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# At a Glance

## IL TROVATORE

MUSIC BY GIUSEPPE VERDI; LIBRETTO BY SALVADORE CAMMARANO

**Structure:** 4 acts, with 1 intermission after Act II

**Running time:** 2 hours, 40 minutes

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

**Key Characters:**

- *Manrico*, a troubadour and rebel fighter
- *Leonora*, a noblewoman in love with Manrico
- *Count di Luna*, commander of the king's guard who desires Leonora
- *Azucena*, Romani woman bent on avenging her mother's death at the hands of the Count's father

The most popular of Verdi's works during his lifetime, *Il Trovatore* has enjoyed uninterrupted success since its 1853 premiere. It is the composer's 17th opera and marks the beginning of his middle period, along with other enduring works like *Rigoletto* and *La Traviata*.

The opera opens with a chilling horror story, introducing a fast-moving plot that hurls toward a shocking conclusion. Verdi's arias, duets, ensembles, and choruses sustain the work's momentum while giving the performers numerous opportunities to create moments of elegance, grandeur, reflection, and extreme drama. *Il Trovatore* does not preach a moralistic message or put forward a philosophy; its principal aim is to tell an exciting and musically vivid tale, at the heart of which are intense family dynamics.

**Listen for:** The concluding act is filled with vocal highlights for all four of the key characters, but listen to how Verdi creates something special for Leonora in Act IV. The scene opens with an expressive aria, followed by the Miserere sung with Manrico and the chorus, which leads into a two-part duet with the Count. The resulting vocal showcase has Leonora onstage and singing for roughly 22 minutes straight.

---

## THE (R)EVOLUTION OF STEVE JOBS

MUSIC BY MASON BATES; LIBRETTO BY MARK CAMPBELL

**Structure:** 18 scenes, no intermission

**Running time:** 90 minutes

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

**Key Characters:**

- *Steve Jobs*, tech icon and founder of Apple
- *Laurene Powell Jobs*, Steve Jobs' wife
- *Steve Wozniak*, Apple co-founder known as "Woz"
- *Kōbun Chino Otagawa*, spiritual advisor to Jobs
- *Chrisann Brennan*, Jobs' girlfriend

*The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* is the first opera by Bay Area composer and DJ Mason Bates. It features an electro-acoustic score for orchestra and electronica paired with a libretto by Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Mark Campbell.

Musically and dramatically inspired by the creative spirit of Steve Jobs, the opera progresses non-linearly through episodes in Jobs' life, from a 2007 product launch to scenes set in 1973 when he is inventing in the Jobs family garage with Woz and, after 18 scenes, to Jobs' own funeral in 2011. In the tradition of Richard Wagner's leitmotifs, i.e. melodies associated with specific characters or themes, Bates pairs each of the opera's characters with not just their own musical motif but a distinct sonic identity, and these collide and blend as the people interact, as if mixed by a DJ.

**Did you know?** Since its 2017 world premiere at Santa Fe Opera, *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* has been presented by seven different companies across the United States and won a Grammy Award. San Francisco Opera is one of the original co-commissioners of the opera, and these performances, postponed from 2020 by the pandemic shutdown, mark the opera's long-awaited local premiere near the Silicon Valley environs that provide much of the opera's setting.

# Welcome to San Francisco Opera's Fall Season!

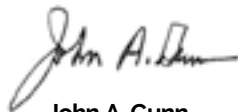
We're thrilled to be launching our 101st season after the tremendous success of our Centennial which officially ended this July. Our new season offers equally captivating artistry with three co-commissions by San Francisco Opera and the highest ratio of new stories that we have ever offered on our stage.

This season, Caroline H. Hume Music Director Eun Sun Kim will launch her initiative to perform operas by Giuseppe Verdi and Richard Wagner each season. She begins with Verdi's magnificent *Il Trovatore* and a new-to-San Francisco production of Wagner's *Lohengrin* (read more about it on page 25). Next summer she will lead an acclaimed production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* that was inspired by 1920s cinema.

We will also explore powerful subjects including the multifaceted impact of technology on our lives with *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* by Mason Bates and Mark Campbell, protecting individual identity when society denies your freedom with *Omar* by Rhiannon Giddens and Michael Abels, and the resilience of families in the face of tragedy with Kaija Saariaho's *Innocence*.

Thank you for all you do to make this level of creativity possible. As a nonprofit organization, San Francisco Opera depends on all of you to support the level of artistic excellence that our community has come to enjoy. Thank you for being a part of our opera family, and we hope you enjoy this incredible year as we launch the second century of San Francisco Opera!

Sincerely,



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



**Jack Calhoun**  
President  
San Francisco Opera Association



**P.S. from Jack Calhoun.** This marks my first season as president of the San Francisco Opera Association. I have been privileged to serve on the Board for 15 years, and stepping into this role is incredibly meaningful for me, particularly as we embark upon our next century. We have made great strides in the last year, welcoming new people into our opera community with new performances, venues, and ticketing programs. I look forward to continuing to welcome new and returning patrons into our magical world of opera! Thank you for your ticket purchases and financial contributions that make it all possible.

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# John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn



TERRENCE MCCARTHY

**O**nce again, the unprecedented generosity of Cynthia and John Gunn has set the stage for a dazzling season at San Francisco Opera. Since 2002, when John joined the Opera Board, the couple has underwritten numerous productions and provided exceptional support for many of the Company’s innovative endeavors. In September 2008, the Gunns made a historic commitment—believed to be the largest gift ever made by individuals to an American opera company—to help fund the signature projects of 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 Shilcock. This season, the Gunns’ inspired generosity is helping make possible four productions—*Il Trovatore*, *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*, *Lohengrin*, and *The Magic Flute*. The Gunns invite everyone to give and join them as a member of San Francisco Opera’s donor community. John comments, “Opera is a dynamic art form, and all of us play a role in keeping it a meaningful part of our social fabric. With you we can propel San Francisco Opera into its next 100

years of artistic history.” John is the former chairman and CEO of Dodge & Cox Investment Managers. He joined the firm in 1972, the year he received his MBA from Stanford Business School and married Cynthia, who graduated from Stanford with an A.B. in political science in 1970. Early in her career, Cynthia was the editor and director of *The Portable Stanford* book series for ten years. She edited 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. Opera lovers are grateful to Cynthia and John and applaud their commitment to keeping San Francisco Opera a leading-edge company.

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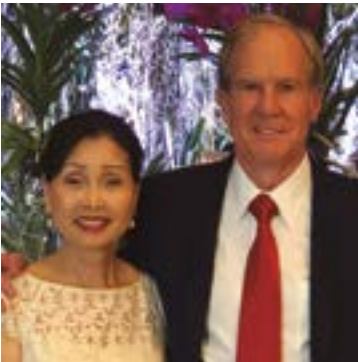
# Donor Spotlight



## **Diane B. Wilsey (Opening Week Grand Sponsor)**

Dede Wilsey, a longtime San Francisco Opera board member, patron, and *Opera Ball* supporter, believes deeply in the transformative power of the arts, particularly the multifaceted world of opera. Says Dede, “It’s a marvelous spectacle. From the voices and pageantry to the scenery, costumes, and acting, opera fills the senses and takes you to another place.” Thanks to Dede’s generosity, opera enthusiasts of all ages have much to celebrate. As Opening Week Grand Sponsor for the seventeenth year, she is excited to celebrate the start of our 101st season with a concert of opera stars Roberto Alagna and Aleksandra Kurzak, with our beloved San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus under the baton of Caroline H. Hume Music Director Eun Sun Kim. Dede is also supporting the celebratory floral arrangements that grace the War Memorial Opera House on

September 8, the free, annual *Opera in the Park* concert at Robin Williams Meadow on September 10, and the opening production of Verdi’s *Il Trovatore* under the baton of Eun Sun Kim. Dede’s leadership support was critical in the creation of the Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera, a dynamic, intimate space at the Veterans Building, which opened in spring 2016. Her philanthropic commitment to the community extends to many organizations. Dede has been chairman of the board of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco since 1996 and serves on the boards of the San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Ballet, and the War Memorial Performing Arts Center and is a lifetime trustee of UCSF.



DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

## **Jerome and Thao Dodson (Production Sponsor, *Il Trovatore*)**

“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.

---

# Donor Spotlight



KRISTEN LOKEN

## **Burgess & Elizabeth Jamieson (Production Sponsor, *Il Trovatore*)**

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

attract the next generation of opera lovers.”

Burgess says. “We are so pleased to play a contributing role in bringing *Il Trovatore* to the stage. We look forward to this grand production, especially as it features Music Director Eun Sun Kim.” In 2011, at the conclusion of more than 45 years of active experience in private and public investment management, Burgess began serving as a Board Member on the San Francisco Opera’s Board of Directors and its investment committee.



DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

## **Barbara A. Wolfe (Production Sponsor, *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*)**

Barbara Wolfe has been a longtime opera fan and supporter of San Francisco Opera. Works of Mozart and Wagner, and operas in the classical Italian tradition are particular favorites. Most recently, Barbara supported the Company’s new productions of *La Traviata*, *Don Giovanni*, *Tosca*, and *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, as well as the 2018 *Ring* cycle. With her late husband Tom, Barbara also sponsored *Tannhäuser*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *The Magic Flute*, *Mefistofele*, *Norma*, and *Don Carlo*. Barbara serves on the boards of the San Francisco Opera Association and San Francisco SPCA and was a longtime trustee at Mills College. She has supported educational programs and scholarships at several primary and secondary schools, graduate scholarship and fellowship programs at UCSF Foundation, and the Achievement Rewards for College Scientists program in Northern California.

Barbara is also a supporter of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, as well as numerous humanitarian and animal welfare organizations.

# Jan Shrem & Maria Manetti Shrem



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

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

Maria and Jan have been San Francisco Opera supporters since 1985 and have provided significant support for opera artists through the establishment of four major funds. Through the Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund, they support many classic works of the Italian repertoire, including this season’s *Il Trovatore* and *The Elixir of Love*. Through the Conductors Fund, appearances of renowned conductors are assured at San Francisco Opera, this season for *Omar* and *The Elixir of Love*. Through the Emerging Stars Fund, Jan and Maria help bring some of opera’s most exciting rising talents to the stage. And finally, the Luminaries Concert Fund enables

San Francisco Opera to bring legendary artists to the stage for special events and performances.

Maria counts sopranos Renée Fleming and Nadine Sierra, tenor Michael Fabiano, and baritone Lucas Meachem as personal friends and was especially close to Luciano Pavarotti, treating the legendary tenor as family whenever he performed in San Francisco. Beyond their support for education, fine arts, and music, the Manetti Shrems have been generously supporting causes in medical research and science, focusing on communities of need, particularly the elderly and children. A few years ago, the president of Italy bestowed upon Maria Manetti Shrem the title of Grand Officer of the Order of the Star of Italy for her consistent support of cultural collaboration between Italy and the U.S. In June 2022, the Mayor of San Francisco, London Breed, along with the City and the County, proclaimed “June 22 Manetti Shrem Day for Philanthropy.”

In December 2022, she received The Spirit of the Opera award for her devotion to San Francisco Opera, her high level of commitment to advancing the success of the Company, and her ongoing support of the art form. She is the 2023 UC Davis Medal recipient for her profound arts legacy and passion for creating opportunities for exploration and education.

# 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 86% of the revenue needed to create transformative opera.

Listed gifts were received between **August 1, 2022 and August 18, 2023**. We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of our donor listings. If we have misspelled or omitted a name, please accept our apology and notify us at **(415) 565-3212** so that we may update our records accordingly.

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# Omar Giving Circle

Join a special new giving circle, available for new and increased gifts to support Rhiannon Giddens and Michael Abels' *Omar*. *Omar* is the true story of a 19th-century Islamic scholar from West Africa, enslaved in South Carolina, but who found and expressed identity and faith through the written word. The Omar Giving Circle is a broad-based effort beginning at only \$22, embracing gifts of all sizes as vital to bring this important work to our community.



## TAMBOURINE \$22

Encircled by repeating pairs of metal discs, the "22" level is inspired by the prominence of the tambourine in the opera. Most scholars agree that the origins of the tambourine date back to 1700 BCE or even earlier, and it appears in sacred texts from West Africa, Turkey, Greece, Italy, India, and throughout the Middle East.



## KUFI \$120

The traditional hat worn by Omar in the opera is called a Kufi from the Kufi script it resembles. It plays a significant role in the opera as Julie, an enslaved woman, becomes close to him. The Kufi script is thought to have gone into general use in the 12th century. The hat is a part of the national dress of many West African countries and symbolizes African descent in many American cultures.



## AKONTING \$517

The akonting is an African gourd lute known as the ancestor of the modern banjo played by co-composer Rhiannon Giddens, who studied the instrument. The three strings of the akonting are tuned to the pattern 5-1-7, which inspires the name for this level! (7-note scale with 7th, 5th, and 1st notes.)



## SCHOLAR \$1,831

The best known of the scholar Omar Ibn Said's writings is his autobiographical essay, *The Life of Omar Ibn Said*, written in 1831, the work forms the basis of the opera.



## BLUEGRASS \$4,000

In honor of co-composer Rhiannon Giddens' frequent genre, bluegrass. Bluegrass was born out of North American blues music which was directly influenced by West African music. Recognized as a new American artform in the 1940's, Bluegrass is a fusion of music styles and experiences, much like the fusion of opera, Senegalese, and American styles found in *Omar*.



