SAN FRANCISCO OPERA CELEBRATES 91ST SEASON OPENING WITH BOITO'S *MEFISTOFELE* CONDUCTED BY NICOLA LUISOTTI SEPTEMBER 6, WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE

OPENING NIGHT FESTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTED BY *OPERA BALL 2013: THE GARDEN OF GOOD AND EVIL* AND *BRAVO! CLUB OPENING NIGHT GALA*

OPENING WEEKEND CONCLUDES WITH ANNUAL FREE OPERA IN THE PARK CONCERT

SAN FRANCISCO (August 27, 2013)—San Francisco Opera celebrates the opening of its 91st Season on Friday, September 6, 2013 with a gala performance of Arrigo Boito's *Mefistofele* conducted by San Francisco Opera Music Director Nicola Luisotti and featuring an illustrious cast, led by Russian bass Ildar Abdrazakov in the title role of Mefistofele, American soprano Patricia Racette as both Margherita and Elena and Mexican tenor Ramón Vargas as Faust. The opening night festivities are highlighted by *Opera Ball 2013: The Garden of Good and Evil*, created by celebrity event designer Colin Cowie, and BRAVO! CLUB's *Opening Night Gala.* Concluding the opening weekend of the 2013–14 Season is one of the Bay Area's most popular musical events—*San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park,* San Francisco Opera's annual free concert in Golden Gate Park on Sunday, September 8.

Arrigo Boito's *Mefistofele* / September 6–October 2

San Francisco Opera's 2013–14 season opens September 6, 2013 with Arrigo Boito's *Mefistofele* (*Mephistopheles*), in one of the most impressive productions ever seen at the War Memorial Opera House. The title role of Mefistofele is sung by Russian bass Ildar Abdrazakov in his stage role debut, soprano Patricia Racette appears as both Margherita 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—now co-owned with the Metropolitan Opera—featuring designs by Michael Levine, is directed by Laurie Feldman.

Opera Ball 2013: The Garden of Good and Evil / Friday, September 6

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 sold-out 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 *Mefistofele*. 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 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.

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 *Mefistofele.* An indulgent dinner created by acclaimed chef Lucas Schoemaker of McCalls Catering and Events follows at 6 p.m. in City Hall, and at 8 p.m. the curtain rises on the gala opening night performance of *Mefistofele* at the War Memorial Opera House. Returning to City Hall following the performance, guests will enjoy 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.

BRAVO! CLUB's _Opening Night Gala_ / Friday, September 6

BRAVO! CLUB, San Francisco Opera's group of young professionals dedicated to building a new audience for opera, presents its 22nd annual opening night gala on Friday, September 6, co-chaired by Sia Charonis and Lauren Groff. BRAVO! CLUB begins the evening at 7 p.m. with a champagne promenade reception on the Outdoor Loggia at the War Memorial Opera House followed by the opening night

performance of Boito's *Mefistofele.* The post-performance festivities continue with dessert, hors d'oeuvres and dancing into the night at Jardinière Restaurant.

***San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park* / Sunday, September 8**

A beloved San Francisco tradition, the annual *San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park* concert will take place on Sunday, September 8 at 1:30 p.m. The celebratory free event features artists from the Company's Fall 2013 Season and the San Francisco Opera Orchestra conducted by Nicola Luisotti. The concert draws thousands of music lovers each year, many of whom enjoy the occasion with elaborate picnics on the lawn. In the event's time-honored finale, the audience joins with the singers in a rousing rendition of the drinking song ("Libiamo nei'lieti calici") from Verdi's *La Traviata*. This concert, held in Sharon Meadow at Golden Gate Park, is free and open to the public.

TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Tickets for the performance of Boito's *Mefistofeles* (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.

The September 8 *San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park* concert is free and open to the public; no tickets required. Visit sfopera.com/park for more information.

Opera Ball 2013: The Garden of Good and Evil is sold-out. For more information, visit sfopera.com/OperaBall2013 or call (415) 565-3204.

Tickets for BRAVO! CLUB'S *Opening Night Gala*, which include performance tickets, are priced from $250 to $425 and may be purchased at sfopera.com/bravo. A BRAVO! CLUB membership fee of $60 is required to attend the *Opening Night Gala*.

