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Orpheus and Eurydice

BY CHRISTOPH WILLIBALD GLUCK



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Vol. 100, No. 5 • 2022–23 Season • November/December 2022

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Proclamation

City and County of San Francisco

WHEREAS, the City and County of San Francisco traditionally recognizes organizations which have made significant and remarkable contributions to the vitality of our City, and the incredible and innovative work of the San Francisco Opera truly represents San Francisco values at their best; and

WHEREAS, the 2022-2023 Season is the San Francisco Opera's Centennial Season, and for 100 years the Opera has hosted world-class, extravagant, and stimulating theatrical operas to San Francisco's residents and visitors alike; and

WHEREAS, originally founded by conductor Gaetano Merola with an inaugural performance of Puccini's *La Bohème* at the Civic Auditorium, it has grown to become one of the world's most renowned opera companies, setting the gold standard for beautiful and unique performances; and

WHEREAS, the San Francisco Opera's success lead to its permanent home within the War Memorial Opera House beginning in 1932 with an opening production of *Tosca*, and since then it has enriched San Francisco with original operatic debuts such as *Blood Moon*, *The Makropulos Case*, and *Dead Man Walking*, among many other fantastic productions; and

WHEREAS, with its rich history, the San Francisco Opera company has promoted the performing arts with U.S. debuts of operas like Messiaen, Strauss, Rossini, Britten; and also hosted stars like Dorothy Kirsten, Luciano Pavarotti, and Judy Garland; and

WHEREAS, this year also marks the 90th anniversary of the War Memorial Performing Arts Center, whose beloved architectural ornamental elements, has made it an emblem not only for the honor of United States Veterans, but also the true heart of San Francisco's artistic community; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco Opera is an irreplaceable part of our City and its endless dedication to dynamic artistry and performing arts deserves a grand celebration; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that I, **London N. Breed**, Mayor of the City and County of San Francisco, in recognition of the San Francisco Opera on the occasion of its centennial anniversary, do hereby proclaim September 9, 2022 as...

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA DAY

...in San Francisco!



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City and County of San Francisco to be affixed.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "London Breed".

London N. Breed
Mayor

At a Glance

LA TRAVIATA

BY GIUSEPPE VERDI

Nov 11, 13, 16, 22, 25, 27, 30; Dec 3

Structure: 3 acts, with 2 intermissions

Running time: 3 hrs

Language: Sung in Italian with English supertitles

Key Characters:

- *Violetta Valéry*, a Parisian courtesan
- *Alfredo Germont*, a young bourgeois passionately in love with Violetta
- *Giorgio Germont*, Alfredo's father

Did you know? Between 1851 and 1853, Verdi had three important opera premieres: *Rigoletto* (March 1851), *Il Trovatore* (January 1853), and *La Traviata* (March 1853). *Rigoletto* and *Il Trovatore* were immediate successes, but *La Traviata* had a disastrous opening engagement. It wasn't until performances in Venice at the Teatro San Benedetto in 1854 that the opera was on its way to becoming one of the most performed operas in the canon.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

BY CHRISTOPH WILLIBALD GLUCK

Nov 15, 18, 20, 26; Dec 1

Running time: 90 mins without intermission

Language: Sung in Italian with English supertitles

Key Characters:

- *Orpheus*, The world's greatest musician, son of the god Apollo
- *Eurydice*, his wife who has died on their wedding day
- *Amore*, the goddess of love

Did you know? For each of its first three major premieres—Vienna (1762), Parma (1769), and Paris (1774)—*Orpheus and Eurydice* featured a different voice type for Orfeo. In Vienna, the role was cast as an alto castrato; in Parma, a soprano castrato; and in Paris, a high tenor. In San Francisco Opera's production the role is sung by a countertenor.

—Michael Bragg, *Music Planning Associate and Opera Librarian*

WELCOME FROM THE BOARD OF SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

Welcome to the final two productions of San Francisco Opera's fall season! Your support has sustained us through the pandemic and given San Francisco Opera the financial stability and creative inspiration to present an amazing 100th season to our community. Thank you!



John A. Gunn



Keith B. Geeslin

It has been an exciting Centennial Season so far. The world premiere of John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra* was enthusiastically received by audiences and critics alike. Robert Carsen's wonderful production of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* made its Bay Area debut on September 25. Following the opening night bows, Tad and Dianne Taube General Director Matthew Shilvock awarded the Opera Medal, the Company's highest honor, to illustrious bass Ferruccio Furlanetto for his distinguished service to the Company spanning four decades.

In 1957, San Francisco Opera presented the American premiere of Poulenc's hauntingly beautiful *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, showcasing the artistry of then-emerging star soprano Leontyne Price. Last month, we were fortunate to have Caroline H. Hume Music Director Eun Sun Kim on the podium to lead this 20th-century masterpiece in five transcendent performances.

We conclude our fall season with two love stories, each told through brand-new productions built in our scene and costume shops. *La Traviata* features three Company debuts: soprano Pretty Yende as Violetta, tenor Jonathan Tetelman as Alfredo Germont, and baritone Simone Piazzola as Giorgio Germont. In *Orpheus and Eurydice*, countertenor Jakub Józef Orliński and conductor Peter Whelan make their Company debuts. We hope you enjoy these compelling operas.

This Centennial Season, the Dolby Family's *Opera for the Bay* program provides one hundred \$10 tickets in prime seating locations for new ticket buyers or those who have not purchased tickets in the past three years. We are deeply grateful to the Dolby Family for their generous support of the Company's mission to share the transformative power of opera with our community. The program has been extremely successful this fall, bringing in 1,400 new ticket-buying households to the opera. Please tell your family and friends about the program and help us continue to grow our audiences.

We are *your* San Francisco Opera. Thank you for coming to the Opera and we hope you enjoy the performance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John A. Gunn".

John A. Gunn

Chairman of the Board
San Francisco Opera Association

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith B. Geeslin".

Keith B. Geeslin

President
San Francisco Opera Association

San Francisco Opera Association

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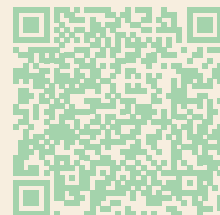
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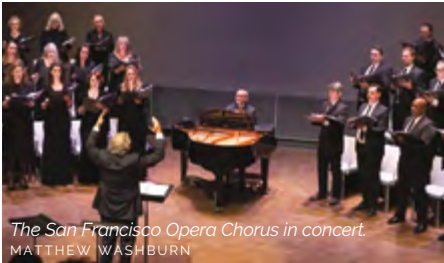


Lina ballerina clip
White gold and diamonds.

San Francisco Opera News

DECEMBER CONCERTS

The Centennial Season's fall presentations come to a close with an event-packed, musical weekend, December 1–4. Thursday, December 1 and Saturday, December 3 are the final opportunities to experience the new productions of *Orpheus and Eurydice* and *La Traviata*, respectively. On Friday, December 2, the Company's resident artists, the **Adler Fellows**, take center stage with Music Director **Eun Sun Kim** and the **San Francisco Opera Orchestra** for *The Future Is Now* concert. Then, the artists of the **San Francisco Opera Chorus**, under the direction of Chorus Director **John Keene**, close out the fall season with a concert on Sunday, December 4. For tickets and more information, visit sfopera.com/calendar.



The San Francisco Opera Chorus in concert.
MATTHEW WASHBURN

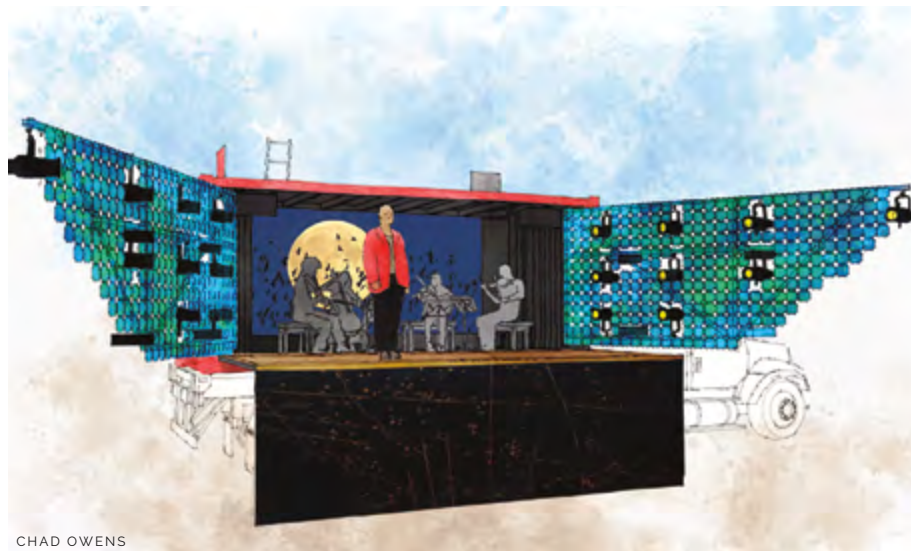


Gaetano Merola (third from left) with the cast of *La Traviata* in 1932.
MORTON

Explore the Company's illustrious 100-year history in two upcoming public exhibitions. In partnership with the **SFO Museum**, *San Francisco Opera: A Centennial Celebration* (opening November 19, 2022) showcases rare costumes worn by the Company's stars, including Leontyne Price, Kirsten Flagstad, and Beniamino Gigli, in the Harvey Milk Terminal 1 at San Francisco International Airport. At San Francisco's **Museo Italo Americano**, *Bravissimi!* (opening March 16, 2023) celebrates the vital role of the Italian community and artists like Gaetano Merola in fostering support for the art form in Northern California. Stay tuned for more information about each of these upcoming exhibitions. Visit sfmuseum.org and museoitaloamericano.org for more details.

La Bohème Hits the Road

Coming this spring, San Francisco Opera takes Puccini's compelling love story *La Bohème* out of the Opera House and into communities around the Bay Area. Audiences will be able to enjoy a small-scale, abridged version of the opera performed by artists, including San Francisco Opera's Adler Fellows, live on a shipping-container-turned-traveling-opera stage. *Bohème Out of the Box* is free to attend and has scheduled stops in two East Bay locations, one on the Peninsula, and one in the South Bay from late March through early April. For updates, stay tuned at sfopera.com/100.



CHAD OWENS



Pretty Yende / BRIX NXUMALO

NEW IN SONG EPISODE: PRETTY YENDE

Soprano **Pretty Yende**, who stars as Violetta in this fall's new production of *La Traviata*, grew up in the South African timber city of Piet Retief, steeped in Zulu culture and buoyed by family, a tight-knit church community, and a joy for singing. In the new episode of San Francisco Opera's award-winning video portrait series *In Song*, we enter this multifaceted artist's world, following her home as she visits with her congregation and family and performs with the students of her alma mater, the Ndlela Secondary School. Yende recalls her grandmother, who planted "the first seeds of music in my soul," and a 10-second opera encounter through a TV ad that made her dream of singing music she had never imagined before. Featured performances include the Zulu traditional song "Iqhude" and excerpts of Donizetti's "L'amor funesto," performed with pianist José Dias. View now at sfopera.com/insong.

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John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn



TERRENCE MCCARTHY

Once again, the unprecedented generosity of Cynthia and John Gunn has set the stage for a dazzling season at San Francisco Opera.

Since 2002, when John joined the Opera Board, the couple has underwritten numerous productions and provided exceptional support for many of the Company's innovative endeavors. In September 2008, the Gunns made a historic commitment—believed to be the largest gift ever made by individuals to an American opera company—to help fund the signature projects of then-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 four productions—*Antony and Cleopatra*, *Eugene Onegin*, *La Traviata*, and *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*. The Gunns invite everyone to give and join them as a member of San Francisco Opera's donor community. John comments, "Opera is a dynamic art form, and all of us play a role in keeping it a meaningful part of our social fabric. With you we can propel San Francisco Opera into its next 100 years

of artistic history." 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 of Stanford University and is Chairman Emeritus of the Advisory Board for the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research. Cynthia currently serves as a trustee of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and is a former overseer of Stanford's Hoover Institution and has been a member of the advisory board of Family and Children Services and the board of the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health. Opera lovers are grateful to Cynthia and John and applaud their commitment to keeping San Francisco Opera a leading-edge company.

Donor Spotlight



DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

Jerome L. & Thao N. Dodson (Production Sponsor, *La Traviata*)

“A fiery horse with the speed of light, a cloud of dust and a hearty, Hi-Yo, Silver!”

Those words, accompanied by the galloping excitement of Rossini’s *William Tell Overture*, transfixed a young Jerry Dodson as he listened to *The Lone Ranger* on the family radio in Oak Park, Illinois. Just as Bugs Bunny’s *The Rabbit of Seville* had done for many, a lighthearted entertainment sparked a future operatic devotion.

That little boy grew up to attend Berkeley in the 60’s, serve with the Foreign Office in Vietnam where he and Thao met, and attend Harvard Business School. Eventually, the couple married, settled in the Bay Area, and raised a family. In the 1980s, Jerry was a pioneer in the field of socially responsible investing with little interest in opera. But in 1992, when San Francisco Opera decided to celebrate Rossini’s bicentennial

with the rarely performed *Guillaume Tell*, Thao, already an opera lover, suggested to Jerry that they go.

Tell was praised for its striking Mansouri production, and the Dodsons began attending regularly. They became season ticket holders in 1999 and supporters, “in a small way,” as Jerry puts it. A friendship with David Gockley, which endures to this day, led to a larger role as Company Sponsors. “I so admired what he did for the opera, but it was not very good for my pocketbook,” Jerry laughs. Jerry also lends his financial expertise to the audit committee.

