SAN FRANCISCO OPERA CENTER PRESENTS THE 2011 SCHWABACHER DEBUT RECITALS

Twenty-ninth season features performances by baritones Sidney Outlaw and Eugene Chan, each with pianist John Churchwell; Steven Blier with Sara Gartland, Daniel Montenegro and Austin Kness; mezzo-soprano Daveda Karanas with pianist Allen Perriello

SAN FRANCISCO (January 12, 2011)–San Francisco Opera Center presents the 29th season of the Schwabacher Debut Recitals, on February 20, March 6, March 27 and April 10 at Temple Emanu-El's Martin Meyer Sanctuary (Two Lake Street, at Arguello, in San Francisco). The annual Schwabacher Debut Recitals presents recitals by artists who have participated in the programs of the San Francisco Opera Center and Merola Opera Program and offers Bay Area audiences the unique opportunity to hear gifted young singers in an intimate setting.

The 2011 series begins on Sunday, February 20, 2011, with Merola Opera Program alumnus baritone Sidney Outlaw accompanied by pianist and San Francisco Opera music staff member John Churchwell in the West Coast premiere of composer Wayne Oquin's song cycle *A Time to Break Silence: Songs Inspired by the Words and Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.* Commissioned by the Juilliard School in 2007 and inspired by the Civil Rights movement, this work received its world premiere by Outlaw at Saint Bartholomew's Church in New York City and was broadcast on New York's WQXR on the Marilyn Horne Foundation Debut Recital Series *The Song Continues...* Recently named winner of the 2010 Montserrat Caballé International Singing Competition, Outlaw appeared as Dr. Dulcamara in the Merola Opera Program's production of *L'Elisir d'Amore* in 2010. A native of Brevard, North Carolina and a graduate of both the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and the Juilliard School, Outlaw completed Florida Grand Opera's Young Artist Development Program in 2009.

The series continues on Sunday, March 6 with Merola Opera Program alumnus baritone Eugene Chan and pianist John Churchwell performing works by Tchaikovsky and Schumann as well as Poulenc's *Le Travail du Peintre.* Led by New York Festival of Song's Steven Blier on the piano, the recital on Sunday, March 27 features songs from Spain and Latin America, including music by Alberto Hemsi, Maria Grever, and Gisela Hernandez performed by current Adler Fellows Sara Gartland, soprano, and Daniel Montenegro, tenor, with former Adler Fellow Austin Kness, baritone. The final recital of the series on Sunday, April 10 will feature former Adler Fellows Daveda Karanas (mezzo-soprano) and Allen Perriello (pianist) in Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder*.

The Schwabacher Debut Recitals has been endowed in perpetuity by the generosity of the late James Schwabacher. A celebrated Bay Area singer, recitalist, scholar and teacher, James Schwabacher is a co-founder of the Merola Opera Program. The Schwabacher Debut Recitals has introduced the artistry of world-renowned opera singers, including Susan Graham, Anna Netrebko, Deborah Voigt, Brian Asawa and Thomas Hampson. The recitals offer a rare opportunity to hear a wealth of song literature ranging from Baroque masterpieces and Romantic-era classics to newly commissioned works.

Tickets & Information

All performances take place at Temple Emanu-El's Martin Meyer Sanctuary (Two Lake Street, at Arguello, in San Francisco). Single tickets for the Schwabacher Debut Recitals are $25; a four-recital subscription is $80. Tickets may be purchased by calling the San Francisco Opera Box Office (Mon. 10 am-5 pm, Tues.-Fri. 10 am-6 pm) at (415) 864-3330. Student Rush tickets are available for $10 at Temple Emanu-El 30 minutes prior to each recital (limit of two tickets per person; valid ID is required), subject to availability.

2011 Schwabacher Debut Recitals
Temple Emanu-El's Martin Meyer Sanctuary

PROGRAM 1: **Sunday, February 20, 5:30 p.m.**
Sidney Outlaw, baritone
John Churchwell, piano
Merola Opera Program alumnus Sidney Outlaw presents the West Coast premiere of Wayne Oquin's song cycle *A Time to Break Silence: Songs Inspired by the Words and Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.* Outlaw will be accompanied by San Francisco Opera music staff member John Churchwell.

PROGRAM 2: Sunday, March 6, 5:30pm
Eugene Chan, baritone
John Churchwell, piano
Merola Opera Program alumnus Eugene Chan presents works by Tchaikovsky and Schumann as well as Poulenc's *Le Travail du Peintre*. Chan will be accompanied by San Francisco Opera music staff member John Churchwell.

