestra, among others.



WORLD
PREMIERE

SHE WAS HIS QUEEN. HE WAS HER DOWNFALL.

Antony and Cleopatra

BY JOHN ADAMS

SEPTEMBER 10, 15, 18, 23, 27; OCTOBER 2, 5, 2022




TICKETS ON SALE JUNE 28 | (415) 864-3330 | SFOPERA.COM

All performances feature English supertitles. All dates, prices, programs, artists, and productions subject to change. Tickets subject to availability. Illustration: Brian Stauffer.

Another 100 Seasons

THE SAN FRANCISCO OPERA CENTENNIAL
CELEBRATES THE PAST AND LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

BY LISA HOUSTON



*Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin in the production
by Robert Carsen. / MICHAEL COOPER*

A BIG BOLD SEASON

Someday people will look back and say, “remember the pandemic, when we all sat in our cars and watched the opera, so separate, and yet so together? Wasn’t that something?”

While our own waistlines expanded with pandemic pounds, arts organizations slimmed down, busily adapting to meet the unprecedented challenge. Even so, San Francisco Opera’s General Director Matthew Shilvock, the staff, and the Company kept their eye on the

ball. Calendar pages were turning. The centennial year was coming, ready or not. Well, the moment has arrived. This fall, the Company joins only two other American companies (the Metropolitan Opera and the Cincinnati Opera) to have reached the centennial milestone. The 100th season will feature a jubilant array of new works, new productions, and stars worthy of the name. The centennial logo is a burst of kaleidoscopic color. “It’s a big, bold budget and it’s a big, bold season,” Shilvock says. “We can’t be anything but bold at the moment.”

INNOVATIVE ZEAL IS IN OUR DNA

The season is bookended by new commissions of Bay Area composers. John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra* kicks things off with stars Gerald Finley and Amina Edris originating the title roles. "It's a story of intense love," Shilvock says, "almost *Who's-Afraid-of-Virginia-Woolf*-esque." The season closer, *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*, is a mystical take on the immortal love story of artists Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera by acclaimed Berkeley-born composer Gabriela Lena Frank. Adding yet more local depth to the story, tempest-tossed lovers Kahlo and Rivera divorced in 1940 and remarried one another that same year in San Francisco City Hall.

Two jewels of the twentieth-century canon will honor the Company's history of important American premieres:

Richard Strauss' *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (1959) and Francis Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites* (1957). Featuring these works, Shilvock says, "is a way of showing that innovative zeal has always been a part of this Company's DNA." Other past American premieres include Ravel's *L'Enfant et les Sortilège* (1930), Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1961), and Janáček's *The Makropulos Case* (1966).

The David Hockney production of the Strauss will be new to San Francisco audiences. Full of ultra-saturated colors and luscious, organic shapes evocative of the opera's theme of fertility, Hockney's designs bring the energy of the "magic fairy tale" librettist Hugo von Hofmannsthal described. Sir Donald Runnicles takes the podium to lead a powerful cast, including sopranos Camila Nylund and Nina Stemme.

General Director Matthew Shilvock backstage at the War Memorial Opera House.
SASHA ARUTYUNOVA



Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* staged by Amon Miyamoto with costumes by Kenzō Takada.
TOKYO NIKIKAI OPERA FOUNDATION/CHIKASHI SAEG



Strauss' *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, production by David Hockney. / ROBERT MILLARD

The silvery shimmer of Heidi Stober's soprano will resonate with celestial elements of Olivier Py's production of *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, an opera which is historically important to the Company for another reason. In 1957, the role of Madame Lidoine, the new prioress, went to American soprano Leontyne Price. It was her first role with a major opera company, and it was then, backstage, that General Director Kurt Herbert Adler tapped Miss Price on the shoulder and asked a question that would change the opera world forever: "Do you know *Aida*?"

TELLING INTIMATE STORIES

The Centennial Season also includes some new takes on the core repertoire. Pretty Yende brings star power to the title role of director Shawna Lucey's production of *La Traviata*, which will be the first new production of that work since 1987. "Shawna goes deeply into the backstory of characters, exploring why they do what they do," Shilvock says. "We see the Parisian background through floor to ceiling windows. It resonates with the classic look you would expect in a *Traviata*, but it is also intentionally contemporary. Violetta is always on display, always in a fishbowl. It's an example of how characterization drives design. It's something of a theme as we look to new productions."

Directed by Amon Miyamoto, a new *Madame Butterfly* sees events through the eyes of Butterfly's son, now grown and coming to grips with the complicated heritage of his parents' tragic love. Karah Son makes her Company debut in the title role, joined by the Pinkerton of tenor Michael Fabiano and Lucas Meacham as Sharpless.

The costumes for *Butterfly* were the last major work of renowned designer Kenzō Takada, who passed away from

complications of COVID in Paris in 2020. Famous for his love of florals and nuanced reinterpretation of classic Japanese design, Takada spoke of his work on the opera: "I tried to grasp Puccini's narratives while drawing Japanese spirituality as accurately as possible. It should make the audience dream and travel in ecstasy."

Gluck's *Orpheus and Eurydice* is a standout for several reasons. "It's a very different musical language than anything else in the season," Shilvock says of the rarely performed work. "A real contrast to the Strauss sonorities. It's 80 minutes, a focused burst of a very personal story of grief." Among many highly anticipated house debuts this season, perhaps the most eagerly awaited, is the *Orpheus* of Jakub Józef Orliński, the Polish countertenor and champion breakdancer. (And no, that's not a typo.)

Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* is the Company's first Russian opera since 2008 and another "gets you right by the heart" story. Evgenia Muraveva makes her American debut here as Tatyana in Robert Carsen's deservedly beloved production, a simple but stunning background for the almost internal monologues that drive dual tales of two ill-fated loves. "No matter how grand opera seems to be," Shilvock says, "they're almost always very intimate stories." Tchaikovsky himself did not call his setting of Pushkin an opera but rather, "intimate scenes." The production also features the house debut of Gordon Bintner in the title role.

TALENT AND TIMING.

Leontyne Price described two elements as vital for a career: talent and timing. "Being in the right place at the right time. As far as I was concerned," she said, "San Francisco was definitely that." As it has been for many. "*Wozzeck* proved to



El último sueño de Frida y Diego composer Gabriela Lena Frank.
MARIAH TAUGER



Jakub Józef Orliński makes his Company debut as Orpheus in Gluck's Orpheus and Eurydice. / JIYANG CHEN

be a perfect choice for my reentry into the American operatic orbit,” Marilyn Horne said of an invitation from San Francisco that brought her back to the States from Germany in 1961 and ignited a blockbuster career.

The American debuts of Birgit Nilsson, Giuseppe Taddei, Sena Jurinac, Renata Tebaldi, Ebe Stignani, Boris Christoff, and far too many other luminaries to name, took place right here. And then there are the “home grown” singers, as Adler called them, who came up through the young artist programs. Carol Vaness. Dolora Zajick. Janis Martin. Not to mention the role debuts. Caballé’s first Turandot? Here at San Francisco Opera. The first time Pavarotti sang “Nessun dorma” on an American operatic stage was also here. Nina Stemme’s first *Ring* cycle? You guessed it, here.

But perhaps the Company’s most historic hire was the recent appointment of the first woman music director of any major American opera company, Eun Sun Kim. “We were looking for a new music director in 2019. It was important to us that we choose someone who had gone through a production process with us. It was pretty early on in *Rusalka* that you felt something very special happening,” Shilvock says of her 2019 debut. “Stagehands were coming up to me and saying, ‘I really hope it’s her.’ Everyone felt such total respect from Eun Sun, not just for the orchestra but through the whole theater. She has such a complete understanding of what it takes to make great opera happen.” *Tosca*’s Ailyn Pérez described Kim from the singer’s perspective. “She has what I feel is a psychic

ability to know what we’re going to do,” Pérez says, “and to walk us through it.”

Another recent hire is the new chorus director, John Keene. “You could see how their musical priorities clicked so symbiotically,” Shilvock said of Kim and Keene. In the wake of Sheri Greenawald’s retirement, Carrie-Ann Matheson and Markus Beam have taken on the roles of artistic director and general manager of the San Francisco Opera Center, respectively. “The addition of Theresa von Klug as chief operating officer is a reflection of the growing scope of what we’re trying to do as a company,” Shilvock says. “As we add in new projects in the community, new experiences in the theater, new digital initiatives, we want someone who is intersecting all the different elements of the Company, who can stay in that centralizing space and pull everything together.”

THIS IS YOUR OPERA HOUSE!

Still other changes reflect a more profound shift within the organization. “We have begun to speak internally with much more vulnerability as a company,” Shilvock says. “Onstage we expect our singers and our musicians to be very vulnerable, and great art is created from vulnerability. We have been trying to find that vulnerability in all our work. Taking our time to listen and make room for different perspectives.”

That work is supported by the now three-year-old Department of Diversity, Equity, and Community. “Coming out of the pandemic, there’s an absolute



Pretty Yende performs Violetta in *La Traviata* for the first time in America in her Company debut. / DARIO ACOSTA



Composer John Adams and Music Director Eun Sun Kim at an orchestra reading for Adams' new opera, *Antony and Cleopatra*. / KRISTEN LOKEN

urgency. We have to open the doors of the Opera House to the whole community and say “This is your opera house! This is your place to experience these transformational stories of humanity.”

STEPS INTO THE UNKNOWN...