## TAMA \$7,280

The Senegalese tama, or talking drum, is known to project sounds imitating human speech across a seven-to-eight kilometer distance, or 7-2-8. Omar Ibn Said was originally abducted from West Africa, in the Futa Toro region (modern-day Senegal) where the Tama is played widely and used to send messages as well as make music.



## OLIVE TREE \$30,000+

Omar sings of the olive tree during the moment of darkness when his humanity is attacked, "The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp, which is within a glass, which is like a brilliant star fueled by a blessed tree, an olive tree, neither Eastern nor Western, whose oil would almost glow, even if untouched by fire." The themes of our shared humanity can be seen in the symbol of the olive tree.

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"The reigning American dramatic soprano of the day"  
—*New York Times*

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BAY AREA PREMIERE  
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**Music to Accompany  
a Departure**

A Cal Performances  
Co-commission  
Grant Gershon, *conductor*  
Peter Sellars, *director*

Peter Sellars, Grant Gershon, and singers of the Los Angeles Master Chorale reunite to perform Heinrich Schütz's *Music to Accompany a Departure*, a deeply personal meditation on what it means to say goodbye during times of struggle.

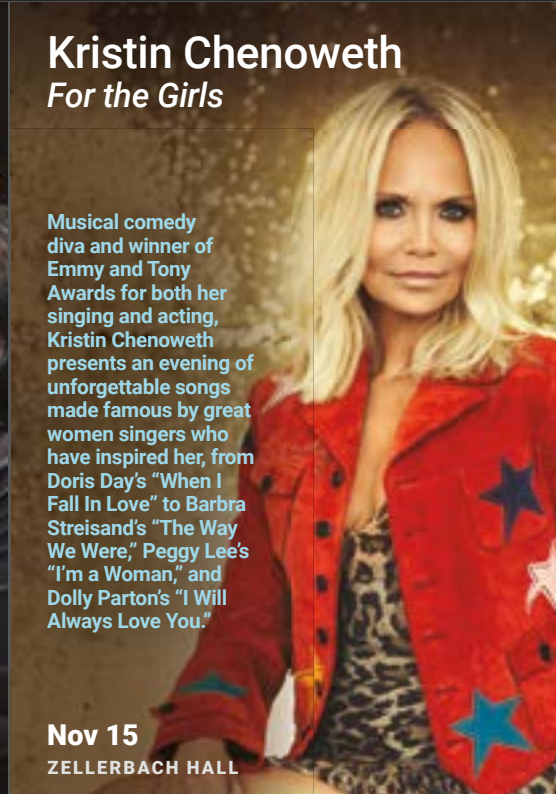
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**For the Girls**

Musical comedy diva and winner of Emmy and Tony Awards for both her singing and acting, Kristin Chenoweth presents an evening of unforgettable songs made famous by great women singers who have inspired her, from Doris Day's "When I Fall In Love" to Barbra Streisand's "The Way We Were," Peggy Lee's "I'm a Woman," and Dolly Parton's "I Will Always Love You."

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**The English Concert**  
**Handel's Rodelinda**  
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**Feb 9**  
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**Amina Edris,** *soprano*  
**Pene Pati,** *tenor*  
**Robert Mollicone,** *piano*  
**Voyages**

Works by Duparc, Ravel, Saint-Saëns, Quilter, and Vaughan Williams, and traditional songs from Egypt and Samoa

Darlings of the opera world, the wife and husband duo of soprano Amina Edris and tenor Pene Pati returns to the Bay Area with a varied program of songs traversing eras and continents.

**Apr 23**  
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# A Voyage with Giants

CAROLINE H. HUME MUSIC DIRECTOR EUN SUN KIM  
UNVEILS HER NEW VERDI AND WAGNER INITIATIVE

BY ROGER PINES



**T**his fall San Francisco Opera embarks on a glorious adventure, starting two of the greatest composers in operatic history: Giuseppe Verdi and Richard Wagner. Beginning in 2023–24 with *Il Trovatore* and *Lohengrin*, Music Director Eun Sun Kim will conduct a Verdi and a Wagner opera each season well into the future.

No one is more excited about the Verdi/Wagner initiative than Kim herself. “It was my idea,” she explains. “After I debuted here with *Rusalka* (2019), we talked through other possibilities. When I accepted this position, Wagner was there from the beginning. I wanted to add Verdi as I planned my ongoing collaboration with the orchestra.”

Kim’s goal in that collaboration is to set priorities that will lead to the artistic growth of the Company. In considering how Verdi and Wagner can help in achieving that goal, she begins by comparing this project with a symphony music director’s cycles of Beethoven, Brahms, Schumann, or Mahler—“composers who showed enormous range within their own style as they developed.” It’s the same with Wagner and Verdi. Kim declares with great enthusiasm, “It will be wonderful to work with our orchestra on this repertoire on a long-term basis.”



PHOTO BY STEFAN COHEN

Examining any Verdi or Wagner score is meaningful to Kim because “they have such depth musically, and you can’t detach the relationship between the music and the drama. The musical language simply *goes* with the drama! In bel canto opera, you have such beautiful melodies, but not necessarily with real drama behind them.” Wagner described his own works as “music drama,” but for Kim that phrase clearly applies to Verdi as well.

Initially, the Company will present better-known Verdi operas. (As a “prelude,” Kim led *La Traviata* last season.) The Verdi opera for 2023–24 will be a longtime audience favorite, *Il Trovatore*, written in 1853—the same year as *Traviata*—when the composer was mid-career. “I’m hoping we’ll move toward Verdi’s later works eventually,” says Kim, mentioning *Simon Boccanegra* as a work of particular interest.

Born in the same year (1813), Verdi and Wagner are described by Kim as “giants.” That designation comes, above all, from her feeling that “their music moves our hearts.” She’s also especially invigorated by the rhythmic vitality that makes Verdi immensely enjoyable to perform, both for singers and orchestral musicians. One word figuring prominently in Kim’s conversation is “nuance,” particularly vital in Wagner. “In a Wagner score, you can find nearly thirty measures within

which he might give only one musical indication, from *piano* to *crescendo*. How will you create the necessary nuances there? As opposed to Puccini, where in *La Bohème* he wrote four different musical indications in *one* bar.”

In addition to *Traviata*, Kim’s Verdi conducting to date has included *Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and the Requiem. In any Verdi work, she feels it is essential “to balance between bringing out the music’s virtuosity and making the drama happen.” She recognizes the excitement of the musically grand-scale, thrillingly impassioned episodes that abound in *Trovatore*, but she also appreciates the intimacy that Verdi makes possible: “His orchestra totally reflects the singers’ emotion, the *internal* voice of the characters—that’s what makes him one of the giants.”

In *Trovatore*, Kim can’t really pick a favorite moment, but she does especially relish the Manrico/Azucena duet in Act II, “which really *hurts* when you think about this story—it’s really *doloroso* [painful]. That’s a moment in the opera on which I am most concentrated. It’s not only *doloroso*, but also sensitive and delicate as well, in presenting the relationship between these two characters.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 43

# Il Trovatore

**OPERA IN FOUR ACTS BY GIUSEPPE VERDI**

**LIBRETTO BY SALVADORE CAMMARANO**

**BASED ON THE PLAY BY ANTONIO GARCÍA GUTIÉRREZ**

**CO-PRODUCTION OF SAN FRANCISCO OPERA,  
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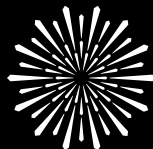
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**SEPTEMBER 12, 17, 20, 23, 29; OCTOBER 1, 2023**



**SAN FRANCISCO  
OPERA**

# Il Trovatore

## ACT I

Count di Luna's guards listen as their captain, Ferrando, tells the story of the count's father burning an old Romani woman at the stake for witchcraft. In revenge, the woman's daughter abducted one of the count's infant sons and burned the child to death. The other son, now the Count di Luna, has pledged to find the woman's daughter and avenge his brother.

In the palace garden, Leonora, the queen's lady-in-waiting, confides to her companion, Inez, that she has fallen in love with an unknown troubadour who has been serenading her. Inez has misgivings about the stranger, but Leonora cannot forget him. After the two women leave, Count di Luna appears. He is also in love with Leonora and intends to marry her. His thoughts are interrupted by the song of the troubadour. Leonora returns and, in the darkness, mistakes the count for her beloved. The troubadour emerges, accusing Leonora of infidelity, and revealing himself as Manrico, leader of the rebel forces. The count challenges him to a duel.

## ACT II

Day breaks over a Roma mountain camp. The men hammer on their anvils and the women work at their handicrafts. In a trance, Azucena relives the events of her mother's death on the pyre and is haunted by her final cry for vengeance. As the camp breaks up, Manrico asks Azucena to elaborate on the story. In near delirium, she tells him of the abduction of the count's child and the burning, not of di Luna's brother, but of her own son. Manrico, who has always believed Azucena to be his mother, is puzzled by what he has heard. After regaining her senses, Azucena reaffirms her maternal love for him, and the imperative that he kill the Count di Luna. A messenger arrives and informs Manrico that Leonora, believing him killed in battle, is about to take the veil at a nearby convent. Despite Azucena's protests, he rushes off to Leonora.

At the convent, di Luna and his guards are planning to abduct Leonora. Manrico appears with his followers, who foil the count's attempts, allowing the lovers to escape.

## —INTERMISSION—

## ACT III

The count is laying siege to the fortress where Leonora and Manrico have taken refuge. Azucena is brought into the camp and Ferrando recognizes her as the murderer of di Luna's brother. In despair, she utters Manrico's name, doubling the count's fury and his delight at her capture.

Inside the fortress, Manrico and Leonora are about to be married. She is anxious, but Manrico assures her of his love. News arrives that Azucena has been captured and is to be burned at the stake. Manrico rallies his forces to attack.

## ACT IV

Both Manrico and Azucena have been imprisoned. Leonora arrives at the prison and, when the count appears, offers herself to him in exchange for Manrico's life. Di Luna accepts the proposal joyously and, as he is giving orders to his guards, Leonora swallows poison, determined that the count's sole reward will be her lifeless body.

Inside the prison, Azucena is tormented by the memory of her mother's death. Manrico tries to comfort her by reminding her of peaceful days. Leonora enters and tells Manrico that he is free, but he suspects the price of his freedom and curses her. As the count appears, he overhears Leonora tell Manrico in her dying breath that she has preferred death to life without him. Enraged, the count sends Manrico to his death. Azucena is forced to witness the execution. Her mother is avenged: Di Luna has killed his own brother.

---

**First performance:** Rome, Teatro Apollo, January 19, 1853

**First performance in the United States:** New York, Academy of Music, May 2, 1855

**First San Francisco performance:** Maguire's Opera House, May 5, 1859, by the Bianchi Opera Troupe

**First San Francisco Opera performance:** Civic Auditorium, October 6, 1926

*Il Trovatore* has been performed in 24 previous seasons at San Francisco Opera.

**Personnel:** 9 principals, 59 choristers, 6 supernumeraries, 9 dancers: **83 total**

**Orchestra:** 1 flute (plus 1 piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, 1 cimballo, 1 timpani, 3 percussionists; regular (40) strings: **62 total**

**Backstage:** 1 percussion, 1 snare drum, 1 harp, 1 horn, 1 organ

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**Eun Sun Kim**

Production

**Sir David McVicar**

Revival Director

**Roy Rallo**

Movement Director

**Colm Seery**

Set Designer

**Charles Edwards**

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**Brigitte Reiffenstuel**

Lighting Designer

**Jennifer Tipton**

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**John Keene**

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Musical Preparation

**Matthew Piatt, Laura Poe,  
Bryndon Hassman, Andrew King,  
John Churchwell, Fabrizio Corona**

Diction

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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1 • 2 PM

# Il Trovatore

Opera in four acts by **Giuseppe Verdi**

Libretto by **Salvadore Cammarano**

Based on the play by **Antonio García Gutiérrez**

(Sung in Italian with English supertitles)

## CAST

(in order of vocal appearance)

*Ferrando* **Robert Pomakov**

*Inez* **Mikayla Sager †**

*Leonora* **Angel Blue**

*Count di Luna* **George Petean \***

*Manrico* **Arturo Chacón-Cruz**

*Azucena* **Ekaterina Semenchuk**

*An Old Roma* **Bojan Knezevic**

*Messenger* **Kevin Gino**

*Ruiz* **Edward Graves †**

*Leonora's friends and nuns, The count's allies, warriors, and Romani*

\* San Francisco Opera debut † Current Adler Fellow

**TIME AND PLACE:** Nineteenth Century, Spain

**ACT I**

**ACT II**

**—INTERMISSION—**

**ACT III**

**ACT IV**

*The performance will last approximately two hours and forty minutes with one intermission.*

# San Francisco Cheers for *Il Trovatore*



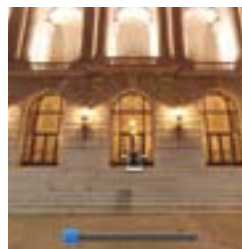
Groundbreaking for San Francisco's new opera house with Charles Kendrick of the War Memorial committee (smiling in the center), November 11, 1926.

