



**SAN FRANCISCO OPERA**

**2007-08 SEASON  
FURTHER PRESS INFORMATION**

For further press information or to obtain 2007-08 Season announcement-related photographs, please visit [www.sfopera.com/press](http://www.sfopera.com/press) or contact:

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## SAN FRANCISCO OPERA 2007-08 SEASON AT A GLANCE

- Eleven productions, ten of which are new to San Francisco Opera
- Presented from September 7, 2007 to July 6, 2008

### San Francisco Opera Commission – *World Premiere*

*Appomattox*

An opera by Philip Glass

Libretto by Christopher Hampton

Music by Philip Glass

### New Production Created by San Francisco Opera

*Tannhäuser*

Graham Vick, director; Paul Brown, designer

### San Francisco Opera Premiere - *New to San Francisco Opera Repertory*

*Ariodante*

Dallas Opera production

### San Francisco Opera Co-Productions

*Das Rheingold*

First installment of the “American” *Ring* cycle

Co-produced with Washington National Opera

*The Rake’s Progress*

Co-produced with Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie (Brussels); Opéra de Lyon; Royal Opera, Covent Garden; and Teatro Real de Madrid

*La Rondine*

Co-produced with Théâtre du Capitole de Toulouse and Royal Opera, Covent Garden

### West Coast Premiere

*The Little Prince*

Houston Grand Opera

Co-Produced with Cal Performances in Berkeley

### Additional Productions New to San Francisco Opera

*Lucia di Lammermoor*

Metropolitan Opera

*The Magic Flute*

Originally created by Houston Grand Opera

*Macbeth*

Originally created by Zurich Opera

## San Francisco Opera Debuts

### Singers

Veronica Cangemi**	Dalinda, <i>Ariodante</i>
Richard Croft	Lurcanio, <i>Ariodante</i>
Natalie Dessay	Title role of <i>Lucia di Lammermoor</i>
Doina Dimitriu	Lady Macbeth, <i>Macbeth</i>
Giuseppe Filianoti	Edgardo, <i>Lucia di Lammermoor</i>
Clifton Forbis	Samson, <i>Samson and Delilah</i>
Angela Gheorghiu	Magda de Civry, <i>La Rondine</i>
Günther Groissböck	Fafner, <i>Das Rheingold</i>
Petra Lang	Venus, <i>Tannhäuser</i>
Christopher Maltman	Papageno, <i>The Magic Flute</i>
Stefan Margita	Loge, <i>Das Rheingold</i> ; Walther, <i>Tannhäuser</i>
Erika Miklósa	Queen of the Night, <i>The Magic Flute</i>
Ewa Podles	Polinesso, <i>Ariodante</i>
Gerard Powers	Prunier, <i>La Rondine</i>
James Rutherford	Wolfram, <i>Tannhäuser</i>
Petra Maria Schnitzer	Elisabeth, <i>Tannhäuser</i>
Andrew Shore	Ulysses S. Grant, <i>Appomattox</i>
Peter Seiffert	Title role of <i>Tannhäuser</i>
Katharine Tier‡	Third Lady, <i>The Magic Flute</i>
Ji Young Yang‡	A Young Shepherd, <i>Tannhäuser</i>
Georg Zeppenfeld	Sarastro, <i>The Magic Flute</i>

### Conductors

Dennis Russell Davies	<i>Appomattox</i>
Jean-Yves Ossonce	<i>Lucia di Lammermoor</i>
Massimo Zanetti	<i>Macbeth</i>

### Directors

Robert Lepage	<i>The Rake's Progress</i>
Graham Vick	<i>Tannhäuser</i>
George C. Wolfe	<i>Appomattox</i>
Mary Zimmerman	<i>Lucia di Lammermoor</i>

\*\* U.S. Opera debut ‡ Current Adler Fellow

## Season Artists to Date

### Sopranos:

Laura Aikin  
Veronica Cangemi<sup>.\*</sup>  
Anna Christy  
Natalie Dessay\*  
Doina Dimitriu\*  
Rebecca Evans  
Angela Gheorghiu\*  
Rhoslyn Jones †<sup>♫</sup>  
Dina Kuznetsova  
Petra Lang\*  
Erika Miklósa\*  
Melody Moore †<sup>♫</sup>  
Petra Maria Schnitzer\*  
Ruth Ann Swenson †<sup>♫</sup>  
Elza van den Heever †<sup>♫</sup>  
Ji Young Yang †<sup>♫</sup>

