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# La Bohème

BY GIACOMO PUCCINI



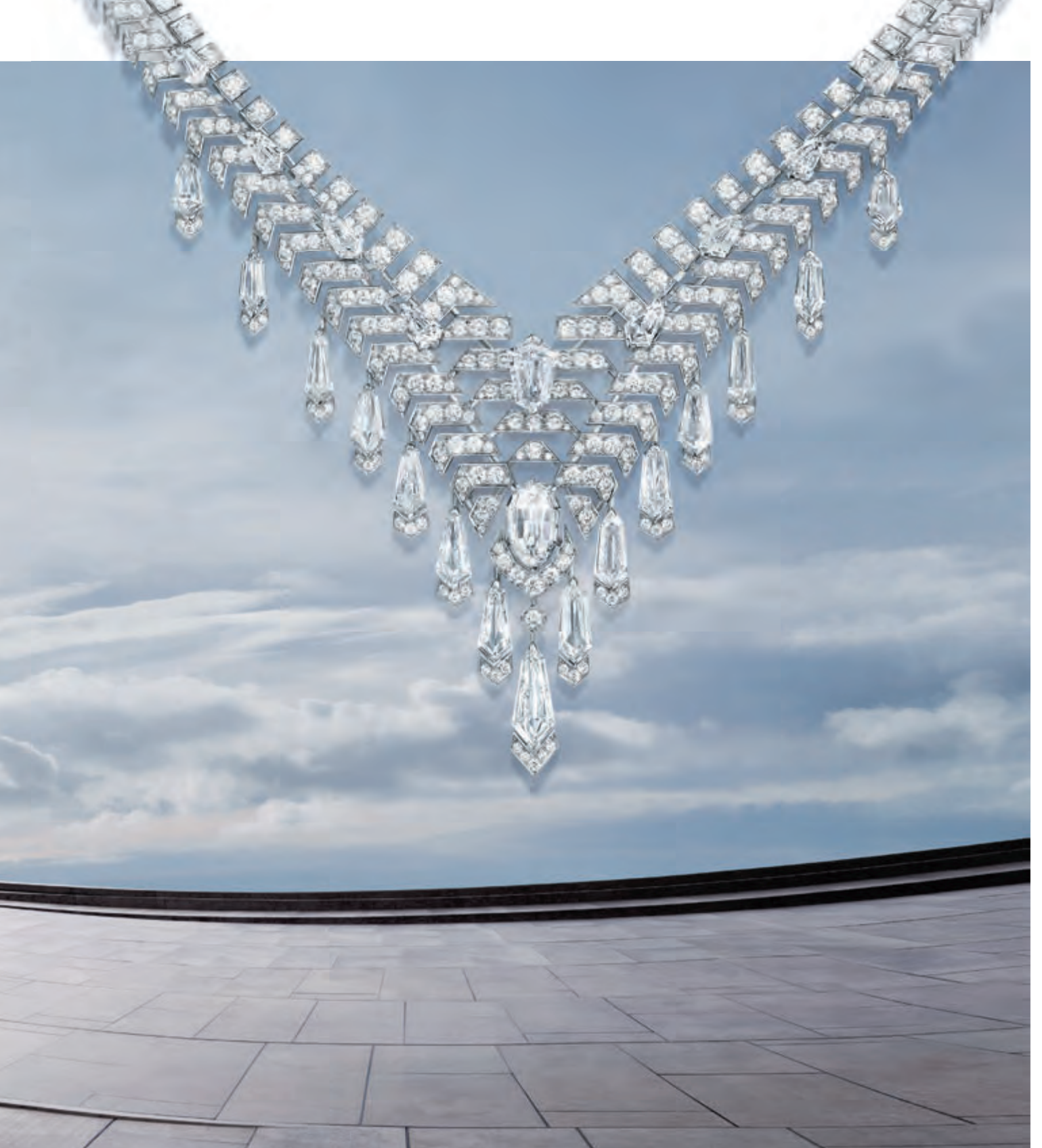
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**COMPASS**

# La Bohème

MUSIC BY GIACOMO PUCCINI

**Structure:** 4 acts, with one intermission after Act II

**Running time:** 2 hours, 15 minutes

**Language:** Sung in Italian with English supertitles

**Key Characters:**

- *Rodolfo*, a poet who lives in a Parisian garret
- *Mimi*, a seamstress who has just moved into the building
- *Marcello*, a painter and Rodolfo's roommate
- *Musetta*, Marcello's on-and-off-again lover

*La Bohème*, Puccini's 1896 masterpiece about love and loss among a group of bohemian artists who are struggling to make

ends meet in 19th-century Paris, is probably the most frequently performed opera in history. Its poignant drama and surging melodies encompass a microcosm of human emotions, from the intoxication of young love to jealousy to the pain of loss that comes far too early.

**Did you know?** San Francisco Opera founder Gaetano Merola had a particular fondness for *La Bohème*. Not only did he conduct it for the inaugural opening night of his new Company in 1923, Merola claimed that as a young conservatory student in Naples he heard the opera more than 30 times during its premiere season in Italy.

---

# Idomeneo

MUSIC BY WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

**Structure:** 3 acts, with two intermissions

**Running time:** 3 hours, 30 minutes

**Language:** Sung in Italian with English supertitles

**Key Characters:**

- *Idomeneo*, King of Crete
- *Idamante*, Idomeneo's son, in love with Ilia
- *Ilia*, a Trojan princess captured by the Greeks
- *Elettra*, a Greek princess who loves Idamante

Four years before he began his trio of operas with poet Lorenzo Da Ponte (*The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Così fan tutte*), Mozart's *Idomeneo* revealed that the young prodigy had become

an artist (though still only 25) of singular originality, insight, and communicative ability. The opera centers around a fateful oath made by a king who must then face an impossible choice between duty to his kingdom and love for his own son. Australian director Lindy Hume's production updates the story from its roots in Homeric legend and enhances the dramatic tension with imagery of the surging seas and craggy coastlines of Tasmania.

**Listen for:** In *Idomeneo*'s Act II aria "Fuor del mar" ("Out of the sea") the king expresses his inner turmoil at being pursued by a cruel fate. For this pivotal scene, Mozart composed a bravura showpiece for the tenor who must exhibit urgency, technical finesse, dynamic and vocal range, introspection, and dramatic power.





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## WELCOME FROM THE BOARD OF SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

**Welcome to summer at San Francisco Opera!** We're delighted you're here with us for another year of extraordinary artistic experiences that bring the community together in moments of sublime beauty and impact.

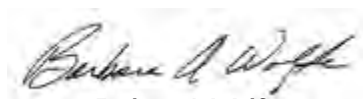
Puccini's *La Bohème* is one of the most enduring operas ever written. In fact, it was the very first opera performed by San Francisco Opera on September 26, 1923, being a favorite of our founder Gaetano Merola. When the opera premiered in Italy in 1896, the teenaged Merola heard it performed numerous times and had a good understanding of Puccini's intent for the piece. It is fitting that it launched his new company and has appeared in no fewer than 46 seasons since. It never ceases to tug at our heartstrings with its story of young love thwarted far too soon.

Talking of youth, Mozart's *Idomeneo* represents the work of a 25-year-old composer throwing off the mantle of "child prodigy" and establishing himself as a major voice in Europe. It is a work full of propulsive energy, powerful choruses, and deeply psychological character portrayals. We're so excited for Eun Sun Kim's interpretation of *Idomeneo*, a work rarely seen here. In fact, this is just the fifth time the Company has staged the work since 1977, although it features prominently in our history. It was the opera due to be performed the day of the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989. The Company rallied to keep playing while the city recovered, and just three days after the earthquake *Otello*, *Aida*, and *Idomeneo* were being performed at the Masonic Auditorium.

We're delighted to welcome you to our Pride Concert on June 27 as we celebrate our LGBTQIA+ community with a very special evening of music, immersive projections, and a post-show dance party. Featuring beloved San Francisco Opera artists Jamie Barton, Brian Mulligan, and Nikola Prinz, emceed by Monét X Change, and with the San Francisco Opera Orchestra conducted by Eun Sun Kim and Robert Mollicone, this promises to be a very special evening.

Thank you for making San Francisco Opera a part of your plans this summer. We are preparing exciting things for the fall and hope that you will come back and experience many more transcendent moments in the theater.

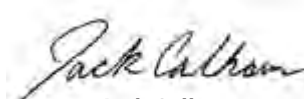
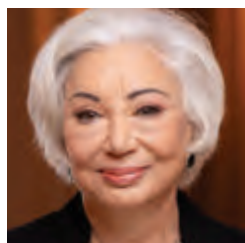
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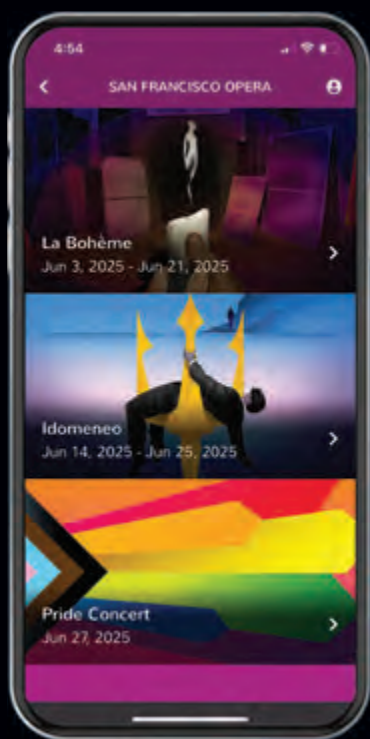
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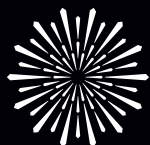
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Matthew Shilvock, *General Director, 2016-*



# Marieke & Jeff Rothschild



NOAH BERGER

**T**he central theme of our philanthropy has been to have a positive impact on the lives of others who have not had the opportunities and good fortune we have enjoyed,” note Marieke and Jeff Rothschild. As new champions of San Francisco Opera, they are doing precisely that.

“Marieke and I were raised with the expectation that one should participate in philanthropy, and we feel very fortunate to be able to engage at the scale, scope, and impact that our success has enabled,” remarks Jeff. “We are attracted to projects that have the potential for meaningful and enduring social impact.”

The Rothschilds’ philanthropic investments span health care, education, economic development, and land preservation. They are equally passionate about art. “Great art is something that you need to have a good life,” reflects Marieke. “You could live without beauty, but why would you?”

Live performance is especially close to their hearts. “We come together, taking time out of our busy lives, for

this shared experience,” Marieke explains. “The lights go down, there is a hush. Talented people work in harmony to create something extraordinary for us. By the end, we are all changed. Live music is life affirming.”

The Rothschilds’ commitment to San Francisco Opera comes at a critical moment of inflection for the Company. “Marieke and Jeff are propelling forward the Opera, allowing us to remain bold and courageous in our programming, our innovations, and our community engagement,” observes General Director Matthew Shilvock. “Their philanthropy is a wonderful exemplar of a soaring vision that uplifts the Bay Area. I am profoundly grateful for the trust they are placing in us to produce art that showcases the creative vitality of San Francisco on the global stage.”

“San Francisco Opera is at an interesting crossroads,” Marieke concludes. “I like that they are willing to take chances, to think outside of the box. To adapt this old art form to the modern world requires new audiences and new directions, and we find those here.”

# 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—*Un Ballo in Maschera*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Tristan and Isolde*, and *La Bohème*—and the Beethoven 9 Concert. 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 10 years. She edited 28 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, 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. John served as Chair of San Francisco Opera's Board of Directors for 16 years and recently became Chair Emeritus in 2024. He continues to serve on its Executive Committee. Opera lovers are grateful to Cynthia and John, and applaud their commitment to keeping San Francisco Opera a leading-edge company.



# Louise Gund

Production Sponsor, *Idomeneo*



DREW ALTIZER

**L**ouise Gund is an accomplished theater producer with a wide range of artistic talents. She has produced 12 Broadway plays and musicals, winning a Tony Award and Drama Desk Award for *All the Way*, and receiving three additional Tony Award nominations. A subscriber to San Francisco Opera since 2010, Louise has served on the Opera's Board of Directors since 2013. She has also served on the boards of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Cal Performances, Earthjustice, and the Berkeley Community Chorus and Orchestra. In addition to her major support of these organizations, she is an environmental activist and a staunch advocate on behalf of women's and children's issues. She was awarded the San Francisco Opera Spirit of the Opera Award in 2019 for devoted service to the Company and was the inspiration behind the Opera's Producers Circle.

In the Fall of 2023, Louise had the vision to found our Sixth Opera Fund which ensures each season will produce six operas instead of the previously planned five. Louise is passionate about enabling creativity to flourish, telling stories of meaning, and ensuring a vibrant future for the arts.

# Jan Shrem & Maria Manetti Shrem

Production Sponsor, *La Bohème*



**J**an and Maria both developed a love for opera at a young age, despite growing up half a world apart. Jan Shrem, following a successful career in publishing across Japan and Europe, went on to establish Clos Pegase Winery in California's Napa Valley, where he cultivated a world-class collection of modern and contemporary art. Maria Manetti Shrem built an international legacy in fashion entrepreneurship, playing a key role in bringing Gucci and Fendi into U.S. department and specialty stores. Together, they have dedicated their focus and generosity to philanthropy, supporting education, the performing and visual arts, and medical causes.

Though their journeys took them across the globe, their shared passion eventually led them to San Francisco Opera—and to each other. As dedicated Company Sponsors for over a decade, Jan and Maria established four generous funds:

- The Conductors Fund: Ensuring the continued presence of esteemed conductors on the podium.
- The Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund: Supporting performances by today's most compelling artists in the Italian repertoire.
- The Emerging Stars Fund: Showcasing promising young talents on the San Francisco Opera stage throughout the season.

- The Luminaries Concert Fund: Bringing legendary artists to the stage for special events and performances.

In December 2022, Maria was honored with The Spirit of the Opera award in recognition of her unwavering dedication to San Francisco Opera, her leadership in advancing its success, and her commitment to the art form. In 2023, she received the prestigious UC Davis Medal, an honorary degree, for her profound impact on the arts and her dedication to fostering education and exploration.

Maria made history in April 2024 by establishing eight endowed funds in perpetuity at the UC Davis College of Letters and Science—the most significant gift in its history. In January 2025, her transformative philanthropy inaugurated the Maria Manetti Shrem Art District / Arts Renaissance. Her generosity will benefit over 35,000 students annually, supporting top faculty, emerging talents, and world-renowned artists.

Through her visionary leadership, Maria continues to shape the cultural landscape and enrich lives worldwide.

