



SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

**2014–15 REPERTORY SEASON
SUMMARY INFORMATION**

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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA 2014–15 SEASON AT A GLANCE

- 92nd season; presented from September 5 to December 7, 2014 and June 7 to July 5, 2015
- Ten productions: one world premiere, two Company premieres, two new productions, and two productions new to San Francisco

Norma

NEW PRODUCTION

Presented September 5–30, 2014

Co-production with Canadian Opera Company; Gran Teatre del Liceu, Barcelona; and Lyric Opera of Chicago

Starring Sondra Radvanovsky, Daveda Karanas, Marco Berti, Christian Van Horn

Conducted by Nicola Luisotti; Directed by Kevin Newbury

Susannah

COMPANY PREMIERE, NEW PRODUCTION

Presented September 6–21, 2014

San Francisco Opera production

Starring Patricia Racette, Brandon Jovanovich, Raymond Aceto

Conducted by Karen Kamensek; Directed by Michael Cavanagh

Un Ballo in Maschera (A Masked Ball)

Presented October 4–22, 2014

San Francisco Opera production

Starring Krassimira Stoyanova, Julianna Di Giacomo, Heidi Stober, Ramón Vargas, Thomas Hampson, Brian Mulligan, Dolora Zajick

Conducted by Nicola Luisotti; Directed by Jose Maria Condemni

Partenope

COMPANY PREMIERE

Presented October 15–November 2, 2014

Production originally created by English National Opera and Opera Australia

Starring Danielle de Niese, Daniela Mack, David Daniels

Conducted by Christian Curnyn; Directed by Christopher Alden

Tosca

Presented October 23–November 8, 2014

San Francisco Opera production

Starring Lianna Haroutounian, Brian Jagde, Mark Delavan

Conducted by Riccardo Frizza; Directed by Jose Maria Condemni

La Cenerentola (Cinderella)

Presented November 9–26, 2014

San Francisco Opera production

Starring Karine Deshayes, René Barbera, Fabio Capitanucci, Carlos Chausson

Conducted by Jesús López-Cobos; Directed by Gregory Fortner

La Bohème

PRODUCTION NEW TO SAN FRANCISCO

Presented November 14–December 7, 2014

Co-production with Houston Grand Opera and Canadian Opera Company

Starring Sonya Yoncheva, Leah Crocetto, Nadine Sierra, Ellie Dehn, Michael Fabiano, Giorgio Berrugi, Alexey Markov, Brian Mulligan

Conducted by Giuseppe Finzi; Directed by John Caird

Les Troyens (The Trojans)

PRODUCTION NEW TO SAN FRANCISCO

Presented June 7–July 1, 2015

Co-production with Royal Opera, Covent Garden; Teatro alla Scala, Milan; and Wiener Staatsoper, Vienna

Starring Anna Caterina Antonacci, Daveda Karanas, Susan Graham, Bryan Hymel, Sasha Cooke

Conducted by Donald Runnicles; Production by David McVicar

La Ciociara (Two Women)

WORLD PREMIERE

Presented June 13–30, 2015

Music by Marco Tutino

Libretto by Marco Tutino and Fabio Ceresa

Adapted from a script by Luca Rossi

Based on the novel *La Ciociara* by Alberto Moravia

By arrangement with Studio Legale Cau Morandi Minutillo Turtur

Commissioned by San Francisco Opera

Co-production with Teatro Regio Torino

Starring Anna Caterina Antonacci, Sarah Shafer, Stephen Costello, Mark Delavan

Conducted by Nicola Luisotti; Directed by Francesca Zambello

Le Nozze di Figaro (The Marriage of Figaro)

Presented June 14–July 5, 2015

San Francisco Opera production

Starring Philippe Sly, Lisette Oropesa, Nadine Sierra, Kate Lindsey, Angela Brower, Luca Pisaroni

Conducted by Patrick Summers; Directed by Robin Guarino

San Francisco Opera Debuts

René Barbera
Giorgio Berrugi
Carlos Chausson
Scott Conner
Anthony Roth Costanzo
Karine Deshayes
Julianna Di Giacomo
Lianna Haroutounian
Bryan Hymel
James Kryshak
Alexey Markov
Krassimira Stoyanova

Conductor:

Christian Curnyn
Karen Kamensek

Director:

