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The Handmaid's Tale

BY POUL RUDERS AND PAUL BENTLEY

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY MARGARET ATWOOD



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Vol. 102, No. 2 • 2024–25 Season • September–October 2024

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Cover illustration by Brian Stauffer

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Un Ballo In Maschera (A Masked Ball)

MUSIC BY GIUSEPPE VERDI • LIBRETTO BY ANTONIO SOMMA

Structure: 3 acts with 2 intermissions

Running time: 3 hours

Language: Italian with English supertitles

Key Characters:

- *Gustavus III*, King of Sweden who loves Amelia
- *Amelia*, wife of Renato who is torn by her affection for the king
- *Renato*, the king's adviser and friend
- *Oscar*, the king's page
- *Ulrica*, a fortune teller

Un Ballo in Maschera (or *Ballo* for short) is one of Verdi's most direct and tightly constructed operas. *Ballo*'s relatively simple story—a love triangle that leads to murder at a masked ball—

owes much of its tension, drama, humor, and romance to Verdi's musical imagination. The score, which opens with a four-note motive that develops into a complex web of light and dark gestures, illuminates the characters and their motivations. *Ballo* is filled with jocular moments (especially for the king and Oscar) which Verdi contrasts with music depicting more elemental passions to create a masterwork that both gets the heart pounding and the feet tapping.

Listen for: In Act III, Scene 1, Renato's aria "Eri tu" ("You were the one") is arguably the opera's turning point. The aria, which captures the moment when an essentially good man reaches his breaking point, challenges the singer to use the full range of their voice while portraying an expansive range of emotions. "Eri tu" is one of the most important arias in the baritone repertoire.

The Handmaid's Tale

MUSIC BY POUL RUDERS • LIBRETTO BY PAUL BENTLEY

Structure: Prelude and 2 acts with 1 intermission

Running time: 2 hours, 50 minutes

Language: English with English supertitles

Key Characters:

- *Offred*, a Handmaid seeking to escape the repressive state of Gilead
- *Serena Joy*, wife of Offred's Commander and a former TV gospel singer in the time before
- *Aunt Lydia*, an instructor at the Red Centre where Handmaids are indoctrinated
- *The Commander*, a member of Gilead's leading class

Poul Ruders' operatic interpretation of Margaret Atwood's best-selling novel *The Handmaid's Tale* received its world premiere in 2000 at Copenhagen's Royal Danish Theatre. This

production marks the opera's West Coast premiere in a new co-production between Copenhagen's The Royal Danish Theatre and San Francisco Opera. The story takes place in a dystopian American future where women are forced into child-bearing servitude by the theocratic regime of Gilead. Atwood's chilling vision of a post-democratic reign of terror, adapted in Paul Bentley's libretto, finds vivid expression in Ruders' score. The Grammy-nominated composer employs a large orchestra including an expanded battery of percussion instruments and digital sound effects, along with a chorus, to create the opera's haunting sound world.

Did you know? *The Handmaid's Tale* has been adapted for a variety of works on the page, stage, and screen including a 1990 feature film, a ballet, several stage plays, and the Emmy- and Golden Globe Award-winning Hulu series starring Elisabeth Moss.

WELCOME FROM THE BOARD OF SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

Welcome to the 102nd season of San Francisco Opera! It's a joy to begin another year of artistic experiences that will bring us together as a community and celebrate creativity in the Bay Area. We're excited to launch the season with you!

Over the course of a year, San Francisco Opera brings together 1,000 highly talented singers, instrumentalists, dancers, artisans, crew, and staff, making our company one of the most significant creative employers in America. Since the Opera's centennial we have seen the tremendous energy of this creative community energize the Bay Area in particularly stimulating ways. Subscriptions for this 2024-25 Season are almost 1,000 *more* than last year—the first time in recent memory that subscriptions have increased. Our subsidized introductory Dolby Tickets have brought over 10,000 new people into the theater over the last two years, and we're particularly delighted that so many are coming back for more.

We begin the season with a pair of operas that highlight the incredible potentials of the opera stage, and the connective possibilities between artists and audiences. We are excited to share with you Verdi's lyrically sublime *Un Ballo in Maschera* under the baton of Music Director Eun Sun Kim and Poul Ruders' incisive *The Handmaid's Tale*.

We're blessed in this city to have some of the finest performing and visual arts in the country. That speaks to the fervent belief held by generations of patrons in the vital importance of a thriving cultural city. Our ability to sustain this is completely dependent on you, our patrons. Thank you for carrying forth that belief in the arts with such passion and generosity. Here's to a thrilling season ahead!

With gratitude,



Barbara A. Wolfe
Chair of the Board
San Francisco Opera Association



Jack Calhoun
President
San Francisco Opera Association



A note from Barbara Wolfe:

I am particularly honored to begin my first season as Chair of the Opera Board. I have been attending operas here since the 1960s and have been a member of the board since 2009. The art created by the talented members of the Company is absolutely captivating, and we, the audience, are the fortunate beneficiaries. I look forward to shaping the future with Jack, Matthew, Eun Sun, and the whole company.



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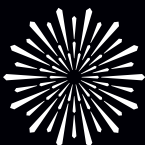
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COMPASS

John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn



TERRENCE MCCARTHY

Once again, the unprecedented generosity of Cynthia and John Gunn has set the stage for a dazzling season at San Francisco Opera. Since 2002, when John joined the Opera Board, the couple has underwritten numerous productions and provided exceptional support for many of the Company's innovative endeavors. In September 2008, the Gunns made a historic commitment—believed to be the largest gift ever made by individuals to an American opera company—to help fund the signature projects of then General Director David Gockley, including new operas and productions, multimedia projects, and outreach programs, and they have proudly continued that support for General Director Matthew Shilvock. This season, the Gunns' inspired generosity is helping make possible four productions—*Un Ballo in Maschera*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Tristan and Isolde*, and *La Bohème*—and the *Beethoven 9* Concert. The Gunns invite everyone to give and join them as a member of San Francisco Opera's donor community. John comments, "Opera is a dynamic art form, and all of us play a role in keeping it a meaningful part of our social fabric. With you we can propel San Francisco Opera into its next 100 years of artistic history." John is the former chairman and CEO of

Dodge & Cox Investment Managers. He joined the firm in 1972, the year he received his MBA from Stanford Business School and married Cynthia, who graduated from Stanford with an A.B. in political science in 1970. Early in her career, Cynthia was the editor and director of *The Portable Stanford* book series for 10 years. She edited 28 books by Stanford professors on a vast array of topics, including *Economic Policy Beyond the Headlines* by George Shultz and Ken Dam. In addition to their support of San Francisco Opera, the Gunns are active members of the community. John is a former trustee of Stanford University and is Chairman Emeritus of the Advisory Board for the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research. Cynthia currently serves as a trustee of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, is a former overseer of Stanford's Hoover Institution, and has been a member of the advisory board of Family and Children Services and the board of the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health. John has served as Chair of San Francisco Opera's Board of Directors for 16 years and recently became Chair Emeritus in 2024. He continues to serve on its Executive Committee. Opera lovers are grateful to Cynthia and John and applaud their commitment to keeping San Francisco Opera a leading-edge company.

Marieke & Jeff Rothschild



NOAH BERGER

The central theme of our philanthropy has been to have a positive impact on the lives of others who have not had the opportunities and good fortune we have enjoyed,” note Marieke and Jeff Rothschild. As new champions of San Francisco Opera, they are doing precisely that.

“Marieke and I were raised with the expectation that one should participate in philanthropy, and we feel very fortunate to be able to engage at the scale, scope, and impact that our success has enabled,” remarks Jeff. “We are attracted to projects that have the potential for meaningful and enduring social impact.”

The Rothschilds’ philanthropic investments span health care, education, economic development, and land preservation. They are equally passionate about art. “Great art is something that you need to have a good life,” reflects Marieke. “You could live without beauty, but why would you?”

Live performance is especially close to their hearts. “We come together, taking time out of our busy lives, for

this shared experience,” Marieke explains. “The lights go down, there is a hush. Talented people work in harmony to create something extraordinary for us. By the end, we are all changed. Live music is life-affirming.”

The Rothschilds’ commitment to San Francisco Opera comes at a critical moment for the Company. “Marieke and Jeff are propelling forward the Opera, allowing us to remain bold and courageous in our programming, our innovations, and our community engagement,” observes General Director Matthew Shilvock. “Their philanthropy is a wonderful exemplar of a soaring vision that uplifts the Bay Area. I am profoundly grateful for the trust they are placing in us to produce art that showcases the creative vitality of San Francisco on the global stage.”

“San Francisco Opera is at an interesting crossroads,” Marieke concludes. “I like that they are willing to take chances, to think outside of the box. To adapt this old art form to the modern world requires new audiences and new directions, and we find those here.”

Jan Shrem & Maria Manetti Shrem

Production Sponsor, *Un Ballo in Maschera*



Jan and Maria both developed a love of opera at a young age, although they grew up half-a-world apart. Jan Shrem, after a career devoted to his publishing businesses in Japan and Europe, created Clos Pegase Winery in California's Napa Valley, collecting some of the world's greatest modern and contemporary art. Maria Manetti Shrem internationally succeeded with her fashion-based entrepreneurial companies, bringing Gucci and Fendi in the departments and specialty stores in the USA. In joyous partnership the Manetti Shrem couple is bringing their focus and affection to philanthropic causes that advance education, the performing and visual arts, and medicine.

While their lives led them each around the globe, their individual passions eventually brought them to San Francisco Opera and to each other. As Company Sponsors for more than a decade, Jan and Maria have established four generous funds:

- The Conductors Fund helps ensure the continued appearances of noted conductors on the podium.
- The Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund helps

bring today's most compelling artists in Italian repertoire to San Francisco Opera.

- The Emerging Stars Fund supports the Company in showcasing exciting rising young stars on our stage throughout the season.
- The Luminaries Concert Fund enables San Francisco Opera to bring legendary artists to the stage for special events and performances.

In December 2022, Maria received The Spirit of the Opera award for her devotion to San Francisco Opera, her high level of commitment to advancing the success of the Company, and her ongoing support of the art form. She is the 2023 UC Davis Medal recipient for her profound arts legacy and passion for creating opportunities for exploration and education. In April 2024, Maria Manetti Shrem made history by donating eight endowments in perpetuity to the College of Letters and Science at UC Davis—the most significant gift ever—benefiting over 30,000 students a year, top faculty members, best talents, and world-renowned artists. Her visionary leadership continues to shape the cultural landscape and enrich lives across the globe.

Donor Spotlight



Diane B. Wilsey (Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor)

Dede Wilsey—a longtime San Francisco Opera board member, patron, and *Opera Ball* supporter—believes deeply in the transformative power of the arts, particularly the multifaceted world of opera. Says Dede, “It’s a marvelous spectacle. From the voices and pageantry to the scenery, costumes, and acting, opera fills the senses and takes you to another place.” Thanks to Dede’s generosity, opera enthusiasts of all ages have much to celebrate. As Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor for the eighteenth consecutive year, she is excited to celebrate the start of our season with the opening production of Giuseppe Verdi’s *Un Ballo in Maschera* conducted by the Caroline H. Hume Music Director of San Francisco Opera Eun Sun Kim. She is also supporting the celebratory

floral arrangements that grace the War Memorial Opera House on September 6 and the free, annual *Opera in the Park* concert at Robin Williams Meadow on September 8. Dede’s leadership support was critical in the creation of the Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera, a dynamic, intimate space at the Veterans Building that opened in spring 2016. Her philanthropic commitment to the community extends to many organizations. Dede has been chair of the board of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco since 1996, serves on the boards of San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Ballet, and the War Memorial Performing Arts Center, and is a lifetime trustee of UCSF.



DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

Jerome & Thao Dodson (Production Sponsor, *Un Ballo in Maschera*)

“A fiery horse with the speed of light, a cloud of dust, and a hearty, ‘Hi-Yo, Silver!’” Those words, accompanied by the galloping excitement of Rossini’s *William Tell* Overture, transfixed a young Jerry Dodson as he listened to *The Lone Ranger* on the family radio in Oak Park, Illinois. Just as Bugs Bunny’s *Rabbit of Seville* had done for many, a lighthearted entertainment sparked a future operatic devotion.

That little boy grew up to attend Berkeley in the 1960s, serve with the American Embassy in Vietnam where he and Thao met, and attend Harvard Business School. Eventually, the couple married, settled in the Bay Area, and raised a family. In the 1980s, Jerry was a pioneer in the field of socially responsible investing with little interest in opera. But in 1992, when San Francisco Opera celebrated Rossini’s

bicentennial with the rarely performed *William Tell*, Thao, already an opera lover, suggested to Jerry that they go.

William Tell was praised for its striking Lotfi Mansouri production, and the Dodsons began attending regularly. They became season ticket holders in 1999 and supporters “in a small way,” as Jerry puts it. A friendship with David Gockley, which endures to this day, led to a larger role as Company Sponsors. “I so admired what he did for the opera, but it was not very good for my pocketbook,” Jerry laughs. Jerry also lends his financial expertise to the audit committee.

In 2016, Dodson considered the import of Gockley’s departure. He met with Matthew Shilvock and joined the board that year. “We hit it off right away!” Jerry says. He felt a similar affinity with Keith Geeslin, then President of the San Francisco Opera Association. Eager to continue support, the Dodsons see this as a perfect time to revitalize and energize the Company within the San Francisco community. The initial fire ignited by *William Tell* continues to burn brightly.

Donor Spotlight



Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for New Productions (Production Sponsor, *The Handmaid's Tale*)

San Francisco Opera owes a heartfelt debt of gratitude to Phyllis C. Wattis for her many generous and visionary gifts to the Company that include an endowment that established the Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for New Productions. Mrs. Wattis passed away in June 2002 at the age of 97. During her life she generously supported many Bay Area nonprofit organizations and was especially interested in the arts, also contributing her time, wisdom, and leadership to the fine arts and the performing arts. She served prominently on the boards of San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, San Francisco Opera, and San Francisco Symphony and was a committed financial and ideological supporter of each of these organizations as well. Mrs. Wattis helped underwrite San Francisco Opera's world premiere productions including *Dangerous Liaisons* (1994), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1998), and the critically acclaimed *Dead Man Walking* (2000). San Francisco Opera deeply appreciates the many generous gifts from Mrs. Wattis and takes this opportunity to recognize the Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for New Productions for its sponsorship support of *The Makropulos Case* (2010), *The Flying Dutchman* (2013), *Two Women* (2015), *Così fan tutte* (2021), *Fidelio* (2021), *Don Giovanni* (2022), *Antony and Cleopatra* (2022), and *Innocence* (2024).



KRISTEN LOKEN

Bob Ellis (Production Sponsor, *The Handmaid's Tale*)

Bob has been a longtime supporter of contemporary opera since he became a member of the board of directors in 2001. He has supported all of John Adams' new productions for San Francisco Opera, beginning with the commission of *Doctor Atomic* in 2005, *Girls of the Golden West* in 2017, and *Antony and Cleopatra* in 2022. Other production sponsorships include Douglas Moore's *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, Olivier Messiaen's *Saint François d'Assise*, and the 2011 premiere of Francesca Zambello's production of Wagner's *Ring* cycle. Most recently, Bob sponsored San Francisco Opera's sold-out co-commission *El último sueño de Frida y Diego* by composer Gabriela Lena Frank and librettist Nilo Cruz, and *Omar* by Rhiannon Giddens and Michael Abels. He has also served on the boards of Opera Parallèle, OPERA America, and Central City Opera.



