



SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

***San Francisco Chronicle* Presents *Opera in the Park* Caps Opening Weekend of San Francisco Opera's 97th Season**

**Free event On Sunday, September 8, to feature 2019–20 Season Artists and
San Francisco Opera Orchestra**



(Opera in the Park 2018; Photo: ©Drew Altizer Photography/San Francisco Opera)

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (August 30, 2019; updated September 3) — San Francisco Opera and *San Francisco Chronicle* present the latest edition of the annual *Opera in the Park* concert at 1:30 pm on Sunday, September 8, 2019.

The free concert, held in celebration of San Francisco Opera's 97th season, showcases the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and artists from upcoming productions. Company General Director Matthew Shilvock will serve as emcee.

Opera in the Park bookends an action-packed weekend for San Francisco Opera, which opens its season with Charles Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet* and its annual *Opera Ball* and BRAVO! CLUB Gala on Friday, September 6, followed by the opening night of Benjamin Britten's *Billy Budd* on Saturday, September 7.

As a preview for the fall season, *Opera in the Park* spotlights the artists headlining these productions.

Representing *Romeo and Juliet* are tenor Pene Pati, fresh from his role debut as Romeo; baritone Lucas Meachem who plays the fiery Mercutio; and soprano Amina Edris. Pati and Edris will embody the title roles of *Romeo and Juliet* on October 1, a rare instance when a husband-wife duo will perform opposite each other in the title roles.

Joining the concert from the cast of *Billy Budd* are baritone John Chest, having recently made his San Francisco Opera debut in the title role; bass-baritone Christian Van Horn, who plays the morally corrupt master-at-arms Claggart; and baritone Edward Nelson, an alumnus of San Francisco Opera's Adler Fellowship program.

The *Opera in the Park* concert also highlights performances from second-year Adler Fellows soprano Natalie Image, mezzo-soprano Ashley Dixon, tenor Christopher Oglesby and countertenor Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen.

Leading the San Francisco Opera Orchestra will be a trio of conductors: *Romeo and Juliet's* Yves Abel, *Billy Budd's* Lawrence Renes and Robert Mollicone, a former Adler Fellow who conducted the popular music trio Sol3 Mio in their 2017 concert with the San Francisco Opera Orchestra.

Together, they will navigate through a wide range of works by composers including Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, George Frideric Handel, Charles Gounod, Giuseppe Verdi, Engelbert Humperdinck, John Adams, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and more. The concert will also feature pop and Broadway favorites.

Opera in the Park has been a Bay Area tradition for 46 years, furthering San Francisco Opera's mission of sharing opera with the community. Since its founding in 1971 under former general director Kurt Herbert Adler, *Opera in the Park* has offered free performances from some of opera's legendary figures, such as tenor Luciano Pavarotti and mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne.

The event takes place on the slopes of Robin Williams Meadow, formerly known as Sharon Meadow, in Golden Gate Park. In the past, *Opera in the Park* has drawn upwards of 15,000 concertgoers, some of whom arrive as early as 6 am to stake out the perfect spot on the lawn.

Various community partners will be represented at tables and tents around the concert, including *San Francisco Chronicle*, Classical KDFC, Kaiser Permanente, San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, Compass Family Services and Community Housing Partnership.

No tickets are required to attend the show. The event is free and open to the public. Food and beverage will be available on site for purchase. Parking is extremely limited; using public transit is therefore strongly encouraged. Limited ADA parking and seating is available. Artists and program are subject to change. For more information, please call (415) 864-3330 or visit sfopera.com/park.

Learn more about San Francisco Opera's 2019–20 season at sfopera.com, and connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

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SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE PRESENTS OPERA IN THE PARK

Free Concert Celebrating the Opening of San Francisco Opera's 97th Season

Sunday, September 8, 2019, 1:30pm

Robin Williams Meadow, Golden Gate Park

ARTISTS (subject to change):

Sopranos: Amina Edris, Natalie Image

Mezzo-soprano: Ashley Dixon

Countertenor: Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen

Tenors: Pene Pati, Christopher Oglesby

Baritones: John Chest, Lucas Meachem, Edward Nelson

Bass-baritone: Christian Van Horn

Conductors: Yves Abel, Lawrence Renes, Robert Mollicone

San Francisco Opera Orchestra (Kay Stern, concertmaster)

Emcee: Matthew Shilvock, San Francisco Opera General Director

This event is FREE; no tickets required. Bring a picnic and enjoy this outdoor, family-friendly concert; food and beverages will also be available for sale at the event. Limited ADA parking and seating is available. Public parking is extremely limited; taking public transit is highly recommended. A free bicycle valet parking area will be available on the east side of the meadow.

For further information about *Opera in the Park*, call (415) 864-3330 or visit sfopera.com/park.

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

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Francisco Opera also extends special thanks to San Francisco Recreation & Parks and the San Francisco Parks Alliance.

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