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Jeffery S. McMillan, *Editor*

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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](https://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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06/01/2022 – 06/30/2022



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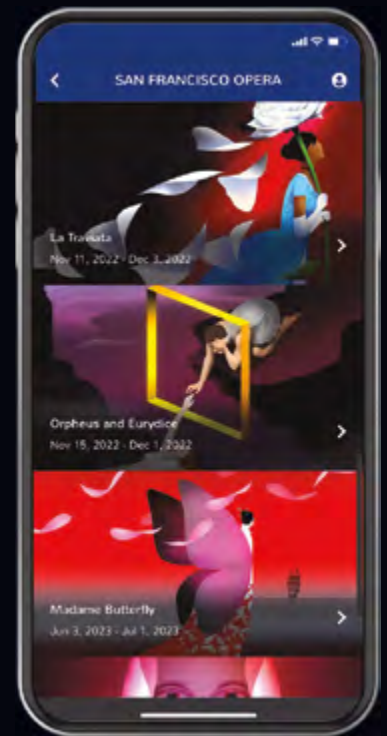
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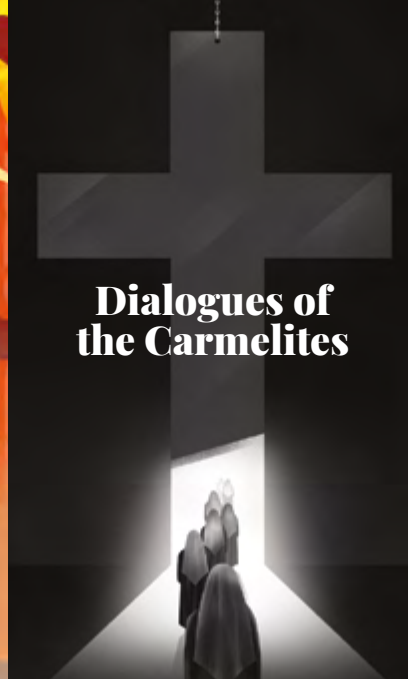
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**Antony  
and Cleopatra**



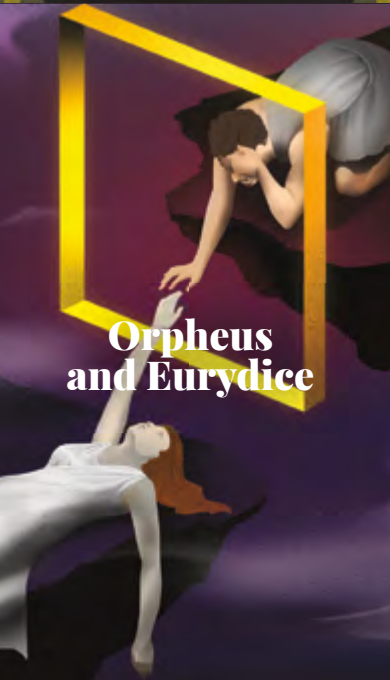
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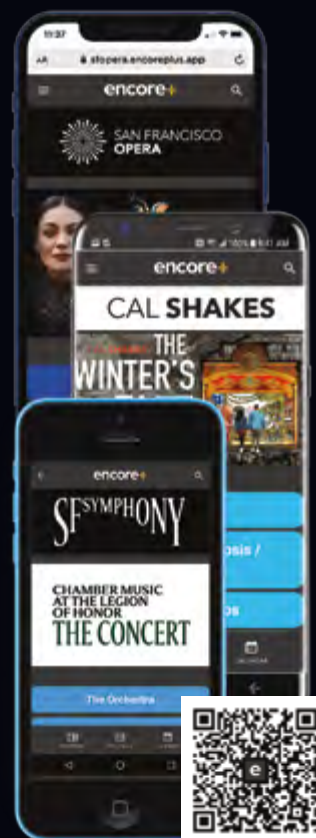
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## A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

**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,

**Keith B. Geeslin**  
President

San Francisco Opera Association

**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](http://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*



## December 2021

### **THE FUTURE IS NOW: ADLER FELLOWS CONCERT** San Francisco Opera

## 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. 🍄

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

# John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn



TERRENCE MCCARTHY

**O**nce 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.



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# 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

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# 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](http://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

**A**s 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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—KAREN J. KUBIN



KRISTEN LOKEN

\* deceased

## 25 CONSECUTIVE YEARS OF DONOR LOYALTY CONTINUED



KRISTEN LOKEN

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the acting,  
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to make magic.”  
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“Watching for the  
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

## PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES

- 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.**

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

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**ACCESSIBILITY** San Francisco Opera is committed to providing easy access for all of our patrons.

Please contact the Opera Box Office prior to your visit so that we can ensure your comfort.

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

**LISTENING DEVICES** Assistive listening devices are available at the North Lobby coat check. ID deposit required.

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

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

For COVID safety reasons, drinks are not permitted inside the theater.

The **SAN FRANCISCO OPERA SHOP**, located in the South Mezzanine lobby, sells SF Opera merchandise, jewelry, books, and gift items. The

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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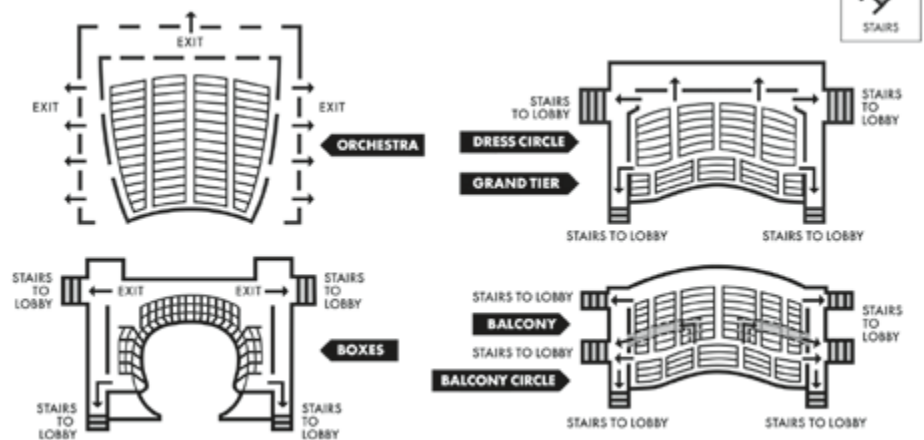
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### OPERA IN THE PARK

**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**

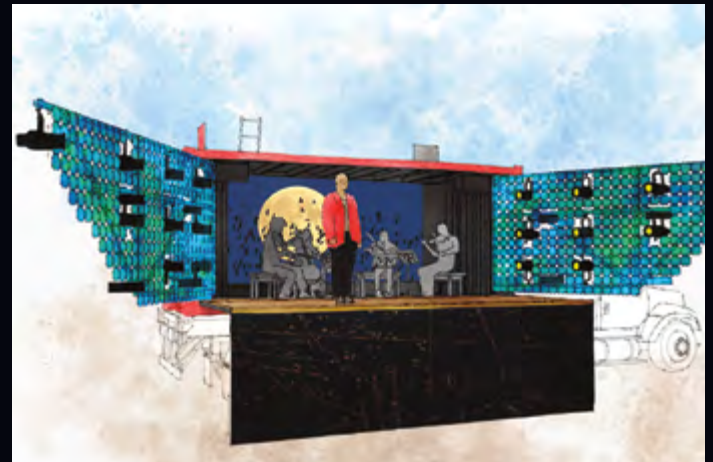
Take a tour of our historic home, the War Memorial Opera House! Family-friendly activities, sing-alongs, and demonstrations will be offered throughout the day.



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**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.



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# Dream of the Red Chamber

紅樓夢

OPERA IN TWO ACTS BY BRIGHT SHENG 盛宗亮

LIBRETTO BY DAVID HENRY HWANG 黃哲倫 AND BRIGHT SHENG 盛宗亮

BASED ON THE BOOK BY CAO XUEQIN 曹雪芹

This production is made possible, in part, by  
John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn;  
and the Edmund W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund.

Darrell Ang's appearance is made possible by a gift to  
the Conductors Fund by Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem.

The commission of the 2016 world premiere of  
*Dream of the Red Chamber* was initiated and funded by  
the Chinese Heritage Foundation Friends of Minnesota.

**JUNE 14, 17, 19, 23, 25; JULY 1, 3, 2022**

The performance will last approximately two hours and fifty minutes, including one intermission.

**SAN FRANCISCO OPERA PRODUCTION**



SAN FRANCISCO  
OPERA

# Dream of the Red Chamber

## PROLOGUE

**Monk's Room / Ruins / A mythical place.** Beggars drift through the ruins of a once-great home as a monk appears. He needs to tell the world an extraordinary story: a stone, left behind from the construction of Heaven, nurtured a crimson pearl flower with its dew for 3,000 years. Together, Stone and Flower seek to fulfill their love by living as mortals on Earth. The Monk tries to dissuade them from such a course. But Stone and Flower disobey, traveling through a magic mirror to Earth.

## ACT I

**SCENE 1: The Grand Hall.** Flower becomes Dai Yu, a brilliant but sickly young woman whose mother has just died. She arrives in the home of one of the Dynasty's most prestigious old families, the Jia clan. Granny Jia, Dai Yu's grandmother, loved Dai Yu's late mother, but Lady Wang, Granny Jia's daughter-in-law, takes an immediate dislike to the newcomer.

Stone becomes the Jias' sole male heir: Bao Yu, Lady Wang's son, a spoiled youth born with a piece of jade in his mouth. When introduced, Bao Yu and Dai Yu feel they have met before. Envoys from the Emperor announce the promotion of Bao Yu's elder sister to the coveted rank of Princess. For generations, the Jias have owed a huge debt to the Imperial Court, but Princess Jia's promotion suggests that the Emperor might be willing to make peace with his long-time rivals.

**SCENE 2: Dai Yu's chamber.** Later that night, Bao Yu hears Dai Yu playing the qin (a stringed instrument). They begin to write poems together; her skill is superior. They resolve to transform the world with music.

**SCENE 3: Pear Court Pavilion.** The seasons change as time passes. To counter Dai Yu's influence, Lady Wang brings her niece, the beautiful Bao Chai from the wealthy Xue clan, into their home. Bao Chai's mother, Aunt Xue, seeks entrée to high society, while Aunt Xue's sister Lady Wang seeks the Xues' money to repay the Imperial debt; they hope to make a match. Though Bao Chai is perfect in so many ways, Bao Yu is disgusted by her practicality. Granny, on the other hand, hopes her grandson will marry Dai Yu.

**SCENE 4: Bao Yu's chamber.** Bao Yu has an erotic dream in which both women appear. Though attracted to Bao Chai, he feels Dai Yu is his soulmate.