In 2016, Dodson considered the import of Gockley’s departure. He met with Matthew Shilvock and joined the Board that year. “We hit it off right away!” Jerry says. He felt a similar affinity with Keith Geeslin, (President of the San Francisco Opera Association.) Eager to continue support, the Dodsons see the centennial season as a perfect time to revitalize and energize the company within the San Francisco community. The initial fire ignited by *William Tell* continues to burn brightly.



KRISTEN LOKEN

Burgess & Elizabeth Jamieson (Production Sponsor, *La Traviata*)

Libby and Burgess Jamieson have made an extraordinary commitment to San Francisco Opera for more than three decades by supporting traditional classical productions. Their ongoing generosity has ensured an enduring place on the War Memorial Opera House stage for such applauded and memorable works as *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Il Trittico*, *La Bohème*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Turandot*, *Tosca*, and *La Traviata*. They consider their sustained support of the arts, and especially of San Francisco Opera, as a means of preserving important cultural links for future generations. “Libby and I believe in the enduring love of great works appealing to seasoned and new audiences alike and which attract

the next generation of opera lovers,” Burgess says. “We are so pleased to play a role in bringing *La Traviata* to the stage. We have a special fondness for supporting Verdi operas and look forward to this grand production, especially as it features our Music Director Eun Sun Kim, who will conduct such outstanding artists as Pretty Yende and Jonathan Tetelman, both making their Company debuts.” With more than 45 years of experience in private and public investment management, Burgess is active on the San Francisco Opera’s Board of Directors and its investment committee.

Donor Spotlight



DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

Edmund W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund (Production Sponsor, *La Traviata*)

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. (*La Traviata* is the 27th production supported by the Littlefield Family.) Jeannik held a subscription for more than 40 years until her passing in 2013. Her daughter, Denise Sobel, continues her family's wonderful legacy of support as a dedicated benefactor of Opera Ball and production sponsor of *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*. The Littlefield Family was honored in November 2021 with the San Francisco Opera Guild's 2021 Crescendo Award alongside the announcement of Sobel's leadership support of San Francisco Opera's Department of Diversity, Equity and Community. The Edmund W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Endowment Fund provides a permanent and unrestricted source of income for the Company.



DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

Barbara A. Wolfe (Production Sponsor, *La Traviata*)

Barbara Wolfe has been a longtime opera fan and supporter of San Francisco Opera. Works of Mozart, Wagner, and operas in the classical Italian tradition are particular favorites. Most recently, Barbara supported the Company's new productions of *Don Giovanni* and *Tosca* as well as the 2018 *Ring* cycle. With her late husband Tom, Barbara also sponsored *Tannhäuser*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *The Magic Flute*, *Mefistofele*, *Norma*, and *Don Carlo*. Barbara serves on the Board of the San Francisco Opera Association and was a longtime trustee at Mills College. She has supported educational programs and scholarships at several primary and secondary schools, graduate scholarship and fellowship programs at Mills College, UC Davis Veterinary School, The UCSF Foundation, and the ARCS program in Northern California. Barbara is also a supporter of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, as well as numerous humanitarian and animal welfare organizations.

Jan Shrem & Maria Manetti Shrem



Maria Manetti Shrem has enjoyed extraordinary success in business, in particular in the fashion industry, where she played a major role in establishing Gucci as a truly global force. Today, her focus is philanthropy, and she has made no secret of the fact that she and her husband, Jan Shrem, aim to give away the bulk of their wealth in their lifetimes.

“I want to give with my warm hands, not after passing,” Manetti Shrem says. “And we want to inspire other wealthy people to give now. For me, the art of living is the art of giving.” Since the mid-1990s, Manetti Shrem has contributed generously in the San Francisco Bay Area, New York, the U.K., and Italy, where she was born, in Florence.

Maria and Jan have been San Francisco Opera supporters since 1985 and 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 *La Traviata* and *Madame Butterfly*. Through the Conductors Fund, appearances of renowned conductors are assured at San Francisco Opera, this season for *Eugene Onegin* and

Orpheus and Eurydice. 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 counts sopranos Renée Fleming and Nadine Sierra, tenor Michael Fabiano and baritone Lucas Meachem as personal friends and was especially close to Luciano Pavarotti, treating the legendary tenor as family whenever he performed in San Francisco. Beyond their support for education, fine arts, and music, the Manetti Shrems have been generously helping talents in the medical research and health science, caring about the less fortunate ones, and the people in need such as the elders and kids. A few years ago, the president of Italy bestowed upon Maria Manetti Shrem the title of Grand Officer of the Order of the Star of Italy for her consistent support of cultural collaboration between Italy and the U.S. This Year 2022, the Mayor of San Francisco, London Breed, along with the City and the County, proclaimed “June 22 Manetti Shrem Day for Philanthropy.”

Individual Giving

The collective support of San Francisco Opera's generous donor family keeps world-class opera on the stage and brings transformative community programs to students and families. Each year, support from individuals like you accounts for 75% of the revenue needed to create great opera.

With gratitude, we recognize donors below in bold who have made increased gifts during this time frame to support our Centennial Season. Listed gifts were received between **August 1, 2021 and October 25, 2022.** We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of our donor listings. If we have misspelled or omitted a name, please accept our apology and notify us at **(415) 565-3212** so that we may update our records accordingly.

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Nadja Michael as Emilia Marty in Janáček's The Makropulos Case. / CORY WEAVER

Joyce DiDonato:
EDEN

A Cal Performances Co-commission

DiDonato is joined by the early-music ensemble Il Pomo d'Oro in a theatrical, semi-staged concert that features music from the 17th to 21st centuries by Handel, Gluck, Cavalli, Mahler, Ives, and Copland.



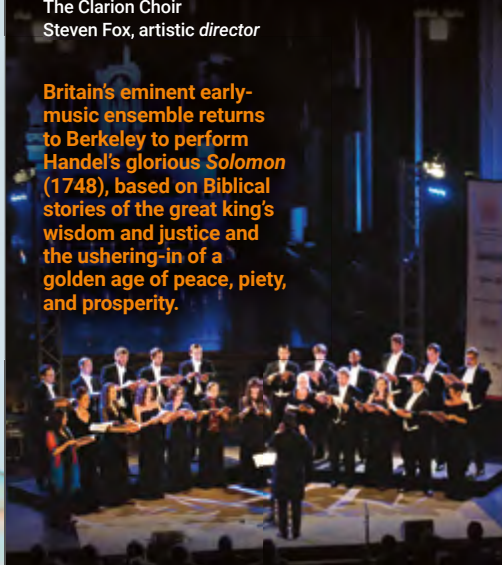
Jan 21

ZELLERBACH HALL

The English Concert

Harry Bicket, *conductor*
 The Clarion Choir
 Steven Fox, *artistic director*

Britain's eminent early-music ensemble returns to Berkeley to perform Handel's glorious *Solomon* (1748), based on Biblical stories of the great king's wisdom and justice and the ushering-in of a golden age of peace, piety, and prosperity.



Mar 5

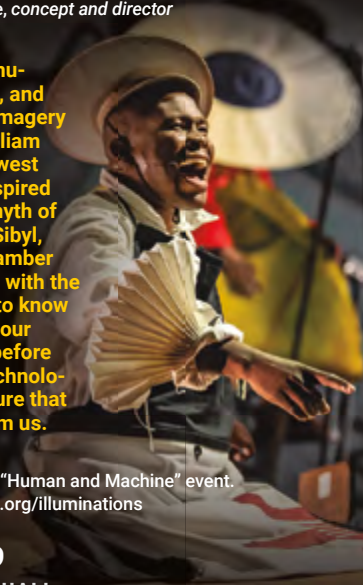
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US PREMIERE

William Kentridge's
SIBYL

William Kentridge, *concept and director*

Myth, magic, music, movement, and mesmerizing imagery combine in William Kentridge's newest production. Inspired by the Greek myth of the Cumaean Sibyl, Kentridge's chamber opera wrestles with the human desire to know our future and our helplessness before powers and technologies that obscure that knowledge from us.



An *Illuminations*: "Human and Machine" event.
calperformances.org/illuminations

Mar 17-19

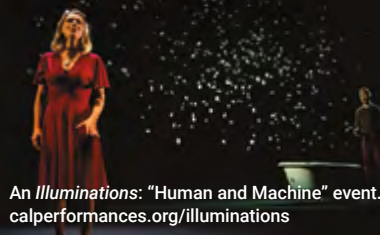
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Michel van der Aa's
Blank Out

West Coast Premiere

Miah Persson, *soprano*
 Roderick Williams, *baritone* (film)
 Netherlands Chamber Choir (film)
 Klaas Stok, *conductor*

In a performance the *Guardian* called "an astonishing tour de force," Swedish soprano Miah Persson entralls at the center of *Blank Out*, Michel van der Aa's chamber opera about tragedy, memory, and loss.



An *Illuminations*: "Human and Machine" event.
calperformances.org/illuminations

Apr 28-29

ZELLERBACH HALL

Octavia E. Butler's
Parable of the Sower

Bay Area Premiere

Created by Toshi Reagon and Bernice Johnson Reagon
 Co-directed by Eric Ting and Signe V. Harriday



Singer, composer, and activist Toshi Reagon and her mother, legendary artist Bernice Johnson Reagon (of *Sweet Honey in the Rock* fame), bring science fiction writer Octavia E. Butler's deeply resonant and startlingly prescient *Parable of the Sower* to life in an evening-length opera.

An *Illuminations*: "Human and Machine" event.
calperformances.org/illuminations

May 5-6

ZELLERBACH HALL

Based on the novels *Parable of the Sower* and *Parable of the Talents* by Octavia E. Butler

Nina Stemme, soprano

A rare opportunity to experience Nina Stemme's extraordinary voice in recital! Noted for her brilliant performances as Turandot, Salome, Elektra, and a range of Wagnerian heroines, the Swedish dramatic soprano is considered one of the greatest, most magnetic singers in opera today.



May 7

ZELLERBACH HALL

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Photo of Jennifer Bennes, Scenic Artist, IATSE Local 800 by Drew Altizer.



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WITH THE SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS

Mark your calendars for a beautiful evening of music and memories!
Music directors past and present lead an exceptional roster of treasured
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Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera in the War Memorial Veterans Building

Celebrate this historic milestone at an elegant soirée featuring a pre-concert
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Gala and concert tickets will go on sale later this year. Gala tickets sold separately from the concert.

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The 100th Anniversary Concert is made possible, in part, by Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem.

Photos: Morton & Co., Cory Weaver.

Your Guide to San Francisco Opera at the War Memorial Opera House

**WELCOME! WE'RE SO PLEASED YOU'RE HERE.
PLEASE READ OUR GUIDE TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR TIME AT THE OPERA.**

ACCESSIBILITY

San Francisco Opera is committed to providing easy access for all of our patrons. Need assistance for a future performance? Please contact the Opera Box Office prior to your visit so that we can ensure your comfort.

For patrons using 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.

COAT CHECK

Check your coat 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.

**ALL ARE WELCOME.
HELP US MAKE SURE EVERYONE
HAS A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE!**

- Turn off all electronic devices during the performance, including digital watches and cell phones. We ask this out of respect for the artists and for everyone in the theater enjoying a live, in-the-moment experience.
- Take photos before, during intermission, or after the performance, and leave cameras and recording devices off during performances.
- Keep your well-fitted mask on during the performance and when not eating or drinking in the lobbies.
- Enjoy food and drinks pre-show and during intermission, before entering the theater. To keep everyone safe, food and drinks are not allowed inside the theater.
- As a courtesy to those who may have fragrance allergies, please avoid wearing perfume or cologne.
- Get to know and enjoy this wonderful community of opera lovers. Say hello to one another pre-show, at intermission, or leaving the theater.

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

Pre-Order!

Avoid lines during intermission by pre-ordering beverages and snacks with a food and beverage server upon your arrival at any point of service.

DINING

Cafés: Enjoy a variety of sandwiches, snacks, and refreshments

- **Café Express (Lower Level, Open 2 hours before curtain)**
- **Dress Circle Lounge (Level 3, South, Open 1 hour before curtain)**

Restaurants: Dine pre-show or reserve a table for intermission.

PRELUDE AT THE OPERA HOUSE • Lower Lounge

Prelude at the Opera House (formerly known as The Café at the Opera) offers a changing seasonal buffet (including brunch) and elevated à la carte dishes.

NORTH BOX RESTAURANT AND BAR • North Mezzanine Level

Overlooking the magnificent main lobby, North Box Restaurant offers California cuisine with global influences and is an ideal destination for pre-performance and intermission dining.

*Restaurants are open two hours prior to performances.
Reservations are strongly recommended.
Reserve a table online at sfopera.com/dine,
email operahousepreorder@ggcatering.com,
or call (415) 861-8150 (email preferred over phone)*

DRINKING FOUNTAINS

Quench your thirst at drinking fountains available on all levels or at the water station on the north side of the lower level.

FIRST AID STATION

Our First Aid Station is located on the South Lower Level. In case of emergency, please ask the nearest usher to assist you.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of everyone is our top priority. Please view up-to-date protocols at sfopera.com/safetyfirst. Audience members who do not follow the Front of House safety protocols will be asked to leave the venue.

LARGE-PRINT CAST SHEETS AND SYNOPSES

Visit the North Lobby coat check for large-print versions of the cast sheets and synopses.

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.

LOST AND FOUND

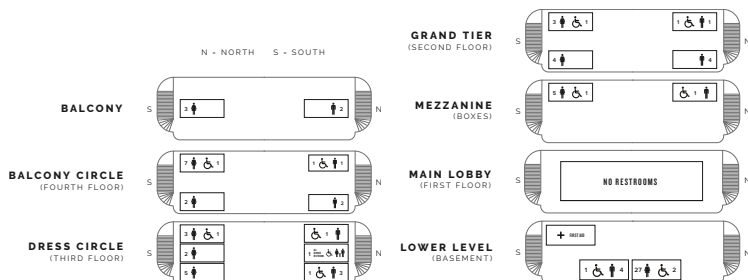
Items may be turned in or claimed at the North coat check during the performance. All unclaimed items are delivered to the War Memorial Performing Arts Center at 401 Van Ness Ave., Room 110, (415) 621-6600 (8 AM–5 PM, Monday–Friday).

