SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD ANNOUNCES DETAILS OF
91ST SEASON OPENING NIGHT GALA, SEPTEMBER 6, 2013
Opera Ball 2013: The Garden of Good & Evil

OPERA BALL 2013 MARKS
BAY AREA DEBUT OF CELEBRITY EVENT PLANNER COLIN COWIE

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA'S 2013-14 SEASON OPENS WITH
ARRIGO BOITO'S *MEPHISTOPHELES*

[Left to right: Co-chair Mai Shiver, SF Opera Guild President Karen Kubin and Co-chair Ann Girard; Arrigo Boito's *Mephistopheles*; Event designer Colin Cowie. For these and other images, visit sfopera.com/press]

SAN FRANCISCO (May 8, 2013)—San Francisco Opera celebrates the opening of its 91st season on September 6, 2013 with a gala opening night like none other. San Francisco Opera Guild's 2013 *Opera Ball: The Garden of Good and Evil* will be created by celebrity event designer Colin Cowie to reflect the celestial and devilish themes of the evening's performance—late 19th-century Italian composer Arrigo Boito's *Mephistopheles*. Boito's monumental and thrilling retelling of the *Faust* legend will star acclaimed international performers Ildar Abdrazakov, Patricia Racette and Ramón Vargas in one of the most impressive productions ever seen on the War Memorial Opera House stage.

Always a highlight of the City's cultural and philanthropic season, *Opera Ball* is an extraordinary event that brings together local and national corporate, political, civic and philanthropic leaders. The proceeds from this celebrated signature fundraising event support San Francisco Opera's and San Francisco Opera Guild's award-winning education and community programs throughout the Bay Area. *Opera Ball 2013* is co-chaired by Ann Girard and Mai Shiver; Karen Kubin is president of San Francisco Opera Guild.

"When my co-chair Mai and I learned that the season opening opera was to be *Mephistopheles*, we knew that *Opera Ball* needed to truly match the extraordinary level of drama and pageantry that will be seen on the stage," stated *Opera Ball* co-chair Ann Girard. " We couldn't be more pleased to work with Colin Cowie and we are certain that this year's *Opera Ball* will be sensational—a garden full of surprises and elegance, tinted with just the right amount of evil." Girard continued, "Similar to enjoying a breathtaking view of the Golden Gate Bridge or cheering for our World Series champions, the San Francisco Giants, the opportunity to attend opening night at San Francisco Opera is one of the most unique experiences available in the Bay Area." "We are also excited to present this year's gala in the magnificence of San Francisco City Hall," added *Opera Ball* co-chair Mai Shiver, "Its grand and interesting spaces will be sure to contribute to the drama of the evening." Shiver continued, "We extend our appreciation to Colin Cowie and his team of professionals for inspiring us with their vision and contributing generously to the Opera Guild's educational programs."

Colin Cowie is one of the most recognizable and sought-after event planners in the industry. Well known for his stunning celebrity weddings, Grammy Awards and Oscar Awards parties, luxury hotel openings and other high profile celebrations around the world, Cowie now adds San Francisco to his impressive roster of event locations. Colin Cowie's celebrity client list spans from Oprah Winfrey and Tom Cruise to Jennifer Lopez and Lil Wayne. The designer is regular guest on the *Today Show*, *The Oprah Winfrey Show* and *The Ellen DeGeneres Show.* Also a prolific author, Cowie has written nine books, including six wedding books, two entertaining cookbooks, a book on living with style and three books on design.

Opera Ball 2013: The Garden of Good and Evil begins with a heavenly pre-performance cocktail reception in the North Light Court of San Francisco's historic City Hall at 5 p.m., created to mirror the

spectacular production of *Mephistopheles.* An indulgent dinner created by acclaimed chef Lucas Schoemaker of McCalls Catering and Events follows at 6 p.m. in the Beaux-Arts style rotunda, and at 8 p.m. the curtain rises on the gala opening night performance of *Mephistopheles* at the War Memorial Opera House. Returning to City Hall following the performance, guests will experience decadent cocktails, desserts and dancing in an atmosphere dramatically transformed into an exotic sanctuary full of diabolical surprises. San Francisco Opera's opening night festivities will take place at City Hall this year due to the closure of the War Memorial Veterans Building and War Memorial Campus for seismic retrofit and renovations.