Since its inception the Company has worked to make storytelling contemporary, from projections and supertitles inside of the Opera House to live radio broadcasts (as early as the 1932 opening of the War Memorial Opera House), touring productions, *Opera in the Park*, Opera Center productions in smaller venues, programs in the public schools, and more recently *Opera at the Ballpark* simulcasts. This season welcomes *The Traviata Encounter*, where the fourth wall will come down, allowing artists and audience to mingle in an immersive experience of the story. *Bohème Out of the Box* will take opera around the Bay Area in a shipping-container-turned-stage. And perhaps most inventive, the *Instigators* program will bring together bold innovators from outside the world of opera to pioneer new directions for the art form. “These ancillary programs are all the beginnings of experiments,” Shilvock says. “We’re building what we call the Creative Edge Fund to ensure the funding that allows us to look at this on a multi-year basis. We have to find that replicability. Just as we’ve done with the simulcasts over the years. We’re taking the steps into the unknown, but we’re also thinking how can they develop, and how do they inflect other aspects of our work?”

The centennial is also an opportunity to reflect and be grateful for the astounding and undeniably collective achievement of cast, crew, company, and most importantly, audience. There have been hurdles and crises. A depression. Wars. A major earthquake. That first *Frau* in '59 was fraught with all manner of challenges. Young designer Jean-Pierre Ponnelle was drafted into the French Army, leaving the Company’s art department to finish the production. And no fewer than three of the principal singers had to withdraw for various reasons.

Some other Company disaster stories are apocryphal. No, the firing squad did not jump over the parapet in a 1961 *Tosca*. (There was no *Tosca* in '61.) Did an earthquake in 1933 really hurl Lily Pons out of a donkey cart in *Cavalleria*? Again, no. Pons never sang *Cavalleria*, at least not on this stage. Though there were some donkey shenanigans in a 1991 *Suor Angelica*. Night after night, the contrary beast gave those poor nuns a terrible time, and in an otherwise tragic tale, the donkey got the only big laugh of the night. That’s why opera can soften even the most cynical heart, because even when it goes wrong, opera is right. To attempt opera is to have hope. To commission another work, to create a new production, or to give a new singer a chance, is to twist the kaleidoscope one more time, and let the magic happen. 🍄

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.

John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn



TERRENCE MCCARTHY

Once again, the unprecedented generosity of Cynthia and John Gunn has set the stage for a dazzling season at San Francisco Opera. Since 2002, when John joined the Opera Board, the couple has underwritten numerous productions and provided exceptional support for many of the Company’s innovative endeavors. In September 2008, the Gunns made a historic commitment—believed to be the largest gift ever made by individuals to an American opera company—to help fund the signature projects of General Director David Gockley, including new operas and productions, multimedia projects, and outreach programs, and they have proudly continued that support for General Director Matthew Shilvock. This season, the Gunns’ inspired generosity is helping make possible six productions—*Tosca*, *Live and in Concert: The Homecoming*, *Fidelio*, *Così fan tutte*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Dream of the Red Chamber*. 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 is a former Trustee, Chairman of 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 Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco 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.

Donor Spotlight



Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for New Productions (Production Sponsor, *Don Giovanni*)

San Francisco Opera will always owe a debt of gratitude to Phyllis C. Wattis for her many generous and visionary gifts to San Francisco Opera that include an endowment that established the Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for New Productions. This season's *Fidelio*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Don Giovanni* are made possible by the sponsorship support of the Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for New Productions. Phyllis C. Wattis passed away in June 2002 at the age of 97. During her life she generously supported many Bay Area nonprofit organizations engaged in health care (California Pacific Medical Center, Lucile Packard Children's Hospital), education (University of California, Stanford University), displays of scientific wonders (Academy of Sciences, Exploratorium), and production of music (Conservatory of Music, San Francisco

Symphony). She was especially interested in the arts, contributing also her time, wisdom, and leadership to fine arts and performing arts. She served prominently on the boards of San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, San Francisco Opera, and San Francisco Symphony and was a committed financial and ideological supporter of each of these organizations as well. Her vision was instrumental in shaping the arts community in San Francisco. Phyllis C. Wattis helped underwrite San Francisco Opera's world premiere productions, including *Dangerous Liaisons* (1994), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1998) and *Dead Man Walking* (2000). She provided additional support to many other productions, including a new production of *War and Peace* (1991), *Lulu* (1998), *Wozzeck* (1999), and *Kat'a Kabanova* (2002). San Francisco Opera deeply appreciates the many generous gifts from Phyllis C. Wattis and takes this opportunity to recognize the Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for New Productions for its sponsorship support.



Edmund W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund (Production Sponsor, *Dream of the Red Chamber*)

Dream of the Red Chamber is the 26th production supported by the Littlefield Family Company Sponsors since 2002, the Littlefield name became especially familiar to opera fans in 2006 when Jeannik made her historic \$35 million commitment to San Francisco Opera. She held a subscription for over 40 years until her passing in 2013. Jeannik's daughter, Denise Sobel, continues her family's wonderful legacy of support as a dedicated benefactor of *Opera Ball*. The Littlefield Family was honored in November 2021 with the San Francisco Opera Guild's 2021 Crescendo Award along with the announcement of Sobel's leadership support of San Francisco Opera's Department of Diversity, Equity and

Community (DEC). The Edmund W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Endowment Fund provides a permanent and unrestricted source of income for the Company.



Bernard & Barbro Osher (Production Sponsor, *Don Giovanni*)

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.

DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

RAY "SCOTTY" MORRIS

Donor Spotlight



DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

Joan Traitel/Great Singers Fund

(Sponsor, Etienne Dupuis, Nicole Car, and Luca Pisaroni in *Don Giovanni*)

“Without great singers, opera is not all it could be,” says San Francisco Opera board member Joan Traitel. “That’s why my late husband and I approached then-General Director 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 late 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. “ I am

thrilled to sponsor Etienne Dupuis, Nicole Car and Luca Pisaroni. 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.”



CHINESE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

傳龍基金

www.chineseheritagefoundation.org

The Chinese Heritage Foundation (Commissioning Sponsor, *Dream of the Red Chamber*)

Based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the Chinese Heritage Foundation supports the preservation and promotion of Chinese history, culture, and heritage and encourages innovation in the arts. Through our grant awards and outreach programs, we actively seek common ground in which to further mutual understanding among all peoples. In initiating and

funding the commission of a 21st-century operatic treatment of *Dream of the Red Chamber*, one of the best known and most beloved novels in Chinese literature, we wish to engage the contemporary audience, win its empathy for our tragic story, and deepen its understanding of our cultural heritage. We applaud San Francisco Opera, its General Director Emeritus David Gockley, and General Director Matthew Shilvock for supporting our goals and creating a sumptuous and significant production that has already garnered international acclaim and will have a lasting influence well beyond the opera world.

“It was such a privilege to partner with the Chinese Heritage Foundation in the creation of this powerful new opera,” says General Director Matthew Shilvock. “They believe passionately in connecting culture through art, and the Foundation was the driving force behind the inception of the operatic *Dream of the Red Chamber*. I am thrilled that they will be joining us again for this presentation, after it has had such a successful run of performances in China.”

Jan Shrem & Maria Manetti Shrem



DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

As Jan Shrem explains, “For Maria, it is all about the artists. Though I had loved opera for years before I met her, it was Maria who opened my eyes to the dedication and sacrifice of the artists.” Jan and Maria have provided significant support for opera artists through the establishment of four major funds. Through the Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund, they support many classic works of the Italian repertoire, including this season’s *Tosca* and *Don Giovanni*. Through the Conductors Fund, appearances of renowned conductors are assured at San Francisco Opera, this season for *Così fan tutte* and *Dream of the Red Chamber*. Through the Emerging Stars Fund, Jan and Maria help bring some of opera’s most exciting rising talents to the stage. And finally, the Luminaries Concert Fund enables San Francisco Opera to bring legendary artists to the stage for special events and performances.

Maria, born in Florence, Italy, says, “Opera has been one of my greatest passions since I was 13 years old.” When she saw *Madame Butterfly* at San Francisco Opera in 1974 starring

Renata Scottò, the two had an emotional backstage meeting. “She was so far from home and so grateful to be able to speak Italian with me—we both cried. I began to understand the challenging life of opera artists. Since then, I have been motivated to do what I can to welcome artists when they are working in San Francisco.” Jan concurs, “They dedicate their lives for our pleasure, and their artistry elevates our lives.”

Maria adds, “It is immensely satisfying to support San Francisco Opera in this way. We can appreciate the benefits of our philanthropy here and now as we enjoy these young, exciting artists and become their friends.” Maria feels that artists want friends in the audience, and she and Jan are pleased to know that their presence gives artists greater confidence. “We hope others will join us in contributing to these funds and these friendships.”

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

25 Consecutive Years of Donor Loyalty

Every gift makes a difference. Thank you to the following donors who have generously supported San Francisco Opera for 25 consecutive years. You are an integral part of creating opera joy for all!

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new season announcements
and wondering about
upcoming experiences
with new works
as well as with familiar,
beloved works,
are annual rituals.”
—KAREN BURTNES PRAK

* deceased

Your Opera Experience

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- Please turn off and refrain from using all electronic devices during the performance, including digital watches and cell phones.
- No cameras or recording equipment are permitted during performances in the Opera House.
- All patrons must wear well-fitted masks at all times when inside the theater. Drinks are not allowed inside the theater.
- 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.

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

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Shop is open 90 minutes before performances, at intermissions, and afterward. All proceeds benefit San Francisco Opera.

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

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LARGE-PRINT CAST SHEETS AND SYNOPSIS are available at the North Lobby coat check station.