### Mezzo-Sopranos:

Olga Borodina  
Catherine Cook †<sup>♫</sup>  
Kendall Gladen †<sup>♫</sup>  
Susan Graham<sup>♫</sup>  
Jill Grove<sup>♫</sup>  
Denyce Graves  
Jennifer Larmore  
Katharine Tier †<sup>♫</sup>

### Contraltos:

Ewa Podleś\*

### Tenors:

Piotr Beczala  
William Burden<sup>♫</sup>  
David Cangelosi  
Richard Croft\*  
Misha Didyk  
Giuseppe Filianoti\*  
Clifton Forbis\*  
Stefan Margita\*  
Matthew O'Neill †<sup>♫</sup>  
Gerard Powers\*  
Peter Seiffert\*  
Noah Stewart †<sup>♫</sup>  
Carlo Ventre

### Baritones:

Dwayne Croft  
Mark Delavan †<sup>♫</sup>  
Richard Paul Fink<sup>♫</sup>  
Thomas Hampson<sup>♫</sup>  
Juha Uusitalo

### Bass- Baritones:

Jeremy Galyon †<sup>♫</sup>  
Christopher Maltman\*  
James Morris  
James Rutherford\*  
Andrew Shore\*  
Andrea Silvestrelli

### Basses:

Oren Gradus<sup>♫</sup>  
Günther Groissböck\*  
Eric Halfvarson  
Kevin Langan<sup>♫</sup>  
Eric Owens  
Gregory Reinhart  
Georg Zeppenfeld\*

\* San Francisco Opera debut

\*\* U.S. Opera debut

† Former Adler Fellow

‡ Current Adler Fellow

♫ Merola Opera Program graduate

## Conductors

Donald Runnicles

*Tannhäuser*  
*The Magic Flute*  
*The Rake's Progress*  
*Das Rheingold*

Dennis Russell Davies\*  
Ion Marin  
Jean-Yves Ossonce\*  
Patrick Summers<sup>♫</sup>  
Massimo Zanetti\*

*Appomattox*  
*La Rondine*  
*Lucia di Lammermoor*  
*Samson and Delilah; Ariodante*  
*Macbeth*

\* San Francisco Opera debut












♫ Merola Opera Program graduate

## Directors

Francesca Zambello	<i>Das Rheingold</i>
Sandra Bernhard	<i>Samson and Delilah</i>
John Copley	<i>Ariodante</i>
Robert Lepage*	<i>The Rake's Progress</i>
David Pountney	<i>Macbeth</i>
Graham Vick*	<i>Tannhäuser</i>
George C. Wolfe*	<i>Appomattox</i>
Mary Zimmerman*	<i>Lucia di Lammermoor</i>





\* San Francisco Opera debut

## Merola Opera Program and Adler Fellowship Program Artists








Ruth Ann Swenson †  
Catherine Cook †  
Susan Graham   
Jill Grove   
William Burden   
Mark Delavan †  
Richard Paul Fink   
Thomas Hampson   
Oren Gradus   
Kevin Langan   
Patrick Summers 

### Current Adler Fellows (2007)

#### *Incoming:*

Heidi Melton   
Ji Young Yang   
Katharine Tier   
Noah Stewart 

#### *Returning:*

Rhoslyn Jones   
Melody Moore   
Elza van den Heever   
Kendall Gladen   
Matthew O'Neill   
Jeremy Galyon   
Matthew Piatt 

† Former Adler Fellow

‡ Current Adler Fellow

 Merola Opera Program graduate

## Biographies

### DAVID GOCKLEY

David Gockley became San Francisco Opera's sixth general director on January 1, 2006, following in the footsteps of General Directors Gaetano Merola (1923-1953), Kurt Herbert Adler (1953-1981), Terence A. McEwen (1982-1988), Lotfi Mansouri (1988-2001), and Pamela Rosenberg (2001-2005). Considered one of the major innovators in American opera, Gockley came to San Francisco from Houston Grand Opera (HGO), the organization that he led for more than three decades. Gockley transformed HGO from a small regional company into one of the leading opera companies in the United States by a bold mixture of traditional and adventurous repertoire, the application of modern technology to reach new audiences, artistic excellence, and solid financial governance. A self-described "progressive traditionalist," Gockley is passionately committed to the premise that opera is a living art form that speaks to a variety of audiences.