John Caird
Gregory Fortner
Robin Guarino

Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola*, Iopas in *Les Troyens*
Rodolfo in *La Bohème*
Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola*
Count Horn in *Un Ballo in Maschera*
Armindo in *Partenope*
Title role of *La Cenerentola*
Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera*
Title role of *Tosca*
Aeneas in *Les Troyens*
Little Bat McLean in *Susannah*
Marcello in *La Bohème*
Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera*

Partenope
Susannah

La Bohème
La Cenerentola
Le Nozze di Figaro

Season Artists to Date

Sopranos:

Anna Caterina Antonacci[♦]
Leah Crocetto^{†♫}
Ellie Dehn
Julianna Di Giacomo^{*♦}
Lianna Haroutounian^{*}
Danielle De Niese[♦]
Lisette Oropesa
Patricia Racette^{†♫♦}
Sondra Radvanovsky
Sarah Shafer[♦]
Nadine Sierra^{†♫♦}
Heidi Stober
Krassimira Stoyanova^{*}
Sonya Yoncheva

Mezzo-Sopranos:

Angela Brower
Catherine Cook^{†♫♦}
Sasha Cooke[♦]
Karine Deshayes^{*}
Susan Graham[♫]
Suzanne Hendrix[♫]
Daveda Karanast^{†♫♦}
Kate Lindsey
Daniela Mack^{†♫♦}
Dolora Zajick^{†♫}

Countertenors:

Anthony Roth Costanzo^{*}
David Daniels

Tenors:

René Barbera^{*♫}
Giorgio Berrugi^{*}
Marco Berti[♦]
Stephen Costello[♦]
Michael Fabiano
Greg Fedderly
Bryan Hymel^{*♫}
Brian Jagde^{†♫}
Brandon Jovanovich
James Kryshak^{*♦}
Alek Shrader^{†♫♦}
Joel Sorensen
Ramón Vargas

Baritones:

Fabio Capitanucci
Thomas Hampson[♫]
Alexey Markov^{*}
Brian Mulligan[♦]

Bass-Baritones:

Carlos Chausson^{*}
John Del Carlo[♫]
Craig Colclough^{*}
Mark Delavan^{†♫♦}
Christian Van Horn[♦]
Luca Pisaroni
Philippe Sly^{‡♫♦}
Dale Travis^{†♫}

Basses:

Raymond Aceto[♦]
Scott Conner^{**}

* San Francisco Opera debut

♦ Role debut

† Former Adler Fellow

‡ Current Adler Fellow

♫ Merola Opera Program graduate

Conductors

Nicola Luisotti

Norma
Un Ballo in Maschera
La Ciociara

Patrick Summers[♫]

Le Nozze di Figaro

Giuseppe Finzi

La Bohème

Donald Runnicles

Les Troyens

Christian Curnyn^{*}

Partenope

Riccardo Frizza

Tosca

Karen Kamensek^{*}

Susannah

Jesús López-Cobos

La Cenerentola

* San Francisco Opera debut

♫ Merola Opera Program graduate

Directors

Christopher Alden	<i>Partenope</i>
John Caird*	<i>La Bohème</i>
Michael Cavanagh	<i>Susannah</i>
Jose Maria Condemit†♫	<i>Un Ballo in Maschera, Tosca</i>
Gregory Fortner*	<i>La Cenerentola</i>
Robin Guarino*	<i>Le Nozze di Figaro</i>
David McVicar	<i>Les Troyens</i>
Kevin Newbury	<i>Norma</i>
Francesca Zambello	<i>La Ciociara</i>

* San Francisco Opera debut

† Former Adler Fellow

♫ Merola Opera Program graduate

Merola Opera Program and Adler Fellowship Program Alumni

René Barbera♫	Brian Jagde †♫
John Del Carlo♫	Daveda Karanas†♫
Leah Crocetto †♫	Daniela Mack †♫
Catherine Cook †♫	Patricia Racette †♫
Mark Delavant♫	Alek Shrader †♫
Julianna Di Giacomo†♫	Nadine Sierra†♫
Susan Graham♫	Patrick Summers ♫
Thomas Hampson♫	Dolora Zajick†♫
Bryan Hymel♫	

Current Adler Fellows (2014)

Incoming:

Noah Lindquist♫, *coach/accompanist*
Pene Pati♫, *tenor*
Efraín Solís♫, *baritone*
Zanda Švēde♫, *mezzo-soprano*
Maria Valdes♫, *soprano*