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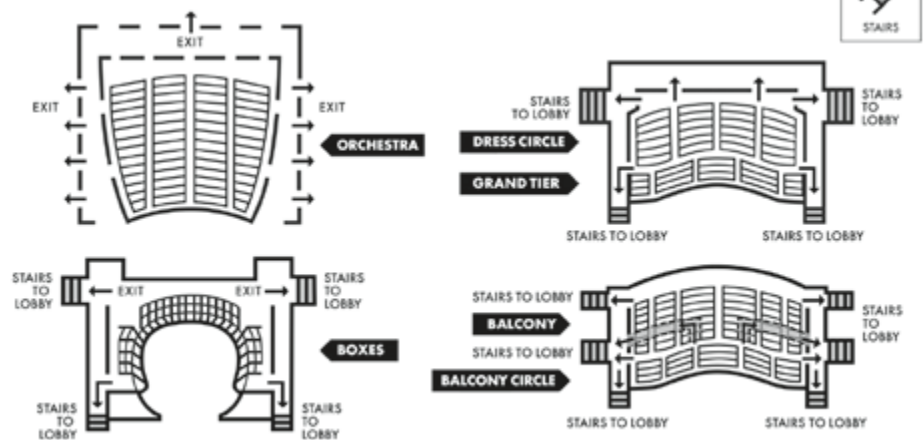
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Join us for special centennial events as we honor our past and shape our future.



OPERA IN THE PARK

Sunday, September 11, 2022

Free and open to all! Don't miss this time-honored Bay Area tradition in Golden Gate Park.



OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, October 23, 2022

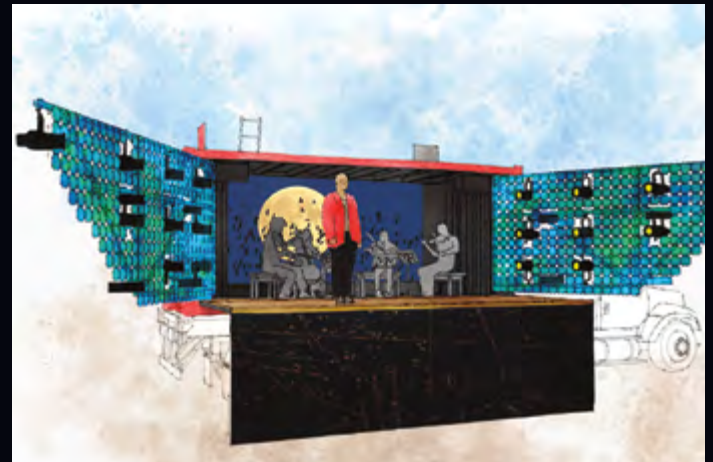
Take a tour of our historic home, the War Memorial Opera House! Family-friendly activities, sing-alongs, and demonstrations will be offered throughout the day.



THE TRAVIATA ENCOUNTER

Saturday, November 19, 2022

Enjoy Act I of Verdi's beloved opera followed by an immersive evening of food, drinks, and mingling with the artists from the production in a transformed Opera House.



BOHÈME OUT OF THE BOX

Early 2023

We're taking opera out of the Opera House and bringing it to you! Audiences around the Bay Area can enjoy shortened versions of *La Bohème* performed live on a shipping-container-turned-stage.

Sign up for our mailing list to be the first to know when tickets go on sale and events are added.

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Photos (left to right, top to bottom): Centennial illustration by Brian Stauffer, Drew Altizer, David Wakely, Drew Altizer, Chad Owens.

Don Giovanni

IL DISSOLUTO PUNITO (THE LIBERTINE PUNISHED)

OPERA IN TWO ACTS BY WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

LIBRETTO BY LORENZO DA PONTE

This production is made possible, in part, by
John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn;
Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for New Productions;
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Etienne Dupuis, Nicole Car, and Luca Pisaroni's appearances
are made possible by a gift to the Great Singers Fund
by Joan and David Traitel.

Additional funding is provided by Candace Zander Kahn and Barbara Moller Ward.

JUNE 4, 10, 12, 15, 18, 21, 26; JULY 2, 2022

The performance will last approximately three hours and twenty minutes, including one intermission.

NEW SAN FRANCISCO OPERA PRODUCTION



SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA

Don Giovanni

ACT I

Late at night, Don Giovanni's servant Leporello is keeping watch while his master assaults Donna Anna, the daughter of the Commendatore. The Commendatore rushes to her defense, but Don Giovanni slays the old man and flees with Leporello. Anna returns with Don Ottavio, her fiancé, and the two swear revenge. In the early morning, Giovanni's jilted lover Donna Elvira is searching for Giovanni. When they meet, Giovanni talks his way out of trouble and escapes, leaving Leporello to explain his master's philandering ways. Around midday, Giovanni and Leporello happen upon the nuptial parade of Masetto and Zerlina. Zerlina excites Giovanni's fancy, but his seduction of her is interrupted by Elvira, who sweeps Zerlina away. Anna and Ottavio arrive, not yet recognizing Giovanni as the Commendatore's murderer. When Elvira interrupts again, Giovanni attempts to pass off her hysterics as madness and leaves to "help" Elvira in her distress. Anna soon realizes that Giovanni is her attacker and calls for vengeance.

Giovanni orders Leporello to prepare a party in honor of Masetto and Zerlina's wedding. He renews his wooing of Zerlina, but her sharp-eyed fiancé intervenes. As Giovanni leads the young couple into the party, Anna, Ottavio, and Elvira arrive wearing disguises and are quickly invited to join the festivities. With the celebration in full swing, Giovanni pulls Zerlina into an adjoining room. She cries for help, and Giovanni tries to make Leporello look like the offending villain. The three guests unmask and believe they have Don Giovanni trapped. However, he once again escapes his accusers.

ACT II

Later that evening, Don Giovanni soothes a disgruntled Leporello and hatches his latest plot, this one aimed at Elvira's maid, requiring master and servant to exchange clothes. Elvira is lured away by the man she thinks is her beloved, and the real Giovanni is left to serenade the maid. Just then an armed group led by Masetto arrive in search of the fugitive. Giovanni, disguised as Leporello, sends them off in all directions, disarms Masetto, and beats him. Leporello, still disguised as Don Giovanni, is trying to flee when Anna, Ottavio, Masetto, and Zerlina converge upon him. Leporello reveals his identity, confusing everyone, and hides. Zerlina discovers him once everyone has left and threatens immediate retribution for his crimes.

Leporello, proving to be as elusive as his master, narrowly escapes.

Later that night, Giovanni and Leporello have sought refuge in a cemetery. Their conversation is interrupted by a ghostly voice from the statue of the Commendatore. In response to a doomsday warning, Giovanni orders Leporello to invite the statue for a pre-dawn supper. The invitation is accepted, and the two leave to prepare. Meanwhile, Ottavio seeks to console Anna, suggesting marriage. Temporarily rejected, he charges Anna with cruelty. Anna protests her love and begs for patience. Giovanni eats supper while a band serenades him with popular tunes of the day. Elvira rushes in and tries to persuade Giovanni to change his ways so she can forgive him. He cruelly taunts her, and she leaves in despair. Moments later, her terrified scream is heard and Leporello rushes back in terror, announcing the arrival of the statue of the Commendatore. The Commendatore asks if Giovanni will dine with him, and the arrogant Giovanni accepts. The Commendatore demands repeatedly that Giovanni repent his behavior, but Giovanni refuses and is dragged to hell.

EPILOGUE

The other characters return searching for Giovanni. Leporello tells them what has happened. They all cite the moral of the opera: This is the evil-doer's end, and sinners will die just as they have lived.

First performance: Prague National Theatre; October 29, 1787.
Second production at Vienna's Burgtheater; May 7, 1788

First performances in the U.S.: New York City, Park Theatre;
May 23, 1826

First San Francisco Opera performance: October 10, 1938.
Don Giovanni has been performed in 24 previous seasons at San Francisco Opera.

Personnel: 8 principals, 33 choristers

Orchestra: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, 1 timpani, 32 strings (10 first violins, 8 second violins, 6 violas, 5 cellos, 3 basses); 1 fortepiano, 1 cello (continuo); 1 mandolin; **51 total**

Onstage musicians in costume: 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 violins, 1 cello, 2 basses

Offstage musicians: 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 3 trombones, 4 first violins, 3 second violins, 2 violas, 1 cello, 2 basses

Don Giovanni

Il dissoluto punito (The Libertine Punished)

(Sung in Italian with English supertitles)

Conductor

Bertrand de Billy*

Director

Michael Cavanagh

Set and Projection Designer

Erhard Rom

Costume Designer

Constance Hoffman

Lighting Designer

Jane Cox

Chorus Director

John Keene*

Assistant Conductor

Robert Mollicone

Prompter

Matthew Piatt

Continuo

Thalia Moore, cello

Bryndon Hassman, fortepiano

Musical Preparation

John Churchwell, Bryndon Hassman,

Kseniia Polstiankina Barrad, Andrew King[†],

Fabrizio Corona

Diction

Alessandra Cattani

Supertitles

Philip Kuttner

Assistant Director

Morgan Robinson

Stage Manager

Darin Burnett

Assistant Stage Managers

Rachel Garoon, Jonathan S. Campbell,

Anna Reetz, Jayme O'Hara

Dance Master

Colm Seery

Fight Director

Dave Maier

Costume Supervisor

Galen Till

Wig and Makeup

Jeanna Parham

New San Francisco Opera Production

SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 2022 • 7:30 PM

FRIDAY, JUNE 10 • 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, JUNE 12 • 2 PM

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15 • 7:30 PM

SATURDAY, JUNE 18 • 7:30 PM

TUESDAY, JUNE 21 • 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, JUNE 26 • 2 PM

SATURDAY, JULY 2 • 7:30 PM

CAST

(in order of vocal appearance)

Leporello

Luca Pisaroni

Donna Anna

Adela Zaharia*

Don Giovanni

Etienne Dupuis*

The Commendatore

Soloman Howard

Don Ottavio

Amitai Pati

Donna Elvira

Nicole Car*

Zerlina

Christina Gansch

Masetto

Cody Quattlebaum*

Overlords, Refugees, Survivors

* San Francisco Opera debut

† Current Adler Fellow

TIME AND PLACE: *Late 2080s. A Ruined House, Mid-Atlantic United States*

ACT I: Rooms, Hallways, and Grounds of the Ruined House

—INTERMISSION—

ACT II: Rooms, Hallways, and Grounds of the Ruined House

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

Patrons who leave during the performance may not be reseated 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.

