



**SAN FRANCISCO OPERA'S 2007-08 SEASON OPENS WITH  
CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS' *SAMSON AND DELILAH*,  
STARRING OLGA BORODINA AND CLIFTON FORBIS,  
SEPTEMBER 7 – 28 AT THE WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE**

**SEPTEMBER 28 PERFORMANCE SIMULCAST LIVE TO AT&T BALLPARK**

SAN FRANCISCO (September 5, 2007) – San Francisco Opera opens its 85th season on Friday, September 7 at 7 p.m. with Camille Saint-Saens' lavish *Samson and Delilah*. The production stars mezzo-soprano Olga Borodina, who reprises her seductive 2001 performance as Delilah and tenor Clifton Forbis as Samson in his San Francisco Opera debut. This sweeping biblical epic runs for eight performances through September 28 at the War Memorial Opera House.

*Samson and Delilah* comes out of the opera house and into the ballpark when San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Giants partner to present a free live simulcast from the War Memorial Opera House to AT&T Park on Friday, September 28 at 8:00 p.m.

Led by conductor Patrick Summers, the cast also features bass-baritone Juha Uusitalo (The High Priest of Dagon) and Merola Opera Program alumnus Oren Gradus (An Old Hebrew). Nicolas Joël's opulent production is directed by Sandra Bernhard with sets by Douglas Schmidt, costumes by Carrie Robbins, and original lighting designs by Thomas Munn.

Sung in French with English supertitles, performances of *Samson and Delilah* in the War Memorial Opera House will last approximately three hours, and are scheduled for September 7 (7 p.m.), September 11 (7:30 p.m.), September 13 (7:30 p.m.), September 16 (2 p.m.), September 19 (7:30 p.m.), September 22 (7:30 p.m.), September 25 (8 p.m.), and September 28 (8 p.m.). Starting on September 11, all performances will feature an Opera Talk by Ron Gallman fifty-five minutes prior to curtain. Opera Talks are presented free of charge to patrons holding tickets to the corresponding performance.

## **Opera at the Ballpark – Friday, September 28**

The Company's mission of bringing opera into the community continues on September 28 at 8:00 p.m. when San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Giants partner to bring opera to the ballpark with a free live simulcast of Saint-Saëns's *Samson and Delilah* to AT&T Park in San Francisco. The performance will be transmitted in high definition live from the War Memorial Opera House stage to AT&T Park's Mitsubishi Electric Diamond Vision scoreboard. Baseball and opera fans will have a chance to experience this FREE event with seating both on the field and in the stands. By logging on to [www.sfopera.com/giants](http://www.sfopera.com/giants), fans will be able to register for tickets to the simulcast (and early entrance to the ballpark), and will be automatically entered in a drawing for two Box Seats to San Francisco Opera's production of *Madama Butterfly* this December, and two Box Seats at AT&T Park for a 2008 San Francisco Giants game.

San Francisco Opera simulcasts are made possible by the Company's Koret-Taube Media Suite, a high-definition video production facility installed on the fifth floor of the War Memorial Opera House. The media suite is the first permanent high-definition (HD) broadcast-standard 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. Opera at the Ballpark is sponsored, in part, by Franklin Templeton Investments, Charles Schwab & Company, Inc., Music Performance Fund and Film Funds, and KDFC Radio. San Francisco Chronicle/SFGate.com and KPIX are pleased to partner with San Francisco Opera on all of its 2007-08 Season Community Events.

## **Tickets and Information – War Memorial Opera House Performances**

Tickets for *Samson and Delilah* are priced from \$15-\$275 and may be purchased online at [www.sfopera.com](http://www.sfopera.com) or in person at the Box Office [War Memorial Opera House, 301 Van Ness Avenue (at Grove Street), or by phone at (415) 864-3330]. Box Office hours are Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Standing Room tickets go on sale at 10 a.m. on the day of each performance; tickets are \$10 each, cash only.

The War Memorial Opera House is located at 301 Van Ness Avenue. Patrons are encouraged to use public transportation to attend San Francisco Opera performances. The War Memorial Opera House is within walking distance of the Civic Center BART station and near numerous bus lines, including the 5, 21, 47, 49, and the F Market Street. For further public transportation information, visit [www.bart.gov](http://www.bart.gov) and [www.sfmuni.com](http://www.sfmuni.com).

Company Sponsor Mrs. Edmund W. Littlefield is proud to support this production. This production is made possible, in part, by The Bernard Osher Endowment Fund, Mr. and Mrs. David T. Traitel and Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey. KPIX is the official television sponsor of San Francisco Opera's 2007-08 Season.