Returning:

Hadleigh Adams♫, *bass-baritone*
A.J. Glueckert♫, *tenor*
Erin Johnson♫, *soprano*
Jacqueline Piccolino♫, *soprano*
Philippe Sly♫, *bass-baritone*
Chuanyue Wang♫, *tenor*
Sun Ha Yoon♫, *coach/accompanist*

† Former Adler Fellow

♫ Merola Opera Program graduate

DAVID GOCKLEY
General Director

Considered one of the major innovators in American opera, David Gockley has been general director of San Francisco Opera since 2006 and is passionately committed to the premise that opera is a living art form that speaks to a variety of audiences. Under his leadership, San Francisco Opera has already presented six world premieres (Philip Glass and Christopher Hampton's *Appomattox*; Stewart Wallace and Amy Tan's *The Bonesetter's Daughter*; Christopher Theofanidis and Donna Di Novelli's *Heart of a Soldier*; Nolan Gasser and Carey Harrison's *The Secret Garden*; Mark Adamo's *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene*; Tobias Picker and J.D. McClatchy's *Dolores Claiborne*) and two West Coast premieres (Rachel Portman's *The Little Prince*; Jake Heggie's *Three Decembers*). The Company also presented a new production of Wagner's epic four-opera cycle, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, in June 2011 conducted by Donald Runnicles and directed by Francesca Zambello.

Gockley is committed to broadening and diversifying audiences for San Francisco Opera. In his first months as general director he took opera to the center of the community with a free outdoor simulcast—the first in the Company's history—of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* in May 2006. The subsequent nine simulcasts throughout the Bay Area, including seven at San Francisco's AT&T Park, have collectively drawn nearly 200,000 opera fans. These simulcasts are made possible by the Company's Koret-Taube Media Suite, which Gockley led San Francisco Opera to create in 2007. The first permanent high-definition broadcast-standard video production facility installed in any American opera house, the Koret-Taube Media Suite gives the Company the permanent capability to produce simulcasts and other projects including OperaVision, retractable screens providing close-up shots in high-definition video for patrons in balcony seats. Gockley ushered in another first for San Francisco Opera in the spring of 2008 when the Company presented a series of four operas in movie theaters across the country; this series, now expanded to sixteen titles, are available to theaters and performing arts venues as the Company's Grand Opera Cinema Series. In 2007 Gockley also launched radio partnerships that have returned regular San Francisco Opera broadcasts to the national and international radio airwaves.

Gockley came to San Francisco from Houston Grand Opera (HGO), where he was general director for more than three decades. Under his leadership, HGO received a Tony, two Emmy and two Grammy Awards; established the HGO Orchestra as well as the HGO Studio, which develops the talents of young singers; began annual international radio broadcasts and tours; and became America's leading commissioner and producer of new works. By 2006, HGO had 35 world premieres and six American premieres to its credit. Gockley also oversaw the creation of the Wortham Theater Center, HGO's home built entirely with private funds.

David Gockley was born in Philadelphia in 1943 and grew up in Wayne, Pennsylvania. He pursued vocal studies at the New England Conservatory and then studied conducting and composition at Brown University, where he received a bachelor's degree. He holds a master's degree from Columbia University Business School, which also named him the first recipient of

the Dean's Award for "Distinguished Professional Achievement." Brown University awarded him an honorary doctorate of fine arts in 1993 and, in 1995, recognized him with the William Rogers Award for outstanding professional achievement and extraordinary service to humanity.