DREW ALTIZER

Louise Gund (Production Sponsor, *The Handmaid's Tale*)

Louise Gund is an accomplished theater producer with a wide range of artistic talents. She has produced twelve Broadway plays and musicals, winning a Tony Award and Drama Desk Award for *All the Way*, and receiving three additional Tony Award nominations. A subscriber to San Francisco Opera since 2010, Louise has served on the Opera's board of directors since 2013. She has also served on the boards of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Cal Performances, Earthjustice, and the Berkeley Community Chorus and Orchestra. In addition to her major support of these organizations, she is an environmental activist and a staunch advocate on behalf of women's and children's issues. She was awarded the San Francisco Opera Spirit of the Opera Award in 2019 for devoted service to the Company and was the inspiration behind the Opera's Producers Circle. Louise is passionate about enabling creativity to flourish, telling stories of meaning, and ensuring a vibrant future for the arts.



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Retirement age for the Aunts in *The Handmaid's Tale*
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This list reflects gifts received as of August 14, 2024.

HOPE \$650+

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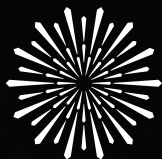
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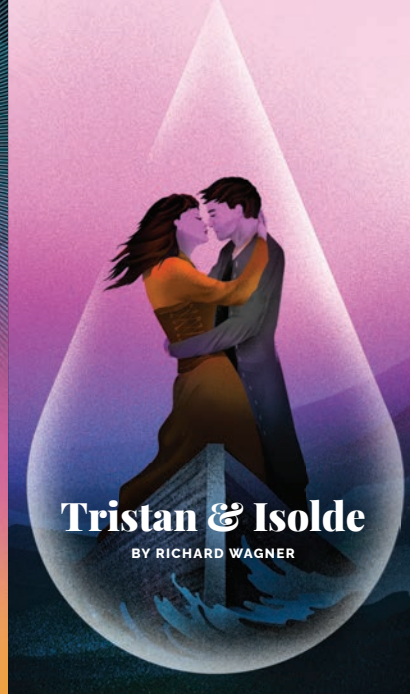
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BASED ON THE NOVEL BY MARGARET ATWOOD



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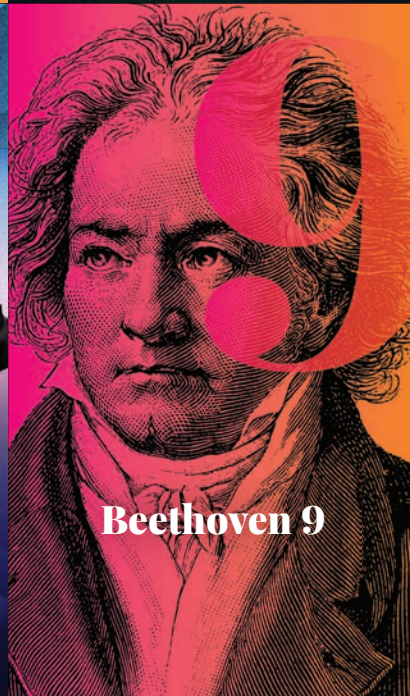
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The Handmaid's Tale

OPERA IN TWO ACTS COMPOSED BY POUL RUDERS
LIBRETTO BY PAUL BENTLEY
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY MARGARET ATWOOD

This production is made possible, in part, by
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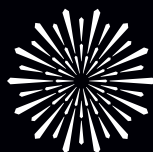
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San Francisco Opera and Royal Danish Theatre Co-Production

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SEPTEMBER 14, 17, 20, 22, 26, 29; OCTOBER 1, 2024



SAN FRANCISCO
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The Handmaid's Tale

A Handmaid pieces together the fragments of her story and tells it to us.

Her life in America changed overnight in 2024 when, triggered partly by a low birth-rate caused by an environmental crisis, fundamentalists established a religious dictatorship known as the Republic of Gilead. Women were denied the right to work, possess property, or read and write. Furthermore, all fertile women of child-bearing age who were in breach of new marriage laws were forcibly separated from their families and sent to indoctrination centres, run by 'Aunts.' There the women became Handmaids, to be posted to privileged childless households and ritually impregnated by the husband in the presence of his wife. If a Handmaid had not produced a child after three postings, she was sent to the colonies to clear up radiation spills.

PROLOGUE

Torn from her husband, Luke, and their daughter as they were attempting to leave the country, the Handmaid was taken to the Red Centre where she participated in classes alongside other women who proved themselves fruitful in the past. Her friend Moira is among them and she meets Janine. Moira risked everything to escape and finally succeeded. Janine breaks down, imagining she is back in the time before the revolution. The Handmaids graduate from the Red Centre and are sent to their first postings.

ACT I

A few years later, the Handmaid, who has not yet produced a child, transfers to her third posting, where she is known as Offred (Of Fred), after the Commander of the house. She recognizes his wife as Serena Joy, who was a television Gospel singer before the revolution. She meets the servant members of the household: Nick and Rita.

Memories of her life before the revolution when she met Luke, fell in love, and had a daughter are ever present in Offred's mind. She remembers her mother's frustrated warnings about the need to keep fighting for hard-won rights and freedoms.

Offred goes shopping, paired with another Handmaid, Ofglen. They meet Janine, now called Ofwarren, who is heavily pregnant. When Offred visits the doctor, she rejects his offer to impregnate her. At home, Nick attempts to talk to Offred, and the Commander enters her bedroom—both are illegal acts. Offred undergoes her monthly ritual impregnation. Afterwards, Nick tells her that the Commander wants to see her privately, which is strictly forbidden.

At the Red Centre, Wives, Commanders, Aunts, and Handmaids gather for the birthing ritual and Janine/Ofwarren's baby is born.

Back home, Offred visits the Commander in his office at night.

ACT II

Next morning, Rita finds Offred lying motionless and overreacts. The Commander caresses Offred during a ritual impregnation. She is terrified Serena Joy noticed and that Offred will be sent to the colonies. Offred and Ofglen go prayer-shopping. Offred learns that there is an underground movement whose code word is Mayday, but she is too frightened to help them. Janine/Ofwarren, whose baby was euthanized due to deformities, breaks down again and is taken away to be killed.

Offred's secret visits to the Commander continue. He brings her gifts and explains things to her: why Rita overreacted, for instance—the previous Handmaid posted here had killed herself.

Desperate for a child, Serena Joy bribes Offred to try getting pregnant by Nick. The bribe is a recent photo of Offred's missing daughter.

The Commander smuggles Offred into Jezebel's, a private brothel for top-ranking men in Gilead. She meets Moira there.

Back home, Offred and Nick make love.

Wives and Handmaids gather to witness and participate in the hanging of 'criminals' at a Salvaging event. The second part of the event is a Particicution where Handmaids are required to destroy a 'rapist.' Ofglen starts by kicking him unconscious to spare him pain—he was in fact a fellow member of the underground movement.

Offred finds she has a new shopping partner; she never again meets the former Ofglen, who has killed herself rather than be exposed as part of the resistance. Serena Joy has learned about Offred's liaisons with the Commander. The police arrive to arrest Offred and to take her from the house. Nick tells her to trust them—that they are from the resistance and that she should go with them, but she is unsure what her fate will be.

First performance: Copenhagen, Denmark; The Royal Danish Theatre (performed in Danish as *Tjenerindens Fortælling*); March 6, 2000

First performance in the U.S.: St. Paul, Minnesota, Ordway Center for the Performing Arts (Minnesota Opera); May 10, 2003

First San Francisco Opera performance: September 14, 2024

Personnel: 19 principals, 52 choristers, 8 dancers, 22 supernumeraries; **101 total**

Orchestra: 3 flutes (2 doubling alto flute, one doubling piccolo), 3 oboes (1 doubling English horn), 3 clarinets (one doubling bass clarinet), 3 bassoons (one doubling contra bassoon), 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, 1 tuba, 1 timpani, 5 percussion, 1 harp, 1 sampler keyboard, 1 digital piano, 1 organ; 46 strings (14 first violins, 10 second violins, 8 violas, 8 cellos, 6 basses); **79 total**

*Conductor***Karen Kamensek***Production***John Fulljames****Associate Director***Lucy Bradley****Set Designer***Chloe Lamford***Associate Set Designer***Helen Hebert****Costume Designer***Christina Cunningham****Lighting Designer***Fabiana Piccioli****Projection Designer***Will Duke****Sound Designer & Mixing Engineer***Rick Jacobsohn***Movement Director***Colm Seery***Chorus Director***John Keene***Assistant Conductor***Robert Mollicone***Musical Preparation***Nathan Salazar, Marika Yasuda,
Kseniia Polstiankina Barrad,
John Churchwell, Fabrizio Corona***Diction***Erie Mills***Assistant Directors***Morgan Robinson, E. Reed Fisher***Stage Manager***Darin Burnett***Assistant Stage Manager***Megan Coutts, Collette Berg,
Jennifer Harber, Jayme O'Hara***Dance Master***Colm Seery***Fight Director***Dave Maier***Intimacy Coordinator***Maya Herbsman***Technical Supervisors***Erik Walstad, Scott Cavallo***Costume Supervisor***Jai Alltizer***Hair and Makeup***Jeanna Parham**

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2024 • 7:30 PM

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 • 7:30 PM

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 • 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22 • 2 PM

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 • 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 • 2 PM

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1 • 7:30 PM

The Handmaid's Tale

Opera in two acts by **Poul Ruders** • Libretto by **Paul Bentley**Based on the novel by **Margaret Atwood**

(Sung in English with English supertitles)

CAST

(in order of vocal appearance)

<i>Offred</i>	Irene Roberts
<i>Aunt Lydia</i>	Sarah Cambridge
<i>Janine/Ofwarren</i>	Katrina Galka*
<i>Moir</i>	Caroline Corrales*†
<i>Moir's Aunt</i>	Silvie Jensen
<i>Serena Joy</i>	Lindsay Ammann*
<i>Offred Double</i>	Simone McIntosh
<i>Luke</i>	Christopher Oglesby
<i>Rita</i>	Sara Couden*
<i>Ofglen</i>	Rhoslyn Jones
<i>Econowife</i>	Edith Dowd*
<i>Widow</i>	Whitney Steele
<i>Handmaid 1</i>	Jacque Wilson*
<i>Handmaid 2</i>	Mary Rauh*
<i>Guard 1</i>	Chester Pidduck
<i>Offred's Mother</i>	Gabrielle Beteag
<i>The Doctor</i>	Matthew DiBattista*
<i>Offred's Commander</i>	John Relyea
<i>Nick</i>	Brenton Ryan
<i>Warren's Wife</i>	Courtney Miller
<i>Handmaid 3</i>	Jesslyn Thomas
<i>Echo</i>	Crystal Kim
<i>Guard 2</i>	William O'Neill
<i>Commander X</i>	Kevin Gino
<i>Girl</i>	Sarah Nadreau*
<i>Man</i>	Michael Jankosky
<i>New Ofglen</i>	Nikola Printz†
<i>Eye</i>	Wilford Kelly
<i>Offred's Daughter</i>	Valerie Corrales
<i>Handmaids, Aunts, Wives, Commanders, Eyes, Guards</i>	

* San Francisco Opera debut † Current Adler Fellow

TIME AND PLACE: 2030, Republic of Gilead with flashbacks to the time before

ACT I

—INTERMISSION—

ACT II

*The performance will last approximately two hours and fifty minutes with one intermission.**Latecomers may not be seated during the performance after the lights have dimmed.**Patrons who leave during the performance may not be reseated until intermission.**The use of cameras, cell phones, and any kind of recording equipment
is strictly forbidden during the performance.**Please turn off and refrain from using all electronic devices.*

To Sing is to Conjure

***The Handmaid's Tale* has been adapted into many artistic disciplines. What are the advantages of opera (singing, music, theater) for conveying this story?**

The Handmaid's Tale should offer a visceral and overwhelming experience; opera's unique strength is in taking us right into the heart of the most extreme emotions.

The fragmentary nature of the book is challenging to bring alive on stage, and the opera has a naturally filmic structure, shifting constantly in and out of locations and periods. If we meet those challenges, live theater is an ideal medium for this multi-layered narrative in which everything we see is a memory. Sometimes these memories, from both the pre- and post-war periods, share the stage simultaneously as Offred tries to understand her younger self. We are unsure which facts can be trusted as events are distorted, duplicated, and mirrored, like in a dream or a nightmare.

In the opera, as in the book, Offred tells her own story. She does this both to piece her own story together and to protest against the things that happened to her and which continue to happen somewhere in our world. This act of protest is strongly felt in the shared experience of live performance.

What is distinctive about Poul Ruders' score and how the musical landscape of the opera affects the storytelling and impact?

Poul's score foregrounds the singing voice; the determination and fragility of the solo voice as well as the homogeneity and strength of the choral voice.

The singing voice is the oldest instrument and, heard naked, takes us out of time and place. The opera emerges from, and ends with, the almost unaccompanied sound of Offred's solo voice. This is a story told by a single voice, determined to be heard. This plaintive voice, singing across time, is a memorable feature of the opera. To write is to imagine an alternative world, to sing is to conjure it.

Yet Offred is not really alone. Instead she is an



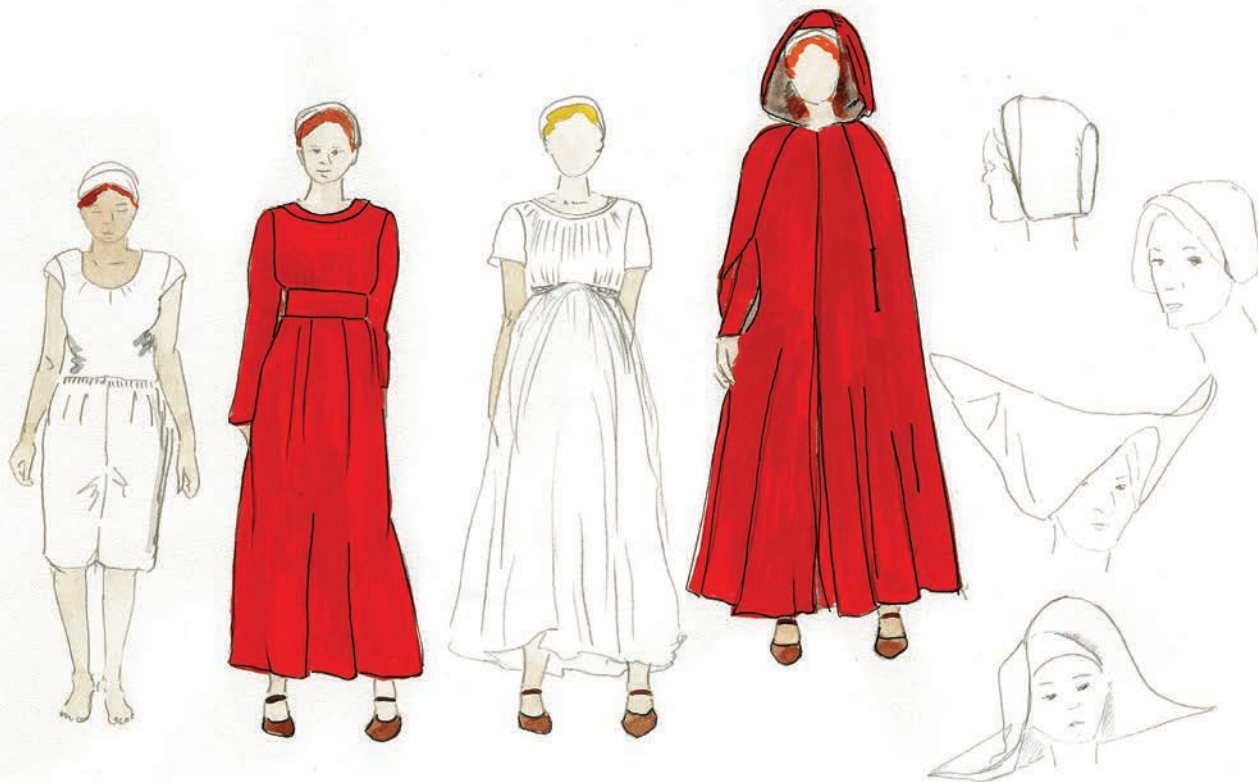
everywoman character whose story, Atwood implies, may be an assembly of many women's voices. So, another great feature of the score is the choral singing of the Handmaids, chanting as they are brainwashed in the Red Centre. This is an opera about a people and our production begins and ends with a group of mothers who will be transformed into Handmaids, and who will finally emerge to sing their story.