In September 2024, we mourned the peaceful passing of Jan Shrem at 94, who was honored with a memorial short film at the Manetti Shrem Museum in January 2025. We celebrate his extraordinary legacy and stand in deep sympathy with Maria during this time of loss.



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# Donor Spotlight



DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

## **Jerome & Thao Dodson (Production Sponsor, *La Bohème*)**

“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 *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 '60s, serve with the American Embassy 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, then President of the San Francisco Opera Association. Eager to continue support, the Dodsons see this 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.



PHOTO VIA COMMUNITY HOSPITAL OF THE MONTEREY PENINSULA

## **Bertie Bialek Elliott (Production Sponsor, *La Bohème*)**

Roberta “Bertie” Bialek Elliott has a long history of volunteerism and philanthropic support, especially in the Bay Area and at her alma mater, Northwestern University in Chicago. Mrs. Elliott was born in Omaha, Nebraska, and graduated from Northwestern in 1954 with a degree in history and Phi Beta Kappa honors. In 1963, she and her then husband moved to Carmel, California, to raise their family. She was an early investor in Berkshire Hathaway, founded by her brother, legendary investor Warren Buffett. She and her three daughters established the Berkshire Foundation in 1996 and have supported many organizations and institutions through it. Mrs. Elliott has had a relationship with San Francisco Opera for more than 20 years. She is a big fan of John Adams. She sponsored *Anthony and Cleopatra* in 2022, *Girls of the Golden West* in 2017, and was a

commissioning sponsor of *Doctor Atomic* in 2005. She has served on the boards of the Monterey Bay Aquarium, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Monterey County Symphony Association, Carmel Bach Festival, and Community Foundation for Monterey County.

# Donor Spotlight



## **Dianne and Tad Taube (Production Sponsor, *La Bohème*)**

For more than 30 years, Dianne and Tad Taube have been catalysts for growth and innovation at San Francisco Opera. Their relationship with the Company dates back to 1991, and, since then, they have played an instrumental role in shaping its future through their visionary support and generous contributions.

The Taubes' impact can be seen in numerous facets of the organization. Their major funding of the Dianne and Tad Taube Atrium Theater has created a space for dynamic performances, while their support of the General Director's position, named in their honor, underscores their commitment to leadership and excellence at the highest levels. They also have been pivotal in advancing the Company's reach and influence through media, providing lead funding for the groundbreaking Taube Media Suite and supporting the renowned *Opera at the Ballpark* simulcasts, which have been instrumental in transforming the Company's impact in the wider community.

"As ongoing Company Sponsors, Dianne and Tad Taube exemplify the very spirit of philanthropy, inspiring others to give with the same generosity and vision," says Matthew Shilvock, the Tad and Dianne Taube General Director.

The Taubes' dedication goes beyond financial support. Dianne has served on the San Francisco Opera Board of Directors for over 20 years, contributing her expertise and leadership to the organization's long-term success. Together, Dianne and Tad have sponsored more than 10 productions, helping to bring both classic and contemporary works to life.

"Our many years of involvement with San Francisco Opera are an investment in the cultural life of our community," notes Dianne Taube. "It is an honor to help the Opera evolve. We are especially proud that our matching gifts in recent years help the Opera carry out its vision to bring this beautiful art form to people all over the Bay Area and beyond.



KRISTEN LOKEN

## **J. Burgess Jamieson (in memoriam) and Elizabeth Jamieson (Production Sponsor, *La Bohème*)**

Libby and Burgess Jamieson have made an extraordinarily sustaining commitment to San Francisco Opera since 1985, providing steadfast support for traditional classical productions. Their generosity ensured that celebrated and memorable works such as *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Il Trittico*, *La Bohème*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Turandot*, *Tosca*, *La Traviata*, and *Lohengrin* found a lasting presence on the War Memorial stage. Libby, along with her daughter Ellen, are pleased to offer a sponsorship role to bring *La Bohème* to the Opera as a tribute to Mr. Jamieson.

In November 2023, the Opera mourned the loss and board member contributions of Burgess. In 2011, following more than 45 years of distinguished experience in private and public investment management, Burgess began serving as a member of the San Francisco Opera Board of Directors and its investment committee. San Francisco Opera honors his remarkable legacy as a philanthropist, innovator in the venture capital community, and enterprising business leader.

Once reminiscing about his fondness for *La Bohème*, Burgess remembered that he had the pleasure of attending many performances in numerous US and European venues. This opera, compared to other composers' works, he felt, is a rare chance for audiences to have an especially melodic experience. He once added that: "Libby and I are pleased to bring *La Bohème* back to San Francisco this season in this beautifully sung and artistically staged production."

Burgess' vision and commitment to support the arts will inspire generations of music lovers for years to come.



# Donor Spotlight



## Anne Popkin

“Opera reminds us of our shared humanity,” remarks Anne Popkin. “Through love, heartbreak, conflict, and forgiveness, opera reflects the entire emotional spectrum of life. And one gets to share that experience with others in the audience. Like the arts generally, we must embrace this, especially in challenging times.”

Anne’s philanthropy centers on education, the arts, medicine, and the environment. On moving to the Bay Area in 2011, she quickly became involved with San Francisco Opera. In 2014 she joined the Opera’s Board, and in 2016 she made a significant gift to the Opera’s Endowment to create programs focused on expanding new audiences. Named for her father, who first introduced her to opera, the Jordan Joseph Popkin Opera Outreach Fund is dedicated to her mission.

“The Fund reflects two priorities,” Anne notes. “It enables people from all walks of life to know and fall in love with opera. And it enables the Opera to create annual and longer-term programs to address audience expansion using income the gift generates every year.”

Anne’s inspired leadership is expanding San Francisco Opera’s goal to develop new audiences and augment future programming. She is clear about her purpose. “Opera is for everyone. Here, we create exceptional art,” she reflects. “This is our guiding star. But we also have another mission: to bring the experience of opera to the broader Bay Area and its residents, to people who may not otherwise find themselves at the Opera. Donating to our Endowment is one way for me to further that mission.”

## The Endowment Fund

San Francisco honors those whose Endowment contributions, received through May 1, 2025, have generously provided the Company with the financial stability and assurance to be the most exciting force in opera today and in the future.

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*Rigoletto* Illustration  
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# Your Guide to San Francisco Opera at the War Memorial Opera House

WELCOME! WE'RE SO PLEASED YOU'RE HERE.

**CONNECT TO SAN FRANCISCO OPERA** after the performance! Follow us on Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok @sfopera for your insider's look!



## COAT CHECK

Check your coat at the north and south ends of the Main Lobby. For the safety and comfort of our audience, please check large bags at coat check.

## DINING

**CAFES:** 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 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 open two hours prior to performances.

Reservations are strongly recommended.

Reserve a table online at [sfopera.com/dine](https://sfopera.com/dine) or email

[operahousepreorder@ggcaterring.com](mailto:operahousepreorder@ggcaterring.com),

or call **(415) 861-8150** (email preferred).

## 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.

## 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.

## 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 everyone in the theater enjoying a live, in-the-moment experience.
- Take photos before or after the performance, during intermission, and during the bows. Leave cameras and recording devices off during performances.
- Enjoy food and drinks, purchased onsite pre-show and during intermission, before entering the theater. You may bring purchased drinks into the theater, but please be mindful of your fellow patrons.
- 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.

*The Opera reserves the right to remove any patron creating a disturbance.*

## 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.

## ACCESSIBILITY

San Francisco Opera is committed to providing easy access for all of our patrons. If you 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. We are unable to provide patrons a wheelchair nor personal assistance. If you arrive with a caregiver, they will be granted unseated entry to assist you and invited to wait in the lobby until the performance concludes.

## LARGE-PRINT CAST SHEETS AND SYNOPSES

Visit the North Lobby coat check for large-print versions.

## 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.

## OPERA GLASSES

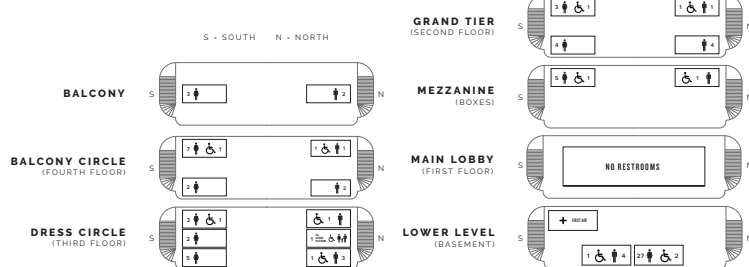
See the action up close and rent a pair of opera glasses for \$5 at the North Lobby coat check. ID deposit is requested. Credit card only.

## 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 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday–Friday).

## RESTROOMS

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



## 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 on the front steps of the War Memorial Opera House. These ambassadors are there to assist you.



## WALKING GROUPS

Civic Center Ambassadors lead walking groups to BART and the Civic Center & UC SF Law garages after evening performances. They will be holding signs on the Opera House steps facing Van Ness once the performance concludes.

## RIDESHARE

Rideshare services pick-up and drop-off at the white loading zone at 301 Van Ness Avenue (located in front of the Opera House).

## 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. Taxis cannot be guaranteed as service is based on availability of licensed taxis. Please note the Taxi Ramp is not staffed.

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

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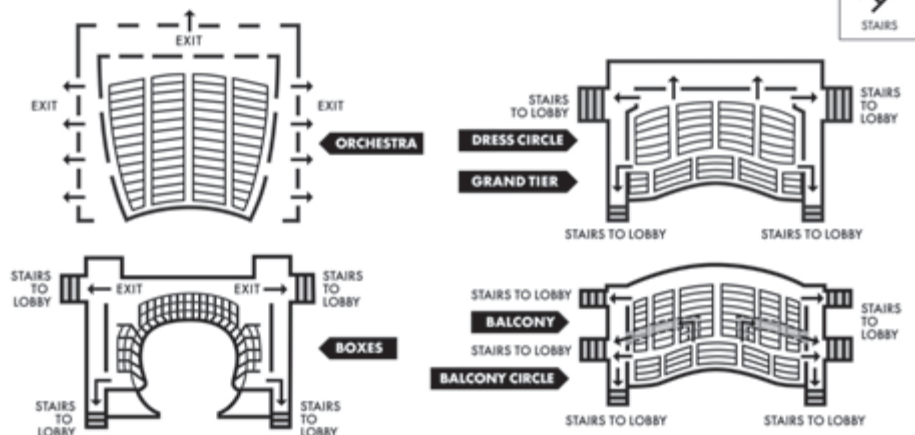
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## SAN FRANCISCO WAR MEMORIAL AND PERFORMING ARTS CENTER WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE EXIT DIAGRAM



**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.

The San Francisco War Memorial acknowledges that we are on the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone who are the original inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula. As guests, we recognize that we benefit from living and working on their traditional homeland. We wish to pay our respects by acknowledging the ancestors, elders, and relatives of the Ramaytush Community and by affirming their sovereign rights as First Peoples.



# Our Donor Family

The collective support of San Francisco Opera's generous donor family keeps world-class opera on the stage and brings community programs to students and families. Each year, support from individuals and institutional funders accounts for over 80% of the revenue needed to create transformative opera.

Listed gifts were received between **August 1, 2023 and May 1, 2025**. 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** or **membership@sfopera.com** so that we may update our records accordingly.

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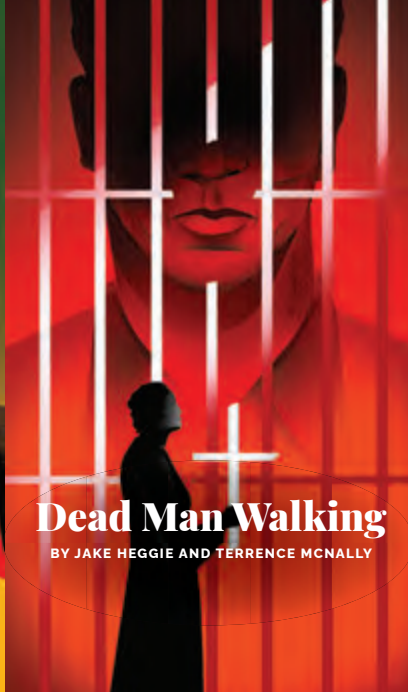
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# La Bohème

OPERA IN FOUR ACTS BY GIACOMO PUCCINI

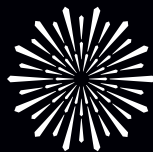
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**JUNE 3, 7, 10, 12, 13, 15, 18, 19, 21, 2025**



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# La Bohème

## ACT I

It is Christmas Eve in Paris. Two poverty-stricken young artists, Marcello, a painter, and Rodolfo, a poet, attempt to work in their freezing garret. In desperation, they burn one of Rodolfo's dramas to keep warm. Their two roommates, Colline, a philosopher, and Schaunard, a musician, return home. Even though Schaunard has brought food, the four bohemians decide to eat their Christmas dinner in the Latin Quarter. Just then, Benoit, their landlord, arrives to demand his overdue rent. The men ply him with drink and, when he boasts of marital indiscretions, they feign moral indignation and throw him out. Marcello, Colline, and Schaunard leave for the Latin Quarter. Rodolfo, always the loner, promises to join them after finishing some work, but a knock on the door interrupts him. Mimì, a young neighbor, enters in search of a light for her candle. Clearly ill and breathless from the stairs, she faints and drops her room key. Rodolfo is entranced by her and manages to detain her by concealing the key. Either by accident or design, both their candles go out. As they search in the darkness for the lost key, their hands touch. They are instantly attracted and joyfully declare their love before leaving to join Rodolfo's friends.

## ACT II

A festive crowd celebrates Christmas Eve in the Latin Quarter. At the Café Momus, Rodolfo introduces Mimì to his roommates. Their carefree mood changes when Musetta, Marcello's former lover, appears with Alcindoro, her aging suitor. Musetta, still in love with Marcello, attempts to attract his attention. He starts by deliberately ignoring her but cannot resist her obvious play for him. Musetta shrewdly gets rid of the besotted Alcindoro and leaves him to foot the entire bill as she and her bohemian friends escape through the crowd.

## ACT III

Early one snowy February morning, Mimì seeks out Marcello, who is painting a mural at a tavern near the city gates. Mimì tells Marcello that she and Rodolfo have separated because of his jealousy. As Marcello tries to comfort her, Rodolfo appears, also seeking Marcello's advice. Mimì conceals herself and overhears their conversation. Rodolfo tells Marcello he is leaving Mimì

because of her flirtations with other men. Marcello is skeptical and forces Rodolfo to admit the truth: Mimì is mortally ill, and Rodolfo is consumed by feelings of guilt and remorse, knowing that the harsh conditions of their life together have endangered her health. Mimì's cough gives her away, and Rodolfo realizes she has overheard everything. Overwhelmed by her plight, Rodolfo promises to stay with Mimì until the spring. Marcello and Musetta argue viciously and separate.