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA 91ST SEASON OPENING CELEBRATIONS

OPENING NIGHT CELEBRATIONS – Friday, September 6, 2013

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 *Mefistofele* and further celebration. A highlight of the City's cultural and philanthropic season, *Opera Ball 2013* is created by celebrity event designer Colin Cowie and raises funds to benefit San Francisco Opera and the Opera Guild's education and community programs. Ann Girard and Mai Shiver co-chair *Opera Ball 2013*.

5 p.m. Cocktail reception at San Francisco City Hall
6 p.m. Dinner at San Francisco City Hall
8 p.m. Gala opening-night performance of *Mefistofele* at the War Memorial Opera House
11:30 p.m. *Opera Ball* guests return to San Francisco City Hall for cocktails, desserts and dancing

Opera Ball 2013 is sold-out. For more information, visit sfopera.com/OperaBall2013 or call (415) 565-3204.

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BRAVO! CLUB Opening Night Gala
Join BRAVO! CLUB's young professionals as they kick off the season in style with a champagne pre-performance reception on the outdoor Loggia of the War Memorial Opera House followed by the season-opening performance of *Mefistofele* and post-performance desserts and dancing at Jardinière. Sia Charonis and Lauren Groff co-chair BRAVO! CLUB's Opening Night Gala.

7 p.m. Champagne Promenade reception on the Loggia of the War Memorial Opera House
8 p.m. Gala opening-night performance of *Mefistofele* at the War Memorial Opera House
11:30 p.m. *Opening Night Gala* guests proceed to Jardinière for cocktails, desserts and dancing

For tickets and membership information, visit sfopera.com/bravo.

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SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE PRESENTS SAN FRANCISCO OPERA IN THE PARK
Sunday, September 8, 2013 at 1:30 p.m.
Sharon Meadow, Golden Gate Park

A beloved San Francisco tradition, the free annual *San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park* concert features artists from the San Francisco Opera's Fall 2013 Season and the San Francisco Opera Orchestra conducted by Music Director Nicola Luisotti. This concert, held in Sharon Meadow at Golden Gate Park, is free and open to the public; no tickets required. For more information, visit sfopera.com/park.

MEFISTOFELE by Arrigo Boito
(*MEPHISTOPHELES*)

San Francisco Opera production co-owned with the Metropolitan Opera

September 6 (8 p.m.)**, 11** (7:30 p.m.), **14** (8 p.m.), **17**• (7:30 p.m.), **20** (8 p.m.), **24**• (8 p.m.), **29**• (2 p.m.); **October 2**• (7:30 p.m.), **2013**

Libretto by Arrigo Boito
Approximate running time: 3 hours, 30 minutes with two intermissions
Sung in Italian with English supertitles
First Performance: Milan, March 5, 1868
First SFO Performance: October 1, 1923
Most Recent SFO Performances: November 1994

Cast:
Mefistofele **Ildar Abdrazakov**

Production Team:
Conductor **Nicola Luisotti**

Margherita, Elena	**Patricia Racette**	*Revival Director*	**Laurie Feldman**
Elena	**Marina Harris** (9/14, 9/17, 9/29)	*Production*	**Robert Carsen**
Faust	**Ramón Vargas**	*Designer*	**Michael Levine**
Marta	**Erin Johnson†**	*Lighting Designer*	**Gary Marder**
Wagner	**Chuanyue Wang*†**	*Chorus Director*	**Ian Robertson**
Pantalis	**Renée Rapier†**	*Choreographer*	**Alphonse Poulin**
Nereo	**Chuanyue Wang*†**		

* San Francisco Opera Debut † Current Adler Fellow ● OperaVision Performance

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San Francisco Opera is sponsored, in part, by the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn, Franklin and Catherine Johnson, Mrs. Edmund W. Littlefield, Bernard and Barbro Osher, and Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem. San Francisco Opera is supported, in part, by a grant from Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.

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

Opera in the Park is made possible, in part, by Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey. Additional support is provided by the William and Gretchen Kimball Fund, Kaiser Permanente, and Scharffen Berger Chocolate Maker.

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

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2013–14 Season Sponsor

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