Since its 2000 premiere, Poul Ruders' work has been presented around the world. What is most important to you about staging this new production?

We are staging the opera 40 years after the novel was written, and the story comes to life all too easily in a dystopian future a few years from today. So we situate the story not back in the 1990s that Atwood originally imagined but rather in our own world transformed in the 2030s.

Margaret Atwood said in 1985 that everything in the book had happened somewhere in the world but of course its resonances have changed over time. We stage it now against the background of a global rise of polarized and extreme politics, the election of authoritarian governments, the shock of climate breakdown and global pandemic, a collapse of human rights for women in parts of the world such as Afghanistan, and the removal of reproductive rights in the US. The story is an urgent reminder that freedom is hard-won and can be easily lost by a complacent generation.

Any staging must be inspired by the iconic imagery described in the book, but this is no longer imagery which is only found in the fictional world. The red robe and the white headdress of the Handmaid has become a symbol of protest. Around the world, protestors dressed as Handmaids have campaigned in defense of reproductive rights in public squares and outside courtrooms. The red robe has been transformed from a fictional garment of submission to a real-world garment of protest. 🌸



Dressing Gilead

GENERAL DIRECTOR MATTHEW SHILVOCK

IN CONVERSATION WITH COSTUME DESIGNER CHRISTINA CUNNINGHAM

Closely based on Margaret Atwood's dystopian masterpiece, our new co-production of *The Handmaid's Tale* by composer Poul Ruders and librettist Paul Bentley is a piece with an iconography almost unmatched in any other literary work. The red cape and the white headpiece of the Handmaids have become immediately understood symbols of protest, worn at demonstrations when legislative and judicial actions threaten the rights of women. The stratification of society in *The Handmaid's Tale* suggests an approach to costuming that comes powerfully out of the text. I sat down with costume designer Christina Cunningham when she was in San Francisco for costume fittings, and she shared with me how she has brought the nuance of her own design to the text, bringing the work alive for the stage.

Christina makes her San Francisco Opera debut with *The Handmaid's Tale*. She is an incredibly in-demand costume designer, working frequently with director Simon McBurney. When director John Fulljames approached her about this new co-production between Copenhagen and San Francisco, she had some familiarity with the story, having read the book some years before. But she decided to

avoid watching any of the Hulu series that had just come out—she wanted to ensure that her influence was the primary source of the book, not the secondary source of the adaptation.

There were some fundamentals that she knew going in: first, colors play a critical role in defining the stratification of Gilead—they have to be part of the iconography of the piece. Christina noted that this is probably the most prescriptive show that she's ever worked on. Secondly, the Handmaids' headpiece could not cover the ears of the singers—it had to give them aural access. From there she began to envision what could be.

The costumes are not from a specific period, but generally harken back to a mid-20th-century aesthetic when a patriarchal society was more fundamentally ingrained; a time when women's clothes had a more feminine shape but were also more modest and understated. Wherever possible, Christina went back to the book. For example, Margaret Atwood talks of the Handmaids wearing a long red dress and talks of the Wives being in blue. Christina did switch the colors of the Aunts and Marthas: in the book the Marthas are a "dull green" and the Aunts are in



Top: The Handmaids' and Wives' dresses.

Center: Christina's designs for the Handmaids.

Bottom: Designs and an example of the Wives' costumes.

brown, but Christina favored the dull green for the Aunts to emphasize the militarization of their authoritarian rule.

Christina wanted the Handmaids' dresses to be flattering but reserved. She gave them a slightly open neckline, and used a heavy fabric that gives a glide to the dress as the Handmaids walk, and a higher waistline that can work for pregnant Handmaids. In the book the Handmaids are in red dresses, the color of blood. The production's capes are made in a strong red, but Christina chose to soften the tone of the dresses beneath them, which are still red but in a slightly muted tone to give the subtle feel of many washes, of being handed on from Handmaid to Handmaid.

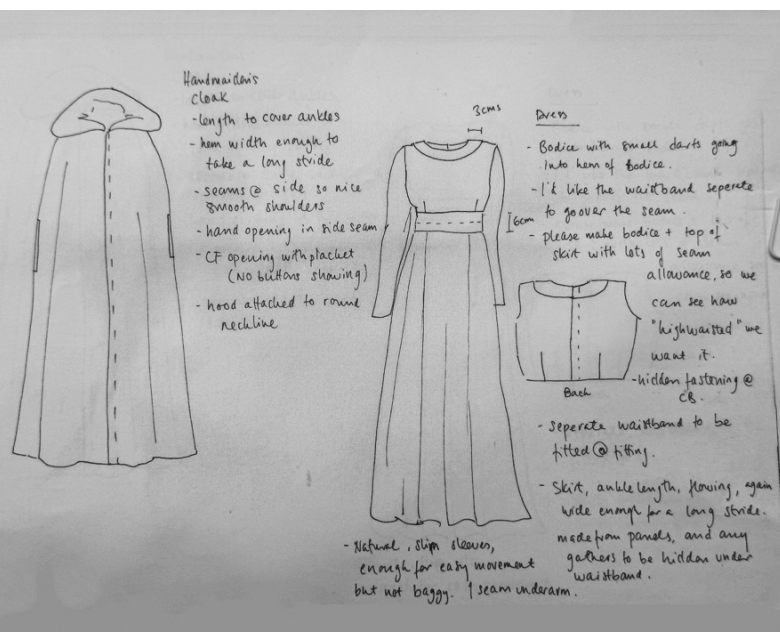
The 'wings' headaddresses were a challenge. The book says of the prescribed white wings: "they keep us from seeing, but also being seen." Offred describes her room in the Commander's house as "In a nunnery ... time is measured by bells, and there are no mirrors." Christina had seen images of the red and white Handmaids' uniform being used in protests in which the white wings were much more enclosing. But, in an opera, the singers have to be able to hear themselves and each other, and see each other and the conductor. She needed a design that would take all of that into account.

She worked with a milliner in Copenhagen to come up with a material not quite as heavy as buckram and then worked with singers to try out shapes and sizes, to ensure that they could hear, see the conductor, and be slimline enough to credibly lean in and whisper to each other (important for the resistance) without hitting headpieces. To ensure the integrity of the wings, she added a folded seam on top to strengthen the edges without adding weight. As Christina notes, these headpieces take a lot of space to travel! (See images on next page.)

The Handmaids also have a small bonnet that they wear when not out in public, and Christina came up with a clever magnet system that allows the main headpiece to lock onto the bonnet to ensure it's always centered and secure.

The Wives are dressed in a feminine but modest look from the 1950s, again in a slightly muted blue, and a headpiece that they wear when going out to show a little more formality. It's as much a uniform as that of the Handmaids.

The Aunts embody an element of the military, and Christina turned to female military uniforms as inspiration, including a pin with the eye of Gilead.



Top and center: The designs and example of an aunt's costume, including a close-up of the eye of Gilead pin.

Bottom: The Handmaids' headpiece and bonnet showing the strengthened seams and magnet system.

The Marthas have a more muted brown palette for their look.

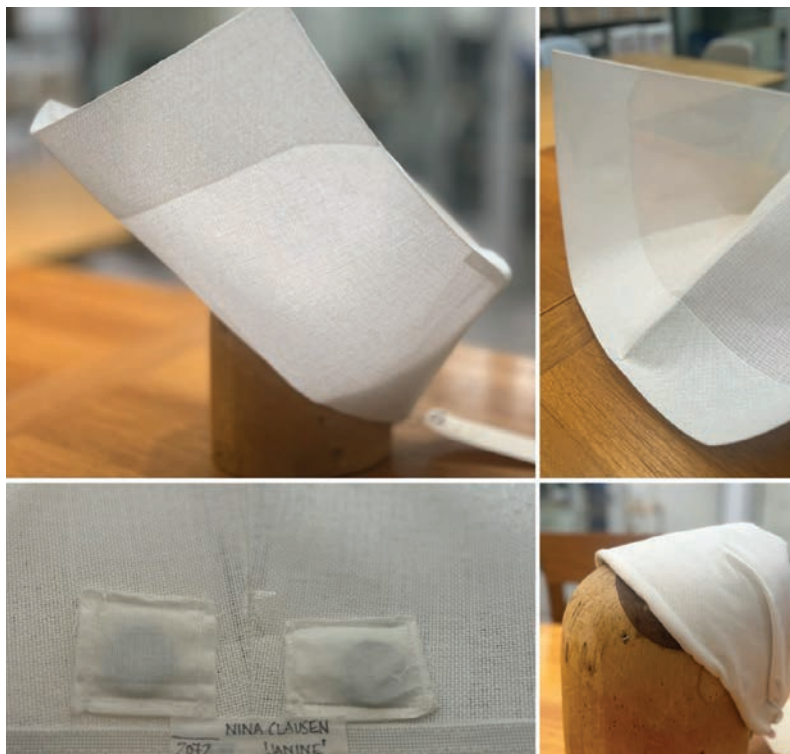
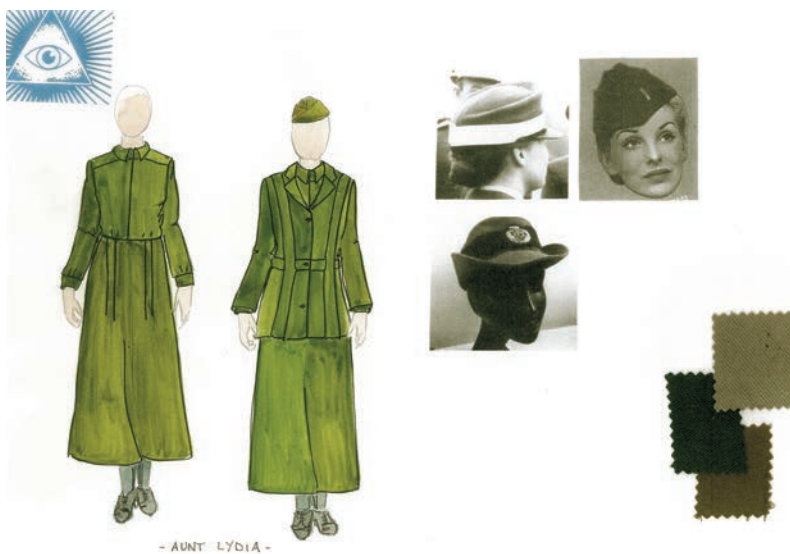
For the Commanders' costumes, Christina wanted the men to feel smartly dressed but also be threatening and militaristic. She decided to go beyond the regular three-piece suit and was inspired by the British police, using 1990s versions of the police dress uniform. Christina found a surplus supplier that provided most of the uniforms.

There are also a number of costumes from "the time before"—the pre-story, before Gilead takes over American society in a coup. These are off-the-rack clothes aimed to show the normalcy of society before all of this unfolds. These scenes feature a number of children, and Christina noted a Covid-quirk. The production was originally intended to be produced in Copenhagen and San Francisco in 2020. When it came back to Copenhagen in late 2022, there was a Danish requirement that those people originally cast be offered the job again, including the supernumeraries (or extras). Those children cast in 2020 had outgrown their costumes and so Christina and the team there had to adapt and adjust.

An interesting crossover from the time before to present day Gilead happens at Jezebel's—the nightclub that the Commander takes Offred to in the second act. Here the ladies entertaining the Commanders are in clothes of the time before, but it's as though they've found mismatched items from a dressing up box left up in an attic somewhere—things that the commanders have squirreled away from the time before and that they're making the ladies wear.

In a production with this much uniformity in the costuming—big blocks of commonality on stage—the costume staff must be on heightened awareness to the smallest of details. Seams, colors of fabrics, shades of white—all of these things have to maintain an absolute uniformity, otherwise the audiences' eyes will focus on the differences not the commonalities, particularly when set against Chloe Lamford's clean white set (a note that Chloe was also the designer of *Innocence* just on stage in June).

It's fascinating to see how Christina has fashioned this production, always sensitive to the text but ensuring the practicality of the costumes on stage to both tell the story and to allow the singers the freedom to perform within the restrictions of their Gilead uniforms. It's a critical part of how we bring "page to stage" and interpret the story through an operatic lens. 🌸





A 2017 demonstration in Washington, D.C.
with protesters dressed as Handmaids.
B. CHRISTOPHER/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

The Handmaid's Tale in the Classroom

**OAKLAND TEACHER AND WRITER ANDREW SIMMONS
TALKS ABOUT THE ONGOING RELEVANCE
AND IMPACT OF MARGARET ATWOOD'S BOOK
ON NEW GENERATIONS OF READERS.**

For those who aren't familiar, what is *The Handmaid's Tale* about?

The novel turns out to be a primary source document of the Gileadean regime, a totalitarian theocratic patriarchy inscribed (via coup and environmental calamity) into the guts of what was once the United States. It's narrated by Offred, the protagonist, on a series of audio recordings dubbed onto contraband cassette tapes (Boy George and Twisted Sister!) during a presumed escape. She is the representative Handmaid—a fertile woman assigned to a high-status household for a sanctified procreation “ceremony.” Facing plummeting birth rates, Gilead has a broad agenda of ethnic and religious cleansing beyond depriving women of autonomy. Its ideology blends 17th-century New England theology with early 1980s “family values” conservatism. The Commander, an apex predator of Gilead and head of Offred's new household, tells Offred that the now-vanquished feminist movements gave men “nothing to work for, nothing to fight for.” Sex was too easy, chasing money “too abstract.” For fulfillment, men had to subjugate.

Decades-old works of speculative fiction like *The Handmaid's Tale* are often (unfairly) expected to predict our present course at any given time. A novel rooted in historical record, *The Handmaid's Tale* is maybe most valuable (to me, at least) in how it explores how we study what's already happened. A self-described “refugee of the past,” Offred is old enough to recall college classes and political suffrage. She records her story for the benefit of a potential future audience while acknowledging her likely insignificance. According to Margaret Atwood, Offred's decision to document her story is “an act of hope.” It requires a certain faith in the humanity of those future audiences, the belief that they will in turn perceive her humanity and be moved, educated, and emboldened by what they learn. We should want the same from our own historians, the generations to come who may study and judge us for values, habits, and inaction.

Why do you think this story was turned into a film, TV series, ballet and an opera? What draws artists to tell and retell this story?

