



SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA

**SAN FRANCISCO OPERA OPENS 96TH SEASON WITH
DOUBLE BILL OF PIETRO MASCAGNI'S *CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA* AND
RUGGERO LEONCAVALLO'S *PAGLIACCI*, SEPTEMBER 7–30**

**José Cura's Production Unites the Frequently-Paired Italian Works as a
Continuous Story Set in Buenos Aires**

**Italian Conductor Daniele Callegari Makes Company Debut Leading a
Cast of Ekaterina Semenchuk, Lianna Haroutounian, Roberto Aronica,
Marco Berti, David Pershall and Dimitri Platanias**



A scene from José Cura's production of Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* [left]; Roberto Aronica as Turiddu [center]; Lianna Haroutounian as Nedda in *Pagliacci* [right]. ©Cory Weaver/San Francisco Opera

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT (415) 864-3330 AND SFOPERA.COM

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (September 6, 2018) — San Francisco Opera's 2018–19 Season opens Friday, September 7 with the double bill of Pietro Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Ruggero Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* (or *Cav/Pag*), and opening night galas hosted by San Francisco Opera Guild and the BRAVO! CLUB. Italian conductor **Daniele Callegari** makes his Company debut leading an international cast in **José Cura's** production, staged in revival by fellow Argentine **Jose Maria Condemi**. Opening weekend festivities inaugurating the Company's 96th season continue Saturday, September 8, with Gaetano Donizetti's *Roberto Devereux* and on Sunday, September 9, with *San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park*, the annual free concert in Golden Gate Park celebrating the new opera season.

Mascagni's 1890 one-act opera *Cavalleria Rusticana* (*Rustic Chivalry*) and Leoncavallo's 1892 *Pagliacci* (*Clowns*) depict gritty tales of small-town love affairs, jealousy and retribution that shake their

communities. Long paired for their powerful music and dramatic onstage situations, the short Italian works include some of opera's most famous melodies including the Intermezzo in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Canio the clown's tragic soliloquy "Vesti la giubba" in *Pagliacci*.

Last performed by San Francisco Opera in 2003, the famous double bill returns in the production by acclaimed Argentine tenor José Cura who is also known for his work as a conductor and, in recent years, opera director and designer. Cura's staging unites the two operas into a continuous narrative set in La Boca, the working-class barrio in Buenos Aires once settled by Italian immigrants and is today known for its colorful row houses and tango performances.

"With both operas sharing the same set," Cura explains, "the challenge was to establish a socially structured town with its priests, mayor, bartender, barber, grocer, children, etc. So, we see Nedda and the clowns from *Pagliacci* posting their company poster at the beginning of *Cavalleria*, as well as Mamma Lucia still managing her tavern, assisted by her waiter, Silvio. But my favorite moment remains the ending: hearing Lucia shouting 'La commedia è finite.' It is not just the voice of an old woman, but the voice of Earth, the voice of creation, shouting 'Basta!' ('Enough!') to the entire world."

After thrilling performances at San Francisco Opera in Verdi's *Luisa Miller* and *Aida*, Russian mezzo-soprano **Ekaterina Semenchuk** returns as Santuzza, the abandoned heroine of *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Her errant lover, Turiddu, is performed by Italian tenor **Roberto Aronica**. Acclaimed Greek baritone **Dimitri Platanias** makes his United States debut in the dual leading roles of Alfio in *Cav* and Tonio in *Pag*. Mezzo-soprano **Jill Grove** portrays Mamma Lucia and mezzo-soprano **Laura Krumm** is Lola.

The cast of *Pagliacci* features Italian tenor **Marco Berti** as Canio, the actor whose personal travails have tragic reverberations on the stage. Admired for her recent performances of the leading roles in Puccini's *Tosca* and *Madama Butterfly* on the War Memorial Opera House stage, Armenian soprano **Lianna Haroutounian** adds Nedda to her repertory. American baritone **David Pershall** sings the role of Nedda's lover Silvio and New Zealand tenor and second-year San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow Amitai Pati is Beppe. Callegari leads the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus, the latter of which was prepared by Company Chorus Director **Ian Robertson**.

The production, which premiered at Opéra Royal de Wallonie-Liège in 2012 and was revived at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, is remounted by Condemi and features the work of original director and set designer Cura, costume designer **Fernand Ruiz**, lighting designer **Olivier Wéry**, revival lighting designer **Justin Partier** and choreography by San Francisco Opera Dance Master **Lawrence Pech**.

Sung in Italian with English supertitles, the seven performances of the *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* double bill are scheduled for September 7 (8 p.m.), September 12 (7:30 p.m.), September 16 (2 p.m.), September 19 (7:30 p.m.), September 22 (7:30 p.m.), September 28 (7:30 p.m.) and September 30 (2 p.m.), 2018.

TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Tickets for the double bill of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* are priced from \$26 to \$398. A \$2 facility fee is included in all Balcony sections. All other sections include a \$3 per ticket facility fee. For tickets, visit sfopera.com, call (415) 864-3330 or visit the San Francisco Opera Box Office at 301 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco. Box Office hours: Monday 10 a.m.—5 p.m.; Tuesday through Saturday 10 a.m.—6 p.m. Standing Room tickets go on sale at 10 a.m. on the morning of each performance. Standing room tickets are \$10 each, cash only, and limited to two tickets per person. Casting, schedules and ticket prices are subject to change

Each presentation of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* at the War Memorial Opera House, except for the September 7 opener, features a Pre-Opera Talk beginning 55 minutes prior to curtain. Pre-Opera Talks are open to tickets holders for the corresponding performance. Each *Cav/Pag* Pre-Opera Talk will be presented by music educator Robert Hartwell.