OPERA GLASSES

See the action up close and rent a pair of opera glasses for \$5 at the North Lobby coat check. ID deposit is requested. Credit card only.

RESTROOMS

Restrooms are located on all levels of the Opera House except on the Orchestra Level (Main Lobby).



RIDESHARE

Direct your rideshare service to pick-up and drop-off using the white loading zone at 450 Franklin Street (located behind the Opera House).

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA SHOP

Take home a memento! Located in the South Mezzanine lobby, the Opera Shop sells branded merchandise, jewelry, books, and gift items. The Shop is open 90 minutes before performances, at intermissions, and afterward. All proceeds benefit San Francisco Opera.

TAXI SERVICE

Patrons desiring a taxi after a performance should come to the Grove Street Taxi Ramp located on the south side of the Opera House. Accommodations are provided on a first-come, first-served basis and cannot be guaranteed as service is based on availability of licensed taxis. Taxi availability is limited. Please note the Taxi Ramp is not staffed.

IMPROVING YOUR SAFETY

Meet Your Civic Center Ambassadors!

As you leave the theater, be on the lookout for friendly community ambassadors in orange vests or coats along Grove Street. These ambassadors are there to assist you and escort you to and from the Opera House on performance days and evenings from 6:30–11:30pm.

SAN FRANCISCO WAR MEMORIAL AND PERFORMING ARTS CENTER WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE

Owned and operated by the City and County of San Francisco through the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco

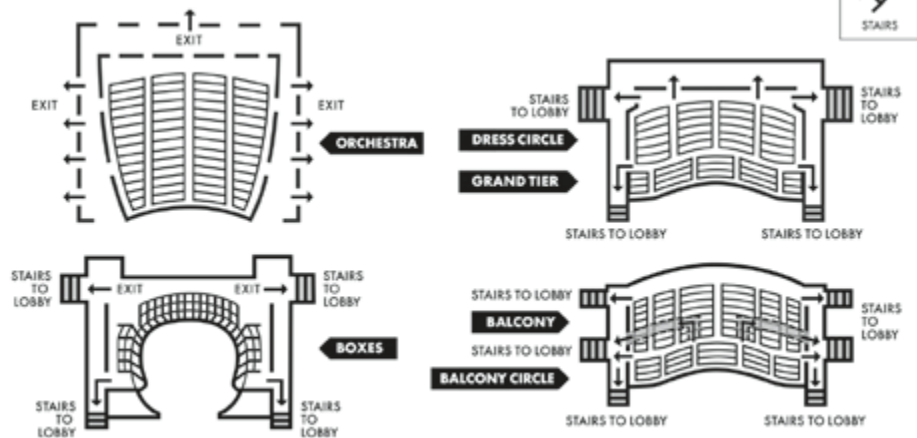
The Honorable London N. Breed, Mayor

TRUSTEES

- Thomas E. Horn, *President*
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SAN FRANCISCO WAR MEMORIAL AND PERFORMING ARTS CENTER WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE EXIT DIAGRAM



PATRONS, ATTENTION PLEASE! FIRE NOTICE: Please note the nearest exit. In an emergency, follow any lighted exit sign to the street. **WALK**, do not run, to the nearest exit. Disabled patrons, proceed to nearest elevator lobby and await assistance.

In Memoriam

We honor the members of San Francisco Opera that we lost this past year.



ROBERT CAHEN

Teresa Berganza,
mezzo-soprano

Teresa Berganza is remembered for the supple purity of her lyric mezzo-soprano and the meticulous agility of her vibrant coloratura. Acclaimed for her portrayals of Rossini's heroines, Berganza's florid singing helped

spur the reintroduction of many bel canto masterpieces for mezzo. Her Angelina *La Cenerentola* and Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, heard here in the late 1960s, are considered by many a gold standard. Also acclaimed for her Mozart roles, her sensual Zerlina in Joseph Losey's 1979 film, *Don Giovanni*, was a departure from her previous, more demure characters. A film of her 1981 Paris performance of *Carmen* is contemporaneous with her San Francisco bow in the role. Her portrayal was notable for its well-researched rejection of familiar Carmen clichés, which she criticized as an inauthentic depiction of her native Spain. Born in Madrid in 1933 to a Catholic mother and an atheist father, Berganza briefly considered a musical life within a religious order before attending Madrid Conservatory. A devoted recitalist and pedagogue, Berganza championed the work of Spanish composers such as de Falla and Granados, often appearing alongside her compatriot, Montserrat Caballé.



DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

Dawn Yates Black,
philanthropist

A native and longtime resident of Palo Alto, Dawn Yates Black was the matriarch of a large family, which included six children, four stepchildren, nine grandchildren, and sixteen great-grandchildren. Black's parents-

in-law purchased Castle Rock Vineyard in Napa in 1949. Now the Yates Family Vineyard, the business is run by Black's second eldest son, Mike Yates, who is both winemaker and farmer. In addition to her large family, Black will be remembered by many friends who enjoyed their time with her on the golf course, at the bridge table, and on the tennis court. Reflecting on life as she entered her

tenth decade, Black said, "each decade had its ups and downs, but most had some redeeming factor." Her generosity helped support San Francisco Opera, where she served on the board from 1994 through 2019. Black also gave generously to the California Pacific Medical Center and Guide Dogs for the Blind.



DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

Carol Franc Buck,
philanthropist

Carol Franc Buck was raised in Vacaville and educated at Dominican College and Stanford. The daughter of U.S. Congressman Frank H. Buck, her father passed away when she was just six years old. It

was her mother who instilled an appreciation for opera and philanthropy, bringing her to San Francisco Opera from a young age, and beginning her own scholarship fund for youth in the Vacaville area. A great lover of the outdoors, Buck eventually married and settled in Tahoe, raising a son there, and serving the community in myriad ways. The Nevada Museum of Art houses "the Altered Landscape, Carol Franc Buck Collection," which contains photographs related to land use and the changing landscape. Her generosity and leadership within the San Francisco arts community were exemplary. Buck served on the board of San Francisco Opera from 1996 until her passing in 2022. Her support was crucial to the founding of the Classical Tahoe festival, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music's new residential tower bears her name, as does a faculty chair in opera and musical theatre. Her contribution to UCSF helped create what would become the Carol Franc Buck Breast Care Center.



MARTY SOHL

Maria Ewing,
mezzo-soprano and soprano

Maria Ewing rose quickly to fame for her compelling voice and naturalistic characterizations. First appearing with San Francisco Opera at 23 as Mercédès in *Carmen*, followed soon

by *La Périchole*, Charlotte in *Werther* (available at the Company's *Streaming the First Century*, sfopera.com/firstcentury), Idamante in *Idomeneo*, and Mélisande. Her Salome, famous for its nude dance in a production directed by Ewing's ex-husband, Peter Hall, was seen here in 1993. Soprano roles soon became the bulk of her repertoire, taking on Blanche in *Dialogues des Carmélites* at the Metropolitan Opera at the age of 27. Sometimes called "incendiary," even Ewing's portraits of familiar characters such as Dorabella and Cherubino surprised with their nuance and sheer authentic personality. "If you're not allowed to delve into yourself and your instincts," she told the *L.A. Times* during a run of *Tosca* in 1992, "you have nothing to offer. You become a puppet, being told what to do, how to move and where to move, which is devoid of meaning." Born in Detroit in 1950, Ewing was a student of soprano Eleanor Steber and mezzo-soprano Jennie Tourel. She is the mother of actress Rebecca Hall, who explored the family's history on a recent episode of *Finding Your Roots* on PBS.



**Lorry Lokey,
philanthropist**

In 1961, young journalist Lorry Lokey rented an office in San Francisco, invested \$1,500 in a teletype machine, and founded Business Wire, now a leading force in global news distribution.

A native of Portland, Oregon, he began his journalistic career working for *Stars and Stripes* after serving in the Army. He received his bachelor's degree in journalism from Stanford where he served as editor-in-chief for the *Stanford Daily*. In 2006 Lokey sold Business Wire to Berkshire Hathaway and turned his attention to philanthropy, joining the San Francisco Opera Board in 2007 and serving for a decade. "I learned by seeing a bulletin as to how much people in [Portland] gave to the United Jewish Appeal, and I saw my mother's name down there for a hundred dollars," he said. "This was half a month's pay back then, and we were not very well-to-do. I went up to my mother and I said, 'Mom, we can't afford this, why did you do that?' She said that 'people need help,' and that always stuck with me."



RON ENNIS

**Plato Karayanis,
administrator**

Plato Karayanis served as general director of The Dallas Opera from 1977 to 2000, pivotal years in the expansion of the company's repertoire and audience. Karayanis was devoted to new works, facilitating the

commission and PBS telecast of Dominick Argento's *The Aspern Papers* (1987). The son of Cypriot and Greek immigrants, Karayanis grew up in Pittsburgh and studied voice at Carnegie Mellon before his lyric baritone won him a scholarship to Tanglewood. He continued his studies at Curtis, where he met his wife, mezzo-soprano Dorothy Krebill. The young couple spent seven years performing in Europe before returning to the United States, where Karayanis began his work in administration as head of the rehearsal department at San Francisco Opera, where he was integral to the development of the Affiliate Artists Program, forerunner to the Adler Fellowship Program. After his retirement from The Dallas Opera, Karayanis continued to play an important role in the support and development of regional opera in America, including years as a consultant for Palm Beach Opera and Opera San Antonio.



**Thomas J. Munn,
lighting designer**

Invited to San Francisco by Kurt Herbert Adler in 1976, Thomas J. Munn had been working primarily in theatre and had never seen a Wagner opera when he began his tenure with *Die Walküre's* dramatic immolation

scene. Munn's first season was a smashing success and from then on, he gained a deserved reputation as a theater artist par excellence, whether lighting Kiri Te Kanawa in Versace or illuminating David Hockney's sets for the *Magic Flute* or tackling more unexpected challenges such as the move to Civic Center after the Loma Prieta earthquake and subsequent updating of the opera house's lighting equipment. Born in 1944 in the birthplace of General Electric, New Britain, Connecticut, Munn's high school was an early adopter of that company's new lighting control switchboards, nurturing Munn's lifelong fascination for theatre. Named Lighting Designer Emeritus after his retirement in 2002, Munn continued to design for various productions and became a professor in UC Davis's theater and dance department, mentoring the next generation of theater artists.



CORY WEAVER

Sheila Nadler, mezzo-soprano

Over four decades, mezzo-soprano Sheila Nadler shared her substantial gifts with San Francisco Opera, beginning with nine different roles in 1968, her debut season. Nadler returned to to sing the title role of *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*, La Cieca in *La Gioconda*, the Auntie in *Peter Grimes*, and others. She originated the role of Marilyn Klinghoffer in John Adams' *The Death of Klinghoffer* at the work's premiere in Brussels before bringing that interpretation to San Francisco Opera, a co-commissioner of the work. A native New Yorker and graduate of Bard College and Juilliard, Nadler also sang at major houses abroad, including the Metropolitan Opera, Covent Garden, and Opéra Bastille. Her final appearance with San Francisco Opera was as the Duchess of Krakentorp in the 2009 production of *La Fille du Régiment* featuring Diana Damrau and Juan Diego Flórez.



June Preston, chorus

June Preston was a member of the San Francisco Opera Chorus for the 1952 season but will be remembered by many as a child star of the 1930s. Born in Glendale, California in 1928, Preston was signed to a seven-year contract with RKO films when she

was just three. She trained as a dancer at Meglin Dance Studio among a cadre of young performers known as "Meglin's Kiddies." Many stars emerged from that studio, including Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland, and Shirley Temple. Preston gave up film at sixteen and began her operatic career, which took her all over the world, including singing Mimì in *La Bohème* opposite tenor Jan Peerce for a South American tour. Her films include the Oscar winning *It Happened One Night* and *Maytime* with Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy. Though not as famous as Shirley Temple, Preston's profile was high enough to merit numerous merchandising contracts for toys, paper dolls, and "June Preston Frocks," dresses for little girls which were advertised as "dainty and inimitably youthful as the lovely young film star."

Richard Taruskin, musicologist

Professor Richard Taruskin was a titan of musicology. A gifted feather ruffler known for his gargantuan intellect, Taruskin's intense brand of scholarship broadened popu-



lar interest in musicology, which underwent something of a renaissance over the course of Taruskin's career. Born in Queens in 1945 to an intellectually lively and musical household, he was an accomplished viola da gambist and performed around New York while studying

music and Russian at Columbia. The author of more than a dozen books, his 4,000-page *Oxford History of Western Music* and 1,800-page *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions* brought an unprecedented rigor and depth to the study of those subjects. A professor first at Columbia, and then at the UC, Berkeley for many decades, Taruskin wrote erudite program articles for San Francisco Opera, especially for the Russian repertoire. At his memorial at Hertz Hall, UC Chancellor Carol Christ said of him, "He was a public intellectual who, in his journalism, made music of the past present and consequential, demanding of our passionate attention, and response."



Sandra Walker, mezzo-soprano

Born in 1946 in Richmond, Virginia, Sandra Walker studied at University North Carolina Greensboro before attending Manhattan School of Music where she met her husband, tenor Melvin Brown. The couple

began their married life singing in Germany, where she gave birth to their son, Noel. A Rhine maiden in San Francisco Opera's 1972 *Ring* Cycle, local audiences also heard her as Olga opposite Mirella Freni's Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin* and again as Flosshilde to fellow Rhine maidens, Mary Mills and Ann Panagulias, in the 1989 *Ring*. Bradamante in *Orlando Furioso* in 1989 and Hedwige in *Guillaume Tell* in 1991 were her final bows here. Her performances at New York City Opera were numerous and frequently televised. She sang the Secretary in Menotti's *The Consul*, directed by the composer. Her roles at the Metropolitan included Madalena in *Rigoletto* and Mrs. Sedley in *Peter Grimes*. A devoted teacher, she lived in Augusta, Georgia, and for many years maintained a private voice studio. 🎭

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.