## ACT IV

Rodolfo and Marcello, now separated from Mimì and Musetta, respectively, are working in their garret. Schaunard and Colline arrive with supper, and the four fool around, imagining they are attending a fancy ball. Suddenly, Musetta enters with Mimì, now close to death and desperate to be with Rodolfo. Marcello and Musetta leave to summon a doctor and buy Mimì a muff to warm her hands. Colline also departs to sell his beloved overcoat. Left alone for a few moments, Mimì and Rodolfo remember their happier times together.

The others return. But before the doctor can arrive, Mimì dies.

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**First performance:** Turin, Teatro Regio; February 1, 1896

**First performance in the U.S.:** Los Angeles, Del Conte Opera Company; October 14, 1897

**First San Francisco Opera performance:** September 26, 1923, the inaugural performance of the newly incorporated San Francisco Opera, conducted by Gaetano Merola.

*La Bohème* has been performed by San Francisco Opera in 46 previous seasons. For complete information on all past casts, visit [archive.sfopera.com](http://archive.sfopera.com)

**Personnel:** 12 principals, 50 choristers, 20 children choristers, 5 supernumeraries; **87 total**

**Orchestra:** 2 flutes, 1 piccolo, 2 oboes, 1 English horn, 2 clarinets, 1 bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, 1 cimbasso, 1 timpani, 4 percussion, 1 harp; regular (40) strings; **68 total**

**Onstage:** 2 piccolos, 4 trumpets, 2 percussion; **8 total**

**Backstage:** 2 percussion

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The children singing in this production are members of the San Francisco Girls and Boys Choruses (listed on page 58). The San Francisco Girls Chorus is led by Artistic Director Valérie Sainte-Agathe and The San Francisco Boys Chorus is led by Intermediate Chorus Director Todd Jolly.



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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18 • 7:30 PM  
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# La Bohème

Opera in four acts by **Giacomo Puccini**  
Libretto by **Luigi Illica** and **Giuseppe Giacosa**

(Sung in Italian with English supertitles)

## CAST

(in order of appearance)

Marcello	<b>Lucas Meachem</b> (June 3, 7, 10, 12, 15, 19) <b>Will Liverman*</b> (June 13, 18, 21)
Rodolfo	<b>Pene Pati</b> (June 3, 7, 10, 12, 15, 19) <b>Evan LeRoy Johnson</b> (June 13, 18, 21)
Colline	<b>Bogdan Talos*</b>
Schaunard	<b>Samuel Kidd†</b>
Benoît	<b>Dale Travis</b>
Mimi	<b>Karen Chia-ling Ho</b> (June 3, 7, 10, 12, 15, 19) <b>Nicole Car</b> (June 13, 18, 21)
A Prune Vendor	<b>C. Michael Belle</b>
Parpignol	<b>Chester Pidduck</b>
A Child	<b>Jacob Rainow</b>
Musetta	<b>Andrea Carroll*</b> (June 3, 7, 10, 12, 15, 19) <b>Brittany Renee</b> (June 13, 18, 21)
Alcindoro	<b>Dale Travis</b>
Customhouse Sergeant	<b>Andrew Thomas Pardini</b>
Customhouse Officer	<b>Nikolas Nackley*</b>

*Students, townspeople, shopkeepers, street vendors, soldiers, waiters, children*

\* San Francisco Opera debut    † Current Adler Fellow

**TIME AND PLACE:** Mid-nineteenth-century Paris

**ACT I:** A garret

**ACT II:** The Latin Quarter

—INTERMISSION—

**ACT III:** A city gate, the Barrière d'Enfer

**ACT IV:** A garret

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

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

*Patrons who leave during the performance may not be reseated until intermission.*

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

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

# Episode in the Life of an Artist

**LA BOHÈME RECAPTURES A WRITER'S YOUTH**

BY LARRY ROTHE



*Arturo Chacon-Cruz (Rodolfo) and Erika Grimaldi (Mimi) in La Bohème, 2017. / CORY WEAVER/SAN FRANCISCO OPERA*

One minute. That is how long it took me to fall in love with *La Bohème*, and I suspect others, millions of them, have succumbed just as quickly, starting with the Turin audience that evening in 1896 when the curtain first rose on the bohemians' garret and Rodolfo gazed across the chimneys of Paris. At that moment, roughly a minute into the music, Puccini introduces the theme that is key to this opera: this reminiscence, this look back, back from some future vantage point on an episode long past, an episode that colored a life.

Ask what opera is all about, and *La Bohème* is likely to be part of the answer. Its beauties inspire love in first-timers and devotees. But *Bohème* is about more than beauty. It demonstrates what opera can do.

One thing opera can do is render time more convincingly than any other method of storytelling. *La Bohème* is an artist's self-portrait, an account of himself as a young man. That artist, Rodolfo, is the memory's author, and in *Bohème* he reflects on who he was. Take note: The man telling his story is different from the man we see on stage. We get to know the onstage Rodolfo through the words we hear him utter. We get to know the older Rodolfo through the music, the medium that carries the words, the medium that delivers the recollection. In a

Then comes something more unsettling, a phrase shaped symmetrically and sung B/A/A/D/A/A/G, the repeated As rising and falling a fourth, pivoting around the D before the final A drops a step, as did the first interval of this phrase, this phrase that evokes such a powerful sense of nostalgia before the music recovers and Rodolfo ends in a rising flourish. What we hear *in the music* itself is something generous and carefree, tinged at midpoint with a hint of melancholy. What we hear *Rodolfo tell us* is that he is thinking about all those comfortable warm houses while the old stove in the garret sits idle, mounting no defense against the December cold. In fitting sounds so sublime to words so banal, Puccini offers a musical equivalent to our tendency to embellish the past. *Times were hard back then, but those were the days.*

Think of *La Bohème* as narrated by an older-and-wiser Rodolfo who recalls his twenties, when he was a wannabe writer, cold and hungry in the loft he shared with three artsy friends: a painter, a philosopher, and a musician. *Times were hard back then, but those were the days.* Into this scene of poverty walks Mimì, appearing almost as an apparition. The slow sunrise of a crescendo in the strings presages her aria "Mi chiamano Mimì": "I'm always called Mimì." Her name is actually Lucia, a fact she discloses just

---

## ***"La Bohème is an artist's self-portrait, an account of himself as a young man. That artist, Rodolfo, is the memory's author."***

---

written memoir, the author comments self-consciously on episodes of his past. Opera dispenses with such narrative clumsiness. It can render past and present simultaneously, mimicking life. It mirrors what we do when we recall parts of our own past and reflect on what they meant, and on what they continue to mean at the moment we recapture them. No other kind of narrative achieves this so elegantly.

Now trade my abstractions for the action on stage. Puccini aligns us with his protagonist before we know what is happening. A minute in, we encounter Rodolfo's theme, fifteen bars that over the next two hours we will hear in various forms. Here, with its first appearance, the composer dresses the most mundane of subjects in his most arresting music. "In the gray skies I'm watching the smoke from a thousand Paris chimneys," Rodolfo sings in a breezy seven bars.

once and never repeats. Lucia: *light*. Light is what she offers Rodolfo, in the form of love and acceptance such as any poet craves from his audience. Mimì is his audience now, and she will be forever after, because everything he does and writes he will do and write for her. Now he leaves behind the goofy horseplay of the opening scenes, the banter with the guys. He gets serious. He performs for Mimì. *Who am I? I'm a poet. How do I live? Yeah, well—I live.* In an instant, Mimì is in love. Rodolfo has the lines and knows how to use them. Yet his delivery is anything but slick. He hears himself pleading his case to Mimì in a new voice, honest and unguarded. Mimì is not his first girlfriend—his approach to her is too eloquent for a novice—but she is the one who will make the difference, the one who *has* made the difference, as the older-and-wiser Rodolfo/narrator understands. Mimì, as Rodolfo recalls her,





Torre del Lago Puccini - Villa Puccini - Il Maestro al pianoforte  
Giacomo Puccini at home in Torre del Lago / LEBRECHT MUSIC ARTS / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

will always illuminate the memory of those rough days, in which she played so central a role, those days that, for all their hardship, will always bear the tender ache suggested in that pivotal rising and falling fourth.

I have focused on one moment in this two-hour opera. That moment launches the drama's trajectory in an uninterrupted arch. Puccini's fusion of action and music is surely one reason his *Bohème* so completely overshadows Leoncavallo's. Ruggero Leoncavallo, remembered today only for *Pagliacci*, the first of his many operas and operettas, was at work on his own *Bohème* when he learned his rival was also adapting *Scenes from Bohemian Life*, an 1849 collection of sketches by French writer Henri Murger. Although Puccini in 1895 had produced only one bona fide success of his own, that success was *Manon Lescaut*. Leoncavallo, finding himself pitted against a composer who could create an opera of such sweeping melodies and impact, understood what he was up against, and he reacted badly. After all, he had discovered Murger first. Puccini stayed cool. Let the public decide, he said, with the confidence of an artist who knows he is good for more than one hit. The two *Bohèmes* co-existed for ten years, until

Leoncavallo's vanished from the stage and Puccini's went on to become the world's most popular opera.

Anyone inclined to sit through Leoncavallo's *Bohème* will understand why time has favored Puccini, who achieved such different results using similar material. Leoncavallo's opera, an ungainly hybrid that starts as flaccid comedy, then shifts to blustering tragedy, feels pieced together and fails to deliver the urgent sense of life that is Puccini's strong suit. Leoncavallo believed himself a competent librettist and fashioned his own script. In librettists Giuseppe Giocosa and Luigi Illica, Puccini found the ideal collaborators, both of them accomplished writers who had worked with him on *Manon Lescaut* and who after *Bohème* would deliver the librettos for *Tosca* (1900) and *Madama Butterfly* (1904). Using Murger's collection of stories drawn from his own experience as a struggling writer, they devised a tale marked by the realism and naturalism audiences would have found in contemporary novels. Puccini, who knew what made a script live or limp, demanded rewrite after rewrite, forcing his librettists to ask themselves more than once if working with this man was worth the anguish.

The results in *Bohème* speak for themselves: words that inspire the ideal musical setting and that dictate the pace. Consider the two parts of Act I. The first part rushes, pedal-to-the-floor as the garret-partners trade jokes and jibes. This contrasts with the act's second half, when Rodolfo and Mimì discover each other and the music slows to a rhapsody, embodying a passion that supplants kid stuff with ecstasy.

Early audiences faulted *Bohème* for what we now regard as one of its great strengths, its realism. So downbeat a story set against so gritty a background, those characters you might encounter on any city sidewalk—all that was fine for the pages of Balzac or Zola or Dickens or Frank Norris, but the opera stage was reserved for more graceful material. (Audiences had not yet encountered Richard Strauss' *Salome*.) Often opera asks us to suspend our disbelief. Not *Bohème*. We recognize its world.

Yet *La Bohème* is hardly a documentary. Puccini writes melodies so seductive, and he is so easy to love, that he is often dismissed as an entertainer, as if that vocation left no room for artistry. *Bohème* should convince us otherwise.

Any catalog of Puccini's gifts has to include his extraordinary use of the orchestra. In the great aria "Che gelida manina," for example, he is elegant and reserved, applying a brushstroke of strings and a dab of winds and harp to color the moment Rodolfo grasps that he is in love. His theme—the one we heard a minute in—has already returned, first on solo violin, with a delicacy that suggests his vulnerability, and again in just a hint as he stands transfixed by Mimì, stunned by the luck that has led her to his door. Now, in prelude to his greatest aria, his theme turns gentle and broad—a setting for serious words—and even as it transforms into "Talor del mio forziere," Puccini holds the orchestra back, allowing his singer full rein in this impossibly romantic music. In his orchestral restraint, even more than his *fortissimos*, Puccini displays his artistry.

The orchestra leads us through the drama. Act I opens with a rush of strings, winds, and brass as Rodolfo and Marcello kvetch and joke. It closes with a gentle reprise of "Talor del mio forziere," growing to a great crescendo as Rodolfo and Mimì pledge themselves to each other, and at last closing quietly, the lovers' voices receding offstage. Act II, perfectly shaped, ends as it began, with the Christmas revelers. In between, we meet Musetta. Her waltz is a masterful feat of foreplay and consummation, teasing and swelling until it climaxes *fortissimo* and *tutta forza*, to be followed by a quiet denouement before the revelers return. Act III, opening and closing with a great snap to attention in the orchestra, concludes as Act I



Lithograph by Adolfo Hohenstein, 1895. / PVDE / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

ended, only now Rodolfo and Mimì sing of parting, not of the shared life that awaits them, and the last music we hear is a sad variant of "Talor del mio forziere." Act IV's structure follows that of Act I: orchestral bluster, upbeat mood, then reversal, as Musetta enters with the news that Mimì hasn't long to live. A telling reference to Rodolfo's theme, for the first and only time heard in the minor mode, underscores the tragedy. As Mimì dies, we recall the lovers' meeting in a fleeting *pianissimo* reference to "Che gelida manina." Mimì promised springtime in her first aria, and flowers, a return to life. Rising flutters in the flute accompanied her words then, and they recur as Musetta mourns the doomed Mimì.

Although the flowers Mimì fashions from bits of fabric will last, nothing that lives and breathes can run out the clock. Real flowers die and youth passes. What Mimì and Rodolfo shared was an episode, destined to end—even if its memory will endure as surely as Mimì's flowers. In *La Bohème*, Rodolfo has seen to that. 🌸

Larry Rothe's books include *For the Love of Music* and *Music for a City, Music for the World*. Visit [larryrothe.com](http://larryrothe.com).



# They call me Mimi

**THREE ARTISTS  
SHARE INSIGHTS ON  
BRINGING PUCCINI'S  
SEAMSTRESS TO LIFE**

BY LOUISE T. GUINHER



*The late Italian soprano Mirella Freni, who made her San Francisco Opera debut in 1967 as Mimi in La Bohème, remains an inspiration for artists taking on the role.*

MARGARET NORTON



**S**an Francisco Opera welcomes three sopranos as Mimì in *La Bohème* this month. Each traveled her own unique path to one of opera's most beloved roles. Caroline Corrales, who appears as Mimì later this month with *Bohème Out of the Box*, saw her first *La Bohème* as a teenager at her hometown Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. "I was *so* taken by the story and by the music," she remembers. "It was so sweet and beautiful and heartbreaking!"