San Francisco Chronicle presents Opera in the Park is a free, family-friendly outdoor concert; no tickets are required. Food and beverages will be available for sale at the event. Parking is extremely limited; taking public transit is highly recommended. For more information, visit sfopera.com/park.

OperaVision screens, suspended from the ceiling of the balcony section at select performances, provide close-up and mid-range ensemble shots in high-definition video; English subtitles appear at the bottom of each screen. OperaVision is made possible by the Koret-Taube Media Suite. Visit sfopera.com for OperaVision dates.

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. San Francisco Opera is pleased to offer complimentary shuttle service to and from Civic Center BART station for all Fall 2018 mainstage performances. Shuttle service is offered 90 minutes before and 45 minutes following every performance. The War Memorial Opera House is within walking distance of the Civic Center BART Station and near numerous bus lines, including 5, 21, 47, 49 and the F Market Street. For further public transportation information, visit bart.gov and sfmta.com.

Van Ness Construction: Due to construction for the SFMTA Van Ness Improvement Project, vehicles are unable to pick-up and drop-off at 301 Van Ness Avenue, and bus lines 47, 49 and 90 may experience travel delays. Please use the white loading zone at 450 Franklin Street (behind the Opera House) for rideshare pick-up and drop-off. We suggest planning extra time.

###

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA AND PAGLIACCI CASTING AND CALENDAR

*Company Debut **American Debut ♪Role Debut †Current Adler Fellow •OperaVision
All performances take place at the War Memorial Opera House.

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA by Pietro Mascagni / **PAGLIACCI** by Ruggero Leoncavallo
Production New to San Francisco Opera

September 7 (8 p.m.), **12*** (7:30 p.m.), **16*** (2 p.m.), **19*** (7:30 p.m.), **22** (7:30 p.m.), **28** (7:30 p.m.),
30 (2 p.m.), **2018**

Opéra Royal de Wallonie-Liège production
Sung in Italian with English supertitles
Approximate running time: 3 hours including one intermission

Cavalleria Rusticana

Libretto by Guido Menasci and Giovanni Targioni-Tozzetti; based on a story and play by Giovanni Verga
First performance: Rome; May 17, 1890
First SFO performance: September 24, 1927
Most recent SFO performance: 2003–04 Season

Pagliacci

Libretto by Ruggero Leoncavallo
First performance: Milan; May 21, 1892
First SFO performance: October 6, 1923
Most recent SFO performance: 2003–04 Season

***Cavalleria Rusticana* Cast:**

<i>Turiddu</i>	Roberto Aronica ♪
<i>Santuzza</i>	Ekaterina Semenchuk
<i>Alfio</i>	Dimitri Platanias **
<i>Lola</i>	Laura Krumm ♪
<i>Mamma Lucia</i>	Jill Grove ♪
<i>Solo Dancers</i>	Alexandra FitzGibbon* , Jekyns Peláez
<i>Mascagni</i>	David Whatley*
<i>Arguing Couple</i>	Buffy Baggott, Alan Cochran

***Pagliacci* Cast:**

<i>Canio</i>	Marco Berti
<i>Nedda</i>	Lianna Haroutounian ♪
<i>Tonio/Leoncavallo</i>	Dimitri Platanias **
<i>Silvio</i>	David Pershall ♪
<i>Beppe</i>	Amitai Pati †♪
<i>Citizen</i>	William O'Neill
<i>Mayor</i>	Chester Pidduck
<i>Paperboy</i>	Sebastian Vera Cuevas

***Cavalleria Rusticana* / *Pagliacci* Creative Team:**

<i>Conductor</i>	Daniele Callegari*
<i>Production</i>	José Cura*
<i>Revival Director</i>	Jose Maria Condemi

Set Designer
Costume Designer
Lighting Designer
Revival Lighting Designer
Choreographer
Chorus Director

José Cura*
Fernand Ruiz*
Olivier Wéry*
Justin Partier*
Lawrence Pech
Ian Robertson

San Francisco Opera Orchestra, San Francisco Opera Chorus and San Francisco Opera Dance Corps

San Francisco Opera is sponsored, in part, by The Dolby Family, Bertie Bialek Elliott, Ann and Gordon Getty, John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn, Burgess and Elizabeth Jamieson, Franklin and Catherine Johnson, Edmund W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund, Steven M. Menzies, Bernard and Barbro Osher, Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem, Dianne and Tad Taube, Phyllis C. Wattis Endowment Funds, Diane B. Wilsey and Barbara A. Wolfe. San Francisco Opera is supported, in part by a grant from Grants for the Arts.

Wells Fargo is the Season Sponsor of San Francisco Opera.

OperaVision, high-definition projection screens featured in the upper Balcony level, is made possible by the Koret/Taube Media Suite.

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

Cavalleria Rusticana / *Pagliacci* are made possible, in part, by Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey. Additional support is provided by John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn; the Edmund W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund; Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem, through the Conductors Fund and the Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund; and Joan & David Traitel, through the Great Singers Fund.



2018–19 Season Sponsor



High resolution downloadable photographs of *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Pagliacci* and artist headshots are available at sfopera.com/press. For cast biographies, visit sfopera.com.

For further press information, contact San Francisco Opera Communications:

Jon Finck (415) 565-6472 / jfinck@sfopera.com

Julia Inouye (415) 565-6430 / jinouye@sfopera.com

Jeffery McMillan (415) 565-6451 / jmcmillan@sfopera.com

Teresa Concepcion (415) 565-6470 / tconcepcion@sfopera.com