



SAN FRANCISCO  
OPERA

UPCOMING *OPERA IS ON* STREAMING PERFORMANCES FROM  
SAN FRANCISCO OPERA:

October 31–November 1: Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*

November 7–8: Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera (A Masked Ball)*

November 14–15: Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*

November 21–22: Verdi's *Rigoletto*

November 28–29: Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore (The Elixir of Love)*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (October 22, 2020) — San Francisco Opera announces upcoming streaming of full-length operas from October 31 through November 29. Titles include Gaetano Donizetti's bel canto masterpiece *Lucia di Lammermoor* starring Natalie Dessay on October 31–November 1; Giuseppe Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera (A Masked Ball)* with former music director Nicola Luisotti conducting a thrilling cast on November 7–8; Modest Mussorgsky's political drama *Boris Godunov* with Samuel Ramey portraying the titular Russian tsar on November 14–15; Verdi's tragic masterpiece *Rigoletto* with a cast headed by Željko Lučić on November 21–22 and Ramón Vargas and Inva Mula co-star in Donizetti's romantic comedy *L'Elisir d'Amore (The Elixir of Love)* reset in Napa Valley on November 28–29. The presentations, filmed live in high-definition at the War Memorial Opera House, will be viewable on demand for free with registration at [sfopera.com](https://sfopera.com) on the first streaming date starting at 10 am (PDT) and expiring at 11:59 pm the following day.



Scenes from *Lucia di Lammermoor* (2008). Photos: Terrence McCarthy/San Francisco Opera

## October 31–November 1: *Lucia di Lammermoor*

San Francisco Opera's 2008 presentation of Gaetano Donizetti's 1835 bel canto masterpiece *Lucia di Lammermoor* includes the Company debut of French soprano Natalie Dessay, a celebrated interpreter of the title role. Based on one of Sir Walter Scott's popular Waverly novels, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, the opera follows the tragedy of a delicate, young woman who after being betrayed by her brother and spurned by her lover loses her sanity in one of opera's most famous and vocally thrilling mad scenes. *The Mercury News* describes Dessay's performance as "almost effortless, her voice buoyant, moon-beamed and glassy as the strange, heavenly sounds accompanying her." The opera also stars Italian tenor Giuseppe Filianoti as Lucia's beloved, Edgardo; Italian baritone Gabriele Viviani as her brother, Enrico; bass Oren Gradus as Raimondo; tenor Matthew O'Neill as Normanno; tenor Andrew Bidlack as Arturo and mezzo Cybele Gouverneur as Alisa. The production from Florence's Teatro del Maggio Musicale features direction from Graham Vick and Marco Gandini, production designs by Paul Brown and lighting by Nick Chelton. In his first American opera engagement, Jean-Yves Ossonce conducts the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, and Chorus Director Ian Robertson prepares the San Francisco Opera Chorus. *Lucia di Lammermoor* is performed in Italian with English subtitles and has an approximate running time of 2 hours, 23 minutes.



Scenes from *Un Ballo in Maschera (A Masked Ball)* (2014). Photos: Cory Weaver/San Francisco Opera

## November 7–8: *Un Ballo in Maschera (A Masked Ball)*

Full of vocal lyricism, San Francisco Opera's 2014 production of Giuseppe Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera (A Masked Ball)* features the "spectacular" (*San Francisco Chronicle*) Company debut of

soprano Julianna Di Giacomo, a Merola Opera Program graduate, as Amelia, opposite baritone Thomas Hampson who portrays her jealous husband, Count Anckarström (Renato). Mexican tenor Ramón Vargas is Amelia's admirer and the Count's close friend, King Gustavus III (Riccardo), a role Vargas has performed internationally throughout his career. Soprano Heidi Stober takes on the trouser role of the page, Oscar. A renowned interpreter of many of Verdi's mezzo-soprano roles, Dolora Zajick is the fortuneteller, Ulrica. Rounding out the cast are baritone Efraín Solís as Silvano and Christian Van Horn and Scott Conner as conspirators Sam and Tom, respectively.

Set in 18th-century Sweden, the production is directed by Jose Maria Condemi with costumes designed by John Conklin and lighting by Gary Marder. Choreographer Lawrence Pech creates the masked ball's exuberant commedia dell'arte routine. Following Verdi's 1859 score that ranges in mood from turbulent drama to sparkling joy, former Music Director Nicola Luisotti leads the San Francisco Opera Orchestra in "an intensely expressive performance, brilliantly paced" (Classical Voice North America). *Un Ballo in Maschera* is performed in Italian with English subtitles and has an approximate running time of 2 hours, 17 minutes.



