



SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

JANUARY 2021 FREE OPERA STREAMS INCLUDE:

Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet* January 16–17

Saint-Saëns' *Samson and Delilah* January 23–24

Verdi's *La Traviata* January 30–31

DEPARTMENT OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND COMMUNITY OFFERS
INTERACTIVE TALKS ON COMPOSERS IN JANUARY AND FREE FAMILY
WORKSHOPS: *WINTER IN OPERA LAND*, DECEMBER 23, 27, 29

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (December 16, 2020; [updated January 11, 2021](#)) — Full-length free opera streams continue in January with three titles that were simulcast previously from the War Memorial Opera House to the stadium of the San Francisco Giants. From January 16–17 Charles Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*, based on Shakespeare's tragic love story, highlights the electrifying role debuts of Pene Pati and Nadine Sierra as the young lovers. The following weekend (January 23–24), the Company will offer Camille Saint-Saëns' most popular opera, *Samson and Delilah*, starring Clifton Forbis and Olga Borodina. On January 30–31 Giuseppe Verdi's *La Traviata* features Nicole Cabell portraying the titular celebrated courtesan opposite Stephen Costello as her love interest, Alfredo. Before year's end, the Company's Department of Diversity, Equity and Community (DEC) will offer family workshops free of charge during December and inaugurate the new year with a series of talks with contemporary composers in January as part of the *Opera Aficionado* series.

OPERA IS ON FREE OPERA STREAMS

Free streams are viewable on demand with registration at sfopera.com, beginning at 10 am (Pacific) on the first streaming date through 11:59 pm the following day

ROMEO AND JULIET, JANUARY 16–17



Scenes from *Romeo and Juliet* (2019). Photos: Cory Weaver/San Francisco Opera

The 2019 presentation of Charles Gounod's 1867 French opera *Roméo et Juliette* (*Romeo and Juliet*), a work first performed by the Company during its inaugural season in 1923, showcases the role debuts of Samoan-born New Zealand tenor Pene Pati as Romeo and American soprano Nadine Sierra as Juliet. The *San Francisco Chronicle* praises Pati for his “gleaming, sensuous stream of sound” and “magical, indescribable charisma.” The cast also includes Lucas Meachem as Mercutio, James Creswell as Friar Lawrence and Timothy Mix as Count Capulet. The Teatro Carlo Felice and Opéra de Monte-Carlo co-production is conceived by Opéra Monte Carlo Director Jean-Louis Grinda with staging assistance by Vanessa d'Ayral de Serignac, sets by Eric Chevalier, costumes by Carola Volles and lighting by Roberto Venturi. French-Canadian conductor Yves Abel leads the San Francisco Opera Orchestra in an opera full of romantic duets and exciting musical moments, notably Juliet's challenging, rarely performed Act IV Potion Aria, “Amour, ranime mon courage.” San Francisco Opera Chorus Director Ian Robertson prepares the San Francisco Opera Chorus for the masked ball and tense moments between the Capulets and Montagues. *Romeo and Juliet* is performed in French with English subtitles and has an approximate running time of 2 hours and 25 minutes.

SAMSON AND DELILAH, JANUARY 23–24



Scenes from *Samson and Delilah* (2007). Photos: Terrence McCarthy/San Francisco Opera

Director Sandra Bernhard stages Nicolas Joël's opulent San Francisco Opera production of Camille Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila* (*Samson and Delilah*), featuring set designs of Biblical Gaza by Douglas Schmidt, colorful costumes by Carrie Robbins and dramatic lighting by Thomas J. Munn. The 1877 French grand opera is led by tenor Clifton Forbis and the "thrilling" (*The Mercury News*) mezzo-soprano Olga Borodina in the title roles. Juha Uusitalo portrays the High Priest of Dagon, Eric Jordan is Abimelech and Oren Gradus is an Old Hebrew. Maestro Patrick Summers conducts the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus in this sumptuous work filled with large-scale ensembles. This 2007 presentation was the first free simulcast by the Company to the home of the Giants, with approximately 15,000 people in attendance. *Samson and Delilah* is performed in French with English subtitles and has an approximate running time of 2 hours.

LA TRAVIATA, JANUARY 30–31



Scenes from *La Traviata* (2014). Photos: Cory Weaver/San Francisco Opera

The lavish 2014 San Francisco Opera presentation of Giuseppe Verdi's *La Traviata* is the vision of English director John Copley with revival staging by Laurie Feldman. Leading the cast is Nicole Cabell, winner of the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, who takes on the role of the courtesan Violetta Valéry, one of the most well-known characters in the soprano repertoire. Cabell is paired with Richard Tucker Award-winning tenor Stephen Costello as Alfredo Germont. The cast also includes Vladimir Stoyanova as Alfredo's protective father, Giorgio Germont, Daniel Montenegro as Gastone, Dale Travis as Baron Douphol, Hadleigh Adams as Marquis d'Obigny, Andrew Craig Brown as Doctor Grenvil and Zanda Svède as Flora Bervoix. The creative team behind the production are set designer John Conklin, costume designer David Walker, lighting designer Gary Marder and choreographer Yaelisa. Music director Nicola Luisotti conducts the San Francisco Opera Orchestra in a "frequently revelatory" (*San Francisco Classical Voice*) interpretation of Verdi's beloved 1853 score, and Ian Robertson prepares the chorus for the lively party scenes. Note: This cast of *La Traviata* is an alternate cast from the one that performed in the July 5, 2014 ballpark simulcast. *La Traviata* is performed in Italian with English subtitles and has an approximate running time of 2 hours and 5 minutes.

