



## **SAN FRANCISCO OPERA CENTER ANNOUNCES 2012 ADLER FELLOWS**

SAN FRANCISCO (November 30, 2011)—San Francisco Opera Center Director Sheri Greenawald announced today the ten recipients of the 2012 Adler Fellowship. The prestigious resident artist training program has nurtured the development of more than 140 young artists since its inception.

The eight singers selected as 2012 Adler Fellows are sopranos Nadine Sierra (Fort Lauderdale, Florida), Marina Boudart Harris (Whittier, CA); mezzo-sopranos Laura Krumm (Iowa City, Iowa) and Renée Rapier (Marion, Iowa); tenor Brian Jadge (Piermont, New York); baritones Ao Li (Shandong, China) and Joo Won Kang (Seoul, South Korea); and bass-baritone Ryan Kuster (Jacksonville, Illinois). Sierra, Jadge, Li and Kuster are scheduled to return as Adler Fellows. Outgoing 2011 Adler Fellows are sopranos Susannah Biller, Leah Crocetto and Sara Gartland; mezzo-soprano Maya Lahyani; countertenor Ryan Belongie; tenor Daniel Montenegro; and coach and accompanist Tamara Sanikidze.

The two pianists selected for Apprentice Coach Fellowships are Robert Mollicone (East Greenwich, Rhode Island) and returning Adler Fellow David Hanlon (Arlington, Virginia). The Adler Fellow Apprentice Coaches work closely with Mark Morash, Director of Musical Studies of the Opera Center, and John Churchwell, Head of Music Staff at San Francisco Opera. The Coaches participate in the musical activities of both San Francisco Opera and the Opera Center, and are involved in all aspects of the Adler Fellows' training by acting as pianists for classes, playing for other master coaches as well as preparing the Adler Fellows for concerts and main-stage roles.

“As always, I am very pleased to announce our new 2012 class of Adler Fellows,” said San Francisco Opera Center Director Sheri Greenawald. “It is inspiring to work with such talented young artists. Helping them develop their burgeoning musical careers is truly a rewarding experience.”

The Adler Fellowship Program is a performance-oriented residency offering advanced young artists intensive individual training, coaching, professional seminars and a wide range of performance opportunities throughout their fellowship. Adler Fellows also gain valuable professional experience by performing roles of increasing importance in San Francisco Opera’s main-stage season. The Adler Fellows are selected from the young artists who have participated in the Merola Opera Program.

In addition to performances on the main stage of the War Memorial Opera House, Adler Fellows enjoy a variety of performance opportunities throughout their fellowship. The 2012 Adlers will perform a co-production of the chamber opera *Love/Hate* by composer Jack Perla with Oberlin Dance Collective (ODC) in San Francisco on April 12, 14 and 15. Selected Adler Fellows will also be featured in the Schwabacher Debut Recital Series (at Temple Emanu-El’s Martin Meyer Sanctuary in San Francisco), which was created to spotlight artists who have participated in the programs of the San Francisco Opera Center.

The Adler Fellows’ season culminates with a special year-end concert featuring the singers in an evening of opera scenes and arias with the San Francisco Opera Orchestra. This year’s concert, *The Future Is Now: Adler Fellows Gala Concert*, showcasing the acclaimed 2011 Adler Fellows in concert with the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, takes place on Thursday, December 1, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. at Herbst Theatre in San Francisco.

Further details about upcoming 2012 Adler Fellow performances will be announced at a later date. Biographies of the 2012 Adler Fellows follow below.

### **2012 Adler Fellow Biographies**

Second-year Adler Fellow **NADINE SIERRA** is an alumna of the 2010 Merola Opera Program, where she was heard as Adina in *L’Elisir d’Amore*; this fall she created the roles of Juliet and Barbara in the world premiere of *Heart of a Soldier*. Winner of the 2009 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Sierra’s other recent awards include first prize of the George London Competition (2010),

the Gerda Lissner International Competition (2010), the Loren Zachary Competition (2010) and the Stella Maris Competition (2011), as well as second prize in the Mirjam Helin International Vocal Competition (2009). She has also sung the Sandman (*Hansel and Gretel*), the First Spirit (*Die Zauberflöte*), Beth (*Little Women*), and Despina (*Così fan tutte*). Sierra recently appeared as Tytania (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) with Boston Lyric Opera and Euridice (*Orfeo ed Euridice*) with Palm Beach Opera. Upcoming engagements include Gilda (*Rigoletto*) with Florida Grand Opera and Papagena (*The Magic Flute*) with the Company this season.