SAN FRANCISCO HISTORY CENTER, SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY

## 1926: PREMIERE BRINGS NEWS OF THE FUTURE

On October 6, 1926 prima donna Claudia Muzio and mezzo-soprano Kathryn Meisle headlined the San Francisco Opera premiere of *Il Trovatore* at the Civic Auditorium, but it was arguably Charles Kendrick of the War Memorial committee who stole the show. Before the performance began, Kendrick stepped in front of the curtain to offer an update about the city's plans to build a new opera house: \$2 million of the necessary \$5 million had been secured, and groundbreaking would take place in a matter of weeks. He said, "We shall call upon you music lovers and proud citizens of San Francisco to raise the rest of the money needed" and the audience roared its approval. Ground was broken and the funds were

raised, but innumerable obstacles (including the onset of the Great Depression) delayed construction until January 1931. The War Memorial Opera House opened on October 15, 1932 in time for San Francisco Opera's tenth season, which included *Il Trovatore* starring Muzio and Meisle.



**EXPLORE:** Take a virtual tour of the War Memorial Opera House, an architectural gem and focal point for the city's cultural scene for 90+ years. [sfwarmemorial.org](http://sfwarmemorial.org).



**LISTEN:** Zinka Milanov sings Leonora on the classic 1952 RCA Victor recording of *Il Trovatore*.

**1943: THE VOICE IS THE THING**

During the War, Company founder Gaetano Merola bolstered his roster with artists who were already established in the United States but new to the West Coast. One such import was dramatic soprano Zinka Milanov. In 1943, her only season with San Francisco Opera, the Croatian diva’s beautiful and perfectly controlled voice illuminated Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, Verdi’s *La Forza del Destino*, and *Il Trovatore*. Act IV, Scene 1 of *Trovatore* provides Leonora with an unusually generous opportunity to make an impression—about 22 minutes of continuous singing in different configurations: an aria (“D’amor sull’ali rosee”), the “Miserere” with tenor and chorus, and a vigorous duet with the baritone (“Mira, di acerbe lagrime”). Milanov, who was more known for exquisite vocalism than realistic acting, wove an intoxicating spell in her protracted scene that led the *San Francisco Chronicle* to praise her as “strikingly beautiful to see and hear with a rich warmth and intimacy of expression that lent new color, life, and meaning to the part of Leonora.”



Zinka Milanov as Leonora, 1943.  
SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ARCHIVES



Giacomo Lauri-Volpi as Manrico.  
METROPOLITAN OPERA ARCHIVES

**1929: SETTING A NEW ARTISTIC STANDARD**

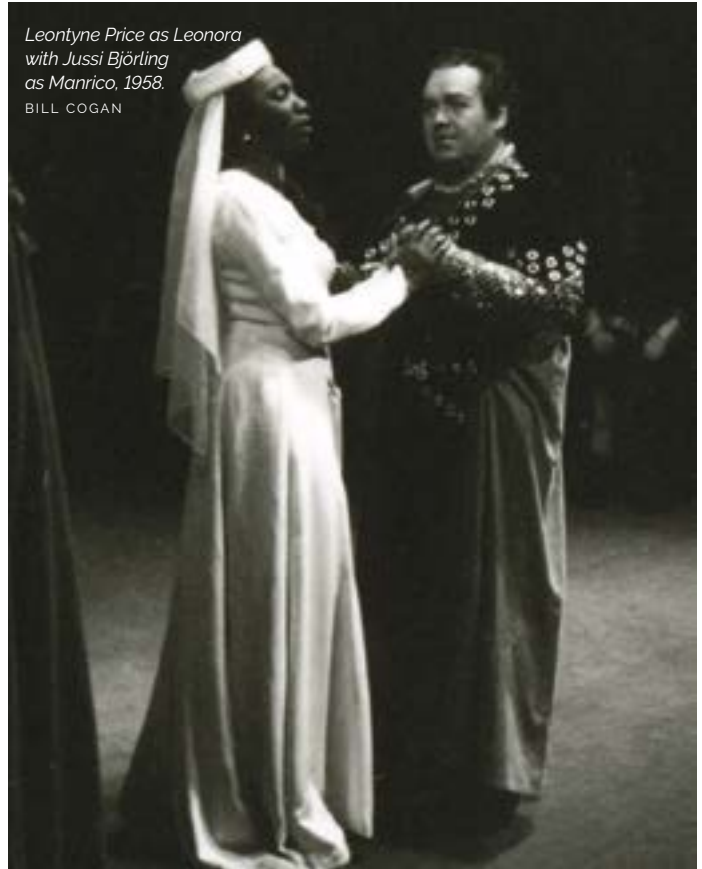
*Il Trovatore* was revived in 1929 for a powerful quartet of soloists including Giacomo Lauri-Volpi, the immensely popular Italian tenor who had opened the season as the Duke of Mantua in Verdi’s *Rigoletto*. Lauri-Volpi created such a furor singing the Duke’s aria “La donna è mobile” that the performance came to a standstill for nearly nine minutes of stomping, screaming, and riotous applause. Four nights later, he was on stage again to sing one of his specialties, Manrico in *Il Trovatore*. The tenor’s “sensation-provoking high notes” did not disappoint but it was the Company’s full ensemble—soloists, chorus, orchestra, scenic artists—that made headlines. The next morning, the *San Francisco Examiner* proclaimed, “Artistic Record Set ... the fact remains beyond possibility of cavil that last night’s performance of *Il Trovatore* represents the high water mark of achievement of the San Francisco Grand Opera.”



**VISIT:** Learn about the contributions of Italians and Italian Americans to San Francisco Opera at the exhibition BRAVO! Celebrating San Francisco Opera, Its Italian Roots and Legacy. [museoitaloamericano.org](http://museoitaloamericano.org).

### 1958: VERDI DUET ACROSS GENERATIONS

One of Giacomo Lauri-Volpi's successors as the Manrico of a generation was Swedish tenor Jussi Björling. A regular with San Francisco Opera since his debut in 1940, Björling's return in 1958 proved to be his last season with the Company. The veteran tenor's onstage partner for *Il Trovatore* was the young soprano from Laurel, Mississippi, Leontyne Price, singing her first-ever Leonora; one legend at the end of his career singing alongside a rising star near the outset of hers. Björling's wife and biographer, Anna-Lisa Björling, recalled, "Price's Leonora, a role she was to perfect in years ahead, was already sensational." Björling and Price would record the Verdi Requiem together in 1960, an essential recording made just two months before the tenor's death, but their only onstage collaboration happened at the War Memorial Opera House in *Il Trovatore*.



Leontyne Price as Leonora with Jussi Björling as Manrico, 1958. BILL COGAN



**STREAM:** Leontyne Price as Leonora in the Company's 1971 production. [sfopera.com/firstcentury](https://www.sfopera.com/firstcentury) (Session 3: Italian Roots).



Shirley Verrett as Azucena and Luciano Pavarotti as Manrico, 1975. RON SCHERL

### 1975: SPONTANEOUS OVATION FOR SHIRLEY VERRETT

In 1975, Verdi's opera was headlined by Joan Sutherland and Luciano Pavarotti, two of the most popular singers of their time, along with Russian powerhouse Elena Obraztsova as Azucena. When Obraztsova came down with laryngitis, Shirley Verrett was rushed in to replace her. Verrett, who took great care in creating vivid characterizations on stage, loved performing Azucena, a woman who lives on the margins of society and is mistreated by the powers that be. On the night of September 17, Verrett *really* got into her character. Against the backdrop of Verdi's incredibly dramatic music, she conveyed Azucena's Act II scene so vividly that as she described throwing the baby into the fire, the audience exploded. After several minutes of applauding, most of the audience had risen to their feet—a standing ovation right in the middle of a scene!



**VIEW:** A portrait of Shirley Verrett as Selika in Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* at The Hume Family Gallery (Veterans Building, 401 Van Ness Ave., Fourth Floor)





Caption / CREDIT

## 1986: DOLORA ZAJICK'S LEADING-ROLE DEBUT AS AZUCENA

The 1986 Summer Season opened with *Il Trovatore* featuring an esteemed Bulgarian soprano, a venerable Venetian baritone, and an Italian tenor sporting a pair of boots previously worn by the swashbuckling film star Errol Flynn. But it was Dolora Zajick (then billed as Zajic), the young American mezzo-soprano performing Azucena, who had everyone talking. In her first-ever leading role, the recent Merola Opera Program participant and former Adler Fellow brought the house down. The *San Francisco Examiner* praised how she “lived every word and every scene. She brought chills to the spine.” When Zajick took her curtain call at the end of the opera, “Brava!” cheers reigned down confirming that a spectacular new talent had arrived. Zajick, one of the foremost Verdi mezzos of the last 40 years, reprised her inimitable Azucena with San Francisco Opera in 1994 and 2003.



**PODCAST:** Dolora Zajick discusses her path as a young artist with San Francisco Opera Center. [sfopera.com/digital/north-stage-door](https://sfopera.com/digital/north-stage-door) (Episode 4).


## 2009: SWAN SONG OF A BELOVED BARITONE

San Francisco Opera has showcased many of the world's leading baritones as the Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore*, including Leonard Warren, Ettore Bastianini, and Vladimir Chernov. The Company's 2009 premiere of Sir David McVicar's staging featured the silver-maned Dmitri Hvorostovsky in the role. Known for his flawless breath control, matinee-idol looks, and excellence in the music of Rossini, Mozart, Rimsky-Korsakov, and, most of all, Verdi, Hvorostovsky was one of opera's bonafide superstars and a Bay Area favorite. The Count would be his last role with San Francisco Opera. In June 2015, Hvorostovsky was diagnosed with a brain tumor; within two years he was gone at only 55. Before his passing, Hvorostovsky made a brief and highly emotional return to the stage, singing three last performances


at the Metropolitan Opera. The role? Count di Luna in McVicar's production of *Il Trovatore* which Hvorostovsky helped introduce and is now inextricably linked. ❁



Dmitri Hvorostovsky as Count di Luna, 2009. CORY WEAVER



**WATCH:** 2009 highlights of Dmitri Hvorostovsky as the Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore*. [youtube.com/sfoperamedia](https://youtube.com/sfoperamedia).

The background of the page is a reproduction of the painting 'The Pyre' by Francisco Goya. It depicts a dark, somber scene of a public execution. A large, bright fire consumes a body on a pyre in the center. To the left, a man stands in profile, his face partially illuminated by the fire's glow. In the foreground, another man is crouching or crawling away from the viewer, his back to the camera, also partially lit by the fire. The overall atmosphere is one of horror and tragedy, with strong contrasts between light and shadow.

VISIONS OF THE ROMA  
**Outsiders in**  
*Il Trovatore*

BY ADA WOLIN

**I***l Trovatore* is an epic story of power, prejudice, and revenge, set against the dramatic backdrop of a medieval civil war. Though some aspects of its plot may beggar belief, the opera sets a complicated scene with minimal pedantry. Yet, this efficiency comes at a cost. That *Il Trovatore* emphasizes story and emotion over naturalism is not unique, nor is it condemnable. Within opera, every note, every moment, every detail has the power to reach listeners, each of whom brings their own knowledge and experience to the opera. To achieve accessibility, *Il Trovatore* relies on a gradient of familiar archetypes—Count di Luna, the cruel and controlling inheritor of generational wealth; Manrico and Leonora, lovers separated by class; Azucena, a Romani outcast whose life has been marred by tragedy. But *Il Trovatore* does more than rehash familiar settings and social paradigms—the opera’s historical setting and marginalized characters represent the changing, sometimes radical, and often contradictory view of outsiders during the Romantic period in Europe.

Romanticism emerged in the late eighteenth century as an artistic response to the rationalism of the

*Trovador* enraptured Spanish audiences with its evocative medieval setting onto which the playwright cast an epic of forbidden love, revenge, and power. Spain’s Romantic period began in earnest in the mid-1830s, as did its comparatively slow march toward industrialization. Prior to the 1830s, Romanticism was making its way to Spain through translated works by British poets.

In England, industrialization was well under way in the early 19th century, an alienating force (according to the Romantics) that prioritized output and commerce over personal freedom and human dignity. The Romantic interest in “outsiders” developed in tandem with the development of this grim, industrial world. Nineteenth-century Romantic intellectuals felt that by looking beyond the mainstream social order, they could find an example of how to live a truer, more meaningful life. One marginalized group who piqued the interest of Romantics were the Roma, at that time known as “Gypsies,” who were set apart by their nomadic way of life and their alternative economic framework, which was based in skilled trades and small-scale vending. As is often the case, there was more to the

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***“The opera’s historical setting and marginalized characters represent the changing, sometimes radical, and often contradictory view of outsiders during the Romantic period in Europe.”***

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Enlightenment. To the Romantics, a logical and scientific worldview poorly encapsulated the messy subjectivity of emotion, experience, and morality. Romantic writers emphasized emotional over rational expression and eschewed many of the aesthetic constraints of the Enlightenment in favor of a spontaneous and personal creative process. Such writers also drew inspiration from an idealized version of the past, looking to pastoral settings and folk traditions that evoked a more authentic connection to the self and to nature.

Though Giuseppe Verdi and Salvatore Cammarano’s *Il Trovatore* first reached Italian audiences in 1853, the opera’s story originated seventeen years earlier with *El Trovador*, an 1836 play by Antonio García Gutiérrez. *El*

story. As journalist Juliet Lapidus wrote for Slate, “barred from purchasing land or joining guilds, the Roma had no choice but to move about. Wandering became a way of life, and the Roma fit into the European economy by selling merchandise in rural areas distant from shops.” This way of life was no more innate to the Roma than 12-hour factory days were to the average industrial laborer. Nevertheless, essentialized depictions of the Roma as innately restless and capricious people proliferated throughout the Romantic period in Europe.