"I am so excited to be part of this year's San Francisco Opera season opening," stated Colin Cowie. "We are working with a fun and edgy theme, *The Garden of Good and Evil*, where our guests will experience the Garden of Good for cocktails and dinner, and the Garden of Evil for the post opera festivities. As opera is such a wonderful contribution to our musical culture, I am thrilled to be a part of this very special event. We promise a fun and fabulous night!"

San Francisco Opera's 2013-14 season opens September 6, 2013 with Arrigo Boito's *Mephistopheles*, in one of the most impressive productions ever seen at the War Memorial Opera House. The title role of Mephistopheles is sung by Russian bass Ildar Abdrazakov in his stage role debut, soprano Patricia Racette appears as both Marguerite and Elena, and Mexican tenor Ramón Vargas makes his fully-staged role debut as Faust, the philosopher who sells his soul to the devil in exchange for perpetual youth. Music Director Nicola Luisotti conducts the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus in this monumental work of "choral grandeur and melodic richness" (*The New York Times*). Robert Carsen's impressive San Francisco Opera production, featuring designs by Michael Levine, is directed by Laurie Feldman.

TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Tickets for *Opera Ball 2013: The Garden of Good and Evil* are priced at $1,000; $1,500; $2,500; and $5,000; ticket availability is limited. *Opera Ball* tickets may be purchased at sfopera.com/OperaBall2013 or by calling (415) 565-3204.

Tickets for the performance of Boito's *Mephistopheles* (not including *Opera Ball 2013* gala) are priced from $23 to $385 and may be purchased at 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.

Friday, September 6, 2013 **War Memorial Opera House**

Opera Ball 2013: The Garden of Good and Evil
Presented by San Francisco Opera and San Francisco Opera Guild, the evening begins with an elegant pre-performance cocktail reception and sumptuous dinner followed by the season-opening performance of Boito's *Mephistopheles* and further celebration. A highlight of the City's cultural and philanthropic season, *Opera Ball* raises funds to benefit San Francisco Opera and the Opera Guild's education and community programs. Co-chairs: Ann Girard and Mai Shiver. For tickets or more information about *Opera Ball 2013*, call (415) 565-3204 or visit sfopera.com/OperaBall2013

5 p.m.	Cocktail reception at the North Light Court of San Francisco City Hall
6 p.m.	Elegant dinner in the Rotunda of San Francisco City Hall
8 p.m.	Gala opening-night performance of *Mephistopheles* at the War Memorial Opera House
11 p.m.	*Opera Ball* guests return to City Hall for cocktails, desserts and dancing.

Opera Ball 2013 Co-Chair Biographies

Ann Girard was raised in the Bay Area and received her B.A. from University of California, Berkeley. She continued her studies at the University of California, Hastings College of the Law, served as managing editor of *The Constitutional Law Quarterly*, and studied abroad at the Institute on International and Comparative Law, L'Universite de Paris, Pantheon-Sorbonne. She began her legal career with Brobeck, Phleger & Harrison in San Francisco. Most recently, she served as general counsel to QuickLogic Corporation in Silicon Valley. She has served as president of the Bay Area American Corporate Counsel Association, chair of ACCA's Intellectual Property Committee, and as a director of ACCA's national board. Ann was appointed by Chief Justice Ronald M. George, Supreme Court of California, to be a member of the Business Courts Task Force, Judicial Council of California. She has served as a business mentor for The Inroads Program and on the Editorial Advisory Board of *California Lawyer Magazine*. She is an Adviser for Hastings College of the Law Alumni Association. Ann is active in the community, including as the immediate past president of the San Francisco Opera Guild and as co-chair of events benefiting the Special Olympics and Peninsula Open Space Trust.

Mai Shiver serves as the senior legal manager and chief compliance officer for Wells Capital Management and in this role, brings 20 years of experience as an attorney specializing in regulatory, securities, litigation matters and commercial matters with operational knowledge of securities trading and business enhancement strategies. Wells Capital Management is a U.S. registered investment adviser managing over

$300 billion in U.S. and global equity, fixed income and quantitative strategies for institutional clients globally. Prior to joining Wells Capital Management, Mai served as a director of regulatory policy for the Pacific/Archipelago Exchange and as counsel for the law firm of DLA Piper in Chicago and law firms in San Francisco and Oakland, California and received her bachelor's degree from the University of Georgia in Genetics and earned a *juris doctorate* from the University of California, Hastings College of Law. Mai has been admitted to practice law in California and Illinois. Mai has served as an active director for San Francisco Opera Guild since 2003. She has chaired several special events and participated on the Guild's nominating committees. Mai has also served as a member of the San Francisco Financial Women Association, the International Diplomacy Council, San Francisco Junior League, and the SFMOMA Modern Art Council, Chicago Field Museum, and the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

Colin Cowie Biography

Colin Cowie was born in Kitwe, Zambia, educated in South Africa and has lived in the United States since 1985. His company Colin Cowie Celebrations is an event planning, interior design, and lifestyle-consulting company with offices in New York and Los Angeles.