A native of Los Angeles, soprano **MARINA BOUDART HARRIS** is an alumna of the 2011 Merola Opera Program. Her recent roles include Arminda (*La Finta Giardiniera*), Berta (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), Tatyana (*Eugene Onegin*), and the title role of *Arabella*. On the concert stage, she has been a featured soloist in Mozart's Mass in C Minor, Mahler's Symphony No. 2, and Bach's Mass in B Minor. She is a three time soloist with the Los Angeles Bach Festival, performing such works as Bach's *Magnificat*, *Saint John Passion* and *Wachet, betet!* with the Festival Orchestra and Choir. In 2010, Harris was chosen as a Western Regional finalist for the Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions and was the second place winner in the Finals. She was also a Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Regional Finalist in 2009, and took home the Special Encouragement Award. A participant at the Music Academy of the West, she was selected as an Encouragement Award Winner at the Marilyn Horne Foundation Vocal Competition in 2010 for her performance of art song repertoire. She holds a bachelor's degree from California State University Long Beach and a graduate certificate from the University of Southern California.

Mezzo-soprano **LAURA KRUMM**, a native of Iowa City, Iowa, is currently pursuing a master's degree in vocal performance at the University of North Texas where she has been awarded the Bill and Margo Winspear Award and won the 2011 Concerto Competition. Her recent repertoire includes Charlotte (*Werther*), Sesto (*La Clemenza di Tito*), Cherubino (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Prince Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*), and the Second Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*). As a participant in the 2011 Merola Opera Program, she was featured in scenes from *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* and *Rigoletto*. She has performed in concerts and operas with La Musica Lirica in Novafeltria, Italy; OperaWorks in Los Angeles; California; and was a finalist in the 2011 Dallas Opera Guild Competition. Ms. Krumm holds a bachelor's degree in history from Luther College.

American mezzo-soprano **RENÉE RAPIER** has performed with the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, the Northern Iowa Symphony Orchestra, the Grinnell Orchestra, the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, and with the Tafelmusik Baroque Summer Institute Orchestra. She is a frequent performer with the Boston-based early music ensemble La Donna Musicale, and she appeared on their latest CD, *Anna Bon: La virtuosa di Venezia*, released in 2010. Rapiere holds a master's degree in vocal performance from the University of Northern Iowa. She is a former studio artist at Chautauqua Opera and a participant in the 2010 and 2011 Merola Opera Program, where she most recently performed Rosina (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*). Awards include the Chautauqua Studio Artist Award, first prize in the Schubert Club Scholarship Competition, a national finalist of the Bel Canto Vocal Scholarship Foundation Competition, and was a national semifinalist at the Metropolitan Opera Council Auditions in 2011.

Lyric tenor and third-year Adler Fellow **BRIAN JAGDE** made his San Francisco Opera debut in 2010 as Joe (*La Fanciulla del West*) and returned as the Messenger (*Aida*), Janek (*The Makropulos Case*), Oloferno Vitellozzo (*Lucrezia Borgia*), and Don José (*Carmen for Families*). An alumnus of the 2009 Merola Opera Program, he has appeared as Rodolfo (*La Bohème*) for Syracuse Opera and made his

European debut in 2010 in the title role of *Werther* and as Macduff (*Macbeth*) for the Teatr Wielki in Poland. He also appeared as Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*) with Virginia Opera and Rodolfo at Castleton Festival Opera earlier this year. Jagde holds a bachelor's and master's degree from the Purchase College-Conservatory of Music. He will make his debuts with Minnesota Opera, the Santa Fe Opera, and Fresno Grand Opera in 2012.

Baritone **AO LI**, a second-year Adler Fellow, is a native of Dezhou, China who studied at Shandong Normal University. He made his Company debut earlier this fall as Ascanio Petrucci (*Lucrezia Borgia*) and as El Dancaïre (*Carmen for Families*). As a participant in the 2010 Merola Opera Program, he sang the role of Belcore (*L'Elisir d'Amore*) and was featured in an aria from *I Puritani* in the grand finale concert. A frequent recitalist in China, Li is a past recipient of the prestigious Youth of China award, first prize in the seventh Shandong Qilu Style Contest, third place in the Taipei World Chinese Vocal Competition, the bronze award in the People's Republic of China's Ministry of Culture's eighth China International Vocal Competition, and he was selected as Shandong Province's winner in the eleventh National Young Singers TV Grand Prix Contest.