We like dystopias. Maybe we tantalize ourselves with stylish fantasies of future horrors and then rejoice that our lives are not (yet) so terrible. Or we fret and feel galvanized in our present to fight to avoid that scary future. The television show began production towards the end of 2016,

when, for many, the political climate reflected a slide towards authoritarianism, the mainstreaming of reactionary ideas that included gleeful celebrations of sexism and bigotry. When some major political actors called for a return to American greatness, they used the language of violent revolution.

You teach this book in your class each year. What are some of the students' responses to the story that have surprised or encouraged you?

The novel fittingly opens in the repurposed shell of a high school gymnasium, with Aunt Lydia instructing Handmaids-in-training. Unlike Offred, the next generation of women, the girls of Gilead, will have no fading memories of pep rallies and homecoming dances, of makeout sessions and fashion trends. Aunt Lydia tells Janine, another Handmaid-to-be, that she was to blame for her rape at 14. Acquiescing to “the ceremony” is, on the other hand, solemn duty to God and Gilead. The other women pile on—another hideous conditioning routine: feel shame for being a victim, be complicit in shaming others, feel shame for that as well.

Teenagers often capably diagnose unfairness in their domain and still struggle to resist it. In high school, as in Gilead, appearances matter. Social survival can mean ignoring inconvenient truths, even adding your voice to an ugly chorus. Janine's teenage experience and the community response register as familiar to many teens, especially girls.

And I unfortunately witness it in class: The book angers students because casual sexism, harassment, shame, and gaslighting feature in their social universe too. If you've read local news, you know that sexual assault and harassment scandals have plagued high schools across the Bay Area. In the past few years, several widely read articles have warned of the excesses of campus cancel culture, suggesting that droves of innocent boys may have their lives destroyed by false accusations or exaggerated responses to minor infractions. This may happen, and it's bad if and when it does, but the exact opposite pattern has been my experience: Most of the time, the accusations are valid and the consequences for harmers nonexistent or insignificant.

I see parallels with the Commander as well. He wants Gilead to be “bearable” for women, but like a kid enabling a video game cheat code, in pursuing his affair with Offred, he seeks the thrill of seduction without the possibility of resistance. He describes himself as

“I can teach *The Handmaid’s Tale* differently every year because students are always facing phenomena—whether supreme court decisions or nuggets of pop culture—that all but scream relevance.”

“ordinary” yet finds a “natural” arrangement at Jezebel’s, an elites-only sex club. There, in a “juvenile display,” he parades Offred for his cronies pretty much like an insecure high school guy, but what he really craves is intimacy. And as one of my seniors once memorably announced in English class, you can’t “hack” that.

Tellingly, some young readers note the Commander’s politeness. He enjoys Scrabble. He doesn’t force himself on Offred. Year after year, they don’t always immediately grasp that he does force himself on her, that his power to give her taboo trinkets (or not) is the point, that he likes watching her read because it is forbidden, an exotic dance from a bygone era. Just as he marvels at lawyers and businesswomen trapped at Jezebel’s, their former callings sanded away. The students prefer to see him as a good guy in a bad system. He is polite while being monstrous because that’s how monstrosity usually works.

This is an important lesson for teenagers, who need to become adults with monster-detection capabilities at full tilt.

In what ways have students’ responses changed over time?

Atwood has called the novel a “literature of witness.” It asks you to look at what is going on around you, to diagnose dangers. Even if parts feel dated or some essential elements insufficiently addressed, like Gilead’s overt racism, for example, its warning is always pretty fresh. I can teach *The Handmaid’s Tale* differently every year because students are always facing phenomena—whether supreme court decisions or nuggets of pop culture—that all but scream relevance. So, last November, while we had to study Texas abortion restrictions and subsequent protests, we could also consider how *Barbie*, a subversive confection of a film, and Megan Thee Stallion, a swaggering and popular female rapper, each cleverly

assailed misogyny. This November, something else will surface, another chapter in the same story.

Students can really imagine how a contemporary totalitarian patriarchy might be different. Forget neighbors snooping and spying—the stranglehold on citizens would be enforced by extensive digital surveillance. The fundamentalist theology would have to be allied with irreverent, caustic social media-driven conspiracy-mongering and frank semi-ironic displays of sexism. Instead of a controlled media diet, citizens would have so much muck to wade through online that they would just give up.

One thing that is absolutely evolving is that too many boys—a significant minority, let’s say—are being indoctrinated into misogynistic worldviews through bodybuilding influencers, content streamers, and pickup artist charlatans who masquerade as life coaches or financial advisors or mere goofballs. A *Handmaid’s Tale* for 2024 might require a menagerie of such characters! Some boys genuinely believe the script they’re handed, and others find the tone and ideas so edgy and daring that it passes for humor. But when the algorithm is responding and finding new increasingly virulent versions to share, one can only laugh ironically for so long before some of the ideas take hold. And these basic beliefs about where women belong in society are a skip away from the Sons of Jacob, the political group in *The Handmaid’s Tale* that overthrows the government and establishes Gilead.

Consistently though, when I poll students every June, a surprising number call *The Handmaid’s Tale* their favorite book of the year. Few students have seen the TV show before they read the novel, so they come in without much prior knowledge, just at most some sense of the costume look from a protest they’ve seen condensed into a clip online. 🌟

Andrew Simmons lives in Oakland, teaches public high school English, and writes for publications.

Margaret Atwood's best-selling novel from 1985 has sprung off into numerous artistic statements, including film, ballet, opera, theater, radio, and streaming adaptations. Each time the story returns it reflects a new center of gravity for audiences, never feeling dated but rather "right here, right now."



FILM

Natasha Richardson as Offred in a still from *The Handmaid's Tale*, directed by Volker Schlöndorff, 1990.



BALLET

A new ballet choreographed by Lila York and produced by the Royal Winnipeg Ballet premiered in 2013 and was revived most recently in 2022.



TELEVISION

Hulu developed an original series starring Elizabeth Moss as Offred in 2017. The award-winning series' sixth season will launch in 2025.



OPERA

The operatic adaptation by composer Poul Ruders and librettist Paul Bentley had its 2000 world premiere in Copenhagen and was sung in Danish as *Tjenerindens Fortælling*. A recording of the premiere (left) was released in 2001.



THE OPERA'S WEST COAST PREMIERE

Ruders opera, which has been performed in Minneapolis, Boston, Toronto, and other cities makes its West Coast premiere in a San Francisco Opera co-production with The Royal Danish Theatre.

CAMILLA WINTHER



San Francisco Public Library

Page to Stage: *The Handmaid's Tale* Book Club

San Francisco Opera's Department of Diversity, Equity and Community will be expanding the Company's partnership with San Francisco Public Library in presenting **Page to Stage: *The Handmaid's Tale* Book Club**. Join us to explore this haunting story and engage in deep and impactful discussions revolving around Margaret Atwood's dystopian novel, its timely themes, and the production brought to stage by San Francisco Opera.

Book Club participants will receive a free copy of Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*.

RICHMOND BRANCH:

Thursday, September 5 • 5PM

VISITACION VALLEY BRANCH:

Wednesday, September 11 • 5PM

OCEAN VIEW BRANCH:

Saturday, September 14 • 2PM

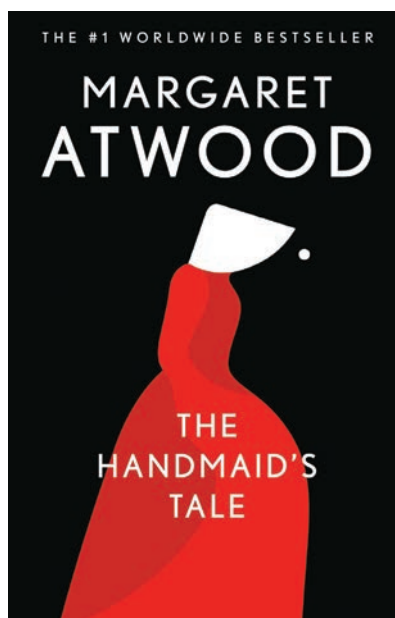
NOE VALLEY BRANCH:

Friday, September 20 • 3PM

MARINA BRANCH:

Sunday, September 22 • 2PM

These sessions will be led by *The Opera in You* Teaching Artist Patricia Cotter.



The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood.

Artist Profiles

American Debut * San Francisco Opera Debut ♪ Role Debut † Current Adler Fellow + Merola Opera Program Graduate ◇ Merola and Adler Fellowship Graduate



POUL RUDERS*

(Ringsted, Denmark)

Composer

Recent and

Upcoming: *The*

Handmaid's Tale
(Yarra Valley Opera,

Boston Lyric Opera, English National Opera, Copenhagen's Royal Danish Opera, Greenville's Glow Lyric Theatre, Theater Freiburg); Symphony No. 6 (Odense); *The Thirteenth Child* (Odense). Composer of five operas, more than 50 symphonic works and concertos, and dozens of solo and chamber pieces



PAUL BENTLEY*

(Sheffield, England)

Librettist

Librettist for Poul Ruders' operas
The Handmaid's Tale
and *Kafka's Trial*;

A Handmaid's Diary; *The Man Who Came After Hyacinth Bobo*, a Fourth Crusade novel; *Inquisition*, a play about the Jesuit scientist Teilhard de Chardin



KAREN KAMENSEK

(Chicago, Illinois)

Conductor

San Francisco Opera

Highlights: Carlisle

Floyd's *Susannah*

Recent and

Upcoming: *Tosca* (London's Royal Ballet and Opera); Philip Glass' *Akhmat* (English National Opera, Metropolitan Opera); Glass' *Satyagraha* (ENO); Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* (Welsh National Opera); Bernstein's *Candide* (WNO); *Die Zauberflöte* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Victoria Borisova-Ollas' *Dracula* (Royal Swedish Opera); Bernstein's *Wonderful Town* (Norwegian Opera & Ballet)



IRENE ROBERTS* ♪

Mezzo-Soprano

(Sacramento, California)

Offred

San Francisco Opera

Highlights: *Giulietta*

in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*; title role of *Carmen*; Bao Chai in *Dream of the Red Chamber*; Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*

Recent and Upcoming: Venus in *Tännehauser* (Edinburgh, Bayreuth, Lyon); Kundry in *Parsifal* (Hannover State Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Munich's Bavarian State Opera); Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde* (Palermo's Teatro Massimo, Berlin); Hänsel in *Hänsel und Gretel* (Berlin)



LINDSAY AMMANN* ♪

Mezzo-Soprano

(Tucson, Arizona)

Serena Joy

Recent and

Upcoming: *Mescalina*

in *Le Grand Macabre* (Munich's Bavarian State Opera); Maddalena in *Rigoletto* (Deutsche Oper Berlin); Erda in *Siegfried* (Atlanta Opera); Nurse in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (Lyon Opera); Third Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* (Metropolitan Opera); Erda, First Norn and Flosshilde in *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (Berlin)
Instagram: @lindsayammann



SARAH CAMBRIDGE* ♪

Soprano

(Vancouver, B.C., Canada)

Aunt Lydia

San Francisco Opera

Highlights: Foreign

Princess in *Rusalka*; Third Norn and Ortlinde in the *Ring* cycle
Recent and Upcoming: Helmwig in *Die*

Walküre (Zurich Opera); Chrysothemis in *Elektra* (Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe); Sieglinde in *Die Walküre* (Opéra National de Bordeaux)
San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship: 2017, 2018

Merola Opera Program: 2016

Facebook: @sarahcambridgesoprano

Instagram: @sarahcambridge



JOHN RELYEA* ♪

Bass

(New Market, Ontario, Canada)

The Commander

San Francisco Opera

Highlights:

Méphistopélès in *Faust*; title role of *Le Nozze di Figaro*; Colline in *La Bohème*

Recent and Upcoming: *Bluebeard's Castle* (Paris Opera); Claggart in *Billy Budd* (Rome Opera, Oslo); *Les Huguenots* (Semperoper Dresden); *Don Carlos* (Metropolitan Opera); Brett Dean's *Hamlet* (Metropolitan Opera); title role of Mefistofele (Rome)
San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship Program: 1996, 1997

Merola Opera Program: 1995



SIMONE

MCINTOSH* ♪

Mezzo-Soprano

(Paris, France)

Offred Double

San Francisco Opera

Highlights: Second

Wood Nymph in *Rusalka*

Recent and Upcoming: Romeo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* (Staatstheater Hannover); Hänsel in *Hänsel und Gretel* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Proserpina and Speranza in *L'Orfeo* (Zurich)
San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship: 2019, 2020, 2021

Merola Opera Program: 2018

ARTIST PROFILES CONTINUED



**CHRISTOPHER
OGLESBY** ♫

Tenor
(Woodstock, Georgia)

Luke

San Francisco Opera

Highlights: Dancaïro

in *Carmen*; Benvolio in *Romeo and Juliet*; Edmondo in *Manon Lescaut*; Jaquino in *Fidelio*

Recent and Upcoming: A Shepherd and a Sailor in *Tristan und Isolde* (San Francisco Opera); Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* (Calgary Opera); Rodolfo in *La Bohème* (Utah Opera)
Adler Fellowship Program: 2019, 2020, 2021

Merola Opera Program: 2018



BRENTON RYAN ♫

Tenor
(Sedalia, Missouri)

Nick

San Francisco Opera

Highlights: Janek in *The Makropulos Case*;

A Novice in *Billy Budd*; Curzio in *Le Nozze di Figaro*; Eros in *Antony and Cleopatra*

Recent and Upcoming: Mime in *Das Rheingold* (London's Royal Ballet and Opera); Monostatos in *Die Zauberflöte* (Valencia's Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia; CM in Gregory Spears' *The Righteous* (Santa Fe)
Instagram: @brenton_ryan



RHOSLYN JONES ♫

Soprano
(Aldergrove, B.C., Canada)

Ofglen

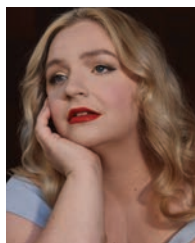
San Francisco Opera

Highlights: Fifth

Maid servant in *Elektra*; Julia Dent Grant in Philip Glass' *Appomattox*; Frasquita in *Carmen*; Yvette in *La Rondine*; Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte*

Recent and Upcoming: Lisa in *The Queen of Spades* (West Bay Opera)

San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship: 2006, 2007
Merola Opera Program: 2004, 2005
@rozwithazed



**CAROLINE
CORRALES** * ♫+

Soprano
(Saint Louis, Missouri)

Moir

Recent and

Upcoming: *Carmen*

(Santa Fe Opera); *Falstaff* (Santa Fe); Huang Ruo's *M. Butterfly* (Santa Fe); Ma Zegner in Missy Mazzoli's *Proving Up* (Boston University Opera Institute); Anne Trulove in *The Rake's Progress* (Boston)
San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship Program: 2024
Merola Opera Program: 2023



KATRINA GALKA * ♫

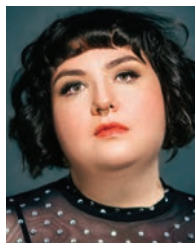
Soprano
(Milwaukee, Wisconsin)

Janine/Ofwarren

Recent and

Upcoming: Marie in

La Fille du Régiment (Opera Colorado); Olympia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (Zurich); Musetta in *La Bohème* (Hamburg State Opera); First Niece in *Peter Grimes* (Milan); Adele in *Die Fledermaus* (Hamburg); title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* (New Orleans Opera); Blondchen in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (Munich's Bavarian State Opera)
Instagram: @katrina.galka
Facebook: @KatrinaGalkaSoprano



