

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA CELEBRATES 90TH SEASON OPENING WITH VERDI'S *RIGOLETTO* CONDUCTED BY NICOLA LUISOTTI SEPTEMBER 7, WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE

OPENING NIGHT FESTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTED BY OPERA BALL 2012, NOTTE DI SPLENDORE: A 90TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AND BRAVO! CLUB OPENING NIGHT GALA

FREE SEASON-OPENING EVENTS INCLUDE ANNUAL OPERA IN THE PARK CONCERT AND OPERA AT THE BALLPARK SIMULCAST

SAN FRANCISCO (July 13, 2012)—San Francisco Opera celebrates the opening of its 90th Season on Friday, September 7, 2012 with a gala performance of Giuseppe Verdi's *Rigoletto* conducted by San Francisco Opera Music Director Nicola Luisotti and featuring an illustrious cast led by baritone Željko Lučić in the title role, soprano Aleksandra Kurzak as Gilda and Francesco Demuro as the Duke of Mantua. The opening night festivities are highlighted by *Opera Ball 2012, Notte di Splendore: A 90th Anniversary Celebration* and BRAVO! CLUB's *Opening Night Gala*.

Also celebrating the opening of the 2012–13 opera season are two of the Bay Area's most popular musical events— *San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park,* San Francisco Opera's annual concert in Golden Gate Park on Sunday, September 9 and *Webcor Builders Presents Opera at the Ballpark,* a live simulcast of San Francisco Opera's *Rigoletto* at AT&T Park on Saturday, September 15. Both events are free to the public.

Giuseppe Verdi's Rigoletto / September 7-30

San Francisco Opera's 2012–13 Season opens on September 7 with Verdi's *Rigoletto*, the vivid and compelling story of a vengeful court jester desperately attempting to protect his daughter from disaster.

Conductor Nicola Luisotti leads the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus, together with an international cast of singers including acclaimed Serbian baritone and Verdi specialist Željko Lučić in the title role, and the Company debuts of Polish soprano Aleksandra Kurzak as Gilda and Italian tenor Francesco Demuro as the Duke of Mantua. Opening Saturday, September 8, San Francisco Opera presents *Rigoletto* with a second renowned cast of featuring Marco Vratonga, Albina Shagimuratova and David Lomelí. Opera and theater director Harry Silverstein returns to direct this San Francisco Opera production with sets designed by Michael Yeargan. *Rigoletto* runs for 12 performances through September 30, alternating between the two casts of principals. (See attached calendar for complete cast information.)

Opera Ball 2012, Notte di Splendore: A 90th Anniversary Celebration / Friday, September 7

A highlight of the City's cultural and philanthropic season, *Opera Ball* is the Company's celebrated signature fundraising event co-produced with San Francisco Opera Guild to benefit San Francisco Opera and San Francisco Opera Guild's education and community programs. *Opera Ball 2012* is co-chaired by Cathy MacNaughton and Diane Rubin. Ninetieth Anniversary Honorary Chairmen are Cynthia Fry Gunn, Jeannik Méquet Littlefield and Diane B. Wilsey. *Opera Ball 2012, Notte di Splendore* begins with an elegant pre-performance cocktail reception at 5 p.m. in the historic War Memorial House. A sumptuous dinner by acclaimed chef Lucas Schoemaker of McCall Associates follows in the tented Opera Ball Pavilion, transformed by renowned event architect Robert Fountain into an Italian palace fit for the Duke of Mantua. At 8 p.m., the curtain rises on the gala opening night performance of *Rigoletto*. Following the conclusion of the opera, *Opera Ball* patrons will return to the Opera Ball Pavilion for cocktails, desserts and dancing the night away to the Richard Olsen Orchestra.

Opera Ball 2012 is generously supported by Presenting Sponsor, Nordstrom; Jewelry Sponsor, Bulgari; Supporting Sponsors, Joan & David Traitel; and Luxury Automotive Sponsor, Ferrari/Maserati of San Francisco; as well as Hartmann Studios, United, William Hill Estate Winery, Scharffenberger Cellars, Town & Country, Nob Hill Gazette, Soiree Valet, Satoko Furuta Design, and Marci & Lou Palatella.

BRAVO! CLUB's Opening Night Gala / Friday, September 7

BRAVO! CLUB, San Francisco Opera's group of young professionals dedicated to building a new audience for opera, presents its 21st annual opening night gala on Friday, September 7, co-chaired by Eva Binda and Gianna Cardinale. BRAVO! CLUB begins the evening at 6 p.m. with an extended pre-performance

cocktail and hors d'oeuvres reception by Patina Catering in the Entrance Lobby at the War Memorial Veterans Building followed by the opening night performance of Verdi's *Rigoletto*. The post-performance festivities continue with dessert and dancing to the music of DJ Rukus in the elegant Green Room of the War Memorial Veterans Building, which will be transformed with Rich Italian renaissance style décor.