PROGRAM 3: Sunday, March 27, 5:30pm
Steven Blier, piano
Sara Gartland, soprano
Daniel Montenegro, tenor
Austin Kness, baritone
New York Festival of Song's Steven Blier presents *Amores Nuevos* with Adler Fellows Sara Gartland and Daniel Montenegro, and former Adler Fellow Austin Kness.

This program is made possible, in part, by Robert & Laura Cory.

PROGRAM 4: Sunday April 10, 5:30pm
Daveda Karanas, mezzo-soprano
Allen Perriello, piano
Former Adler fellows **Daveda Karanas** and pianist **Allen Perriello** present Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder*.

About the Artists

Accompanist and vocal coach **STEVEN BLIER** is the artistic director of New York Festival of Song. He has performed in recital with such artists as Samuel Ramey, Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, Susan Graham, Frederica von Stade, Jessye Norman, and Sylvia McNair. In concert with Renée Fleming, he performed throughout North America and Europe, including recitals at Carnegie Hall, La Scala, Milan, and a *Live From Lincoln Center* telecast. Blier co-founded New York Festival of Song in 1988 with Michael Barrett and since the Festival's inception he has programmed, performed, translated and annotated over 125 vocal recitals with repertoire spanning the entire range of American song. A champion of American music, he has premiered works of John Corigliano, Ned Rorem, William Bolcom, John Musto, Richard Danielpour, Tobias Picker, Robert Beaser, and Lee Hoiby. His discography includes a Grammy Award winning recording of Leonard Bernstein's *Arias and Barcarolles* (Koch International); the NYFOS discs of Blitzstein, Gershwin, and German Lieder (*Unquiet Peace*); Gershwin's *Lady Be Good!* (Nonesuch Records); four albums of songs by Charles Ives in partnership with baritone William Sharp (Albany Records); and *The Land Where the Good Songs Go* with Sylvia McNair and Hal Cazalet.

Baritone **EUGENE CHAN** made his San Francisco Opera debut in 2007 as Prince Yamadori (*Madama Butterfly*). A graduate of the 2008 Merola Opera Program, Chan recently made his European debut as Count Almaviva (*Le Nozze di Figaro*) in Basel, Switzerland. In the 2010–11 season, Chan returns to Basel to perform Yeletsky (*Pique Dame*) and Count Almaviva, makes his debut at Bologna's Teatro Comunale, and performs a recital in Carnegie Hall. Chan's repertoire includes the title roles of *Don Giovanni* and *Eugene Onegin*, Ottone (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*), Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Danilo (*The Merry Widow*), Schaunard (*La Bohème*), and Albert (*Werther*), among others. He has performed throughout the world with companies such Opera Theater of St. Louis, Shanghai National Grand Theater, Sacramento Opera, Opera Santa Barbara, West Bay Opera and Music Academy of the West. He has been featured as soloist with orchestras such as the San Francisco Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Toscanini Orchestra of Parma. Chan holds a bachelor's degree in music from Sacramento State University and is a graduate of the Theater Basel *OperAvenir,* Seattle Opera Young Artists Program, Music Academy of the West, the Steans Institute at the Ravinia Festival, and OperaWorks! He has received awards from the Premio Spiros Argiris International Competition, the Washington International Competition, the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the Liederkranz Foundation, Houston Opera's Eleanor McCollum Competition, the Marilyn Horne Foundation, and the William Matheus Sullivan Foundation.

JOHN CHURCHWELL enjoys a career as pianist, conductor and coach at opera houses around the world. An assistant conductor for both San Francisco Opera and the Metropolitan Opera, Churchwell has worked on more than 80 productions with such conductors as James Levine, Nello Santi, Nicola Luisotti, Donald Runnicles, and Sir Charles Mackerras. A champion of American music, Mr. Churchwell has participated in the world premieres of John Harbison's *The Great Gatsby*, Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*, Phillip Glass' *Appomattox*, and the recent collaboration between Stewart Wallace and Amy Tan, *The Bonesetter's Daughter.* On the recital stage, Churchwell has partnered with world-renowned vocalists, including Joyce DiDonato, Diana Damrau, Carol Vaness, Dawn Upshaw, David Pittsinger, Patricia Schuman, and Jill Grove. He also appears regularly in chamber music concerts with members of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. John Churchwell earned his doctorate from the University of Minnesota and also holds bachelor degrees from the New England Conservatory

and Tufts University, and a master's degree in accompanying from the University of Minnesota. Beginning in the 2011-12 Season, John Churchwell will take on the new role of Head of Music Staff at San Francisco Opera.