That Romani people had, by the 19th century, endured centuries of oppression also endeared them to the Romantics, whose interest in nonconformity and personal freedom aligned with the Roma’s perceived rejection of the



Antonio García Gutiérrez, Spanish dramatist and author of *El Trovador*, in 1887.  
BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



Giuseppe Verdi in the 1840s before composing *Il Trovatore* in 1853.  
GIANCARLO COSTA/BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

established social order. That is not to say that Romanticism created en masse acceptance or understanding of the Roma. Even within an individual writer's or artist's oeuvre, we find seemingly contradictory portrayals. The British poet William Wordsworth largely expressed sympathy and even admiration for Romani people, going so far as to criticize the societal circumstances which marginalize them in "The Female Vagrant" (1798). By comparison, in his "Gipsies" from 1807, Wordsworth defines the limits of his liberality; "In scorn I speak not;—they are what their birth and breeding suffer them to be; Wild outcasts of society!"

Literature from Spain's Romantic period also reveals multifaceted, even fragmentary attitudes toward outsiders and social liberalism. Spain's recently unstable political climate and deeply entrenched Catholicism, in some cases, yielded conservative and nationalistic themes. These are particularly found in the historical drama, a format which gained significant popularity among Spanish dramatists, including Gutiérrez. In most history plays, accurate representation of

events was secondary to the overarching emotional narrative. The medieval period was an especially fruitful setting because it was familiar enough to be recognized by the audience and distant enough for the artist to insert modern sensibilities and more challenging social issues.

In *Il Trovatore*, we see a many-sided reflection of how outsiders were perceived during this period. At times this exoticism is embraced; at others it is held at arm's length. We can rejoice that the opera rejects some of the most pernicious stereotypes of its Romani characters. While the Roma were often associated with indolence or fringe economic activities such as fortune-telling, *Il Trovatore's* Roma characters extol the praises of hard work.

It is important not to mistake the opera's tolerance of outsiders for accurate representation. In *The Roma: Between a Myth and a Future*, Dimitrina Petrova notes that within European Romanticism, "the nomad is wrapped in a cloud of romantic fantasy—a perception of freedom understood as carelessness. An intrinsic element of this fantasy is the



Group of Romani women dancing while men play guitar and tambourine in Granada, Spain, undated.  
BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

unrepressed Gypsy woman—‘Carmen’ or ‘Esmeralda’ dancing in harmony with nature.” That the joyful ‘band of Gypsies’ is a foil to the war and power-hungry world of Count di Luna’s men serves to reinforce another equally simplistic view of the Roma. We see this paradigm echoed in Act III, when Azucena claims “D’una zingara è costume mover senza disegno il passo vagabondo, ed è suo tetto il ciel, sua patria il mondo” (“It’s the gypsy’s custom to move her wandering steps without any plan; the sky is her roof, and the world is her country”). Yet, even as Azucena’s own words affirm this stereotype, the opera’s overarching story rejects this one-note characterization. Most of us are unlikely to believe that Azucena is either free or careless. Through modern eyes, we can see that she is deeply bound by the trauma of her mother’s murder and the terrible events which followed it.

Ultimately, *Il Trovatore*’s historical backdrop tells us more about the opera’s 19th-century milieu than it does about its historical narrative. But within what Tracie

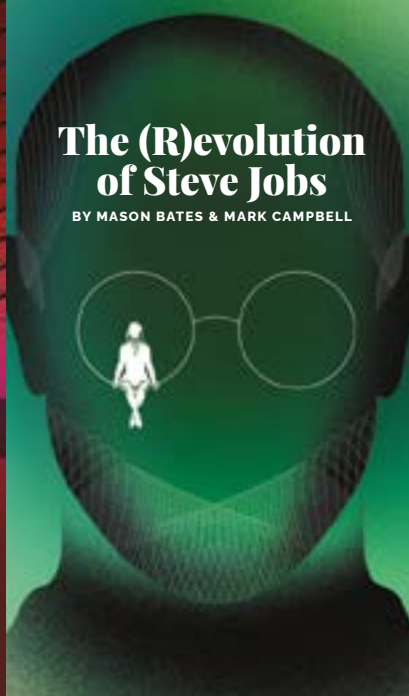
Amend describes as an “imagined past,” the opera creates verisimilitude through its depiction of anti-Roma discrimination. It is a masterful twist of irony that in an opera as grand, sprawling, and ambitious as *Il Trovatore*, the true axis of the story is an act of prejudice. The wrongful accusation against Azucena’s mother—that she bewitched Count di Luna’s son, an act for which she was burned at the stake—is the shared history that brings all four lead characters together (whether they know it or not). As modern viewers, we would certainly be within our rights to view this precipitating event as just another dramatic prop to facilitate the opera’s story. Alternatively, we could view it as a comment on the long life span of bigotry—empowering some, marginalizing others, affecting all. ❁

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Ada Wolin is a pop culture and music writer. She is the author of *Golden Hits of the Shangri-Las in the 33 1/3 book series by Bloomsbury Publishing.*



**Il Trovatore**  
BY GIUSEPPE VERDI



**The (R)evolution  
of Steve Jobs**  
BY MASON BATES & MARK CAMPBELL



**Lohengrin**  
BY RICHARD WAGNER



**Omar**  
BY RHIANNON GIDDENS & MICHAEL ABELS



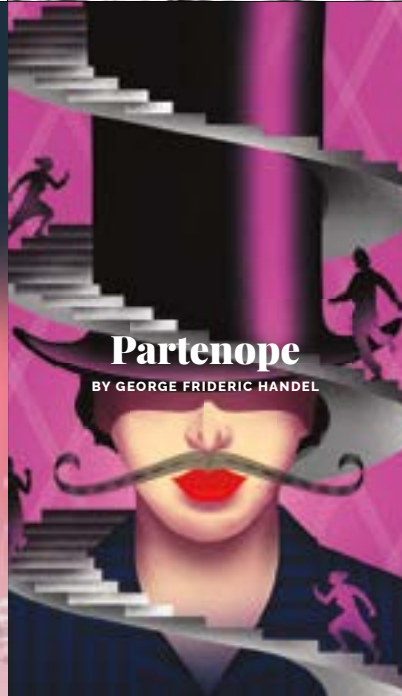
**The Elixir of Love**  
BY GAETANO DONIZETTI



**The Magic Flute**  
BY WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART



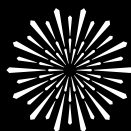
**Innocence**  
BY KAIJA SAARIAHO & SOFI OKSANEN



**Partenope**  
BY GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

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# Artist Profiles

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



## EUN SUN KIM

(Seoul, South Korea)  
Caroline H. Hume  
Music Director of San  
Francisco Opera

### Conductor

### San Francisco Opera

**Highlights:** *Rusalka*; *Tosca*; *Fidelio*; John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra*; *Dialogues of the Carmelites*; *La Traviata*; *Homecoming Concert*; *Eun Sun Kim Conducts Verdi: The Future Is Now* Adler Fellows Concert; *Opera Ball*; *Opera in the Park*; *Madame Butterfly*; *100th Anniversary Concert*

**Recent and Upcoming:** *Lohengrin* (San Francisco Opera); *The Magic Flute* (San Francisco Opera); *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (Paris Opera); Maria Callas Centenary (Paris Opera); *La Bohème* (Metropolitan Opera, Vienna State Opera, Milan's Teatro alla Scala); *Tosca* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Turandot* (Houston Grand Opera); *Roberto Devereux* (LA Opera); Verdi Requiem (Dutch National Opera); concerts with Berlin Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra, Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, The Philadelphia Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Seoul Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic  
Principal Guest Conductor of Houston Grand Opera  
Instagram: @ESKConductor



## ARTURO CHACÓN-CRUZ +

Tenor  
(Sonora, Mexico)

### Manrico

### San Francisco Opera

**Highlights:** Rodolfo in *La Bohème*; Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto*; *In Song*: Arturo Chacón-Cruz

**Recent and Upcoming:** Cavaradossi in *Tosca* (Oviedo Opera); Ismael in *Nabucco* (Valencia's Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia); Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller* (Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu); Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Palermo, Macau China); Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* (Hamburg, Budapest, Naples, Los Angeles); Alfredo in *La Traviata* (Moscow, Muscat Oman); Ruggero in *La Rondine* (Genoa Opera); title role of *La Damnation de Faust* (Buenos Aires' Teatro Colon, Mexico City's Opera de Bellas Artes); Des Grieux in *Manon* (Tenerife); Don José in *Carmen* (Liège); King Gustavo III in *Un Ballo in Maschera* (Barcelona)  
Winner of Jan and Maria Manetti Shrem Emerging Stars Competition (2017)  
Merola Opera Program: 2003



## ANGEL BLUE †

Soprano  
(Los Angeles, California)

### Leonora

### San Francisco Opera

**Highlights:** Clara in *Porgy and Bess*  
**Recent and Upcoming:** Micaëla in *Carmen* (Metropolitan Opera); Magda in *La Rondine* (Metropolitan Opera); title role of *La Traviata* (Metropolitan Opera); title role of *Aida* (London's Royal Opera Covent Garden); concerts with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra (on tour); title role of *Porgy and Bess* (Metropolitan Opera)  
Grammy Award: Best Opera Recording for *Porgy and Bess* (2021) and *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* (2023)  
Beverly Sills Award (2020)  
Richard Tucker Award (2022)



## EKATERINA SEMENCHUK

Mezzo-Soprano  
(St. Petersburg, Russia)

### Azucena

### San Francisco Opera

**Highlights:** Federica in *Luisa Miller*; Amneris in *Aida*; Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana*  
**Recent and Upcoming:** Princess Eboli in *Don Carlo* (Milan's Teatro alla Scala); title role of *Turandot* (Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu); Abigail in *Nabucco* (Deutsche Oper Berlin, Las Palmas)



## GEORGE PETEAN \*

Baritone  
(Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

### Count di Luna

### Recent and

### Upcoming:

Title role of *Rigoletto* (Naples, Liège); Ezio in *Attila* (Milan's Teatro alla Scala); Jago in *Otello* (Monte Carlo); Renato in *Un Ballo in Maschera* (Munich's Bavarian State Opera); title role of *Macbeth* (Vienna); Don Carlo di Vargas in *La Forza del Destino* (Zurich); Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Vienna); Amonasro in *Aida* (Munich); Don Carlo in *Ernani* (Munich); Marcello in *La Bohème* (Berlin); Germont in *La Traviata* (Munich, Amsterdam)



## ROBERT POMAKOV

Bass  
(Toronto, Canada)

### Ferrando

### San Francisco Opera

### Highlights:

Monterone in *Rigoletto*; Mathieu in *Andrea Chénier*  
**Recent and Upcoming:** Ferrando in *Il Trovatore* (Zurich Opera); Bartolo in *Le*

ARTIST PROFILES CONTINUED

*Nozze di Figaro* (Canadian Opera Company); First Nazarene in *Salome* (COC); Banquo in *Macbeth* (Calgary Opera); Hagen in *Götterdämmerung* (Tiroler Festspiele); The Bonze in *Madame Butterfly* (Paris Opera, Metropolitan Opera); Gremin in *Eugene Onegin* (Oslo's Den Norske Opera); Nourabad in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* (Santa Fe Opera); Méphistophélès in *Faust* (Vancouver Opera); King René in *Iolanta* (Frankfurt Opera); Monterone in *Rigoletto* (Metropolitan Opera)



**EDWARD GRAVES** ♫+  
Tenor  
(Oxon Hill, Maryland)  
**Ruiz**  
**San Francisco Opera Highlights:**  
Gastone in *La*

*Traviata*; Stone/Eunuch in Bright Sheng and David Henry Hwang's *Dream of the Red Chamber*; *Centennial Celebration Concert*; Rodolfo in *Bohème Out of the Box*

**Recent and Upcoming:** Noble in *Lohengrin* (San Francisco Opera); Amadou in Rhiannon Giddens and Michael Abels' *Omar* (San Francisco Opera); Anatol in *Vanessa* (Spoleto Festival USA); Policeman 2 in Jeanine Tesori and Tazewell Thompson's *Blue* (Michigan Opera Theatre, Glimmerglass Festival); title role of Handel's *Judas Maccabaeus* (Berkshire Choral International); *What the Heart Desires* (Merola Opera Program); *Back Home: Through the Stage Door* (Merola); Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*/Michael Ching's *Buoso's Ghost* (Michigan Opera Theatre); Robbins in *Porgy and Bess* (Seattle Opera); John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* (Florentine Opera) San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship: 2022, 2023  
Merola Opera Program: 2021



**MIKAYLA SAGER** ♫+  
Soprano  
(Vancouver, Canada)  
**Inez**  
**San Francisco Opera Highlights:** Soloist in *Eun Sun Kim Conducts*

*Verdi*; Sister Felicity in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*; Mimi in *Bohème Out of the Box*; Kate Pinkerton in *Madame Butterfly*; Keeper of the Gates of the Temple in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*; Frida Image #1 in Gabriela Lena Frank and Nilo Cruz's *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*

**Recent and Upcoming:** Concert (UC Davis Symphony Orchestra); Giannetta in *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Festival Napa Valley) San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship: 2022, 2023  
Merola Opera Program: 2021