NICOLA LUISOTTI

Music Director

Italian conductor Nicola Luisotti has been music director of San Francisco Opera since the fall of 2009 and holds the Caroline H. Hume Endowed Chair. In the current season he has already led *Mefistofele* and *Falstaff*, as well as a special presentation of Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*; he leads *Madama Butterfly* and *La Traviata* this spring. Luisotti also serves as music director of the Teatro di San Carlo in Naples and his engagements with that company include *Aida* and *Otello* this season. The maestro's other engagements in the current season include *Don Giovanni* and *Turandot* at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden and a concert with the orchestra of Turin's Teatro Regio. Called "both an original thinker and a great respecter of tradition" by *Opera News*, which featured him on the cover of the July 2011 special issue on conductors, Luisotti made his Company debut in 2005 conducting *La Forza del Destino* and returned in November 2008 to conduct *La Bohème*. As the Company's music director, he has led acclaimed performances of *Il Trovatore*, *Salome*, *Otello*, *La Fanciulla del West*, *Aida*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Rigoletto*, *Lohengrin*, *Tosca*, and *Così fan tutte*. Maestro Luisotti has garnered enthusiastic praise from both audiences and critics for his work at La Scala (*Attila*), the Royal Opera, Covent Garden (*Aida*, *Turandot*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Il Trovatore*, *Nabucco*); the Metropolitan Opera (*La Bohème*, *Tosca*, *La Fanciulla del West*); Paris Opera (*La Traviata*, *Tosca*); the Vienna State Opera (*Simon Boccanegra*); Genoa's Teatro Carlo Felice (*Un Ballo in Maschera*, *La Fanciulla del West*, *La Traviata*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Il Viaggio a Reims*); Venice's La Fenice (*Madama Butterfly*); Munich's Bavarian State Opera (*Macbeth*, *Tosca*); Frankfurt Opera (*Il Trittico*); Madrid's Teatro Real (*Il Trovatore*, *La Damnation de Faust*, *Mefistofele*); Los Angeles Opera (*Carmen*, *Pagliacci*); Dresden's Semperoper (*Tosca*, *Die Zauberflöte*); Toronto's Canadian Opera Company (*Un Ballo in Maschera*); Seattle Opera (*Macbeth*); Bologna's Teatro Comunale (*Salome*); Valencia's Palau de les Arts (*Mefistofele*); and in Tokyo's Suntory Hall (*Turandot*, *Tosca*, *La Bohème*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Così fan tutte*). Maestro Luisotti was awarded the 39th Premio Puccini Award in conjunction with the historic 100th anniversary of Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West* at the Metropolitan Opera, which he conducted last season.

Equally at home on the concert stage, Luisotti served as principal guest conductor of the Tokyo Symphony from 2009 to 2012 and has also established growing relationships with the orchestras of London (Philharmonia Orchestra), Genoa, Budapest, Turin, Munich (Bavarian Radio Orchestra), Palermo, and Rome (Santa Cecilia Orchestra), as well as the Berlin Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, and the Atlanta Symphony. The conductor's discography includes a complete recording of *Stiffelio* (Dynamic) with the orchestra of Trieste's Teatro Verdi and the critically acclaimed *Duets* (Deutsche Grammophon), featuring Anna Netrebko and Rolando Villazón. He is also on the podium of a DVD recording of the Met's *La Bohème*, with Angela Gheorghiu and Ramón Vargas (EMI).

PATRICK SUMMERS
Principal Guest Conductor

Houston Grand Opera Artistic and Music Director and Principal Guest Conductor for San Francisco Opera, Patrick Summers has led a vast repertory for the Company, including *Ariodante*, *Samson et Dalila*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, *Il Trittico*, *Xerxes*, *Moby-Dick*, and *Der Fliegende Holländer*; the world premieres of André Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1998), Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* (2000), and Christopher Theofanidis and Donna Di Novelli's *Heart of a Soldier* (2011); and the West Coast premiere of Heggie's *Three Decembers* (2008). Summers has twice received Merola Opera Program's Otto Guth Award and was named its "Distinguished Alumnus" in 2001. The maestro has led an array of productions at the Metropolitan Opera, including *La Traviata*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Così fan tutte*, *I Puritani*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, and *Rodelinda*, as well as *Madama Butterfly* and *Salome*, which were both broadcast live in HD to movie theaters around the world. Summers is also a regular guest with the world's preeminent opera companies, including Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu, Welsh National Opera, the Dallas Opera, Opera Australia, Seattle Opera, Lisbon Opera, Bordeaux Opera, and the Bregenz Festival, among many others. His most recent world premieres include Previn's *Brief Encounter* at Houston Grand Opera and Paul Moravec's *The Letter* at the Santa Fe Opera. Summers has overseen many of Houston Grand Opera's important artistic advances, including the formation of its own orchestra, the Houston Grand Opera Orchestra. During his tenure, he has supervised and conducted seven world premieres as well as many seminal opera works not previously mounted by the company. The Indiana University graduate was named Stolichnaya's "Artist of the Year" in 1998.