Soprano **SARA GARTLAND,** a second-year Adler Fellow, made her San Francisco Opera debut last season as Barbarina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and returned as Kate Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*). She appeared as Suzel (*L'Amico Fritz*) with the 2009 Merola Opera Program, where she also performed in scenes as Gilda (*Rigoletto*) and Nannetta (*Falstaff*). Other recent engagements include performances with Utah Opera and Des Moines Metro Opera as Alexandra in Blitzstein's *Regina*, Opera Iowa as Norina (*Don Pasquale*) and the Ohio Light Opera as Elisabeth Bennet in the world premiere of Mechem's *Pride and Prejudice*, Valencienne (*The Merry Widow*), and as Marianne (Romberg's *The New Moon*). Gartland earned a master's degree in vocal performance from the University of Colorado Boulder and a bachelor's degree in vocal performance from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is a former Eastern Region finalist at the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and fourth place winner of the Denver Lyric Opera Guild Competition.

Mezzo-soprano **DAVEDA KARANAS** is a former Adler Fellow who most recently appeared at San Francisco Opera as Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* and covered Amneris in *Aida*. She will return in 2011 as Waltraute and the 2nd Norn in the Company's new production of *Der Ring des Nibelungen.* Karanas made her San Francisco Opera debut as the Nurse (*Boris Godunov*) and returned as the Mistress of the Novices (*Suor Angelica*) in *Il Trittico* and Waltraute (*Die Walküre*). An alumna of the Merola Opera Program, she sang the role of Tisbe in Merola's 2007 production of *La Cenerentola*. Future seasons will see her at the Canadian Opera Company, Vancouver Opera, Oper Frankfurt, Washington National Opera, Arizona Opera, and Seattle Opera. Karanas made her professional debut in 2006 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron.* The mezzo-soprano's recent credits include Ericlea (*Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*) with Chicago Opera Theater; Lady with a Hat Box (Argento's *Postcard from Morocco*) and the Princess (*Suor Angelica*) with Boston University Opera Institute; as well as Marchesa Melibea (*Il Viaggio a Reims*) with Music Academy of the West. In addition to being a grand prize winner at the 2008 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Karanas is a former international semi-finalist in the German *Neue Stimmen* ("New Voices") Competition, a recipient of the 2006 Encouragement Award at the Marilyn Horne Foundation Competition, and a grand prizewinner of the 2005 Arizona Opera League Competition. She holds degrees from Arizona State University and Southeastern Louisiana University.

Baritone **AUSTIN KNESS**, a native of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, concluded his two-year Adler Fellowship in 2010. He appeared at San Francisco Opera as Sciarrone (*Tosca*) and Marquis d'Obigny (*La Traviata*) in 2008 and returned in the 2009–10 season as Marco (*Gianni Schicchi*), the Second Nazarene (*Salome*), a Herald (*Otello*) and Handsome (*La Fanciulla del West*); he most recently appeared as Brühlmann (*Werther*), Prince Yamadori (*Madama Butterfly*), A Stagehand (*The Makropulos Case*) and several roles in *Cyrano de Bergerac* this season. An alumnus of the Merola Opera Program, he performed the title role in the Merola 2008 production of *Don Giovanni*. He has performed with Indiana University Opera Theater as Count Almaviva (*Le Nozze di Figaro)*, Don Giovanni, Escamillo (*Carmen)* and Eddie Carbone (*A View from the Bridge)*. Kness is a former member of the Des Moines Metropolitan Opera Apprentice Program (2006–07), where he performed the roles of Moralès (*Carmen)* and Count Ceprano (*Rigoletto)*. The baritone has also sung the roles of Fiorello (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia)* and Moralès with Cedar Rapids Opera Theater.

A first-year Adler Fellow, **DANIEL MONTENEGRO** recently appeared as a Thug in Los Angeles Opera's world premiere production of Daniel Catán's *Il Postino.* The tenor performed Nemorino (*L'Elisir d'Amore*) as a participant in the 2010 Merola Opera Program following his San Francisco Opera debut as Roderigo (*Otello*) in 2009. His many appearances with Los Angeles Opera include Gastone (*La Traviata*, released on Decca DVD); El Dancaïro (*Carmen*), which he also performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic; and Maximino Mendez in the world premiere of Lee Holdridge's *Concierto para Mendez*, as well as productions of *L'Incoronazione di Poppea, Luisa Fernanda, Il Tabarro* and *Die Gezeichneten.* Montenegro's other credits include the Shepherd (Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex*) at the Sydney Festival and the Steersman (*Der fliegende Holländer*) with both Portland Opera and Arizona Opera. The Southern California native is a former resident artist at Minnesota Opera, where he performed Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Nick (*The Handmaid's Tale*), Flavio (*Norma*), and Liverotto (*Lucrezia Borgia*). Montenegro is a graduate of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