**GABRIELLE
BETEAG** ♫

Mezzo-Soprano
(Lilburn, Georgia)

OFFRED'S MOTHER

San Francisco Opera

Highlights: Third

Frida Image in *El último sueño de Frida y*

Diego; Iras in *Antony and Cleopatra*

Recent and Upcoming: Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* (San Francisco Ballet); Anna I in Kurt Weill's *Seven Deadly Sins* (Wolf Trap); Mercédès in *Carmen* (The Atlanta Opera)

San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship Program: 2022, 2023

Merola Opera Program: 2021

Instagram: @mezzogabrielle

Facebook: @MezzoGabrielle



SARA COUDEN * ♫

Contralto
(Walnut Creek, California)

Rita

Recent and

Upcoming: Nurse in

Dukas' *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* (West Edge Opera); Mother, Chinese Cup, and Dragon Fly in *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* (Philadelphia Orchestra); Handel's *Messiah* (Seattle); Ottavia in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* (West Edge Opera); Baba the Turk in *The Rake's Progress* (Lakes Area Music Festival); Juno in *Semele* (St Petersburg Opera Company)



**MATTHEW
DIBATTISTA** *

Tenor
(Medford, Massachusetts)

The Doctor

Recent and

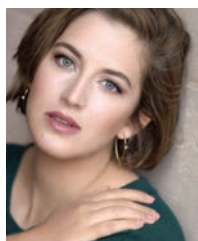
Upcoming: Teacher in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* (Boston Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall); Triquet in *Eugene Onegin* (Santa Fe Opera); Beppe in *Pagliacci* (Palm Beach Opera); Monostatos in *Die Zauberflöte* (Palm Beach Opera); Witch in *Hänsel und Gretel* (Michigan Opera Theatre); Doctor in *The Handmaid's Tale* (Boston Lyric Opera); Scaramuccio in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Santa Fe)
Instagram: @MattDiBaTenor
Facebook: @Matthew DiBattista – Tenor

ARTIST PROFILES CONTINUED



NIKOLA PRINTZ†
Mezzo-Soprano
(Oakland, California)
New Ofglen
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: Voices of
Unborn Children/

Servants in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*
Recent and Upcoming: Mercédès in
Carmen (San Francisco Opera); Rosina in
Il Barbiere di Siviglia (Opera San José);
title role of *Carmen* (Festival Opera, San
José); title role of *L'Italiana in Algeri*
(Opera Memphis)
San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship
Program: 2023, 2024
Merola Opera Program: 2021, 2022



JESSLYN THOMAS†
Soprano
(Rindge,
New Hampshire)
Handmaid 3
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: First Page

in *Lohengrin*; Sister Alice in *Dialogues of
the Carmelites*; Bridesmaid in *Le Nozze di
Figaro*; Madrigal Singer in *Manon Lescaut*;
Mrs. O'Malley in *It's a Wonderful Life*
Recent and Upcoming: Soprano soloist
in Faure's Requiem (First Congregational
Church of Palo Alto); Mahler's Fourth
Symphony (UC Berkeley)
Member of San Francisco Opera
Regular Chorus



COURTNEY MILLER†
Mezzo-Soprano
(Madison, Wisconsin)
Warren's Wife
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: Sister St.
Charles in *Dialogues*

of the *Carmelites*
Recent and Upcoming: Marcellina in
Le Nozze di Figaro (Sacramento
Philharmonic & Opera); Gertrude in
Roméo et Juliette (Opera San José);

Berta in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (San José)
Member of San Francisco Opera Extra
Chorus
@mezzomiller
Website: courtneymiller.com



CRYSTAL KIM†
Soprano
(Seoul, South Korea)
Echo
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: Cousin in
Madame Butterfly

Recent and Upcoming: Soprano
soloist in Ives' Fourth Symphony (San
Francisco Symphony); soprano soloist
in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony
(Symphony Silicon Valley)
Member of San Francisco Opera
Regular Chorus
Instagram: @sfsealion



EDITH DOWD*†
Mezzo-Soprano
(Johnson City,
Tennessee)
Econowife
Recent and
Upcoming:

Engagements with Metropolitan Opera
Chorus and Berlin State Opera Chorus
Member of San Francisco Opera
Regular Chorus



WHITNEY STEELE†
Mezzo-Soprano
(Portland, Oregon)
Widow
San Francisco
Opera Highlights:
Guadalupe Ponti in

El último sueño de Frida y Diego;
Aunt in *Madame Butterfly*;
Page in *Lohengrin*
Recent and Upcoming: Quartet in
Everest (Opera Parallèle)
Member of San Francisco Opera
Regular Chorus



JACQUE WILSON*†
Mezzo-Soprano
(Fresno, California)
Handmaid 1
Recent and
Upcoming: Mother in
Little Women (Island

City Opera); alto soloist in Beethoven's
Ninth Symphony (Resounding Achord);
alto soloist in John Corigliano's *Fern Hill*
(Peninsula Cantare); alto soloist in
Beethoven's Mass in C (Peninsula
Cantare); alto soloist in Haydn's *Mass in
Time of War* (Peninsula Cantare)
Member of San Francisco Opera
Regular Chorus and Philharmonia
Baroque Orchestra and Chorale



MARY RAUH*†
Mezzo-Soprano
(Lihue, Hawaii)
Handmaid 2
Recent and
Upcoming: Vivaldi's
Gloria (Mission

Dolores Basilica); Jan Zelenka's Gloria
(Mission Dolores Basilica); Forester's
Wife and Owl in *The Cunning Little Vixen*
(Pocket Opera); Mrs. Herring in Britten's
Albert Herring (Pocket Opera); Charlotte
in *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*
(Pocket Opera)
Member of San Francisco Opera Extra
Chorus



SILVIE JENSEN†
Mezzo-Soprano
(San Francisco,
California)
Moir's Aunt
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: Page in

Lohengrin; Mother in *Madame Butterfly*
Recent and Upcoming: Selysette in
Ariane et Barbe Bleue (West Edge
Opera); Maddelena in *Rigoletto* (Opera
Modesto); Juno in *Semele* (American
Bach Soloists)

ARTIST PROFILES CONTINUED

Member of San Francisco Opera
Regular Chorus
Website: silviejensen.com



KEVIN GINO♪

Tenor
(Diamond Bar,
California)

Commander X
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: Uncle

Yakuside in *Madame Butterfly*;
Messenger in *Il Trovatore*

Recent and Upcoming: Alfred in *Die Fledermaus* (Pocket Opera); Camille in *Die Lustige Witwe* (Pocket Opera); Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* (Pocket Opera)
Member of San Francisco Opera
Regular Chorus



CHESTER PIDDUCK♪

Tenor
(Saint Louis, Missouri)

Guard
San Francisco Opera
Highlights: Mr. Martini
in *It's a Wonderful Life*;

Parpignol in *La Bohème*; Nantucket Sailor
in *Moby-Dick*; Waiter in *Arabella*; Slaver
in *Omar*

Recent and Upcoming: Prince Ramiro in
La Cenerentola (San Francisco Opera
Guild)

Member of San Francisco Opera
Regular Chorus



WILFORD KELLY♪

Bass-Baritone
(Miami, Florida)

Eye

Recent and
Upcoming: Bartolo in
Le Nozze di Figaro

(San Francisco Conservatory of Music);
Gus O'Neill in John Musto's *Later the*
Same Evening (SFCM); Leone in Handel's
Tamerlano (SFCM); Engagements with
West Edge Opera, Jacksonville Symphony

Member of San Francisco Opera
Regular Chorus
Website: wilfordkelly.com



SARAH NADREAU*♪

Mezzo-Soprano
(Spokane, Washington)

Girl

Recent and
Upcoming: Hänsel in
Hänsel und Gretel

(Trentino's Music Academy International)
Member of San Francisco Opera
Regular Chorus



MICHAEL JANKOSKY♪

Tenor
(Pittsburgh,
Pennsylvania)
Man

San Francisco Opera

Highlights: Engineer in *The (R)evolution*
of *Steve Jobs*; Giuseppe in *La Traviata*;
Peasant in *Eugene Onegin*; Prune Vendor
in *La Bohème*

Recent and Upcoming: Tenor soloist in
Bach's Magnificat (San Francisco
Symphony); Mendelssohn's Second
Symphony: *Lobgesang* (SFS); Stacy
Garrop's *Terra Nostra* (San Francisco
Choral Society)

Member of San Francisco Opera
Regular Chorus and San Francisco
Symphony Chorus



WILLIAM O'NEILL♪

Bass-Baritone
(Providence,
Rhode Island)

Guard

San Francisco Opera
Highlights: Ernie in *It's*

a Wonderful Life; Slaver in *Omar*; soloist
in *Sweeney Todd*; Moroccan soldier in
Two Women; Drunk in *Show Boat*

Recent and Upcoming: Member of San
Francisco Opera Regular Chorus



JOHN FULLJAMES*

(Newcastle, UK)

Stage Director

Recent and
Upcoming: *The*
Handmaid's Tale
(Copenhagen's

Royal Danish Opera); *Die Walküre*
(Copenhagen); John Adams' *Nixon in*
China (Madrid's Teatro Real,
Copenhagen, Scottish Opera); *Fidelio*
(Polish National Opera); *Don Giovanni*
(Greek National Opera); *Orfeo ed Euridice*
(Milan's Teatro alla Scala); Kurt Weill's
Street Scene (Madrid, Opera Cologne);
Così fan tutte (Bucharest Opera)



LUCY BRADLEY#

(West London, UK)

Associate Director

Recent and
Upcoming: Director of
The Flying Dutchman
(OperaUpClose)

Associate Director of John Adams' *Nixon*
in *China* (Madrid's Teatro Real), Kurt
Weill's *Street Scene* (Madrid), *The*
Handmaid's Tale (Royal Danish Opera)
Revival Director of *Tosca* (London's Royal
Ballet and Opera)

Instagram: @lucy_loves_london
X: @Lucyloveslondon



CHLOE LAMFORD

(Deal, UK)

Set Designer

San Francisco Opera
Highlights: Kaija
Saariaho's *Innocence*

Recent and

Upcoming: *Orfeo* (Zurich Opera); *Rusalka*
(London's Royal Ballet and Opera);
Innocence (Aix-en-Provence, Helsinki,
London); *La Bohème* (English National
Opera); *The Handmaid's Tale*
(Copenhagen); *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Helsinki,
Luxembourg, Barcelona, Copenhagen);
Pelléas et Mélisande (Aix, Tokyo)

CHRISTINA CUNNINGHAM#

(London, UK)

Costume Designer

Recent and Upcoming: *Wozzeck* (Aix-en-Provence); *Carmen* (Scottish Opera); *The Handmaid's Tale* (Copenhagen's Royal Danish Opera); *The Rake's Progress* (Amsterdam's Dutch National Opera); *Nabucco* (Opéra Orchestre National Montpellier); *People, Places and Things* (Trafalgar Theatre); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (London's Bridge Theatre); *Alys, Always* (Bridge Theatre); *Julius Caesar* (Bridge Theatre); *Grief Is the Thing with Feathers* (Dublin's Black Box Theatre)

**FABIANA PICCOLI***

(Rome, Italy)

Lighting Designer

Recent and Upcoming: *Semele* (Paris' Théâtre des Champs-Élysées);

La Gioconda (Salzburg Easter Festival); *Trouble in Tahiti* and *A Quiet Place* (London's Royal Ballet and Opera); *Don Giovanni* (Lille Opera, Greek National Opera); *Aida* (Savonlinna Festival); *The Handmaid's Tale* (Copenhagen's Royal Danish Opera); *Rigoletto* (London); *Eugene Onegin* (Scottish Opera, Rhin Opera)

**WILL DUKE***

(Chichester, UK)

Projection Designer

Recent and Upcoming: *Missy Mazzoli's Breaking the Waves* (Detroit, Paris'

Opéra Comique, Scottish Opera); *Peter Grimes* (Milan, Madrid); *Don Giovanni* (Gothenburg, Greek National Opera); *Wozzeck* (Aix-en-Provence); *Carmen* (Scottish Opera); John Adams' *Nixon in China* (Madrid, Copenhagen); *Aida* (Copenhagen); *Cabaret* (Paris' Lido); *The Handmaid's Tale* (Copenhagen)
Website: willduke.net

**RICK JACOBSON**

(Cortlandt Manor, New York)

Sound Designer and Mixing Engineer**San Francisco Opera****Highlights:** Mason

Bates and Mark Campbell's *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*

Recent and Upcoming: *La Bohème* (The Philadelphia Orchestra at Bravo! Vail); Mason Bates and Gene Scheer's *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay* (Indiana University)

Instagram: @rick.jacobsohn

**HELEN HEBERT***

(London, UK)

Associate Set Designer

Recent and Upcoming: *Dialogues of the Carmelites*

(Liège Opera); *Alcina* (Wuppertal Opera); *Next to Normal* (London's Wyndham's Theatre); *Don Giovanni* (Aix en Provence Festival); *Little Miss Burden*; *Sh't Happens*

Website: helenhebert.com

**JOHN KEENE**

(Lancaster, Pennsylvania)

Chorus Director**San Francisco Opera**

Highlights: John Adams' *Antony and*

Cleopatra; *Orpheus and Eurydice*; *Die Frau ohne Schatten*; Gabriela Lena Frank and Nilo Cruz's *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*; Mason Bates and Mark Campbell's *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*; Rhiannon Giddens and Michael Abels' *Omar*; Kaija Saariaho's *Innocence*; *Un Ballo in Maschera*

Recent and Upcoming: *Tristan und Isolde*; Beethoven's Ninth Symphony; *Carmen*; *La Bohème*; *Idomeneo*

**COLM SEERY**

(Dublin, Ireland)

Movement Director**San Francisco Opera****Highlights:**

Movement Director of *Antony and Cleopatra*

Choreographer of *Madame Butterfly*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*, *Il Trovatore*, *Partenope*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*

Recent and Upcoming: Choreographer of *Idomeneo* (Berlin State Opera); Britten's *Gloriana* (Madrid's Teatro Real); *Ariodante* (Vienna State Opera, Israeli Opera)

**DAVE MAIER**

(El Cerrito, California)

Fight Director**San Francisco Opera****Highlights:** *Il*

Trovatore; John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra*; *Carmen*; *Tosca*; the *Ring* cycle; *Pagliacci*; *Rigoletto*; *Romeo and Juliet*; *Billy Budd*

Recent and Upcoming: *Rigoletto* (Opera San José); *1984* (Aurora Theatre Co.); *Misery* (Palo Alto Players); *As You Like It* (Cal Shakes); *Of Mice and Men* (Livermore Valley Opera); *The Untime* (Marin Shakespeare)

**MAYA HERBSMAN**

(San Francisco, California)

Intimacy Coordinator**San Francisco Opera****Highlights:** John

Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra*; *La Traviata*

Recent and Upcoming: *The Rape of Lucretia* (Merola); writing in Alexis Black and Tina M. Newhauser's *Supporting Staged Intimacy*; *Didi* film; *The Tempest* (San Francisco Shakespeare)

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Photo by Kristen Loken.



Sounds of Summer

June 2024 marked the finale of San Francisco Opera's 101st season with three powerful mainstage operas and a splendid array of presentations throughout the Bay Area testifying to the art form's ability to excite and inspire.

