SAN FRANCISCO OPERA PRESENTS MOZART'S
LE NOZZE DI FIGARO,
SEPTEMBER 21–OCTOBER 22, WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE

DANIELLE DE NIESE AND LUCA PISARONI STAR,
MUSIC DIRECTOR NICOLA LUISOTTI CONDUCTS

DIRECTOR JOHN COPLEY CELEBRATES HIS 30TH
SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ENGAGEMENT

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT 415-864-3330 OR SFOPERA.COM

SAN FRANCISCO (September 3, 2010)—San Francisco Opera presents Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's eternally popular comedy *Le Nozze di Figaro (The Marriage of Figaro)* in nine performances running September 21–October 22 at the War Memorial Opera House. A cast of vivid characters is headlined by soprano Danielle de Niese in her highly-anticipated Company debut as Susanna and young Italian bass-baritone Luca Pisaroni as Figaro. American soprano Ellie Dehn debuts as the Countess Almaviva and Lucas Meachem is her philandering husband. Making her Company debut as Cherubino is Canadian mezzo-soprano Michèle Losier. Performing in the final three performances of this production are Kostas Smoriginas as Figaro, Heidi Stober as Susanna and Trevor Scheunemann as Count Almaviva. Music Director Nicola Luisotti conducts the Company's beloved production directed by John Copley.

Vocally and visually stunning lyric soprano Danielle de Niese brings one of her signature roles to San Francisco Opera for her Company debut as the beautiful maid Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro.* Of her recent appearance in the role at the Metropolitan Opera, the *New York Times* wrote: "Most

notably Danielle de Niese, a natural comic actress . . . brought an ebullient playfulness to the role." After she reprised the role at Lyric Opera of Chicago, the *New City Stage* wrote: "Soprano Danielle de Niese, the reigning Mozart soprano extraordinaire, is a sexy Susanna who not only sings rapturously but who brings layers of meaning to her every action." In addition to her acclaimed performances as Susanna in New York and Chicago, de Niese's credits include the title role of *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* in Paris, Madrid, London, Amsterdam and Glyndebourne; and Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* in Chicago, Brussels and Glyndebourne.

Captivating young bass-baritone Luca Pisaroni returns to San Francisco Opera in the title role of this production after first appearing with the Company as Masetto in 2007's *Don Giovanni*. Pisaroni has previously appeared as Figaro at the Salzburg Festival, Santa Fe Opera, Madrid's Teatro Real, Netherlands Opera and the Metropolitan Opera. Following his performances in San Francisco, Pisaroni will bring the role to Paris Opera and Vienna State Opera. Since his impressive 2007 debut as Figaro at the age of 26, Pisaroni's other credits have included Leporello in *Don Giovanni* at Glyndebourne; Aeneas in *Dido and Aeneas* in London, Amsterdam and Vienna; Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* in Paris; and Achilla in *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* in Amsterdam and Brussels.

American soprano Ellie Dehn makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Countess Almaviva, a role she will also perform this season at Houston Grand Opera. Dehn's other recent roles include Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* at the Ravinia Festival, Mimì in *La Bohème* at the San Diego Opera and Minnesota Opera, and Freia in *Das Rheingold* at Los Angeles Opera. Former Adler Fellow Lucas Meachem returns to San Francisco Opera as Count Almaviva, a role he recently performed at Munich's Bavarian State Opera. Other roles Meachem has recently performed include Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at Opera Colorado and Los Angeles Opera and the title role of *Don Giovanni* at New Orleans Opera and Santa Fe Opera. Canadian mezzo-soprano Michèle Losier brings her portrayal of the humorous young page Cherubino to San Francisco Opera following her recent appearances in the role at Washington National Opera. Her other recent and diverse credits include Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, Wellgunde in *Der Ring des Nibelungen* and Charlotte in *Werther*.

The final three performances of this production (October 10, 16 and 22) feature Heidi Stober, Kostas Smoriginas and Trevor Scheunemann. Soprano Heidi Stober makes her San Francisco Opera

debut this season as Sophie in *Werther* and returns in this production as Susanna, a role she recently performed at Deutsche Oper Berlin. Winner of the 2009 *Operalia* Competition, Kostas Smoriginas appears at San Francisco Opera for the first time as Figaro, which he has previously performed at Washington National Opera and the Lithuanian National Opera. Baritone Trevor Scheunemann appeared last season at San Francisco Opera as Jake Wallace in *La Fanciulla del West* and returns as Count Almaviva, a role he has performed at Washington National Opera.

