SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA'S *PORGY AND BESS, AIDA, BORIS GODUNOV* AND *LUCREZIA BORGIA* COME TO SUNDANCE KABUKI CINEMAS MARCH AND MAY 2013

New titles in San Francisco Opera's *Grand Opera Cinema Series* in HD, recorded live at the War Memorial Opera House, begin March 5 and 9 with the Gershwins' *Porgy and Bess*

SAN FRANCISCO (February 18, 2013)— San Francisco Opera partners with Sundance Cinemas to present HD screenings of the Company's acclaimed productions of George and Ira Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, Giuseppe Verdi's *Aida*, Modest Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* and Gaetano Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* at the Sundance Kabuki Cinemas in San Francisco. The Tuesday evening (7:15 p.m.) and Saturday morning (10:00 a.m.) screenings begin in March with *Porgy and Bess* and continue in March and May 2013.

These screenings mark the fourth series of San Francisco Opera's popular opera presentations to be shown at the Sundance Kabuki Cinemas as part of the Company's *Grand Opera Cinema Series,* which focuses on distributing San Francisco Opera presentations to arts centers, independent film theaters, universities and other venues in the Western region of the country. The first three series of operas have been presented by theaters in Washington, Oregon, Arizona, Nevada and California. Additionally, the Company's *Grand Opera Cinema Series* productions have been distributed in 14 countries throughout Europe and in Mexico.

The series begins on March 5 and 9 with George and Ira Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, based on the play by Dubose and Dorothy Heyward. A turbulent story of love found and lost, *Porgy and Bess* is a quintessentially American masterpiece highlighted by almost a dozen of Gershwin's most

recognizable melodies, including “Summertime,” “I Got Plenty o’ Nuttin’” and “It Ain’t Necessarily So.” Bass-baritone Eric Owens, who was recently featured on the Metropolitan Opera’s 2013 Grammy Award-winning recording of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, and soprano Laquita Mitchell headline the cast as Porgy and Bess, an unlikely couple who manage to find love amidst the squalor of Catfish Row. The cast also features Lester Lynch as Crown, Karen Slack as Serena, Chauncey Packer as Sportin’ Life and Eric Greene as Jake. Francesca Zambello directs her acclaimed production from 2009 and John DeMain conducts.

On March 26 and 30, the series continues with Giuseppe Verdi’s triumphant Egyptian opera *Aida*, conducted by San Francisco Opera Music Director Nicola Luisotti. A compelling tale of conflicting loyalties and forbidden passions, this spectacular production is designed by renowned fashion designer Zandra Rhodes and directed by Jo Davies. The celebrated cast of principal singers features Italian soprano Micaela Carosi as Aida, a role that she has sung around the world to great acclaim. Verdian mezzo-soprano Dolora Zajick sings Amneris, tenor Marcello Giordani is Radames, baritone Marco Vratogna is Amonasro and baritone Hao Jiang Tian sings the role of Ramfis in this 2010 production.

Mussorgsky’s *Boris Godunov*, starring legendary American bass-baritone Samuel Ramey in the title role, is presented on May 11 and 14. Mussorgsky's masterwork, presented in its original seven-scene version, is a theatrical experience of searing intensity that brings to life the lavish pageantry and political intrigue of czarist Russia in the mid-16th century. Samuel Ramey sings his signature role of Boris Godunov, the Russian ruler haunted by a horrible act he committed years earlier, and he is joined by an internationally renowned cast, including John Uhlenhopp as Prince Shuisky, Vitalij Kowaljow as Pimen, Vsevolod Grivnov as Grigory and Vladimir Ognovenko as Varlaam. Vassily Sinaisky conducts and Julia Pevzner directs this striking 2008 production designed by Göran Wassberg.

The series concludes on May 25 and 28 with Donizetti’s bel canto gem, *Lucrezia Borgia*. Soprano Renée Fleming, one of the most celebrated artists of our time, appears in the title role. In this opera, Borgia, a femme fatale renowned for her ruthless pursuit of power, reveals poignant vulnerability when she comes face to face with her long-lost son. American tenor Michael Fabiano appears as Borgia’s son Gennaro, mezzo-soprano Elizabeth DeShong appears as Maffio Orsini and

Vitalij Kowaljow is Alfonso d'Este. This production, created for Renée Fleming, was designed and is directed by John Pascoe. Italian conductor Riccardo Frizza conducts this 2011 production.

Recorded live in high definition at San Francisco's historic War Memorial Opera House, all shows include English subtitles and a brief intermission with behind the scenes interviews. All performances feature the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and San Francisco Opera Chorus (Ian Robertson, Chorus Director).

San Francisco Opera's education department presents free, informative 25-minute pre-screening lectures prior to each Saturday morning performance. Lectures begin at 9:30 a.m. inside the theater and will be presented at *Porgy and Bess, Aida, Boris Godunov* and *Lucrezia Borgia*.

Tickets for San Francisco Opera's *Grand Opera Cinema Series* at the Sundance Kabuki Cinemas are priced at $11.50 for adults and $10 for seniors plus a $2 amenity fee for the Tuesday evening screenings; and $9.50 for adults and seniors and $9 for children (under 13) plus a $1 amenity fee for the Saturday morning screenings. Tuesday evening screenings are available only for patrons age 21 and over; light food, snacks and alcoholic beverages are available for purchase at the Sundance bistro and bar and may be brought into the theater. Tickets for reserved seats are available via sundancecinemas.com and at the Sundance Kabuki Box Office. For more information about Sundance Kabuki Cinemas, visit sundancecinemas.com or call (415) 346-3243.