Mozart's *The Magic Flute* met the silent film era in Barrie Kosky and Suzanne Andrade's witty production. / CORY WEAVER



Innocence, the searing masterpiece by composer Kaija Saariaho, librettist Sofi Oksanen, and dramaturg Aleksis Barrière, had its US premiere on June 1. / CORY WEAVER

Christopher Alden's production of Handel's *Partenope* returned with a scintillating cast: Nicholas Tamagna (Armindo), Daniela Mack (Rosmira), Julie Fuchs (Partenope), Carlo Vistoli (Arsace), Alek Shrader (Emilio), and Hadleigh Adams (Ormonto). / CORY WEAVER



BEYOND Innocence SYMPOSIUM



SAN FRANCISCO
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In-depth discussion at the Beyond Innocence symposium with W. Kamau Bell, Chinaka Hodge, Vilma Jää, and Karega Bailey.
KRISTEN LOKEN

Italian countertenor Carlo Vistoli was the top vote getter in the Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Emerging Stars Competition for his portrayal of Arsace in Handel's Parteneope. / CORY WEAVER



The Company's Bohème Out of the Box at the intersection of Solano and Evelyn Avenues in Albany.
RENEFF-OLSON PRODUCTIONS



Adler Fellow Nikola Printz and Educational Content Creator Cole Thomason-Redus perform at The Magic Flute Family Workshop at Fairyland. / STEFAN COHEN



The June 26 performance of The Magic Flute was Pride Night at the Opera.
RENEFF-OLSON PRODUCTIONS



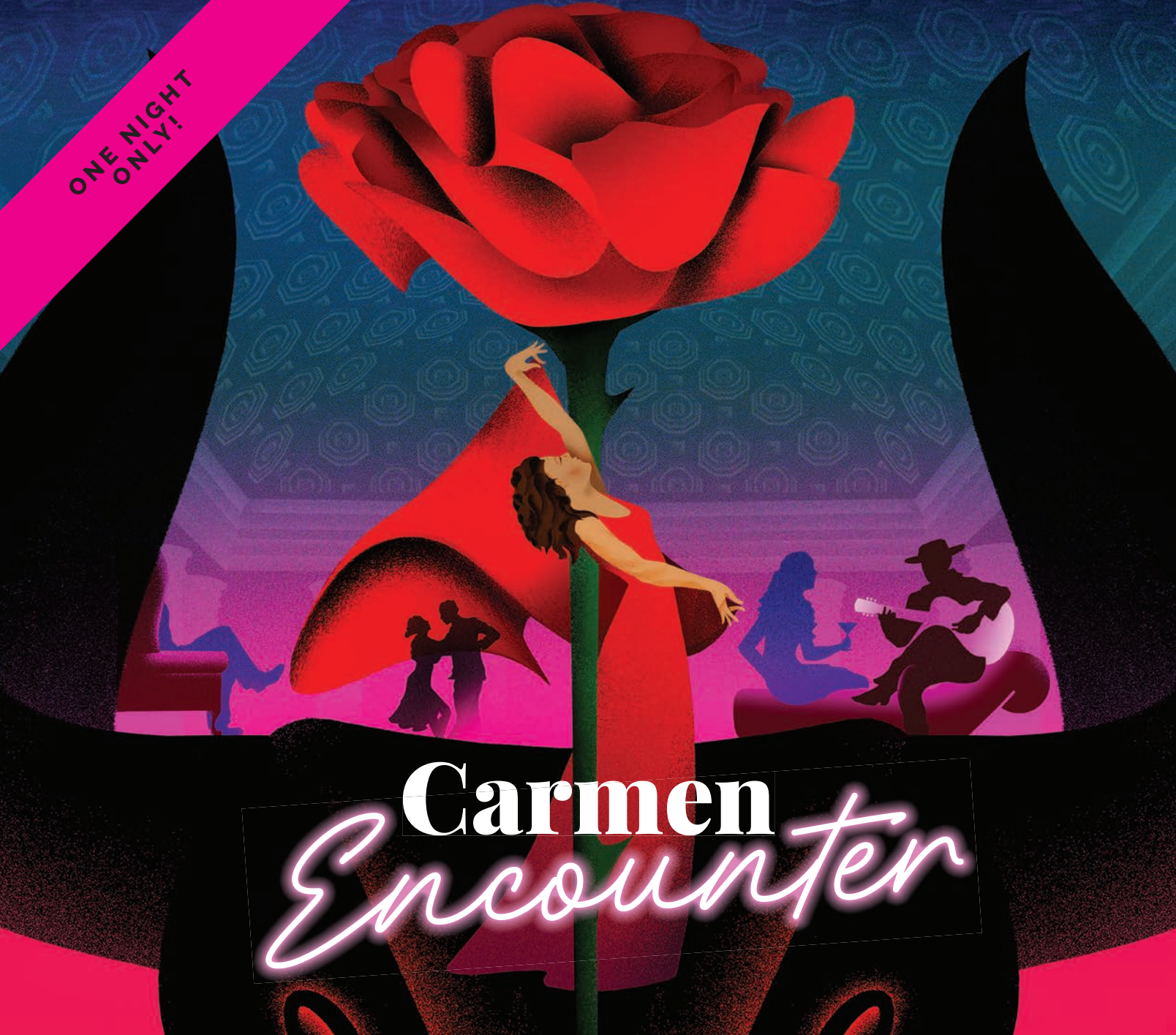
The Opera in You storytelling workshops culminated in a public showcase on June 15 at the San Francisco Public Library.
KRISTEN LOKEN

The cast for The Magic Flute with Music Director Eun Sun Kim backstage. / KRISTEN LOKEN



Innocence cast members look on backstage before taking their bows.
KRISTEN LOKEN

ONE NIGHT
ONLY!



Carmen *Encounter*

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2024 AT 7:30PM



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Event recommended for ages 21+. All dates, prices, programs, artists, and productions subject to change. Tickets subject to availability. Illustration by Brian Stauffer

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Sep 19–21

**Fauré's
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Nov 15–17

**Handel's
Messiah**
Dec 6–7

***Carmina burana*
& Adams'
Piano Concerto**
Jan 16, 18–19

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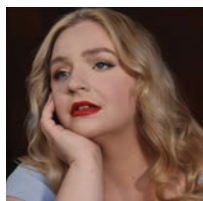
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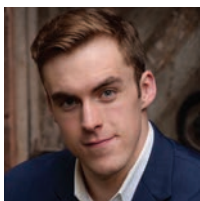
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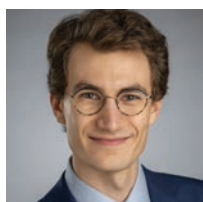
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—Amina Edris, soprano

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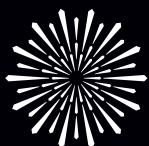
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Or Schraiber, *choreographer and dancer*

Olivier Messiaen's deeply affecting, hour-long song cycle for voice and piano, is presented in a dramatic new interpretation. Moving from a musical duet to a quartet with dancers, the production breaks open Messiaen's cycle, connects the relationship between movement and music, and grapples with the intensity of love and loss as part of human experience.

Sep 27

ZELLERBACH HALL, BERKELEY

An Illuminations: "Fractured History" event.
calperformances.org/illuminations



Lester Lynch, *baritone* Kevin Korth, *piano*

A regal presence on stages throughout the world, the dramatic baritone can sing with great power and also silken subtlety, and brings gravitas to his rare recital performances. In his Cal Performances debut, Lynch presents songs by Schubert, Brahms, Mussorgsky, Ives, and Gordon Getty.

Oct 13

HERTZ HALL, BERKELEY



Asmik Grigorian, *soprano* Lukas Geniušas, *piano*

Among the most electrifying performers of her generation, the Lithuanian soprano makes her first West Coast appearance with an all-Russian-language Cal Performances debut recital, performing rarely heard songs—"small pieces of opera in a few minutes"—by Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff.

Dec 15

HERTZ HALL, BERKELEY



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ALL ARE WELCOME. HELP US MAKE SURE EVERYONE HAS A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE!

- Turn off all electronic devices during the performance, including digital watches and cell phones. We ask this out of respect for the artists and for everyone in the theater enjoying a live, in-the-moment experience.
- Take photos before or after the performance, during intermission, or during the bows, and leave cameras and recording devices off during performances.
- Enjoy food and drinks, purchased onsite pre-show and during intermission, before entering the theater. You may bring purchased drinks into the theater, but please be mindful of your fellow patrons.
- As a courtesy to those who may have fragrance allergies, please avoid wearing perfume or cologne.
- Get to know and enjoy this wonderful community of opera lovers. Say hello to one another pre-show, at intermission, or leaving the theater.

The Opera reserves the right to remove any patron creating a disturbance.

FIRST AID STATION

Our First Aid Station is located on the South Lower Level. In case of emergency, please ask the nearest usher to assist you.

ACCESSIBILITY

San Francisco Opera is committed to providing easy access for all of our patrons. If you need assistance for a future performance, please contact the Opera Box Office prior to your visit so that we can ensure your comfort.

FOR PATRONS USING WHEELCHAIRS: San Francisco Opera offers wheelchair-accessible seats at a range of prices. All entrances at the War Memorial Opera House are wheelchair accessible. Wheelchair-accessible stalls in restrooms can be found on all floors (except the Main Lobby and 5th floor Balcony levels). Accessible drinking fountains are located on all floors except the Balcony Level. We are unable to provide patrons a wheelchair nor personal assistance. If you arrive with a caregiver, they will be granted unseated entry to assist you and invited to wait in the lobby until the performance concludes.

LARGE-PRINT CAST SHEETS AND SYNOPSES

Visit the North Lobby coat check for large-print versions.

LISTENING DEVICES

Assistive listening devices are available at the North Lobby coat check. ID deposit required.

LIVE TITLES: TEXT-TO-VOICE SUPERTITLES

Headsets that provide a spoken version of the supertitles are available at the North Lobby coat check.

OPERA GLASSES

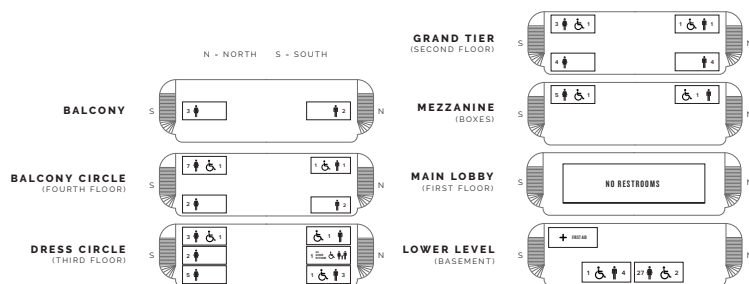
See the action up close and rent a pair of opera glasses for \$5 at the North Lobby coat check. ID deposit is requested. Credit card only.

LOST AND FOUND

Items may be turned in or claimed at the North coat check during the performance. All unclaimed items are delivered to the War Memorial Performing Arts Center at 401 Van Ness Ave., Room 110, (415) 621-6600 (8 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday–Friday).

RESTROOMS

Restrooms are located on all levels of the Opera House except on the Orchestra Level (Main Lobby).



IMPROVING YOUR SAFETY

Meet Your Civic Center Ambassadors!

As you leave the theater, be on the lookout for friendly community ambassadors in orange vests or coats along Grove Street. These ambassadors are there to assist you.



WALKING GROUPS

Civic Center Ambassadors lead walking groups to BART and the Civic Center & UC SF Law garages after evening performances. They will be holding signs on the Opera House steps facing Van Ness once the performance concludes.

RIDESHARE

Rideshare services pick-up and drop-off at the white loading zone at 301 Van Ness Avenue (located in front of the Opera House).

TAXI SERVICE

Patrons desiring a taxi after a performance should come to the Grove Street Taxi Ramp located on the south side of the Opera House. Taxis cannot be guaranteed as service is based on availability of licensed taxis. Please note the Taxi Ramp is not staffed.

SAN FRANCISCO WAR MEMORIAL AND PERFORMING ARTS CENTER WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE

Owned and operated by the City and County of San Francisco through the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco

The Honorable London N. Breed, Mayor

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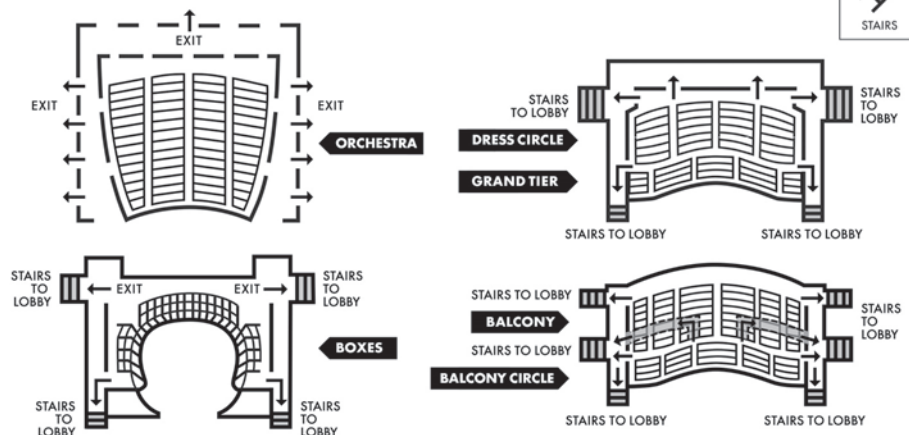
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Elizabeth Murray, *Managing Director Emerita*

SAN FRANCISCO WAR MEMORIAL AND PERFORMING ARTS CENTER WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE EXIT DIAGRAM



PATRONS, ATTENTION PLEASE! FIRE NOTICE: Please note the nearest exit. In an emergency, follow any lighted exit sign to the street. **WALK**, do not run, to the nearest exit. Disabled patrons, proceed to nearest elevator lobby and await assistance.

The San Francisco War Memorial acknowledges that we are on the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone who are the original inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula. As guests, we recognize that we benefit from living and working on their traditional homeland. We wish to pay our respects by acknowledging the ancestors, elders, and relatives of the Ramaytush Community and by affirming their sovereign rights as First Peoples.