**SCENE 5: The Grand Hall.** Princess Jia arrives home for a visit. She tells Lady Wang that the palace is filled with

enemies, and she fears she cannot keep her position. The Emperor wants Bao Yu to marry Bao Chai, and the Princess gives them both the same gift to symbolize this wish. This delights Lady Wang, upsets Granny, and throws Dai Yu into despair. But Bao Yu resolves their love will triumph.

## ACT II

**SCENE 1: Bamboo grove.** Dai Yu's health continues to decline. On the bank of her favorite lake, she buries the falling peach blossom petals. Overhearing her, Bao Yu is profoundly moved. She teases him about the Princess' wish for him to marry Bao Chai and storms off. But she overhears Bao Yu declaring that he remains devoted to her.

Bao Chai enters and encourages Bao Yu to submit his name for a high post. He rebukes her. Humiliated, she resolves to take action.

**SCENE 2: Princess Jia's quarters at the palace / Granny's chamber.** Princess Jia writes a desperate letter to her family informing them that she has lost the power struggle and will be dead by the time they read this. There is only one way for the Jias to save themselves. Granny Jia falls ill. She declares that she wants her grandson to marry Dai Yu. A eunuch arrives, bearing the letter from the Princess. Granny Jia dies, sending the clan into mourning.

**SCENE 3: A hall in the estate.** Now head of the clan, Lady Wang orders her son to carry out the Emperor's wishes and marry Bao Chai. This is the only way to pay back the Imperial debt. She has sent Dai Yu away to the other side of the lake. Bao Yu is defiant.

**SCENE 4: Far side of the lake / Bamboo grove.** Dai Yu burns the poems she and Bao Yu wrote. But Bao Yu makes a stand for love and tells Lady Wang he will become a monk. Defeated, Lady Wang agrees to let Bao Yu marry Dai Yu.

**SCENE 5: The Grand Hall.** At the wedding, Bao Yu exchanges vows with the veiled Dai Yu. Once they are married, Bao Yu discovers he has actually married Bao Chai, tricked by Aunt Xue and Lady Wang! Suddenly, Imperial soldiers storm in to confiscate the property of the Jia and Xue clans. The Emperor only encouraged this marriage so that when he arrested the Jias, he could also seize the Xue fortune. The soldiers sack and burn the estate.

**SCENE 6: Monk's Room / Lake / Ruins.** We realize that the Monk is Bao Yu's older self, writing his own life story. After the wedding, Dai Yu slowly walks into the lake, where she disappears. The Jia family has become beggars, wandering through the illusion known as life.

# Dream of the Red Chamber

## 紅樓夢

Conductor  
**Darrell Ang** 洪毅全

Director  
**Stan Lai** 賴聲川

Production Designer  
**Tim Yip** 葉錦添

Lighting Designer  
**Gary Marder**

Revival Choreographer **Colm Seery**

Chorus Director  
**John Keene**

Fight Director  
**Dave Maier**

Assistant Conductor  
**Michelle Rofrano**\*

Prompter  
**Dennis Doubin**

Musical Preparation **Maureen Zoltek**

**Kseniia Polstiankina Barrad**  
**Marika Yasuda** † 安田真莉花  
**John Churchwell**  
**Fabrizio Corona**

Diction  
**Lynne Soffer**

Chinese Supertitles  
**Sharon Chan** 陳楚珊 **Joanna C. Lee** 李正欣 **Patrick P. Lee** 李百強

Associate Director  
**E. Reed Fisher**

Assistant Director  
**Jose Maria Condemini**

Stage Manager  
**Thea Railey**

Assistant Stage Managers  
**Jayne O'Hara**

**Anna Reetz**  
**Jonathan S. Campbell**  
**Rachel Garoon**

Costume Supervisor  
**Jai Alltizer**

Wig and Makeup  
**Jeanna Parham**

(Sung in English with English and Chinese supertitles)

### CAST

(in order of vocal appearance)

Monk/Dreamer	<b>Francis Jue</b> * 趙耀宗
Stone/Bao Yu	<b>Konu Kim</b> * 金健雨
Flower/Dai Yu	<b>Meigui Zhang</b> * 張玫瑰
Stone (voice)/Eunuch	<b>Victor Cardamone</b> * †
	<b>Edward Graves</b> * †
	<b>Timothy Murray</b> †
Flower (voice)/Lady-in-Waiting	<b>Elisa Sunshine</b> †
	<b>Esther Tonea</b> * †
	<b>Gabrielle Beteag</b> * †
Solo Maid	<b>Gabrielle Beteag</b> * †
Granny Jia	<b>Sabina Kim</b> * 金炫志
Lady Wang	<b>Hyona Kim</b> 金佼那
Bao Chai	<b>Hongni Wu</b> * 吳虹霓
Aunt Xue	<b>Guang Yang</b> 楊光
Princess Jia	<b>Karen Chia-ling Ho</b> 何佳陵

Chorus and Supernumeraries

\* San Francisco Opera debut † Current Adler Fellow

TIME AND PLACE: *Dynastic China*

PROLOGUE: Monk's Room/Ruins/A mythical place 序: 茅庵 / 廢墟 / 神話空間

#### ACT I 第一幕

SCENE 1: The Grand Hall 第一場: 榮慶堂

SCENE 2: Dai Yu's chamber 第二場: 瀟湘館

SCENE 3: Pear Court Pavilion 第三場: 梨香院

SCENE 4: Bao Yu's chamber 第四場: 怡紅院

SCENE 5: The Grand Hall 第五場: 榮慶堂

—INTERMISSION— 中場休息

#### ACT II 第二幕

SCENE 1: Bamboo grove 第一場: 翠竹林

SCENE 2: Princess Jia's quarters at the palace/  
Granny's chamber 第二場: 鳳藻宮 / 賈母廂院

SCENE 3: A hall in the estate 第三場: 榮府正堂

SCENE 4: Far side of the lake/Bamboo grove 第四場: 桃花湖邊 / 翠竹林

SCENE 5: The Grand Hall 第五場: 榮慶堂

SCENE 6: Monk's Room / Lake / Ruins 第六場: 茅庵 / 桃花湖 / 廢墟

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.

TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2022 • 7:30 PM

FRIDAY, JUNE 17 • 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, JUNE 19 • 2 PM

THURSDAY, JUNE 23 • 7:30 PM

SATURDAY, JUNE 25 • 7:30 PM

FRIDAY, JULY 1 • 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, JULY 3 • 2 PM

# 紅樓夢

序：茅庵 / 廢墟 / 神話空間

一群叫化子在破落的大宅中流離。一個和尚出現。他向世人訴說一段傳奇故事：女媧煉石補天時，石頭遭遺棄未用，三千年來牠對其日夜滋養灌溉的絳珠草心生傾慕。石頭與絳珠草遂以肉血之軀成就愛情。和尚力圖勸止，但石、草凡心已熾，雙雙被風月寶鑑吸引入鏡，墮入紅塵而轉世投胎。

## 第一幕

**第一場：榮慶堂** 絳珠草降生為黛玉，自懂性以來便身體虛弱，母親剛剛仙逝。她來到尊榮繁華的榮國府，拜見外祖母賈母。賈母眾兒女中所疼者獨黛玉母親，自然愛及孫女。王夫人卻對遠道而來的黛玉不生好感。

石頭現已轉世為寶玉，賈家唯一子嗣，啣玉而誕，王夫人之子。寶、黛相見，二人雖記不得前世之事，卻感似曾相識。皇上派都太監降旨，晉封寶玉的姐姐元春為鳳藻宮尚書，成為皇上最寵幸的貴妃。世代以來，賈府欠下巨額皇債，但元妃的晉升可能是皇上願與長期政治勁敵議和的徵兆。

**第二場：瀟湘館** 入夜，黛玉撫琴，寶玉為她的琴音所迷。二人一同賦詩，黛玉比寶玉更勝一籌，共同嚮往人間的真善美。

**第三場：梨香院** 春去秋來。對於寶、黛之情，王夫人心感不悅，請來了雍容豐美、家財萬貫的薛寶釵進府。寶釵母親薛姨媽希望女兒嫁進世宦名家，王夫人認定如能與薛家結盟便可償還皇債。雖然寶釵知禮隨分，但寶玉嫌她世故。賈母喜見寶玉與黛玉兩情相悅，有讓二人成婚念頭。

**第四場：怡紅院** 寶玉夢見一位帶著面紗的美貌女子，她似是寶釵又像黛玉。醒來時既興奮又困惑，雖說他一心只向黛玉，但肉身似又把他推到寶釵身邊。

**第五場：榮慶堂** 元妃回府省親，告訴王夫人宮內爾虞我詐，得勢失勢難料。元妃在賞賜中暗示皇上的心意：寶玉和寶釵之賜物相同。王夫人喜出望外，賈母看在眼裡大為不悅。黛玉慨嘆人間無情，寶玉自信真愛必能勝過一切。

## 第二幕

**第一場：翠竹林** 黛玉的病情每況愈下，常喜在湖邊，吟唱充滿哀傷的葬花詞。寶玉路過聽見，情為所動。她拿元妃欲他迎娶寶釵說了句賭氣話就離去。

寶釵欲勸寶玉謀取仕官職位，寶玉責斥她，說自己心中愛慕的只有黛玉。黛玉走得不遠，聽到他們對話。寶釵再次感到委屈。她下定決心，必須把握機會。

**第二場：鳳藻宮 / 賈母廂院** 元妃寫下家書：她深知已失聖眷，性命不能久保。要挽救賈府的劫難，只剩下一個方法。

賈母病危，說出她心中的遺願是要寶、黛為配。太監送上元妃家書；絕望中賈母不支身亡，家族準備喪葬。

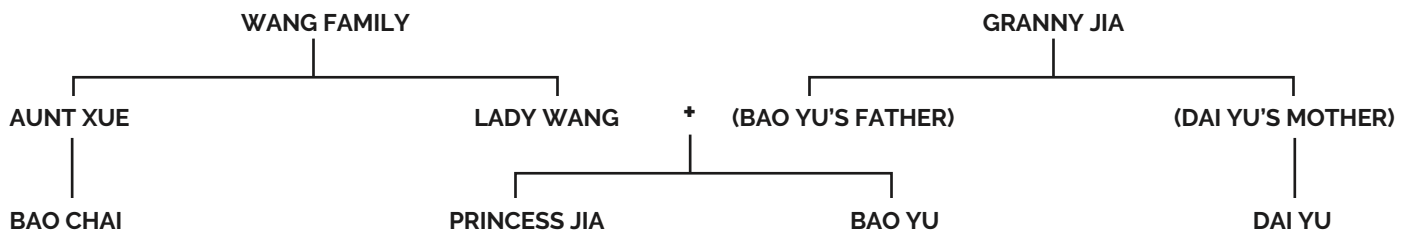
**第三場：榮府正堂** 王夫人成為賈府的掌權人，告知寶玉皇上的意願是要寶玉立即與寶釵成婚，也是賈府償還皇債的唯一出路。王夫人已令黛玉搬至園外她葬花之湖的對岸。寶玉力抗。