NEW SAN FRANCISCO OPERA PRODUCTION

Orpheus and Eurydice

(ORFEO ED EURIDICE)

OPERA IN THREE ACTS BY CHRISTOPH WILLIBALD GLUCK

LIBRETTO BY RANIERI DE' CALZABIGI

Peter Whelan's appearance is made possible by a gift to
the Conductors Fund by Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem

Jakub Józef Orliński and Meigui Zhang's appearances
are made possible by a gift to
the Emerging Stars Fund by Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem

Additional support provided by
Marcia Barinaga and Corey Goodman;
Lisa Erdberg and Dennis Gibbons;
and Jerome Guillen and Jeremy Gallaher

NOVEMBER 15, 18, 20, 26; DECEMBER 1, 2022

The performance will last approximately 90 minutes, with no intermission.



THE FUTURE OF OPERA

Orpheus and Eurydice

OVERTURE

Orpheus is unable to find an outlet for his immense emotional grief following the death of his wife, Eurydice. Lost in his thoughts, he replays memories of their relationship and the final moments before her passing.

ACT I

At Eurydice's funeral, Orpheus remains lost in his trauma. As the unbearable loss turns to anger, he cries to the gods to restore Eurydice to him. Amore, goddess of love, appears and comforts him. Pitying Orpheus, the gods allow him to traverse the land of the dead to retrieve Eurydice on condition that he not look upon her until they have reached the land of the living. Orpheus agrees and begins his journey.

ACT II

Orpheus approaches Hades, where the Furies and lost souls try to deny his passage. However, Orpheus' singing softens their pain and elicits their compassion to grant him safe passage. In Elysium, Orpheus is moved by the surrounding beauty but feels emptiness after not finding his beloved. Eurydice is brought back to him, and without looking at her, Orpheus leads her away.

ACT III

Orpheus leads Eurydice through a labyrinth out of the underworld. Eurydice yearns for Orpheus to look at her, but he is forbidden to do so and unable to explain why. Eurydice suggests that eternal death would have been preferable to his coldness toward her. Unable to bear it, Orpheus turns to look upon Eurydice, only to see her die again. Orpheus contemplates how he can live without her and decides to end his life. Amore stops him and gifts Orpheus wholeness and acceptance.

First performance: Vienna, Burgtheater; October 5, 1762

First Performance in the U.S.: Charleston, South Carolina; June 24, 1794

First San Francisco Opera performance: September 6, 1959 (on tour in Portland, Oregon)

Orpheus and Eurydice has been performed in only 1 previous San Francisco Opera season, 1959. Hector Berlioz's French version of the score was performed in concert in 1995. For complete casting and other information, visit archive.sfopera.com.

Personnel: 3 principals, 41 choristers, 6 solo dancers; **50 total**

Orchestra: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 1 clarinet, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, 1 timpani, 31 strings (9 first violins, 8 second violins, 6 violas, 5 cellos, 3 basses); **46 total**

Orpheus and Eurydice

(*Orfeo ed Euridice*)

Opera in three acts by **Christoph Willibald Gluck**

Libretto by **Ranieri de' Calzabigi**

(Sung in Italian with English supertitles)

Conductor

Peter Whelan*

Director

Matthew Ozawa

Choreographer

Rena Butler*

Set and Projection Designer

Alexander V. Nichols

Costume Designer

Jessica Jahn

Lighting Designer

Yuki Nakase Link*

Chorus Director

John Keene

Assistant Conductor

Geoffrey Loff*

Prompter

Vito Lombardi

Musical Preparation

Kseniia Polstiankina Barrad, César Cañón

John Churchwell, Fabrizio Corona

Diction

Alessandra Cattani

Supertitles

Ilana Rainero-de Haan

Assistant Director

Morgan Robinson

Stage Manager

Darin Burnett

Assistant Stage Managers

Collette Berg, Jonathan S. Campbell,

Rachel Garoon

Dance Master

Colm Seery

Fight Director

Dave Maier

Costume Supervisor

Galen Till

Hair and Makeup

Jeanna Parham

New San Francisco Opera Production

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2022 • 7:30 PM

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18 • 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20 • 2 PM

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26 • 7:30 PM

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1 • 7:30 PM

CAST

(in order of vocal appearance)

<i>Orpheus</i>	Jakub Józef Orliński *
<i>Amore</i>	Nicole Heaston
<i>Eurydice</i>	Meigui Zhang
<i>Dancers</i>	Alysia Chang
	Brett Conway
	Marian Faustino *
	Livanna Maislen *
	Christopher Nachtrab
	Maxwell Simoes

Grieving Community / Lost Souls / Placid Shades

* San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE: Now & Here

Overture: Orpheus' Psyche

ACT I: Eurydice's Funeral on Earth

ACT II: Orpheus' Journey through the Underworld

ACT III: The Labyrinth

The performance will last approximately 90 minutes without intermission.

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

The Stages of Grief

The landscape of grief is a deeply personal one; a labyrinth that must be traversed in one's own time, in one's own way. The pain from loss can be piercing, wiping out sight as one stumbles through shards of memories, highlighting times that have passed in search of a way forward.

As we ascend from the pandemic, the entire world grapples with collectively experienced traumas: the loss of countless lives and a world forever impacted, forever changed. When one struggles to navigate loss, art illuminates our path toward healing and acceptance. Through Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* we are taken on a journey with an individual, who, consumed by grief, aims to bring back the one they've lost. Within this visceral tale of human love and loss is a portal into humankind's unconsciousness.

The Orpheus myth has captivated our imaginations for generations, having been told through the lens of countless artists. With an extremely diverse creative team, we tell this story through the lens of our manifold backgrounds by intersecting our respective cultural forms of grieving and mourning the dead. Through exploring personal stories of grief, we discerned that one's personal journey through pain is intrinsically linked with memory and is a deeply internal process. In traversing the phases of grief toward acceptance, Orpheus' journey navigates his mind and psyche. Hades therefore becomes a landscape of souls, trapped in their pain, lost in cycling memories. Elysium transmutes to a landscape of heroes who have processed their loss. The Labyrinth, a liminal space where the processing of memory is the only path through.

Two elements comprise our production: Orpheus' memories of Eurydice and the terrain of his mind. Because emotions and relationships can be so dynamic, we investigate Orpheus and Eurydice's relationship through richly athletic dance. The lovers are doubled by dancers and each Orpheus and Eurydice couple represents a distinct phase in their journey leading to Eurydice's death. To depict the landscape of Orpheus' mind, we collaborated with the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) to investigate brain images of individuals who experienced trauma. Every projection is made up of brain images, whether scans or pictures of neurons and neural pathways. This rich visual tapestry displays our neurobiology, the dance depicts the memory landscape, and the music the emotional journey.

We all experience love, loss, anger, grief, acceptance, and hope; this unites us. It felt best to invite my fellow creative team members to voice their thoughts on this piece, our production, and their design:



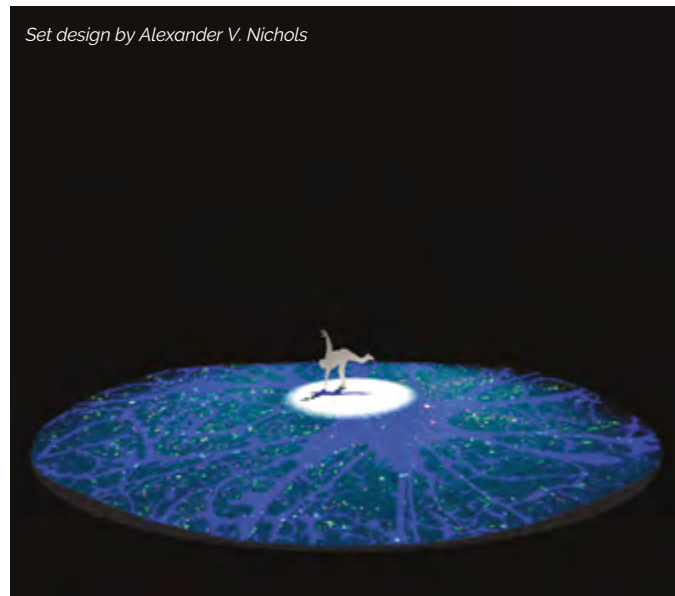
RENA BUTLER (Choreographer)—Movement is our soul's way of flushing out our deepest emotions—a tool to navigate, compartmentalize, and make sense of our distorted psyches when offset by insurmountable grief. What happens when we are denied access to our safest place, love? *Orfeo* offers us a scenario of love and loss and the vicious repetition it plays in our lives. As the art of dance is our most extreme form of human expression, it is also used as a device for us to navigate this repetitive cycle of distortion. Within the moving body we are galvanized. Soaring through space, we too find severe dichotomous sectors of our minds that bind, restrict, and arrest us in our pain to reconnect to love.

ALEXANDER V. NICHOLS (Scenic & Projections)—Early in the creative process, as director Matthew Ozawa and I began our discussions in search of the visual setting for the opera, our conversation continually returned to the idea that Orpheus' state of mind throughout the course of the performance reflects his process of grieving Eurydice's death. Exploring this idea became a conceptual springboard for the visual design that is presented onstage. During the design process we were inspired by the amazing brain imaging work being done at UCSF and lucky enough to form a collaboration with two doctors, Sanziana Roman (MD FACS) and Christine Glastonbury (MBBS), both of whom were generous with their support and guidance in our quest to depict microscopic aspects of the brain as both metaphoric and literal landscapes. The images used in the production were graciously shared with us by doctors Aditi Deshpande, Christine Glastonbury, Zuzana Krejciova, Christina Mora, Phi Nguyen, Brian Orr, and Torsten Wittmann.

YUKI NAKASE LINK (Lighting)—Grief is ubiquitous and therefore universal. In searching for ways to visualize design that can speak to universal qualities, I've focused on lighting's ability to depict nature and time. When looking at nature, nature is a fundamental principal of all life. Human beings live in nature—connected to our bodies, the air, the water, or the sun. My goal for this production has been to bring qualities of nature to the stage. For instance, the overture of the opera starts with lighting that enhances the beauty of human bodies, like sculptures in museums and gardens. Eurydice's funeral is held under the thick gray clouds as if the rain is mimicking Orpheus' tears. Amore brings the warmth of the sun to Orpheus' broken heart. Since we share nature with everyone on our planet, regardless of race, gender, culture, or nationality, the lighting design represents the quality of nature that must be universally understood by anyone in the world.

JESSICA JAHN (Costumes)—My uncle died during the process of this production, and so I have been reflecting about this piece and how it resonates with my fresh, acute experience of losing a loved one. One of the recent memories I strongly remember was a spontaneous moment when my aunt wrote him a note, which she placed with him before the cremation. That recognition of their continuing connection was so meaningful—one of the many ways we hold memories of our loved ones and those that we have lost. We, as humans, have always found ways to stay connected—to ourselves, to each other, to the people that are no longer here—and we use those experiences with them and the ways they are still a part of our lives to give us information about how to move forward without them. I would encourage you to remember those spaces—whether raw and present, or foggy and distant—because it helps in supporting the most empathetic parts of ourselves. 🌱

Set design by Alexander V. Nichols



Jakub Józef Orliński in rehearsal for Orpheus and Eurydice. / KRISTEN LOKEN



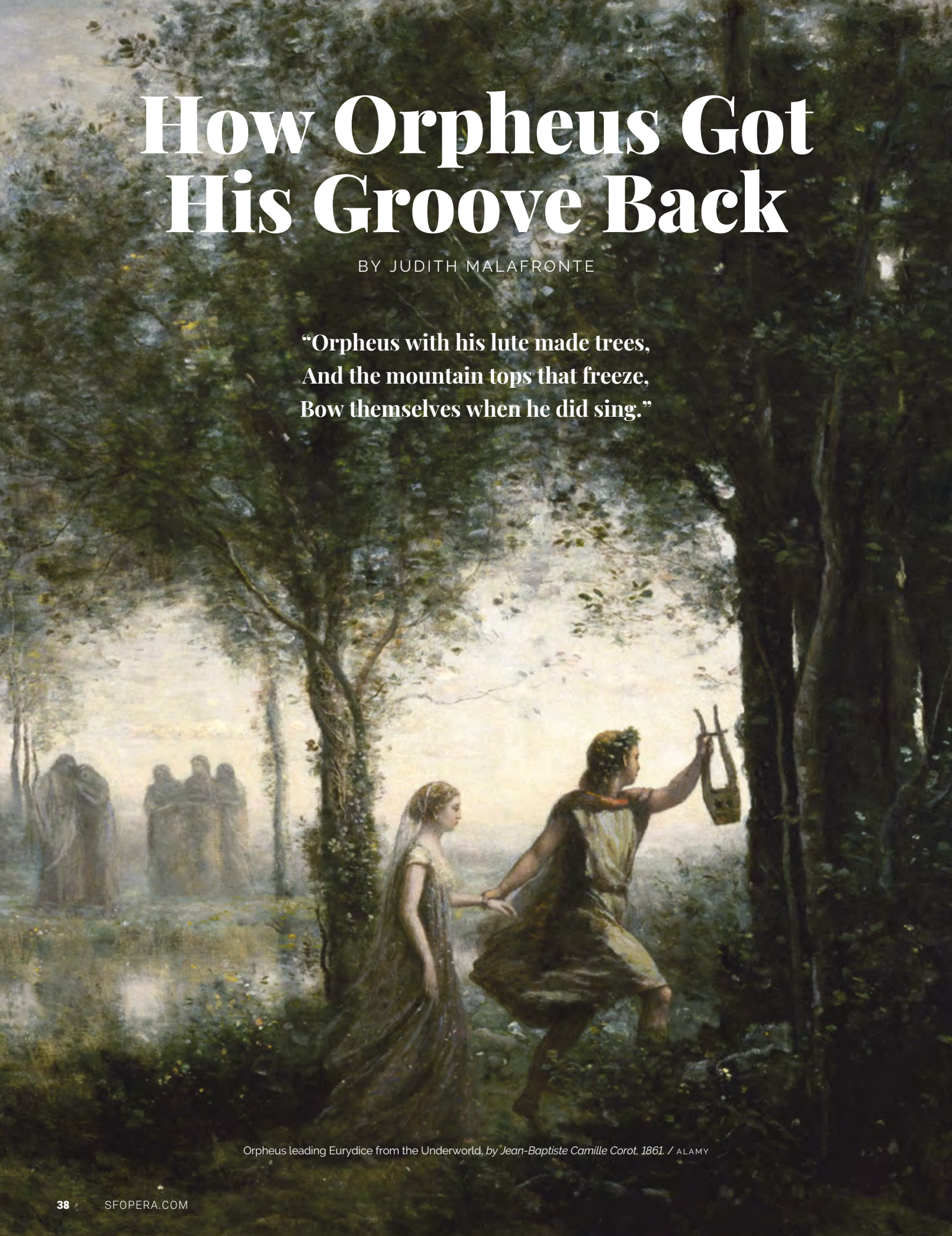
Costume designs for Orpheus and Amore by Jessica Jahn; illustrations by Dan Wang.