Gockley is recognized for being a risk-taker, for mounting dynamic theatrical productions and exploring daring artistic ideas, and for balancing new, progressive productions and traditional operatic repertoire. Under his leadership, San Francisco Opera (SFO) is currently preparing to present two world premieres. In the fall of 2007, SFO will present *Appomattox*, commissioned from composer Philip Glass and librettist Christopher Hampton. In the fall of 2008, the Company unveils composer Stewart Wallace and Bay Area novelist Amy Tan's *The Bonesetter's Daughter*, based on her best-selling novel of the same name. SFO will also present a new production of Wagner's *Ring* cycle (a co-production with Washington National Opera) starting with *Das Rheingold* in 2008 and ending with a full presentation of the cycle in the 2010-2011 season. San Francisco Opera Artistic Adviser Francesca Zambello directs this "American" *Ring* and Music Director Donald Runnicles will conduct.

David Gockley is committed to broadening and diversifying audiences for San Francisco Opera, and during his first months as general director he took opera to the center of the community with a free outdoor simulcast—the first in San Francisco Opera's history and based on an innovation he pioneered at Houston Grand Opera—of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* in May 2006. The state-of-the-art live feed of the opera from the War Memorial Opera House to a giant outdoor screen in San Francisco's Civic Center Plaza drew over 8,000 diverse music lovers and opera newcomers. Gockley's innovative approach was implemented again in October 2006 when San Francisco Opera reached nearly 15,000 people simultaneously in two different venues with a simulcast of Verdi's *Rigoletto* to Civic Center Plaza and Stanford University's Frost Amphitheater.

Gockley joined Houston Grand Opera in 1970 as business manager, armed with both a musical background and a business degree from Columbia University. Two years later, at age 29, he became general director. Under his leadership, HGO received a Tony, two Emmy, and two Grammy awards; established the Houston Grand Opera Orchestra; and became America's leading commissioner and producer of new works. By 2006, HGO had 35 world premieres to its credit, including Thomas Pasatieri's *The Seagull* (1974); Carlisle Floyd's *Bilby's Doll* (1976) and *Cold Sassy Tree* (2000); Leonard Bernstein's *A Quiet Place* (1983); Mark Adamo's *Little Women* (1998) and *Lysistrata* (2005); John Adams' *Nixon in China* (1987); Sir Michael Tippett's *New Year* (1989); Meredith Monk's

*ATLAS* (1991); Stewart Wallace's *Harvey Milk* (1995); Daniel Catán's *Florencia en el Amazonas* (1996) and *Salsipuedes* (2004); Rachel Portman's *The Little Prince* (2003); and Jake Heggie's *The End of the Affair* (2004). Among the six American premieres presented during Gockley's tenure was the 1984 premiere of Philip Glass's *Akhnaten*. In 1975, HGO presented the first fully-staged production of Scott Joplin's *Treemonisha*. The next year, HGO restored George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* to the American operatic repertory with a landmark production which went on to win Tony and Grammy awards.

Gockley initiated international and national tours, taking HGO to Broadway, Europe, Japan, and Egypt. In 1996, *Porgy and Bess* marked HGO's debut at Milan's La Scala and Paris's Opera Bastille. Virgil Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts*, directed by Robert Wilson, was featured at the inaugural Lincoln Center Festival '96 and the 50th Edinburgh International Festival. In 1988, HGO's world premiere production of *Nixon in China* also traveled to Edinburgh. Through Gockley's efforts, HGO began annual radio broadcasts on National Public Radio, the European Broadcast Union, and Australian Broadcasting Corporation. A number of HGO's productions under Gockley, including *Willie Stark*, *Treemonisha*, *Little Women*, and the Emmy award-winning *Nixon in China*, have been televised on PBS/WNET's *Great Performances* series. HGO's numerous recordings include *Treemonisha* (Deutsche Grammophon), *Porgy and Bess* (RCA), *Cold Sassy Tree* (Albany), *Florencia en el Amazonas* (Albany), Tod Machover's *Resurrection* (Albany), *Little Women* (Ondine/Koch), Bright Sheng's *Song of Majnun* (Delos), *ATLAS* (ECM), and the Grammy award-winning *Nixon in China* (Nonesuch).

Gockley's pioneering new innovations at HGO included the free outdoor "Plazacasts" of mainstage opera productions; the Multimedia Modular Stage, a stage system utilizing huge projection screens to provide a sense of intimacy in large outdoor settings (similar to the stages used by rock bands, the design was the first of its kind for opera production); and OperaVision, a system of plasma and projection screens located in the upper levels of the theater to provide audiences with close-up shots and supertitles. In 1977, Gockley co-founded the Houston Grand Opera Studio to develop the talents of young singers with a potential for major careers in opera and musical theater. The program has helped to nurture the careers of Joyce DiDonato, Denyce Graves, Eric Halfvarson, Susanne Mentzer, and many others. One of the crowning achievements of Gockley's tenure was the 1987 opening of Wortham Theater Center, HGO's home. The \$72 million performing arts center was built entirely with private funds.