**第四場：桃花湖邊 / 翠竹林** 黛玉把昔日與寶玉一同創作的詩稿慢慢焚掉。寶玉則定下決心，鄭重告知王夫人非黛玉不娶，如她堅持這場姻親聯婚，他便出家當和尚。王夫人無法，只好同意讓寶玉娶黛玉為妻。

**第五場：榮慶堂** 在盛隆的典禮中，寶玉與蒙著蓋頭的黛玉儂相贊禮拜天地，禮成後寶玉揭開蓋頭，驚見卻是寶釵！原來薛姨媽與王夫人一同哄騙寶玉，致使兩家聯姻。皇家錦衣軍來到大府，沒收賈薛兩家全部財產。原來聖指釵玉成婚，執意在搜捕賈家時可正式同時沒收兩家財產。賈府被燒毀。

**第六場：茅庵 / 桃花湖 / 廢墟** 顯然寶玉就是年少時的和尚；他正在寫下自己的故事。寶、釵聯婚後，黛玉孤身緩緩降行到桃花湖而消失。賈府上下淪為叫化子，在這個太虛幻境四處流離。

## FAMILY TREE



**D***ream of the Red Chamber* is the most revered novel in Chinese literature for a reason. I can't think of any other work that comes close in terms of length, complexity, depth, passion, characters, story arc, and beauty of language. When I first learned that David Henry Hwang and Bright Sheng were working on an opera based on the novel, I could not help but ask "How?" To consider transforming such a panoramic depiction of Chinese life, death, and relations into a two-and-a-half-hour opera, to present the story in all its broad strokes and fine lines to a contemporary Western audience, to reveal all the fascinating and wildly diverse characters in all their multi-faceted subtleties, within the complexities of their relationships, was a daunting thought indeed.

How surprised was I when I got the first draft of the libretto and saw that most of the characters had been cut! What? To retain only seven of around 40 major characters



Stan Lai  
PHOTO BY DA QIAO 张涵涵

## Shades of Translucence Between East and West

was equivalent to perhaps keeping only Hamlet, Ophelia, and Laertes in an operatic *Hamlet*—keeping in mind that *Dream* is 20 times longer. I came to realize what a brilliant decision this was. A literal rendition faithful to all the characters and storylines would be to me adaptation suicide. By concentrating on the bare nucleus of the *dramatis personae*, in particular the Bao Yu–Dai Yu–Bao Chai love triangle, we are afforded the opportunity to let all other things—political, social, cultural, and philosophical—seep through to create an operatic work that is expansive yet intimate, sensible and accessible to a contemporary audience.

As director, I contemplated at length what my main objectives would be. To me, *Dream of the Red Chamber* is an encyclopedia of aristocratic life in the Qing Dynasty, and within the details of such living lies the grand sophistication of the Chinese people, which includes an intricate net of social behavior and relationships. The key to opening the visual essence of this opera would be to depict the sophisticated lifestyle itself, in all its detail, to make it a medium that displays the quintessence of Chinese life and thought.

Permeating the novel and this opera are the Buddhist and Daoist themes of impermanence and karma. How to enhance these subtle and abstract concepts that advance through the opera's progression became another of my concerns, which

led to the floating quality of all the costumes and the translucent and unstable quality of the Grand Garden.

Over the years, I usually direct my own work as playwright, so whatever conflicts arise between writer and director are reconciled internally. Working with David and Bright posed potential occupational hazards, for we are all strong-minded and proudly assured of ourselves in our own ways. The process turned out to be a joy, filled with mutual respect and admiration. We discussed together the particular staging of key dramatic moments and any proposed libretto and musical changes. Our relationship was such that I was even emboldened to request that Bright add music in certain places in order to give me more time to build a meaningful theatrical image or transition. We certainly had our share of differences but none that could not be reconciled through mutual understanding.

The "dream" of the Red Chamber, to me, is its impermanence, the fleeting transient quality of the very real loves and passions in the garden. As if waking from a dream, Dai Yu and Bao Yu see the reality of their lives, which inherently is dream-like, unreal, ephemeral, colored by the interplay of lushness and sparsity, and the myriad shades of translucence. Deep gratitude to the San Francisco Opera for bringing us together to create this luminous work. 🌟

Backstage at the Hong Kong Arts Festival premiere of *Dream of the Red Chamber*. Kneeling (from right) are composer Bright Sheng, conductor Muhai Tang and production designer Tim Yip. Standing behind Sheng is the late Ed Lee, Mayor of San Francisco along with San Francisco Opera General Director Emeritus David Gockley, director Stan Lai, and members of the cast. / JOANNA C. LEE



# Dream Journey: To China and Back Again

BY KEN SMITH

Six months after its world premiere in San Francisco in September 2016, *Dream of the Red Chamber* traveled to the Hong Kong Arts Festival. In another six months, the production made history when it became the first American opera to tour China, with initial performances at Beijing's Poly Theatre before launching the opening of Changsha's new Meixihu International Culture and Arts Centre Grand Theatre and finally ending its run at the Qintai Grand Theatre in Wuhan.

This month, composer Bright Sheng and librettist David Henry Hwang's operatic retelling of author Cao Xueqin's Qing Dynasty epic is set to make history again, with its international cast and a pan-Asian creative team (including director Stan Lai and Oscar-winning designer Tim Yip), marking the first of San Francisco Opera's many

commissioned works to be revived at the War Memorial Opera House.

As San Francisco audiences prepare to revisit this acclaimed production, we spoke with several people who witnessed firsthand the opera's landmark tour of China: music critic Li Cheng, whose early writings about the opera in the *Beijing Morning Post* paved the way for good notices around the country; the Beijing-based impresario Wray Armstrong, founder of Armstrong Music & Arts, who was instrumental in bringing the production to China; and Karen Chia-ling Ho, the soprano and former Merola artist who made her San Francisco Opera debut as Princess Jia and remains the only performer to appear in this production on each step of its journey, from the world premiere through the China tour and back to San Francisco in 2022.



Music critic Li Cheng



Wray Armstrong with Armstrong Music & Arts Chief Operating Officer Evita Zhang.



Soprano Karen Chia-ling Ho / RICHARD BLINOFF

***Dream of the Red Chamber* is a story most Chinese people know (and have an opinion about). How well did you know it beforehand, and how did that color your opinion of the opera?**

**Li Cheng:** I first read the novel in junior high school, during the final years of the Cultural Revolution, when the government allowed it for [restricted] publication again and my family had access. As a teenager I didn't have much patience for the poetry or the metaphors, but I later found them more interesting. Now I don't have so much time to read, but the story stays with me.

**Wray Armstrong:** I knew almost nothing, except that it was terribly famous. Only after I heard about the project did I start getting into it properly—and it was very intimidating! We had been confident in the performances and production but were concerned about some details of the adaptation, and that the story was going to be performed in English. I'm not sure when the exact "eureka" moment came to push ahead, but at the San Francisco premiere my Chief Operations Officer Evita Zhang and I noticed an incredible excitement. Nothing I'd seen in China by contemporary composers rang so strongly with what I knew about Chinese history, but I really think it was the opening night party that convinced us. The buzz was extraordinary, with a strong sense of pride from the Chinese folks there.

**Karen Chia-ling Ho:** I first read a small part of the story in my high school literature class in Taipei. I was a little scared of this role, actually. I know it's not that big in the opera, but being a princess is a very big deal for the Jia family. Preparing for the role, I tried to read the whole

book, but I gave up after about 10 pages and started watching the TV versions, which actually helped shape my stage presentation. Our choreographer Fang-Yi Sheu [in 2016] also helped in making my role look big since my normal personality is not like that.

**After San Francisco, the opera went on to Hong Kong and then three cities in China. How did different audiences respond? Did word-of-mouth and internet chatter match with your experience?**

**WA:** There was always a sense of wonder everywhere we took it. I don't know Hong Kong audiences so well, but they seemed slightly cooler. On opening night in Beijing, and particularly in the smaller cities, audiences were generally warm. I asked a number of people if they were upset that it wasn't in Chinese, and they thought it was great, first of all, that Americans did this show, and second, that Chinese audiences got to see the show as the Americans saw it.

**LC:** I only saw the opera in Beijing, where the audience response was polarized. Many in the cultural elite didn't like the libretto, because as you say, every Chinese person has their own ideas. I was in the camp that liked the opera. I might not have agreed with some of the smaller details, but the way the story develops through hidden clues was detailed and well-crafted.

**KH:** Audiences in China were more serious about the story. I'd read comments online like, "How could you turn such a long book into two-and-a-half hours?" But others were more optimistic, like "This great Chinese work has been set loose in the world!" The audiences there were



Composer Bright Sheng and librettist David Henry Hwang.

DREW ALTIZER



Karen Chia-ling Ho (far right) and colleagues on tour with

*Dream of the Red Chamber*. / KAREN CHIA-LING HO

quite different. In one performance outside of Beijing, the cast got distracted because some audience members were eating and drinking during the performance.

**San Francisco Opera's appearance in China, co-produced by the Poly Group and Armstrong Music and Art, was a landmark experience on many levels. What was it like from your perspective?**

**LC:** The last time an American opera company came to China was more than 10 years ago, when Opera Boston brought Zhou Long's *Madame White Snake* to the Beijing Music Festival. But that production was nowhere near the scale of *Dream of the Red Chamber* and traveling only to one city isn't actually a tour. I don't know how much planning is involved in touring abroad, but seeing the results made me appreciate how difficult it is.

**WA:** The experience was, shall we say, nail-biting. Most of the things we present come prepackaged and pre-rehearsed, and the complications come in advance. *Dream* had an endless list of details, from fundraising to shipping costumes and sets by sea, with many additional challenges once we got to China. Our initial shock was that our plans with the Central Opera House fell through, so we suddenly had no chorus, orchestra, or rehearsal space, with about a month to reassemble the forces. We ended up hiring two different orchestras and an additional

conductor. We heard five or six local choirs, and while they were all excited and willing, no one could commit to learning a complete contemporary opera in just two weeks. We finally found a fabulous Ukrainian chorus from Dnipro that arrived practically off-book at the first rehearsal. Going to China's second-tier cities was particularly exciting. Wuhan had presented a number of big projects but never a full opera production from a Western company, and we were the first major project at Zaha Hadid's Culture and Arts Centre in Changsha. They had to finish building a new road just to load us in.