Please keep your mask on at all times in the theater.

Please note, drinks are not allowed in the theater.

NEW SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA PRODUCTION

HER LOVE WAS NEVER FOR SALE.

La Traviata

BY GIUSEPPE VERDI

NOVEMBER 11, 13, 16, 22, 25, 27, 30; DECEMBER 3, 2022



TICKETS ON SALE JUNE 28 | (415) 864-3330 | SFOPERA.COM

All performances feature English supertitles. All dates, prices, programs, artists, and productions subject to change. Tickets subject to availability. Illustration: Brian Stauffer.

A Cautionary Tale and a Fresh Start



Set design for Don Giovanni. / ERHARD ROM

So here we are. This is the third and final installment of our trilogy of the Mozart and Da Ponte operas, a journey that has taken many years but now feels like it has rocketed by in a flash. World events in these same few years have also greatly influenced the sensation of time passing for so many of us. 2019 seems like an eternity ago, and, with one unsettling turn of events after another hurtling towards us, we might wonder what year we're living in.

When we charted *The Great American House* journey, we deliberately stretched our timeline to demonstrate the universality and timelessness of the common themes in these amazing works. The place in this trilogy has stayed the same, but the time frame advances over centuries. The more things change, the more they—and we—remain the same. We didn't set out to be so prescient, and I wish we weren't, but here we are.

The first opera in this arc, *The Marriage of Figaro*, was set in the late eighteenth century—Mozart's period—a time of hope, possibility, and optimism for the characters and their society, as symbolized by the construction of the great manor house. For the second chapter, we set *Così fan tutte* 150 years later, in the late 1930s. The house's new inhabitants, like the structure and the Nation itself, have reached a crossroads after years of growth, struggle, and



Director Michael Cavanagh
ANITA WATKINS

upheaval. Their choices inevitably and indelibly transform them and the world.

Now we find ourselves in a time of finality and conclusion, when the consequences of those selfish actions have been visited on this same place, some 150 years later. It is the late 2080s, a not-too-distant and not unlikely future in a now-ruined world, destroyed not by some external force but a natural one, that of human nature at its worst. Greed, desire, and hunger for power, without regard for the impacts on our fellow human beings, has stolen our future and loosed monsters on the world. And those monsters look like us.

This, then, is a cautionary tale, promising (not just threatening) catastrophe if our private urges are not tempered by empathy for others and a regard for the greater good. More importantly, at the end of it all, the people of this world are offered a chance for renewal. The epilogue of our story offers the characters a fresh start to learn from their losses and rebuild their lives, families, and societies. We can only hope that we, in the real world, get the same chance.

We must take the long view, from the perspective of the great arc of time, in the houses we build as individuals and together as a society. If we do, we might just learn these essential lessons before consequence and calamity claim us. We could have no better teachers than Mozart and Da Ponte. 🍷

Wiener Fassung: The Vienna Version of *Don Giovanni*

When a conductor is invited to lead a new production of *Don Giovanni*, the first question is, of course, “Which version?” This deliberation requires close collaboration between the opera house, the director and the conductor. The choice of version has a crucial influence on the entire production.

It is common practice for repertory theaters in Europe to present a dubious mix of two existing versions:

Mozart’s original version for Prague (1787) and his Vienna version (1788). The reason for combining elements of these two incarnations of the work is simple: it gives singers the freedom to sing all of their arias from both versions, or even to pick and choose arias for themselves.

The privilege of a new production is that it allows us to ask anew that essential question: What was Mozart’s artistic motivation? He knew full well that Prague and Vienna would have different casting possibilities and his practical flair enabled him to adapt his creation accordingly.

Historically, there is absolutely no doubt about the structure of the Prague version. What was presented in Vienna, on the other hand, requires more reflection. There has been much debate among musicologists on this subject, leading to an overall constructive evolution.

For the singers who would perform his opera in Vienna, Mozart composed two new arias and corresponding recitatives. The additions included the two well-known arias: “Dalla sua pace” for Don Ottavio and Donna Elvira’s “In quali eccessi ... Mi tradi quell’alma ingrata,” a special showcase for the soprano Caterina Cavalieri. Mozart also composed the Act II duet, “Per queste tue manine,” for his new Leporello and Zerlina.

Along with additions to the score, the composer also omitted some music from the Prague version. Leporello’s aria “Ah pietà, Signore miei” was cut and replaced with the recitative, “Ah pieta ... con passion.” Mozart also made changes to the finale where Donna Anna, Donna Elvira, Zerlina, Don Ottavio, Leporello, and Masetto relate their



Conductor Bertrand de Billy / MARCO BORGREVE

next steps (“Or che tutti, o mio tesoro”). He crossed out about 60 measures and inserted new music for the text beginning with “Ah certo, è l’ombra” through “Resti dunque quel birbon, con Proserpina e Pluton,” which leads us more directly into “Questo è il fin di chi fa mal”—the final pronouncement on the Don: “So do all wrong-doers end.” This change to the epilogue is rarely performed in the composite versions of *Don Giovanni*.

These additions, cuts, and changes to the opera had major consequences. For one, the role of Elvira took on considerably more depth, becoming as important as Donna Anna. The comic duet between Zerlina and Leporello was often criticized, but it offers a real glimpse into the future: this duet from *Don Giovanni* suggests the overture of *Così fan tutte* in the oboe melody and the general tonality of C Major, as well as the repeated coloraturas on the word “così.” Was it Mozart’s intention to introduce his third work in the Da Ponte trilogy even though *Così fan tutte* would not have its Viennese premiere until 1790? We do not know. This duet might seem strange in a traditional *Don Giovanni*, but this note of humor underpins what is often forgotten: the opera is subtitled *dramma giocoso*. It is *Don Giovanni*’s second version—“die Wiener Fassung” or Vienna version—which will be presented here in San Francisco in its historical entirety for the first time.

The fact that Mozart conducted two different versions of *Don Giovanni* for Prague and Vienna within the space of just a few months, offers an important point for the question of whether there are two versions or two different operas. Mozart left no final verdict on which was his preferred version or what was the “true” *Don Giovanni*—had he conducted it in London or Paris, there might be even more versions. What we have are two masterpieces by a genius at the peak of his creative powers, and we will perform it in the form that the Viennese public heard in 1788. To be honest—and just between us—do we really have to decide which one is the best one? 🍷



Carol Vaness as Donna Anna, Pamela South as Zerlina, and Lella Cuberli as Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, 1980.
RON SCHERL

Listen to Her: Hearing the Women in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*

BY KRISTI BROWN-MONTESANO



Harolyn Blackwell as Zerlina and Gino Quilico as the title role in *Don Giovanni*, 1991. / MARTY SOHL

“Cause everything old is new again.” This clever catchphrase from Peter Allen’s 1974 song neatly sums up the paradoxical magic of Western classical opera as a staged art form. Scan the latest season offerings from opera houses around the world and you will find that most titles premiered at least a century ago. Yet these same operas—when fully realized in live performance—demand current, or at minimum, fresh perspectives. From its origins in the seventeenth century, opera has always been about more than the musical score. Opera is *drama*: visual, textual, and aural. And so, every staged production of a long-familiar opera creates an opportunity for discovery.

Such re-visioning is especially urgent with *Don Giovanni* which, right up to present day, has had a difficult time shaking a critical orthodoxy dating back to the nineteenth century: namely, that the title character is heroic or at least sympathetic. There is a significant ethical issue today in lionizing a man who will say or do anything to make a sexual conquest for an audience that has witnessed the #MeToo movement and the subsequent indictment of many powerful men. There is also plenty of evidence against a heroic view of Don Giovanni in the work itself. The reception history of *Don Giovanni*—including critical and scholarly commentary as well as productions—has largely ignored or explained away what is right there on the page: three female characters of very different character and situation, accusing the Don of deception and abuse. Even more striking, Donna Anna, Donna Elvira, and Zerlina listen to—and defend—one another against a man of rank, a surprisingly rare

occurrence in *opera buffa* and, frankly, in opera generally.* The women's joint resistance to Don Giovanni drives the narrative of the opera, forcing the nobleman into a defensive position and thwarting the aims of his libidinous entitlement.

Collectively, the three women characters claim the lion's share of the opera's musical gems; in comparison, Don Giovanni's musical numbers (apart from "Là ci darem la mano") are unremarkable. And in terms of the opera's large-scale tonal planning, the primary musical key of this opera—the key of D, both major and minor modes, as introduced in the overture—belongs not to the libertine or even to the supernatural agent of his demise, the Commendatore's statue come to life. Instead, the key of D really belongs to Donna Anna. Don Giovanni briefly invokes D minor in his final words to the Commendatore—"Stay, if you want to die"—but Donna Anna fully embraces the key in a duet with her betrothed, Don Ottavio. Fainting at the sight of her father's bloody corpse, Donna Anna revives with traumatized, D-minor despair ("Fuggi, crudele," or "Flee, cruel one"). Don Ottavio tries to shift her to a more tranquil harmonic area, but Donna Anna is fixed on that fatal key, making her fiancé promise to avenge her father. In the duet that follows, the two lovers lament the horrible weight of this vow, their joint exclamations ringing with the power of a later Mozart work in D minor—the Requiem or more specifically the "Dies irae" ("Day of wrath, day of judgement").