**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

**SAMSON AND DELILAH** by Camille Saint-Saëns  
**San Francisco Opera Production**

**War Memorial Opera House**  
**September 7** (7 pm), **11<sup>sq</sup>** (7:30 pm), **13<sup>sq</sup>** (7:30 pm),  
**16<sup>sq</sup>** (2 pm), **19** (7:30 pm), **22** (7:30 pm), **25** (8 pm), **28**  
 (8 pm), **2007**

Libretto by Ferdinand Lemaire  
 First performance: Weimar, December 2, 1877  
 Approximate running time: 3 Hours  
 Sung in French with English supertitles

**Cast:**

<i>Samson</i>	<b>Clifton Forbis*</b>
<i>Delilah</i>	<b>Olga Borodina</b>
<i>The High Priest of Dagon</i>	<b>Juha Uusitalo</b>
<i>An Old Hebrew</i>	<b>Oren Gradus</b>
<i>Abimélech</i>	<b>Eric Jordan*</b>
<i>A Philistine Messenger</i>	<b>Noah Stewart</b>
<i>First Philistine</i>	<b>Richard Walker</b>
<i>Second Philistine</i>	<b>Jere Torkelsen</b>

**Production Team:**

<i>Conductor</i>	<b>Patrick Summers</b>
<i>Director</i>	<b>Sandra Bernhard</b>
<i>Production</i>	<b>Nicolas Joël</b>
<i>Set Designer</i>	<b>Douglas W. Schmidt</b>
<i>Original Lighting Design</i>	<b>Thomas J. Munn</b>
<i>Costume Designer</i>	<b>Carrie Robbins</b>
<i>Chorus Director</i>	<b>Ian Robertson</b>
<i>Choreographer</i>	<b>Kenneth von Heidecke</b>

\* San Francisco Opera Debut

<sup>sq</sup> OperaVision Performance. San Francisco Opera introduced OperaVision last summer as an innovative way to give balcony audiences a better view of the stage. OperaVision screens, hung from the ceiling of the balcony section, provide close-up and mid-range ensemble shots in high-definition video. Supertitles are shown at the bottom of each screen.

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**OPERA AT THE BALLPARK**  
**Free live simulcast of *Samson and Delilah***

**AT&T Park, 24 Willie Mays Plaza, San Francisco**  
**Friday, September 28**  
**Pre-show begins at 7:30 pm; Opera begins at 8 pm**

San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Giants partner to bring opera to the ballpark with a FREE live simulcast of Saint-Saëns's biblical epic *Samson and Delilah*. Opera and baseball fans can experience this FREE event with seating both on the field and in the stands.

Only registered ticket holders will be allowed early entrance for best seating, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Field seating is limited and will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Giants Security will issue wristbands to ticket holders for field seating beginning at 5 p.m. Those who have not pre-registered and do not have pre-printed tickets will be allowed to enter AT&T Park beginning at 7 p.m. For complete details and to register for tickets, visit [www.sfopera.com/giants](http://www.sfopera.com/giants).

AT&T Park Concessions will be open for the simulcast. No lawn chairs will be allowed for field seating, and no glass containers, alcohol, metal utensils, hard-sided coolers or picnic baskets will be permitted. AT&T Park in San Francisco is easily accessible by public transportation. For directions and public transit information, please visit <http://sanfrancisco.giants.mlb.com>.

### About Samson and Delilah

First performed at San Francisco Opera on October 7, 1943, *Samson and Delilah* tells the well-known biblical story of the Hebrew strongman Samson, a leader among his people struggling to free themselves from the persecution of the Philistines. After Samson kills the Philistine commander Abimélech, the High Priest of Dagon hatches a plan with the Philistine temptress Delilah to seduce Samson and learn the secret of his strength. Samson reveals to her that his strength lies in his hair. Delilah drugs the hero and cuts his long locks. Samson, blind and imprisoned in Gaza, is challenged to demonstrate the power of the Hebrew God, and prays for the return of his strength. Chained to the temple pillars, he pulls on his shackles to crush himself and his enemies.