**KH:** I haven't been "on tour" since I was in a children's choir. We'd performed in the U.S., New Zealand, Japan, but we were young and never thought of it as work. For *Dream*, we were away for an intense one-and-a-half months, moving to different cities every four or five days, with very little rehearsal time with different orchestras or stage crews. That was the tough part. On the other hand, we got to see China and feel its history, and we all got very close—not only the cast but also many of the chorus singers. Most of chorus didn't speak English, but they tried their best to communicate with us. Music was our common language.

**What did you take away from this experience?**

**LC:** I've forgotten many details, but I clearly remember the final ensemble, which is the most complicated finale





Karen Chia-ling Ho as Princess Jia in *Dream of the Red Chamber* at the Hong Kong Arts Festival in 2017. / KEITH HIRO/HONG KONG ARTS FESTIVAL

ever written by a Chinese composer and impressive even among European operas. For decades now, any ensembles in Chinese operas are short, and not even the Chinese composers living abroad or those still in China heavily influenced by Western music have written anything close.

**WA:** One key reason for our success was having a fearless COO. So many things could've gone wrong, and Evita just never let go. Largely because of COVID, we haven't done anything on this scale since. But thanks to delivering *Dream* we were able to create the music-theatre-dance piece *Magical Night at the Art Museum* with San Francisco Ballet Principal Dancer Yuan Yuan Tan, which we toured in nearly 20 Chinese cities. We only had seven musicians, not a symphony orchestra, and our show wasn't "operatic" in scale, but we did create and produce the costumes from

scratch. And thanks to *Dream*, we knew that experienced wigmakers and makeup people are essential.

**KH:** The tour taught me, first, never expect too much beforehand, and second, always be ready to react quickly. We had two different singers playing Bao Yu, and because our second Bao Yu didn't get much rehearsal time he would sometimes forget his entrances. We learned to be aware of everything around us at all times and always help each other out. 🍀

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*Critic and journalist Ken Smith has covered music on five continents for a wide range of print, broadcast, and internet media. A winner of the ASCAP/Deems Taylor Award and the 2020 SOPA Award for arts and culture reporting, he is the author of Fate, Luck Chance ... the Making of "The Bonesetter's Daughter" Opera.*

# Prisoners of Cao Xueqin

BY DAVID ROLSTON

For much of the 18th century, *Dream of the Red Chamber* (*Honglou meng*) circulated in manuscript form among a limited circle. But by the 1790s, as the first printed editions appeared, the novel began to ensnare an ever-increasing number of readers, some of whom resorted to fisticuffs when it came to the all-important question of which of the two heroines, Dai Yu or Bao Chai, was favored by the author.

Within only a few years of the earliest printed editions, readers began to write sequels to the work, one of which resorted not only to having the author, Cao Xueqin, become one of its characters but also to make him recant his original version in favor of a more “accurate” one. However, despite having written his own name into the novel’s first chapter (albeit as editor rather than author) Cao was forgotten for most of the 19th century. Not until well into the 20th century, as information about Cao and his family (including the earliest commentaries, written by his friends and relatives) was rediscovered and re-evaluated, did the majority of Chinese readers realize that Cao was the author, his fame and influence coming to rival that of Shakespeare. Today, Cao’s novel has inspired a whole discipline of study, “Red-ology” (*Hongxue*), with a sub-discipline, Cao-ology (*Caoxue*), devoted to the study of Cao himself.

It is too early, perhaps, to tell whether the United States will become similarly enamored with the novel. Two complete English translations have been available for decades (under the respective titles *Dream of Red Mansions* and *The Story of the Stone*), but so far only the lucky Western academics who teach the novel regularly (among whom I count myself) come close to the satiety of Chinese readers who return to the novel annually. Although there have been attempts in English to recount the novel in a single evening (including a certain adaptation for Western opera ...), we are still very far indeed from the onslaught of countless adaptations that the Chinese have enjoyed (some might say suffered) for many decades.



Chinese postage stamp issued in April 2022 showing Dai Yu burning the letters, a famous scene from *Dream of the Red Chamber*.

For one thing, the novel itself exists in a vast array of Chinese versions, many including commentary instructing the reader how to approach the novel (to become, in essence, an informed reader the first time around). Commentary editions became less common in the 20th century as the Chinese realized this was not the way Westerners published and read fiction. As the commentary tradition was re-evaluated (claimed as uniquely Chinese by the late 20th century), important literary figures, such as former Minister of Culture Wang Meng, began to publish their own commentary editions. Modern versions contain copious annotation, and the range of reading aids and reference works available for Chinese readers include an almost 1,500-page “dictionary” (only slightly shorter than a standard, lightly annotated edition of the novel) with summary information on nearly all of the novel’s “sequels” (more than 50 are listed).

In addition, the story has been adapted for a wide range of performance genres, traditional as well as modern. The earliest TV miniseries adaptation (in 36 hour-long episodes) appeared in 1987; a longer one premiered in 2010 (50 episodes). Other miniseries have



*Bao Yu's dream, painted on silk by Qing Dynasty artist Sun Wen.*  
BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

been distinguished either by their emphasis (one focusing only on the maids ran for 21 episodes; another centered around Dai Yu had more than 35) or how the story is told (from a nine-episode series where all the characters are played by little children to a 30-episode version told in Yueju, a Chinese-opera form indigenous to Shanghai). During filming for the first and last of these miniseries (in Beijing and Shanghai, respectively), *Red Chamber* theme parks were constructed and continue to host tourists.

Cao Xueqin himself and his writing of the novel was also the subject of a 30-episode TV miniseries, despite the fact that we know very little about his life (his family fell

precipitously from wealth and favor when their household was raided and confiscated on imperial orders). Although some of these miniseries are available online, the quality of the English subtitles is generally not good.

Great novels are worth fighting over. There are a number of reasons why so many Chinese have had such strong and conflicting opinions. One is the fact that although Cao Xueqin has been at the center of most everyone's understanding of the novel, we do not have a complete and final version that we can be sure is completely his. Whereas the early manuscripts in 80 chapters can be assumed to be his, even they cannot be said to represent a final, completed

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***“Although Cao Xueqin has been at the center of most everyone’s understanding of the novel, we do not have a complete and final version that we can be sure is completely his.”***

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19th-century illustration of the Garden in Dream of the Red Chamber by Sun Wen. / WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

version of those chapters. We know that Cao wrote more, but those additional chapters have not survived. The publishers of the first printed editions claimed that the last 40 chapters of their 120-chapter versions were based on manuscripts by the original author (whom they do not try to identify), but those chapters are so often at odds with many clear hints in the commentary and original manuscripts about how the novel should end that the publishers' claims are difficult to believe. Big debates in those chapters still concern what Cao Xueqin might have written, what he couldn't possibly have written, and even how he wanted the novel to end. And to complicate matters further, we are pretty sure that Cao recycled parts of an earlier draft into at least the first 80 chapters without completely changing the material to match the new style. We are left, then, with a famous and beloved novel that has at least three parts, each with its own tone, none clearly labeled or completely distinct from the other parts. Far from turning Chinese readers off, however, this complexity seems to have made the novel all the more endearing.

The other underlying reason why the novel is so contentious is that the portions that seem most to represent Cao's style and conception eschew the traditional all-knowing and omniscient narrator of most Chinese novels. Here he tends not to spell out in any straightforward way his

own view of the more important (and more complex) characters, which forces the reader to rely on subtle clues. This is intensified in the case of some characters, such as Bao Chai, about whom the author never shows his hand. Typically in this genre, readers are impelled to look past the characters' surface presentation to find evidence of their hypocrisy. Despite clear evidence in the text and commentary that Bao Chai and Dai Yu were not seen as antagonists by Cao but rather as aspects of a composite ideal woman, the majority of readers have been suspicious of Bao Chai's motives for being so "good."

Adapters, like translators, are typically confronted with linguistic and time constraints that make it impossible for them to realize all the different levels of the original. This is certainly the case with *Dream of the Red Chamber*, where debates continue over what the "original" is or should be. We should not expect any adaptation or translation to be perfect, only that the effort is creative and honest in representing as many aspects of the original as possible. Why should only Chinese readers be the prisoners of Cao Xueqin? 🍵

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David Rolston is on the Asian Languages and Cultures faculty at University of Michigan. He has taught a variety of courses on *Dream of the Red Chamber* for more than three decades.

# ARTIST PROFILES

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



**BRIGHT SHENG** 盛宗亮  
(New York, New York)  
**Composer and co-librettist**  
**San Francisco Opera**  
**Highlights:** *Dream of the Red Chamber*  
**Recent and Upcoming:** *Old Tune Renewed*

(Prism Quartet); *Rages of Love* for violin and chamber orchestra (Fontainebleau Chamber Orchestra); recent commissions from Carnegie Hall, National Arts Center of Canada, China National Center for the Arts, Shanghai Symphony, Suzhou Symphony, Curtis Institute; work in progress: *The Enigmas of Li Qing Zhao* (李清照——欲说还休)  
Founder and Artistic Director of the annual music festival Intimacy of Creativity (The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology)  
Leonard Bernstein Distinguished University Professor of Music at the University of Michigan  
Helmuth and Anna Pao Sohmen Professor-at-Large at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology



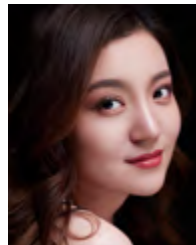
**DAVID HENRY HWANG**  
黄哲伦  
(Los Angeles, California)  
**Co-librettist**  
**San Francisco Opera**  
**Highlights:** *Dream of the Red Chamber*  
**Recent and Upcoming:** Co-

librettist of Philip Glass' *Circus Days & Nights*; librettist of Huang Ruo's *An American Soldier*, *The Rift*, and *M. Butterfly* (Santa Fe Opera); book and lyrics for Jeanine Tesori's *Soft Power*; writer of Disney's live-action remake of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and Anna May Wong biopic; writer/consulting producer of the television series *The Affair*, *Billion Dollar Whale* (Westward/SKG); upcoming Netflix tv series  
Tony Award: Best Play for *M. Butterfly* (1988)  
Grammy Award: Best Opera Recording and Best Classical Contemporary Composition for Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar* (2006)



**DARRELL ANG** \* 洪毅全  
(Singapore)  
**Conductor**  
**Recent and Upcoming:** Conducting engagements with NCPA Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, NHK

Symphony Orchestra Tokyo, NSO Taiwan, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra Tokyo, Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio-France, RTVE Symphony Orchestra Madrid, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, Mariinsky Theatre, Bordeaux Opera Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Sichuan Symphony Orchestra  
As composer: *Fanfare for a Frazzled Earth* (Singapore National Youth Orchestra)  
Facebook/Instagram: darrellang.music  
Twitter: darrellang