BRAVO! CLUB's *Opening Night Gala* is generously supported by Asset Management Company, Black Stallion Estate Winery, Irony, Jen's Desserts, Uber, Code Salon, Cultivar and Wilkes Bashford.

San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park / Sunday, September 9

A beloved San Francisco tradition, the annual *San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park* concert will take place on Sunday, September 9, 2012 at 1:30 p.m. The celebratory event features artists from the Company's Fall 2012 Season and the San Francisco Opera Orchestra conducted by Nicola Luisotti. The concert draws thousands of music lovers each year, many of whom enjoy the occasion with elaborate picnics on the lawn. In the event's time-honored finale, the audience joins with the singers in a rousing rendition of the drinking song ("Libiamo nei'lieti calici") from Verdi's *La Traviata*. This concert, held in Sharon Meadow at Golden Gate Park, is free and open to the public.

Webcor Builders Presents Opera at the Ballpark / Saturday, September 15

Also in celebration of the new season, San Francisco Opera partners with Webcor Builders and the San Francisco Giants to present the Company's seventh free live simulcast at AT&T Park on Saturday, September 15, 2012 at 8 p.m. Verdi's *Rigoletto*, featuring a celebrated cast of singers and conducted by Nicola Luisotti, will be simulcast live from the War Memorial Opera House to AT&T Park's high-definition scoreboard. A unique opportunity for fans to enjoy the sights and sounds of San Francisco Opera in one of the nation's foremost ballparks, the Company's simulcasts at AT&T Park have drawn more than 165,000 people, many experiencing opera for the first time. *Webcor Builders Presents Opera at the Ballpark* is made possible through the extraordinary technology of the Koret-Taube Media Suite. This event marks the tenth free simulcast presented by San Francisco Opera under David Gockley's leadership.

TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Tickets for *Opera Ball 2012, Notte di Splendore: A 90th Anniversary Celebration* are priced at \$1,000 (sold-out); \$1,500; \$2,500; and \$5,000; ticket availability is limited. *Opera Ball* tickets may be purchased at sfopera.com/OperaBall2012 or by calling (415) 565-3204.

Tickets for BRAVO! CLUB'S *Opening Night Gala*, which include performance tickets, are priced from \$250 to \$425 and may be purchased at <u>sfopera.com/bravo</u>. A BRAVO! CLUB membership fee of \$60 is required to attend the *Opening Night Gala*.

Tickets for the performance of Verdi's *Rigoletto* are priced from \$27 to \$340 and may be purchased at <u>sfopera.com</u> or through the San Francisco Opera Box Office [301 Van Ness Avenue (at Grove Street), or by phone at (415) 864-3330]. Standing Room tickets go on sale at 10 a.m. on the day of each performance; tickets are \$10 each, cash only.

The September 9 San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park concert is free and open to the public; no tickets required. Visit sfopera.com/park for more information.

The September 15 Webcor Builders Presents Opera at the Ballpark simulcast at AT&T Park is free and open to the public; advance online registration assures early entrance into the ballpark for preferred seating and entry into a special prize drawing. Visit <u>sfopera.com/simulcast</u> to register.

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA 90TH SEASON OPENING CELEBRATIONS

Opera Ball 2012, Notte di Splendore: A 90th Anniversary Celebration Friday, September 7, 2012

War Memorial Opera House & Opera Ball Pavilion

Presented by San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Opera Guild, the evening begins with an elegant pre-performance cocktail reception and sumptuous dinner in the tented Opera Ball Pavilion followed by the season-opening performance of Verdi's *Rigoletto* and further celebration. A highlight of the City's cultural and philanthropic season, *Opera Ball* raises funds to benefit San Francisco Opera and the Opera Guild's education and community programs. Cathy MacNaughton and Diane Rubin co-chair *Opera Ball 2012*. For tickets or more information about *Opera Ball 2012*, call (415) 565-3204 or visit <u>sfopera.com/operaball2012</u>.

5 p.m. Cocktail reception at the War Memorial Opera House

6 p.m. Dinner in the Opera Ball Pavilion

8 p.m. Gala opening-night performance of *Rigoletto* at the War Memorial Opera House

11 p.m. Opera Ball guests return to the Opera Ball Pavilion for cocktails, desserts and dancing to the

Richard Olsen Orchestra

BRAVO! CLUB *Opening Night Gala* Friday, September 7, 2012

War Memorial Opera House & War Memorial Veterans Building

Join BRAVO! CLUB's young professionals as they kick off the season in style with a glamorous preperformance cocktail and hors d'ouevres reception followed by the season-opening performance of *Rigoletto* and post-performance dancing. Co-chairs for BRAVO! CLUB's 2012 *Opening Night Gala* are Eva Binda and Gianna Cardinale. For tickets and membership information, email bravoclub@sfopera.com or visit sfopera.com/bravo.

