



SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

NORTH STAGE DOOR PODCAST DELVES INTO MOZART, DA PONTE AND SAN FRANCISCO OPERA'S NEW MOZART-DA PONTE TRILOGY

New Episode Released Today / Available at sfopera.com/northstagedoor



War Memorial Opera House North Stage Door (Photo: John Boatwright); The Company's Mozart-Da Ponte Trilogy—set in an American house across a 300-year timespan—launched in 2019 with *The Marriage of Figaro* (*Le Nozze di Figaro*) set in revolutionary America and starring Jeanine De Bique (Susanna), Michael Sumuel (Figaro) and Nicole Heaston (Countess Almaviva) (Photo: Cory Weaver); *Cosi fan tutte* premieres in November (set design Erhard Rom)

San Francisco, CA (July 20, 2021) — Lennon and McCartney. Kander and Ebb. Mozart and Da Ponte. San Francisco Opera's *North Stage Door* podcast takes listeners backstage to examine the dynamic 18th-century duo of composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte. Members of the cast and creative team behind the Company's new Mozart–Da Ponte trilogy and special guest, author Daniel Handler, explore how this creative partnership continues to move and inspire us today in Episode 2 of *North Stage Door*, now available for free at sfopera.com/northstagedoor, as well as Apple Podcasts, Spotify and wherever you get your podcasts.

North Stage Door host Chris Largent takes us on our Episode 2 journey:

- *The Marriage of Figaro* (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), *Cosi fan tutte* and *Don Giovanni* are three of opera's most well-known works. San Francisco Opera's new production of *The*

Marriage of Figaro premiered in 2019, and despite his familiarity with this opera, the production and its casting of three of the lead roles left a profound impact on Company Music Librarian and North Stage Door producer Michael Bragg, who shares his story along with two of the opera's cast members—soprano Nicole Heaston (Countess Almaviva) and bass-baritone Michael Sumuel (Figaro)—and San Francisco Opera's Director of Diversity, Equity and Community Charles Mc Neal.

- Mozart and Da Ponte never intended for these three operas to become a trilogy. So, where did this idea come from? General Director Matthew Shilvock and Michael Cavanagh, director of the Company's new Mozart-Da Ponte Trilogy—set in an American house across a 300-year timespan, and continuing this season with the premieres of his new productions of *Così fan tutte* (Nov/Dec 2021) and *Don Giovanni* (June/July 2022)—explore the origin with North Stage Door's Jeremy Patfield.
- San Francisco Opera Assistant Stage Manager and *North Stage Door* producer Rachel Garoon has a *Così*-inspired confession ... and gets through it with the help of Dr. Kristi Brown-Montesano, chair of Music History at the Colburn Conservatory of Music and author of *Understanding the Women of Mozart's Operas*, stage director Shawna Lucey and marriage and family therapist Kathleen Schiltz.
- Did you know that Mozart was one of many composers who borrowed music from *other* operas for his *own* shows? San Francisco Opera Public Relations Director Jeffery McMillan takes us on a musical quotation treasure hunt, from Mozart to Louis Armstrong and the Grateful Dead.
- How would *you* have written the end of *Don Giovanni*? Bay Area-native Daniel Handler—author of seven novels, including *Why We Broke Up*, *We Are Pirates*, *All the Dirty Parts* and, most recently, *Bottle Grove*; and who, under the pen name Lemony Snicket, is also responsible for the thirteen-volume *A Series of Unfortunate Events*—talks to *North Stage Door* executive producer Molly McBride about writing, music, opera and his relationship with all three.

San Francisco Opera's *North Stage Door* podcast takes listeners into the swirl of creativity, stagecraft and performance at San Francisco Opera. Named for the artist and staff entrance into the War Memorial Opera House, this audio storytelling series takes listeners backstage into the creative environment and complex inner working of the Company via lively stories, true confessions and insightful interviews, opening a window into the

complex inner workings of this vibrant company and the many aspects necessary to make a rich, multi-faceted art form come to life.

Episode 1 of *North Stage Door*, released in April, features an inside look at *The Barber of Seville* and the Company's COVID-era return to live performance with a new production of Gioachino Rossini's enduring masterpiece this past spring at the Marin Center drive-in. The episode's voices include the Company's Figaro for the *Barber* performances, Lucas Meachem, beloved soprano Patricia Racette, Academy Award-winning director and Pixar Chief Creative Officer Pete Docter, Chairman of the Chuck Jones Center for Creativity Craig Kausen and members of the creative and production teams behind the Company's new *Barber of Seville*. To access this episode, and all of San Francisco Opera's free digital programming, visit sfopera.com/online.

North Stage Door is a production of San Francisco Opera.

Hosted by San Francisco Opera Associate Technical Director Chris Largent.

Production Team for North Stage Door: Katherine Baltrush-Little, Michael Bragg, Chris Davis, Jodi Gage, Jeffery McMillan, Jeremy Patfield, Barbara Rominski, Troy Smith, Celine Strouts and Kali Wilson.

The podcast was developed with help from Marisa Brink and Trey Costerisan.

Sound Designer and Audio Engineer: Tod Nixon.

Coordinating Producer: Rachel Garoon.

Special thanks to music staff member and pianist Robert Mollicone and Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra.

Consulting Producer: Elena Park/Lumahai Productions.

Executive Producers: Molly McBride and San Francisco Opera Managing Director:

Production Jennifer Good.

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PRESS PHOTOS: High-resolution, downloadable photographs for *North Stage Door* are available at pressphotos.sfopera.com.

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