GIUSEPPE FINZI
Resident Conductor

San Francisco Opera Resident Conductor Giuseppe Finzi made his Company debut in 2008 conducting *The Elixir of Love for Families*, and he returned to lead performances of *La Bohème*, *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, *Faust*, *La Fanciulla del West*, *Aida*, *Turandot*, *Carmen*, *Rigoletto*, *Tosca*, and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, as well as the Company's performances at the 2009 and 2011 Stern Grove Festivals. He has also conducted *Carmen for Families*, *The Barber of Seville for Families*, and the 2011 and 2012 Adler Fellows gala concerts. A native of Bari, Italy, Finzi previously served as assistant conductor, coach, and pianist at Milan's Teatro alla Scala. He made his conducting debut in 2003 with *Tosca* at the Teatro Rendano in Cosenza and returned in 2004 for *La Traviata*. Finzi has since led productions of *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and *Così fan tutte* as well as concerts in Italy, Europe, and Asia. Most recently he made his debut in Germany conducting *Carmen* at Deutsche Oper Berlin. Actively involved in the community, Finzi led a master class with the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and conducted their spring production of *Così fan tutte* in 2012. Recent and upcoming engagements include *The Nutcracker* at the Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, new productions of *Rigoletto* at Palermo's

Teatro Massimo and *Idomeneo* at the Theater Lübeck in Germany, and a return to Berlin for *Carmen*.

IAN ROBERSTON
Chorus Director

Recipient of the 2012 San Francisco Opera Medal, Ian Robertson has been chorus director and conductor with San Francisco Opera since 1987, having prepared more than 300 productions for the Company. He was awarded the Olivier Messiaen Foundation Prize in 2003 for his artistic contribution to the preparation of the Company's North American premiere of *Saint François d'Assise*. Robertson made his San Francisco Opera conducting debut with *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and has since led performances of *Falstaff*, *Lohengrin*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, *Don Carlo*, *Turandot*, *Il Trovatore*, and *La Bohème*. He has led the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus in many concerts, and he has conducted productions and concerts for San Francisco Opera Center and Merola Opera Program. Other North American opera credits include productions with Sarasota Opera, Edmonton Opera, and Philadelphia's Curtis Opera Theatre. Before joining San Francisco Opera, Robertson was head of music and chorus director of Scottish Opera, where he led numerous productions, including *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *The Pearl Fishers*, *The Secret of Susanna*, and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. He is currently the artistic director of the San Francisco Festival Chorale, which performed this summer at the Grand Teton Music Festival, and the San Francisco Boys Chorus. A 2009 trip with the San Francisco Boys Chorus took him to the inauguration of the President of the United States, and this summer he led performances with the Boys Chorus in St. Petersburg and Copenhagen.

FABRIZIO CORONA
Associate Chorus Master

Fabrizio Corona joined San Francisco Opera as associate chorus master in July 2011. He has worked as a vocal coach and associate chorus master at Opera Monte Carlo, the Multipromo Opera Festival in Florence, the Puccini Festival in Torre del Lago, and the Chigiana Academy in Sienna. As a pianist, he has accompanied singers at the Accademie Francis Poulenc di Tours in France and other concerts and recitals, as well as conducting and coaching various choral performances during his time with Opera Monte Carlo. Corona is a graduate of Florence's Cherubini Conservatory.

LAWRENCE PECH
Dance Master, Resident Choreographer

Currently in his seventeenth year as dance master and resident choreographer for San Francisco Opera, Lawrence Pech has recently choreographed *Turandot*, *Heart of a Soldier*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Don Giovanni*, *Xerxes*, *Carmen*, *Rigoletto*, and *Der Fliegende Holländer* for the Company. He has created period and interpretive dances for nearly thirty operas with the Company, most recently for Wagner's *Ring* cycle. Pech received his formal training from American Ballet Theatre (ABT) and was invited by Mikhail Baryshnikov to join that company in

1980; he continues to teach and choreograph for the nationwide ABT Summer Intensives. In 1986 Pech joined San Francisco Ballet and became a principal dancer in 1989. He founded his own dance company in 1995 and has choreographed more than fifty-five ballets, thirty musicals, and numerous self-produced evenings of music and dance. Pech was recently awarded his third Bay Area Theater Critics Circle Award for Best Choreography. He graduated with honors from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music with a degree in composition.