Administration

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Managing Director: Artistic

Michael Simpson

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Director of Innovation Programs

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Director of Communications

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Theresa Von Klug

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Linda Rodriguez, *Accounting Manager*

Gracie Tang, *Senior Accountant*

Whitney Ward, *Payroll Administrator*

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Sara Lee, *Programmer/Analyst*

Susan McConkey, *Consultant*

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Barbara Rominski, *Director of Archives*

ARTISTIC

CHORUS DIRECTION

John Keene, *Chorus Director*

Fabrizio Corona, *Associate Chorus Master*

ARTISTIC AND MUSIC PLANNING

Zackery Hayhurst, *Artistic Planning Manager*

Ilana Rainero-de Haan, *Music Planning Manager*

John Churchwell, *Head of Music Staff*

Vivian Wang,

Music Planning Associate & Opera Librarian

Valentina Simi, *Artist Services Coordinator*

Zachary Calhoun, *Artistic Operations Coordinator*

Justin Benard, *Assistant to the Managing Director: Artistic*

MUSIC STAFF

Nelson Calzi, **John Churchwell**, **Dimitri Dover**,

Bryndon Hassman, **Andrew King**,

Robert Mollicone, **Matthew Piatt**, **Kseniia**

Polstiankina Barrad, **Nathan Salazar**,

Bin Yu Sanford, **Stefano Sarzani**,

Emmanuel Tjeknavorian, **Marika Yasuda**

Geoffrey Lee, *Ballet Pianist*

LANGUAGE COACHES

Radoslava Quinn, *Czech*

Anja Burmeister, *German*

Patricia Kristof Moy, *French*

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Artistic Director, San Francisco Opera Center

Markus Beam,

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Grace Owens, *Opera Center Coordinator*

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Teresa Concepcion, *Communications Manager*

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Tabitha Rowell, *Director of Development*

Donna Batson, *Director of Institutional Giving*

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Director of Prospect Research and Strategy

Olga Korolev,

Prospect Research and Strategy Associate

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Alek Shrader, *Annual Giving Officer*

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Director of Individual & Leadership Giving

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Jacqueline Hammel, *Individual Giving Officer*

Kate Wood, *Individual Giving Officer*

Maude Engström, *Legacy Giving Associate*

Maita Eyzaguirre, *Development Associate: Strategy*

Johann Joson, *Manager of Donor Stewardship*

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Karman Ferrell Pave, *Director of Special Events*

Katie Cagampan,

Associate Director of Special Events

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND COMMUNITY

Ryan Marchand,

Director of Diversity, Equity and Community

Christabel Nunoo, *Education Development Manager*

Heather Kelly-Laws, *DEC Project Manager*

Cole Thomason-Redus,

Educational Content Curator

Chelbi Harvin-Dickens,

Community Engagement Coordinator

Anthony Aguilar, **Joshua Raoul Brody**,

Brandon DiPaola, **Marcelle Dronkers**,

Katherine Issel Pitre, **Sven Olbash**,

Jacob Russel-Snyder, **Cole Thomason-Redus**

Teaching Artists

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Celestine Ratsch-Rivera,

Assistant to the Executive Offices

Elena Park, *Strategic Advisor*

OFFICE OF THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

Matthew Piatt, *Musical Assistant to the Music Director*

Rachael Smith,

Executive Assistant to the Music Director

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Associate Director of Analytics and Strategy

Michael Bragg, *Marketing Manager, Digital Content*

Tyler Cervini, *Marketing Manager, Digital & Acquisition*

Alyssa Feskanin, *Marketing Manager, Email and Digital*

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Senior Marketing Coordinator, Brand and Loyalty

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Engagement and Partnerships

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Katy Zolfaghari, *Creative Project Manager*

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Medallion Society Concierge Manager,

Assistant Box Office Manager

Jennifer Pollack,

Group Sales Manager, Assistant Treasurer

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Emily Tilles, *Subscriptions Manager, Assistant Treasurer*

Roberto Bonilla, *Phone Room Sales Manager,*

Subscriber Representative

Dale Whitmill, *Subscriber Representative*

Jing Bentley, **Julia Grizzell**, **Kyle Minor**,

Yma Munoz, **Brian Van Scyoc**

Patron Services Personnel

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Marialice Dockus, *Head Usher*

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Armando Benutto, **Felix Bishop**, **Stuart Bousel**,
Jan Brown, **Danica Burt**, **Wendy Chang**, **Frank Chow**,
Jan Cobb, **Calico Dant**, **Kathy Dere**, **Martin Dias**,
Felix Dina, **Dave Doering**, **Jonathan Drogin**,
Mel Dufort, **Caesar Evangelista**, **Bill Flanagan**,
Christine Ford, **Jorge Gonzalez-Rodriguez**,
Chip Heath, **Kate Juliana**, **Elaine Kawasaki**,
Kathleen Keeler, **Helen Kim**, **Ryszard Koprowski**,
Isaac Kumpula, **Chris Largent**, **Sharon Lee**,
Leland Leong, **Sadie Li**, **Julia Livesey**, **Michael Mak**,
Manuel Martinez, **Leontyne Mbele-Mbong**,
Sam Mesinger, **John Morris**, **Timm Muldoon**,
Dale Nedelco, **Beth Norris**, **Jeff Norris**,
Jennifer Norris, **Jan Padover**, **Julie Peck**,
Christine Plowright, **Bill Repp**, **Jack Sale**,
Robyn Sandberg, **Allen Sawyer**, **Kelly Smith**,
Stephanie Somersille, **Kumi Stanfield**, **Melissa Stern**,
Theresa Sun, **Janet Tom**, **Claire Tremblay**,
Richard Wagner, **Steve Weiss**, **Tom Wong**,
May Yasui, **Elaine Yee**
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Gary Isaordi, **Ginny Lackner**, **Bob Nelson**,
Volunteer Usher, 50+ years of service

Hui Ming Wu, *Show Maid*

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Jay Stebley, *Retail Manager*
Susan Montana, *Assistant Manager*

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Matthew Buckman, *Director of Music Operations*
Noelle Romelfanger, *Chorus & Dance Manager*
Cameron Daly, *Music Operations Associate*
Kali Wilson, *Operations Associate*
Kip Cranna, *Dramaturg Emeritus*

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Tracy Davis, *Orchestra Manager*
Kevin Myers, *Orchestra Operations Manager*
Krishna Montmorency, *Orchestra Librarian*

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and Revenue Management
Jess Levy, *Associate Director of Patron Data*
Alix Josefski, *Associate Director of Donor Services*
Sarah Benjamin, *Patron Data Associate*
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Timmy Yuen, *Associate Director, Human Resources*
Apurva Shahi, *Human Resources Analyst*

PRODUCTION

*Senior Production Staff Member

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Jeremy Patfield,
*Director of Production Operations & Media**
Paul Dana,
Support Services Coordinator
Aine Donnelly,
Production Finance Assistant
Sylvia Jiang,
Production Finance Assistant
Ellen Presley,
Special Projects Manager
Celine Strouts,
Production Operations Manager

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Doug Mitchell,
Head of Audio/Video
Ziggy Tomcich,
Assistant Head of Audio/Video

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David Hatch, *Head of Carpentry*
Greg Harsha, *Assistant Head of Carpentry*
Christopher Davis, *Wilsey Center Head*

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Daniele McCartan, *Costume Director**
Jai Alltizer, *Costume Shop Manager*
Charlotte Brockman, *Production Accountant*
Galen Till, *Senior Production Supervisor*

ELECTRICS

Leon Parsons, *Head of Electrics*
Michael Anderson,
Assistant Head of Electrics
Russell E. Adamson III,
Lighting and Projection Systems Administrator

FIGHT DIRECTION

Dave Maier, *Fight Director*

LIGHTING

Justin Partier, *Lighting Director**
Daniel Friedman, **David Tkach**,
Assistant Lighting Designers
Erin Riley, *Lighting Intern*
Madeleine Hebert, *Hemsley Lighting Intern*

MEDIA

Jodi Gage, *Media Producer*

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Lori Harrison, *Head of Properties*
Frederick Wielandt, *Assistant Head of Properties*

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Marin Venturi, *Rehearsal Department Director**
Savannah Criswell,
Rehearsal Department Manager & Scheduling
Liz R. Ray,
Rehearsal Department Administrative Coordinator
Jacob D. Zdunich,
Rehearsal Department Personnel Associate
Liv Field, **Rosie Burns Pavlik**,
Rehearsal Department Assistants

SCENE SHOP

John Del Bono, *Scene Shop Foreperson*
Steve McNally, *Scenic Artist in Charge*

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Darin Burnett,
*Production Stage Manager**
Darin Burnett, **Jennifer Harber**,
Jayme O'Hara, **Thea Railey**,
Stage Managers
Jose Maria Condemí, **E. Reed Fisher**,
Roy Rallo, **Morgan Robinson**,
Assistant Stage Directors
Collette Berg, **Jonathan S. Campbell**,
Megan Coutts, **Jennifer Harber**, **Jayme O'Hara**,
Thea Railey, **Anna Reetz**,
Assistant Stage Managers
Colm Seery, *Dance Master*

TECHNICAL DIRECTION

Erik Walstad, *Technical and Safety Director**
Ryan O'Steen, *Production Manager**
Scott Cavallo, *Assistant Technical Director*
Lawren Gregory, *Assistant Technical Director*

WARDROBE

Tony Gorzycki, *Head of Wardrobe*
Cynthia Fusco, **Carol Horaitis**,
Robert Horek, **David McKain**,
Wardrobe Assistants

WIG, HAIR, & MAKEUP

Jeanna Parham,
Department Head of Wigs, Hair, and Makeup
Christina Martin,
Assistant Department Head of
Wigs, Hair, and Makeup

Dr. Myron Marx, *Company Medical Adviser*

Seyfarth Shaw LLP, *Counsel*

Armano LLP, *Independent Public Accountants*

UCSF doctors:

Dr. George Rutherford
Dr. Robert Harrison
Dr. Sanziana Roman

Asero Insurance Services, *Insurance Brokers*

Cory Weaver, *Official Photographer*

Yamaha is the Official Piano of San Francisco Opera

Pianos supplied by Piedmont Piano

2024–25 Artists

PRINCIPAL ARTISTS

Georgiana Adams†+
 Louise Alder#
 Lindsay Ammann*
 Jamie Barton
 Gabrielle Beteag◊
 Aleksey Bogdanov+
 Alex Boyer+
 Sarah Cambridge◊
 Nicole Car
 Andrea Carroll*
 Neal Cooper
 Caroline Corrales*†+
 Sara Couden*
 Matthew DiBattista*
 Amartuvshin Enkhbat*
 Michael Fabiano
 Ying Fang*
 Katrina Galka*
 Blanche Hampton■
 Jongwon Han†
 Lianna Haroutounian
 Karen Chia-ling Ho+
 Jennifer Holloway
 Eve-Maud Hubeaux#
 Evan LeRoy Johnson
 Rhoslyn Jones◊
 Alisa Jordheim
 Anja Kampe
 Samuel Kidd*†+
 Thomas Kinch†+
 Wolfgang Koch*
 Laura Krumm◊
 Judit Kutasi
 Adam Lau+
 Will Liverman*
 Daniela Mack◊
 James McCarthy†+
 Simone McIntosh◊
 Lucas Meachem◊
 Rebecca Nash
 Christopher Oglesby◊
 Simon O'Neill+
 Toni Marie Palmertree◊
 Pene Pati◊
 Matthew Polenzani
 Nikola Printz†+
 John Relyea◊
 Brittany Renee

Irene Roberts
 Arianna Rodriguez†+
 Brenton Ryan
 Alexandra Sanchez
 Annika Schlicht#
 Chiharu Shibata■
 Philip Skinner◊
 Olivia Smith†+
 Bogdan Talos#
 Jonathan Tetelman
 Russell Thomas
 Elza van den Heever◊
 Christian Van Horn
 Kwangchul Youn
 Mei Gui Zhang+

CONDUCTORS

Karen Kamensek
 Eun Sun Kim
 Benjamin Manis*
 Ramón Tebar

PRODUCTION

John Caird
 John Fulljames*
 Francesca Zambello

STAGE DIRECTORS

Lucy Bradley#
 Katherine Carter*
 Paul Curran
 Lindy Hume*
 Leo Muscato*

CHOREOGRAPHERS

Anna Maria Bruzzese*

KEY:

* San Francisco Opera Debut
 # American Debut
 ◊ Adler Fellow Graduate
 † Current Adler Fellow
 + Merola Opera Program Graduate
 ◊ Merola and Adler Fellowship Graduate
 ■ Solo Dancer
 Cover Artist

Chorus

John Keene, Chorus Director
 Fabrizio Corona, Associate Chorus Master

REGULAR CHORUS

Nadima Avakian	Crystal Kim◊
Buffy Baggott†	Bojan Knežević
Kathleen Bayler	Elisabeth Rom Lucio
C. Michael Belle	Liesl McPherrin
William Lee Bryan	Angela Eden Moser
Cheryl Cain	Sally Mouzon
Janet Campbell	Sarah Nadreau◊
Danielle Cheiken	Antonio Nagore
Alan Cochran	Erin Neff
Sara Colburn	William O'Neill◊
Clare Demer	Andrew Thomas Pardini
Edith Dowd◊	Rachelle Perry
Anders Fröhlich	Phillip Pickens
John Fulton	William Pickersgill†
Kevin Gino◊	Chester Pidduck◊
Patrick J. Hagen	Laurel Cameron Porter
Stella Hannock	Samuel Rabinowitz
Harlan Hays	Jonathan Smucker
Daniel Harper†	Whitney Steele◊
Christopher Jackson	Jesslyn Thomas◊
Michael Jankosky◊	Jere Torkelsen
Silvie Jensen◊	Andrew Truett
Wilford Kelly◊	Jacque Wilson◊
Claire Kelm†	

EXTRA CHORUS

Morgan Balfour	Eileen Meredith
Jenn Brody	Courtney Miller◊
Katie Carlson Cartwright	Thalia Moore
Spencer Dodd	Julia Mulholland
Mélissa Dufort	Alexander Perkins
Jessica Elisabeth	Valery Portnov
Stephanie Feigenbaum	Leandra Ramm
Margaret Genovese	Mary Rauh◊
Glenn Healy	Clifton Romig
Matt Hidalgo	Chung-Wai Soong
Nina Jones	Alexander Taite
Celest'anna Jordan	Nicole Takesono
David Kekuewa	Paul Thompson
Megan Kellogg	Sydnee Turrentine-Johnson
Eric Levintow	Nicolas Vasquez-Gerst
Benjamin Liupaogo	Nick Volkert
Matthew Lovell	Jack Wilkins
Joachim Luis	Daniel Yoder
Zachary Martin	

√ Chorus member on leave of absence
 ◊ Solo Role

San Francisco Opera extends its gratitude and appreciation to the following labor organizations whose members, artists, and craftspeople make possible our performances.

American Federation of Musicians, Local 6
 American Guild of Musical Artists, Inc.
 International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Local 16

Theatrical Wardrobe Union, Local 784, I.A.T.S.E.
 Make-Up Artists and Hair Stylists Union, Local 706, I.A.T.S.E.