Nicole Car's introduction was a baptism by fire. As a young artist with Sydney Opera, she asked to sit in on rehearsals for a new *Bohème* and found herself jumping in for an ailing colleague. "I had two weeks to learn [Mimì], which was crazy. I remember working with coaches three or four hours a day, trying to absorb all this amazing music. I just got thrown in there, which in some ways was really positive, because everything felt kind of organic, in terms of the character development." Car has taken her Mimì to many top companies around the world, including London's Royal Opera and the Metropolitan Opera.

Karen Chia-ling Ho, making her role debut this season, admits that when she first saw *Bohème* as a student in Taiwan she "wasn't a big fan of opera. I was like, 'Opera is clichéd. It's all love stories.' I was into German lieder. But

my teachers at Eastman and CCM [Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music] gave me so many different tools and resources, so I started doing more opera scenes and workshops, and I started to grow into the love of opera."

Each artist has a highly personal take on Mimì's essential qualities. "For me, the essence of Mimì is a sense of innocence, a naïveté that needs to be brought out," says Car. "She has this big, loving heart. I think Mimì—my Mimì at least—is lonely. She's spent a lot of time by herself, and she ends up with this band of boys, and I think it plays to something quite social in her that she didn't know she had. I think she found in those boys, and in Musetta, something really special, and I definitely relate to that. And the idea of that special ever-giving love. She's not an absorber. She *gives out* light to the world."

Ho, too, connects with Mimì's introverted side. "I think she's a little bit similar to my younger self, because I wasn't very social. She says, in her text, 'I don't go out, I just stay in my room.' I was a little bit like that, and I was a little naïve." She notes that in other respects she and Mimì are very different. "I think she's very brave—which I am not," she says with a confiding smile. "She dares to love."

Corrales admires Mimì's kindness of heart above all. "She's so thoughtful and so intentional with her words, and with the delicate way she treats other people, with so

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***“Despite the tragedy of Mimì’s story,  
her portrayals see her as a positive figure of truth and beauty.”***



Karen Chia-ling Ho (left) makes her role debut as Mimì on June 3, 7, 10, 12, 15, and 19. Nicole Car (center) performs the role on June 13, 18, and 21. Caroline Corrales (right) portrays Mimì in *Bohème Out of the Box* on June 28 and 29 at Heritage Plaza in Hayward.

much respect and love. Even when she's ready to leave Rodolfo, she keeps saying 'Senza rancor' [without rancor]—and it's genuine! It's such a joy to be able to play this wonderful, deeply good, authentic, and lovely woman."

Despite the tragedy of Mimì's story, her portrayals see her as a positive figure of truth and beauty. "I never like Mimì to be the downer," says Car. "She's not sad about her illness, she's not angry about it. She accepts it as part of her life; and she wants to live that life as much as she can until her time is up. I think there's this kind of radiant sunshine that comes out of her that comes from a truthful place."

One of the defining moments for Corrales comes in her first aria: "after the climax, where she's talking about when the frost disappears and the flowers start to bloom, and she feels the warmth of the sun, and it's all hers. It's this huge dramatic musical moment, and then everything drops, and she talks about seeing these flowers in a vase and investigating each petal, and how sweet it is to smell them and see them. That's really who she is. She's so curious and so thorough and so gentle, and the greatest joy in her life is literally smelling the roses."

Ho is approaching her first Mimì with her heart and mind wide open. "The key is in her first aria," she says. "But after discussion with my friends and colleagues, they all have different interpretations, and now I'm thinking, 'Hmm ... which kind of Mimì will I be?' because my interpretation is very straightforward. I think she's innocent, she's poor, but she wants to experience different things in life. But some people say, 'Actually she's very calculated. That's why she went to knock on [Rodolfo's] door....' I still feel like there are many parts where I need some other people's insights into the character to give me inspiration."

Two of the sopranos offer strikingly similar perceptions about Mimì's lyrical bent. "When she starts talking about herself in 'Mi chiamano Mimì,'" says Car, "she doesn't even realize that in a lot of ways she becomes so much more poetic than the actual poet is in his aria." Corrales picks up the theme: "As she's getting to know Rodolfo, and he tells her that he's a poet, she talks about how all the things she loves to do are 'poesia' too. And in the final duet, she's so, so poetic. She talks about how her love is so profound, it's deeper than the sea. She has this amazing moment where she's reflecting some of Rodolfo's ideas, and it just shows how much she listened and was a great partner in that way—to take on these qualities, and to enhance these qualities in herself, that just deepens their connection."



*Karen Chia-ling Ho created the role of Princess Jia in Bright Sheng and David Henry Hwang's Dream of the Red Chamber at San Francisco Opera in 2016.*  
CORY WEAVER

When learning a new piece, Ho avoids referring to performances of the past. "Normally, I just listen one time through, and then I'll put it aside, because I'm pretty good at copying, so I try not to do that. I just want to know the shape of the music, and then I'll do exploration by myself." Car and Corrales, on the other hand, tip their hats to the same touchstone Mimì. "[Mirella] Freni's version is one of the most pure, beautifully sung, respectful of the score, and just very informed in terms of the character," says Car. "My favorite production ever was San Francisco Opera with Mirella Freni and [Luciano] Pavarotti," says Corrales. "It's wonderful to be able to understand those performance traditions and see, 'Okay, what is Mirella doing that's in the score, and what is she doing that's her own signature? And what is resonating with me so much that I could take inspiration from it?'"

The role's emotional stakes pose a significant challenge. "It took me at least two or three weeks of coachings to be able to sing the last few pages of her music without crying," confesses Corrales. Ho faced the same hurdle. "My teacher Diana Soviero told me, 'You cannot cry on the stage, because if you cry, the audience





Nicole Car made her *Company* debut in 2022 as Donna Elvira in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. / CORY WEAVER



Caroline Corrales as Mimì in *Bohème Out of the Box*, April 2025. / KRISTEN LOKEN

will not cry,” she says. “So you have to be very present—you’re yourself, at the same time that you have to bring out the character to the audience. It’s pretty challenging.”

All three agree on the secret of the opera’s evergreen charms. “It’s the power of verismo opera,” says Ho. “It’s very close to people’s heart. The love story never ends, and it can be transplanted to many different places and times.”

“These are real people’s stories,” echoes Corrales. “We see ourselves in them. They are vibrant and resourceful, and deep and caring people who are living in an economic struggle, who are trying to survive while being true to themselves. All of them are raw and real. What’s more relatable than the opening scene of a bunch of friends and roommates trying to scramble together money for food and heat? And then making art, and falling in love, and finding joy in the little things.”

“Love is a universal story,” says Car. “It’s not a story of kings and queens, it’s a story of something that is possible for all of us. Everyone in that public will have some story that informs them of something these characters are doing onstage. My aim is to be a vessel for that.”

San Francisco Opera’s trio of Mimìs say the credit for their

portrayals goes to the composer. “Puccini wrote a piece that is genius. There is no extra note, there are no extra words, it’s not overly dramatic. It’s just perfectly written,” says Car. “It’s such an ensemble-y piece! If you have six people who are really willing to put themselves in the situation and be there for each other—no divas, no divos—you have an absolute winning combination every time.”

“Puccini is so specific,” says Corrales. “Every tempo marking, every dynamic marking, every swell is so deeply connected to the text and to the character. When I started learning [Mimì], my teacher was Nova Thomas, who had studied with Mirella Freni and spent a month living with her, just learning [Mimì]. And Mirella said to her, ‘If you sing and observe every piece of ink on the page, you’ll be a hundred times greater the Mimì than I ever was.’ Which I don’t think is possible, but she was so right that every single thing you need to be a great Mimì is right there on the page. You don’t have to do any kind of inventing. You just come to it with an open heart and let Mimì in.”

*Louise T. Guinther, longtime senior editor at Opera News magazine, is an arts writer based in New York.*



# Artist Profiles

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



## RAMÓN TEBAR

(Valencia, Spain)

### Conductor

**San Francisco Opera**

**Highlights:** *L'Elisir d'Amore*; *The Future Is Now*; *Adlers in Concert*

**Recent and Upcoming:** *La Bohème* (Hamburg State Opera, Vienna State Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Opera Naples); *Madama Butterfly* (Ópera de Tenerife, Vienna, FGO); *Carmen* (FGO, Cincinnati Opera, Savonlinna Opera, Naples); *Turandot* (Vienna); *Don Pasquale* (Vienna, Hamburg); *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu); Saverio Mercadante's *Francesca da Rimini* (Frankfurt Opera); *Roméo et Juliette* (Cincinnati); *La Cenerentola* (Royal Swedish Opera); *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* (Lorraine Opera); *Otello* (Pamplona's Baluarte); Daniel Catán's *Florencia en el Amazonas* (FGO); *Die Zauberflöte* (Naples); *Aida* (Naples); concerts with Cincinnati Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, Aarhus Symphony, Norrlandsoperans symfoniorkester, Copenhagen Philharmonic Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of Opera Naples (Florida) Artistic Director of Spain's Arantzazu Festival



## KAREN CHIA-LING HO, ♪+

Soprano

(Hainesville, Illinois)

### Mimi

**San Francisco Opera:** Princess Jia in Bright

Sheng and David Henry Hwang's *Dream of the Red Chamber*

**Recent and Upcoming:** Title role of *Madama Butterfly* (Florentine Opera, Parnassus Society, Vancouver Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Boston Lyric Opera, Virginia Opera, Hawaii Opera Theatre); Meretaten in Philip Glass' *Akhmat* (Metropolitan Opera); Crowned Child in *Macbeth* (Metropolitan Opera); title role of *Tosca* (Hong Kong's More Than Music festival)

Merola Opera Program: 2014



## NICOLE CAR

Soprano

(Moonee Ponds, Australia)

### Mimi

**San Francisco Opera**

**Highlights:** Donna

Elvira in *Don Giovanni*; Eun Sun Kim Conducts Verdi Concert

**Recent and Upcoming:** Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffman* (Vienna State Opera); Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera* (Munich's Bavarian State Opera); Matréna in Clémence de Grandval's *Mazeppa* (Münchner Rundfunkorchester); title role of *Rusalka* (Opera Australia); Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* (Vienna, Paris Opera); Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* (Vienna,

Metropolitan Opera); Elisabetta in *Don Carlo* (Vienna, Paris, Deutsche Oper Berlin); Ellen Orford in *Peter Grimes* (Milan's Teatro alla Scala, Metropolitan Opera); Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra* (Paris); Desdemona in *Otello* (Vienna); Blanche in *Dialogues des Carmélites* (Vienna); Marguerite in *Faust* (Vienna); Mimi in *La Bohème* (Metropolitan Opera, Munich, London's Royal Ballet and Opera, Philadelphia Orchestra); Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin* (Munich); Salomé in *Hérodiade* (Berlin)



## PENE PATI, ◇+

Tenor

(Apia, Samoa)

### Rodolfo

**San Francisco Opera**

**Highlights:** The Duke in *Rigoletto*; Roméo in

*Roméo et Juliette*; *Opera Ball: The Centennial Celebration*; Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*; *In Song: Pene Pati*

**Recent and Upcoming:** Title role of Gounod's *Faust* (Paris Opera); Rodolfo in *La Bohème* (London's Royal Ballet and Opera, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Paris' Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Canadian Opera Company); The Duke in *Rigoletto* (Metropolitan Opera, Verona, Rouen Opera, Berlin State Opera, Naples); title role of *Werther* (Geneva Chamber Orchestra); Mozart Requiem (Lucerne); Nadir in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* (Aix-en-Provence); title role of Mozart's *Mitridate* (Salzburg Festival, Berlin State Opera); Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Paris Opera); Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette* (Paris'

## MANY THANKS TO

Timothy J. Marten, M.D. & Ms. Mary C. Heylin, supporting Nicole Car;  
Jennifer M. Bienaimé & Joshua Fiedler and Romana D. Bracco, supporting Lucas Meachem.

## ARTIST PROFILES CONTINUED

Opéra Comique, Bordeaux Opera); Alfredo in *La Traviata* (Deutsche Oper Berlin, Dutch National Opera, Berlin State Opera); Chevalier des Grieux in *Manon* (Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu, Hamburg State Opera); title role of *La Damnation de Faust* (Monte-Carlo Opera, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra); Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Naples' Teatro San Carlo); Orombello in Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* (Paris Opera); Percy in *Anna Bolena* (Vienna State Opera); Fernand in *La Favorite* (Bordeaux); Aménophis in Rossini's *Moïse et Pharaon* (Aix); title role of *La Clemenza di Tito* (Aix); *Thaïs* (Orchestre National de France at Théâtre des Champs-Élysées); *Madama Butterfly* (CBSO); Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* (Tonkünstler Orchester); Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France)  
San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship Program: 2016, 2017  
Merola Opera Program: 2013  
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X: @penepatitenor  
TikTok: @pene.pati



**EVAN LEROY JOHNSON**

Tenor  
(Pine Island, Minnesota)

**Rodolfo**

**San Francisco Opera**

**Highlights:** Lensky in *Eugene Onegin*  
**Recent and Upcoming:** Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette* (Minnesota Opera); Giasone in *Médée* (Prague National Theatre); Lensky in *Eugene Onegin* (Canadian Opera Company); Prince in *Rusalka* (Prague, Glyndebourne, Des Moines Metro Opera); Lt. B.F. Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* (Royal Danish Opera, Dallas Opera, Frankfurt); Don José in *Carmen* (Glyndebourne, BBC Proms, Frankfurt, Opera Philadelphia); Cassio in *Otello*

(Munich's Bavarian State Opera), Walther in *Tannhäuser* (Munich); Chevalier de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites* (Munich); Brighella in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Munich); Narraboth in *Salome* (Munich); Edmondo in *Manon Lescaut* (Munich); First Armored Man in *Die Zauberflöte* (Munich); Apparition of a Youth in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (Berlin Philharmonic, Baden-Baden); Malcolm in *Macbeth* (Salzburg Festival); Rodolfo in *La Bohème* (Munich, Philadelphia); Graf Albert in *Die Tote Stadt* (Munich); Steuermann in *Der Fliegende Holländer* (Munich); Ruiz in *Il Trovatore* (Munich); Hunchback in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (Munich); Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Kansas City); Verdi Requiem (Philadelphia)



**ANDREA CARROLL\***

Soprano  
(Bethesda, Maryland)