Scenes from *Boris Godunov* (2008). Photos: Terrence McCarthy/San Francisco Opera

## November 14–15: *Boris Godunov*

Originally a production from Grand Théâtre de Genève, San Francisco Opera's 2008 presentation of Modest Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* is the Company's first staging of the composer's seven-scene, original 1869 version of the political drama. American bass Samuel Ramey takes on the title role of the 16th-century Russia tsar who is haunted by guilt after assassinating the rightful heir to the throne, Dimitri. The male-dominant, international cast includes tenor John Uhlenhopp as Prince Shuisky, bass Vitalij Kowaljow as Pimen and bass Vladimir Ognovenko as the vagabond Varlaam. Former San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow Ji Young Yang and treble Jack Gorin are Boris Godunov's daughter, Xenia, and son, Fyodor. Tenor Vsevolod Grivnov portrays Grigory, a monk who pretends to be Dimitri; baritone Nicolai Janitzky is the secretary of the Duma, Shckelkalov, and former Adler Fellow Andrew Bidlack is the Simpleton. Making her Company debut, Julia Pevzner directs Stein Winge's production, which features work by the creative team of set designer Göran Wassberg, costume designer Kari Gravklev and lighting designer Duane Schuler. Russian conductor Vassily Sinaisky leads the San Francisco Opera Orchestra for the first time and

San Francisco Opera Chorus Director Ian Robertson prepares the chorus for the grand Coronation Scene with members of the cast and the San Francisco Girls and Boys choruses. San Francisco Classical Voice hails, "This truly grand opera, a Russian national treasure, is a masterpiece." *Boris Godunov* is performed in Russian with English subtitles and has an approximate running time of 2 hours, 20 minutes.



Scenes from *Rigoletto* (2012). Photos: Cory Weaver/San Francisco Opera

## November 21–22: *Rigoletto*

Directed by Harry Silverstein, San Francisco Opera's 2012 production of Giuseppe Verdi's suspenseful tragedy *Rigoletto* showcases the creative collaboration of set designer Michael Yeagan, whose sets evoke the shadowy architectural art of Italian painter Giorgio de Chirico, costume designer Constance Hoffman and lighting designer Christopher Maravich. *The Mercury News* calls Serbian baritone Željko Lučić's portrayal of the hunchbacked court jester Rigoletto "majestic." In her Company debut, Polish soprano Aleksandra Kurzak is Rigoletto's daughter, Gilda, who sings "Caro nome," her Act I showpiece, "impeccably" (*San Francisco Chronicle*).

Bowing for the first time on the War Memorial Opera House stage, Italian tenor Francesco Demuro is the rakish Duke of Mantua, who pretends to be a student in order to seduce Gilda and whose Act III aria "La donna è mobile" is one of opera's most famous melodies. Italian bass Andrea Silvestrelli is the assassin Sparafucile, former San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow mezzo Kendall Gladen is Sparafucile's daughter, Maddalena, and Canadian bass Robert Pomakov is Count Monterone. Conducting the composer's propulsive 1851 score, former Music Director Nicola Luisotti leads the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, and Chorus Director Ian Robertson prepares the San Francisco Opera Chorus for the work's ensemble moments. *Rigoletto* is performed in Italian with English subtitles and has an approximate running time of 2 hours, 7 minutes.



Scenes from *L'Elisir d'Amore (The Elixir of Love)* (2008). Photos: Terrence McCarthy/San Francisco Opera

## *L'Elisir d'Amore (The Elixir of Love)*

San Francisco Opera's 2008 production of Gaetano Donizetti's comic opera updates the work's original setting of 18th-century Basque Country to the eve of World War I in Northern California's Napa Valley. Heading the cast are Mexican tenor Ramón Vargas as the naive peasant Nemorino in "a ravishing performance" (*San Francisco Chronicle*) and Albanian soprano Inva Mula in her Company debut as Adina, Nemorino's romantic interest who he tries to win using a "love potion." Italian baritone Giorgio Caoduro is Sergeant Belcore, who competes for Adina's love; Italian baritone Alessandro Corbelli is the clever travelling salesman, Dr. Dulcamara, and former San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow Korean soprano Ji Young Yang is Adina's friend Giannetta. The creative team comprises director James Robinson, set designer Allen Moyer, Tony Award-winning costume designer Martin Pakledinaz and lighting designer Paul Palazzo. Under the baton of Bel Canto expert Bruno Campanella, the San Francisco Opera Orchestra performs Donizetti's 1832 ebullient score. *L'Elisir d'Amore* is performed in Italian with English subtitles and has an approximate running time of 2 hours, 17 minutes.

In response to the global pandemic, San Francisco Opera launched *Opera is ON* in April 2020 to engage with audiences and share great artistry worldwide. Current San Francisco Opera subscribers and members (donors of \$75 and up) retain access to the streamed events after their window of public access. For more information, visit [sfopera.com](https://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.

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High-resolution, downloadable photographs of the operas are available at [sfopera.com/press](https://sfopera.com/press).

For further press information, please contact:

Julia Inouye (415) 565-6430 / [jinouye@sfopera.com](mailto:jinouye@sfopera.com)

Jeffery McMillan (415) 565-6451 / [jmcmillan@sfopera.com](mailto:jmcmillan@sfopera.com)

Teresa Concepcion (415) 565-6470 / [tconcepcion@sfopera.com](mailto:tconcepcion@sfopera.com)