**BOJAN KNEZEVIC** ♫  
Bass-Baritone  
(Belgrade, Serbia)  
**An Old Roma**  
**San Francisco Opera Highlights:** Soloist in

over 30 productions, including *Dulcamara* in *L'Elisir d'Amore*; *Harashta* in *The Cunning Little Vixen*; *Sacristan* in *Tosca*; *Haly* in *L'Italiana in Algeri*; *Antonio* in *Le Nozze di Figaro* Member of San Francisco Opera Regular Chorus  
San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship: 1995  
Merola Opera Program: 1992, 1993, 1994



**KEVIN GINO** ♫  
Tenor  
(Diamond Bar, California)  
**Messenger**  
**San Francisco Opera Highlights:** Yakuside

in *Madame Butterfly*  
**Recent and Upcoming:** The Fisherman in Stravinsky's *Le Rossignol* (West Edge Opera); Alfred in *Die Fledermaus* (Pocket

Opera); Camille in *Die Lustige Witwe* (Pocket Opera); Rodolfo in *La Bohème* (San Francisco Opera Guild)  
Member of San Francisco Opera Regular Chorus



**SIR DAVID MCVICAR**  
Production  
(Glasgow, Scotland)  
**San Francisco Opera Highlights:**  
Productions of *Don Giovanni*, *Les Troyens*,

*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Rusalka*; Director of *Il Trovatore*, *Andrea Chénier*  
**Recent and Upcoming:** *Il Trovatore* (Metropolitan Opera); *Fedora* (Metropolitan Opera); *Medea* (Metropolitan Opera, Canadian Opera Company); *Don Carlo* (Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Agrippina* (Metropolitan Opera); *Adriana Lecouvreur* (Metropolitan Opera); *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Metropolitan Opera); *Pagliacci* (Metropolitan Opera); *Tosca* (Metropolitan Opera); *Norma* (Metropolitan Opera); *Elektra* (Chicago); *Macbeth* (Chicago, COC); *Falstaff* (Santa Fe Opera); *Rusalka* (COC); *Le Nozze di Figaro* (London's Royal Opera Covent Garden, Opera Australia); *Salome* (London); Britten's *Death in Venice* (London); *Andrea Chénier* (London); *Giulio Cesare* (Glyndebourne Festival Opera); *La Traviata* (Scottish Opera, Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu); Cavalli's *La Calisto* (Milan's Teatro alla Scala); Verdi's *I Masnadieri* (Milan); *Don Giovanni* (Australia); *Faust* (Australia)  
Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres



**ROY RALLO**  
Revival Director  
(Anaheim, California)  
**San Francisco Opera Highlights:** Director of *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *The Barber of Seville for Families*,



## ARTIST PROFILES CONTINUED

*Pikovaya Dama*; San Francisco Opera staff director for 27 seasons

**Recent and Upcoming:** Associate Director of *Partenope* (San Francisco Opera); Niloufar Talebi and Aleksandra Vrebalov's *Abraham in Flames* (San Francisco's Z Space); Schubert's *Winterreise* (Le Chimera Project) Founding member of Canada's Le Chimera Project



**CHARLES EDWARDS**  
Set Designer  
(Newcastle, England)

**San Francisco Opera Highlights:** *Il Trovatore*

**Recent and Upcoming:** Set designer of *Werther* (London's Royal Opera Covent Garden); *Faust* (Royal Opera); *Lucia di Lammermoor* (English National Opera); *Jenůfa* (ENO); *Gianni Schicchi* (Opera North); *I Masnadieri* (Milan's Teatro all Scala); *La Calisto* (Milan); *Don Carlos* (Metropolitan Opera); *Fedora* (Metropolitan Opera); *Il Trovatore* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Rossini's *La Gazza Ladra* (Frankfurt) Director of *Tristan und Isolde* (Grange Park)



**BRIGITTE REIFFENSTUEL**  
Costume Designer  
(Munich, Germany)

**San Francisco Opera Highlights:** *Il Trovatore*

**Recent and Upcoming:** *Leopoldstadt* (London's West End, Broadway); *Il Barbiere de Siviglia* (Salzburg Festival); *Fedora* (Metropolitan Opera); *OKLAHOMA!* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *The Light in the Piazza* (London's Royal Festival Hall, Los Angeles, Chicago); *Twelfth Night* (London's Young Vic) Tony Award: Best Costume Design for a Play for *Leopoldstadt* (2023)



**JENNIFER TIPTON**  
Lighting Designer  
(Columbus, Ohio)

**San Francisco Opera Highlights:** *Il Trovatore*; *Louise*; Jake Heggie's *Dead*

*Man Walking*; *Die Lustige Witwe*; *Jenůfa*; *Hänsel und Gretel*; *Pikovaya Dama*; *Don Giovanni*

**Recent and Upcoming:** Ricky Ian Gordon's *Intimate Apparel* (Lincoln Center); *Pictures from Home* (Broadway); *To Kill a Mockingbird* (on tour); Beckett's *First Love* (Zoom); Richard Nelson's Rhinebeck plays; Amy Hall Garner's *Somewhere in the Middle* (Paul Taylor Company); Lauren Lovette's *Dreamachine* (Paul Taylor Company); *Our Days and Night* installation (Baryshnikov Arts Center)



**COLM SEERY**  
Movement Director  
(Dublin, Ireland)

**San Francisco Opera Highlights:** Movement Director of John Adams' *Antony*

and *Cleopatra*; Choreographer of *Madame Butterfly*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Gabriela Lena Frank and Nilo Cruz's *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*; Revival Choreographer of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Andrea Chénier*, Bright Sheng and David Henry Hwang's *Dream of the Red Chamber*; Dance Master of *Don Giovanni*, *Eugene Onegin*, *La Traviata*, *Orfeo ed Euridice*  
**Recent and Upcoming:** Choreographer of *Idomeneo* (Staatsoper Berlin); Britten's *Gloriana* (Madrid's Teatro Real); *Ariodante* (Vienna State Opera, Israeli Opera); Associate Choreographer of *Andrea Chénier* (London's Royal Opera Covent Garden); Revival Choreographer of *La Traviata* (Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu); *Manon* (Dallas Opera, Buenos Aires' Teatro Colon); *Giulio Cesare*

(Glyndebourne Festival Opera); *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Glyndebourne); *Rinaldo* (Glyndebourne)



**JOHN KEENE**  
Chorus Director  
(Lancaster, Pennsylvania)

**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*; *Madame Butterfly*; *Die Frau ohne Schatten*; Gabriela Lena Frank and Nilo Cruz's *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*; *100th Anniversary Concert*

**Recent and Upcoming:** Mason Bates and Mark Campbell's *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*; *Lohengrin*; *Omar*; *The Elixir of Love*; *The Magic Flute*; Kaija Saariaho, Sofi Oksanen, and Aleksis Barrière's *Innocence* Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition and San Francisco Conservatory of Music Voice Concerto Competition judge Instagram: @keenejohn



**DAVE MAIER**  
Fight Director  
(El Cerrito, California)

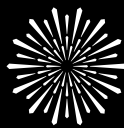
**San Francisco Opera Highlights:** John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra*; *Carmen*;

*Tosca*; the *Ring* cycle; *Pagliacci*; *Rigoletto*; *Romeo and Juliet*; *Billy Budd*  
**Recent and Upcoming:** *Romeo and Juliet* (Opera San José); *POTUS* (Berkeley Rep); *Hamlet* (Marin Shakes); *Twelfth Night* (Marin Shakes); *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Oakland Theater Project); *King Lear* (Santa Cruz Shakespeare); *The Taming of the Shrew* (Santa Cruz Shakespeare)

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# The Elixir of Love Encounter

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*The Elixir of Love Encounter* is made possible, in part, by the Creative Edge Fund with major support from founding funders Carol and Dixon Doll, Peter Fenton and Kate Greer, and Bob Ellis.

*The Elixir of Love* is made possible, in part, by Jerome and Thao Dodson; the San Francisco Opera Guild; and Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem.

Event recommended for ages 21+. All dates, prices, programs, artists, and productions subject to change. Tickets subject to availability. Illustration by Brian Stauffer

*“I always joke that casting  
Trovatore is very easy—  
you just need to find the five  
best singers in the world ...  
I really think we have  
those singers  
on our team!”*



PHOTO BY CODY PICKENS

It's often lamented that there are few great Verdi singers nowadays, but the Company's *Trovatore* artists have been triumphantly successful internationally in Verdi roles. Kim has worked previously with Ekaterina Semenchuk and George Petean, but it will be a “first date” for her with the other three principals. Paraphrasing a quip from the legendary tenor Enrico Caruso, she notes that “I always joke that casting *Trovatore* is very easy—you just need to find the five best singers in the world,” adding, “I really think we have those singers on our team!”

As for Wagner, his music was new to Kim when she arrived in Europe from her native Korea to finish her studies. “In Germany, Wagner came into my life. I had to get over all the clichés about Wagner being long, boring, difficult.” Her first time conducting Wagner was an unexpected work, rarely heard today: *Das Liebesverbot*. “I don't feel I need to perform it again,” she said of the composer's first staged opera, written at age twenty-two, “but it was a great beginning in getting to know Wagner.” That production in Meiningen was followed by *Der Fliegende Holländer*, first in Bergen and then Frankfurt. It was a Bergen performance for students that showed Kim how Wagner could affect an audience. Her listeners, ranging in age from seven-year-olds to teenagers, were “so silent, so into the drama. At the end, it was like a rock concert—they went *crazy* over that music! Wagner speaks to kids, to adults, to everyone.”

Kim is clearly delighted to launch the Wagner portion of the Verdi/Wagner initiative with her first *Lohengrin*, the work with which Wagner began to find his own style. “With *Holländer* and *Tannhäuser*, Wagner was experimenting,” Kim notes. “*Lohengrin* is the first piece where he's on the way to getting rid of ‘numbers’ [distinctly defined, self-contained arias and duets].” When Wagner wrote about the *Lohengrin* Act I prelude, “he said he wanted it to be ‘*erstmalig, einmalig, neuartig*’ [as if for the first time, unique, new], and also *überirdisch* [unearthly, celestial]. That music is a perfect way to begin the opera.”

Wagner composed magnificently for the *Lohengrin* chorus and Kim looks forward to working on this opera with the Company's choristers. “In our rehearsals we'll work on details, nuances, and on how we'll drive the drama forward.”

Surprisingly, Kim finds *Lohengrin* relatable to contemporary lives. No matter that it was created nearly 175 years ago: “What makes us human beings hasn't drastically



Eun Sun Kim bows with the cast and creative team for Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, 2023. / DREW ALTIZER



Eun Sun Kim. / STEFAN COHEN

changed! Figures like Lohengrin, like Ortrud, are always present in our own time. As long as the storytelling is strong and it works onstage, I think the audience can connect with the piece very easily." She's reminded in that respect of last season's *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, where "you could feel the audience's energy, how connected they were to the drama. That's the power of a live performance, and why we all gather together to experience it."

As with *Trovatore*, Kim can't wait to collaborate with the *Lohengrin* cast. "I haven't worked with [tenor] Simon O'Neill, but I've heard him perform a lot in Europe. There's such clarity in his voice, and what he does with the text makes the storytelling meaningful. Heldentenor repertoire is physically demanding and the singer must pace himself, yet without letting the audience think, 'Oh, now he's saving his energy to get to the end.' Simon understands this. I have huge respect for him." Opposite O'Neill is Julie Adams, a former Adler Fellow singing her first Elsa. "I've been working with her on the role since last summer. We're both people who are picky about the details—this work has been really exciting."

Kim hasn't seen the productions by Sir David McVicar (*Il Trovatore*) and David Alden (*Lohengrin*), but she

conducted the McVicar *Rusalka* in San Francisco "and I admired its wonderful *Personenführung* [lit., "guidance of the characters"]. When seen in London, Alden's *Lohengrin* was hailed by *Bachtrack's* critic as "provoking far more thought and tension than any *Lohengrin* I've ever seen." Kim is "very, very excited to finally work with David Alden. Like David McVicar, he's totally connected with the *music* as well as the drama in all his productions."

In all the upcoming Verdi and Wagner repertoire, Kim knows that "what the audience gets from the live performances will always be different. For longtime subscribers, I hope experiencing these operas will be meaningful for them, and that they'll realize how closely the orchestra and I are connected—that we're a team. And for firstcomers, I hope these operas will be a special voyage of discovery. If one of our performances is a life-changing moment for them, what more can I expect?" ❁

---

*Roger Pines is a contributing writer to Opera News, Opera (U.K.), programs of opera companies internationally, and major recording labels. A faculty member of Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music, he has also been a panelist on the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts' "Opera Quiz" each season since 2006.*

2023 PULITZER PRIZE  
WINNER FOR MUSIC

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# Omar

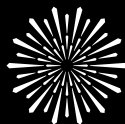
BY RHIANNON GIDDENS AND MICHAEL ABELS



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

# 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, large bags are strongly discouraged and are subject to search.

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

### North Box Restaurant and Bar • North Mezzanine Level

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

*Restaurants are open two hours prior to performances.*

*Reservations are strongly recommended.*

*Reserve a table online at [sfopera.com/dine](https://sfopera.com/dine) or email [operahousepreorder@ggcatery.com](mailto:operahousepreorder@ggcatery.com),*

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

## 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 for everyone in the theater enjoying a live, in-the-moment experience.
- Take photos before or after the performance, during intermission, or during the bows, and 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 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.

*Management 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.