Free streams are viewable on demand with registration at sfopera.com, beginning at 10 am (Pacific) on the first streaming date through 11:59 pm the following day.

Current San Francisco Opera subscribers and members (donors of \$75 and up) retain access to the streamed events and opera titles after their window of public access. For more information, visit sfopera.com, and follow San Francisco Opera on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [Spotify](#). *Opera is ON* is made possible by an OPERA America Innovation Grant, supported by the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation.

OPERA AFICIONADO: COMPOSERS SPOTLIGHT

San Francisco Opera's Department of Diversity, Equity and Community continues its weekly live interactive lecture series, *Opera Aficionado*. The January discussions offer a chance for people who are passionate about opera to talk directly with contemporary composers about their work. Each 75-minute conversation gives music lovers around the world a front-row seat to scholarly talks, allowing attendees to dialogue with fellow opera lovers, experts and special guests. Each month is focused on a concept or theme. For tickets and more information, visit sfopera.com/aficionado

OPERA AFICIONADO — JANUARY: COMPOSERS (programs subject to change)



Byron Au Young, David Conte, Dr. Anne K. Hege

- Sunday, January 17, 1 pm: Dr. Clifford "Kip" Cranna with composer David Conte: *So You Want to Write an Opera?—A Conversation with Opera Composer and Teacher David Conte*

Composing an opera . . . the task is just as daunting as it sounds! But how *does* one go about writing an opera? Join San Francisco Opera Dramaturge Emeritus Kip Cranna as

we seek to answer this question with noted San Francisco-based composer and professor David Conte. Hear about David's own journey as an opera composer, the important mentorship he received along the way and the new generation of composers he has nurtured as Chair of the Composition Department at San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

- Sunday, January 24, 1 pm: Composer Byron Au Young: *Songs for the Revolution*
- Sunday, January 31, 1 pm: Composer Dr. Anne K. Hege: *Merging Boundaries—Opera in a Digital World*

This talk invites you to explore the future of opera where instruments are designed using video game controllers; dancers morph into the orchestra; and the boundaries between sight, sound, scenery and story are merged. Beginning with a short overview of the history of technology and electronics in opera, Dr. Anne K. Hege will introduce exciting new adventures in contemporary opera including an in-depth discussion of her journey creating a new opera for laptop orchestra and live vocalists in collaboration with the Stanford Laptop Orchestra.

TICKETS: Each virtual lecture is \$20 and holds a maximum capacity of 20 attendees. A limited number of discounted tickets are available upon request for individuals in need. Tickets are available until noon on the day of each event at sfopera.com/aficionado.

FREE FAMILY WORKSHOPS: *WINTER IN OPERA LAND* December 23, 27, 29

On December 23, 27 and 29 San Francisco Opera's Department of Diversity, Equity and Community will offer three free family workshops, designed for families with young children, in a series called *The Adventures of Opera Bear: Winter in Opera Land*. Each unique 40-minute session includes singing, dancing and learning about the residents of Opera Land, including Bearitone the Opera Bear. Recommended for children in grades Pre-K to 3.

- Wednesday, December 23, 11 am: Opera Bear's Holiday Party: Join Bearitone the Opera Bear and his friends Foxy Tenor and Alto Owl as they share songs, games and stories from cultures around the world.

- Sunday, December 27, 11 am: Singalong & Storytime: In this workshop with Mr. Cole and his friend Bearitone the Opera Bear, children will have fun with rhythm, learn two songs and dance their way to Opera Land to hear a story about Bearitone's latest adventure.
- Tuesday, December 29, 11 am: Dance Along with Opera Bear: In this end-of-year workshop, Bearitone the Opera Bear and Mr. Cole will explore fun and exciting dance-tunes from Opera Land.

TICKETS: Registration for the free workshops opens at 8 am on Friday, December 18 at sfopera.com/winter-program. Capacity is limited to 20 households per workshop. Priority access will be given to the clients of San Francisco Opera community partner Compass Family Services.

San Francisco Opera is sponsored, in part, by The Dolby Family, Carol and Dixon Doll, Bertie Bialek Elliott, Keith and Priscilla Geeslin, 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

Yamaha is the official piano of the San Francisco Opera.

OFFICIAL WINE SPONSOR



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High-resolution, downloadable photographs of opera productions and DEC educational events are available at sfopera.com/press.

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