David Gockley was born in Philadelphia in 1943 and grew up in Wayne, Pennsylvania. His father was an athletic coach and inspired his early love for sports. From his mother he inherited a passion for music. He pursued vocal studies at Boston's New England Conservatory and then studied conducting and composition at Brown University, where he received a bachelor's degree in 1965. In 1970, he received 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." Gockley's alma mater, 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. Gockley has served as president of OPERA America. He is the father of two daughters, Meredith and Lauren, and a son, Adam.

## DONALD RUNNICLES

Donald Runnicles has served as music director and principal conductor of San Francisco Opera since 1992. During the 2007-08 season, he leads the Company in four of eleven productions: *Tannhäuser*, *The Magic Flute*, *The Rake's Progress*, and *Das Rheingold*. Last summer was Maestro Runnicles's inaugural season as music director of the Grand Teton Music Festival; he also serves as principal conductor of New York's Orchestra of St. Luke's and is principal guest conductor of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. As a guest conductor, Runnicles appears frequently at the BBC Proms and the Edinburgh Festival, and has built strong relationships as a guest artist with the Bayreuth, Salzburg, and Glyndebourne festivals as well as the Vienna State Opera. He conducts two *Ring* cycles this season at the Deutsche Oper Berlin as well as *Parsifal* with the Vienna State Opera, and he will lead concerts with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra.

Maestro Runnicles has led San Francisco Opera in more than fifty-five productions, including the world premieres of John Adams's *Doctor Atomic* and Conrad Susa's *The Dangerous Liaisons*; the North American premiere of Olivier Messiaen's *Saint François d'Assise*; and the San Francisco premiere of Stewart Wallace's *Harvey Milk*. Born in Scotland, Runnicles studied at St. John's College, Cambridge and the University of Edinburgh. He began his career as a *répétiteur* in Mannheim, becoming general music director at the Freiburg State Theater in 1989. The conductor made his North American debut in 1988 conducting Berg's *Lulu* at the Metropolitan Opera.

Throughout his career, Donald Runnicles has conducted many of the world's finest orchestras and opera companies, including the Berlin Philharmonic, Vienna Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, BBC Symphony, the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and La Scala, among others. His broad discography includes vocal and symphonic works ranging from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Wagner's *Ring* Cycle, to Mozart's Requiem. Earlier this season Runnicles celebrated the release of two new recordings: Wagner's complete *Tristan und Isolde* on the Warner Classics label and a compilation of Strauss and Wagner, with Christine Brewer and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, from Telarc. Maestro Runnicles holds an honorary degree from Edinburgh University and was named Officer of the British Empire in 2004.

## FRANCESCA ZAMBELLO

An internationally recognized director of opera and theater, Francesca Zambello was appointed artistic adviser for San Francisco Opera in 2006. She began her long association with the Company in 1983 as assistant stage director for *Ariadne auf Naxos* and has since been involved in fourteen productions here, including *Boris Godunov*, *Anna Bolena*, *La Traviata*, Poulenc's *La Voix Humaine*, and *Don Giovanni*, among others.

Zambello's American debut took place at Houston Grand Opera with a production of *Fidelio* in 1984. She made her debut in Europe at the Teatro la Fenice in Venice with *Beatrice di Tenda* in 1987 and has since staged new productions at major theaters and opera houses in Europe and the United States. Collaborating with outstanding artists and promoting emerging talent, she takes a special interest in new music theater works, innovative productions, and in producing theater and opera for wider audiences.

Francesca Zambello was recently awarded the title of *Chevalier des Arts et des*

*Lettres* by the French government for her contribution to French culture and the Russian Federation's medal for service to culture. Other honors for her work include three Olivier Awards from the London Society of Theaters and two Evening Standard Awards for "Best Musical" and "Best Opera." She has also received an Evening Standard Award for "Best Company Achievement". The French *Grand Prix des Critiques* was awarded to her twice for her work at the Paris Opera. Other awards include "Best Production" in Japan, the Palme d'Or in Germany, the Golden Mask in Russia, and the Helpmann Award in Australia.