MARCO TUTINO
Composer and Librettist, *La Ciociara (Two Women)*

Italian composer Marco Tutino has written operas, chamber music, and symphonic works that have been performed by leading opera companies and orchestras in Italy in Europe. His operatic compositions include *Pinocchio* (1985) for Genoa Opera; *Cirano* (1987) for the Laboratorio Lirico in Alessandria; *La Lupa* (1990) for the Mascagni centenary in Livorno, and subsequently restaged in Hungary, Germany, Bologna, and Palermo; *Vite Immaginarie* (1990) for the Teatro Comunale in Bologna; *Federico II* (1990), commissioned by Bonn Opera; *Il Gatto con gli Stivali* (1994), *Pugacev* (1997), and *Peter Uncino* (2001) for the Arena di Verona; *Vita* (2003), commissioned by Milan's La Scala; *Le Bel Indifférent* (2004) and *The Servant* (2008) for the Macerata Opera Festival; *La Bella e la Bestia* (2005) for the Teatro Comunale di Modena; and *Senso* (2010) for Palermo's Teatro Massimo. Other compositions include a clarinet concerto commissioned by La Scala and later performed by the BBC Symphony; the ballet *Riccardo III* for the Teatro Scoiale di Rovigo and the Teatro Comunale di Treviso, also seen at Venice's Teatro La Fenice; the ballet *Dylan Dog* (1999) for the Arena di Verona; the musical *Peter Pan* for the Piccolo Teatro di Milano; *Canto di Pace* for tenor, choir, and orchestra for the Teatro delle Muse di Ancona; and a flute concerto for the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra. From 1991 to 1994, Tutino programmed music for the Pomeriggi Musicali chamber orchestra in Milan, and he has served as the composer-in-residence for the Arena di Verona. He has also served as artistic director of Turin's Teatro Regio and general and artistic director of the Teatro Comunale in Bologna.

FABIO CERESA
Librettist, *La Ciociara (Two Women)*

As a librettist, Fabio Ceresa most recent work was creating the libretto for Daniele Zanettovich's *Marco Polo*, which received its premiere at the Croatian National Theatre in 2013. Currently an assistant stage director for Milan's La Scala, he holds degrees in music and law and has worked at Tokyo's New National Theater, the Glyndebourne Festival, and Valencia's Palau de las Artes Reina Sofia, collaborating on productions by Graham Vick (*Don Carlo*) and Peter Hall (*La Cenerentola*), among many others. His work at La Scala includes productions of *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Il Trittico*, *The Makropulos Case*, *Lulu*, *Bluebeard's Castle*, *The Merry Widow*, and *From the House of the Dead*, among others.

ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

A leader among international opera companies for nine decades, San Francisco Opera was founded by Gaetano Merola (1881–1953) and incorporated in 1923. Merola and Kurt Herbert Adler were the Company's first two general directors. Merola led the Company from its founding in 1923 until his death in 1953; Adler headed the organization from 1953 through 1981. Legendary for both their conducting and managerial skills, these two leaders established a formidable institution that is internationally recognized as one of the top opera companies in the world and heralded for its first-rate productions and roster of international opera stars. Following Adler's tenure, the Company was headed by three visionary leaders: Terence A. McEwen (1982–1988), Lotfi Mansouri (1988–2001), and Pamela Rosenberg (2001–2005). Originally presented over two weeks, the Company's season now contains approximately seventy performances of ten operas between September and July.

In 2012, San Francisco Opera celebrated the 80th anniversary of its performing home, the War Memorial Opera House. The venerable beaux arts building was inaugurated on October 15, 1932 and holds the distinction of being the first American opera house that was not built by and for a small group of wealthy patrons; the funding came thanks to a group of private citizens who encouraged thousands of San Franciscans to subscribe.