How Orpheus Got His Groove Back

BY JUDITH MALAFRONTE

“Orpheus with his lute made trees,
And the mountain tops that freeze,
Bow themselves when he did sing.”



Orpheus leading Eurydice from the Underworld, by Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot, 1861. / ALAMY

William Shakespeare had a page sing this to the despairing Queen Katharine as she waits for news of her divorce from King Henry VIII. Art triumphs over nature, even as telling the story provides consolation.

Orpheus, the greatest singer in the world, went to Hell and back for love. On their wedding day, Orpheus's wife, Euridice, is bitten by a snake and taken to the underworld. He resolves to pursue her. Crossing the river Styx and passing by monsters and furies, he must summon both his genius and his self-control to sing exceptionally persuasive music. He is granted permission to lead Euridice back to the living, provided he not look at her or mention the stipulation, but it proves even more difficult to exit than to enter, and no high notes or fancy roulades will do. The man who can control nature cannot master his own emotions. Doubt and panic hound the couple, he turns to look at her, and she returns forever to the darkness.

In the oldest surviving opera, *Euridice* (1600), with a text by Ottavio Rinuccini and music by Jacopo Peri and Giulio Caccini, Venus herself accompanies the hero on his mission, and because there are no strictures about looking back, all ends well. Claudio Monteverdi's 1607 setting replaces librettist Alessandro Striggio's original violent ending—the hero is torn apart by the Bacchantes, frenzied followers of Dionysus—with a happy apotheosis, the triumph of reason where Apollo carries his son Orfeo up to the heavens in a brilliantly joyful tenor duet. A deft musician, Monteverdi's hero always finds the appropriate mode, from impassioned recitative to jaunty strophic aria where each verse is sung to the same music. Orfeo's address to Charon, "Possente spirto," is a showpiece of vocal skill and artistic expression.

Luigi Rossi's lavish 1647 version, one of the first operas ever seen in France, is stuffed with gods and goddesses and additional characters including Momus, Endymion, Charon, Jealousy, Suspicion, the Three Graces, the Three Fates, a soothsayer, and a nurse. Euridice even has a jealous and unsuccessful lover, Aristaeus. Orpheus fails in his task, but Jupiter turns the couple and the hero's lyre into a constellation. Antonio Sartorio's 1672 version of the story presents a complicated plot with nearly fifty arias.

Throughout the 17th century Orpheus operas appeared in Germany by Heinrich Schütz, J.P. Krieger, and Reinhard Keiser; in England by Matthew Locke; and in France by Marc-Antoine Charpentier. The power of music, the

embodiment of genius, and the triumph of love were all attractive themes, and who could resist opportunities to compose hellish music? The 18th century saw even more versions and in 1762 a new *Orfeo ed Euridice* spearheaded groundbreaking operatic reforms.

The coming together in Vienna of composer Christoph Willibald von Gluck, librettist Ranieri de' Calzabigi, and the castrato singer Gaetano Guadagni, under the intendant Count Durazzo, was fortuitous. Theatrical reform was in the air. Dance theory and acting style were moving away from showcasing the virtuosity of individual performers toward a concentration on naturalism, clarity, and simplicity of the narrative. Beauty and balance were cultivated. In Italy, the Venetian Carlo Goldoni was scripting plays to replace the formulaic plots and characters of the *commedia dell'arte*. In London, David Garrick was employing a new mode of acting, replacing the studied and codified poses and gestures with more natural movement, and staying in character even when not declaiming. Voltaire added *sensibilité* to his plays, and Diderot demanded the banishment of secondary characters, silly intrigue, and long and vapid speeches, calling for more realism in scenery and costuming.

The poet Calzabigi had been a follower of Metastasio, but in writing the libretto to *Orfeo ed Euridice*, he streamlined the text, avoiding similes (no arias about tempest-tossed ships or warbling nightingales) and complex plots. Gluck had begun his career in Milan, setting the usual Metastasian *opera seria* texts: *Artaserse*, *Demofonte*, *Porco*, *La Semiramide Riconosciuta*, *Ezio*, *La Clemenza di Tito*, and *Il Re Pastore*, and had tried his hand at comic operas. But now with Calzabigi as a partner, innovative ideas were possible. Banished were the *da capo* arias so beloved of singers, and that held up the action with their opportunities for self-indulgent display. Like Monteverdi's hero, Gluck's Orfeo always chooses the appropriate form: a 3-verse *passepied* with connecting recitatives, an improvised plea to the chorus, a rhapsodic, through-composed arioso, and—to express his grief—a startlingly controlled rondeau in a major key. Gone were the applause-provoking exit arias and the clattering harpsichord-accompanied secco recitatives that merely separated a string of arias. Secondary plots and extraneous characters were eliminated, in this case leaving us with only Orpheus, Eurydice, and Amore. Vocal passagework was minimal, and the text was set more syllabically. The chorus was more prominent, and the



Left to right: Portrait of composer Christoph Willibald Gluck by Joseph Duplessis, 1775. / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES. Italian castrato Gaetano Guadagni created the role of Orfeo in 1762. Anonymous 18th-century portrait. / Pauline Viardot was a renowned Orfeo in the mid-late 19th century. Portrait of the mezzo-soprano by Ary Scheffer, 1840. / ALAMY

orchestra was given expressive power to support the dramatic action in recitatives. Large forms combined solo, chorus, and dance in the French style. Overtures were now linked to the score, rather than operating as stand-alone musical introductions that could move casually from one opera to another.

The influence of Guadagni must be acknowledged. After his early experience singing in church choirs, the alto castrato appeared in a traveling comic troupe and gradually cultivated a natural style that blended clarity with passionate declamation. Although Handel added showy runs for Guadagni in the 1750 revivals of his oratorio *Messiah* (“For he is like a refiner’s fire” enhanced the otherwise stately “But who may abide”), the singer was more successful as the ardent, eloquent Didymus in the composer’s *Theodora*. While in London, Guadagni worked with the celebrated Shakespearean actor Garrick, refining what music historian Charles Burney, who heard Guadagni several times, called his elegant and noble presence, graceful propriety of gestures, and delicate and polished singing. Yet, Guadagni seems to have been a complicated artist. Early in his career he was fired from a church choir because he had appeared in an opera, and once he showed up to a church job in a robe of gold rather than the expected black vestment. His command of English must have been good, as he appeared in several of

Handel’s oratorio revivals as well as John Christopher Smith’s opera *The Fairies*. But because of his lofty refusal to pander to audiences by breaking character to acknowledge applause or to grant encores, he was often criticized for his ingratitude.

Gluck’s collaboration with Calzabigi continued with *Alceste* (1767) and *Paride ed Elena* (1770) and the published preface to *Alceste* reads as a manifesto for this new art. Because of his ideas of operatic reform—more direct expression and a stripping away of surface ornament—Gluck had become a figure in a philosophical firestorm, stoked by 18th-century French influencers. First, followers of Jean-Baptiste Lully had been attacked by fans of the more contemporary composer Jean-Philippe Rameau. Later, the “Querelle des Bouffons” erupted, pitting Italian comic opera against French works. Now families and friendships suffered when alliances were drawn up between Gluck and Niccolò Piccini, an Italian composer summoned to the French court by the king’s official mistress, Madame du Barry, to spite the dauphine Marie Antoinette, Gluck’s patroness. It was all too much for the semi-retired Gluck, who wrote to a friend that he had no wish to return to Paris, “to become the object of the criticism or the praise of the French nation, for they are as fickle as a red rooster.”

Gluck revised and revived *Orfeo ed Euridice* twice, once to accommodate a soprano castrato in the title role, and



Left to right: San Francisco Opera's first Orfeo, mezzo-soprano Blanche Thebom, on tour with the Company in Los Angeles, November 6, 1959. / MARIE JEANETTE; Lucine Amara as Eurydice with the San Francisco Opera Chorus on stage at the War Memorial Opera House, 1959. / BILL COGAN

then reworking it to a French libretto for performances with a tenor, as the French detested castratos. Guadagni hung onto the role sentimentally, championing other settings of the myth, including pasticcios or mashups by various composers and even composing his own version. Living comfortably in retirement in Padua, he would put on performances of Orfeo, singing behind the scenes of his villa's puppet theater.

Orfeo ed Euridice lived on when Hector Berlioz championed the work with an 1859 adaptation for the star mezzo-soprano Pauline Viardot, known for her supreme musicianship and neo-classical stage persona. Elements of Gluck's Viennese, Italian, and French versions were combined with Viardot's virtuosity and after about 150 performances it served as her official farewell to the operatic stage.

In the 20th century, Arturo Toscanini padded his 1909 production at New York's Metropolitan Opera with "Divinités du Styx" from *Alceste* and other pieces to showcase American contralto Louise Homer as Orfeo. Beloved English oratorio and Lieder contralto Kathleen Ferrier only took on two operatic roles, Britten's *Lucretia* (in *The Rape of Lucretia*) and Gluck's Orfeo, which she first sang at Glyndebourne in 1947. American mezzo-soprano Risë Stevens owned the role at the Metropolitan Opera in the 1950s, and only a disagreement over fees thwarted her

headlining the 1959 performances with San Francisco Opera. (Blanche Thebom went on instead.) British mezzo-soprano Janet Baker brought elegant classicism and impassioned purity of sound to the role, which was integral to her career. Like Viardot, Baker chose to end her operatic career as Orfeo, in Peter Hall's 1982 production for Glyndebourne.

As Ovid relates in *Metamorphoses*, when Orpheus died, all of nature wept. The rivers were swollen with their own tears. The singer's limbs were scattered here and there, while his head and his lyre floated down the river and miraculously made music. In A. S. Kline's translation, "Floating in midstream, the lyre lamented mournfully; mournfully the lifeless tongue murmured; mournfully the banks echoed in reply." The hero's father Phoebus prevents a snake from attacking Orpheus's head and turns the serpent to stone. The ghost of Orpheus descends again to the underworld, recognizing all the places he had seen before. He searches the Elysian Fields and finds Euridice once again. "They walk side by side; now she goes in front, and he follows her; now he leads, and looks back, as he can do in safety now, at his Eurydice." 🌿

Mezzo-soprano Judith Malafronte is on the faculty of the Historical Performance Institute at Indiana University Jacobs School of Music and writes regularly for Opera News.