**MEIGUI ZHANG** \* ♪  
張玫瑰  
Soprano (Chengdu, China)

**Flower/Dai Yu**  
**Recent and Upcoming:**

*In Song: Meigui Zhang* (San Francisco Opera); Thibault in *Don Carlos*

(Metropolitan Opera); Barbarina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Metropolitan Opera); Bloody Child in *Macbeth* (Metropolitan Opera); Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* (Verbier Festival); Anne Trulove in *The Rake's Progress* (Merola Opera Program); J.S. Bach's *Coffee Cantata* (Menlo Chamber Music Festival); Mahler's Fourth Symphony (Sichuan Symphony Orchestra China tour); Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (Beijing's National Centre for the Performing Arts); concerts with Xi'an and Shenzhen Symphony Orchestras; recitals (Miami's Wertheim Performing Arts Center, China tour); Mozart's "Exultate, jubilate" (New Jersey Symphony Orchestra); Glière's Concerto for Coloratura Soprano and Orchestra (Camerata Notturna)  
Merola Opera Program 2018  
Instagram: meigui\_zhang  
Facebook: Meigui Zhang



**KONU KIM** \* ♪ 金健雨  
Tenor (Seoul, South Korea)

**Stone/Bao Yu**  
**Recent and Upcoming:**

Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* (Glyndebourne Festival, San Diego Opera); Ernesto in

*Don Pasquale* (Glyndebourne); Arnold in *Guillaume Tell* (Irish National Opera); *Petite Messe Solennelle* (Wexford Opera Festival); Leone in *L'Ange de Nisida* (Donizetti Festival Bergamo); Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di*

*Siviglia* (Nouvel Opera Fribourg, London's Royal Opera Covent Garden); Edoardo in *Un Giorno di Regno* (Garsington Festival); Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* (Teatro Verdi di Basseto); Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* (Daegu Opera); Capellio in *Giulietta e Romeo* (Belcanto Opera Festival Japan); Elvino in *La Sonnambula* (Budapest Mûpa Palace of Arts)  
Instagram: tenor.konukim  
Facebook: konu.kim85



**HYONA KIM** 金侏那  
Mezzo-Soprano  
(Seoul, South Korea)  
**Lady Wang**

**San Francisco Opera**

**Highlights:** Lady Wang in *Dream of the Red Chamber*

**Recent and Upcoming:** Suzuki

in *Madame Butterfly* (San Francisco Opera, Dortmund Opera); title role of Ernest Guiraud, Paul Dukas, and Camille Saint-Saëns' *Frédégonde* (Dortmund); Ortrud in *Lohengrin* (Dortmund); Fidès in Meyerbeer's *Le Prophète* (Dortmund); Nancy Tang in John Adams' *Nixon in China* (Dortmund); Lady Wang in *Dream of the Red Chamber* (Hong Kong Arts Festival); Amneris in *Aida* (Dortmund); Tzipie in Oliver Knussen's *Wo die Wilden Kerle Wohnen* (Dortmund)



**KAREN CHIA-LING HO**  
\* 何佳陵

Soprano (Taipei, Taiwan)

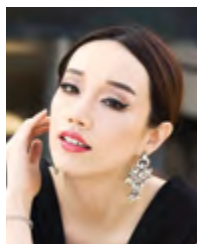
**Princess Jia**  
**San Francisco Opera**

**Highlights:** Princess Jia in *Dream of the Red Chamber*

**Recent and**

**Upcoming:** Meretaten in Philip Glass' *Akhmaten* (Metropolitan Opera); Crowned Child in *Macbeth* (Metropolitan Opera); title role of *Madame Butterfly* (Hawaii Opera Theatre); title role of *Tosca* (Hong Kong); Violetta in *La Traviata* (Philharmonia Orchestra of New York Lincoln Center); soloist Tyzen Hsiao music (San Jose Center of the Performing Arts)  
Merola Opera Program 2014  
Facebook: @Karen Chia-ling Ho

# ARTIST PROFILES



**HONGNI WU** \*♪ 吳虹霓  
Mezzo-Soprano  
(Jiangxi, China)  
**Bao Chai**  
**Recent and**  
**Upcoming:** Comrade  
Chin/Shu Fung in  
Huang Ruo's *M.*  
*Butterfly* (Santa Fe  
Opera); The Composer

in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Montpellier Opera); Flora in *La Traviata* (London's Royal Opera Covent Garden); Mercédès in *Carmen* (London); Second Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* (London); Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Opera Maine); Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (Wuhan Philharmonic Orchestra); Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* (Hangzhou Philharmonic Orchestra); Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* (Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra, Shanghai Symphony Orchestra); Mahler and Strauss recital (Guangzhou Opera House); Respighi's *Il Tramonto* (Shanghai Symphony Hall); Tan Dun's *Buddha Passion* (China tour)



**SABINA KIM** \*♪ 金炫志  
Soprano (Seoul,  
South Korea)  
**Granny Jia**  
**Recent and**  
**Upcoming:** Suzuki  
in *Madame Butterfly*  
(London's Royal  
Albert Hall, Pacific  
Symphony, New

Jersey Festival Orchestra); Amneris in *Aida* (Knoxville Opera, Daegu International Opera Festival); Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde* (Bogotá Symphony); Gertrude in *Roméo et Juliette* (Korean National Opera); Mamma Lucia in *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Ulsan Singers Opera); Alisa in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Ulsan); alto soloist in Handel's *Messiah*; Vivaldi *Gloria*; Wilberg Requiem (Carnegie Hall); Dan Forrest's *Jubilate Deo* (Carnegie Hall); Verdi Requiem (Missouri Symphony)



**GUANG YANG** ♪ 楊光  
Mezzo-Soprano (Los  
Angeles, California)  
**Aunt Xue**  
**San Francisco**  
**Opera Highlights:**  
Amneris in *Aida*  
**Recent and**  
**Upcoming:** Ferena  
in *Nabucco*; Adalgisa

in *Norma*; Azucena in *Il Trovatore*; Mother Chen in Huang Ruo's *An American Soldier* (Washington National Opera)



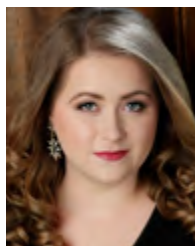
**FRANCIS JUE** \*♪ 趙耀宗  
(New York, New York)  
**The Monk/Dreamer**  
**Recent and**  
**Upcoming:** Theater:  
DHH in *Soft Power*  
(Public Theater);  
Duch in *Cambodian*  
*Rock Band* (Signature  
Theatre); Resten in

*The Language Archive* (TheatreWorks Silicon Valley); Elaine Kim/Jessye Norman/Mrs. Young-Soon Han in *Twilight*; Los Angeles, 1992 (Signature Theatre); Father in *Wild Goose Dreams* (Public Theater); Larry in *King of the Yeas* (San Francisco Playhouse)  
Film and TV: Chinese Foreign Minister Chen in *Madam Secretary*; Zeke Meredith in *New Amsterdam*; Fred in *Hightown*  
Facebook: Francis Jue  
Twitter: @fjue  
Instagram: juefrancis



**ELISA SUNSHINE** ♪+  
Soprano (San  
Clemente, California)  
**Flower (voice)/**  
**Lady-in-Waiting**  
**San Francisco**  
**Opera Highlights:** A  
shepherd boy in *Tosca*  
**Recent and**  
**Upcoming:** Queen

of the Night in *Die Zauberflöte* (Pensacola Opera); Selena in Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer's *If I Were You* (Merola Opera Program); Marie in *La Fille du Régiment* (Merola Grand Finale); Gretel in *Hänsel und Gretel* (Regina Opera); Musetta in *La Bohème* (Regina Opera); Elizabeth Christine in Scott Wheeler's *The Sorrows of Frederick* (Center for Contemporary Opera)  
Adler Fellowship Program 2020, 2021, 2022  
Merola Opera Program 2019



**ESTHER TONEY** \*♪+  
Soprano (Buford,  
Georgia)  
**Flower (voice)/**  
**Lady-in-Waiting**  
**Recent and**  
**Upcoming:** Diana  
in Jake Heggie and  
Gene Scheer's *If I*  
*Were You* (Merola

Opera Program); Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* (Merola Grand Finale); Callie Van Lew in Jake Heggie's *Intelligence* (workshop)  
Winner of Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition 2022  
Adler Fellowship Program 2020, 2021, 2022  
Merola Opera Program 2019



**GABRIELLE BETEG**  
\*♪+  
Mezzo-Soprano  
(Atlanta, Georgia)  
**Flower (voice)/Lady-**  
**in-Waiting/Solo Maid**  
**Recent and**  
**Upcoming:** Mercédès  
in *The Threepenny*  
*Carmen* (Atlanta Opera

The Big Tent); Woman in a Hat/Duchess in John Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles*  
Winner of Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions 2020  
Adler Fellowship Program 2022  
Merola Opera Program 2021



**VICTOR CARDAMONE**  
\*♪+  
Tenor (Pittsburgh,  
Pennsylvania)  
**Stone (voice)/Eunuch**  
**Recent and**  
**Upcoming:** Don  
Ottavio in *Don*  
*Giovanni* (Opera  
Columbus); Tamino

in *Die Zauberflöte* (University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music); La Thèière/Le Petit Vieillard/La Rainette in *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* (Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra); Jenik in *The Bartered Bride* (CCM); Scaramuccio in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Wolf Trap Opera); Soldat in Viktor Ullmann's *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* (Wolf Trap Opera); Larry Renault in William Bolcom's *Dinner at Eight* (CCM); Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* (Brevard Music Center)  
Adler Fellowship Program 2022  
Merola Opera Program 2021



**EDWARD GRAVES** \*♪+  
Tenor (Oxon Hill,  
Maryland)  
**Stone (voice)/Eunuch**  
**Recent and**  
**Upcoming:** Policeman  
2 in Jeanine Tesori and  
Tazewell Thompson's  
*Blue* (Michigan Opera  
Theatre, Glimmerglass

Festival); title role of Handel's *Judas Maccabaeus* (Berkshire Choral International); *What the Heart Desires* (Merola Opera Program); *Back Home: Through the Stage Door* (Merola Opera Program); Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*/Michael Ching's *Buoso's Ghost* (Michigan Opera Theatre); Robbins in *Porgy and Bess* (Seattle Opera); John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* (Florentine Opera); Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (Florentine Opera); *The Magic Flute* (Florentine Opera)  
Adler Fellowship Program 2022  
Merola Opera Program 2021



**TIMOTHY MURRAY** 🎭  
Baritone (Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin)  
**Stone (voice)/Eunuch San Francisco**  
**Opera Highlights:** Sciarone in *Tosca*  
**Recent and Upcoming:** Title role of *Don Giovanni* (North

Carolina Opera); soloist in *Carmina Burana* (San Francisco Symphony); Schaunard in *La Bohème* (North Carolina Opera); Paul in Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer's *If I Were You* (Merola Opera Program); Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Academy of Vocal Arts); Mercutio in *Roméo et Juliette* (Academy of Vocal Arts); duets from *I Puritani* and *Les Pêcheurs de Perles (The Adlers: Live at the Drive-In)*; excerpts as the title role of Thomas' *Hamlet* (Merola Grand Finale) Adler Fellowship Program 2020, 2021, 2022 Merola Opera Program 2019