A young artist with Florida Grand Opera, baritone **JOO WON KANG** was a participant in the 2011 Merola Opera Program. Recent engagements include a recital with Zurich's Verein Opera and an appearance with New Jersey Verismo Opera. A native of Korea, his recent awards include winning the Palm Beach Opera Competition; the Gerda Lissner International Competition, resulting in his debut at Carnegie Hall; the Career Bridge Competition; and the Opera Index and Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation awards. He holds a master's degree from the Manhattan School of Music, where his credits include Eurimaque (Fauré's *Pénélope*) and Count Almaviva (*Le Nozze di Figaro*); he also received the Edgar Foster Daniels Scholarship in Voice. He holds a bachelor's degree from Yonsei University (South Korea), where he performed Marcello (*La Bohème*) and a Priest (*Die Zauberflöte*).

A second-year Adler Fellow, bass-baritone **RYAN KUSTER** made his San Francisco Opera debut this fall as a Mandarin (*Turandot*) and returned as Astolfo (*Lucrezia Borgia*) and Masetto (*Don Giovanni*). Remaining engagements with the Company this season include Escamillo (*Carmen for Families*). He is a recent graduate of the 2010 Merola Opera Program, where he performed in the scenes program as Garibaldi (*Rodelinda*), Bartolo (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), and Cajus (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*). As a participant in Philadelphia's Academy of Vocal Arts, he has appeared as Schaunard (*La Bohème*), Enrico (*Anna Bolena*), Oroveso (*Norma*), and as the Governor in the world premiere of Margaret Garwood's *The Scarlet Letter*, among other roles. Recent engagements include his debuts with San Antonio Opera as Marullo (*Rigoletto*) and Annapolis Opera as Angelotti (*Tosca*). He was also featured as Rambaldo (*La Rondine*) with Oberlin Conservatory in Italy; Count Ceprano (*Rigoletto*) as well as Betto (*Gianni Schicchi*), and in Ching's *Buoso's Ghost* with Opera New Jersey.

Pianist and apprentice coach **ROBERT MOLLICONE** was a member of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, where he has served on music staff for productions of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Don Pasquale*, *Tosca*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. He holds a master's degree from Boston University. His performance credits include solo engagements, as well as opera, art song, chamber music, orchestral keyboard, music theatre, and numerous community outreach projects. He has also performed in master classes for Martin Katz, Margo Garrett, Patrick Summers, Warren Jones, Stephanie Blythe, Phyllis Curtin, and Simon Estes, and he has worked with composers Daniel Pinkham, Yehudi Wyner, Michael Friedman, Tobias Picker, and Jason Robert Brown. Mollicone has served as a vocal coach and pianist for Boston Lyric Opera, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Boston

Opera Collaborative, Boston University Tanglewood Institute, and Opera North. He was a Spectrum Resident Artist at Virginia Opera in 2009, and he is an alumnus of the 2011 Merola Opera Program.

Pianist and apprentice coach **DAVID HANLON** is a second-year Adler Fellow and alumnus of the 2010 Merola Opera Program. He is a recent graduate of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, where he worked on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Lohengrin*, *Tosca*, and the world premiere of André Previn's *Brief Encounter*. He also served as principal coach for that company's world premiere presentation of Christopher Theofanidis's *The Refuge* and will serve as music director this fall for the world premiere mariachi opera *To Cross the Face of the Moon* by José "Pepe" Martinez. He has appeared in concert at such venues as the 92nd Street Y, Merkin Hall, Rose Hall at Lincoln Center, the Whitney Museum, Tonic, Zilkha Hall, Sprague Hall, Mass MoCa, and Cairo's historic Ewart Hall. He holds bachelor's degrees in both music and classics from Wesleyan University and a master's degree in music from Manhattan School of Music. His playing, as well as his own compositions, can be heard on the New Amsterdam Records label.

### **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.

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. 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.

Initially founded as the San Francisco Opera/Affiliate Artists program in 1977, the Adler Fellowship Program is one of the nation's most prestigious performance-oriented residencies for the most advanced young singers and coach/accompanists. Each year, Adler Fellows are sponsored by individual donors to help cover the cost of their fellowship, 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.

For more information on the San Francisco Opera Center and the Adler Fellowship and Merola Opera Program, visit [www.sfopera.com](http://www.sfopera.com) and [www.merola.org](http://www.merola.org).

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For further press information about the Adler Fellowship Program please visit [www.sfoopera.com/press](http://www.sfoopera.com/press) or contact San Francisco Opera Communications:

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