British opera director and producer John Copley made his San Francisco Opera debut directing Handel's *Giulio Cesare* in 1982 and this year celebrates his 30th engagement with the Company. His impressive list of San Francisco Opera credits include six seasons of *La Traviata*, the U.S. premiere of Tippett's *The Midsummer Marriage,* Handel's *Orlando* and *Semele, Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni, Eugene Onegin, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Queen of Spades, Il Trovatore, Idomeneo*, *Anna Bolena, Peter Grimes, Manon* and *Ariodante*.

Sung in Italian with English supertitles, the nine performances of *Le Nozze di Figaro* are scheduled for September 21 (8 p.m.), September 23 (7:30 p.m.), September 25 (8 p.m.), September 30 (7:30 p.m.), October 3 (2 p.m.), October 5 (7:30 p.m.), October 10 (2 p.m.), October 16 (8 p.m.), and October 22 (8 p.m.), 2010.

Tickets and Information

Tickets for the performance of Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro (The Marriage of Figaro)* are priced from $20 to $360 and may be purchased at www.sfopera.com or through the San Francisco Opera Box Office [301 Van Ness Avenue (at Grove Street), or by phone at (415) 864-3330]. Standing Room tickets go on sale at 10 a.m. on the day of each performance; tickets are $10 each, cash only.

The War Memorial Opera House is located at 301 Van Ness Avenue at Grove Street. Patrons are encouraged to use public transportation to attend San Francisco Opera performances. The War Memorial Opera House is within walking distance of the Civic Center BART station and near numerous bus lines, including 5, 21, 47, 49 and the F Market Street. For more public transportation information, visit bart.gov and sfmuni.com.

Casting, programs, schedules and ticket prices are subject to change. For further information about *Le Nozze di Figaro* and San Francisco Opera's 2010–11 season, please visit sfopera.com.

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Company Sponsors John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn are proud to support *Le Nozze di Figaro*. This production is made possible, in part, by San Francisco Opera Guild and The Thomas Tilton Production Fund.

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LE NOZZE DI FIGARO: PRODUCTION INFORMATION

LE NOZZE DI FIGARO by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO)

September 21 (8 p.m.)**, 23** (7:30 p.m.)**, 25** (8 p.m.)**, 30●** (7:30 p.m.)**; October 3●** (2 p.m.)**, 5●** (7:30 p.m.), **10** (2 p.m.), **16** (8 p.m.), **22** (8 p.m.), **2010**

San Francisco Opera Production

Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte
Approximate running time: 3 hours, 30 minutes with one intermission
Sung in Italian with English supertitles

First Performance:	Vienna, May 1, 1786
First SFO Performance:	November 9, 1936
Most Recent SFO Performances:	June 2006

Cast:

Figaro	**Luca Pisaroni**
	Kostas Smoriginas* (10/10, 16, 22)
Susanna	**Danielle de Niese***
	Heidi Stober (10/10, 16, 22)
Countess Almaviva	**Ellie Dehn***
Cherubino	**Michèle Losier***
Count Almaviva	**Lucas Meachem**
	Trevor Scheunemann (10/10, 16, 22)
Doctor Bartolo	**John Del Carlo**
	Dale Travis (10/10, 16, 22)
Marcellina	**Catherine Cook**
Don Basilio	**Greg Fedderly**
Don Curzio	**Robert MacNeil**
Barbarina	**Sara Gartland*†**

Production Team:

Conductor	**Nicola Luisotti**
Director	**John Copley**
Lighting Designer	**Christopher Maravich**
Chorus Director	**Ian Robertson**

* San Francisco Opera Debut ♪ Role Debut † Current Adler Fellow ● OperaVision performance

