SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA CENTER

THE 2013 SCHWABACHER DEBUT RECITALS PRESENTED BY SAN FRANCISCO OPERA CENTER AND MEROLA OPERA PROGRAM

31st Season features bass-baritone Philippe Sly, April 7; New York Festival of Song's Steven Blier with Marina Harris, Laura Krumm, A.J. Glueckert and Hadleigh Adams, April 21; Mezzo-soprano Sarah Mesko and tenor Theo Lebow, May 5

SAN FRANCISCO (March 5, 2013)—San Francisco Opera Center and the Merola Opera Program present the 31st season of the Schwabacher Debut Recitals on April 7, 21 and May 5, 2013 at Temple Emanu-El's Martin Meyer Sanctuary in San Francisco. The annual series showcases artists who have participated in the San Francisco Opera Center and Merola Opera programs and offers Bay Area audiences the unique opportunity to hear gifted young singers perform a varied and eclectic range of song literature in the intimate setting of the Martin Meyer Sanctuary.

The 2013 Schwabacher Debut Recitals begin on Sunday, April 7 at 5:30pm with Merola Opera Program alumnus and first-year Adler Fellow bass-baritone Philippe Sly performing works by Duparc, Ravel, Ropartz, Schubert and Mahler. Sly, who recently made his San Francisco Opera debut as Archibald Craven in the world premiere of Nolan Gasser and Carey Harrison's *The Secret Garden* and will sing the role of Guglielmo in this summer's *Così fan tutte*, will be accompanied by Adler Fellow and Merola graduate Sun Ha Yoon.

The series continues on Sunday, April 21 at 5:30pm with New York Festival of Song Artistic Director Steven Blier presenting *From Bel Canto to Can Belto: Songs by Italians and Italian-Americans.* Performing with Blier will be current Adler Fellows Marina Harris (soprano), Laura Krumm (mezzo-

soprano), A.J. Glueckert (tenor) and Hadleigh Adams (bass-baritone) in a selection of songs by Italian masters.

The 2013 Schwabacher Debut Recitals conclude on Sunday, May 5 at 5:30pm with Merola Opera Program alumni mezzo-soprano Sarah Mesko and tenor Theo Lebow, accompanied by current Adler Fellow Robert Mollicone. The program will feature an eclectic collection of songs by Tchaikovsky, Britten and selections from Dvořák's *Gypsy Songs*.

The Schwabacher Debut Recitals are endowed in perpetuity by the generosity of the late James Schwabacher and are sponsored by the Jack H. Lund Charitable Trust.

A celebrated Bay Area singer, recitalist, scholar and teacher, James Schwabacher was a co-founder of the Merola Opera Program. The Schwabacher Debut Recitals have introduced the artistry of internationally acclaimed artists including Anna Netrebko, Deborah Voigt, Susan Graham, Brian Asawa and Thomas Hampson. The recitals provide an opportunity to hear a wealth of song literature ranging from Baroque masterpieces and Romantic-era classics to newly commissioned works performed by up and coming young singers.

Tickets & Information

All performances take place at Temple Emanu-El's Martin Meyer Sanctuary (Two Lake Street, at Arguello, in San Francisco). Single tickets for the Schwabacher Debut Recitals are $25; a three-recital subscription is $50. Tickets may be purchased by calling the San Francisco Opera Box Office (Mon. 10 am-5 pm, Tues.-Sat. 10 am-6 pm) at (415) 864-3330. Student Rush tickets are available for $15 at Temple Emanu-El 30 minutes prior to each recital (limit of two tickets per person; valid ID is required; subject to availability). Casting, programs, schedules and ticket prices are subject to change.

2013 Schwabacher Debut Recitals

Presented by San Francisco Opera Center and Merola Opera Program

Temple Emanu-El's Martin Meyer Sanctuary (Two Lake Street, at Arguello, in San Francisco)

PROGRAM 1: **Sunday, April 7, 5:30 p.m.**
Philippe Sly, bass-baritone
Sun Ha Yoon, piano
Performing works by Duparc, Ravel, Ropartz, Schubert and Mahler.

PROGRAM 2: Sunday, April 21, 5:30 p.m.
Steven Blier, piano
Marina Harris, soprano
Laura Krumm, mezzo-soprano
A.J. Glueckert, tenor
Hadleigh Adams, bass-baritone
From Bel Canto to Can Belto: Songs by Italians and Italian-Americans presented by New York Festival of Song's Steven Blier with Marina Harris, Laura Krumm, A.J. Glueckert and Hadleigh Adams.

PROGRAM 3: Sunday, May 5, 5:30 p.m.
Sarah Mesko, mezzo-soprano
Theo Lebow, tenor
Robert Mollicone, piano
Performing works by Tchaikovsky, Britten and selections from Dvořák's *Gypsy Songs*.