### About the Artists

Mezzo-soprano **OLGA BORODINA** (*Delilah*) reprises a role she sang at San Francisco Opera in 2001, and which she has performed around the world at the Metropolitan Opera, Washington National Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Salzburg Festival, La Scala, Théâtre de la Monnaie, as well as Covent Garden and the Concertgebouw and Barbican Theaters. The Kirov Opera artist made her U.S. debut in San Francisco in 1991 in an *Opera in the Park* concert, returning for the proper debut in the title role of *La Cenerentola* in 1995. Subsequent role debuts here include Lyubasha (*The Tsar's Bride*) and the title role of *Carmen*. Most recently, she opened our 2005-2006 season in the title role of Isabella in *L'Italiana in Algeri*. Other major engagements include the Salzburg Festival (Marina Mnishek in *Boris Godunov*, Eboli in *Don Carlos*); La Scala (the Principessa in *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Delilah*, *Carmen*); Paris Opera (*Carmen*, Eboli, Marina); and the Metropolitan Opera (Marina, *Delilah*, *Carmen*, Isabella, Amneris in *Aida*, and recently Laura in *La Gioconda*). The mezzo-soprano's recordings include *Khovanshchina*, *The Queen of Spades*, *War and Peace*, *Prince Igor*, *Boris Godunov*, *Eugene Onegin*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Don Carlos*, *Samson et Dalila*, Rachmaninov's *Vespers*, *Pulcinella*, and Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette*. She has also released the solo recordings *Tchaikovsky Songs* (voted "Best Debut Recording of 1994" at the Cannes Classical Music Awards), *Songs of Desire*, *Bolero*, and an album of arias with the Welsh National Opera Orchestra. Recent releases include the Verdi Requiem under Valery Gergiev, *Aida* with the Vienna Philharmonic, and a compilation of her recordings called *A Portrait of Olga Borodina* on Philips. This season she returns to the Met as Amneris and *Carmen*.

**CLIFTON FORBIS** (*Samson*) makes his San Francisco Opera debut with this production. He has sung Samson at the Metropolitan Opera, the San Diego Opera, Cincinnati Opera, in Bilbao, and the Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa. Recent engagements include Tristan (*Tristan und Isolde*) at Paris Opera; the Drum Major (*Wozzeck*) at the Met; and the title role of *Otello* at Tokyo Opera Nomori, Saxon State Opera in Dresden, and Monte Carlo Opera. Forbis's extensive Met credits include Lensky (*Eugene Onegin*), Andrei Khovansky (*Khovanshchina*), Don José (*Carmen*), and the title role of *Oedipus Rex*. He has sung Tristan with Los Angeles Opera and the Grand Théâtre de Genève; Siegmund (*Die Walküre*) with Vienna State Opera, the Dallas Opera, and the Canadian Opera Company; *Otello* at La Scala, Vienna State Opera, and in concert performances with the Chicago Symphony at the Ravinia Festival; Cavaradossi (*Tosca*) with Seattle Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Marseille Opera, and Opera Pacific; Boris (*Kát'a Kabanová*) at Venice's Teatro la Fenice and the Dallas Opera; and Florestan (*Fidelio*) with the Dallas Symphony, the Canadian Opera Company, and the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels. Forbis maintains a close relationship with Canadian Opera Company, where he has performed Florestan, Lensky, Boris, and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Other Canadian engagements

include appearances as Laca (*Jenůfa*) and Cavaradossi with Vancouver Opera, Cavaradossi with Calgary Opera, and Don José with Pacific Opera Victoria in British Columbia. A frequent soloist with many orchestras, his concert performances have included Haydn's *Creation*, Handel's *Messiah*, and Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*. Forbis is a graduate of the Juilliard Opera Center and Southern Methodist University.

Bass-baritone **JUHA UUSITALO** (*The High Priest of Dagon*) made his U.S. debut at San Francisco Opera in the title role of the 2004 production of *The Flying Dutchman* and returned in 2005 to sing his first Don Pizarro in *Fidelio*. Born in Finland, Uusitalo started his musical career as a flutist working with many of Finland's major orchestras, including the orchestra of the Finnish National Opera, before his debut in title role of Verdi's *Falstaff* with the same company in 1997. Uusitalo was immediately welcomed back to that company for productions of *The Flying Dutchman* and Walton's *The Bear*. He has been heard as Wagner's Dutchman at the Savonlinna Opera Festival, La Scala, Vienna State Opera, in Dresden, and at the New National Theatre in Tokyo. Other credits include Scarpia (*Tosca*) at Finnish National Opera and Don Pizarro in the inaugural production of *Fidelio* at the Palacio de las Artes in Valencia. He made his role debut as Verdi's Macbeth at the Savonlinna Opera Festival and appeared as Wotan in *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* in the first installments of a new *Ring* cycle co-produced by the Palacio de las Artes and the Maggio Musicale Festival in Florence. Upcoming engagements include Wotan (*Die Walküre*) at Vienna State Opera; Kurwenal (*Tristan und Isolde*) at Los Angeles Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago; Don Magnifico (*La Cenerentola*) at Helsinki Opera; the Wanderer (*Siegfried*) at the Palacio de las Artes and Vienna State Opera; and Jochanaan (*Salome*) and the Dutchman at the Metropolitan Opera.