**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**

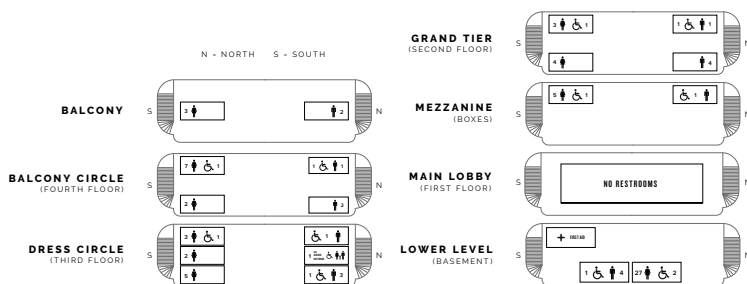
See the action up close and rent a pair of opera glasses for \$5 at the North Lobby coat check. ID deposit is requested. Credit card only.

**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 AM-5 PM, 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 along Grove Street. These ambassadors are there to assist you and escort you to and from the Opera House on performance days and evenings from 6:30-11:30pm.



**RIDESHARE**

Direct your rideshare service to pick up and drop off using the white loading zone at 455 Franklin Street (located behind 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.

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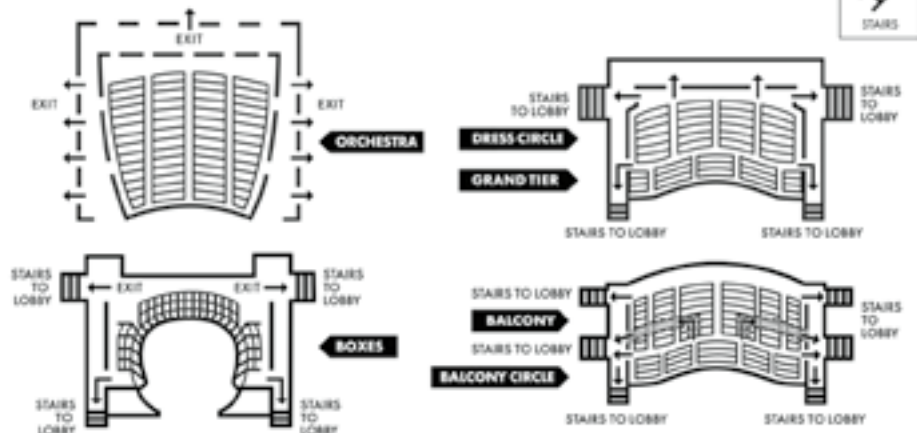
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**PATRONS, ATTENTION PLEASE! FIRE NOTICE:** Please note the nearest exit. In an emergency, follow any lighted exit sign to the street. **WALK**, do not run, to the nearest exit. Disabled patrons, proceed to nearest elevator lobby and await assistance.

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.

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## FIGHT DIRECTION

**Dave Maier**, *Fight Director*

## LIGHTING

**Justin Partier**, *Lighting Director\**

**Davida Tkach**, *Assistant Lighting Designer*

**Daniel Friedman**, *Assistant Lighting Designer*

**Sasha Finley**, *Lighting Intern*

**Natalia Carlson**, *Hemsley Lighting Intern*

## MEDIA

**Jodi Gage**, *Media Producer*

## PROPERTIES

**Lori Harrison**,

*Master of Properties*

**Frederick Wielandt**,

*Assistant Master of Properties*

## REHEARSAL

**Marin Venturi**,

*Rehearsal Department Director\**

**Savannah Criswell**, *Rehearsal Administrator*

**Jacob Zdunich**, *Rehearsal Coordinator: Personnel*

**Liz R. Ray**, *Rehearsal Coordinator: Administration*

**Heather Kelly-Laws**, *Rehearsal Assistant*

## SCENE SHOP

**John Del Bono**, *Scene Shop Foreman*

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

## STAGING STAFF

**Darin Burnett**,

*Production Stage Manager\**

**Darin Burnett, Jennifer Harber**,

**Jayne O'Hara, Thea Railey**,

*Stage Managers*

**Ian Andrew Askew, Jose Maria Condemi**,

**E. Reed Fisher, Jennifer Harber**,

**Dan Wallace Miller**,

**Roy Rallo, Morgan Robinson**,

*Assistant Stage Directors*

**Collette Berg, Jonathan S. Campbell**,

**Megan Coutts, Jayme O'Hara**,

**Thea Railey, Anna Reetz**,

*Assistant Stage Managers*

**Colm Seery**, *Dance Master*

## TECHNICAL DIRECTION

**Erik Walstad**, *Technical and Safety Director\**

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

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

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

## WARDROBE

**Tony Gorzycki**, *Head of Wardrobe*

**Cynthia Fusco, Carol Horaitis**,

**Robert Horek, David McKain**,

*Wardrobe Assistants*

## WIG, HAIR, & MAKEUP

**Jeanna Parham**,

*Department Head of Wigs, Hair, and Makeup*

**Christina Martin**,

*Assistant Department Head of*

*Wigs, Hair, and Makeup*

---

Dr. Myron Marx, *Company Medical Adviser*

Seyfarth Shaw LLP, *Counsel*

Armanino LLP, *Independent Public Accountants*

*UCSF doctors:*

Dr. George Rutherford,

Dr. Mark Almond,

Dr. Robert Harrison,

Dr. Sanziana Roman,

Dr. Clark Rosen

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Pianos supplied by Piedmont Piano

# 2023-24 Artists

## PRINCIPAL ARTISTS

Julie Adams \*^  
 Hadleigh Adams \*^  
 Roberto Alagna \*  
 Andrea Alderman  
 Angela Arnold  
 Javier Arrey  
 Zhengyi Bai \*^  
 Barry Banks  
 Joseph Barron  
 Michael Belle  
 Gabrielle Beteag ^†  
 David Bizic \*  
 Angel Blue  
 Aleksey Bogdanov ^  
 Aleta Braxton \*  
 Bille Bruley \*  
 William Lee Bryan  
 Cheryl Cain  
 Sarah Cambridge \*^  
 Victor Cardamone ^†  
 Maire Therese Carmack \*  
 Arturo Chacón-Cruz ^  
 Sarah Coit  
 Sasha Cooke  
 Christopher Craig \*  
 Johanne Daniel  
 Claire de Sevigne \*  
 Camilo Delgado Diaz \*\*  
 Ashley Dixon \*^  
 Ruxandra Donose  
 Melissa Dufort \*  
 Marina Dumont \*\*  
 Jessica-Elizabeth \*  
 John Fluker \*  
 Julie Fuchs \*  
 John Fulton  
 Christina Gansch  
 Norman Garrett \*  
 Margaret Genovese  
 Rod Gilfry  
 Kevin Gino  
 Renato Girolami \*  
 Edward Graves ^†  
 Calvin Griffin \*  
 Jongwon Han ^†  
 Stella Hannock  
 Earl Hazell  
 Julie Hega \*\*  
 Jonah Hoskins \*  
 Vilma Jää \*\*  
 Christopher Jackson

Ernest C. Jackson, Jr. \*  
 Joanna Lynn-Jacobs \*  
 Michael Jankosky  
 Silvie Jensen  
 James Johnson ~  
 Sydnee Turrentine-Johnson \*  
 Wilford Kelly \*  
 Hyona Kim  
 Simon Kluth \*\*  
 Bojan Knežević  
 Laura Krumm \*^  
 Aleksandra Kurzak  
 Judit Kutasi \*\*  
 Joseph Lattanzi \* ^  
 Adam Lau ^  
 Thomas Lehman \*  
 Christine Lyons  
 Daniela Mack \*^  
 Malcolm MacKenzie  
 Jamez McCorkle \*  
 Jermaine McGhee \*\*  
 Liesl McPherrin  
 Courtney Miller  
 John Moore \*  
 Thalia Moore \*  
 Beate Mordal \*\*  
 Angela Moser  
 Brian Mulligan  
 Miles Mykkanen \*  
 Daniel Okulitch ^  
 William O'Neill  
 Kenneth Overton  
 Simon O'Neill ^  
 Andrew Thomas Pardini  
 Pene Pati \*^  
 Amitai Pati \*^  
 George Petean \*  
 Chester Pidduck  
 Robert Pomakov  
 Laurel Cameron Porter  
 Nikola Printz ^†  
 Taylor Raven ^  
 Brittany Renee \*  
 Arianna Rodriguez ^†  
 Mikayla Sager ^†  
 Moisés Salazar  
 Ekaterina Semenchuk  
 Lucy Shelton \*  
 Alek Shrader \*^  
 Kristinn Sigmundsson  
 Anna Simińska \*  
 Olivia Smith ^†

Whitney Steele  
 Alexander Taite  
 Nicholas Tamagna \*  
 Rehanna Thelwell \*  
 Jere Torkelsen  
 Lauri Vasar \*\*  
 Carlo Vistoli \*  
 Chloe Vaught \*  
 Wei Wu \*  
 Kyle van Schoonhoven ^  
 Jesslyn Thomas  
 Kwangchul Youn \*  
 lávka Zámečnicková \*\*

## CONDUCTORS

Michael Christie  
 John Kennedy \*  
 Eun Sun Kim  
 Clément Mao-Takacs \*  
 Christopher Moulds  
 Ramón Tebar \*

## PRODUCTION

Barrie Kosky and  
 Suzanne Andrade  
 Sir David McVicar  
 Simon Stone \*

## STAGE DIRECTORS

David Alden  
 Christopher Alden  
 Kevin Newbury  
 Roy Rallo  
 Peter Relton \*  
 Tobias Ribitzki \*  
 Kaneza Schaal \*  
 Daniel Slater

## CHOREOGRAPHERS

Kiara Benn \*  
 Maxine Braham \*  
 Timothy Claydon \*

## KEY:

\* San Francisco Opera Debut  
 \*\* U.S. Debut  
 \* Former Adler Fellow  
 † Current Adler Fellow  
 ^ Former Merola Opera Program participant  
 ~ Solo Dancer  
 Cover Artist

# Chorus

John Keene, Chorus Director  
 Fabrizio Corona, Associate Chorus Master

## REGULAR CHORUS

Nadima Avakian	Bojan Knežević *
Buffy Baggott	Elisabeth Rom Lucio
Kathleen Bayler	Liesl McPherrin *
C. Michael Belle	Angela Eden Moser *
William Lee Bryan *	Sally Mouzon
Cheryl Cain	Sarah Nadreau
Janet Campbell	Erin Neff
Alan Cochran	William O'Neill *
Sara Colburn t	Andrew Thomas Pardini *
Edith Dowd	Rachel Perry
Anders Fröhlich	Phillip Pickens
John Fulton *	William Pickersgill
Kevin Gino *	Chester Pidduck *
Stella Hannock *	Laurel Cameron Porter
Daniel Harper	Valery Portnov
Christopher Jackson *	Carole Schaffer t
Michael Jankosky *	Jonathan Smucker
Silvie Jensen *	Whitney Steele *
Wilford Kelly *	Jesslyn Thomas *
Claire Kelm	Jere Torkelsen *
Crystal Kim *	Andrew Truett

t Chorus member on leave of absence  
 \* Solo Role

## EXTRA CHORUS

Andrea Alderman	Joanna Lynn-Jacobs *
Angela Arnold	Ilanthe Marini
Elizabeth Baker	Zachary Martin
Aleta Braxton *	Michael Mendelsohn
Jennifer Brody	Courtney Miller
Katie Carlson Cartwright	Thalia Moore *
Sara Colburn	Julia Mulholland
Christopher Craig *	Antonio Nagore
Johanne Daniel	Raiña Parks
Clare Demer	Alexander Perkins
Spencer Dodd	Aimée Puentes
Melissa Dufort *	Samuel Rabinowitz
Jessica-Elizabeth *	Leandra Ramm
John Fluker *	Clifton Romig
Margaret Genovese	Fernando Ruiz
Patrick J. Hagen	Chung-Wai Soong
Harlan Hays	Alexander Taite *
Earl Hazell *	Nicole Takesono
Glenn Healy	Taylor Thomas-Thompson
Matt Hidalgo	Patrick Tsoi-A-Sue
Joshua Hughes	Sydnee Turrentine-Johnson *
Ernest C. Jackson Jr. *	Nicolas Vasquez-Gerst
Jawan Jenkins	Chloe Vaught *
Celestí'anna Jordan	Igor Vieira
David Kuewa	Nick Volkert
Michael Kuo	Miles Ward
Eric Levintow	Jack Wilkins
Benjamin Liupaogo	Jacque Wilson
Matthew Lovell	Daniel Yoder
Joachim Luis	

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

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



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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*  
Eva Karasik  
Leslie Ludena  
Ka-Yeon Lee  
Aya Kiyonaga  
Craig Reiss

## VIOLA

Carla Maria Rodrigues, *Principal*  
Joy Fellows, *Associate Principal* +  
Emily Liu, *Acting Assistant Principal* ^  
Patricia Heller  
Natalia Vershilova  
Elizabeth Prior ^  
Yi Zhou ^

## CELLO

Evan Kahn, *Principal*  
Thalia Moore,  
*Associate Principal*  
Peter Myers,  
*Assistant Principal*  
Nora Pirquet  
Emil Miland  
Jung-Hsuan Ko  
Ruth Lane

## BASS

Joseph Lescher, *Principal*  
Jonathan Lancelle,  
*Associate Principal*  
Shinji Eshima,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*  
Evan Hillis ^  
Zach Hislop ^