David Gockley became San Francisco Opera's sixth general director in January of 2006 after more than three decades at the helm of Houston Grand Opera. During his first months as general director, Gockley took opera to the center of the community with a free outdoor simulcast—the first in the Company's history—of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* in May 2006. The subsequent nine simulcasts throughout the Bay Area, including seven at San Francisco's AT&T Park, have collectively drawn nearly 200,000 opera fans. These simulcasts are made possible by the Company's Koret-Taube Media Suite, which Gockley led San Francisco Opera to create in 2007. The first permanent high-definition broadcast-standard video production facility installed in any American opera house, the Koret-Taube Media Suite gives the Company the permanent capability to produce simulcasts and other projects including OperaVision, retractable screens providing close-up shots in high-definition video for patrons in balcony seats. Gockley ushered in another first for San Francisco Opera in the spring of 2008 when the Company presented a series of four operas in movie theaters across the country; these operas, in addition to eight new titles added in 2010 and 2011, are available to theaters and performing arts venues as part of the Company's Grand Opera Cinema Series. In 2007 Gockley also launched radio partnerships that have returned regular San Francisco Opera broadcasts to the national and international radio airwaves for the first time in 25 years.

San Francisco Opera's first two general directors, Merola and Adler, regularly conducted for the first six decades of the Company's history. In 1985, the Company appointed Sir John Pritchard as its first permanent music director, and he was followed by Donald Runnicles in 1992. Italian conductor Nicola Luisotti, one of the opera world's most exciting conductors, succeeded Donald Runnicles as music director in the fall of 2009.

Born and raised in Italy, Maestro Luisotti made his international debut in 2002 leading a new production of *Il Trovatore* at the Stuttgart State Theater. He has since led productions at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; the Metropolitan Opera; Milan's La Scala; the Vienna State Opera; Madrid's Teatro Real; Paris Opera; and Munich's Bavarian State Opera (*Tosca*), among

many others. He made his debut in Japan with a staged production of *Tosca* at Suntory Hall and has established growing relationships with the orchestras of Zagreb, Sofia, Genoa, NHK, Tokyo Symphony, Munich's Bavarian Radio Orchestra and Rome's Santa Cecilia Orchestra. In 2012, Luisotti was appointed music director of the Teatro di San Carlo in Naples.

Since its inception, San Francisco Opera has embodied a spirit of innovation by presenting the world premieres of *Blood Moon* (1961), *Angle of Repose* (1976), *Meeting Mr. Ives* (1976, Spring Opera Theater), *Tartuffe* (1980, Opera Center), *The Women in the Garden* (1982, Opera Center), *Full Moon in March* (1982, Opera Center), *The Dangerous Liaisons* (1994), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1998), *Dead Man Walking* (2000), *Arshak II* (2001), and *Doctor Atomic* (2005). Under the leadership of David Gockley, the Company has added six new operas to that list: Philip Glass and Christopher Hampton's *Appomattox* (2007), Stewart Wallace and Amy Tan's *The Bonesetter's Daughter* (2008), Christopher Theofanidis and Donna Di Novelli's *Heart of a Soldier* (2011); Nolan Gasser and Carey Harrison's *The Secret Garden* (2013); Mark Adamo's *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene* (2013); and Tobias Picker and J.D. McClatchy's *Dolores Claiborne* (2013). In 2015, the Company presents the world premiere of Italian composer Marco Tutino's *La Ciociara (Two Women)*, with a libretto by Tutino and Fabio Ceresa. Future planned commissions include an opera by Chinese–American composer Bright Sheng with a libretto by David Henry Hwang.

San Francisco Opera offers a comprehensive array of acclaimed training programs and performance opportunities for young artists under the auspices of the San Francisco Opera Center and the Merola Opera Program (each a separate institution). Both are led by renowned soprano Sheri Greenawald.

San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Opera Guild annually bring opera and music education programs to more than 60,000 students throughout Northern California. San Francisco Opera's groundbreaking Opera ARIA (Arts Resources in Action) programs work with classrooms and educators in grades K–12. Aimed at connecting professional artistic and creative elements of opera with classroom curricula, Opera ARIA's methodology focuses on empowering educators to work with both San Francisco Opera and their own colleagues to develop connections to curriculum and the California State Arts and Academic Standards.

For seventy years, the San Francisco Opera Guild has continued to bring award-winning opera arts in-school programs to children in more than 250 Northern California schools. The Guild's many engaging K–12 programs nurture children and support educators through programs that inspire children to make positive choices and help them grow to be conscientious, sensitive, and culturally aware adults.

In addition to these in-school programs, San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Opera Guild provide countless education opportunities for all ages, including workshops for adults, pre-opera talks, preview lectures, insight panels, professional development for educators, family opera movie screenings, opera arts training camps, student dress rehearsals and opera house and backstage tours.

For more information about San Francisco Opera, please visit sfopera.com.

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