Houston Grand Opera Music Director **PATRICK SUMMERS** (*Conductor*) has led a vast repertory for the San Francisco Opera in his long association with the Company, including last summer's production of *Iphigénie en Tauride*; *A Streetcar Named Desire*, which had its premiere at San Francisco Opera in 1998; and the world premiere of Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* in 2000. Summers has twice received the Merola Opera Program's Otto Guth Award and was named its "Distinguished Alumnus" in 2001. The maestro made his acclaimed Houston Grand Opera debut in 1998 conducting a new production of *La Traviata* with Patricia Racette. He has conducted an array of productions at the Metropolitan Opera, including *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Così fan tutte*, *I Puritani*, and *Rodelinda*. Other highlights include *Nabucco* and *Turandot* with Opera Australia, and *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* at Cincinnati Opera. Summers's recent productions at Houston include *Madama Butterfly* with Patricia Racette, *Idomeneo* with Susan Graham, *Il Trovatore* with Marcello Giordani, *Falstaff* with Bryn Terfel, *Giulio Cesare* with David Daniels, and Jake Heggie's *The End of the Affair*. The Indiana University graduate was named Stolichnaya's "Artist of the Year" in 1998. Upcoming engagements include *La Cenerentola* at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona as well as *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Billy Budd*, and *La Bohème* at Houston Grand Opera. He returns to San Francisco Opera next summer for *Ariodante*.

Renowned stage director **SANDRA BERNHARD** began her long association with the Company in 1990 as the assistant stage director for *Rigoletto* and has been involved in more than fifty productions here. Her San Francisco Opera directing credits include *Lucio Silla* (1991), *Ermione* (1992), *La Bohème* (1993, 2004), *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1994, 1999), *Madama Butterfly* (1994, 1999), *Carmen* (1998), *L'Elisir d'Amore* (2000), *Tosca* (2001, 2004), *Samson and Delilah* (2001), and *Der Rosenkavalier* (2007). She has directed *Samson and Delilah* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Florida Grand Opera, and Dayton Opera, as well as *La Bohème* at Washington National Opera, Cincinnati Opera, and Opera Pacific; *The Mother of Us All* at Baltimore Opera; *Don Giovanni*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and *La*

*Bohème* at Portland Opera; *La Bohème*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and *Street Scene* at Pittsburgh Opera; *The Barber of Seville* and *La Traviata* at Utah Opera; *Der Rosenkavalier* at Minnesota Opera; *The Barber of Seville*, *Rigoletto*, *Don Pasquale*, and *Un Ballo in Maschera* at Florida Grand Opera; *Aida* with Opera Omaha and Austin Lyric Opera; *La Bohème* at Opera Pacific; *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at Fort Worth Opera; and *Little Women* at Dayton Opera. Upcoming engagements include *Aida* at Portland Opera and *La Traviata* at Cincinnati Opera. Bernhard held the J. Ralph Corbett Chair of Opera at College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati from 2003–2007 and is currently the director of HGOco at Houston Grand Opera.

Recently named director of Paris Opera, **NICOLAS JOËL** (*Production*) made his San Francisco Opera debut in 1980 with *Samson and Delilah*, which was revived here in 1983 and 2001. The stage director's relationship with the Company began in 1977 when he served as assistant to the late Jean-Pierre Ponnelle on that season's production of *Turandot*. Subsequent Company engagements included the 1979 mounting of *La Voix Humaine*, *Ernani* in 1984, as well as new productions of *Parsifal* in 1988 and *Faust* in 1995. Career highlights include *Ring* cycles in Lyon, Wiesbaden, and Strasbourg; *Aida* at Lyric Opera of Chicago and Vienna State Opera; a new staging of *Faust* in Toulouse; *Dido and Aeneas* at Paris Opera; *La Rondine* in his debut at Milan's La Scala; *Lohengrin* in Copenhagen; and *Andrea Chénier* for his Metropolitan Opera debut. Other operatic credits include *La Wally* in Düsseldorf, *La Forza del Destino* and *Aida* in Zurich, *Faust* in Vienna, and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Madrid. Joël is a two-time recipient of the *Prix de la Critique Dramatique et Musicale* and was named a *Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* by the French government. Future projects include *La Rondine* with San Francisco Opera and *La Forza del Destino* at the Teatro Comunale in Florence.



2007-08 Season Sponsor

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