**Musetta**

**Recent and Upcoming:** Woglinde in *Das Rheingold*

(Milan's Teatro alla Scala); Gretel in *Hänsel und Gretel* (Semperoper Dresden, Vienna State Opera); Norina in *Don Pasquale* (Vienna, Milan); Nanetta in *Falstaff* (Houston Grand Opera, Palm Beach Opera); Musetta in *La Bohème* (London's Royal Ballet and Opera, San Diego Opera); Ilia in *Idomeneo* (Ravinia Festival); Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* (Metropolitan Opera, Milan, Vienna); Micaëla in *Carmen* (Lyric Opera of Kansas City); Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Canadian Opera Company); Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Vienna, Den Norske Opera); Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* (Houston, Vienna, Dallas); Brahms Requiem (Cleveland Orchestra); Gilda in *Rigoletto* (Vienna); Maria in *West Side Story* (Houston); Leila in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* (Houston); Adèle in *Le Comte Ory* (Garsington Opera); Kitty in Johannes

Maria Staud's *Die Weiden* (Vienna); concert (San Diego)



**BRITTANY RENEE**

Soprano  
(Bronx, New York)

**Musetta**

**San Francisco Opera**

**Highlights:** Julie in Rhiannon Giddens

and Michael Abels' *Omar*

**Recent and Upcoming:** Sister Rose in Jake Heggie and Terrence McNally's *Dead Man Walking* (San Francisco Opera); Musetta in *La Bohème* (Metropolitan Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis); Bess in *Porgy and Bess* (Kennedy Center, Turin's Teatro Regio); Esther in Paula Prestini's *Silent Light* (National Sawdust); Destiny/Loneliness/Greta in Terence Blanchard and Kasi Lemmons' *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* (Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago); Evelyn in *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* (Metropolitan Opera); Annie in *Porgy and Bess* (Metropolitan Opera); Sadie Griffith in Blanchard's *Champion* (Metropolitan Opera); Giannetta in *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Metropolitan Opera); Ancella in *Medea* (Metropolitan Opera); *Rigoletto* (Metropolitan Opera); Micaëla in *Carmen* (Opera Orlando); recital (Florentine Opera); vocals for Blanchard's score for *The Woman King* film



**LUCAS MEACHEM**

Baritone  
(Raleigh, North Carolina)

**Marcello**

**San Francisco Opera**

**Highlights:** Figaro in *Il*

*Barbiere di Siviglia*; title role of *Eugene Onegin*; title role of *Don Giovanni*; Papageno in *The Magic Flute*; Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*; Frank/Fritz in *Die Tote Stadt*; Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*

**Recent and Upcoming:** Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* (Madrid's Teatro Real, Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu, London's Royal Ballet and Opera); Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore* (Houston Grand Opera); Germont in *La Traviata* (Barcelona, Washington National Opera); *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Bologna); Guglielmo de Baskerville in Francesco Filidei's *Il Nome della Rosa* (Milan's Teatro alla Scala); Jean-Dominique Bauby in Joby Talbot's *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* (Dallas Opera); title role of *Don Giovanni* (LA Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Dresden); Michele and Gianni Schicchi in *Il Trittico* (Hamburg State Opera); title role of *Nabucco* (Oper im Steinbruch); Marcello in *La Bohème* (Metropolitan Opera); De Siriex in *Fedora* (Metropolitan Opera); Athanaël in *Thaïs* (Milan, Minnesota Opera); Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* (Dallas); Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (LA Opera); Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Houston); Zurga in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* (Bilbao Opera); Escamillo in *Carmen* (Turin's Teatro Regio, Paris Opera); Mendelssohn's *Elijah* (Chicago Symphony Orchestra) Co-Founder of the Perfect Day Music Foundation (PDMF) Winner of San Francisco Opera's Emerging Star of the Year: 2016 Grammy Award for Best Opera Recording 2017 (Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles*) San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship Program: 2004, 2005 Merola Opera Program: 2003 Website: lucasmeachem.com



**WILL LIVERMAN\***  
Baritone  
(Chesapeake, Virginia)  
**Marcello**  
**Recent and Upcoming:** *The Factotum* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Britten's *War Requiem* (BBC

Proms); Papageno in *The Magic Flute* (Metropolitan Opera); Marcello in *La Bohème* (Chicago); Ned Keene in *Peter Grimes* (Dutch National Opera); *Carmina Burana* (San Francisco Symphony); title role of Anthony Davis' *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X* (Metropolitan Opera); Charles in Terence Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* (Metropolitan Opera, Chicago); Rene Orth's *10 Days in a Madhouse* (Opera Philadelphia); Mercutio in *Roméo et Juliette* (Metropolitan Opera); Horemhab in Philip Glass' *Akhmat* (Metropolitan Opera); Malcolm Fleet in Nico Muhly's *Marnie* (Metropolitan Opera); title role of *Pelléas et Mélisande*; Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Kentucky); Pantalon in *The Love of Three Oranges* (Opera Philadelphia); Zurga in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* (Austin Opera); Silvio in *Pagliacci* (Opera Colorado); The Pilot in Rachel Portman's *The Little Prince* (Tulsa Opera); Foreman at the Mill in *Jenůfa* (Santa Fe Opera); Reverend in Jeanine Tesori's *Blue* (Amsterdam); concerts (Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Oakland Symphony, New York Festival of Song at Kaufman Music Center, Lexington Philharmonic, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Washington Chorus, Dayton Opera, Caramoor, Cincinnati Song Initiative) Grammy Award for Best Opera Recording 2023 (*Fire Shut Up in My Bones*) Website: willliverman.com



**BOGDAN TALOS\***  
Bass  
(Zalau, Romania)  
**Colline**  
**Recent and Upcoming:** Four Villains in *The Tales of Hoffmann* (Dusseldorf); Leporello in *Don Giovanni* (Paris Opera, Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Monterone in *Rigoletto* (Paris); Mandarin in *Turandot* (Paris); Colline in *La Bohème* (Metropolitan Opera); Verdi

*Requiem* (Hamburg Symphony Orchestra); Liszt's *The Legend of Saint Elizabeth* (Budapest, Brussels, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw); title role of *Bluebeard's Castle* (Dusseldorf); title role of *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Hamburg State Opera, Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Oroé in *Semiramide* (Deutsche Oper Berlin); Rodolfo in *La Sonnambula* (Dresden); Caronte in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* (Dresden); Filippo in *Don Carlo* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Banco in *Macbeth* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein); The King in *Aida* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Giorgio in *I Puritani* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Giorgio Talbot in *Maria Stuarda* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Alidoro in *La Cenerentola* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Frère Laurent in *Roméo et Juliette* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Fasolt in *Das Rheingold* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein)



**SAMUEL KIDD†**  
Baritone  
(Ann Arbor, Michigan)  
**Schaunard**  
**San Francisco Opera**  
**Highlights:** *Moralès in Carmen* and *Carmen*

*Encounter*; Christiano in *Un Ballo in Maschera*; a Steersman in *Tristan und Isolde*; Marcello in *Bohème Out of the Box* (San Francisco Opera)

**Recent and Upcoming:** Marcello in *Bohème Out of the Box*; Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* (Opera Naples); Tarquinius in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* (Merola Opera Program, Yale Opera); Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Yale); title role of *Eugene Onegin* (Music Academy of the West); Perennials concert (New York Festival of Song); *Metamorphosis* recital (Merola); Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* (Cincinnati Song Initiative, University of Michigan)



## ARTIST PROFILES CONTINUED

2025 National Finalist, Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition  
San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship Program: 2024, 2025  
Merola Opera Program: 2023  
Instagram: @samuelkidd  
Website: samuelkidd.com



**DALE TRAVIS** ♦+  
Bass-Baritone  
(Trenton, New Jersey)

**Benoit, Alcindoro**  
**San Francisco Opera**  
**Highlights:** Sacristan

in *Tosca*; Benoit and Alcindoro in *La Bohème*; Marquis de la Force in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*; Baron Douphol in *La Traviata*; Elder McLean in Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*; Dr. Bartolo in *Le Nozze di Figaro*; Dr. Kolenaty in *The Makropulos Case*; Majordomo in *Capriccio*

**Recent and Upcoming:** Bartolo in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Palm Beach Opera, Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera); Sacristan in *Tosca* (Santa Fe Opera, Dallas Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre); Benoit and Alcindoro in *La Bohème* (Sacramento); Dr. Bartolo in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Opera San José, Kentucky Opera); Frank in *Die Fledermaus* (Tokyo); Nino Rota's *The Straw Hat* (Minnesota Opera); Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola* (Atlanta Opera, Virginia Opera); Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* (Santa Fe Opera)  
San Francisco Opera Medal (2022)  
San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship Program: 1988, 1989  
Merola Opera Program: 1986, 1987



**CHESTER PIDDUCK**  
Tenor  
(Saint Louis, Missouri)

**Parpignol**  
**San Francisco Opera**  
**Highlights:** Over 20 solo roles, including

Mr. Martini in Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer's *It's A Wonderful Life*; Waiter in *Arabella*; Parpignol in *La Bohème*; Nantucket Sailor in Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer's *Moby-Dick*

**Recent and Upcoming:** Tenor soloist in *Carmina Burana* (CSU Fresno); Beppe in *Pagliacci* (Fresno Youth Orchestra); tenor soloist in Mozart Requiem (St. Helena Choral Society); Prince Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* (San Francisco Opera Guild's Opera Together program)  
Member of San Francisco Opera Regular Chorus

**Past Performances:** Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Opera San José, Mendocino Music Festival); Nemorino (West Bay Opera); Rodolfo in *La Bohème* (Opera San Luis Obispo); tenor soloist in *Carmina Burana* (San Francisco Symphony, Sacramento Choral Society and Orchestra)



**C. MICHAEL BELLE** ♪  
Tenor  
(Greenbelt, Maryland)

**A Prune Vendor**  
**Recent and Upcoming:** Drum Major in *Wozzeck*

(West Edge Opera)  
Member of San Francisco Opera Regular Chorus  
**Past Performances:** Norfolk in Rossini's *Elisabetta* (West Edge Opera); Ralph Rackstraw in *H.M.S. Pinafore* (Lamplighters); title role of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (San Francisco Parlor Opera); Nemorino in *The Elixir of Love* (Pocket Opera); Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus* (Longwood Opera, Opera del West); soloist in *Porgy and Bess* (Lyric Opera of Chicago, Washington National Opera); Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* (Center Stage Opera); Andy in *Treemonisha* (Opera Providence); Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*

(Longwood Opera); Basilio/Don Curzio in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Worcester Opera Works); soloist in Handel's *Messiah* (Commonwealth Opera)



**NIKOLAS NACKLEY** ♪  
Baritone  
(Piedmont, California)

**Customhouse Officer**  
**Recent and Upcoming:** Fifth Inmate in Jake Heggie

and Terrence McNally's *Dead Man Walking* (San Francisco Opera); soloist in Mozart Requiem (Arizona Musicfest); Cpt. Bouchardon in *Mata Hari* (West Edge Opera); soloist (LA Philharmonic, Cal Performances)

Member of San Francisco Opera Regular Chorus

**Past Performances:** Pallante in *Agrippina* (West Edge Opera); title role of *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse* in Patria (West Edge Opera)



**ANDREW THOMAS PARDINI** ♪  
Baritone  
(Modesto, California)

**Customhouse Sergeant**  
**San Francisco Opera**

**Highlights:** Flora's Servant in *La Traviata*; Imperial Commissioner in *Madama Butterfly*; Reporter in Mason Bates and Mark Campbell's *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*

**Recent and Upcoming:** Title role of *The Marriage of Figaro* (Pocket Opera); baritone soloist in Duruflé Requiem and Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* (Cantare Con Vivo); bass soloist in Mozart Requiem (Marin Symphony, Lakeside Symphony and Chorus); bass soloist in *Lord Nelson Mass* (Marin Symphony); bass soloist in *Elijah* (Lakeside Symphony and Chorus); Papageno in *The Magic Flute* (Livermore Valley Opera Outreach); Sciarrone in

## ARTIST PROFILES CONTINUED

*Tosca* (Livermore Valley Opera); baritone soloist in 40th Anniversary Gala (Opera Modesto); Giuseppe Palmieri in *The Gondoliers* (Winter Opera St. Louis); Schaunard in *La Bohème* (Gulfshore Opera, Opera North, Salt Marsh Opera); Dancaïre in *Carmen* (Opera Orlando); Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus* (Orlando) Member of San Francisco Opera Regular Chorus



### JOHN CAIRD

(London, UK)

#### Production

#### San Francisco Opera

**Highlights:** *La*

*Bohème*

#### Recent and

**Upcoming:** Director of *Spirited Away* (Tokyo); Tarik O'Regan's *The Phoenix* (Houston Grand Opera); *Knights' Tale* (Tokyo); *Don Giovanni* (Cardiff); *Tosca* (Houston, LA); *La Bohème* (Canadian Opera Company); *Daddy Long Legs* (Tokyo) Librettist of Tarik O'Regan's *The Phoenix* (Houston)

Honorary Associate Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company



### KATHERINE M. CARTER\*

(New York, New York)

#### Revival Director

#### Recent and

**Upcoming:** Director of *Nabucco* (Canadian

Opera Company); *Dialogues of the Carmelites* (Wolf Trap Opera); *La Bohème* (Aspen Music Festival); Lisa Despain's *Song of the Nightingale* (On Site Opera); *Carousel*; *Roméo et Juliette* Revival Director of *La Bohème* (Canadian Opera Company)

Intimacy Director of *Carmen* (Metropolitan Opera)

Instagram: @Katherine\_M\_Carter

Facebook: @katherine.m.carter1



### DAVID FARLEY

(Dorset, UK)

#### Production Designer

#### San Francisco Opera

**Highlights:** *La*

*Bohème*

#### Recent and

**Upcoming:** *The Comedy About a Bank Robbery* (West End); *Cluedo* (UK tour); *Cluedo 2* (UK tour); *The Snow Queen* (Kingston Rose); Tarik O'Regan's *The Phoenix* (Houston Grand Opera); *La Bohème* (Houston, Canadian Opera Company)

@davidfarleydesign



### MICHAEL CLARK

(Houston, Texas)

#### Lighting Designer

#### San Francisco Opera

**Highlights:** *La*

*Bohème*; *Tosca*; *La Traviata*

**Recent and Upcoming:** *Bluebeard's Castle* (Opera San José); *The Barber of Seville* (Houston Grand Opera); Joel Thompson's *The Snowy Day* (Portland Opera); *Cavalleria Rusticana / Pagliacci* (Lyric Opera of Kansas City); *La Bohème* (Canadian Opera Company) Head of Lighting and Production Media, Houston Grand Opera



### 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*; *Orpheus and Eurydice*; *Madama Butterfly*; *Die Frau ohne Schatten*; Gabriela Lena Frank and

Nilo Cruz's *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*; 100th Anniversary Concert; *Il Trovatore*; Mason Bates and Mark Campbell's *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*; *Lohengrin*; Rhiannon Giddens and Michael Abels' *Omar*; *The Elixir of Love*; *The Magic Flute*; Kaija Saariaho's *Innocence*; *Un Ballo in Maschera*; Poul Ruders and Paul Bentley's *The Handmaid's Tale*; *Tristan und Isolde*; Beethoven's Ninth Symphony; *Carmen* **Recent and Upcoming:** *Idomeneo*; *Rigoletto*; Jake Heggie and Terrence McNally's *Dead Man Walking*; *Parsifal*; Huang Ruo and David Henry Hwang's *The Monkey King*; *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*; *Elektra* Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition and San Francisco Conservatory of Music Voice Concerto Competition judge Instagram: @keenejohn



### DAVE MAIER

(El Cerrito, California)

#### Fight Director

#### San Francisco Opera

**Highlights:** *Il*

*Trovatore*; John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra*; *Carmen*; *Tosca*; the *Ring* cycle; *Pagliacci*; *Rigoletto*; *Romeo and Juliet*; *Billy Budd*

**Recent and Upcoming:** *Zorro* (Opera San José); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Marin Shakespeare Company); *Romeo/Juliet* (Marin Shakespeare Company); *Private Lives* (A.C.T.); *Fat Ham* (SF Playhouse); *Ironbound* (Oakland Theater Project)

# José González Granero

## PRINCIPAL CLARINET

BY TAMARA HADDAD

In the world of opera, where vibrant voices and grand stagings come together, there is an element at work that is not often seen but is surely felt. This presence is the orchestra, breathing color into phrases, stirring our hearts, and soothing our ears with elegant, floated tones. It is embodied in the sound of José González Granero's clarinet.

