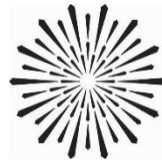


SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA CENTER



MEROLA
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MEDIA ADVISORY

**SOPRANO PATRICIA WESTLEY REPLACES MARY EVELYN HANGLEY IN
APRIL 24 SCHWABACHER RECITAL**

**Final Recital of the 2019 Schwabacher Recital Series Features Pianist Martin Katz
with 2019 Merola Opera Program Artist Patricia Westley and 2019 Adler Fellows
Ashley Dixon, Zhengyi Bai and Christian Pursell**

Tickets available at (415) 864-3330 and sfopera.com

SAN FRANCISCO (April 15, 2019) — Soprano Patricia Westley will replace Mary Evelyn Hanglely in the final recital of the 2019 Schwabacher Recital Series, presented by the Merola Opera Program and San Francisco Opera Center. Soprano and first-year Adler Fellow Mary Evelyn Hanglely has withdrawn from the April 24 recital for personal reasons.

Patricia Westley joins mezzo-soprano Ashley Dixon, tenor Zhengyi Bai and bass-baritone Christian Pursell in a program led by Martin Katz (the “dean of collaborative pianists” *Los Angeles Times*) featuring Samuel Barber’s *Hermit Songs* and selections from Hugo Wolf’s *Mörike Lieder* and Johannes Brahms’ *Deutsche Volkslieder*. One of the world’s busiest collaborators, Martin Katz has appeared and recorded regularly with celebrated vocal soloists such as Cecilia Bartoli, Lawrence Brownlee, José Carreras, Marilyn Horne, Karita Mattila, Samuel Ramey and Frederica von Stade. A pivotal figure in the training of countless singers and pianists for the past three decades, he has taught at the University of Michigan School of Music where he chairs the program in collaborative piano.

New Zealand–American soprano Patricia Westley will return to the Merola Opera Program in the Summer of 2019 to sing the role of Selena in the world premiere of *If I Were You* by Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer. Other 2019 engagements include the roles of Louis XV Chair, The Shepherdess, The Bat and The Screech Owl in Ravel’s *L’Enfant et les Sortilèges* with Pacific Symphony and soloist in Villa-Lobos’ *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* with San José Chamber Orchestra. Recent performances have included Brahms’ *Ein Deutsches Requiem* with the Oakland Symphony, Elisa in Mozart’s *Il Re Pastore*, Musetta in Puccini’s *La Bohème* and Adele in Strauss’ *Die Fledermaus*. Westley has completed an artist

residency with Shreveport Opera and the 2018 Merola Opera Program, won an Encouragement Award from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and is an alumna of the University of Oklahoma and Carnegie Mellon University.

A 2018 Grand Finals winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Ashley Dixon (Merola 2015/2017; second-year Adler Fellow) first appeared with San Francisco Opera last fall as Annina in an excerpt from *La Traviata* at *Plácido Domingo in Concert*, and made her Company debut later in the season as an Angel First Class in Jake Heggie's *It's a Wonderful Life*. Zhengyi Bai (Merola 2018; first-year Adler Fellow), who entered college as a piano major in China before discovering his true instrument, won the Los Angeles District of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and appeared as Alessandro in Merola Opera Program's production of Mozart's *Il Re Pastore*. Christian Pursell (Merola 2017; second-year Adler Fellow) appeared in four Company productions last year, including Sir Walter Raleigh in *Roberto Devereux*, and this month sang Doeg/Samuel in Handel's *Saul* with Nicholas McGegan and the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra at various venues in the Bay Area and at Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles.

The Schwabacher Recital Series showcases the exemplary young artists who have participated in the prestigious training programs of San Francisco Opera Center and the Merola Opera Program. The four-recital series offers music lovers an opportunity to hear opera's next generation of stars in the intimate Dianne and Tad Taube Atrium Theater in San Francisco. The series is endowed in perpetuity by the generosity of the late James Schwabacher and sponsored in part by the Jack H. Lund Charitable Trust, Chris and Jennifer Brahm, Jayne and Peter Davis and Ms. Jean Schuler. A celebrated Bay Area singer, recitalist, scholar and teacher, James Schwabacher was a co-founder of the Merola Opera Program.

For more information on the San Francisco Opera Center, Adler Fellowship and Merola Opera Program, visit sfopera.com and merola.org.

Tickets & Information

All recitals take place at the Dianne and Tad Taube Atrium Theater, a state-of-the-art performance venue utilizing the Constellation® acoustic system from Berkeley-based Meyer Sound. The Taube Atrium Theater is part of San Francisco Opera's Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera, located on the fourth floor of the Veterans Building (401 Van Ness Avenue) in San Francisco.

Tickets (general seating) are \$30 and can be purchased at the San Francisco Opera Box Office (301 Van Ness Avenue) in person, by phone at (415) 864-3330 and online at sfopera.com/srs. Student rush tickets, subject to availability, are available for \$15 at the Taube Atrium Theater (401 Van Ness Avenue) 30 minutes prior to each recital (limit of two tickets per person; valid ID is required). Artists, programs, schedules and ticket prices are subject to change.

Yamaha is the official piano of San Francisco Opera. Pianos generously provided by Piedmont Piano Company.

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2019 SCHWABACHER RECITAL SERIES
Presented by Merola Opera Program and San Francisco Opera Center

Wednesday, April 24 at 7:30 p.m.

Taube Atrium Theater, located on the fourth floor of the Veterans Building, 401 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco

Martin Katz, piano
Patricia Westley, soprano
Ashley Dixon, mezzo-soprano
Zhengyi Bai, tenor
Christian Pursell, bass-baritone

PROGRAM:

Hugo Wolf / Selections from *Mörike Lieder*
Samuel Barber / *Hermit Songs*
Johannes Brahms / Selections from *Deutsche Volkslieder*

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This press release and photographs of the artists featured in the 2019 Schwabacher Recital Series are available at sfoopera.com/press.

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