**STAN LAI** 賴聲川  
(Washington, D.C.)  
**Director San Francisco Opera**  
**Highlights:** *Dream of the Red Chamber*  
**Recent and Upcoming:** Author of *Selected Plays of Stan Lai* (12 plays in

3 volumes, translated by the playwright, University of Michigan Press); Writer and Director of AGO (Theatre Above, Shanghai, Wuzhen Theatre Festival, on tour, China), *One One Zero Eight* (on tour, China), *A Dream Like a Dream* (on tour, China and new production, National Theatre, Taipei 2023); Artistic Director of Performance Workshop, Taipei, and Theatre Above, Shanghai; Festival Director of Wuzhen Theatre Festival, China [weibo.com/laishengchuan](http://weibo.com/laishengchuan)



**TIM YIP** 葉錦添  
(Hong Kong)  
**Production Designer San Francisco Opera**  
**Highlights:** *Dream of the Red Chamber*  
**Recent and Upcoming:** Director of *Love in a Fallen City* Designer of

Team China's Olympic Podium Uniform (2020 Tokyo, 2022 Beijing) Stage and costume designer of 2004 Athens Olympics closing ceremony Academy Award: Best Art Direction for *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2001) [timyipstudio.com](http://timyipstudio.com)

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Instagram: [timyipstime](https://www.instagram.com/timyipstime)  
Facebook: [Tim Yip Studio](https://www.facebook.com/TimYipStudio)



**GARY MARDER**  
(San Diego, California)  
**Lighting Designer San Francisco**  
**Opera Highlights:** *Mefistofele; The Barber of Seville; Der Fliegende Holländer; La Traviata; Carlisle Floyd's Susannah;*

*Un Ballo in Maschera; Tosca; La Cenerentola; Carmen; Jenůfa; Dream of the Red Chamber; Manon; Rigoletto*  
**Recent and Upcoming:** *Tosca* (Washington National Opera); *Madame Butterfly* (Washington); *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Dallas Opera); *Un Ballo in Maschera* (San Diego Opera); *La Clemenza di Tito* (Toronto)



**COLM SEERY**  
(Dublin, Ireland)  
**Revival Choreographer/Dance Master San Francisco**  
**Opera Highlights:** *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg; Andrea Chénier*

**Recent and Upcoming:** Choreographer of *Idomeneo* (Staatsoper Berlin); Britten's *Gloriana* (Madrid's Teatro Real); *Ariodante* (Vienna State Opera); Associate Choreographer of *Andrea Chénier* (London's Royal Opera); Revival Choreographer of *La Traviata* (Barcelona's Liceu, Welsh National Opera); *Giulio Cesare* (Glyndebourne Festival Opera); *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Glyndebourne); *Rinaldo* (Glyndebourne)



**JOHN KEENE**  
(Lancaster, Pennsylvania)  
**Chorus Director**  
**Recent and Upcoming:** San Francisco Opera Chorus Director (*Don Giovanni, 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 Bénédicte, 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:** *Don Giovanni* (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)

**First performance:** San Francisco Opera; September 10, 2016

*Dream of the Red Chamber* has been performed in one previous season at San Francisco Opera.

**Personnel:** 14 principals, 48 choristers, 5 supernumeraries, 6 dancers; 73 total.

**Orchestra:** 2 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes (1 doubling English horn), 2 clarinets (1 doubling bass clarinet), 2 bassoons (1 doubling contrabassoon), 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, 1 tuba, 1 timpani, 3 percussion, 1 harp, 1 qin, 40 strings (12 first violins, 9 second violins, 7 violas, 7 cellos, 5 basses); 65 total.

For these performances, the qin (pronounced ch'in) is played by Shanghai-born musician Zhou Yi. Her instrument was created by master craftsman Liqun Xiong of the Wu Xian Tang Qin Making Workshop in Yangzhou, China.

Digital illustrations by Eli Maffei. Title calligraphy and production brush calligraphy by Patrick P. Lee.

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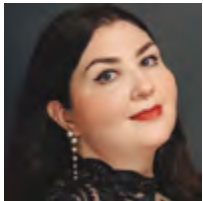
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First-year Adler  
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**TIMOTHY MURRAY**  
Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin  
Third-year Adler  
*Sponsored by*  
Helen Berggruen,  
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Tenor  
**VICTOR CARDAMONE**  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
First-year Adler



Soprano  
**MIKAYLA SAGER**  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
First-year Adler  
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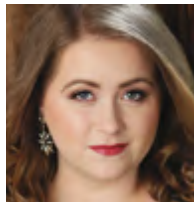
Bass  
**STEFAN EGERSTROM**  
Brooklyn Center, Minnesota  
Third-year Adler  
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Julie Dickson  
Mrs. James K. McWilliams



Soprano  
**ELISA SUNSHINE**  
San Clemente, California  
Third-year Adler  
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Tenor  
**EDWARD GRAVES**  
Oxon Hill, Maryland  
First-year Adler



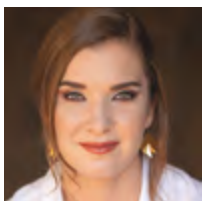
Soprano  
**ESTHER TONEA**  
Buford, Georgia  
Third-year Adler  
*Sponsored by*  
James A. Heagy,  
*in memory of* Jayne Heagy



Pianist/Coach  
**ANDREW KING**  
Syracuse, New York  
Third-year Adler



Pianist/Coach  
**MARIKA YASUDA**  
Williamsburg, Virginia  
First-year Adler  
*Sponsored by*  
Karen J. Kubin



Soprano  
**ANNE-MARIE  
MACINTOSH**  
Langley, British Columbia  
Third-year Adler  
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\* deceased



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**Teresa Concepcion**, *Communications Manager*

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**Donna Batson**, *Director of Institutional Giving*

**Lisa Bordachar**,

*Director of Prospect Research and Strategy*

**Joanna Taber**,

*Associate Director, Campaigns and Sponsorships*

**Alix Josefski**, *Development Associate*

**Duygu Gün**, *Director of Business Partnerships*

### ANNUAL GIVING

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

### INDIVIDUAL AND LEADERSHIP GIVING

**Tabitha S. Rowell**,

*Director of Individual and Leadership Giving*

**Jennifer Amato**, *Individual Giving Officer*

**Iosu Bascaran**, *Leadership Giving Officer*

**Michael Hoke**, *Individual Giving Officer*

**Alondra Orellana**,

*Individual and Leadership Giving Associate*

**Gabriel Tanguay Ortega**, *Individual Giving Officer*

### LEGACY GIVING

**Andrew Maguire**, *Legacy Giving Officer*

**Maude Engström**, *Legacy Giving Associate*

### SPECIAL EVENTS

**Karman Ferrell Pave**, *Director of Special Events*

**Katie Cagampan**, *Senior Manager, Special Events*

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND COMMUNITY

**Ryan Marchand**, *Community Engagement Manager*

**Hannah Dworkin**, *Education Development Manager*

**Cole Thomason-Redus**, *Educational Content Curator*

**Chelbi Harvin-Dickens**,

*Community Engagement Coordinator*

**Eteya Trinidad**, *Community Engagement Associate*

**Linda Baird**, **Joshua Raoul Brody**,

**Marcelle Dronkers**, **Maita Eyzaguirre**, **Kevin Gordon**,

**Lua Hadar**, **Dave Maier**, **Albert Montanes-Sanchez**,

**Cole Thomason-Redus**, **Sven Olbash**,

**Jacob Russel-Snyder**, **Katherine Issel Pitre**,

**Christopher Street**, **Matthew Wolka**,

*Teaching Artists*

## EXECUTIVE OFFICES

**Jordan Amann**, *General Director's Associate*

**Elena Park**, *Strategic Advisor*

**Celestine Ratsch-Rivera**,

*Assistant to the Executive Offices*

## MARKETING

**Troy Smith**, *Associate Director of Marketing*

**Chi-Hsuan Yang**,

*Associate Director of Analytics and Strategy*

**Adam Snellings**, *Art Director*

**Stephanie Gianni**,

*Senior Manager, Digital and Acquisition*

**Jennifer Fingal**, *Manager, Brand and Loyalty*

**Allison Griner**, *Digital Content Manager*

**Bill Murray**, *Web and E-Commerce Manager*

**Katy Zolfaghari**, *Creative Project Manager*

**Alyssa Feskanin**,

*Marketing Coordinator*

*Special Events and Promotions*

**Farrah Hammond**, *Marketing Associate*

### BOX OFFICE

**Jessica Fauver**, *Box Office Manager, Treasurer*

**Rebecca Page**,

*Medallion Society Concierge Manager*

*Assistant Box Office Manager*

**Jennifer Pollack**,

*Group Sales Manager, Assistant Treasurer*

**Charles McGraw**, *Assistant Treasurer*

**Christopher Mark**, *Assistant Treasurer*

**Roberto Bonilla**,

*Phone Room Sales Manager*

*Subscriber Representative*

**Emily Tilles**,

*Subscriptions Manager, Assistant Treasurer*

**Beverlee G. Hassid**,

*Subscriber Representative*

**Jing Bentley**, **Marilyn Duran**, **Kyle Minor**,

**Randall Wesley**, **Dale Whitmill**,

*Patron Services Personnel*

## FRONT OF HOUSE

**Jamye Divila Largent**, *House Manager*  
**Marialice Dockus**, *Head Usher*  
**Rodney Anderson, Marcelo Barbero,**  
**Stuart Bousel, Jan Brown,**  
**Danica Burt, Lila Butler,**  
**Wendy Chang, Frank Chow,**  
**Kathy Dere, Martin Dias,**  
**Dave Doering, Jonathan Drogin,**  
**Bill Flanagan, Christine Ford,**  
**Jorge Gonzalez-Rodriguez,**  
**Chip Heath, Kate Juliana,**  
**Elaine Kawasaki, Kathleen Keeler,**  
**Eileen Keremitsis, Ryszard Koprowski,**  
**Bill Laschuk, Sharon Lee,**  
**Leland Leong, Marilyn Leong,**  
**Sadie Li, Lenore Long,**  
**Doug Luyendyk, Michael Mak,**  
**Sam Mesinger, Eva Moody,**  
**John Morris, Timm Muldoon,**  
**Dale Nedelco, Beth Norris,**  
**Jeff Norris, Jan Padover,**  
**Julie Peck, Christine Plowright,**  
**Robert Remple, Bill Repp,**  
**Robyn Sandberg, Allen Sawyer,**  
**Kelly Smith, Stephanie Somersille,**  
**Melissa Stern, Theresa Sun,**  
**Claire Tremblay, Richard Wagner,**  
**Steve Weiss, Tom Wong,**  
**Elaine Yee,**  
*Ushers*