## FLUTE

Julie McKenzie, *Principal*  
Susan Kang ^  
Stephanie McNab

## PICCOLO

Stephanie McNab

## OBOE

Mingjia Liu, *Principal*  
Gabriel Young, *Associate Principal* +  
Liam Boisset ^  
Books Fisher ^  
Wentao Jiang ^

## ENGLISH HORN

Liam Boisset ^  
Wentao Jiang ^

## CLARINET

José González Granero, *Principal*  
Joanne Burke Eisler,  
*Assistant Principal* †  
Sean Krissman ^  
Junghwan Lee ^

## BASS CLARINET

Junghwan Lee ^

## BASSOON

Rufus Olivier, *Principal*  
Daniel MacNeill +  
Michael Severance †  
Shawn Jones ^

## CONTRABASSOON

Michael Severance †  
Shawn Jones ^

## FRENCH HORN

Kevin Rivard, *Principal*  
Keith Green  
Brian McCarty, *Associate Principal*  
Meredith Brown ^  
Phillip Palmore ^  
Caitlyn Smith-Franklin ^

## TRUMPET

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

## TROMBONE

Samuel Schlosser, *Principal*  
Michael Cox  
David Ridge

## BASS TROMBONE

David Ridge, *Principal*

## TUBA/CIMBASSO

Zachariah Spellman, *Principal*

## TIMPANI

John Burgardt, *Principal*

## PERCUSSION

Patricia Niemi, *Acting Principal*  
Victor Avdienko ^

## HARP

Annabelle Taubl ^

## LIBRARIAN

Carrie Weick  
Krisha Montmorency, *Assistant Librarian*

## ADDITIONAL MUSICIANS

Bryndon Hassman, *organ*  
Kseniia Polstiankina Barrad,  
*piano & celeste*

## ORCHESTRA MANAGER

Tracy Davis  
Kevin Myers,  
*Orchestra Operations Manager*

† = Leave of absence

+ = Principal for one or more  
Summer season operas

^ = Season Substitute

---

# Corps Dancers

Colm Seery, *Dance Master*

Alysia Chang ~  
Vincent Chavez  
Brett Conway ^  
Jamielyn Duggan ^  
Marquis Engle  
Blanche Hampton ^  
Zaria Jackson  
James Johnson  
Bryan Ketron t  
Luke Lazzaro  
Felipe Leon  
Rachel Speidel Little t  
Marlayna Elyse Locklear  
Damon Mahoney  
Coral Martin

Micah Moch  
Christopher Nachtrab ^^  
Jekyns Pelaez t  
Maxwell Simoes ~  
Chiharu Shibata ^^  
Marcos Vedovetto ~  
Jeffrey Ware  
Michael Wells

^ Tenured  
t Tenured Dancer  
on Leave of Absence  
~ Resident Corps  
\* Solo Role

---

# Supernumeraries

## Il Trovatore Child Supernumeraries

Otto Cheshire  
James Coniglio  
Siena Coniglio  
Camden Hsueh  
Gerrit Hsueh  
Alliana Lili Yang

## Steve Jobs Child Supernumeraries

Atom Young Maguire

# Backstage Personnel

## COSTUME SHOP

Jai Alltizer (23), *Costume Shop Manager*  
Galen Till (19),

*Senior Production Supervisor*

Lyre Alston, *Production Supervisor*  
Manuel Gutierrez (24),

*Production Coordinator*

Sally Thomas (24), *Master Tailor*  
Amy Ashton-Keller (30), *Master Draper*  
Barbara Ebel (15), *Senior Draper*  
Santiago Suanes (14), *Men's Draper*  
Nika Cassaro, *Draper*  
Paula Wheeler (32), *Senior Milliner*

Amy Van Every (39), *Senior Dyer*  
Karen Lewis, *Assistant Dyer*  
Jersey McDermott (24),

*Senior Craftsperson/Shoe Specialist*

Emma Lehman, Kristen Tracy (16),  
*Assistant Cutters*

Yui Takenouchi, Taylor Newell,  
Kaitlyn Patrick, *First Hand*

Robyn Marsh, Victoria Mortimer,  
*Costume Assistants*

## COSTUME TECHNICIANS

Miriam Acosta (26), Karla Fix,  
Hoa Fong (25), Gillian Haratani (12),  
Haratini (12), Jaya Grace Goheen,  
Ashley Granbow, Katherine Griffith,  
Meg Horan, Amanda Mitchell,  
Sara Morimoto, Mikael Nohai,  
Sarah Ellen Smith, Charles Sullivan,  
Yesenia Villenasenor, Robert Whitehurst

## WARDROBE DEPARTMENT

### CORE CREW

Nicolas Chacon  
Linda Edwards (25)  
Edward Fonseca (12)  
Lorraine Lewis (11)  
Emma Mueller  
Rachell Nichols  
Phil Perry (26)  
Patrick Sanchez (14)  
Don Smith (27)  
Scott Stewart (23)  
Grisel Torres  
Kirsten Tucker (20)

### DRESSERS

Paula Barish  
Kathleen Blake (11)  
Ava Byrd  
Ash Cable  
Claudia Holaday (44)  
Ralph Hoy  
Michael Kruzich  
Jeffery Larsen  
Demetrius Martin  
Jennifer O'Neill (11)  
Mark Saladino

## WIG, HAIR, AND MAKEUP DEPARTMENT

### SENIOR WIG ARTISTS

Erin Hennessy (10)  
Maur Sela

### WIG ARTISTS

Tori Grayum  
Gloria Mueller  
Sharon Peng  
Lindsay Saier

### SHOW CALL FOREPERSONS

Consuelo Lopez-Robbins  
Christina Martin (11)  
Sharon Peng  
Tim Santry (32)

### PRINCIPAL WIG, HAIR, AND MAKEUP ARTISTS

Melanie Birch (36), Calli Carvajal,  
Sarah Coy, Maricela Garcia,  
Denise Gutierrez (40), Arina Izadi,  
Amber Laudermilk,  
Consuelo Lopez-Robbins,  
Toby Mayer (32), Lisa Patnoe (32),  
Sharon Peng, Maurisa Rondeau,  
Tim Santry (32)

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

Shana Astrachan,  
Vanessa Blanchard Lee,  
Kristen Campbell, Calli Carvajal,  
Sarah Coy, Tatyana Fateyeva,  
Marisela Garcia, Denise Gutierrez (40),  
Erin Hennessy (10), Arina Izadi,  
Amber Laudermilk,  
Consuelo Lopez-Robbins, Letzy Lugo,  
Christina Martin (11), Toby Mayer (32),  
Gloria Mueller, Naki Mugambi,  
Robert Mzarik (17), Leilani Norman,  
Lisa Patnoe (32), Sharon Peng,  
Jordan Plath, Maurisa Rondeau,  
Lindsay Saier, Maur Sela,  
Sophie Smith (9), Kimberly Virgen,  
Lisa Zomer (24)

### SCENE SHOP

Dennis Forry  
Christian Martinez  
Dylan Maxson  
Victor Sanchez (26)

### SCENIC ART DEPARTMENT

Lauren Abrams  
Jennifer Benness

## CARPENTRY DEPARTMENT

Robert Avery  
Neil Biagio  
Dominic Casazza (20), *Assistant Key Flyman*  
Gabriel Castellani (13), *Automation Key*  
Michael Chapman (11), *Key*  
Dennis Criswell  
Paul Delatorre (24), *Key*  
Tony Garcia  
Karla Hargrave  
Greg Harsha (24), *Key*  
Geoffrey R. Heron (17)  
Geoffrey W. Heron (29), *Key*  
Philip Heron, (21),

*Automation and Rigging Foreman*

Ed Joe, *Warehouse Foreman*  
Nick Kukielka  
Michael Martino  
Alex Meyer (29)  
Harry Niedzwetzki (31)  
John O'Donnell (35), *Key Flyman*  
Enrique Pronio  
Michael Ramirez  
Ty Russell, *Night Crew Foreman*  
James Ryan  
Kenneth Ryan (41)  
Michael Ryan  
Eila Saarni

Gregory Shaff (35), *Key*  
Harper Shipley  
Cyrus Sindicich  
Sean Walden (12)  
Randy Walsh (21), *Assistant Key*  
Collin Whitfield  
Sammy Wong

## PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Scott J. Barringer (23), *Key*  
Greta Calvo  
Christy Carter  
James Eldredge (19), *Shop Mechanic*  
Hilary Engelman  
Oris Fry  
Tim Heaney  
Jane Henderson  
Patricia Hewett (16), *Assistant Key*  
Myron Seth Isaacs (23), *Key*  
Mark Kotschnig (21), *Key*  
Emilio Lopez  
John Matlock, *Assistant Key*  
Beth Ozarow (27), *Out of House Key*  
Tara Pellack  
Sarah Shores (16), *Shop Mechanic*  
Morgan Edward Womble-Dahl

## ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT

Eugene Ahn (10), *Gel Room*  
Juan Aldana (19)  
Joni Ben-Yisrael  
John Boatwright (36),  
*House Head Electrician*

Ariel Bott, *Assistant Key Stage Left*  
Danielle Colburn  
Erik Docktor (16), *Projection Programmer*  
Amy Domjan, *Layout Electrician*  
Stephen Echerd (20)  
Will Grunig (21)  
Robert Haycock, *Key Stage Right*  
Ana Gabriela Hernandez-McKig,  
*Gel Room*  
Geoff Heron (14), *Pyro Technician*  
Bernard Honigman (24),  
*Key Light Board Operator*  
Karen Jine  
Brendan Kierans (10),  
*Electric Shop Foreman*  
Sophie Landau  
Maria Mendoza (35), *Projection Coordinator*  
Jonathan Philpott-Kenny  
Lloyd Murphy, *Key Projectionist*  
Glenn Quilici, *Assistant Key Stage Right*  
Kevin Quintero  
Matthew Reynolds  
William Rodriguez  
Kirt Siders, *Data Administrator*  
Andrew Sproule (24), *Key Stage Left*  
Jax Steager,  
*Assistant Key Light Board Operator*

## AUDIO DEPARTMENT

Emad Dajani  
Christine Dumke  
Kimberly Griess, *Key*  
Tod Nixon, *Key* (25)  
Bryan Olson  
Claude Bauschinger

## MEDIA DEPARTMENT

Bob Hines  
Steven Gianfermo  
Mitchell Kell, *Video Editor*  
Neal Morrison  
Elliott Rice  
Brian Shimetz  
Uwe Willenbacher (15), *Audio Editor*

## STUDIO TEACHERS

Donnell Barnes, Carolyn Crimley,  
Susan Gill, Rhona Gordon, Dana Gray,  
Lua Hadar, Martha Harris, Karen Kindig,  
Victoria Northridge

## WRANGLERS

Kate Juliana, Liz Pasha, Diana Young

*Employees who have served the Company for more than 10 years are listed with their years of service.*



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# San Francisco Opera Orchestra



**Kay Stern**  
Concertmaster



**Heidi Wilcox**  
Assistant  
Concertmaster



**Jennifer Cho**  
First Violin



**Dawn Harms**  
First Violin



**Mariya Borozina**  
First Violin



**Barbara Riccardi**  
First Violin



**Dian Zhang**  
First Violin



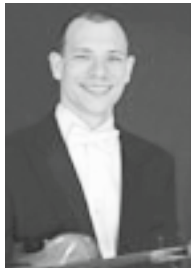
**Leonid Igudesman**  
First Violin



**Jennifer Hsieh**  
First Violin



**Asuka Annie Yano**  
First Violin



**Jeremy Preston**  
Principal  
Second Violin



**Martha Simonds**  
Associate Principal  
Second Violin



**Beni Shinohara**  
Assistant Principal  
Second Violin



**Eva Karasik**  
Second Violin



**Leslie Ludena**  
Second Violin



**Maya Cohon**  
Second Violin



**Craig Reiss**  
Second Violin



**Heegun Song**  
Second Violin  
*Regular Substitute*



**Carla Maria Rodrigues**  
Principal  
Viola



**Joy Fellows**  
Associate Principal  
Viola



**Patricia Heller**  
Viola



**Natalia Vershilova**  
Viola



**Elizabeth Prior**  
Viola  
*Regular Substitute*



**Thalia Moore**  
Associate Principal  
Cello



**Peter Myers**  
Assistant Principal  
Cello



**Nora Pirquet**  
Cello



**Emil Miland**  
Cello



**Ruth Lane**  
Cello



**Joseph Lescher**  
Principal  
Bass



**Jonathan Lancelle**  
Associate Principal  
Bass



**Shinji Eshima**  
Acting Assistant  
Principal Bass



**Julie McKenzie**  
Principal  
Flute



**Stephanie McNab**  
Flute & Piccolo



**Mingjia Liu**  
Principal  
Oboe



**Gabriel Young**  
Associate Principal  
Oboe

**SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ORCHESTRA CONTINUED**



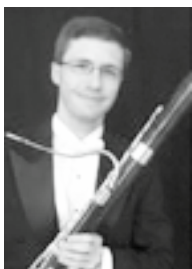
**José González Granero**  
Principal Clarinet



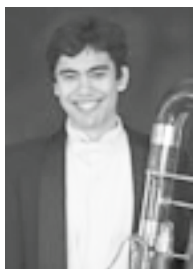
**Joanne Burke Eisler**  
Assistant Principal Clarinet