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Baritone **LUCA PISARONI** *(Figaro)* made his San Francisco Opera debut in 2007 as Masetto in *Don Giovanni*. A native of Busseto, Italy, he studied at the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan before making his professional debut in the title role of *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Klagenfurt in 2001. Pisaroni has since appeared at major opera houses and festivals around the world in leading Mozartean parts such as the title role of *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Metropolitan Opera, Netherlands Opera, London's Barbican Theatre, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, the Santa Fe Opera, and Madrid's Teatro Real; Publio (*La Clemenza di Tito*) at the Met, the Aix-en-Provence Festival, and the Salzburg Festival (available on DVD from TDK); Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) at Netherlands Opera, the Glyndebourne Festival (available on DVD from Opus Arte), and Paris Opera; and Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. Pisaroni's recent engagements include Achilla (*Giulio Cesare in Egitto*), the title role of Cavalli's *Ercole amante* (*Hercules in Love*), Guglielmo, and Aeneas (*Dido and Aeneas*) at La Monnaie in Brussels. Other career highlights include Colline (*La Bohème*) at Paris Opera and the Teatro Real in Madrid; Alidoro (*La Cenerentola*) in Santiago, Chile; Achilla at Opera Colorado; and Hercules (*Alceste*) and Douglas d'Angus (*La Donna del Lago*) at the Salzburg Festival.

Winner of 2009 *Operalia* Competition, **KOSTAS SMORIGINAS** *(Figaro)* makes his San Francisco Opera debut in a role he sings with Washington National Opera later this season. The Lithuanian bass-baritone is a former member of the Royal Opera, Covent Garden's Jette Parker Young Artist Programme and has made several appearances with that company, including Colline (*La Bohème*), Angelotti (*Tosca*), Marquis d'Obigny (*La Traviata*), a Journalist (*Lulu*), a Mandarin (*Turandot*), Bello (*La Fanciulla del West*), and in productions of *Don Carlos* and *Lohengrin.* His other engagements this season include Yeletsky and Tomsky (*The Queen of Spades*) in Tel Aviv and Escamillo (*Carmen*) at Berlin's Linden Opera. Smoriginas studied at the Lithuanian Music and Theater Academy from an early age. After moving to London in 2005 and representing his country in the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, he spent two years at the Royal College of Music, appearing as Araspe (*Tolemeo*) and Seneca (*L'Incoronazione di Poppea*).

Australian-born American soprano **DANIELLE DE NIESE** *(Susanna)* makes her San Francisco Opera debut in a role she sings this season at the Metropolitan Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago. Her career got off to a prestigious start when, at age 18, she became the youngest singer ever to enter the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program. A year later she made her house debut as Barbarina (*Le Nozze di Figaro*). Soon after came important operatic debuts with the Netherlands Opera, the Saito Kinen Festival, and the Paris Opera, but it was her portrayal of Cleopatra in a David McVicar production of Handel's *Giulio Cesare* for her 2005 Glyndebourne Festival debut that brought her to true international acclaim. Since then de Niese has enjoyed operatic successes on the stages of the Paris Opera, Zurich Opera, Netherlands Opera, and Lyric Opera of Chicago among many others. Orchestral engagements have included appearances with the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, National Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, and the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. Other important opera engagements this season include *L'incoronazione di Poppea* with Madrid's Teatro Real and the title role of *Semele* at the Theâtre des Champs Elysees. Her debut solo album, *Handel Arias* was released to international acclaim in 2007, and her much anticipated second recording, *The Mozart Album,* was released this past fall. Born to parents of Sri Lankan and Dutch heritage, Danielle de Niese grew up in Los Angeles. The soprano has been captivating audiences since childhood, when she was a fixture of Los Angeles local television hosting a weekly arts showcase for teenagers, for which she won an Emmy Award.

Making her San Francisco Opera debut this season, American soprano **HEIDI STOBER**'s *(Susanna)* engagements this season include Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), Susanna (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Oscar (*Un Ballo in Maschera*), Nanetta (*Falstaff*), and Gretel (*Hänsel und Gretel*) with Deutsche Oper Berlin; Anne Trulove (*The Rake's Progress*) with St. Paul Chamber Orchestra; Atalanta (*Xerxes*) with Houston Grand Opera; and Morgana (*Alcina*) in Santiago, Chile. A graduate of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, her credits with that company include Blonde (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Drusilla (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*), Xenia (*Boris Godunov*), Susanna, Norina (*Don Pasquale*), The Rose (Portman's *The Little Prince*), and La China in the world premiere of Catán's *Salsipuedes*. Stober's other career highlights include Poppea (*Agrippina*) with New York City Opera, Tigrane (*Radamisto*) with the Santa Fe Opera, Aminta (*Il Re Pastore*) with Opera Theatre of St. Louis, and Leila (*Les Pêcheurs de Perles*) at Opera Colorado.