6 p.m. Cocktail and hors d'ouevres reception at the War Memorial Veterans Building
 8 p.m. Gala opening-night performance of *Rigoletto* at the War Memorial Opera House
 11 p.m. Opening Night Gala guests proceed to the Green Room in the War Memorial Veterans

Building for cocktails, desserts and dancing

San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park Sunday, September 9, 2012 at 1:30 p.m.

Sharon Meadow, Golden Gate Park

A beloved San Francisco tradition, the annual *San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park* concert features artists from the Company's Fall 2012 Season and the San Francisco Opera Orchestra conducted by Music Director Nicola Luisotti. This concert, held in Sharon Meadow at Golden Gate Park, is free and open to the public; no tickets required. For more information visit *sfopera.com/park*.

Webcor Builders Presents Opera at the Ballpark
Free Live Simulcast of Rigoletto at AT&T Park; Saturday, September 15, 2012 at 8 p.m.
24 Willie Mays Plaza in San Francisco

Baseball and opera fans alike have the opportunity to enjoy opera in the beautiful and convivial outdoor setting of AT&T Park as San Francisco Opera continues its highly successful partnership with Webcor Builders and the San Francisco Giants to present Verdi's *Rigoletto* in 2012. This event is free and open to the public, however advance online registration assures early entrance into the ballpark for preferred seating and entry into a special prize drawing. To register, visit *sfopera.com/simulcast*.

RIGOLETTO by Giuseppe Verdi

WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE

September 7 (8 p.m.), **8** (8 p.m.), **11** (8 p.m.), **12** (7:30 p.m.), **15** (8 p.m.), **16** (2 p.m.), **18** (8 p.m.), **19** (7:30 p.m.),

21 (8 p.m.), 23° (2 p.m.), 25 (7:30 p.m.), 30° (2 p.m.), 2012

San Francisco Opera Production

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave

Approximate running time: 2 hours, 35 minutes with one intermission

Sung in Italian with English supertitles

First Performance: Venice, March 11, 1851
First SFO Performance: October 8, 1923
Most Recent SFO Performances: October 2006

Cast: Rigoletto	Željko Lučić Marco Vratogna (9/8), (9/12), (9/16), (9/19), (9/23), (9/25), (9/30)	Production Team: Conductor Director Set Designer	Nicola Luisotti Giuseppe Finzi (9/25), (9/30) Harry Silverstein Michael Yeargan
Gilda	Aleksandra Kurzak* Albina Shagimuratova (9/8), (9/12), (9/16), (9/19), (9/23), (9/30)	Costume Designer Lighting Designer Chorus Director Choreographer	Constance Hoffman Chris Maravich Ian Robertson Lawrence Pech
The Duke of Mantua	Francesco Demuro* David Lomelí (9/8), (9/12), (9/16), (9/19), (9/23), (9/30)		
Maddalena	Kendall Gladen		
Count Monterone	Robert Pomakov*		
Sparafucile	Andrea Silvestrelli		
Marullo	Joo Won Kang†		
Matteo Borsa	Nathaniel Peake		
Count Ceprano	Ryan Kuster†		
Countess Ceprano	Laura Krumm†*		
Giovanna	Renée Rapier†*		
A Page Usher	Laura Krumm† Jere Torkelsen†		
USHEL	JEIE IOIKEISEII'		

^{*} San Francisco Opera Debut † Current Adler Fellow ♪ Role Debut • OperaVision Performance

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San Francisco Opera is sponsored, in part, by the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn, Franklin and Catherine Johnson, Mrs. Edmund W. Littlefield, Bernard and Barbro Osher, and Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem. San Francisco Opera is sponsored, in part, by a grant from Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.

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Company Sponsors John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn, and Mrs. Edmund W. Littlefield are proud to support *Rigoletto*. This production is made possible, in part, by Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey. Major support for this production is also provided by the Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund established by Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem. Nicola Luisotti's appearance made possible by Jan

Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem, Chairs, Amici di Nicola of Camerata. Mr. Lučić's appearance is made possible by a gift to the Great Singers Fund by Joan and David Traitel.

San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park is made possible, in part, by Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey. Additional support is provided by the William and Gretchen Kimball Fund, Kaiser Permanente, and AT&T.

San Francisco Opera simulcasts are made possible through the extraordinary technology of the Company's Koret-Taube Media Suite. A grant from the Koret Foundation provided lead funding for the Koret-Taube Media Suite, with additional support provided by Tad and Dianne Taube. Webcor Builders Presents Opera at the Ballpark is supported by Presenting Sponsor Webcor Builders and Gold Sponsors Charles Schwab, Chevron and United.



2012–13 Season Sponsor

For further press information or to obtain 2012–13 Season–related photographs, please visit_sfopera.com/press or contact: Jon Finck (415)565-6472 / jfinck@sfopera.com
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