When Donna Anna later recognizes Don Giovanni's voice as that of her assailant and her father's killer, she urges Don Ottavio not to weaken his resolve, even though the guilty party is one of their own: a man of rank. In the aria "Or sai chi l'onore" (which cost Mozart an unusual amount of revision), Donna Anna demands—in clarion, *alla breve* D major—that the man who tried to assault ("rapire") her and killed her father be brought to justice. Taken together, the vengeance duet and "Or sai chi l'onore" connect compellingly to the music and events of the opera's finale: Don Giovanni's descent into hell (D minor) and the ensemble moral that follows (D major): "This is how the perfidious life, the one who harms others, ends."



Ezio Pinza as Don Giovanni and Mafalda Favero as Zerlina in the San Francisco Opera premiere of *Don Giovanni*, 1938. / LAWRENCE MORTON

The competing claims of grief, retribution, and love that overwhelm Donna Anna also shape the character of Donna Elvira. Abandoned by Don Giovanni, she is frequently made an object of derision. Don Giovanni and Leporello undercut her entrance aria with sardonic irony; a little later, Leporello addresses the infamous Catalogue Aria to Donna Elvira, confirming her humiliating status as one of thousands of women he has seduced. (There is even chromatic insinuation in Leporello's comment to Elvira that the Don's favorite is the "young beginner.") Vacillating between forgiving Don Giovanni and reviling him, Donna Elvira is nevertheless the character that most actively opposes him, risking her own dignity to inveigh against him publicly, so that other women will not suffer her fate. From this perspective, Donna Elvira's most dramatically riveting number is not a solo aria but the Act I quartet, "Non ti fidar, o misera." Not only does this quartet demonstrate Mozart's masterful control of multiple points of view and characterization within a single musical number, but it helps to establish Donna Elvira's credibility. She first speaks directly to Donna Anna, "Do not trust him, poor woman, that rebellious heart; he has already betrayed me and will deceive you as well." Don Giovanni offers Donna Anna and Don Ottavio an all-too-conventional defense: *la povera ragazza è pazza* ("The poor girl is crazy"). But the noble couple have a very different impression. Observing Donna Elvira, they note her "noble bearing" and "sweet majesty." Donna Anna is

* While Lorenzo Da Ponte labelled his libretto a *dramma giocoso* ("jocular drama"), Mozart referred to *Don Giovanni* as an *opera buffa* (comic opera) though the storyline is much darker than the other Mozart-Da Ponte collaborations (*The Marriage of Figaro* and *Così fan tutte*).



Elisabeth Schwarzkopf as Donna Elvira and Victoria de los Angeles as Donna Anna, 1962. / SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ARCHIVES



Giuseppe Taddei as Leporello and Lella Cuberti as Donna Elvira, 1981. RON SCHERL

especially doubtful, “There is nothing in her face, her speech that suggests that madness.”

Ultimately, Donna Elvira’s tender nature and devotion to the idea of her first love makes it difficult for her to hold a hard line. In this sense, she recalls Countess Almaviva in *The Marriage of Figaro*, with whom she shares a musical signature: Mozart bestows on both women a musical language rooted in “flat” keys and softened by the mellow timbre of the clarinet. Donna Anna’s music, in contrast, mostly uses *opera seria* orchestration with flute and oboe; notably, the aria “Non mi dir,” in which Donna Anna assures Don Ottavio of her love, features clarinet. Likewise, the music of the country peasant Zerlina—including the duet with Don Giovanni, “Là ci darem la mano”—forgoes the clarinet except for her final aria, “Vedrai, carino,” a far more sincere effort than the earlier “Batti, batti” to win back her begrudging betrothed, Masetto.

Zerlina presents a unique dramatic position vis-à-vis Don Giovanni as the girl who first says yes, then emphatically removes consent. As a peasant, she is automatically subject to his power of rank; in fact, Don Giovanni first appeals to Zerlina as a noble gentleman who can “change her life” through marriage. Donna Elvira forcefully interrupts this first seduction attempt, but Don Giovanni does not give up. Spying Zerlina at the ball he is hosting (the end of Act 1), the libertine ushers her forcefully to a more secluded space offstage. Soon we hear her screams for help. She calls Don Giovanni

scellerato—villain—the same word Donna Anna used to curse the masked man who accosted her in the opera’s opening scene.

Caught in the act of trying to rape Zerlina, Don Giovanni nevertheless manages to escape punishment, hiding as always behind status, wealth, charisma, and—most of all—lies. Respecting nothing but his own will and appetites, the libertine even mocks the Commendatore’s statue, glibly inviting the man he murdered to dinner. In the end, a patriarchal “divine intervention” finally brings Don Giovanni to judgement: one man of rank coming back from the dead to settle accounts with another man of rank.

Which leaves us to wonder: was killing the Commendatore the only real crime committed? What about that list Leporello keeps: all those women, all those “young beginners”? What about Zerlina’s and Donna Anna’s screams for help? When we listen closely to the words *and* music of the women in *Don Giovanni*, we find that the Don is not a dashing rake but the criminal predator of the opera’s original title: *Il dissoluto punito*. Seeing him, the “punished dissolute,” through the eyes of Donna Anna, Donna Elvira, and Zerlina, we experience this old story—and Mozart’s enduring opera—in a new light. 🍷

Kristi Brown-Montesano is Chair of Music History and Literature at the Colburn School and author of *Understanding the Women of Mozart’s Operas* (University of California Press).

Making the Mozart-Da Ponte Trilogy



A scene from *The Marriage of Figaro* (2019) with Jeanine De Bique as Susanna, Michael Sumuel as Figaro, Levente Mótár as the Count, Serena Malfi as Cherubino, Greg Fedderly as Basilio, and members of the San Francisco Opera Chorus / CORY WEAVER

This new production of *Don Giovanni* marks the culmination of the Mozart-Da Ponte Trilogy, San Francisco Opera's multi-year project to present all three operas by Mozart and poet Lorenzo Da Ponte as a unified narrative. In the unique conception by director Michael Cavanagh, these three masterpieces share the same setting—an American manor house—at three distinct points across 300 years of history. The story progresses from the founding of the United States in the late eighteenth century (*The Marriage of Figaro*), to the late 1930s when the characters and the house are at a crossroads (*Così fan tutte*), and arrives at a dystopic yet not improbable future in the 2080s when the house and society are in ruins (*Don Giovanni*).

Before the curtain rises on the climactic chapter of this vast theatrical journey, witness the spirit of invention, teamwork, and connection that course through these operatic worlds thanks to the artisans and craftspeople of San Francisco Opera.



Serena Malfi (Cherubino), Nicole Heaston (Countess Almaviva), Catherine Cook (Marcellina), Jeanine De Bique (Susanna), and Natalie Image (Barbarina) / SCOTT WALL



Jai Alltizer (costume shop manager), Daniele McCartan (costume department director), Galen Till (senior production supervisor), and Contance Hoffman (Mozart-Da Ponte Trilogy costume designer).



A scene from *Così fan tutte* (2021) with John Brancy as Guglielmo (third from right) with members of the San Francisco Opera Chorus
CORY WEAVER



Backstage with the cast of *Così fan tutte*.



Senior draper Irene Murray with costumes from *Così fan tutte*.



Above: Images of the making of *Così fan tutte* and from its November 2021 premiere. Below: A few scene shop moments documenting the construction of San Francisco Opera's new production of *Don Giovanni*.



Scenic artists Steve McNally and Jennifer Bennes with the statue of the Commendatore.



Dylan Maxson preparing to cut crown moldings for the Trilog's manor house.



ARTIST PROFILES

*San Francisco Opera Debut †Role Debut ‡Current Adler Fellow **Adler Fellowship and Merola Graduate +Merola Opera Program Graduate



BERTRAND DE BILLY *
(Paris, France)
Conductor
Recent and Upcoming: *Don Giovanni* (Paris Opera); *Otello* (Vienna State Opera); *Faust* (Vienna); *Der Fliegende Holländer*

(Vienna, Munich's Bavarian State Opera); *Die Fledermaus* (Vienna); engagements with Orchestre National France, Orchestre Chambre de Lausanne, Orchestre Suisse Romande
Principal Guest Conductor (Iceland Symphony Orchestra)



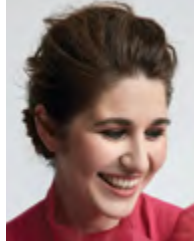
ETIENNE DUPUIS *
Baritone (Montréal, Canada)
Don Giovanni
Recent and Upcoming: Soloist in *Eun Sun Kim Conducts Verdi* (San Francisco Opera); title role of *Don Giovanni* (Paris

Opera); Marcello in *La Bohème* (Metropolitan Opera, Vienna State Opera); Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Vienna); Albert in *Werther* (Vienna); Posa in *Don Carlo* (Deutsche Oper Berlin); Rodrigue in *Don Carlos* (Metropolitan Opera); title role of *Eugene Onegin* (Dallas Symphony Orchestra); Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Metropolitan Opera)
Twitter: etiennelovesya
Facebook: etiennedupuisbaritone



ADELA ZAHARIA *
Soprano (Düsseldorf, Germany)
Donna Anna
Recent and Upcoming: Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* (Paris Opera, Netherlands Opera, Madrid's Teatro

Real, Royal Opera, Covent Garden); Lucia in Marina Abramovic's project *7 Deaths of Maria Callas* (Paris, Munich's Bavarian State Opera); title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein). Violetta in *La Traviata* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein, LA Opera); Elvira in *I Puritani* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Gilda in *Rigoletto* (Los Angeles); Angelica in *Orlando Paladino* (Munich); soprano soloist in Mahler's Fourth Symphony (Tonkünstlerorchester Vienna); Iain Bell's *Aurora* (Royal Liverpool Philharmonic BBC Proms); Mozart arias concert (Prague)