He has written nine books, including six wedding books (*Colin Cowie Weddings*, *Colin Cowie For The Bride*, *Colin Cowie For The Groom*, *Extraordinary Weddings*, *Colin Cowie Wedding Chic*), two entertaining cookbooks (*Effortless Elegance*, *Dinner After Dark*), a book on living with style (*Colin Cowie Chic*), as well as three books on design.

Colin Cowie has regularly appeared on the *Today Show*, *The Oprah Winfrey Show* and *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*. Cowie has appeared as a special guest on many national television shows including *Regis and Kelly*, *Entertainment Tonight*, CNN and *Extra!* Print features and profiles have been published in *Town & Country Magazine, The New York Times* and *New York Times Magazine, TV Guide, USA Today, The Los Angeles Times* and *Los Angeles Times Magazine, Biography Magazine, Architectural Digest, Bon Appetite, In Style, Town & Country, US Weekly, Reader's Digest, The Daily News, Brides Magazine, Modern Bride, People Magazine, The New York Post*, and *The Chicago Daily Herald*.

Colin Cowie Celebrations' celebrity client list includes: Oprah Winfrey, Jerry Seinfeld, Jennifer Lopez, Mark Anthony, Tom Cruise, Nicole Kidman, Jennifer Aniston, Bruce Willis, Demi Moore, Jenny McCarthy, Sela Ward, Don Henley, Kelsey Grammer, Kenny G., Lisa Kudrow, Charlie Sheen, Sugar Ray Leonard, Jennifer Lopez, Lil Wayne, Paula Abdul, Barry Bonds, Michael Jordan, and Hugh Hefner. Cowie's corporate clients include Audemars Piguet, Davidoff of Geneva, Warner Bros, CBS, Cash Money Records, The Whitney Museum, Architectural Digest, Kerzner International's One and Only Hotels, Cosmopolitan Magazine and InStyle Magazine.

Some of the highly publicized events produced by Cowie include: Oprah Winfrey's Legends Ball, Oprah Winfrey's 50th birthday celebration, John Travolta's 50th birthday celebration, Quincy Jones 71st birthday celebration, the grand opening celebrations of the Atlantis Royal Towers (Paradise Island, Bahamas), the Elton John AIDS Foundation Oscar party, the 40th Anniversary of Cosmopolitan Magazine, the grand opening of Palm Island, Dubai the Atlantis Hotel on Palm Island, and the Cosmopolitan Hotel in Las Vegas.

About San Francisco Opera Guild

Founded in 1939 to support arts education and San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Opera Guild has acted on its belief that the life lessons drawn from creative expression are the foundation of confidence and integrity. Celebrating 70 years of offering award winning K-12 education programs and engaging community outreach programs, its mission is to give voice to potential, extending the impact of opera and bringing it center stage into the life of the community. Each year, through San Francisco Opera Guild's fundraising and education fund, more than 50,000 students in 200 schools throughout Northern California discover the power of arts education to help them find their voice. Karen Kubin is President of San Francisco Opera Guild. To learn more about San Francisco Opera Guild, visit sfoperaguild.com.

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Company Sponsors John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn are proud to support *Mefistofele.* This production is made possible, in part, by Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey, The Thomas Tilton Production Fund, and Thomas F. and Barbara A. Wolfe. Major support for this production also provided by the Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund established by Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem. Nicola Luisotti's appearance made possible by Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem, Chairs, Amici di Nicola of Camerata. Mr. Abdrazakov's, Ms. Racette's, and Mr. Vargas's appearances are made possible by a gift to the Great Singers Fund by Joan and David Traitel.

Yamaha is the official piano of San Francisco Opera. Pianos provided by Music Exchange.

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For further press information or to obtain *Opera Ball* and 2013–14 Season–related photographs, please visit sfopera.com/press or contact:
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