**Hui Ming Wu**, *Show Maid*

## OPERA SHOP

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

## MUSIC OPERATIONS

**Katherine Baltrush**, *Associate Operations Director*  
**Kali Wilson**, *Associate Operations Director*  
**Noelle Romelfanger**, *Senior Operations Associate*

## CHORUS AND BALLET

**John Keene**, *Chorus Director*  
**Fabrizio Corona**, *Associate Chorus Master*

## ORCHESTRA

**Tracy Davis**, *Orchestra Manager*  
**Carrie Weick**, *Orchestra Librarian*  
**Matthew Buckman**, *Music Operations Associate*  
**Kip Cranna**, *Dramaturg Emeritus*

## PATRON OPERATIONS

**David Odenkirchen**,  
*Director of Patron Operations  
and Revenue Management*  
**Jess Levy**, *Patron Data Specialist*  
**Anamaria Ramey**, *Donor Services Manager*  
**Sarah Benjamin**, *Patron Data Assistant*  
**Chivly Krouch**, *Donor Records Coordinator*  
**Amir Magid**, *Donor Benefits Coordinator*  
**Mark Wladika**, *Web Development Manager*

## PRODUCTION

*\*Senior Production Staff Member*

## PRODUCTION ADMINISTRATION

**Jeremy Patfield**,  
*Director of Production Operations & Media*  
**Paul Dana**, *Support Services Coordinator*  
**Sylvia Jiang**, *Production Finance Assistant*  
**Ellen Presley**, *Special Projects Manager*  
**Celine Strouts**,  
*Production Operations Manager*

## AUDIO

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

## CARPENTRY

**David Hatch**, *Master Carpenter*  
**Christopher Davis**, *Wilsey Center Head*  
**Mark Baumann**, *Assistant Master Carpenter*

## COSTUME DEPARTMENT

**Daniele McCartan**, *Costume Director*  
**Jai Alltizer**, *Costume Shop Manager*  
**David Doré**, *Senior Production Accountant*  
**Galen Till**, *Senior Production Supervisor*

## ELECTRICS

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

## FIGHT DIRECTION

**Dave Maier**, *Fight Director*

## LIGHTING

**Justin Partier**, *Lighting Director*  
**David Tkach**, *Assistant Lighting Designer*  
**Stacey Boggs**, *Assistant Lighting Designer*  
**Kaia Merrell**, *Lighting Intern*

## MEDIA

**Jodi Gage**, *Media Producer*

## PROPERTIES

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

## REHEARSAL

**Marin Venturi**,  
*Rehearsal Department Director*  
**Savannah Criswell**, *Rehearsal Administrator*  
**Adam Lowe**, *Rehearsal Coordinator*  
**Melissa Dufort**, *Rehearsal Assistant*  
**Leora Gilgur**, *Rehearsal Assistant*  
**Kate Juliana**, *Rehearsal Assistant*  
**Trey Costerisan**,  
*Rehearsal Department Consultant*

## SCENE SHOP

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

## STAGING STAFF

**Darin Burnett**,  
*Production Stage Manager*  
**Darin Burnett, Jennifer Harber,**  
**Jayne O'Hara, Thea Railey**,  
*Stage Managers*  
**Jose Maria Conde, E. Reed Fisher,**  
**Jenny Harber, Roy Rallo, Morgan Robinson**,  
*Assistant Stage Directors*  
**Jessica Barker, Jonathan S. Campbell,**  
**Rachel Garoon, Jennifer Harber,**  
**Jayne O'Hara, Thea Railey, Anna Reetz**,  
*Assistant Stage Managers*  
**Colm Seery**, *Dance Master*

## TECHNICAL DIRECTION

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

## WARDROBE

**Tony Gorzycki**, *Head of Wardrobe*  
**Cynthia Fusco, Robert Horek,**  
**David McKain, Catherine Verdier**,  
*Wardrobe Assistants*

## WIG SHOP PERSONNEL

**Jeanna Parham**,  
*Department Head of Wigs Hair and Makeup*  
**Christina Martin**,  
*Assistant Department Head of  
Wigs Hair and Makeup*

Dr. Myron Marx, *Company Medical Adviser*

Seyfarth Shaw LLP, *Counsel*  
Armanino LLP, *Independent Public Accountants*

Dr. George Rutherford,  
Dr. Mark Almond,  
Dr. Robert Harrison,  
Dr. Sanziana Roman,  
Dr. Clark Rosen,  
UCSF

Asero Insurance Services, *Insurance Brokers*

Cory Weaver, *Official Photographer*

Yamaha is the Official Piano of San Francisco Opera

Pianos supplied by Piedmont Piano

# Backstage Personnel

## COSTUME SHOP

Jai Alltizer (21), *Costume Shop Manager*  
Galen Till (17),  
*Senior Production Supervisor*  
Cassandra Carpenter,  
*Production Supervisor*  
Manuel Gutierrez (22),  
*Production Coordinator*  
Sally Thomas (22), *Master Tailor*  
Amy Ashton-Keller (28),  
*Master Draper*  
Barbara Ebel (13), *Senior Draper*  
Santiago Suanes (12), *Men's Draper*  
Abdiel Portalatin Perez, *Draper*  
Paula Wheeler (30), *Senior Milliner*  
Amy Van Every (37), *Senior Dyer*  
Andrea Phillips, *Assitant Dyer*  
Jersey McDermott (22),  
*Senior Craftsperson/Shoe Specialist*  
Kelly Koehn, *Craftsperson*  
Emma Lehman, Kristen Tracy (14),  
*Assistant Cutters*  
Nika Cassaro, Taylor Newell,  
*Kaitlyn Patrick, First Hand*  
Robyn Marsh, Victoria Mortimer,  
*Costume Assistants*

## COSTUME TECHNICIANS

Miriam Acosta (24)  
Karla Fix  
Hoa Fong (23)  
Gillian Haratani (10)  
Meg Horan  
Kristen Layton  
Jessica Ma  
Amanda Mitchell  
Sara Morimoto  
Mikael Nohai  
Sarah Ellen Smith  
Charles Sullivan  
Yesenia Villenasenor  
Robert Whitehurst

## WARDROBE DEPARTMENT

### CORE CREW

Linda Edwards (23)  
Edward Fonseca (10)  
Carol Horaitis (24)  
Lorraine Lewis  
Barbara Nicholas (23)  
Phil Perry (24)  
Patrick Sanchez (12)  
Don Smith (25)  
Scott Stewart (21)  
Kirsten Tucker (18)

### DRESSERS

Kathleen Blake  
Nicolas Chacon  
David Croker (16)  
Louise Connors  
Thomas Hoffman  
Claudia Holaday (42)

Paige Howie  
Andrew Koch  
Michael Kruzich  
Jeffery Larsen  
John Lewis  
Steven Mallory  
Jennifer O'Neill  
Charles Sullivan  
Anastasia Todish  
Arleen Young

## WIG AND MAKEUP DEPARTMENT

### SENIOR WIG ARTISTS

Maur Sela  
Erin Hennessy

### WIG ARTISTS

Tori Grayum  
Lindsay Saier

### SHOW CALL FOREPERSONS

Sophie Smith  
Sharon Peng  
Christina Martin

### PRINCIPAL MAKEUP & HAIR ARTISTS

Melanie Birch  
Karalynne Fiebig  
Denise Gutierrez  
Lisa Patnoe  
Toby Mayer  
Maurisa Rondeau  
Arina Izadi  
Sophie Smith

### SHOW CALL WIG, HAIR, & MAKEUP ARTISTS

Ksenia Antonoff  
Shana Astrachan  
Tatyana Fayteyeva  
Karalynne Fiebig  
Chri Holmgren Greene  
Denise Gutierrez  
Arina Izadi  
Vanessa Blanchard Lee  
Christina Martin  
Toby Mayer  
Lisa Patnoe  
Sharon Peng  
Calli Carvajal  
Consuelo Lopez Robbins  
Kristen Campbell  
Maurisa Rondeau  
Kimberly Virgen  
Maur Sela  
Sophie Smith  
Juliet Bernal  
Lisa Zomer  
Gloria Mueller  
Jessica Mayeux

## SCENE SHOP

Amy Broussard  
Dennis Forry  
Christopher Fry  
Jesse Hazzard  
Christian Martinez  
Dylan Maxson  
Patricia McCormack  
Jeff Palmer  
Loren Patterson  
Michael Ramirez  
James Ryan  
Eila Saarni  
Victor Sanchez (10)  
Sarah Shores (15)  
Frederick Wielandt (25)

## SCENIC ART DEPARTMENT

Lauren Abrams  
Jennifer Bennes  
David Dunn (25)  
Wayne Olds  
Debbie "Vola" Ruben

## CARPENTRY DEPARTMENT

Michael Accurso (29),  
*Night Crew Foreman*  
Dominic Casazza (16), *Assitant Key Flyman*  
Gabriel Castellani, *Automation Key*  
Michael Chapman, *Key*  
Dennis Criswell  
Paul Delatorre (20), *Key*  
Greg Harsha (20), *Key*  
Geoffrey R. Heron  
Geoffrey W. Heron (25), *Key*  
Philip Heron, (17),  
*Automation and Rigging Foreman*  
Ed Joe, *Warehouse Foreman*  
Michael Martino  
Harry Niedzwetzki (25)  
John O'Donnell (31), *Key Flyman*  
Enrique Pronio  
Michael Ramirez  
Ty Russell  
Bartholomew Ryan  
James Ryan  
Kenneth Ryan (37)  
Michael Ryan  
Gregory Shaff (31), *Key*  
Cyrus Sindicich  
Sean Walden  
Randy Walsh (17), *Assistant Key*  
Collin Whitfield

## PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Scott Barringer (22), *Key*  
Christy Carter  
James Eldredge (18), *Shop Mechanic*  
Hilary Engelman  
Andrea Falkner  
Christopher Fry  
Patricia Hewett (15), *Assistant Key*  
Myron Seth Isaacs (21), *Key*  
Mark Kotschnig (20), *Key*

John Matlock, *Assistant Key*  
Beth Ozarow (26), *Out of House Key*  
Tara Pellack  
Dawn Roth-Golden  
Sarah Shores (15), *Shop Mechanic*

## ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT

Eugene Ahn, *Gel Room*  
Juan Aldana (17)  
Rebecca Bernal  
John Boatwright (34),  
*House Head Electrician*  
Ariel Bott, *Assistant Key Stage Left*  
Erik Docktor (14), *Projection Programmer*  
Amy Domjan, *Layout Electrician*  
Stephen Echerd (18)  
Norris Fong (32)  
Will Grunig (19)  
Karla Hargrave  
Robert Haycock, *Key Stage Right*  
Ana Gabriela Hernandez-McKig  
Geoff Heron (12), *Pyro Technician*  
Bernard Honigman (22),  
*Key Light Board Operator*  
Karen Jine  
Brendan Kierans,  
*Electric Shop Foreman*  
Sophie Landau  
Sonia Martinez  
Maria Mendoza (33), *Projection Coordinator*  
Glenn Quilici, *Assistant Key Stage Right*  
Kevin Quintero  
William Rodriguez  
Kirt Siders, *Data Administrator*  
Andrew Sproule (22), *Key Stage Left*  
Jax Steager,  
*Assistant Key Light Board Operator*

## AUDIO DEPARTMENT

Christine Dumke  
Deanne Franklin, *Key*  
Kimberly Griess  
Kevin McKereghan  
Tod Nixon, *Key* (23)

## MEDIA DEPARTMENT

Adrian Amsems  
Gabriel Colaluca  
Jennie Clark  
Patea Cheney  
Chris Dulmage  
James Edelhofer  
Steven Gianfermo  
Michael Hanchett  
Bob Hines  
Mitchell Kell, *Video Editor*  
Elliott Rice  
Brian Shimetz  
Ian Stewart  
Uwe Willenbacher (13), *Audio Editor*

*Employees who have served the Company for more than ten years are listed with their years of service.*

# 2021-2022 Artists

## PRINCIPAL ARTISTS

Zhengyi Bai \*\*  
Joseph Barron  
*Jamie Barton*  
Gabrielle Beteag †  
*Corey Bix*  
Ben Bliss \*  
John Brancy  
*William Lee Bryan*  
Nicole Cabell  
Nicole Car \*  
Victor Cardamone †  
Arturo Chacón-Cruz \*\*  
*Dominick Chenes* \*  
Karen Chia-ling Ho  
*Alice Chung* \*\*  
Christopher Colmenero \*\*  
James Creswell \*\*  
Etienne Dupuis \*  
Stefan Egerstrom †  
Michael Fabiano  
Christina Gansch  
Edward Graves †  
Greer Grimsley  
*Sarah Cambidge* \*\*  
Nicole Heaston  
Soloman Howard  
*Michael Jankosky*  
*Rhoslyn Jones* \*\*  
Francis Jue \*  
Hyon Kim  
Konu Kim \*  
Sabina Kim \*  
*Bojan Knežević*  
Anne-Marie MacIntosh †  
Simone McIntosh \*\*  
*Liesl McPherrin*  
*Courtney Miller*  
Timothy Murray †  
Christopher Oglesby \*\*  
*William O'Neill*  
*So Young Park*  
Amitai Pati \*\*  
Ailyn Pérez \*\*  
*Yulan Piao*  
*Chester Pidduck*  
*Sun-Ly Pierce*  
Luca Pisaroni  
Cody Quattlebaum \*\*  
Irene Roberts  
Mikayla Sager †  
*Kindra Scharich*  
*Philip Skinner* \*\*  
Joel Sorensen  
*Andrew Stenson* \*\*  
Elisa Sunshine †  
Russell Thomas

Esther Tonea †  
Dale Travis \*\*  
Elza van den Heever \*\*  
Alfred Walker  
Rachel Willis-Sorensen  
Hongni Wu \*  
Guang Yang  
Adela Zaharia \*  
Meigui Zhang \*\*

## CONDUCTORS

Darrell Ang \*  
Bertrand de Billy \*  
Eun Sun Kim  
Henrik Nánási

## STAGE DIRECTORS

Michael Cavanagh  
Jose Maria Condemi  
Stan Lai  
Shawna Lucey  
Matthew Ozawa

## CHOREOGRAPHERS

Colm Seery

## SET DESIGNERS

Robert Innes Hopkins  
Alexander V. Nichols  
Erhard Rom  
Tim Yip

## COSTUME DESIGNERS

Constance Hoffman  
Robert Innes Hopkins  
Jessica Jahm  
Tim Yip

## LIGHTING DESIGNERS

Michael Clark  
Jane Cox  
Gary Marder  
Justin Partier

## VIDEO/PROJECTION DESIGNER

Alexander V. Nichols  
Erhard Rom

\* San Francisco Opera debut

\*\* U.S. debut

° Former Adler Fellow

† Current Adler Fellow

\*\* Former Merola Opera Program participant

*Cover Artist*

# Chorus

**John Keene**, *Chorus Director*

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

## REGULAR CHORUS

Nadima Avakian	Courtney Miller
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

## EXTRA CHORUS

Jennifer Brody	Jim Monios
Cheryl Cain	Sally Porter Munro
Katie Carlson Cartwright	Aimée Puentes
Kelly Clarke	Leandra Ramm
Margaret Genovese	Clifton Romig
Kevin Gino	Kindra Scharich
Harlan Hays	Alexander Taite
Glenn Healy	Michael Taylor
Carolyne Anne Jordan	Igor Vieira
David Kekuewa	Jacque Wilson
Adam Lowe	Daniel Yoder
Eileen Alonso Meredith	

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

American Federation of Musicians, Local 6

American Guild of Musical Artists, Inc.

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Local 16

Theatrical Wardrobe Union, Local 784, I.A.T.S.E.

Make-Up Artists and Hair Stylists Union, Local 706, I.A.T.S.E.

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

United Scenic Artists Local Usa – 829, I.A.T.S.E.

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





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# Orchestra

## FIRST VIOLIN

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

## SECOND VIOLIN

Jeremy Preston, *Principal*  
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\*\*

## CELLO

David Kadarau, *Principal*\*\*  
Thalia Moore, *Associate Principal*  
Peter Myers, *Assistant Principal*  
Nora Pirquet  
Emil Miland  
Victoria Ehrlich  
Ruth Lane †  
Eric Sung\*\*

## BASS

Joseph Lescher, *Principal*  
Jonathan Lancelle, *Associate Principal*  
Steven D'Amico, *Assistant Principal*  
Shinji Eshima  
Samuel Shuhan\*\*

## FLUTE

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

## PICCOLO

Stephanie McNab

## OBOE

Mingjia Liu, *Principal* †  
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\*\*

## BASSOON

Rufus Olivier, *Principal*  
Daniel MacNeill  
Michael Severance

## CONTRABASSOON

Michael Severance

## HORN

Kevin Rivard, *Co-Principal*  
Mark Almond, *Co-Principal* †  
Keith Green  
Brian McCarty, *Acting Co-Principal*  
Meredith Brown\*\*  
Caitlyn Smith-Franklin\*\*  
Christopher Cooper\*\*

## TRUMPET

Adam Luftman, *Principal*  
Scott Macomber\*\*  
John Pearson\*

## TROMBONE

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

## BASS TROMBONE

David Ridge, *Principal*

## TUBA/CIMBASSO

Zachariah Spellman, *Principal*

## TIMPANI

John Burgardt, *Principal*

## PERCUSSION

Richard Kvistad, *Principal/Associate Timpani*  
Patricia Niemi

## HARP

Daniel Levitan\*\*  
Annabelle Taub\*\*

## ADDITIONAL MUSICIANS

Qin , Zhou Yi

## LIBRARIAN

Carrie Weick  
Matthew Buckman, *Assistant*

## ORCHESTRA MANAGER

Tracy Davis  
Matthew Buckman, *Assistant*

\* Principal for one or more fall season operas

† Leave of absence

\*\* Season substitute

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# Corps Dancers

Colm Seery, *Dance Master*

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

Beth Maslinoff  
Jackie McConnell  
Jekyns Pelaez ^  
Chiharu Shibata ^

\* Solo Dancer

^ Tenured

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# Supernumeraries

Pauli Amornkul\*  
Sili Gao\*  
Marissa Israel\*  
Helen Lew\*  
Sarah Yune\*

\* *Dream of the Red Chamber* only

# San Francisco Opera Orchestra



**Kay Stern**  
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



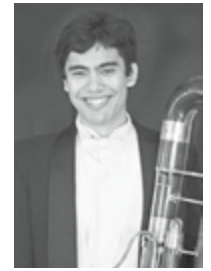
**Anthony Striplen**  
Clarinet &  
Bass Clarinet



**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)*

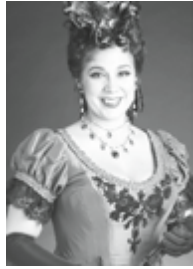
# San Francisco Opera Regular Chorus



**Nadima Avakian**  
Soprano



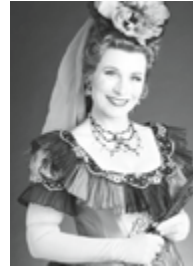
**Kathleen Bayler**  
Soprano



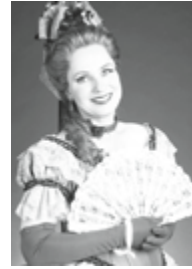
**Sara Colburn**  
Soprano



**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.*

*Carole Schaffer by Pamela Dale and Jonathan Smucker by Lisa Keating.*

## San Francisco Opera Corps Dancers



Jamielyn Duggan



Brett Conway



Blanche Hampton



Bryan Ketron



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Jekyns Pelaez



Chiharu Shibata

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Legacy gifts, like including San Francisco Opera in your will, strengthen our long-term ability to create great opera performances and learning programs. We salute with appreciation those patrons who have made a legacy commitment to San Francisco Opera Association becoming Bel Canto Legacy Society members as of March 31, 2022. Please consider joining this extraordinary group. To learn more, please contact Legacy Giving Officer Andrew Maguire at (415) 551-6244 or [amaguire@sfopera.com](mailto:amaguire@sfopera.com).

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KRISTEN LOKEN

## Opera Star

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@sfopera.com](mailto:amaguire@sfopera.com).

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San Francisco Opera extends its sincere condolences to the family and friends of the following Bel Canto Legacy Society members who have recently passed.

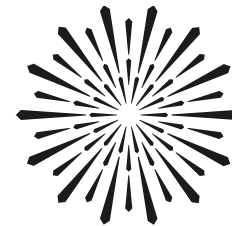
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**Merola Opera Program** is dedicated to the development of the finest young operatic talent into professional artists of the highest caliber. Merola operates in close collaboration with San Francisco Opera but is an independent nonprofit organization, responsible for its own fundraising. Graduates of the Merola Opera Program include Ailyn Pérez, Patricia Racette, Nadine Sierra, Elza van den Heever, Carol Vaness, Deborah Voigt, Joyce DiDonato, Susan Graham, Dolora Zajick, Brian Jagde, Stuart Skelton, Rolando Villazón, Thomas Hampson, Quinn Kelsey, Lucas Meachem, and Patrick Summers. Merola is the future of opera. Please visit us at [merola.org](http://merola.org).



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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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