For more information about San Francisco Opera's *Grand Opera Cinema Series*, including additional theaters screening the series, and further information and video clips of *Porgy and Bess, Aida, Boris Godunov* and *Lucrezia Borgia*, visit sfopera.com/cinemaseries.

San Francisco Opera launched its digital cinema series in Spring 2008 with its presentation of *La Rondine, Samson and Delilah, Don Giovanni* and *Madama Butterfly* to movie theaters across the country. In Fall 2010, *La Bohème, Tosca*, *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *The Elixir of Love* were added to the series, and in Winter 2011, *The Magic Flute*, *Otello*, *Salome* and *Il Trittico* were also added.

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San Francisco Opera's simulcasts and cinemacasts are made possible through the technology of the Company's Koret-Taube Media Suite, the first permanent HD broadcast-standard video production facility installed in an American opera house. A grant from the Koret Foundation provided lead funding for the Koret-Taube Media Suite, with additional support provided by Tad and Dianne Taube. An anonymous donor committed the remaining required funding.

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA'S *GRAND OPERA CINEMA SERIES* AT THE SUNDANCE KABUKI CINEMAS, MARCH-MAY 2013

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PRE-SCREENING LECTURES: San Francisco Opera presents free, informative 25-minute pre-screening lectures prior to each Saturday morning performance. Lectures begin at 9:30 a.m. inside the theater.

INFORMATION: For more information about Sundance Kabuki Cinemas, visit sundancecinemas.com or call (415) 346-3243. For more information about San Francisco Opera's *Grand Opera Cinema Series* and to view video clips of these operas, visit sfopera.com/cinemaseries.

San Francisco Opera's *Porgy and Bess* in HD

Tuesday, March 5, 2013 at 7:15 p.m.
Saturday, March 9, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.

Sundance Kabuki Cinemas
1881 Post Street, San Francisco

Sung in English with English subtitles

A turbulent story of love found and lost, George and Ira Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, based on the play by Dubose and Dorothy Heyward, is a quintessentially American masterpiece. Bass-baritone Eric Owens and soprano Laquita Mitchell headline the cast as Porgy and Bess alongside Lester Lynch as Crown, Karen Slack as Serena, Chauncey Packer as Sportin' Life and Eric Greene as Jake. Francesca Zambello directs her acclaimed production and John DeMain conducts.
[Recorded live at the War Memorial Opera House, Summer 2009]

San Francisco Opera's *Aida* in HD

Tuesday, March 26, 2013 at 7:15 p.m.
Saturday, March 30, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.

Sundance Kabuki Cinemas
1881 Post Street, San Francisco

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

Giuseppe Verdi's Egyptian masterpiece *Aida* is a compelling tale of conflicting loyalties and forbidden passions. This spectacular production is designed by renowned fashion designer Zandra Rhodes, directed by Jo Davies is conducted by San Francisco Opera Music Director Nicola Luisotti. The cast features Italian soprano Micaela Carosi as Aida, mezzo-soprano Dolora Zajick sings Amneris, tenor Marcello Giordani is Radames, baritone Marco Vratogna is Amonasro and baritone Hao Jiang Tian sings the role of Ramfis. [Recorded live at the War Memorial Opera House, Fall 2010]

San Francisco Opera's *Boris Godunov* in HD

Saturday, May 11, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.
Tuesday, May 14, 2013 at 7:15 p.m.

Sundance Kabuki Cinemas
1881 Post Street, San Francisco

Sung in Russian with English subtitles

Mussorgsky's masterpiece, presented in its original seven-scene version, is a theatrical experience of searing intensity that brings to life the lavish pageantry and political intrigue of czarist Russia in the mid-16th century. Legendary bass-baritone Samuel Ramey sings his signature role of Boris Godunov alongside John Uhlenhopp as Prince Shuisky, Vitalij Kowaljow as Pimen, Vsevolod Grivnov as Grigory and Vladimir Ognovenko as Varlaam. Vassily Sinaisky conducts and Julia Pevzner directs this striking production designed by Göran Wassberg. [Recorded live at the War Memorial Opera House, Fall 2008]

San Francisco Opera's *Lucrezia Borgia* in HD

Saturday, May 25, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.
Tuesday, May 28, 2013 at 7:15 p.m.

Sundance Kabuki Cinemas
1881 Post Street, San Francisco

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

Donizetti's bel canto masterpiece, *Lucrezia Borgia* stars soprano Renée Fleming in the title role. In this opera, Borgia, a femme fatale renowned for her ruthless pursuit of power, reveals poignant vulnerability when she comes face to face with her long-lost son. American tenor Michael Fabiano appears as Gennaro, mezzo-soprano Elizabeth DeShong appears as Maffio Orsini and Vitalij Kowaljow is Alfonso d'Este. This production, created for Renée Fleming, is designed and directed by John Pascoe. Italian conductor Riccardo Frizza conducts. [Recorded live at the War Memorial Opera House, Fall 2011]

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This press release and downloadable photographs of *Porgy and Bess*, *Aida*, *Boris Godunov* and *Lucrezia Borgia* are available at sfopera.com/press.

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