An alumni of the 2010 Merola Opera Program where he appeared as Dr. Dulcamara in *L'Elisir d'Amore,* baritone **SIDNEY OUTLAW** was named the 2010 Grand Prize winner of the Montserrat Caballé International Singing Competition. A graduate of the 2009 Florida Grand Opera Young Artist Development Program, Outlaw appeared with that company as Achilla (*Giulio Cesare*), The Marquis D'Obigny (*La Traviata*) and Prince Yamadori (*Madama Butterfly*). The baritone recently appeared as Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) in Weimar and as Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) with Vermont's Opera North. Recent international debuts have included performances in Tel Aviv, Israel; with the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra; and in recital at Wigmore Hall in London. In 2007, Outlaw was a featured soloist with the New York Festival of Song's *Songs of War and Peace* with pianists Steve Blier and Michael Barrett in New York City, and presented his debut recital under the auspices of the Marilyn Horne Foundation is *On Wings of Song* recital series with pianist Tamara Sanikidze.

Coach and accompanist **ALLEN PERRIELLO** completed his two-year Adler Fellowship in 2010 and will coach productions at Boston Lyric Opera and Seattle Opera in early 2011. An alumnus of the 2008 Merola Opera Program, Perriello has served as a member of San Francisco Opera's music staff on the productions of *Porgy and Bess, Il Trovatore, The Abduction from the Seraglio, Faust, Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Madama Butterfly*. Other professional engagements include Opera Cleveland, Rising Star Opera Theater and Ash Lawn Opera. His coaching credits include *Hänsel und Gretel, Albert Herring, La Bohème, Dido and Aeneas, Miss Lonelyhearts, Amahl and the Night Visitors, Il Barbiere di Siviglia, Werther, L'enfant et les Sortileges, L'Elisir d'Amore, The Merry Widow, West Side Story* and *The Consul*. Perriello served as chorus master for Cincinnati Conservatory of Music's productions of *La Bohème* and *L'Elisir d'Amore*. He holds a master's degree in collaborative piano from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and a bachelor's degree in piano performance and music education from Ithaca College.

About San Francisco Opera Center and Merola Opera Program

San Francisco Opera Center was created in 1982 by then–General Director Terence A. McEwen to oversee the operation and administration of the education and training programs initiated by Kurt Herbert Adler in 1954. Providing a coordinated sequence of performance and study opportunities for young artists, San Francisco Opera Center represents a new era in which young artists of major operatic potential can develop through intensive training and performance, under the aegis of a major international opera company. Now under the guidance of its fourth director, Sheri Greenawald, and San Francisco Opera General Director David Gockley, the Opera Center has trained and introduced many

young stars from around the world to the international opera stage through its resident artist programs such as the Adler Fellowship.

Initially founded as the San Francisco Opera/Affiliate Artists program, the Adler Fellowship Program is one of the nation's most prestigious training programs for advanced singers. Each year, Adler Fellows are sponsored by individual donors to help cover the cost of their fellowship. Sponsorships range from $5,000-$100,000, and sponsors affiliated with the Adler Program have the opportunity to attend private studio classes with the Fellows and develop nurturing relationships with them. Alumni from the Adler Fellowship Program include sopranos Laura Claycomb, Nicolle Foland, Nancy Gustafson, Mary Mills, Patricia Racette, Ruth Ann Swenson and Deborah Voigt; mezzo-sopranos Zheng Cao and Dolora Zajick; countertenor Brian Asawa; baritones Mark Delavan and David Okerlund; and bass-baritones Monte Pederson and John Relyea.

One of the oldest and most acclaimed training programs of its kind, the Merola Opera Program for aspiring opera professionals offers up-and-coming singers, coach-accompanists and stage directors the opportunity of intense study and performance during an eleven-week summer program. Each year, hundreds of artists from throughout the world vie for approximately 30 coveted spots in the summer program. Admission is based solely on talent rather than financial ability; there is no charge to the participants. Named for San Francisco Opera's first general director, Gaetano Merola, the program began during the 1954-55 Season and established its full training program in 1957. Alumni of the program include Sylvia McNair, Anna Netrebko, Patricia Racette, Ruth Ann Swenson, Carol Vaness, Deborah Voigt, Susan Graham, Dolora Zajick, Brian Asawa, Thomas Hampson, Rolando Villazón, and Patrick Summers. An independent non-profit organization, the Merola Opera Program operates in collaboration with San Francisco Opera Center and San Francisco Opera.

For more information on the San Francisco Opera Center and the Adler Fellowship and Merola Opera Program, visit www.sfopera.com.

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