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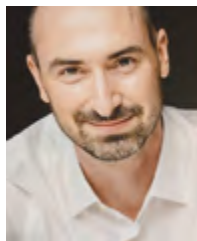
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Artist Profiles

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



PETER WHELAN **
(Dublin, Ireland)

Conductor

Recent and

Upcoming:

Le Nozze di Figaro
(Irish National

Opera); *Die Zauberflöte* (Irish National Opera); Handel's *Radamisto* (English Touring Opera); Vivaldi's *Bajazet* (Irish National Opera, London's Royal Opera Covent Garden); *Così fan tutte* (Irish National Opera)

Engagements with the English Concert; Scottish Chamber Orchestra; Beethoven Orchester Bonn; Netherlands Chamber Orchestre; Portland Baroque Orchestra; Lahti Symphony Orchestra; Oulu Symphony Orchestra; Orchestre de Chambre du Luxembourg; Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra; RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland Artistic Director of the Irish Baroque Orchestra and founding Artistic Director of Ensemble Marsyas

Facebook: @peter.whelan.332

Instagram: @peterwhelanpp

Twitter: @Whelanpp



JAKUB JÓZEF ORLIŃSKI †

Countertenor
(Warsaw, Poland)

Orpheus

Recent and

Upcoming:

Orpheus' Double in Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice* (Metropolitan Opera); Didymus in Handel's *Theodora* (London's Royal Opera Covent Garden); concerts with Il Pomo d'Oro (European tours), Ensemble Matheus (Bratislava, Lednice-Valtice

Music Festival); recitals with pianist Michal Biel (North American and European tours); residency (Wigmore Hall); solo concert with members of New York Baroque Incorporated (Carnegie Hall); Cyrus in *Belshazzar* (Zurich Opera); Handel's *Messiah* (Warsaw Philharmonic, Montreal Bach Festival); Orimeno in Cavalli's *Erismena* (Aix-en-Provence); title role of Handel's *Rinaldo* (Frankfurt Opera, Glyndebourne Festival); Vivaldi's *Stabat Mater* (Les Arts Florissants); Eustazio in *Rinaldo* (English Concert on tour); Unulfo in *Rodelina* (Frankfurt, Lille)
Facebook: @Jakub Jozef Orliński – Countertenor
Instagram: @jakubjozef.orlinski



MEIGUI ZHANG †+

Soprano
(Chengdu, China)

Eurydice

San Francisco Opera

Highlights: Dai Yu in Bright Sheng and

David Henry Hwang's *Dream of the Red Chamber*
Recent and Upcoming: Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* (Atlanta 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); Mozart Requiem (North Carolina Symphony); Brahms Requiem (Calgary Philharmonic); Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* (The Orchestra Now Bard College); Bruckner Te Deum (New Jersey Symphony); Mahler's Fourth Symphony (Sichuan Symphony Orchestra China tour); Beethoven's Ninth

Symphony (Beijing's National Centre for the Performing Arts); J.S. Bach's *Coffee Cantata* (Music@Menlo Chamber Music Festival); concerts with Xi'an and Shenzhen Symphony Orchestras; *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* (Philadelphia Orchestra); recital (Miami's Wertheim Performing Arts Center); Mozart's "Exsultate, 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



NICOLE HEASTON †

Soprano (Katy, Texas)

Amore

San Francisco Opera

Highlights:

Despina in *Così fan tutte*; Countess

Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*

Recent and Upcoming: Claire Devon in Missy Mazzoli and Royce Vavrek's *The Listeners* (Den Norske Opera); Melissa in Handel's *Amadigi di Gaula* (Philharmonia Baroque); Countess Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Houston Grand Opera); Liù in *Turandot* (Houston, Maryland Lyric Opera); *Of Blessed Memory* (Houston Ballet); Yolanda Cantrell in Jim Luigs' *The Impresario* (Houston); Sir Elton John's Trainer in David T. Little and Royce Vavrek's *Vinkensport* (Houston)
Facebook: @nicoleheastonsoprano
Instagram: @katy_operamom
Website: NicoleHeaston.com

ARTIST PROFILES CONTINUED



ALYSIA CHANG ♪
 (Berkeley, California)
Solo Dancer
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: Bright Sheng and David Henry Hwang's

Dream of the Red Chamber

Recent and Upcoming: Member of San Francisco Opera Dance Corps; works by Amy Seiwert, Helen Pickett, Gabrielle Lamb, Val Caniparoli, Jennifer Archibald, Yannis Adoniou, Melissa Bank, Graham Lustig, Janice Garrett/Charles Moulton, Ron Cunningham, Lila York, Paul Taylor, Mark Morris, George Balanchine; performances with Sacramento Ballet, Metropolitan Opera, Radio City Christmas Spectacular, Ziru Dance, Smuin Contemporary Ballet, Oakland Ballet, DawsonDanceSF, SFDanceworks



BRETT CONWAY ♪
 (Fort Wayne, Indiana)
Solo Dancer
San Francisco Opera
Highlights:
Rusalka
Recent and

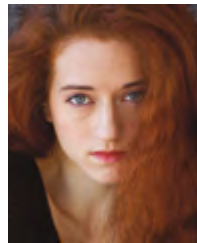
Upcoming: Current member of San Francisco Opera Dance Corps (tenured); faculty member of LINES Ballet's education programs; Co-Artistic Director of SFDanceworks (2020– 2021); former company dancer of LINES Ballet and Nederlands Dans Theater



MARIAN FAUSTINO *♪
 (Fredericksburg, Virginia)
Solo Dancer
Recent and
Upcoming: Works by Sidra Bell, Alvin Ailey,

Ma Cong, Alan Hinline, Kevin Jenkins,

Jayne Persch, Maurya Kerr, Tony Fabella, Agnes Locsin, Caili Quan, Penny Saunders, Danielle Rowe, Kaya Wolsey, Matthew Gilmore; performances with Malashock Dance San Diego, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Owen Cox Dance Group, David Taylor's Zikr Dance Ensemble, Dance Aspen (Vail International Dance Festival, Wheeler Opera House)



LIVANNA MAISLEN *♪
 (Newport, Oregon)
Solo Dancer
Recent and
Upcoming:
 Punchdrunk's *Sleep No More*; New York

Choral Society; Nick Cave's *The Let Go* (Park Avenue Armory); Nona Hendryx and Carrie Mae Weem's *Refrigerated Dreams* (Joe's Pub); The Francesca Harper Project; Bregenzer Fuehling's Tanzfestival; David Lang's *The Mile-Long Opera*; Nicole von Arx



CHRISTOPHER NACHTRAB ♪
 (Long Island, New York)
Solo Dancer
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: *Rusalka*

Recent and Upcoming: Current member of San Francisco Opera Dance Corps (tenured); co-founder of the artistic collaborative Capital Dance Project; formerly a tenured principal artist with Sacramento Ballet; featured artist with the Metropolitan Opera and Washington National Opera



MAXWELL SIMOES
 (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)
Solo Dancer
Recent and
Upcoming:
 Performances with

Jacobs Jonas The Company, the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Smuin Ballet, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, Sadler's Wells; projects with Sia, Hermès, Prada, Greg Lauren



MATTHEW OZAWA
 (Chicago, Illinois)
Director
San Francisco Opera
Highlights:
The Barber of Seville;
Fidelio

Recent and Upcoming: *Madame Butterfly* (Santa Fe Opera); *Romeo and Juliet* (Cincinnati Opera); *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Opera Colorado); *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Kentucky Opera); Huang Ruo and David Henry Hwang's *An American Soldier* (Opera Theatre of St. Louis); Jack Perla and Jessica Murphy Moo's *An American Dream* (Lyric Opera of Chicago)
 Chief Artistic Administration Officer of Lyric Opera of Chicago
 Founder and Artistic Director of Mozawa, a Chicago-based incubator advancing collaborative arts and artists

ARTIST PROFILES CONTINUED



RENA BUTLER *
(Chicago, Illinois)
Choreographer
Recent and Upcoming: Created works for BalletX, Hubbard Street Dance

Chicago, Charlotte Ballet, Boston Dance Theater, The School at Jacob's Pillow, The New Orleans Museum of Modern Art with composer Terence Blanchard, CHTV Stories TV program, short film with Third Coast Percussion and Devonté Hynes, The Young Choreographer's Festival, The Ailey/Fordham School, TEDxChicago Virtual Salon 3.0:Design Your Life, Sweden's Norrdans, National Ballet of Canada
Former dancer with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, AIM by Kyle Abraham, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company, David Dorfman Dance, Manuel Vignouille/M-Motions, The Kevin Wynn Collection, Pasos Con Sabor Salsa Dance Company, Gibney Company
Choreographic Associate with Gibney Company

Instagram: @Rena Butler



ALEXANDER V. NICHOLS
(Berkeley, California)
Set and Projection Designer
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: *The*

Barber of Seville; Fidelio

Recent and Upcoming: *Finale Finale* (San Francisco Ballet); *Kiss My Aztec* (Hartford Stage); *Dear San Francisco* (Les Sept Doigts); *Mon Île, Mon Coeur* (Les Sept Doigts); *LIFE--A Journey Through Time* (Philip Glass, Frans Lanting); *The Headlands* (American Conservatory Theater); new work by Yuri Possokhov (San Francisco Ballet)



JESSICA JAHN
(Brooklyn, New York)
Costume Designer
San Francisco Opera
Highlights:
The Barber of Seville;
Fidelio; Norma

Recent and Upcoming: *The Road We Came* (On Site Opera); *Snowy Day* (Houston Grand Opera); *Coal Country* (The Public Theater); *Blue* (Washington National Opera); *Castor and Patience* (Cincinnati Opera); *La Bohème* (Detroit Opera); *Baldwin and Buckley at Cambridge* (The Public Theater); *Dead Man Walking* (Washington National Opera); *West Side Story* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Moby-Dick* (Utah Opera); *The Passion of Mary Cardwell Dawson* (Glimmerglass Festival)

Adjunct Design Professor with Brandeis University's Theater Arts Department, NYU, and Rutgers University



YUKI NAKASE LINK *
(Pleasant Valley, New York)
Lighting Designer
Recent and Upcoming: *Madame*

Butterfly (Cincinnati Opera); *Orfeo* (Santa Fe Opera); *Proving Up* (The Juilliard School); *In a Grove* (Pittsburgh Opera); *Four Saints in Three Acts* (Target Margin Theater); *The Orchard* (Baryshnikov Arts Center); *Red Velvet* (Shakespeare Theatre Company); *Our Town* (Dallas Theater Center); *When Monica Met Hillary* (Miami New Drama);

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Seattle Opera
Seattle Rep
Seattle Shakespeare Company
Seattle Theatre Group
Taproot Theatre Company
Village Theatre

ARTIST PROFILES CONTINUED

Seven Deadly Sins (New York City, Miami Beach); *Blood Moon* at Prototype Festival (Baruch Performing Arts Center); *Triptych: Eyes of One on Another* (Disney Hall, Kennedy Center, BAM Howard Gilman Opera House)
Website: yukinlink.com



JOHN KEENE

(Lancaster, Pennsylvania)

Chorus Director

San Francisco Opera

Highlights: *Don Giovanni*; Bright

Sheng and David Henry Hwang's *Dream of the Red Chamber*; *Eun Sun Kim Conducts Verdi*; John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra*; *Eugene Onegin*; *Dialogues of the Carmelites*; *La Traviata*

Recent and Upcoming:

San Francisco Opera Chorus Director (*Madame Butterfly*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Gabriela Lena Frank's *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*)
Seattle Opera Head of Music Staff and Chorus Master (*La Bohème*, *Die Walküre*, Jonathan Dove's *Flight*, *Tosca*, *Rigoletto*, *La Cenerentola*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Porgy and Bess*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *Il Trovatore*, *Carmen*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Così fan tutte*, *Béatrice et Bénédicte*, *Aida*)
Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition judge
Instagram: @keenejohn
Twitter: @keenejohn



DAVE MAIER

(El Cerrito, California)

Fight Director

San Francisco Opera

Highlights:

Carmen; *Tosca*; the *Ring* cycle;

Pagliacci; *Rigoletto*; *Roméo et Juliette*; *Billy Budd*; *Manon Lescaut*

Recent and Upcoming:

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)

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Chorus Director Edition

San Francisco Opera's Dramaturg Emeritus Dr. Clifford "Kip" Cranna sat down with former Company Chorus Director Ian Robertson for a conversation about the Opera Chorus. Robertson, who made his debut leading the Chorus in 1987, retired from his post in December 2021 after a distinguished and historic 35-year tenure. Below is an excerpt from the last installment of their wide-ranging, three-part conversation. To listen to the full interview and read transcripts, visit [sfopera.com/firstcentury](https://www.sfopera.com/firstcentury).

Kip Cranna: Could you talk a little bit about dealing with 18th-century repertoire, which is not something we normally think of in terms of the [big] operatic voice? In Gluck, for example, we did the French version of *Orphée et Eurydice* [in 1995] and recorded that. And then Mozart and, of course, Handel. They have different vocal requirements. Can you talk a little bit about working with your choristers on that?



KRISTEN LOKEN

Ian Robertson: Yes. A fascinating subject. I'm glad you brought it up. In the choice of voices, over the years of hiring opera choristers, I was always careful to, first of all, engage people who had voices of quality but also had voices of flexibility. So they could, if necessary, sing an operatic aria in full voice by Verdi or Puccini, but they could also sing Mozart with clarity and cleanliness and immaculate intonation. The process is certainly made easier by the fact that your chorus is full of that kind of voice.

And so that's what I tried to bring to bear in the Baroque and the Handel and Mozart, too. And I remember doing *Semele*, the Handel opera [in 2000], with Charles Mackerras conducting. It had come from the Royal Opera House [in London], and it involved a chorus of 24 singing onstage and a chorus of 24 in the pit. So, what kind of challenge was *that* going to be?

Charles Mackerras was thrilled with it because we made it work far better than it had at Covent Garden, in *his* words. And, in fact, he said that he had managed to get it [balance of sound between Orchestra and Chorus] so close together that he was only aware of hearing the Chorus in the pit. He only heard the Chorus on stage if something was going slightly wrong. So, he was happy. And it was just a great experience. You think Handel is this fairly straightforward music, but it's not. It's like Mozart: it's got to be sung *in*. The melodic twists and turns, the harmonic underpinning ... that's all got to be repeated, repeated, repeated until its second nature.

KC: You used the word "cleanliness," which I think is wonderful in this context of the 18th century because there's really no place to hide in these vocal lines. It's got to be so precise and clear.

IR: Absolutely. That is also what will clarify and enhance the harmony. The chords are utterly clear. Even in the big Puccini operas, if you're singing with too much vibrato and losing focus, then the chords disappear. You need to pull that back a little bit and not over-sing.

KC: You alluded to something that we could talk about which is placement of the Chorus. Stage directors, particularly in our modern era, love to have them way upstage. Can you talk a little bit about making sure that they are together with the Orchestra? That distance is a big factor sometimes.

IR: In fact I became known as the nag because I would keep saying to directors, "But they're so far upstage. It's going to be hard for them to be together with the Orchestra. And it's going to be hard for them to be balanced vocally with the sound of the Orchestra." I managed to gain some ground that way, but most directors I think understand. It's only the ones who perhaps are coming from straight theater or movies who don't really get that. But they usually adapt or tell me to go away (laughs)!

KC: Let's talk about the prompter. We are one of the international companies that uses the prompter on most occasions. Tell us a little bit about their role with the Chorus.

IR: I was never accustomed to prompters in my 10 years at the Scottish Opera. So, it was quite an engaging surprise when I began to work with prompters here at San Francisco Opera. I very quickly realized the advantages of that. I watched Philip Eisenberg, who was one of our great prompters.