About the Artists

Steven Blier is artistic director of the New York Festival of Song (NYFOS), which he co-founded in 1988 with Michael Barrett. Since the Festival's inception, Blier has programmed, performed, translated and annotated more than 130 vocal recitals with repertoire spanning the entire range of American song, art song from Schubert to Szymanowski, and popular song from early vaudeville to Lennon-McCartney. NYFOS has also made in-depth explorations of music from Spain, Latin America, Scandinavia and Russia. Blier enjoys an eminent career as an accompanist and vocal coach. His recital partners have included Renée Fleming, Cecilia Bartoli, Samuel Ramey, Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, Susan Graham, Jessye Norman, and José van Dam in venues ranging from Carnegie Hall to Milan's La Scala. He is also on the faculty of the Juilliard School and has been active in encouraging young recitalists at summer programs, including the Wolf Trap Opera Company, Santa Fe Opera, and the San Francisco Opera Center. In keeping the traditions of American music alive, Mr. Blier has brought back to the stage many of the rarely heard songs of George Gershwin, Harold Arlen, Kurt Weill and Cole Porter. He has also played ragtime, blues and stride piano evenings with John Musto. A champion of American art song, he has premiered works of John Corigliano, Paul Moravec, Ned Rorem, William

Bolcom, John Musto, Richard Danielpour, Tobias Picker, Robert Beaser, Lowell Liebermann, Harold Meltzer, Lee Hoiby, and Mark Adamo, many of which were commissioned by NYFOS. His extensive discography includes the premiere recording of Leonard Bernstein's Arias and Barcarolles (Koch International), which won a Grammy Award.

Marina Harris, a second-year Adler Fellow, is a soprano from Los Angeles, California. She is an alumna of the 2011 Merola Opera Program, where she performed the role of Berta in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. A three time soloist with the Los Angeles Bach Festival, she has performed works such *Magnificat, Johannes-Passion,* and *Wachet, betet!* with the Festival Orchestra and Choir. In 2010, Harris was chosen as a Western Regional Finalist for the Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions and was the Second Place Winner in the Finals. She was also a Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Regional Finalist in 2009, and took home the Special Encouragement Award. Harris was selected as an Encouragement Award Winner at the Marilyn Horne Foundation Vocal Competition in 2010 for her performance of art song repertoire. Harris recently made her San Francisco Opera debut in the role of *Susan Sowerby* in the world premiere of Nolan Gasser and Carey Harrison's *The Secret Garden.*

A native of Iowa City, Iowa, mezzo-soprano **Laura Krumm** is a second-year Adler Fellow who made her San Francisco Opera debut in this fall's *Rigoletto* and created the role of Martha Sowerby in the March 2013 world premiere of Nolan Gasser and Carey Harrison's *The Secret Garden.* As a master's student at the University of North Texas, she was awarded the Bill and Margo Winspear Award and was winner of the 2011 Concerto Competition. Her recent repertoire includes Charlotte (*Werther*), Sesto (*La Clemenza di Tito*), Cherubino (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Prince Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*), and the Second Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*). As a 2011 participant of the Merola Opera Program she was featured in scenes from *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* and *Rigoletto*. She has performed with La Musica Lirica in Novafeltria, Italy and OperaWorks in Los Angeles, and she was a finalist in the 2011 Dallas Opera Guild Competition.

American mezzo-soprano **Sarah Mesko** is an alumna of the 2012 Merola Opera Program. Her 2012–13 season engagements include Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*) and Hansel (*Hänsel und Gretel*) with Washington National Opera and Amélie (*La Grande-Duchesse de Gérolstein*) with the Santa Fe Opera. Other career highlights include Alisa (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) and Kate Pinkerton and Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*) at Washington National Opera as well as La Sagesse and Sidonie (Lully's *Armide*) with Mercury Baroque and Théatre de Gennevilliers in Paris. On the concert stage, she has appeared as a soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra, Alexandria Symphony, the Washington National Cathedral Choral Society, and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. A two-time winner of the Richard F. Gold Career Grant, she is a graduate of Washington National Opera's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program and was a national finalist in the 2009 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

Tenor **A.J. Glueckert** is a first-year Adler Fellow hailing from Portland, Oregon. He is an alumnus of the 2012 Merola Opera Program, where he performed Mr. Owen in Argento's *Postcard from Morocco.* As a resident artist with Minnesota Opera, he performed Arturo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) and created the role of the Crown Prince in the world premiere of Puts's *Silent Night.* He is also a graduate of the young artists programs at the Santa Fe Opera and Utah Opera. A two-time winner of the regional Metropolitan Opera National Auditions, he holds a degree from the San Francisco

Conservatory of Music and appeared as the Drum Major (*Wozzeck*) with San Francisco's Ensemble Parallèle.

American tenor **Theo Lebow** is a graduate of the 2012 Merola Opera Program where he sang the role of Contino Belfiore in *La Finta Giardiniera*. As a 2012–13 Seattle Opera Young Artist, Lebow made his main-stage debut with that company as the First Prisoner in *Fidelio*, and he starred as Edoardo in their young artist production of *Un Giorno di Regno*. Other recent credits include a Scientist in Menotti's *The Last Savage* with the Santa Fe Opera in 2011, the encouragement award from the Gerda Lissner Foundation, semi-finalist placement in the Marcello Giordani Foundation, and regional finalist in the Metropolitan National Council Auditions. Upcoming engagements include Népomuc in *La Grande-Duchesse de Gérolstein* with the Santa Fe Opera.