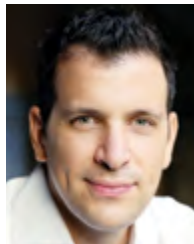
NICOLE CAR *
Soprano (Moonee Ponds, Australia)
Donna Elvira
San Francisco Opera Highlights: Title role of *Tosca*
Recent and Upcoming: Soloist in *Eun Sun Kim Conducts*

Verdi (San Francisco Opera); Ellen Orford in *Peter Grimes* (Metropolitan Opera); Madame Lidoine in *Dialogues des Carmélites* (Vienna State Opera); Mimi in *La Bohème* (Vienna, Metropolitan Opera); Elisabetta in *Don Carlo* (Deutsche Oper Berlin); Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* (Paris Opera); Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin* (Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Vienna); Marguerite in *Faust* (Vienna); Micaëla in *Carmen* (Paris); Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* (Metropolitan Opera)
Twitter: @NicoleCar_Opera



AMITAI PATI **
Tenor (Auckland, New Zealand)
Don Ottavio
San Francisco Opera Highlights: Matteo Borsa in *Rigoletto*; Gastone in *La Traviata*; Beppe in *Pagliacci*; Lord

Cecil in *Roberto Devereux*; Angel First Class in Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer's *It's a Wonderful Life*; *Christmas with Sol3 Mio*
Recent and Upcoming: Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* in concert (Tanglewood); Nadir in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* (Philharmonie de Paris); Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* (English National Opera); Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Seattle Opera)
Adler Fellowship Program 2017, 2018
Merola Opera Program 2016



LUCA PISONI
Bass-Baritone (Vienna, Austria)
Leporello
San Francisco Opera Highlights: Masetto in *Don Giovanni*; Figaro and Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*
Recent and

Upcoming: Leporello in *Don Giovanni* (Hamburg State Opera, Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu); title role of *Don Giovanni* in concert (Sinfonieorchester Basel George Enescu Festival); title role of *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Paris Opera, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Metropolitan Opera); Enrico VIII in *Anna Bolena* (Zürich Opera House);

Dulcamara in *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Seattle Opera); Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* in concert (Concentus Musicus Wien); Don Rodrigue de Menacor in Marc-André Dalbavie's *Le Soulier de Satin* (Paris Opera); Four Villans in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (Hamburg, Vienna State Opera); Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* (Metropolitan Opera); Zoroastro in Handel's *Orlando* (Il Pomo d'Oro European tour); Christmas in Vienna concert livestream (Wiener Sängerknaben); Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* livestream (Orchestra e Coro dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia)



CHRISTINA GANSCH
Soprano (St. Pölten, Austria)
Zerlina
San Francisco Opera Highlights: Dorinda in Handel's *Orlando*
Recent and Upcoming: Eurydice in *Orpheus and*

Eurydice (San Francisco Opera); Servilia in *La Clemenza di Tito* (Royal Opera, Covent Garden); Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* (Covent Garden, Lorraine Opera); 5th Maidservant in *Elektra* (Salzburg Festival); Gretchen in Schumann's *Szenen aus Goethes Faust* (Hamburg State Opera); Najade in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Milan's Teatro alla Scala); Gretel in *Hänsel und Gretel* (Munich's Bavarian State Opera); Marzelline in *Fidelio* (Bologna's Teatro Comunale)
Instagram: @christinagansch



CODY QUATTLEBAUM **
Bass-Baritone (Woodstock, Maryland)
Masetto
Recent and Upcoming: Masetto in *Don Giovanni* (Madrid's Teatro Real); Masetto in *Don Giovanni* in

concert (Tanglewood); title role of *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Israeli Opera); Schaunard in *La Bohème* (Royal Opera, Covent Garden); Ratefreund in Braunfels' *Die Vögel* (Opéra National du Rhin); Hanns Eisler's *Deutsche Sinfonie* (NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra); Handel's *Jephtha* (BBC Proms); *Roméo et Juliette* (RTVE Symphony Orchestra); *Mefistofele* Prologue (Oakland Symphony); Bach's *Coffee Cantata* (Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and Chorale); New Year's Concert Gala (Teatr Wielki); Don Fernando in *Fidelio* (Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg); Handel's *Brockes Passion* (London's Barbican Hall); Bach's *St. John Passion* (London); Handel's

Arminio (Händel-Festspiele Göttingen); Handel's *Dettingen Te Deum* (Göttingen); Bruno Zirato in Micha Hamel's *Caruso a Cuba* (Dutch National Opera); Geronimo in Cimarosa's *Il Matrimonio Segreto* (Dutch National Opera); Larkens in *La Fanciulla del West* (Zürich); Zuniga in *Carmen* (Zürich) Merola Opera Program 2016, 2017



SOLOMAN HOWARD
Bass (Washington, D.C.)
The Commendatore
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: Timur in *Turandot*; Cesare Angelotti in *Tosca*; Don Fernando in *Fidelio*
Recent and Upcoming: Soloist in

Eun Sun Kim Conducts Verdi (San Francisco Opera); Ramfis in *Aida* (Royal Opera, Covent Garden); Colline in *La Bohème* (Madrid's Teatro Real, Santa Fe Opera); Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia); Wurm in *Luisa Miller* (Lyric Opera of Chicago, English National Opera); Sarastro in *The Magic Flute* (Metropolitan Opera); Friar in *Don Carlo* (LA Opera); The King of Egypt in *Aida* (Madrid); Somnus and Cadmus in Handel's *Semele* (The English Concert international tour)
Instagram: @solomanhoward
Twitter: @HowSoMusic



MICHAEL CAVANAGH
(Winnipeg, Canada)
Director
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: John Adams' *Nixon in China*; Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*; *Lucia di Lammermoor*; Ana Sokolović's *Svadba-*

Wedding; *Le Nozze di Figaro*; *Così fan tutte*
Recent and Upcoming: *Nabucco* (L'Opéra de Québec); *Aida* (Royal Swedish Opera)
Artistic Director of Royal Swedish Opera



ERHARD ROM
(Seattle, Washington)
Set and Projection Designer
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: John Adams' *Nixon in China*; Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*; *Lucia di Lammermoor*;

Le Nozze di Figaro; *Così fan tutte*
Recent and Upcoming: *Don Giovanni* (Washington National Opera); *Samson and Delilah* (Washington D.C.); *La Bohème* (Seattle Opera); Kevin Puts' *Silent Night*

(Washington D.C., Glimmerglass Festival); *Rigoletto* (Houston Grand Opera); Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* (Minnesota Opera); *Written in Stone* (Washington, D.C.)
Teaches design at Montclair State University, New Jersey



CONSTANCE HOFFMAN
(Oakland, California)
Costume Designer
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: *Rigoletto*; Mark Adamo's *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene*; *Le Nozze di Figaro*; *Così fan tutte*

Recent and Upcoming: John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra* (San Francisco Opera); *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Opera Theatre of Saint Louis); *Grimm Tales* (Ballet Austin); Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sadko* (Opera Slovenske Narodne Divadlo); *Rigoletto* (LA Opera); *Don Carlos* (Washington National Opera); David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly* (The Court Theatre New York)
Arts Professor and Area Head of Costume Design at the Tisch School of the Arts



JANE COX
(Dublin, Ireland)
Lighting Designer
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: *Le Nozze di Figaro*; *Così fan tutte*
Recent and Upcoming: For Broadway: *Macbeth*; *True West*;

King Lear; *Jitney*; *The Color Purple*
Other: *Assassins* (Off Broadway); *Secret Life of Bees* (Atlantic Theatre)



JOHN KEENE
(Lancaster, Pennsylvania)
Chorus Director
Recent and Upcoming: San Francisco Opera Chorus Director (*Dream of the Red Chamber*, *Eun Sun*

Kim Conducts Verdi, John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, *La Traviata*, *Orpheus and Eurydice*, *San Francisco Opera Chorus in Concert*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*, *100th Anniversary Concert*
Seattle Opera Head of Music Staff and Chorus Master (*La Bohème*, *Orfeo ed Euridice*; *Die Walküre*, *Don Giovanni*, Jonathan Dove's *Flight*, *Tosca*, *Rigoletto*, *La Cenerentola*,

Eugene Onegin, *Porgy and Bess*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *Il Trovatore*, Mason Bates and Mark Campbell's *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*, *Carmen*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Così fan tutte*, *Béatrice et Bénédict*, *Aida*; online streams as pianist of *Cavalleria Rusticana/Pagliacci* excerpts and Angela Meade and Jamie Barton in concert)
Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition judge



DAVE MAIER
(El Cerrito, California)
Fight Director
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: *Carmen*; *Tosca*; the *Ring* cycle; *Pagliacci*; *Rigoletto*; *Romeo and Juliet*; *Billy Budd*; *Manon Lescaut*
Recent and

Upcoming: Bright Sheng and David Henry Hwang's *Dream of the Red Chamber* (San Francisco Opera); *West Side Story* (Opera San José); *Richard II* (African American Shakespeare Company); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Stanford University); *The Tempest* (Oakland Theater Project); *Romeo y Juliet* (Cal Shakes); *Fefu and Her Friends* (American Conservatory Theatre)

Murderer, Seducer, Liar: Why do we need Don Giovanni?

BY PAUL THOMASON



19th-century engraving of Don Giovanni and Donna Anna in the first act of Don Giovanni. / © GIANCARLO COSTA / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

“The character of Don Juan has exercised the imagination of poets of all countries for at least the last three centuries, clear proof of the fact that the problems raised by the figure ... go to the very heart of human existence,” wrote musicologist Hermann Abert. “The world of Don Juan is simply that of the senses, an extreme affirmation of the life force that recognizes no other values than its own.” And Mozart’s Don Giovanni himself, says Abert, “is the heroic embodiment of the most unbridled life force.”