Granero grew up in Iznatoraf, Spain, where the olive trees wrapped around his village like silent storytellers. His first music mentors were his father and grandfather, both of whom were band leaders. "I got into music through the community band. It's very common in Spain. Every town has a wind band," says Granero. This early exposure to music ignited his passion for the clarinet, leading him to travel nearly a hundred miles by bus three days a week for lessons during middle and high school.

Granero received his B.A. from the Granada Superior Conservatory in Spain and the G. Verdi Conservatory in Italy. In 2007, he moved to Los Angeles to attend the Colburn School of Music and study with renowned clarinet teacher Yehuda Gilad, who encouraged him to "sing through the clarinet."

"My goal and passion was always classical music since the beginning," says Granero. "My first opera was *Il Trovatore*. I was so lucky to get to attend it in Busseto, the birthplace of Verdi." But it is Mozart he leans into with awe. Mozart's first operatic use of the clarinet was in *Idomeneo*.

Granero marvels at Mozart's intuitive understanding of the clarinet's potential: "It still amazes me because Mozart used woodwinds in a way that lets it come out in the orchestra. He let the clarinet sing in the highest range of the woodwinds. That color with clarinet, bassoon, and horn is just the perfect combination." Although the clarinet appears infrequently in *Idomeneo*, its presence is purposeful, deepening the woodwind textures in moments of pathos, such as during Ilia's sorrowful arias, and adding richness to the storm scenes in Act III.



One of the most surprising difficulties for the clarinet in *Idomeneo* isn't the playing—it's waiting to play. "In the final act, I might have 20 minutes of silence before my next entrance," Granero says. "The clarinet cools down; the reed dries out; and if I'm not careful, my first note will be flat. So I have to keep warming it and checking the pads for condensation. I wipe it with cigarette papers!"

If *Idomeneo* is where the clarinet found its operatic voice, it is Puccini's *La Bohème* where it found its heart. The clarinet flows through *Bohème*'s restless rhythms, adapting to the singers' feelings as it stretches and contracts alongside them. Granero reflects on Rodolfo's aria "Che gelida manina," where the clarinet is a heartbeat: delicate, invisible, but pulsating. "[The aria] is my favorite. What Pavarotti did ... when he held the high C note for a long time, it's amazing. It gives me chills."

The emotional volatility in *Idomeneo* requires constant dialogue with Maestro Eun Sun Kim, whose precision fosters an appreciated clarity from the orchestra. "She always is making a connection to the stage, the orchestra, or the chorus. And she's very, very good at that," says Granero. "She communicates with her eyes, her baton, her left hand."

The San Francisco Opera Orchestra woodwind section is a close-knit group. Granero shares his appreciation for the camaraderie with principal bassoonist and neighbor in the pit Rufus Olivier. "We have perfect communication. We can anticipate what the other is going to do. We follow each other. We are friends, too," Granero continues. "That's what makes our Orchestra special. We have a very good relationship with each other, no drama."

Granero, who celebrates his 15th year with the Company this summer, believes the magic of opera lies in its collective spirit. "Every night is different," he says. "The singer may take a breath differently; the conductor may reshape a phrase. Our job is to listen, be flexible, and adjust to the composer's vision." It is a reminder that for Granero, music lives in the spaces between notes, breaths, and shared intention. 🌿



# Bohème Out of the Box

Launched in 2023 as part of San Francisco Opera's Centennial Season, *Bohème Out of the Box* has taken *La Bohème*'s powerful emotions and soaring music to outdoor locations in South San Francisco, Los Gatos, Dublin, Burlingame, Alameda, Albany, and Union City, as well as Silicon Valley for staff performances at tech and corporate campuses. This season, the mobile shipping container production has pulled up in Sausalito, San Ramon, and Los Altos Hills, with June 28 and 29 performances scheduled for Heritage Plaza in Hayward. Come enjoy Puccini's classic al fresco! 🌻



Dublin, 2023. / KRISTEN LOKEN



Los Gatos, 2023. / Christabel Nunoo leads a First Act workshop with some young opera fans. / KRISTEN LOKEN



Albany, 2024. / RENEFF OLSON PRODUCTIONS



South San Francisco, 2023. / KRISTEN LOKEN





*Sausalito, 2025. / Philip Skinner (Benoit/Alcindoro), Jongwon Han (Colline), Georgiana Adams (Musetta), Caroline Corrales (Mimi), Samuel White (Rodolfo), Samuel Kidd (Marcello). / KRISTEN LOKEN*



*Alameda, 2024. / Julian Grabarek at the piano. STEFAN COHEN*



*Union City, 2024. / Stage manager Jonathan S. Campbell. / KRISTEN LOKEN*

*Los Gatos, 2023 / Philip Skinner (Alcindoro), Jongwon Han (Colline), Edward Graves (Rodolfo), Nikola Printz (Musetta), Mikayla Sager (Mimi), Timothy Murray (Marcello). / KRISTEN LOKEN*



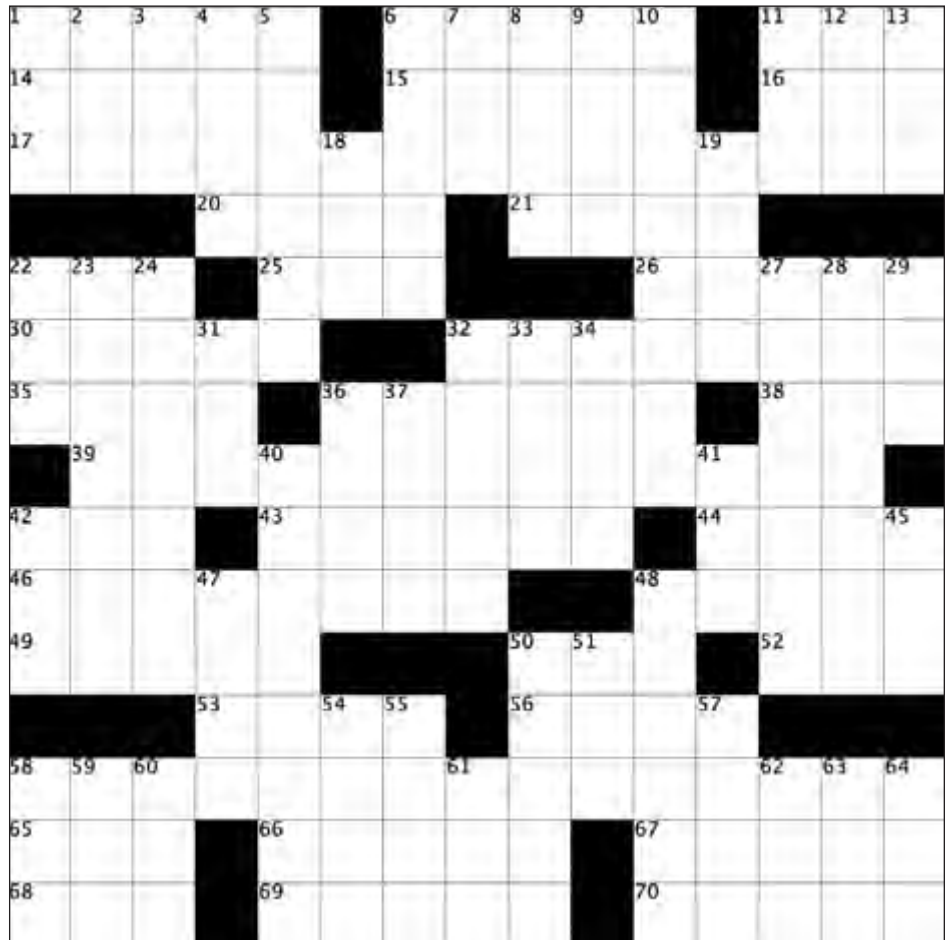


ACROSS

1. Frolics
6. Former Syrian dictator
11. School fund-raising org.
14. German submarine of old
15. Widespread family of African languages
16. OPEC asset
17. Composer of the little-known opera *It's a Dog's Life?*
20. Frog's kiddie-lit friend
21. Eco-friendly conveyance
22. Non-singing "character" in John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra*
25. Essential ingredient for the cured seafood dish lutefisk
26. Dyeing technique involving wax
30. Things to follow or break
32. Lucas Meacham or Will Liverman, for example
35. *Die \_\_\_ ohne Schatten* (Richard Strauss opera)
36. Crop-destroying beetle
38. "Gangnam Style" rapper
39. Composer of the little-known opera *Pancakes?*
42. Inedible part of a peach
43. They go with liver
44. Price
46. 50-50 chance
48. "Bravi \_\_\_!!!"
49. One of three on a concert grand piano
50. Speed measurement, in brief
52. Direction from S.F. to Modesto
53. Have a chat
56. Idomeneo's "Fuor del mar," for example
58. Composer of the little-known opera *The Olympian?*
65. Pair of musicians
66. Nonsense
67. NCO, familiarly
68. Indivisible
69. Glossy fabric
70. BART, for instance

DOWN

1. It might cover the floor
2. Accessory for Cio-Cio-San
3. Extinct flightless bird
4. Formal agreement
5. Barroom perches
6. Dwelling
7. Weaken
8. One who believes that nothing but opera is worth listening to, perhaps



9. For you, in Paris
10. Notable feature of a platypus
11. Taro dish
12. Chemical element with the shortest name
13. Father-daughter boxing dynasty name
18. Memorial Day month
19. Crime drama featuring De Niro and Pacino's first onscreen scene together
22. Canine comment
23. "I Will \_\_\_\_" (Gloria Gaynor classic)
24. Set in braids
27. Highest part of a singer's range
28. Resolutely maintains
29. F major, for instance
31. San Francisco Opera Music Director \_\_\_\_ Sun Kim
32. Amazon founder
33. River in Stratford
34. Barbecue staple
36. Make (one's way)
37. Oklahoma city named for a Tennyson character
40. Substances that lower the temperature
41. Hospital area
42. Liveliness
45. No-win situation?
47. Alliance acronym
48. \_\_\_\_ trap
50. Expert
51. In favor of
54. Monetary unit of Turkey or (formerly) Italy
55. Make something out of wool
57. Slightly open
58. *Much \_\_\_\_ About Nothing* (Shakespeare)
59. Nearly any character in Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*
60. Bottom digit?
61. Printer's density specification, for short
62. Pop diva Rita \_\_\_\_
63. Onscreen special effects, briefly
64. "Jeopardy!" champion and host Jennings

Joshua Kosman is the former music critic for San Francisco Chronicle and co-creator of the weekly crossword puzzle "Out of Left Field."

See the solution on page 54



# The Monkey King Circle

Join *The Monkey King* Giving Circle, and be a part of an extraordinary journey!

This fall, San Francisco Opera premieres a new opera by Huang Ruo and David Henry Hwang, inspired by the timeless tale *Journey to the West*. Your support will help bring this iconic story to life on stage, filled with mythical adventures, rich cultural history, and stunning music. As a member, you'll receive exclusive benefits that will transport you behind the scenes of this groundbreaking production.



**MONKEY NATION** \$60  
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• Digital recognition



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**GUANYIN** \$1,200  
(Deity of compassion and mercy)  
*Previous level benefits plus:*  
• Invitation for two to the final dress rehearsal and talk with the artistic team  
• Special gift at the final dress rehearsal



**JADE EMPEROR** \$6,000\*  
(Ruler of the Celestial Realm)  
*Previous level benefits plus:*  
• Invitation to an additional special event at the Asian Art Museum  
• Invitation for two to an exclusive opening night dinner



**MONKEY KING/SUN WUKONG** \$12,000\*  
(Legendary hero)  
*Previous level benefits plus:*  
• Invitation for two to the cast party

To join the circle with your philanthropic support, visit [sfopera.com/mkcircle](https://sfopera.com/mkcircle) or call (415) 565-3212.

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\*Value of tangible goods and services: Jade Emperor \$350, Monkey King/Sun Wukong \$410. Plus \$23 per performance if you would like to opt into parking.





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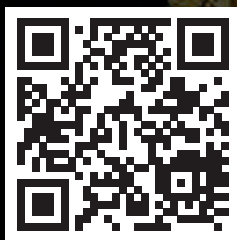
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SCAN TO GIVE

Christian van Horn as Escamillo and Eve-Maud Hubeaux as Carmen in Bizet's *Carmen*. Photo by Cory Weaver.



WORLD  
PREMIERE

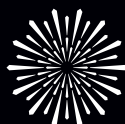
POWER ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH.