KC: Legendary!

IR: Legendary. He worked through *Meistersinger* with the Chorus singing the fight scene and the 12 parts, and he was able to cue them all one by one. I began to support the use of a prompter for the Chorus because in some places the Chorus wouldn't be prompted, but here I encouraged that. So that was another level of security, and in stressful situations. I've worked with some really great prompters and have always enjoyed it. And I think the Chorus does really value them, especially if the conductor is preoccupied with other important things in the pit. It's always a very useful backup to have someone else leading the voices. And so, "yay!" to prompters.

KC: It's a great advantage in the scenes, such as you mentioned. The fight scene in *Meistersinger* is one, and I'm thinking of other ensembles where people are entering willy nilly ...

IR: Just like [Benjamin Britten's] *Billy Budd*, with all those separate groups coming in all over the place ... the prompting was essential. It really helped. And all the Verdi operas, of course, [Simon] *Boccanegra* and the rare Verdis, like *I Vespri Siciliani*.

KC: The Verdi opera that, to me, has such wonderful choruses is *Don Carlo*.

IR: *Don Carlo* is so special.

KC: The [John] Pritchard era [San Francisco Opera music director 1985-1989] was the first time that we did it in French. And it was quite a revelation.

IR: It was a very great revelation to me because when we did it subsequently with Maestro [Nicola] Luisotti [San Francisco Opera music director 2009-18], it was in Italian. To me, it missed a whole lot of color in the voices. I never expected to do *Don Carlo* in French, but there it was.

KC: It's French grand opera after all.

IR: [sings the theme from the auto-da-fé scene] ... That suits the French more than it does the Italian, right? That was fascinating.

KC: Yeah. I think that *Don Carlo* is not at the top of the list

for the average opera fan's [favorite] Verdi, but it is mine. I think it really is a masterpiece.

IR: It is, in so many ways. It paints so many different vocal colors within the characters, and then you've got the auto-da-fé, which is a big chorus scene which needs to be done with at least 90 choristers to get it right.

KC: In your rosters over the years, you had more sopranos and basses than the inner voices. Why is that?

IR: Well, there are different reasons for the sopranos. You've always got to make sure because they are the most exposed at the top of the range, and they need to have a good blending quality so that [it] sounds like one voice and not five different voices. You've got to be careful that you're not putting a huge operatic soprano in there that doesn't have the ability to bring the focus down a little bit, because ... under the stress of the situation, that voice is likely to give out its full blast and ruin your blend. As for tenors, they're nestled in the center of the texture, so they have support both above and below. The bass, of course, is the root of the harmony and they are the structure and the foundation upon which the rest of it is built. Mezzos can usually handle everything. So, it's a constant search for great people. And we have *great* people.

KC: Now that you're in "retirement," tell us a little bit about your activities.

IR: Well, I've dabbled in composition and music arrangements. So I'm doing that and I'm going to be more actively involved with the San Francisco Boys Chorus (who I led for 23 years) for their 75th anniversary year, which is coming up. That requires a lot of arrangement. When they sing the [San Francisco] Symphony at the Christmas program, I arrange carols and other songs, which gives them a chance to sing with orchestra. And I've got a long dormant desire to write music for some Shakespeare sonnets and also music for violin and piano. I really didn't have much time before, but you know, it's like Mahler composing in the summer when he wasn't conducting. Though, I'm no Mahler ... (laughs)!

KC: Ian Robertson. What a pleasure to talk with the recently retired chorus director of San Francisco Opera. Thanks so much for being here.

IR: My pleasure, Kip. Thank you very much. 🍷



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Streaming the First Century: Session 3

As part of the Company's centennial celebrations, Streaming the First Century provides free access to historic San Francisco Opera performances, archival interviews, and much more! Building upon the Slavic (Session 1) and French (Session 2) repertoires, the new installment explores San Francisco Opera's history through the great Italian works. To explore, visit sfopera.com/firstcentury.

RUGGERO LEONCAVALLO'S PAGLIACCI

This riveting 1962 performance, preserved on an audience recording, captures tenor **Mario Del Monaco** and baritone **Ettore Bastianini**, two masters of the Italian tradition, in peak form. Matching the roaring intensity of her colleagues is the young, soon-to-be superstar **Marilyn Horne** singing the soprano role of Nedda.



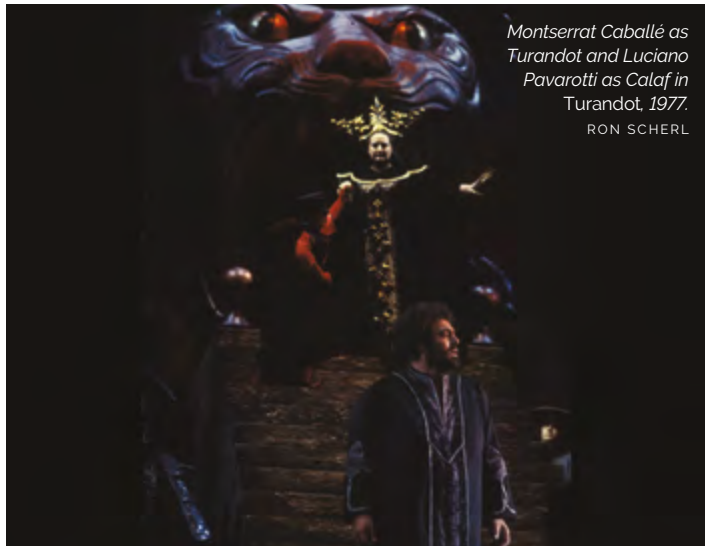
Ettore Bastianini as
Tonio and Mario Del
Monaco as Canio in
Pagliacci, 1962.
ROBERT CAHEN



Marilyn Horne as Nedda, 1962. / CAROLYN MASON JONES

GIACOMO PUCCINI'S TURANDOT

A legendary night in the annals of San Francisco Opera! **Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's** 1977 production marked the first time that soprano **Montserrat Caballé** and tenor **Luciano Pavarotti** would take on the lead roles in Puccini's *Turandot*. The vocal opulence and pyrotechnics on display exceed expectation, as does the emerging soprano **Leona Mitchell** who shines in her role debut as Liu.



Montserrat Caballé as
Turandot and Luciano
Pavarotti as Calaf in
Turandot, 1977.
RON SCHERL



Leona Mitchell as Liu, 1977 / RON SCHERL

ADDITIONAL SESSION 3 FEATURES INCLUDE:

- Excerpts from *Tosca* (1932) on the very night that inaugurated the War Memorial Opera House; tenor Beniamino Gigli bringing down the house in *Andrea Chénier* (1938); a house recording of soprano Leontyne Price in one of her greatest roles: Leonora in *Il Trovatore* (1971); the house debut of Nicola Luisotti conducting *La Forza del Destino* (2005).
- New essays by Judith Malafrente, Mark Burford, and Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen.
- Newly captured interviews with San Francisco Opera Scene Shop Foreman John Del Bono, master builder Pierre Cayard.
- And much more!

Streaming the First Century: Session 4

The culminating fourth installment of Streaming the First Century (released December 5) surveys works by German and Austrian composers. Don't miss these milestone San Francisco Opera performances of operas by Strauss, Korngold, Mozart, Beethoven, and Wagner. To explore, visit sfopera.com/firstcentury.

RICHARD STRAUSS' SALOME

Austrian diva **Leonie Rysanek** is Salome in one of the most entrancing performances of her long, distinguished career. This 1974 San Francisco Opera broadcast, conducted by **Otmar Suitner**, also features legendary Wagnerian **Astrid Varnay** as Herodias.



Astrid Varnay as Herodias, 1974. / RON SCHERL



Leonie Rysanek as
Salome, 1974.
RON SCHERL

ERICH WOLFGANG KORNGOLD'S DIE TOTE STADT

The heart and soul of Korngold's resplendent score are brought to life in this 2008 performance featuring **Torsten Kerl** (Paul), **Emily Magee** (Marie/Marietta), and **Lucas Meachem** (Fritz/Frank). The intrepid cast traverse the opera's vocal challenges undaunted under the assured leadership of then-Music Director **Sir Donald Runnicles**.



Emily Magee as Marietta. / TERRENCE MCCARTHY



Torsten Kerl as Paul in Act I of
Die Tote Stadt, 2008.
TERRENCE MCCARTHY

ADDITIONAL SESSION 4 FEATURES INCLUDE:

- Excerpts from Act II of a truly historic performance of Wagner's *Die Walküre* (1936); Kurt Herbert Adler conducts a spirited account of *Così fan tutte* (1960); Amy Shuard and Regina Resnik bring frightening intensity in an audience recording of Strauss' *Elektra* (1966); Gwyneth Jones gives a definitive performance in *Fidelio* (1978) in a performance that also introduced Sheri Greenawald to San Francisco Opera audiences.
- Contemporary perspective essays by writer Paul Thomason, Larry Rothe.
- Archival interviews with Gwyneth Jones and Lotte Lehmann.
- New interviews with early Opera Center administrator Christine Bullin, designer Robert Darling, administrator Ann Farris, audio preservationist Ward Marston, and broadcast commentator Ira Siff.

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Meredith Brown ^
Logan Bryck ^
Caitlyn Smith-Franklin ^

TRUMPET

Adam Luftman, *Principal*
Scott Macomber ^
John Pearson +

TROMBONE

Samuel Schlosser, *Principal*
Jeffrey Budin ^
David Ridge

BASS TROMBONE

David Ridge, *Principal*

TUBA/CIMBASSO

Zachariah Spellman, *Principal*

TIMPANI

John Burgardt, *Principal*

PERCUSSION

Richard Kvistad,
Principal/Associate Timpani †
Patricia Niemi, *Acting Principal*
Victor Avdjenko ^

HARP

Annabelle Taubl ^

LIBRARIAN

Carrie Weick

ADDITIONAL MUSICIAN

César Cañón, *harpsichord*

ORCHESTRA MANAGER

Tracy Davis
Kevin Myers,
Orchestra Operations Manager

† = Leave of absence

+ = Principal for one or more

Fall season operas

^ = Season Substitute

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
Christopher Nachtrab ^
Jekyns Peláez ^
Maxwell Simoes
Chiharu Shibata ^
Marcos Vedovetto

^ Tenured

Supernumeraries

Sadie Black	Ansel Klucsor	Anthony Sabedra
Bruce Bowen	Andrew Korniej	Fernando Sanchez-Riera
Jim Bowes	Steve Lavezzoli	Pablo Sanfrancisco
Mark Burstein	Sherman Lee	Doug Spradlin
Feliciana Marie Casas	William Liu	Mimi Timberlake
Guerrero	Alan LoFaso	Ross Uchimura
Rick Casse	Priscilla Lore	Domonique Williams
Stacey Chien	Holly MacCormick	Irving Wiltshire
Thomas Colletta	Gilbert Martinez	Laurel Winzler
Eric Dew	Tim McCormick	Alliana 'Lili' Yang
Joe Friedman	Lynn Meinhardt	Atom Young Maguire
Joe Giammarco	Steve Mullin	Viva Young Maguire
Darius Gray	Ivan Navarro	Paul Zemlin
Karsten Guthridge	Ron Niewiarowski	Frank Zepeda
Nancy Huie	Ely Orquiza	
Larry Kern	Ram Ramayanam	

Backstage Personnel

COSTUME SHOP

Jai Alltizer (22),
Costume Shop Manager
Galen Till (18),
Senior Production Supervisor
Cassandra Carpenter,
Production Supervisor
Manuel Gutierrez (23),
Production Coordinator
Sally Thomas (23),
Master Tailor
Amy Ashton-Keller (29),
Master Draper
Barbara Ebel (14), *Senior Draper*
Santiago Suanes (13), *Men's Draper*
Abdiel Portalatin Perez, *Draper*
Paula Wheeler (31), *Senior Milliner*
Amy Van Every (38), *Senior Draper*
Andrea Phillips, *Assitant Dyer*
Jersey McDermott (23),
Senior Craftsperson/Shoe Specialist
Kelly Koehn, Ed Fonseca,
Kathy Roberts, *Craftpersons*
Emma Lehman, Kristen Tracy (15),
Assitant Cutters
Nika Cassaro, Taylor Newell,
Kaitlyn Patrick, *First Hand*
Robyn Marsh, Victoria Mortimer,
Costume Assistants

COSTUME TECHNICIANS

Miriam Acosta (25), Karla Fix,
Hoa Fong (24), Gillian Haratani (11),
Yui Takenouchi, Ashley Granbow,
Sabrina Baladad-Perez,
Katherine Stein, Katherine Griffith,
Haoyu Yao, Meg Horan,
Amanda Mitchell, Sara Morimoto,
Mikael Nohai, Sarah Ellen Smith,
Charles Sullivan,
Yesenia Villenasenor,
Robert Whitehurst

WARDROBE DEPARTMENT

CORE CREW

Nicolas Chacon,
Linda Edwards (24),
Edward Fonseca (11),
Claudia Holaday (43),
Lorraine Lewis (10),
Barbara Nicholas (24),
Rachell Nichols,
Phil Perry (25),
Patrick Sanchez (13),
Don Smith (26),
Scott Stewart (22),
Grisel Torres,
Kirsten Tucker (19)

DRESSERS

Paula Barish, Kathleen Blake (10),
John Goldsmith, Thomas Hoffman,
Andrew Koch, Michael Kruzich,
Jeffery Larsen, Jennifer O'Neill (10),
Mark Saladino, Janice Stephenson,
Mary Still, Charles Sullivan,
Anastasia Todish, Grisel Torres,
Arleen Young