Opera works in recent seasons have included the world premiere of *An American Tragedy*, *Cyrano*, and *Les Troyens* for the Metropolitan Opera; *Porgy and Bess* and *Die Walküre* for Washington National Opera; *La Bohème* at the Royal Albert Hall; *The Fiery Angel* for the Bolshoi Theatre; *Don Giovanni* at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; and *Boris Godunov*, *War and Peace*, *Billy Budd*, and *William Tell* at the Paris Opera.

Recent theater projects have included *Tibet through the Red Box*, a new play by David Henry Hwang for the Seattle Children's Theatre; *The Little Prince* with Oscar-winning composer Rachel Portman; and *Napoleon* in London's West End. Other recent works include a film of Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* for BBC Television; a new film for the BBC, Sony, and PBS of *The Little Prince*; and *West Side Story* for the floating stage at the Bregenz Festival. Upcoming works in theatre include *Showboat* in London at the Royal Albert Hall and a new musical, *Rebecca*, for Vienna's Raimund Theater.

She is developing two new musicals: one based on *The Little House on the Prairie* with Rachel Portman and Beth Henley, and the other entitled *Death Takes a Holiday* with Maury Yeston and Tom Meehan. Further opera works include Wagner's *Ring* cycle for Washington National Opera and San Francisco Opera; *Carmen* for the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; and *Salome* for Lyric Opera of Chicago.

An American who grew up in Europe, Zambello speaks French, Italian, German, and Russian. She attended Moscow University in 1976 and graduated *cum laude* from Colgate University in 1978. She began her career as an assistant director to the late Jean-Pierre Ponnelle. From 1984-1991 she was the artistic director of the Skylight Music Theater. She has been a guest professor at Harvard University and University of California, Berkeley. Francesca Zambello lives in New York and London.

### **PHILIP GLASS**

San Francisco Opera presents the world premiere of composer Philip Glass's *Appomattox* during the 2007-08 season. His award-winning *Satyagraha* had its San Francisco Opera premiere during the 1989 summer season. It was Glass's boundary-pushing opera *Einstein on the Beach* that had its American premiere at the Metropolitan Opera in 1976, which established his name internationally. His opera *The Voyage*, commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera in 1992, has recently become available on CD from Orange Mountain Music. Other recent releases include the children's opera *The Witches of Venice* with libretto by Beni Montresor (Orange Mountain Music); the soundtrack to the film *Notes on a Scandal* (Rounder Records); and the DVD recording of *The Illusionist*.

The composer's most recent stage works have been *Life: A Journey Through Time*, commissioned by the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music and the dance

piece *Amoveo, New Dance*, commissioned by Paris Opera and featuring a new orchestration of music from *Einstein on the Beach*.

Born in Baltimore, Glass studied music at the University of Chicago and the Juilliard School before moving to Paris to work with legendary pedagogue Nadia Boulanger. While in Paris he collaborated with sitar master Ravi Shankar on the film score *Chappaqua* and worked with tabla player Alla Rakha—classical Indian music subsequently had a profound effect on his developing compositional style, which embraced repetitive structures.

Glass has collaborated with a wide array of artists over the course of his career, including Woody Allen, David Bowie, David Byrne, Alan Ginsberg, Twyla Tharp, Yo-Yo Ma, and Doris Lessing, among others. Upcoming premieres include *Book of Longing*, a new work based on the poetry of Leonard Cohen, at the Luminato Festival in Toronto. In April 2007, English National Opera mounts a new production of *Satyagraha*, which will also be presented at the Met during the 2007-08 season.

### **ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO OPERA**

San Francisco Opera is the second largest opera company in North America. Gaetano 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 was in charge from 1953 through 1981. Legendary for both their conducting and managerial skills, the two leaders established a formidable institution that is internationally recognized as one of the top opera companies in the world—heralded for its first-rate productions and roster of international opera stars. Originally presented over two weeks, the Company's season now contains approximately seventy-five performances of ten operas between September and July.

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. His partner in artistic programming and musical issues is Music Director and Principal Conductor Donald Runnicles, appointed in 1992. During his tenure, Runnicles has championed new repertory ranging from the world premieres of John Adams's *Doctor Atomic* (2005) to Conrad Susa's *The Dangerous Liaisons* (1994), in addition to the spectacular American stage premiere of Olivier Messiaen's *Saint François d'Assise* (2002). After seventeen years with the San Francisco Opera, Maestro Runnicles will step down as music director in the summer of 2009. He will continue his relationship with the Company, conducting a new production of *Peter Grimes* and the "American" *Ring* Cycle, which continues into the 2010-11 season. Nicola Luisotti, a rising star in the opera world, will succeed Donald Runnicles as music director in the fall of 2009.

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.