# The Monkey King

猴王悟空

BY HUANG RUO AND DAVID HENRY HWANG

NOVEMBER 14, 16m, 18, 20, 22, 25, 28, 30m, 2025



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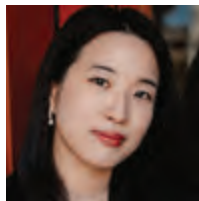
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Acton, Massachusetts  
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**—Gabrielle Beteag, mezzo-soprano**  
(Adler Fellow, 2022–2023)

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# San Francisco Opera News



## Make a Date with the Database

In January, San Francisco Opera relaunched its performance database, an online searchable resource detailing each performance since the Company's founding in 1923. The new site, funded by a generous gift from an anonymous donor and developed in partnership with Kanopi Studios, replaces the Company's original platform that launched in 2008. Director of Archives Barbara Rominski, who manages and updates the database regularly, says the newly reconstituted database has enhanced functionality and introduces many additional features, including records of performances not previously included, thousands of archival photographs, and the digitization of original program books.

Rominski said: "I'm delighted the public now has this powerful research tool at their fingertips. Exploring the Company's illustrious history has never been as fun and potentially engrossing as it is now. The various search filters and hyperlinked entries allow a simple inquiry to quickly grow into a multi-hour session filled with serendipitous connections and discoveries along the way."

Start your journey today! Visit [archive.sfopera.com/search](https://archive.sfopera.com/search).



Dorothy Kirsten and Luciano Pavarotti in *La Bohème* 1969. / ROBERT CAHEN

Top: Andrea Chénier cast, chorus, orchestra, with the administration and Board of the newly formed Company, 1923. / GEO. F. COURSER

## A TIME FOR VERDI

This September brings multiple opportunities to celebrate the powerful art of Giuseppe Verdi, one of opera's greatest composers. From September 5–27, San Francisco Opera Music Director Eun Sun Kim leads *Rigoletto* at the War Memorial Opera House. Then, on September 20, Museo Italo Americano at the Fort Mason Center hosts *Viva Verdi!*, a day-long symposium of lectures, conversations, and performances devoted to the Italian maestro. Mark your calendars and stay tuned for updates about the symposium at [sfmuseo.org](https://sfmuseo.org).



Left: Giuseppe Verdi. / MUSEO ITALO AMERICANO; Right: *Rigoletto*. / CORY WEAVER

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE SOLUTION

From page 48





# The future of opera starts with Merola



KRISTEN LOKEN

Many artists performing with San Francisco Opera this summer—including Pene Pati, Karen Chia-ling Ho, Lucas Meachem, Daniela Mack, Elza van den Heever, Alek Shrader, Dale Travis, Nikola Printz, Samuel Kidd, Samuel White—all trained at Merola. The future of opera starts with Merola.

Each summer, the Merola Opera Program—an independent nonprofit in proud partnership with San Francisco Opera—welcomes a brilliant, international group of emerging artists to San Francisco for an intensive, tuition-free training program. Known as the Merolini, these young artists receive world-class coaching and mentorship as they prepare for the Merola Summer Festival. In 2025, the Merola Summer Festival features an incredible lineup of performances, including a fully staged opera, Rossini's hilarious gem *Le Comte Ory*, as well as an opera scenes concert with orchestra, a recital of American song, and the annual Merola Grand Finale right here in the War Memorial Opera House on August 16.

Tickets to the Merola Summer Festival are on sale now, and Merola members enjoy exclusive, behind-the-scenes access to the process—master classes, rehearsals, receptions, and our signature “Day at Merola” experience—offering a rare window into the making of tomorrow’s stars.

Learn more and become a member at [merola.org](https://merola.org).

**SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD**

**Summer Conservatory**  
July 7-25, 2025  
Ages 10-18

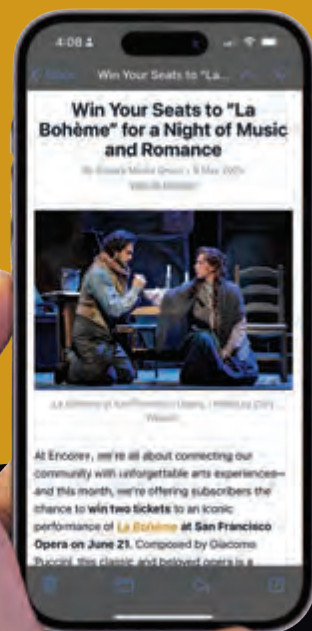
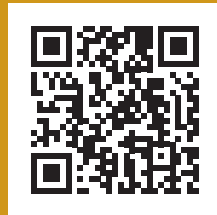
**Opera Scouts & Madrigals**  
September to June, afterschool  
Ages 7-18

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## Finally, an email to look forward to on a Friday afternoon.

Subscribe to our newsletter for the best news and events from the Bay Area's performing arts scene, every Friday.

[encoreplus.app/tgif](https://encoreplus.app/tgif)



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*Managing Director: Artistic*

## Michael Simpson

*Managing Director: Administration/Chief Financial Officer*

## Jordan Amann

*Chief of Staff*

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### CHORUS DIRECTION

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

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**Ilana Rainero-de Haan**, *Music Planning Manager*

**John Churchwell**, *Head of Music Staff*

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**Aine Donnelly**

*Production Finance Assistant*

**Sylvia Jiang**,

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*Special Projects Manager*

**Celine Strouts**,

*Production Operations Manager*

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**Ziggy Tomcich**,

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**Greg Harsha**, *Assistant Head of Carpentry*

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**Charlotte Brockman**, *Production Accountant*

**Galen Till**, *Senior Production Supervisor*

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**Steve McNally**, *Scenic Artist in Charge*

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**Jennifer Harber**, **Jayme O'Hara**,

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*Assistant Stage Directors*

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**Megan Coutts**, **Jennifer Harber**,

**Jayme O'Hara**, **Anna Reetz**,

*Assistant Stage Managers*

**Colm Seery**, *Dance Master*

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**Ryan O'Steen**, *Production Manager\**

**Scott Cavallo**, *Assistant Technical Director*

**Lawren Gregory**, *Assistant Technical Director*

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**Robert Horek**, **David McKain**,

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**Christina Martin**,

*Assistant Department Head of*

*Wigs, Hair, and Makeup*

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Seyfarth Shaw LLP, *Counsel*

Armanino LLP, *Independent Public Accountants*

UCSF doctors:

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Cory Weaver, *Official Photographer*

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Pianos supplied by Piedmont Piano



# 2024-25 Artists

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Georgiana Adams\*†+  
 Louise Alder#  
 Lindsay Ammann\*  
 Jamie Barton  
 C. Michael Belle  
 Gabrielle BeteagΩ+  
 Aleksey Bogdanov+  
 Alex Boyer+  
 Sarah CambidgeΩ+  
 Nicole Car  
 Andrea Carroll\*  
 Monét X Change\*  
 Alan Cochran  
 Neal Cooper  
 Caroline Corrales\*†+  
 Sara Couden\*  
 Matthew DiBattista\*  
 Amartuvshin Enkhbat\*  
 Michael Fabiano  
 Ying Fang\*  
 Katrina Galka\*  
 Kevin Gino  
 Blanche Hampton■  
 Jongwon Han†  
 Lianna Haroutounian  
 Karen Chia-ling Ho+  
 Jennifer Holloway  
 Mary Hoskins\*†+  
 Eve-Maud Hubeaux #  
 Michael Jankosky  
 Evan LeRoy Johnson  
 Rhoslyn JonesΩ+  
 Alisa Jordheim  
 Anja Kampe  
 Samuel Kidd\*†+  
 Thomas Kinch†+  
 Bojan Knezevic  
 Wolfgang Koch\*  
 Laura KrummΩ+  
 Judit Kutasi  
 Adam Lau+  
 Eric Levintow  
 Will Liverman\*  
 Daniela MackΩ+  
 James McCarthyΩ+

Simone McIntoshΩ+  
 Lucas MeachemΩ+  
 Brian Mulligan  
 Nikolas Nackley\*  
 Rebecca Nash  
 Christopher OglesbyΩ+  
 Simon O'Neill+  
 William O'Neill  
 Toni Marie PalmertreeΩ+  
 Andrew Thomas Pardini  
 Pene PatiΩ+  
 Chester Pidduck  
 Matthew Polenzani  
 Nikola PrintzΩ+  
 John RelyeaΩ+  
 Brittany Renee  
 Irene Roberts  
 Arianna RodriguezΩ+  
 Brenton Ryan  
 Alexandra Sanchez  
 Annika Schlicht #  
 Chiharu Shibata■  
 Alek ShraderΩ+  
 Philip SkinnerΩ+  
 Olivia Smith†+  
 David Soar\*  
 Bogdan Talos\*  
 Jonathan Tetelman  
 Russell Thomas  
 Dale TravisΩ+  
 Elza van den HeeverΩ+  
 Christian Van Horn  
 Samuel White\*†+  
 Kwangchul Youn  
 Mei Gui Zhang+  
 Olivier Zerouali\*†+

## CONDUCTORS

Karen Kamensek  
 Eun Sun Kim  
 Benjamin Manis\*  
 Robert MolliconeΩ+  
 Ramón Tebar

## PRODUCTION

John Caird  
 John Fulljames\*  
 Francesca Zambello

## STAGE DIRECTORS

Lucy Bradley #  
 Katherine M. Carter\*  
 José Maria CondemiΩ+  
 Paul Curran  
 Lindy Hume\*  
 Leonardo Muscato\*  
 Morgan Robinson

## CHOREOGRAPHERS

Anna Maria Bruzzese\*

## KEY:

# American Debut  
 \* San Francisco Opera Debut  
 † Current Adler Fellow  
 Ω Adler Fellowship Graduate  
 + Merola Opera Program Graduate  
 ■ Solo Dancer  
 Cover Artist

# Chorus

John Keene, Chorus Director  
 Fabrizio Corona, Associate Chorus Master

## REGULAR CHORUS

Nadima Avakian	Stella HannockΩ	Antonio Nagore
Buffy Baggot	Harlan Hays	Erin Neff
Kathleen Bayler	Christopher Jackson	William O'NeillΩ
C. Michael BelleΩ	Michael JankoskyΩ	Andrew Thomas PardiniΩ
William Lee BryanΩ	Silvie JensenΩ	Phillip Pickens
Cheryl Cain	Wilford Kelly	William Pickersgill
Janet Campbell	Crystal Kim	Chester PidduckΩ
Danielle CheikenΩ	Bojan Knezevic	Laurel Cameron Porter
Hannah Cho	Josephine Lee	Samuel Rabinowitz
Alan Cochran	Eric Levintow	Elisabeth Rom Lucio
Sara Colburn	Liesl McPherrinΩ	Jonathan Smucker
Edith Dowd	Angela Eden Moser	Whitney SteeleΩ
Anders Froehlich	Sally MouzonΩ	Jesslyn Thomas
John FultonΩ	Nikolas NackleyΩ	Andrew Truett
Kevin GinoΩ	Sarah Nadreau	Jacque Wilson

## EXTRA CHORUS

Callum Alden	Leandra Ramm
Spencer Dodd	Dewey Reikofski
Elliott JG Encarnación	Clifton Romig
Luis González	Chung-Wai Soong
Matt Hidalgo	Lee Steward
David Kekuwa	Paul Thompson
Michael Jesse Kuo	Taylor Thomas-Thompson
Yitao Lin	Carmello Tringali
Benjamin Liupaogo	Troy Turriate
Joaquim Luis	Nicolas Vasquez-Gerst
Justin Marsh	Lawrence Venza
Michael Orlinsky	Nicolas Volkert
Alexander John Perkins	Daniel Yoder
Valery Portnov	

√ Chorus member on leave of absence  
 Ω Solo Role

## SAN FRANCISCO GIRLS CHORUS Valérie Sainte-Agathe, Artistic Director

Avery Brandstetter	Jerah Demant	Gitanjali Menon
Amara Damron-Gupta	Emelia Kay Louis	Sasha Shepard

## SAN FRANCISCO BOYS CHORUS Todd Jolly, Intermediate Chorus Director

Arish Arvind	Drake Cheng-Fitzpatrick	Edmund Paul
Miles Baird	Félix Gallisá	West Pinckaers
Henry Benton-	Xavier Martinez	Jacob Rainow
Aufterbeck	Edgar McConnell IV	Stanley Rzad
Landon Chai	Dominic Moser	Micah Soliman

San Francisco Opera extends its gratitude and appreciation to the following labor organizations whose members, artists, and craftspeople make possible our performances.

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

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# Orchestra

Eun Sun Kim, *Music Director*

## FIRST VIOLIN

Kay Stern, *Concertmaster*  
Maya Cohon, *Associate Concertmaster*  
Heidi Wilcox,  
*Assistant Concertmaster*  
Jennifer Cho  
Dawn Harms  
Mariya Borozina  
Naoko Nakajima  
Barbara Riccardi  
Dian Zhang  
Leonid Igudesman  
Jennifer Hsieh  
Asuka Annie Yano

## SECOND VIOLIN

Jeremy Preston, *Principal*  
Martha Simonds, *Associate Principal*  
Beni Shinohara, *Assistant Principal*  
Leslie Ludena  
Ka-Yeon Lee  
Aya Kiyonaga  
Craig Reiss  
Heeguen Song↑

## VIOLA

Carla Maria Rodrigues, *Principal*  
Joy Fellows, *Associate Principal*  
Stephen Goist, *Acting Assistant Principal*  
Natalia Vershilova  
Lindan Burns  
Emily Liu↑  
Elizabeth Prior↑

## CELLO

Thalia Moore, *Acting Principal*  
Peter Myers,  
*Acting Associate Principal*Σ  
Nora Pirquet,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*  
Emil Miland  
Jung-Hsuan Ko  
Ruth Lane  
Jungin Yang↑

## BASS

Joseph Lescher, *Principal*  
Jonathan Lancelle,  
*Associate Principal*  
William Wasson,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*  
Shinji Eshima  
Sean O'Hara↑

## FLUTE

Julie McKenzie, *Principal*↓  
Stephanie McNab, *Acting Principal*  
Susan KangΣ↑  
Michelle Caimotto↑

## PICCOLO

Stephanie McNab

## OBOE

Mingjia Liu, *Principal*  
Gabriel Young, *Associate Principal*Σ  
Benjamin Brogadir

## ENGLISH HORN

Benjamin Brogadir

## CLARINET

José González Granero, *Principal*  
Steve Sánchez↑  
Junghwan Lee↑

## BASS CLARINET

Junghwan Lee↑

## BASSOON

Rufus Olivier, *Principal*  
Daniel MacNeillΣ  
Shawn Jones↑

## CONTRABASSOON

Shawn Jones↑

## FRENCH HORN

Kevin Rivard, *Principal*  
Keith Green↓  
Brian McCarty, *Associate Principal*  
Logan Bryck↑  
Phillip Palmore↑  
Meredith Brown↑