WIG, HAIR, AND MAKEUP DEPARTMENT

SENIOR WIG ARTISTS

Maur Sela
Erin Hennessy

WIG ARTISTS

Tori Grayum
Lindsay Saier

SHOW CALL FOREPERSONS

Karalynne Fiebig,
Consuelo Lopez-Robbins,
Christina Martin, Sharon Peng,
Sophia Smith

PRINCIPAL AND SHOWCALL WIG, HAIR, AND MAKEUP ARTISTS

Shana Astrachan, Juliette Bernal,
Melanie Birch, Vanessa Blanchard Lee,
Kristen Campbell, Calli Carvajal,
Sarah Coy, Karalynne Fiebig,
Marisela Garcia, Dulce Gastelum,
Denise Gutierrez, Erin Hennessy,
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Maurisa Rondeau, Lindsay Saier,
Tim Santry, David Searle, Maur Sela,
Sophie Smith, Erica Villanueva,
Kimberly Virgen, Lisa Zomer

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Amy Broussard, Dennis Forry,
Joel Morgante, Jesse Hazzard,
Christian Martinez, Dylan Maxson,
Scott Whitten, Jeff Palmer,
Loren Patterson, Michael Ramirez,
James Ryan, Eila Saarni,
Victor Sanchez (25), Angelo Montague,
Frederick Wielandt (25)

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Lauren Abrams, Jennifer Bennes,
Wayne Olds, Debbie "Vola" Ruben

CARPENTRY DEPARTMENT

Michael Accurso (32),
Night Crew Foreman
Dominic Casazza (19), *Assitant Key Flyman*
Gabriel Castellani (12), *Automation Key*
Michael Chapman (10), *Key*
Dennis Criswell
Paul Delatorre (23), *Key*
Greg Harsha (23), *Key*
Geoffrey R. Heron (16)
Geoffrey W. Heron (28), *Key*
Philip Heron, (20),
Automation and Rigging Foreman
Ed Joe, *Warehouse Foreman*
Nick Kukielka
Michael Martino
Alex Meyer (28)
Ethan Ng
Harry Niedzwetzki (30)
John O'Donnell, *Key Flyman*
Enrique Pronio
Michael Ramirez
Ty Russell
Bartholomew Ryan
James Ryan
Kenneth Ryan (40)
Michael Ryan
Eila Saarni
Gregory Shaff (34), *Key*
Cyrus Sindicich
Sean Walden (11)
Randy Walsh (20), *Assistant Key*
Collin Whitfield
Sammy Wong

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James Eldredge (18), *Shop Mechanic*
Hilary Engelman
Andy Falkner
Oris Fry
Patricia Hewett (15), *Assistant Key*
Myron Seth Isaacs (22), *Key*
Mark Kotschnig (20), *Key*
John Matlock, *Assistant Key*
Beth Ozarow (26), *Out of House Key*
Noah Peacock
Tara Pellack
Dawn Roth-Golden
Gretchen Scharfenberg
Sarah Shores (15), *Shop Mechanic*
Morgan Womble-Dahl

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Eugene Ahn, *Gel Room*
Juan Aldana (18)
Rebecca Bernal
John Boatwright (35),
House Head Electrician
Ariel Bott, *Assistant Key Stage Left*

Erik Docktor (15), *Projection Programmer*
Amy Domjan, *Layout Electrician*
Stephen Echerd (19)
Will Grunig (20)
Robert Haycock, *Key Stage Right*
Ana Gabriela Hernandez-McKig
Geoff Heron (13), *Pyro Technician*
Bernard Honigman (23),
Key Light Board Operator
Karen Jine
Brendan Kierans, *Electric Shop Foreman*
Sophie Landau
Sonia Martinez
Maria Mendoza (34), *Projection Coordinator*
Glenn Quilici, *Assistant Key Stage Right*
Kevin Quintero
Matthew Reynolds
William Rodriguez
Kirt Siders, *Data Administrator*
Andrew Sproule (23), *Key Stage Left*
Jax Steager,
Assistant Key Light Board Operator

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Emad Dajani
Christine Dumke
Deanne Franklin
Kimberly Griess, *Key*
Kevin McKereghan
Ryan Napoli
Tod Nixon, *Key* (24)
Billy Schmidt

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Bob Hines
Mitchell Kell, *Video Editor*
Elliott Rice
Brian Shimetz
Uwe Willenbacher (14), *Audio Editor*

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Carolyn Crimley
Dana Gray
Lua Hadar
Karen Kindig
Victoria Northridge

WRANGLERS

Sadie Black
Liz Pasha
Diana Young

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

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



Joy Fellows
Acting Associate
Principal, Viola



Patricia Heller
Viola



Jonna Hervig
Viola



Natalia Vershilova
Viola



Elizabeth Prior
Viola
Regular Substitute



Thalia Moore
Acting Principal
Cello



Peter Myers
Acting Assistant
Principal, Cello



Nora Pirquet
Acting Assistant
Principal, Cello



Emil Miland
Cello



Victoria Ehrlich
Cello



Ruth Lane
Cello



Eric Sung
Cello
Regular Substitute



Joseph Lescher
Principal
Bass

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ORCHESTRA CONTINUED



Jonathan Lancelle
Associate Principal
Bass



Steven D'Amico
Assistant Principal
Bass



Shinji Eshima
Bass



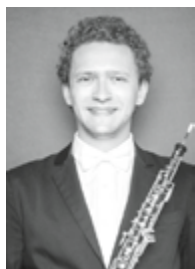
Julie McKenzie
Principal
Flute



Stephanie McNab
Flute & Piccolo



Mingjia Liu
Principal
Oboe



Gabriel Young
Acting Principal
Oboe



Jose Gonzalez Granero
Principal Clarinet



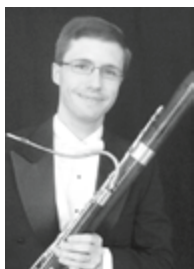
Joanne Burke Eisler
Assistant Principal
Clarinet



Anthony Striplen
Clarinet &
Bass Clarinet



Rufus Olivier
Principal
Bassoon



Daniel MacNeill
Bassoon



Michael Severance
Bassoon &
Contrabassoon



Kevin Rivard
Principal
Horn



Keith Green
Horn



Brian McCarty
Associate Principal
Horn



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
Acting Principal
Percussion



Tracy Davis
Orchestra Manager



Carrie Weick
Librarian

Most photos by John Martin.

Not pictured: Emily Liu (Viola), Yi Zhou (Viola), Mark Votapek (Cello), Evan Hillis (Bass), Michelle Caimotto (Flute), Benjamin Brogadir (Oboe), Alex DiThomas (Oboe), Matthew Boyles (Clarinet), Junghwan Lee (Clarinet), Shawn Jones (Bassoon), Meredith Brown (Horn), Caitlyn Smith-Franklin (Horn), Logan Bryck (Horn), Jeffrey Budin (Trombone), Victor Advienko (Percussion), Annabelle Taubl (Harp), Kevin Myers (Assistant Orchestra Manager and Librarian)

San Francisco Opera Regular Chorus



Nadima Avakian
Soprano



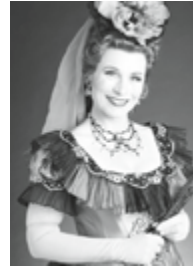
Kathleen Bayler
Soprano



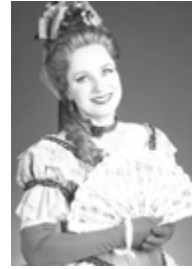
Sara Colburn
Soprano



Clare Demer
Soprano



Claire Kelm
Soprano



Elisabeth Rom Lucio
Soprano



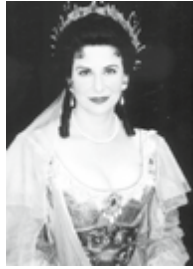
Liesl McPherrin
Soprano



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



Fernando Ruiz
Tenor



Sigmund Seigel
Tenor
Leave of Absence



Jonathan Smucker
Tenor



Andrew Truett
Tenor



William Lee Bryan
Baritone



Anders Fröhlich
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

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



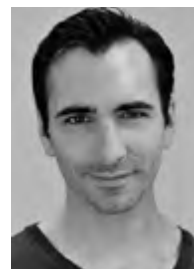
Blanche Hampton



Bryan Ketron



Rachel Speidel Little



Christopher Nachtrab



Jekyns Peláez



Chiharu Shibata

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San Francisco Opera was built by a grassroots campaign of innovative opera lovers back in 1922. So much has changed since then, but this stage as a place where we tell our community's stories and share profound emotional experiences together is more needed than ever.



War Memorial Opera House under construction in 1931



PHOTO: ERIC FRAZIER

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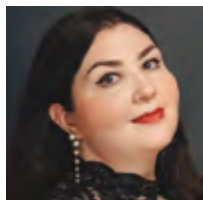
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GABRIELLE BETEAG
Atlanta, Georgia
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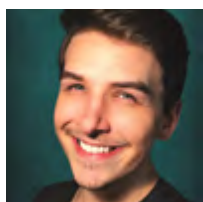
Baritone
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Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin
Third-year Adler
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Tenor
VICTOR CARDAMONE
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
First-year Adler
Sponsored by
Valerie Crane Dorfman



Soprano
MIKAYLA SAGER
Vancouver, British Columbia
First-year Adler
Sponsored by
Anna & Steven Fieler



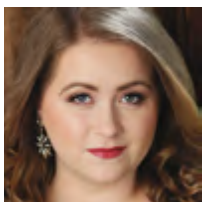
Bass
STEFAN EGERSTROM
Brooklyn Center, Minnesota
Third-year Adler
Sponsored by
Julie Dickson
Mrs. James K. McWilliams



Soprano
ELISA SUNSHINE
San Clemente, California
Third-year Adler
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Tenor
EDWARD GRAVES
Oxon Hill, Maryland
First-year Adler
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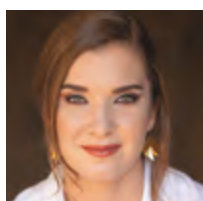
Soprano
ESTHER TONEY
Buford, Georgia
Third-year Adler
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James A. Heagy,
in memory of Jayne Heagy



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



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



Soprano
**ANNE-MARIE
MACINTOSH**
Langley, British Columbia
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"I strongly believe that every young artist needs to go through this experience, not only to grow as an artist but to also understand the intricacies of the business of opera. The guidance and tools I was provided during the Adler Program have served me and continue to serve me as I navigate my career."

**—Amina Edris, soprano and Cleopatra in
the world premiere production of
John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra***

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Photo: Cory Weaver (Meistersinger, 2015-16 Season)

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Lotte Lehmann as Tosca, 1934. / MORTON



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Ailyn Pérez as Tosca, 2021. / CORY WEAVER

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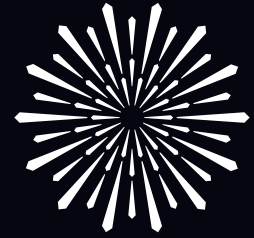
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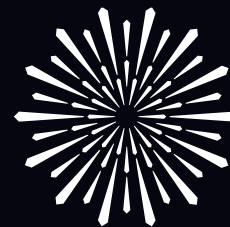
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The Merola Opera Program also extends its most sincere appreciation to all those contributors who helped meet our annual income needs through gifts of \$1 to \$999.

Your San Francisco Opera Needs You

BY GENERAL DIRECTOR MATTHEW SHILVOCK

One hundred years ago, San Francisco Opera was created out of bold and visionary courage. Our founder, Neapolitan conductor Gaetano Merola, had a belief that this great city needed a great opera company. That belief was shared by 75 community members who contributed \$1,000 each (in 1923 dollars) and 1,000 community members who contributed \$75 each. So was born San Francisco Opera.

As we celebrate this centennial milestone, we must embrace the same bold, visionary courage that defined our beginnings. **Our Centennial Season is a blueprint for what this company can be:** extraordinary musical values under Eun Sun Kim; new, inspiring productions; a commitment to a rich diversity of stories and creators; groundbreaking innovation; and a thrilling multiplicity of artistic products whether in the Opera House, in the community, or digitally online. We must exist in many ways in many places, inspiring our audiences, whoever and wherever they are.

Committing to both excellence onstage and an innovative array of artistic products in the community is what will grow the audience of the future. That will only be possible with a transformational increase in philanthropy. Philanthropy makes up some 75% of our revenue each year and, while our philanthropy represents extraordinary generosity, our annual giving has not kept pace with cost-of-living increases over the last twenty years. **Contributed revenue must grow significantly if we are to embrace a bold future and address post-pandemic challenges.** We are grappling with a 20% loss in our subscription base (common



KRISTEN LOKEN

nationwide), as well as a turbulent economy.

This is a moment where we must double down on courageous creativity! This is not a time to retreat. Cutting back now would slam shut a unique window of opportunity we now have to inspire the audiences of our second century. **Our choice in this moment is simple: we can either soar with our possibilities or be paralyzed by our challenges.**

This community has sustained San Francisco Opera with extraordinary passion since 1923. I ask you to help us soar into our second century by making a transformational gift. **Your gift will enable a future of bold creativity.** Our Centennial must not be a mirage of what might have been, fizzling out into bland, “safe” seasons of diminishing relevancy. Our Centennial must be a launching pad for a future of opera that reaffirms San Francisco as one of the great operatic centers of the world. **At our Centennial, we have an imperative to embrace our full creative potential and, in doing so, define the very future of opera.**

If you are already a donor, thank you for being a partner in this thrilling artistic journey. If you are able, please consider doubling your gift in celebration of the Centennial or making whatever increase works for you. If you are not yet a donor, please consider joining this incredible family of supporters who, since 1923, have made possible one of the greatest opera companies in the world.

A future of bold creativity must be the legacy of our Centennial. Together, we can make it possible!

To make a transformational Centennial gift, please contact 100andBeyond@sfoera.com. 🎭



Curtain call for the world premiere of John Adams' Antony and Cleopatra. / DREW ALTIZER

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