Not yet 30, young American soprano **ELLIE DEHN** *(Countess Almaviva)* has engagements through 2012 in many of the world's leading opera houses, including Milan's Teatro alla Scala, the Metropolitan Opera, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Houston Grand Opera, and in Geneva, Bologna, and Rome. Among her 2009–10 engagements are Madame Cortese (*Il Viaggio a Reims*) in Rome, Mimì (*La Bohème*) with Minnesota Opera, and Freia (*Das Rheingold*) and Gerhilde (*Die Walküre*) with Los Angeles Opera. Dehn's other career highlights include Mrs. Naidoo (*Satyagraha*) and Musetta (*La Bohème*) at the Met; Agathe (*Der Freischütz*) in Geneva; Madame Cortese in Bilbao; Cressida (*Troilus and Cressida*) at Opera Theatre of St. Louis; Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*) at the Ravinia Festival; and Juliette (*Roméo et Juliette*) with Minnesota Opera.

Canadian mezzo-soprano **MICHÈLE LOSIER** *(Cherubino)* makes her San Francisco Opera debut in 2010. The Merola Opera Program alumna is a former winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Her

2009–10 season engagements include Frasquita (*Carmen*) at Milan's La Scala, Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*) with Arizona Opera, and Cherubino at Washington National Opera. Losier's other career highlights include Diana (*Iphigénie en Tauride*) at the Metropolitan Opera, Cherubino with Montreal Opera, Charlotte (*Werther*) at Opera Australia, and Niklausse (*The Tales of Hoffmann*) with Boston Lyric Opera. In 2009, she recorded—with pianist Daniel Blumenthal—the complete *Chansons* from Henri Duparc under the Fuga Libera label.

Former Adler Fellow and Merola Opera Program alumnus **LUCAS MEACHEM** *(Count Almaviva)* has appeared at San Francisco Opera in the title role of *Eugene Onegin,* Papageno (*The Magic Flute for Kids*), and in productions of *La Forza del Destino*, *Billy Budd*, and *Doktor Faust*. He was last seen in the dual role of Fritz and Frank in the Company's 2008 production of *Die Tote Stadt.* He made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 2007 as General Rayevsky (*War and Peace*) and sang Zurga (*Les Pêcheurs de Perles*) at Florida Grand Opera and Valentin (*Faust*) at New Orleans Opera. Other recent engagements include his debuts at Lyric Opera of Chicago as Oreste (*Iphigénie en Tauride*) and at Madrid's Teatro Real in the world premiere of José María Sánchez-Verdú's *El Viaje a Simorgh;* his debut in the title role of *Don Giovanni* at the Santa Fe Opera; his Royal Opera, Covent Garden debut as Aeneas (*Dido and Aeneas*); Valentin (*Faust*) at Lyric Opera of Chicago; Count Almaviva at Munich's Bavarian State Opera; and Figaro (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*) with Los Angeles Opera. He has also appeared as Wolfram (*Tannhäuser*) at Tokyo's Saito Kinen Festival and Figaro (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*) in Portland, Maine.

Winner of Washington National Opera's 2007 Artist of the Year award, **TREVOR SCHEUNEMANN** *(Count Almaviva)* makes his San Francisco Opera debut in 2010, appearing as Jake Wallace *(La Fanciulla del West*) and as Count Almaviva (*Le Nozze di Figaro*). The American baritone's recent engagements include Count Almaviva and Zurga (*Les Pêcheurs de Perles*) with Washington National Opera, Moralès (*Carmen*) and Curio (*Giulio Cesare*) with the Metropolitan Opera, Melot (*Tristan und Isolde*) at the Glyndebourne Festival, Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) in Frankfurt, Anténor (Rameau's *Dardanus*) in Lille, and Escamillo (*Carmen*) in San Juan, Puerto Rico. A former member of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program at the Washington National Opera, his roles with that company have included Schaunard (*La Bohème*), Masetto (*Don Giovanni*), Marco (*Gianni Schicchi*), Larry Landau (*Sophie's Choice*), and Prince Yamadori (*Madama Butterfly*). Scheunemann won third place at the 2006 Operalia Competition and was the recipient of a 2006 Sara Tucker Study Grant from the Richard Tucker Foundation.