**Rufus Olivier**  
Principal Bassoon



**Daniel MacNeill**  
Bassoon



**Michael Severance**  
Bassoon & Contrabassoon



**Kevin Rivard**  
Principal Horn



**Keith Green**  
Horn



**Brian McCarty**  
Associate Principal Horn



**Adam Luftman**  
Principal Trumpet



**John Pearson**  
Trumpet



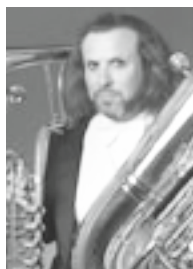
**Scott Macomber**  
Trumpet  
*Regular Substitute*



**Samuel Schlosser**  
Principal Trombone



**David Ridge**  
Principal Bass Trombone



**Zachariah Spellman**  
Tuba/Cimbasso



**John Burgardt**  
Timpani



**Patricia Niemi**  
Acting Principal Percussion



**Tracy Davis**  
Orchestra Manager



**Carrie Weick**  
Librarian

*Most photos by John Martin.*

*Not pictured: Naoko Nakajima (Violin), Ka-Yeon Lee (Violin), Aya Kiyonaga (Violin), Emily Liu (Viola), Yi Zhou (Viola), Evan Kahn (Cello), Jung-Hsuan Ko (Cello), Evan Hillis (Bass), Susan Kang (Flute), Liam Boissett (Oboe), Brooks Fisher (Oboe), Wentao Jiang (Oboe), Zach Hislop (Bass), Sean Krissman (Clarinet), Junghwan Lee (Clarinet), Shawn Jones (Bassoon), Meredith Brown (Horn), Phillip Palmore (Horn), Caitlyn Smith-Franklin (Horn), Michael Cox (Trombone), Victor Advienko (Percussion), Annabelle Taubl (Harp), Kevin Myers (Orchestra Operations Manager), Krisha Montmorency (Assistant Librarian)*

AMERICAN  
PREMIERE

“The most powerful work  
Saariaho has written”

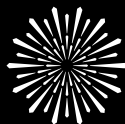
— NEW YORK TIMES

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# Innocence

BY KAIJA SAARIAHO, SOFI OKSANEN,  
AND ALEKSI BARRIÈRE

JUNE 1, 7, 12, 16, 18, 21, 2024



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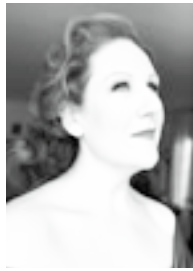
# San Francisco Opera Regular Chorus



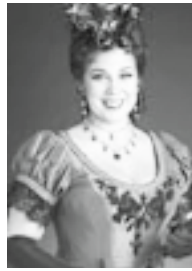
**Nadima Avakian**  
Soprano



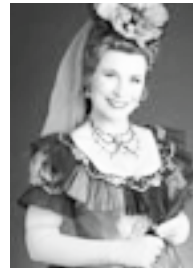
**Kathleen Bayler**  
Soprano



**Cheryl Cain**  
Soprano



**Sara Colburn**  
Soprano  
*Leave of Absence*



**Claire Kelm**  
Soprano



**Crystal Kim**  
Soprano



**Elisabeth Rom Lucio**  
Soprano



**Liesl McPherrin**  
Soprano



**Angela Eden Moser**  
Soprano



**Rachelle Perry**  
Soprano



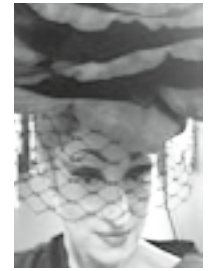
**Carole Schaffer**  
Soprano  
*Leave of Absence*



**Jesslyn Thomas**  
Soprano



**Buffy Baggott**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Janet Campbell**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Edith Dowd**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Stella Hannock**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Silvie Jensen**  
Mezzo-Soprano



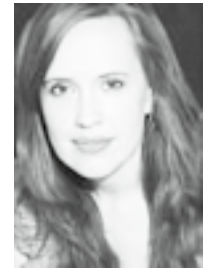
**Sally Mouzon**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Sarah Nadreau**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Erin Neff**  
Mezzo-Soprano



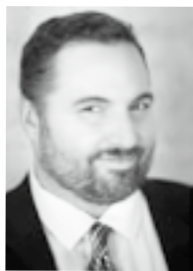
**Laurel Cameron  
Porter**  
Mezzo-Soprano



**Whitney Steele**  
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Tenor



**Alan Cochran**  
Tenor



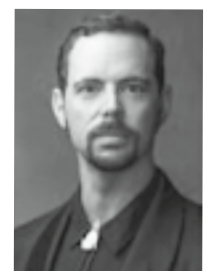
**Kevin Gino**  
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**Daniel Harper**  
Tenor



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Tenor



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Tenor



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Tenor



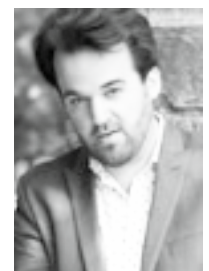
**Andrew Truett**  
Tenor



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Baritone



**Anders Fröhlich**  
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Baritone



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Bass



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Bass



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**Valery Portnov**  
Bass

*Most photos by John Martin.*

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## San Francisco Opera Corps Dancers



**Jamielyn Duggan**



**Brett Conway**



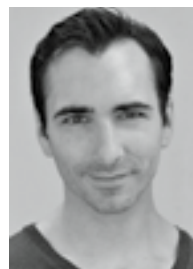
**Blanche Hampton**



**Bryan Ketron**  
*Leave of Absence*



**Rachel Speidel Little**  
*Leave of Absence*



**Christopher Nachtrab**



**Jekyns Peláez**  
*Leave of Absence*



**Chiharu Shibata**

# San Francisco Opera News

## RENATA SCOTTO (1934-2023)



Renata Scotto as Leonora in *Il Trovatore*, 1975.  
RON SCHERL

Opera enthusiasts worldwide were saddened to learn of the passing of Italian soprano Renata Scotto on August 16. Her commitment on the stage and theatrical intensity made Scotto not only a fan favorite but one of the art form's most unforgettable figures. Scotto made her San Francisco Opera debut in 1974 as Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly*, returning on multiple occasions including for the 1979 opening night performance of Ponchielli's *La Gioconda*, which was telecast. In recognition of her artistry and the gift she brought to music lovers in the Bay Area and around the globe, San Francisco Opera dedicates the September 12 performance of *Il Trovatore* to her memory.

## KEITH GEESLIN RECEIVES 2023 NATIONAL OPERA TRUSTEE AWARD

Former president of the San Francisco Opera Association Keith Geeslin is a recipient of the 2023 National Opera Trustee Recognition Award. Geeslin, who recently stepped down from his role after a decade of distinguished service and currently serves as Vice Chairman of the San Francisco Opera Board, is being honored for his exemplary leadership, particularly in growing audiences, doubling the size of the Opera's endowment, ensuring the financial health of the Company during the pandemic, and spearheading a number of key Board initiatives. "The 2023 National Opera Trustee Recognition Award recipients represent the best of our field's leadership," states Marc A. Scorca, president and CEO of OPERA America. "We shine a light on their service to their opera companies as models of superb nonprofit governance. Their exceptional service to their companies strengthens opera across North America."



Keith Geeslin / SCOTT WALL

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

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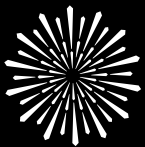
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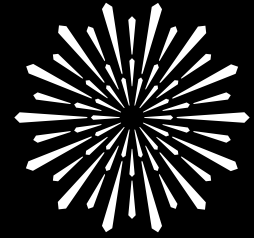
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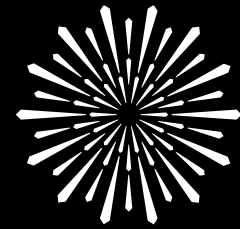
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# Reflecting on Life at 100

BY GENERAL DIRECTOR MATTHEW SHILVOCK

As a proud San Francisco Opera centenarian, I hope you might humor me with a few words of reflection on what it meant to turn 100. It was around 2017 that we started developing plans for the Centennial, exploring repertoire, discussing special programming, and determining how to frame this auspicious moment, one with very little precedence in America. We quickly determined the Centennial must be a season that both honored our storied legacy but that also propelled us into a new century—a springboard from a glorious past into a thrilling future.

How little could we have known just what a hurdle we would have to leap over, and how much of the Centennial would ultimately be planned not five years out but rather 18 months out. While big fundamentals like a new John Adams opera and *Die Frau ohne Schatten* were already underway in 2017, pausing the Company in 2020 for the pandemic meant re-envisioning everything else.

By the spring of 2021 we were reassembling a new Centennial, holding true to the guiding principle that it both honor the past and energize the future. And, in a way, how much more prescient to envision the future on an 18-month cycle rather than a five-year horizon!

I am so proud of how the Centennial ultimately honored the past and trailblazed the future: a balance of works, artists, and themes that ensured the finest opera in our theater, and a suite of innovation programs that previewed the future edge of the artform. In that intersection was, I believe, an exemplar for what is vital to our future:

- Extraordinary artistry, helmed by a spectacular music director as we are so fortunate to have in Eun Sun Kim.
- Unparalleled casting, as in a trio of leading Brünnhildes onstage in one evening as we had with *Die Frau ohne Schatten*.
- Bold, visionary new operas that tell meaningful stories, and fresh productions conceived and designed for this theater and for this community.
- Pushing on artistic boundaries, forging new and unexpected paths that can result in a shipping



KRISTEN LOKEN

container opera popping up in Los Gatos, or one of our Instigators, a VR-expert, being inspired by an Adler Fellow to explore brain-wave technology.

This, and so much more, was our Centennial Season.

What was so thrilling to me was that the Centennial was not just an artistic triumph; it was also an exemplar for how to energize audiences. At a time when audiences are much more selective about entertainment choices, we realized some quite amazing audience statistics this past year. Here are a few highlights:

- The summer season saw an extraordinary 90% of the house's capacity filled.
- Although we began the year down 20% in subscriber households compared to 2019 (sadly a very common, post-pandemic statistic industry-wide), five of the eight operas sold enough single tickets to exceed their subscription shortfall.
- *El último sueño de Frida y Diego* saw 99% of its capacity filled. We also know that the audience represented a much higher proportion of Hispanic patrons than is typical here, tripling from 6% to 19%.
- Both *Madame Butterfly* and *Frida y Diego* saw over 50% of their single ticket buying audiences being brand new to San Francisco Opera.
- The Dolby Family' *Opera for the Bay* subsidized tickets initiative was transformational. This vanguard program saw 9,000 tickets sold at just \$10 each during the Centennial, with 70% of recipients being new to the Company. 17% of those recipients having already re-engaged to see another opera.
- We know from available demographic analysis that programs like *Opera for the Bay*, and new programming like *Bohème Out of the Box* and *Frida y Diego* are bringing in younger people and are beginning to broaden our demographic reach.

This is not an easy time to be attracting audiences. Many are going out much less than they did pre-



Left: Senior milliner Paula Wheeler works on a wig for John Adams' Antony and Cleopatra. / DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY; Center top: The San Francisco Opera Chorus rehearsing the offstage voices at the end of Strauss and Hofmannsthal's Die Frau ohne Schatten. / CORY WEAVER; Center bottom: Yaritza Véliz as Catrina (El último sueño de Frida y Diego) backstage with composer Gabriela Lena Frank. / DREW ALTIZER; Right top: The tech table at a rehearsal for Bohème Out of the Box. / KRISTEN LOKEN; Right bottom: The three Brünnhildes of Die Frau ohne Schatten: Linda Watson, Nina Stemme, Camilla Nylund. / KRISTEN LOKEN;

pandemic, and we're all battling the doom-loop narrative of San Francisco. The Centennial was much needed proof both locally and nationally that thrilling programming produced at the highest levels of excellence can fill houses and create a wonderful city-wide energy!

We felt that so proudly with the critical acclaim for the Centennial. Joshua Kosman of the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted "I've been covering this company since 1985, and in all that time there's never been a season in which so much ambition has been paired with such a high level of execution." Joshua Barone in the *New York Times* noted of the summer season (referencing operatic work both here and at the Symphony) "For a week this month, San Francisco was the country's opera capital."

This all was made possible because of the generosity of our donor community who partnered with us at extraordinary levels to create a season of such impact and energy. We raised \$55.5M in donations for the Centennial, the most significant annual fundraising goal this company has ever seen. From patrons rounding up ticket purchases with online purchases to multi-million-dollar commitments, every penny of contributed revenue is critical to our survival, and we saw last season just how profound the

impact of visionary philanthropy can be.

The level of passionate devotion we saw this Centennial is so indicative of you, our spectacular audience. For 100 years, San Francisco Opera audiences have propelled this company to the stratosphere. Artists adore singing for you, your passion enables history to be made on this stage, and your devotion has sustained this company in the most extraordinary way.

It is hard to put into words my gratitude for the Company members who went above and beyond at every step of the journey to create artistry and energize the entire community around San Francisco Opera. At every turn, they were the Centennial heroes, carrying forth the torch and legacy that so many have built and nurtured over the first hundred years. This is a company for which, quite literally, anything is possible.

And now, it's on to #101. The first season of our second century. It's a season that has the potential to be as exciting as #100, and I cannot wait to see us propel forward the energy of a most spectacular centennial and, together, keep sharing in these awe-inspiring experiences.

Thank you for being a part of something so extraordinary. 🌟

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