## TRUMPET

Adam Luftman, *Principal*  
Scott Macomber↑  
John Pearson

## TROMBONE

Michael Cox, *Acting Principal*  
Samuel Wamhoff↑  
David Ridge

## BASS TROMBONE

David Ridge, *Principal*

## TUBA/CIMBASSO

Zachariah Spellman, *Principal*

## TIMPANI

John Burgardt, *Principal*

## PERCUSSION

Patricia Niemi, *Acting Principal*  
Victor Avdienko↑

## HARP

Eleanor Kirk↑, *Acting Principal*

## LIBRARIAN

Carrie Weick

↓ Leave of absence

Σ Principal for one or more  
Summer season operas

↑ Season Substitute

# Corps Dancers

Colm Seery, *Dance Master*

Alysia Chang□  
Brett Conway↔  
Esther deMonteflores  
Jamielyn Duggan↔  
Alexandra FitzGibbon□  
Daniel Gill  
Blanche Hampton↔  
Emily Hansel  
Bryan Ketron↓  
Livanna Maislen  
Coral Martin□  
Micah Moch□  
Christopher Nachtrab↔

Jessica Nguyen  
Fred C Riley III  
Chiharu Shibata↔  
Gabrielle Sprauve  
Marcos Vedovetto↔■  
Sid Zhang

↔ Tenured  
↓ Tenured Dancer  
on Leave of Absence  
□ Resident Corps  
■ Solo Role

# Supernumeraries

## *La Bohème*

Fernando Aguayo-Garcia  
Karsten Guthridge  
Doug Spradlin  
Paul Zemlin



# Backstage Personnel

## COSTUME SHOP

Jai Alltizer (24), *Costume Shop Manager*  
Galen Till (20),

*Senior Production Supervisor*

Manuel Gutierrez (25),

*Production Coordinator*

Robyn Marsh, *Costume Supervisor*

Sally Thomas (24), *Head Tailor*

Amy Ashton-Keller (30), *Head Draper*

Barbara Ebel (16), Santiago Suanes (14),

Nika Cassaro, *Drapers*

Paula Wheeler (32), *Senior Milliner*

Amy Van Every (40),

*Senior Dyer/Painter*

Karen Lewis, *Dyer/Painter*

Jersey McDermott (25),

*Senior Craftsperson/Shoe Specialist*

Kelly Koehn, *Craftsperson*

Kaitlyn Patrick, Kristen Tracy (16),

*Assistant Cutters*

Julia Colvard, Taylor Newell, Niko Suits,

*First Hand*

Victoria Mortimer, *Costume Assistant*

Teddy Rose Baker, *Sophia Gallegos,*

*Shoppers*

## COSTUME TECHNICIANS

Simone Brooks, Karla Fix,

Hoa Fong (25), Jaya Grace Goheen,

Ashley Grambow, Kathy Griffith,

Gillian Haratani (12), Aki Hasegawa,

Meg Horan, Emma Lehman,

Sara Morimoto (11), Mikael Nohai,

Jane Smith, Hannah Velichko,

Sarah Ellen Wilson, Robert Whitehurst

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### CORE CREW

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Edward Fonseca (13)

Lorraine Lewis (12)

Emma Mueller

Phil Perry (27)

Patrick Sanchez (15)

Leona Schrader-Dee

Don Smith (28)

Scott Stewart (24)

Kirsten Tucker (21)

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Paula Barish,

Kathleen Blake (12), Ash Cable,

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Maur Sela

### WIG ARTISTS

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Tim Santry (34)

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Christy Carter

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James Eldredge (20), *Shop Mechanic*

Oris Fry

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Myron Seth Isaacs (24), *Key*

Mark Kotschnig (22), *Key*

John Matlock, *Assistant Key*

Beth Ozarow (28), *Out of House Key*

Sarah Shores (17), *Shop Mechanic*

Mae Toone

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*House Head Electrician*

Ariel Bott, *Assistant Key Stage Left*

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Lloyd Murphy, *Key Projectionist*

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# San Francisco Opera Orchestra



**Kay Stern**  
Concertmaster



**Maya Cohon**  
Associate  
Concertmaster



**Heidi Wilcox**  
Assistant  
Concertmaster



**Jennifer Cho**  
First Violin



**Dawn Harms**  
First Violin



**Mariya Borozina**  
First Violin



**Naoko Nakajima**  
First Violin



**Barbara Riccardi**  
First Violin



**Dian Zhang**  
First Violin



**Leonid Igudesman**  
First Violin



**Jennifer Hsieh**  
First Violin



**Asuka Annie Yano**  
First Violin



**Jeremy Preston**  
Principal  
Second Violin



**Martha Simonds**  
Associate Principal  
Second Violin



**Beni Shinohara**  
Assistant Principal  
Second Violin



**Leslie Ludena**  
Second Violin



**Ka-Yeon Lee**  
Second Violin



**Aya Kiyonaga**  
Second Violin



**Craig Reiss**  
Second Violin



**Carla Maria Rodrigues**  
Principal  
Viola



**Joy Fellows**  
Associate Principal  
Viola



**Stephen Goist**  
Acting Assistant  
Principal Viola



**Natalia Vershilova**  
Viola



**Lindan Burns**  
Viola



**Emily Liu**  
Viola↑



**Elizabeth Prior**  
Viola↑



**Thalia Moore**  
Acting Principal  
Cello



**Peter Myers**  
Acting Associate  
Principal Cello



**Nora Pirquet**  
Acting Assistant  
Principal Cello



**Emil Miland**  
Cello



**Jung-Hsuan Ko**  
Cello



**Ruth Lane**  
Cello



**Joseph Lescher**  
Principal  
Bass



**Jonathan Lancelle**  
Associate Principal  
Bass



**Shinji Eshima**  
Bass

↑ Season Substitute



## SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ORCHESTRA CONTINUED



**William Wasson**  
Bass



**Julie McKenzie**  
Principal  
Flute



**Susan Kang**  
Flute↑



**Stephanie McNab**  
Flute & Piccolo



**Mingjia Liu**  
Principal  
Oboe



**Gabriel Young**  
Associate Principal  
Oboe



**Benjamin Brogadir**  
English Horn



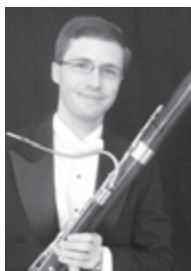
**José González  
Granero**  
Principal Clarinet



**Junghwan Lee**  
Bass Clarinet↑



**Rufus Olivier**  
Principal  
Bassoon



**Daniel MacNeill**  
Bassoon



**Shawn Jones**  
Bassoon/  
Contrabassoon↑



**Kevin Rivard**  
Principal  
Horn



**Keith Green**  
Horn



**Brian McCarty**  
Associate Principal  
Horn



**Phillip Palmore**  
Horn↑



**Logan Bryck**  
Horn↑



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Principal  
Trumpet



**Scott Macomber**  
Trumpet↑



**John Pearson**  
Trumpet



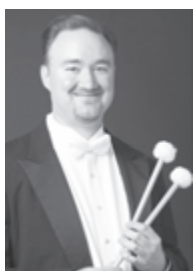
**Michael Cox**  
Acting Principal  
Trombone



**David Ridge**  
Principal  
Bass Trombone



**Zachariah Spellman**  
Tuba



**John Burgardt**  
Timpani



**Patricia Niemi**  
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Percussion



**Victor Avdienko**  
Percussion↑



**Tracy Davis**  
Orchestra Manager



**Carrie Weick**  
Librarian

*Most photos by John Martin.*

*Not pictured:*

*Heeguen Song (Second Violin)↑*

*Jungin Yang (Cello)↑*

*Sean O'Hara (Bass)↑*

*Michelle Caimotto (Flute)↑*

*Steve Sánchez (Clarinet)↑*

*Meredith Brown (Horn)↑*

*Samuel Wamhoff (Trombone)↑*

*Eleanor Kirk (Acting Principal Harp)↑*

*Kevin Myers (Orchestra Operations Manager)*

↑ Season Substitute

# San Francisco Opera Regular Chorus



**Nadima Avakian**  
Soprano



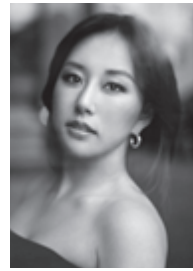
**Kathleen Bayler**  
Soprano



**Cheryl Cain**  
Soprano



**Danielle Cheiken**  
Soprano



**Hannah Cho**  
Soprano



**Sara Colburn**  
Soprano



**Crystal Kim**  
Soprano



**Josephine Lee**  
Soprano



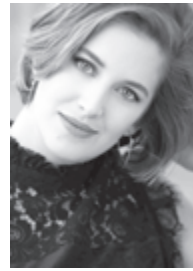
**Liesl McPherrin**  
Soprano



**Angela Eden Moser**  
Soprano



**Elisabeth Rom Lucio**  
Soprano



**Jesslyn Thomas**  
Soprano



**Buffy Baggott**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Janet Campbell**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Edith Dowd**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Stella Hannock**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Silvie Jensen**  
Mezzo-Soprano



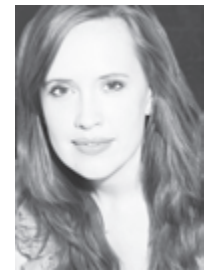
**Sally Mouzon**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Sarah Nadreau**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Erin Neff**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Laurel Cameron  
Porter**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Whitney Steele**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Jacque Wilson**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**C. Michael Belle**  
Tenor



**Alan Cochran**  
Tenor



**Kevin Gino**  
Tenor



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Tenor



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Tenor



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Tenor



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Tenor



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Tenor



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Tenor



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Tenor



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Tenor



**William Lee Bryan**  
Baritone

## SAN FRANCISCO OPERA REGULAR CHORUS CONTINUED



Anders Fröhlich  
Baritone



John Fulton  
Baritone



Harlan Hays  
Baritone



Nikolas Nackley  
Baritone



Andrew Thomas  
**Pardini**  
Baritone



Wilford Kelly  
Bass



Bojan Knežević  
Bass



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Bass



William Pickersgill  
Bass



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Bass

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Jamielyn Duggan



Brett Conway



Blanche Hampton



Bryan Ketron  
*Leave of Absence*



Christopher Nachtrab



Chiharu Shibata



Marcos Vedovetto



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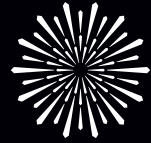
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Celeste Camarena, *Education Program Manager*  
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We express deep appreciation to the following groups and individuals who have made gifts of \$500 or more by March 31, 2025 in memory of Charlot D. Malin, Past President and a leader of San Francisco Opera Guild. For information on how to contribute to this fund, please contact Susan Malott at (415) 565-3291, [smalott@sfopera.com](mailto:smalott@sfopera.com), or visit [sfopera.com/charlotmalinfund](https://sfopera.com/charlotmalinfund).

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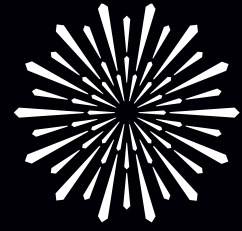
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# Years in the Making

BY GENERAL DIRECTOR MATTHEW SHILVOCK

**T**he great Maria Callas once said, “An opera begins long before the curtain goes up and ends long after it has come down. It starts in my imagination, it becomes my life, and it stays part of my life long after I’ve left the opera house.” While she was speaking as a singer, her sentiments can be applied to the whole process of producing opera. The few hours we see onstage are but the tip of an iceberg of a process of conceiving, selecting, building, and rehearsing that can be years in the making. We will be doing on any given hour in June 2028, and we are already exploring projects for 2030.



CODY PICKENS

The immense arc of preparing opera is a part of its lasting impact. Like Pygmalion carving his beloved Galatea from a block of marble, we bring things to life with extraordinary patience, commitment to craft, and belief in the beauty of what can be. But, unlike carving a sculpture, opera isn’t a solitary sport; we come together as a creative community, each person bringing their own skills, experiences, talents, and resources to

make possible something exquisite.

Just a few weeks after we close this summer, we will be back onstage for technical rehearsals for the fall. Through August we’ll work backwards, beginning with

*Act II set for the Company's first production of Richard Wagner's Parsifal in 1950.*  
R. STROHMEYER



*The set for the new production of Parsifal under construction at the Company's scene shop.*  
MATTHEW SHILVOCK







Costume sketches for *The Monkey King* by Anita Yavich.



Former San Francisco Opera General Director Kurt Herbert Adler with costumier Rose Goldstein of Goldstein & Co., 1960s. / ROBERT MESSICK

*The Monkey King* and ending with *Rigoletto*. Each set has a few days on stage, working out technical challenges, setting the lighting, working through chorus scenes, and ensuring seamless scene shifts—all before we start rehearsals with the casts and orchestra.

This means that new productions—this year *The Monkey King* and *Parsifal*—must be completed by the end of July. Last fall, scenic and costume designs were turned into the blueprints for building so that our workshops could spend the spring building. In the case of *Parsifal* that is a well-established building process, although one infused with cutting edge technology (3-D printing, computer-aided design, and a computerized woodcutter).

*The Monkey King* represents a completely different approach—a world of ephemerality, fluidity, and stage magic. With 60,000 feet of fabric, puppetry, projections, and scenery that moves in the hands of our dancers, creating *The Monkey King* is about building a theatrical toolkit that will come to life in the real-time process of rehearsals. So much of preparing *Monkey King* is experimentation: testing lightweight materials, seeing how fabric hangs to catch the light, and, for our costume shop, realizing the fantastical designs so beautifully designed by Anita Yavich.

The creation of new productions is something deep in our DNA. Since the beginning of San Francisco Opera's existence, we have built our own scenery, although in the

early decades it was largely painted two-dimensional fabric. By the 1950s we had evolved into more physical scenery, but the crafts of theatrical building, scenic painting, and creating the illusion of reality date back in an unbroken lineage to the days of the Gold Rush when vaudeville, musical revue and opera performances could be found in a plethora of now-long-gone theaters around town.

That unbroken lineage also defines our costume production. For decades, we partnered with an external company, Goldstein & Co., founded in 1868. In 1972, Goldstein's inventory was liquidated and its senior costumer Walter Mahoney became our first costume director. Daniele McCartan took on the role in 2002, becoming only the third costume director in our history, though Daniele's tenure in the shop actually began in 1986.

Whether artists, artisans, or technicians, every aspect of the Company represents a lineage back through generations. San Francisco is one of the few cities in America to have maintained these crafts, and I am so proud of the creative community nurtured and sustained by you all. This beautiful symbiosis enables us to produce transcendent works, time and again. I do hope that you'll join us this fall and see the results of these projects which "start in our imagination, become our lives, and stay part of our lives long after we've left the opera house." And, in that, is something very special. 🌟

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