Bass-baritone **Hadleigh Adams** is a first-year Adler Fellow and graduate of the 2012 Merola Opera Program. The New Zealand native was a member of New Zealand Opera from 2004 to 2008 and performed frequently as an oratorio soloist. He made his debut with London's Royal National Theatre in 2011 as Christ in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion.* Awards include a 2010 Joan Sutherland & Richard Bonynge Scholarship and first runner-up in the Australian Singing Competition. Upcoming engagements include Pollux (Rameau's *Castor et Pollux*) with Pinchgut Opera.

A winner in the 2011 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, bass-baritone **Philippe Sly** is a first-year Adler Fellow who recently made his San Francisco Opera debut as Archibald Craven in the world premiere of Nolan Gasser and Carey Harrison's *The Secret Garden* and will be seen as Guglielmo in this summer's *Così fan tutte*. A native of Ottawa, Ontario and a graduate of the 2011 Merola Opera Program, he is a member of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble Studio. Recent and upcoming engagements include Marcello (*La Bohème*) and Nick Shadow (*The Rake's Progress*) at McGill University and Masetto (*Don Giovanni*) at the University of Ottawa. Sly appeared with the Canadian Opera Company in the 2011–12 season singing roles in *The Tales of Hoffmann, A Florentine Tragedy*, *Gianni Schicchi,* and *Semele*.

Coach and pianist **Robert Mollicone** is a second-year Adler Fellow. He was a member of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, where he served on the music staff for *Don Pasquale*, *Tosca*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor* on the main stage. A Rhode Island native, Mollicone has served as a vocal coach and pianist for Boston Lyric Opera, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Boston Opera Collaborative, Boston University Tanglewood Institute, and Opera North. He was a Spectrum Resident Artist at Virginia Opera in 2009, and a participant in the Merola Opera Program in 2010. Mollicone worked on San Francisco Opera's productions of *The Magic Flute* and *Moby-Dick* in 2012.

Pianist and vocal coach **Sun Ha Yoon** is a first year Adler Fellow hailing from Seoul, South Korea. In the summer of 2012 she was participant in the Merola Opera Program. Prior to that, she was a vocal piano fellow at the Music Academy of the West, where she coached *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Don Giovanni*. In January of 2012, she collaborated with soprano Megan Hart in a duo recital at Carnegie Hall as part of Marilyn Horne's "The Song Continues…" series. Sun Ha recently graduated with a doctorate in collaborative piano performance from the University of Maryland and worked as a

coach for the Maryland Opera Studio in two world premiere performances: *Later the Same Evening* by John Musto and *Shadowboxer* by Frank Proto.

About San Francisco Opera Center and Merola Opera Program

San Francisco Opera Center was created in 1982 by then-General Director Terence A. McEwen to oversee the operation and administration of the education and training programs initiated by Kurt Herbert Adler in 1954. Providing a coordinated sequence of performance and study opportunities for young artists, San Francisco Opera Center represents a new era in which young artists of major operatic potential can develop through intensive training and performance, under the aegis of a major international opera company. Now under the guidance of its fourth director, Sheri Greenawald, and San Francisco Opera General Director David Gockley, the Opera Center has trained and introduced many young stars from around the world to the international opera stage through its resident artist programs.

One of the oldest and most acclaimed training programs of its kind, the Merola Opera Program for aspiring opera professionals offers up-and-coming singers, coach-accompanists and stage directors the opportunity of intense study and performance during an eleven-week summer program. Named for San Francisco Opera's first general director, Gaetano Merola, the program began during the 1954–55 Season and established its full training program in 1957. Alumni of the program include Joyce DiDonato, Sylvia McNair, Anna Netrebko, Patricia Racette, Ruth Ann Swenson, Carol Vaness, Deborah Voigt, Susan Graham, Dolora Zajick, Brian Asawa, Thomas Hampson, Rolando Villazón, and Patrick Summers. An independent non-profit organization, the Merola Opera Program operates in collaboration with San Francisco Opera Center and San Francisco Opera.

Initially founded as the San Francisco Opera/Affiliate Artists program in 1977, the Adler Fellowship Program is one of the nation's most prestigious performance-oriented residencies for the most advanced young singers and coach/accompanists. Each year, Adler Fellows are sponsored by individual donors to help cover the cost of their fellowship, and sponsors affiliated with the Adler Program have the opportunity to attend private studio classes with the Fellows and develop nurturing relationships with them. Alumni from the Adler Fellowship Program include sopranos Laura Claycomb, Nicolle Foland, Nancy Gustafson, Mary Mills, Patricia Racette, Ruth Ann Swenson and Deborah Voigt; mezzo-sopranos Zheng Cao and Dolora Zajick; countertenor Brian Asawa; baritones Mark Delavan and David Okerlund; and bass-baritones Monte Pederson and John Relyea.

For more information on the San Francisco Opera Center and the Adler Fellowship and Merola Opera Program, visit sfopera.com and merola.org.

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This press release and related photography are available at sfopera.com/press.

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