With *Don Giovanni*, Mozart and Da Ponte created an opera that has fascinated Western civilization for over 200 years. It has inspired some people, infuriated others, and baffled not a few, but always it has been one of the hallmarks of our society, one of those supreme works of art that define us. And that begs a rather serious question: Why? What does it say about our society that one of its pinnacles of achievement has at its center a man who is a murderer, a seducer, a liar, a man who seems to go out of his way to break the laws and mores that hold that society together? Why are we so fascinated by him?

A clue can be found in the preface to George Bernard Shaw’s play *Man and Superman*, when he comments that what “attracts and impresses” us is “the heroism of daring to be the enemy of God ... Philosophically, Don Juan is a man who, though gifted enough to be exceptionally capable of distinguishing between good and evil, follows his own instinct without regard to the common statute, or canon law.” But this still begs the question: Why? Why does such an apparently destructive character strike such a deep chord in our collective psyche?

Sören Kierkegaard brings us close to the answer when he explains that Don Giovanni is “... a seducer from the ground up. His love is not physical but sensuous, and sensuous love, in accordance with its concept, is not faithful, but absolutely faithless; it loves not one but all.” Don Giovanni says as much to Leporello in Act II: “Love is much the same in any form. He who remains faithful to one is being cruel to the others. I, who have an overabundance of sentiment, love them all.” Mozart deftly depicts this “love them all” aspect in the Don’s music in Act II, by having him sing the same melody to seduce Donna Elvira (“Discendi, o gioia bella”) and, immediately after that, her maid (“Deh vieni alla finestra”).

Kierkegaard was right when he explains that Don Giovanni “is actually neither Idea nor Individual; he hovers between both.” The score says he’s “a young nobleman,” but he is not really a part of the other aristocrats’ world—something Mozart’s music makes very plain. Donna Anna, Don Ottavio, and Donna Elvira all have arias that are often rather formal and heavily embellished, as befits their higher status. Don Giovanni does not. He has three arias; two are short, much shorter than the aristocrats’ arias: the famous Champagne Aria, a breathless explosion of energy with an almost primitively simple melody and a relentless rhythm; and his equally famous Serenade, “Deh vieni alla finestra,” which is described in the score as a Canzonetta, (a light strophic song, often sung at night). It’s a typical wooing song which might be sung by any swain underneath the window of his lady love—exactly as Don Giovanni is doing in Act II. It is immediately followed by an aria in which Don Giovanni impersonates his servant



1777 portrait of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)
LUISA RICCIARINI / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

Leporello and is, musically speaking, the man to a T. So the Don's music sets him apart from the other characters we would assume to be his equals.

And when we think about the way all the characters—both aristocrats and peasants—interact, it immediately becomes clear that everyone revolves around Don Giovanni. Despite the fact they have been hurt by him, they cannot let him go. Our interest in them is because of their relationship to him. Mozart illustrates this brilliantly in the Epilogue when he wrote music that is as close as the mature Mozart ever came to writing trite music. In 1900, the well-respected critic Henry Krehbiel commented, “This finale was long ago discarded, and though Mozart set it to music, he did so in a manner which tells more plainly than the situation that it is an anti-climax, that the opera reached its end with the death of its hero.” But that is precisely the point of the Epilogue—to vividly show that without the magnetic Don Giovanni there is nothing but the mundane. Without him, the characters have deflated, shrunk to the commonplace.

What has gone is the effervescent life force that animated the opera up to that final Epilogue, the quality that has sometimes led to Don Giovanni being called a Dionysian character. For the ancient Greeks, Dionysus was a fertility god (life) and a god of wine; he liberated the emotions and was the source of ecstasy and joy. The Romans debased him into Bacchus, the god of drunkenness (which was not part of Dionysus' cult), and Christianity pushed him even further away by turning him into the Devil, complete with horns, tail, and the cloven hooves of a goat, one of the forms Dionysus sometimes took.

Today, of course, we are much too sophisticated to believe in the ancient Greek Gods who sat on Mount Olympus. But in a curious, profound way they often continue to affect our lives, even though we deny it. “We think we can congratulate ourselves on having already reached such a pinnacle of clarity, imagining that we have left all these phantasmal gods far behind,” wrote Carl Jung. “But what we have left behind are only verbal spectres, not the psychic facts that were responsible for the birth of the gods ... Today they are called phobias, obsessions, and so forth; in a word, neurotic symptoms. The gods have become diseases.”

In his intriguing book *Ecstasy, Understanding the Psychology of Joy*, Robert A. Johnson notes, “Dionysus is a complex figure who symbolizes the irrational world of our senses as it interacts with the rational world of rules and limitations ... To worship Dionysus is to worship the life force ... Dionysus is the perennial profusion of color and life and energy. When we touch Dionysus we touch the irrational wisdom of the senses and experience joy.”

We hunger to experience this ecstatic joy but Western society is very uncomfortable with the whole idea. Touching this potent energy means surrendering control—not something we are encouraged to do, even when it is surrendering to the divine. So what happens when this basic human instinct runs into the rigid cultural restrictions? We have turned Dionysus into addictive behavior. It is no accident that for a while one of the most widely used party drugs was called “ecstasy.” Unfortunately, our (usually unconscious) attempts to experience Dionysus' divine energy too often results in destructive behavior. But while we cannot control Dionysus, we can have a conscious relationship with him. “We must touch Dionysus,” Johnson urges, “we must bring him back into our lives in a humanized form, or in denying him we will destroy ourselves.”

Is it any wonder that Mozart and Da Ponte's *Don Giovanni* occupies such an iconic place in our culture? Hermann Abert describes the Don in his final scene as not a mere man but “a demonic passion spurred on to ever greater heights by every act of resistance it encounters.” The ritual of encountering Dionysus by experiencing Mozart's opera—either in the theater with a community of like-minded people or in the privacy of one's home—is a safe way for us to begin to touch a bit of his presence. And in doing so we can begin the process of transformation to a richer, fuller, more joyful life, to be all we can be. 🍷

Writer, lecturer, and teacher Paul Thomason is based in New York City.

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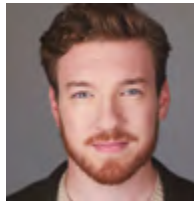


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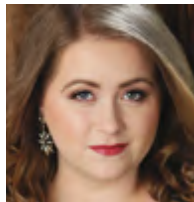
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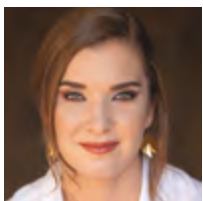
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Courtney Miller
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So Young Park
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Cody Quattlebaum ***
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** Former Merola Opera Program participant

Cover Artist

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John Keene, *Chorus Director*

Fabrizio Corona, *Associate Chorus Master*

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Buffy Baggott	Angela Eden Moser
Elizabeth Baker	Sally Mouzon
Kathleen Bayler	Sally Porter Munro †
C. Michael Belle	Erin Neff
William Bryan *	William O'Neill
Janet Campbell	Andrew Thomas Pardini *
Alan Cochran	Rachelle Perry
Sara Colburn	Phillip Pickens
Clare Demer	William Pickersgill
Anders Fröhlich	Chester Pidduck
Patrick Hagen	Laurel Cameron Porter
Daniel Harper	Valery Portnov
Christopher Jackson	Fernando Ruiz
Michael Jankosky *	Carole Schaffer
Silvie Jensen	Sigmund Seigel †
Mitchell Jones	Jonathan Smucker
Wilford Kelly	Whitney Steele
Claire Kelm	Nicole Takesono
Bojan Knežević	Jesslyn Thomas
Elisabeth Rom Lucio	Jere Torkelsen
Liesl McPherrin	Andrew Truett

* Solo Role

† Chorus member on Leave of Absence

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Jennifer Brody	Jim Monios
Cheryl Cain	Sally Porter Munro
Katie Carlson Cartwright	Aimée Puentes
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Barbara Riccardi
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Leonid Igudesman
Jennifer Hsieh
Asuka Annie Yano
Wenyi Shih**
Robin Hansen**

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

VIOLA

Carla Maria Rodrigues, *Principal*
Patricia Heller, *Acting Associate Principal**
Joy Fellows, *Acting Assistant Principal*
Jonna Hervig
Natalia Vershilova
Yi Zhou**
Elizabeth Prior**

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Peter Myers, *Assistant Principal*
Nora Pirquet
Emil Miland
Victoria Ehrlich
Ruth Lane †
Eric Sung**

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Steven D'Amico, *Assistant Principal*
Shinji Eshima
Samuel Shuhan**

FLUTE

Julie McKenzie, *Principal*
Michelle Caimotto**
Stephanie McNab*

PICCOLO

Stephanie McNab

OBOE

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Gabriel Young, *Acting Principal*
Jessica Pearlman**
Benjamin Brogadir**

ENGLISH HORN

Jessica Pearlman**

CLARINET

Jose Gonzalez Granero, *Principal*
Joanne Burke Eisler, *Assistant Principal* †
Matthew Boyles**
Anthony Striplen †
Clark Fobes**

BASS CLARINET

Anthony Striplen †
Clark Fobes**

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Daniel MacNeill
Michael Severance

CONTRABASSOON

Michael Severance

HORN

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Caitlyn Smith-Franklin**
Christopher Cooper**

TRUMPET

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Scott Macomber**
John Pearson*

TROMBONE

Samuel Schlosser, *Principal*
Jeffrey Budin**
Michael Cox**
David Ridge

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David Ridge, *Principal*

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John Burgardt, *Principal*

PERCUSSION

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Patricia Niemi

HARP

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Annabelle Taub**

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Qin, Zhou Yi

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Matthew Buckman, *Assistant*

* Principal for one or more fall season operas

† Leave of absence

** Season substitute

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Alice Cao
Alysia Chang
Brett Conway ^
Jamielyn Duggan ^
Alexandra FitzGibbon
Blanche Hampton ^
Bryan Ketron ^
Rachel Speidel Little ^

Beth Maslinoff
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Chiharu Shibata ^

* Solo Dancer

^ Tenured

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Sili Gao*
Marissa Israel*
Helen Lew*
Sarah Yune*

* *Dream of the Red Chamber* only

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Concertmaster



Laura Albers
Associate
Concertmaster



Heidi Wilcox
Acting Associate
Concertmaster



Jennifer Cho
Acting Assistant
Concertmaster



Dawn Harms
First Violin



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



Robin Hansen
First Violin
Regular Substitute



Jeremy Preston
Principal
Second Violin



Martha Simonds
Associate Principal
Second Violin



Beni Shinohara
Assistant Principal
Second Violin



Eva Karasik
Second Violin



Leslie Ludena
Second Violin



Maya Cohon
Second Violin



Craig Reiss
Second Violin



Heeguen Song
Second Violin
Regular Substitute



Carla Maria Rodrigues
Principal
Viola



Patricia Heller
Acting Associate
Principal, Viola



Jonna Hervig
Viola



Natalia Vershilova
Viola



Joy Fellows
Acting Associate
Principal, Viola



Elizabeth Prior
Viola
Regular Substitute



David Kadarrauch
Principal
Cello



Thalia Moore
Associate Principal
Cello



Peter Myers
Assistant Principal
Cello



Nora Pirquet
Cello



Emil Miland
Cello



Victoria Ehrlich
Cello



Ruth Lane
Cello



Eric Sung
Cello
Regular Substitute

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ORCHESTRA CONTINUED



Joseph Lescher
Principal
Bass



Jonathan Lancelle
Associate Principal
Bass



Steven D'Amico
Assistant Principal
Bass



Shinji Eshima
Bass



Julie McKenzie
Principal
Flute



Stephanie McNab
Flute & Piccolo



Mingjia Liu
Principal
Oboe



Gabriel Young
Acting Principal
Oboe



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
Acting Co-Principal
Horn



Christopher Cooper
Horn
Regular Substitute



Adam Luftman
Principal
Trumpet



John Pearson
Trumpet



Scott Macomber
Trumpet
Regular Substitute



Samuel Schlosser
Principal Trombone



David Ridge
Principal
Bass Trombone



Zachariah Spellman
Tuba/Cimbasso



John Burgardt
Timpani



Richard Kvistad
Principal Percussion &
Associate Timpani



Patricia Niemi
Percussion



Tracy Davis
Orchestra Manager



Carrie Weick
Librarian



Matthew Buckman
Assistant Orchestra
Manager & Librarian

*Most photos by John Martin.
Not pictured:
Yi Zhou (Viola), Samuel Shuhan (Bass),
Michelle Caimotto (Flute),
Jessica Pearlman (Oboe), Benjamin Brogadir (Oboe),
Matthew Boyles (Clarinet), Clark Fobes (Clarinet),
Meredith Brown (Horn), Caitlyn Smith-Franklin (Horn),
Jeffrey Budin (Trombone), Michael Cox (Trombone)
Daniel Levitan (Harp), Annabelle Taubl (Harp)*

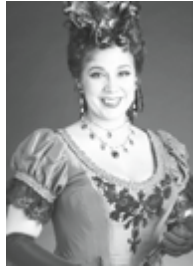
San Francisco Opera Regular Chorus



Nadima Avakian
Soprano



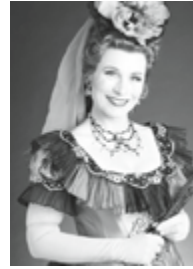
Kathleen Bayler
Soprano



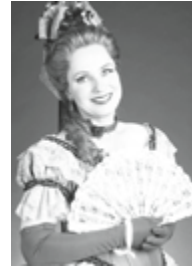
Sara Colburn
Soprano



Clare Demer
Soprano



Claire Kelm
Soprano



Elisabeth Rom Lucio
Soprano



Liesl McPherrin
Soprano



Angela Eden Moser
Soprano



Rachelle Perry
Soprano



Carole Schaffer
Soprano



Jesslyn Thomas
Soprano



Buffy Baggott
Mezzo-Soprano



Elizabeth Baker
Mezzo-Soprano



Janet Campbell
Mezzo-Soprano



Silvie Jensen
Mezzo-Soprano



Courtney Miller
Mezzo-Soprano



Sally Mouzon
Mezzo-Soprano



Sally Porter Munro
Mezzo-Soprano
Leave of Absence



Erin Neff
Mezzo-Soprano



Laurel Cameron Porter
Mezzo-Soprano



Nicole Takesono
Mezzo-Soprano



C. Michael Belle
Tenor



Alan Cochran
Tenor



Patrick Hagen
Tenor



Daniel Harper
Tenor



Christopher Jackson
Tenor



Michael Jankosky
Tenor



Phillip Pickens
Tenor



Chester Pidduck
Tenor



Sigmund Seigel
Tenor
Leave of Absence



Jonathan Smucker
Tenor



Andrew Truett
Tenor



William Bryan
Baritone



Anders Fröhlich
Baritone



Mitchell Jones
Baritone



Andrew Thomas Pardini
Baritone



Jere Torkelsen
Baritone



Wilford Kelly
Bass



Bojan Knežević
Bass



William O'Neill
Bass



William Pickersgill
Bass



Valery Portnov
Bass

Not pictured: Whitney Steele, Mezzo-Soprano; Fernando Ruiz, Tenor

Most photos by John Martin.

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San Francisco Opera Corps Dancers



Jamielyn Duggan



Brett Conway



Blanche Hampton



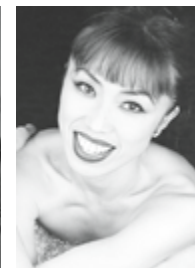
Bryan Ketron



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Meet Marguerite M. McInnes, M.S., Ph.D., linguist, and arts enthusiast. She cheerfully proclaims her more than thirty-year love affair with San Francisco Opera.

For Marguerite, the entire experience of attending a performance is filled with intense joy and delight. She never tires of taking in the total majesty of the War Memorial Opera House with its beautifully crafted ceilings and decorative walls. When in the foyer, she describes herself as being transported into a different world.

And as for the performances themselves, she feels they are always moving and magnificent. “Some of my favorite memories of past productions include *The Ring*, *Tristan and Isolde*, and *The Marriage of Figaro*. I can’t count how many times I leapt to my feet and joined in the final applause!”

“I feel very honored to now be a part of the Bel Canto Legacy Society. It gives me a great deal of happiness to know that I will be able to pass on to future generations the extraordinary experiences I have enjoyed for so many years.” To learn more about Legacy Giving at San Francisco Opera, contact Andrew Maguire, Legacy Giving Officer, at (415) 551-6244 or amaguire@sfoopera.com.

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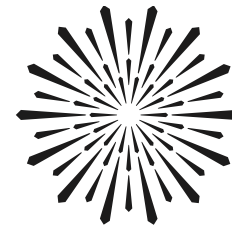
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Making Traditions

BY GENERAL DIRECTOR MATTHEW SHILVOCK

In April, the San Francisco International Film Festival screened Jon Else's new documentary, *Land of Gold*, about our 2017 world premiere of John Adams and Peter Sellars' *Girls of the Golden West*. The film is a fascinating glimpse into our opera company at work and the multitude of creative talents that go into creating live opera on the stage.

This year, we are unveiling four new productions and a brand-new opera. We have gone from the isolation of the pandemic to a thrilling profusion of creativity! As we prepare to raise the curtain on new conceptions of *Don Giovanni*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Orpheus and Eurydice*, and *La Traviata*, I am in awe of the creativity of this company operating in hyperdrive. It is an inspiring reminder that we are a company of makers: that we take the raw materials of notes, words, gesture, wood, metal, fabric and light and fashion them into unique moments of artistic expression.

I love seeing archival photos of the Company at work. These images reinforce that our artistry is the continuation of traditions built over decades. There are so few companies operating at the scale we do in America, and we have a huge responsibility to ensure that these theatrical traditions are maintained—scenic building, orchestral performance practice, costume creation, prompting, and stage combat just to name a few. The Opera House is a community of exceptionally talented individuals whose artistry and crafts build off those who have come before and will inspire those who come after.



KRISTEN LOKEN

The technology of opera production is always evolving, but the basic tenets of how we bring a stage to life are still very much the same. Our work in the theater today has a lineage extending back through the last 100 years of the Company. We are continually guided by those traditions. In navigating the pandemic, it was imperative that we sustain company members and artists, not only because it was the right thing to do, but because our company members carry the

institutional DNA that makes us the Company we are.

We are currently building our new production of *La Traviata*—our first new *Traviata* in 35 years. The original designs called for an aluminum frame, but a complete global shortage of aluminum during the pandemic made that impossible. Our scene shop artisans drew on their deep theatrical experience and switched to a traditional wooden construction, using age-old techniques to graft together 16' lengths of pine to create the necessary 32' lengths.

Whether evidenced in the traditions of the scene shop, ornamentation of a *bel canto* aria, making costumes durable for alterations, or creating a sunrise through lighting effects, our Company is one of the great holders of theatrical tradition in the world. As we prepare to celebrate our Centennial, we honor those before us who built up our theatrical tradition. And we commit to carrying that tradition forward, building and inflecting it to meet the possibilities of the future. 🎭



Onstage scene construction for *Samson et Dalila* in 1933.
SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ARCHIVES



Scene Shop Foreman John Del Bono and Scenic Artist in Charge Steve McNally, working out height clearances for *Don Giovanni*. / MATTHEW SHILVOCK

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