The Art Directors Guild & Scenic, Title and Graphic Artists Local 800

United Scenic Artists Local Usa – 829, I.A.T.S.E.
 Box Office and Front of House Employees Union, Local B-18



Orchestra

Eun Sun Kim, *Music Director*

FIRST VIOLIN

Kay Stern, *Concertmaster*
Maya Cohon, *Associate Concertmaster*Σ
Heidi Wilcox,
Assistant *Concertmaster*
Jennifer Cho
Dawn Harms
Mariya Borozina
Naoko Nakajima
Barbara Riccardi
Dian Zhang
Leonid Igudesman
Jennifer Hsieh
Asuka Annie Yano

SECOND VIOLIN

Jeremy Preston, *Principal*
Martha Simonds, *Associate Principal*
Beni Shinohara, *Assistant Principal*
Leslie Ludena
Ka-Yeon Lee
Aya Kiyonaga
Craig Reiss
Heeguen Song↑

VIOLA

Carla Maria Rodrigues, *Principal*
Joy Fellows, *Associate Principal*Σ
Patricia Heller, *Acting Assistant Principal*
Stephen Goist, *Acting Assistant Principal*
Natalia Vershilova
Lindan Burns
Emily Liu↑
Elizabeth Prior↑

CELLO

Evan Kahn, *Principal*
Thalia Moore, *Associate Principal*
Peter Myers, *Assistant Principal*
Nora Pirquet
Emil Miland
Jung-Hsuan Ko
Ruth Lane

BASS

Joseph Lescher, *Principal*
Jonathan Lancelle,
Associate *Principal*
William Wasson,
Acting *Assistant Principal*
Shinji Eshima
Evan Hillis↑

FLUTE

Julie McKenzie, *Principal*↓
Susan KangΣ↑
Stephanie McNabΣ
Michelle Caimotto↑

PICCOLO

Stephanie McNab

OBOE

Mingjia Liu, *Principal*
Gabriel Young, *Associate Principal*Σ
Benjamin Brogadir
Wentao Jiang↑

ENGLISH HORN

Benjamin Brogadir

CLARINET

José González Granero, *Principal*
Sergio CoehloΣ↑
Junghwan Lee↑

BASS CLARINET

Junghwan Lee↑

BASSOON

Rufus Olivier, *Principal*
Daniel MacNeillΣ
Shawn Jones↑

CONTRABASSOON

Shawn Jones↑

FRENCH HORN

Kevin Rivard, *Principal*
Keith Green
Brian McCarty, *Associate Principal*
Logan Bryck↑
Meredith Brown↑
Phillip Palmore↑

TRUMPET

Adam Luftman, *Principal*
Scott Macomber↑
John PearsonΣ

TROMBONE

Michael Cox, *Acting Principal*
Jeffrey Budin↑
David Ridge

BASS TROMBONE

David Ridge, *Principal*

TUBA/CIMBASSO

Zachariah Spellman, *Principal*

TIMPANI

John Burgardt, *Principal*

PERCUSSION

Patricia Niemi, *Acting Principal*
Victor Avdienko↑

HARP

Annabelle Taubl↑, *Acting Principal*

ADDITIONAL MUSICIANS

Julian Grabarek, *Sampler Keyboard*
Nathan Salazar, *Digital Piano*
Marika Yasuda, *Organ*

LIBRARIAN

Carrie Weick

↓ Leave of absence

Σ *Principal* for one or more
Summer season operas

↑ Season Substitute

Corps Dancers

Colm Seery, *Dance Master*

Vincent Chavez□
Brett Conway↔
Jamielyn Duggan↔
Blanche Hampton↔■
Zaria Jackson□
Bryan Ketron↓
Felipe León□
Rachel Speidel Little↓
Coral Martin□
Micah Moch□
Christopher Nachtrab↔

Jekyns Pelaez↓
Chiharu Shibata↔
Marcos Vedovetto↔

↔ Tenured
↓ Tenured Dancer
on Leave of Absence
□ Resident Corps
■ Solo Role

Supernumeraries

Un Ballo in Maschera

Otto Cheshire
James Coniglio
Atom Young Maguire
Michael Pinell
Pedram Razavi
Derrick Scott
Ross Uchimura

The Handmaid's Tale

Natasha Baker
Olivia Barton
Flora Brinkmann
Siena Coniglio
Valerie Corrales (Offred's Daughter)*
Lilith Emmons
Emmeline Janus
Matilda Lin
Holly MacCormick
Isobel Mackey
Ciara McCarthy
Róisín McCarthy
Katherine Nägele-Lin
Anna Nordeson
Madison Reidy
Yoshiko Santiago
Keira Shum
Aya Spiegel
Siena Thistlethwaite
Viva Young Maguire

Backstage Personnel

COSTUME SHOP

Jai Alltizer (24), *Costume Shop Manager*
Galen Till (20),

Senior Production Supervisor

Manuel Gutierrez (25),

Production Coordinator

Sally Thomas (24), *Master Tailor*

Amy Ashton-Keller (30), *Master Draper*

Barbara Ebel (16), *Senior Draper*

Santiago Suanes (14), *Men's Draper*

Nika Cassaro, *Draper*

Paula Wheeler (32), *Senior Milliner*

Amy Van Every (40), *Senior Dyer*

Jersey McDermott (25),

Senior Craftsperson/Shoe Specialist

Emma Lehman, Kristen Tracy (16),

Kaitlyn Patrick, *Assistant Cutters*

Yui Takenouchi, Taylor Newell,

First Hand

Robyn Marsh, Victoria Mortimer,

Costume Assistants

Teddy Rose Baker,

Junior Workroom Assistant

COSTUME TECHNICIANS

Karla Fix, Hoa Fong (25),

Gillian Haratani (12),

Aki Hasegawa, Jaya Grace Goheen,

Ashley Grambow, Kathy Griffith,

Meg Horan, Amanda Mitchell,

Sara Morimoto (11), Mikael Nohai,

Hannah Velichko, Sarah Ellen Wilson,

Robert Whitehurst

WARDROBE DEPARTMENT

CORE CREW

Linda Edwards (26)

Edward Fonseca (13)

Lorraine Lewis (12)

Emma Mueller

Phil Perry (27)

Patrick Sanchez (15)

Leona Schrader-Dee

Don Smith (28)

Scott Stewart (24)

Kirsten Tucker (21)

DRESSERS

Tiffany Amundson, Paula Barish,

Kathleen Blake (12), Ash Cable,

Nicolas Chacon, George Elvin,

Aki Hasegawa, Claudia Holaday (45),

Ralph Hoy, Michael Kruzich,

Jeffery Larsen, Jennifer Long,

Demetrius Martin, Rachell Nichols,

Nadia Salameh, Christina Sogliuzzo,

Aureoles Stetzel, Grisel Torres,

Amber Vo

WIG, HAIR, AND MAKEUP DEPARTMENT

SENIOR WIG ARTISTS

Erin Hennessy (11)

Maur Sela

WIG ARTISTS

Calli Carvajal

Lindsay Saier

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Tim Santry (33)

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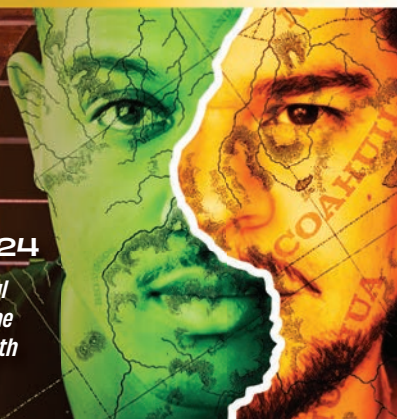
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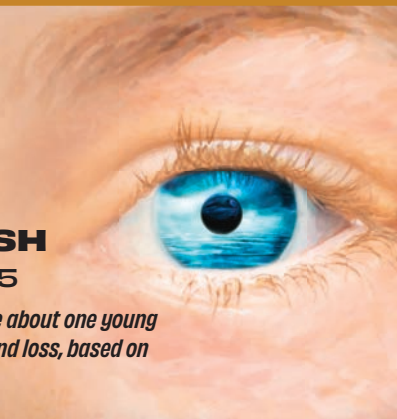
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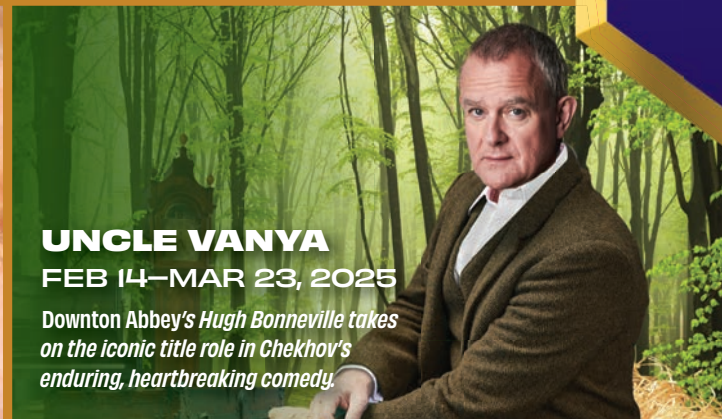
A visually stunning world-premiere about one young girl's journey through friendship and loss, based on the bestselling novel.



UNCLE VANYA

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Downton Abbey's Hugh Bonneville takes on the iconic title role in Chekhov's enduring, heartbreaking comedy.



HERE THERE ARE BLUEBERRIES

APR 5–MAY 11, 2025

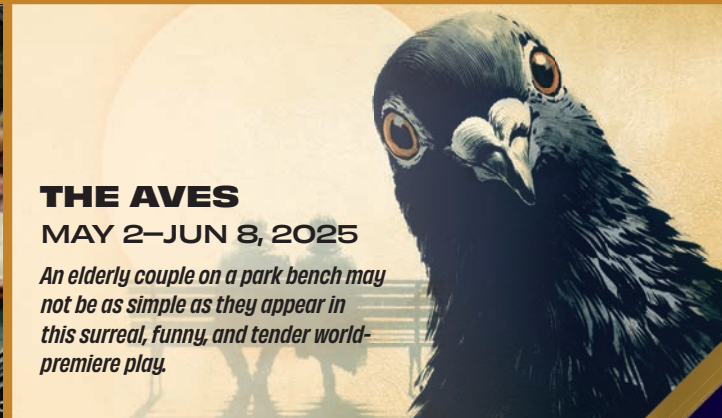
From the creator of The Laramie Project comes the true story of a mysterious album of WWII-era photographs and the secrets it holds.



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First Violin



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Second Violin



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Craig Reiss
Second Violin



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Bass



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Bass

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Flute



Susan Kang
Flute↑



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Bassoon



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Horn



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Horn



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Horn



Phillip Palmore
Horn↑



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Principal
Trumpet



Scott Macomber
Trumpet↑



John Pearson
Trumpet



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Acting Principal
Trombone



Jeffrey Budin
Trombone↑



David Ridge
Principal
Bass Trombone



Zachariah Spellman
Tuba



John Burgardt
Timpani



Patricia Niemi
Acting Principal
Percussion



Victor Avdienko
Percussion↑



Annabelle Taubl
Acting Principal
Harp↑



Tracy Davis
Orchestra Manager



Carrie Weick
Librarian

Most photos by John Martin.

*Not pictured: Heeguen Song (Second Violin)↑,
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William Wasson (Acting Assistant Principal Bass),
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Sergio Coehlo (Clarinet)↑, Junghwan Lee (Clarinet, Bass Clarinet)↑,
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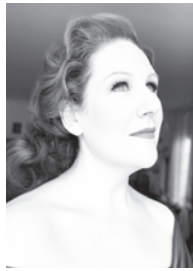
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Nadima Avakian
Soprano



Kathleen Bayler
Soprano



Cheryl Cain
Soprano



Danielle Cheiken
Soprano



Sara Colburn
Soprano



Clare Demer
Soprano



Claire Kelm
Soprano
Leave of Absence



Crystal Kim
Soprano



Elisabeth Rom Lucio
Soprano



Liesl McPherrin
Soprano



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Soprano



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Soprano



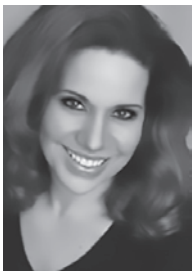
Jesslyn Thomas
Soprano



Buffy Baggott
Mezzo-Soprano
Leave of Absence



Janet Campbell
Mezzo-Soprano



Edith Dowd
Mezzo-Soprano



Stella Hannock
Mezzo-Soprano



Silvie Jensen
Mezzo-Soprano



Sally Mouzon
Mezzo-Soprano



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Mezzo-Soprano



Erin Neff
Mezzo-Soprano



**Laurel Cameron
Porter**
Mezzo-Soprano



Whitney Steele
Mezzo-Soprano



Jacque Wilson
Mezzo-Soprano



C. Michael Belle
Tenor



Alan Cochran
Tenor



Kevin Gino
Tenor



Patrick J. Hagen
Tenor



Daniel Harper
Tenor
Leave of Absence



Christopher Jackson
Tenor



Michael Jankosky
Tenor



Phillip Pickens
Tenor



Antonio Nagore
Tenor



Chester Pidduck
Tenor



Jonathan Smucker
Tenor

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Andrew Truett
Tenor



William Lee Bryan
Baritone



Anders Fröhlich
Baritone



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Baritone



John Fulton
Baritone



Harlan Hays
Baritone



Jere Torkelsen
Baritone



Wilford Kelly
Bass



Bojan Knežević
Bass



William O'Neill
Bass



William Pickersgill
Bass
Leave of Absence



Samuel Rabinowitz
Bass

*Most photos by John Martin.
Jonathan Smucker by Lisa Keating.*

San Francisco Opera Corps Dancers



Jamielyn Duggan



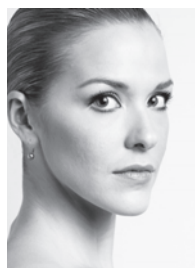
Brett Conway



Blanche Hampton



Bryan Ketron
Leave of Absence



Rachel Speidel Little
Leave of Absence



Christopher Nachtrab



Jekyns Peláez
Leave of Absence



Chiharu Shibata



Marcos Vedovetto

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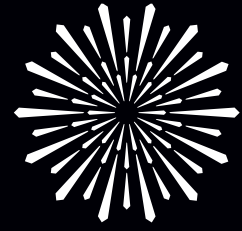
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The International Stage of Opera

BY GENERAL DIRECTOR MATTHEW SHILVOCK

One of the questions I get asked most often is “Where do your productions come from?” It’s a fascinating question to explore as we launch our 102nd season, using this season’s operas as examples.

The simple answer is: a wide variety of places! But we can boil it down to five basic sources: i) things we build; ii) things we own; iii) things we coproduce; iv) things we rent; and v) things we acquire.

The most exciting of the sources are the things we build. These are the complete expressions of creativity by an opera company and help define a company’s aesthetic—taking an idea from scratch and fashioning a new conception with a creative team. We don’t have any brand new builds this season, but recent examples have included *Traviata*, the Mozart–Da Ponte trilogy, *Fidelio* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. Next season’s world premiere production of *The Monkey King* by Huang Ruo and David Henry Hwang will be originated from scratch.

Productions we build quickly become the second category: things we own! The *modus operandi* of the repertory system is that a company invests in new productions designed for their stage and then brings them back in future seasons on a much more inexpensive basis. While a new production might cost us \$2 million to build, a revival of that production might cost just \$25,000 in touchups. We also rent out productions we own to other companies, making them a source of income. The challenge here is the perennial shortage of storage space. We store our sets in Modesto but are always having to make impossible decisions as to what to jettison to make room for new arrivals.

A variant of building is co-producing. This is where we enter into a shared upfront investment with 2–4 companies to build a new production. This both defrays costs for each company but also ensures that the production has a future



KRISTEN LOKEN

life, particularly critical for newly commissioned operas. *Innocence* was a co-production of five international companies. *The Handmaid’s Tale* is a two-way co-production between San Francisco Opera and the Royal Danish Opera. The *Bohème* is a three-way co-production between us, Houston, and Toronto.

A very common source of productions is renting them from another company. For titles that we don’t own and won’t likely

produce on a regular basis, we generally look for options from other companies. This is a wonderful part of the job—scouring the world for all the options and then assessing them along a number of factors—aesthetics, logistics (will it work for our stage size and technology), sightlines, special effects and, most importantly, availability! The *Ballo* this season is a rental from Rome, and the *Idomeneo* is a rental from two Australian companies.

And then, a category that I might have said was rarer but we have quite a few examples at the moment: purchased productions. Often these begin as rental enquiries, but sometimes a company offers it for purchase given their own storage limitations. *Tristan* this season was a purchase from La Fenice in Venice; *Carmen* from the Royal Opera in London; and *The Elixir of Love* last season from Opera North in the UK. I abhor seeing beloved productions get thrown away, and purchasing allows some of the best ones from the world’s stages to have a future life on ours.

As with all things in programming a season, balance here is key—we want to balance things people have seen with new interpretations; and we want to ensure enough new work (whether builds or coproductions) to showcase our creative vision. The interplay of all these factors is a thrilling reflection of the interconnectedness of the international network of opera companies and a reminder of the global stage on which we make art. I hope that you enjoy the season ahead! 🌟

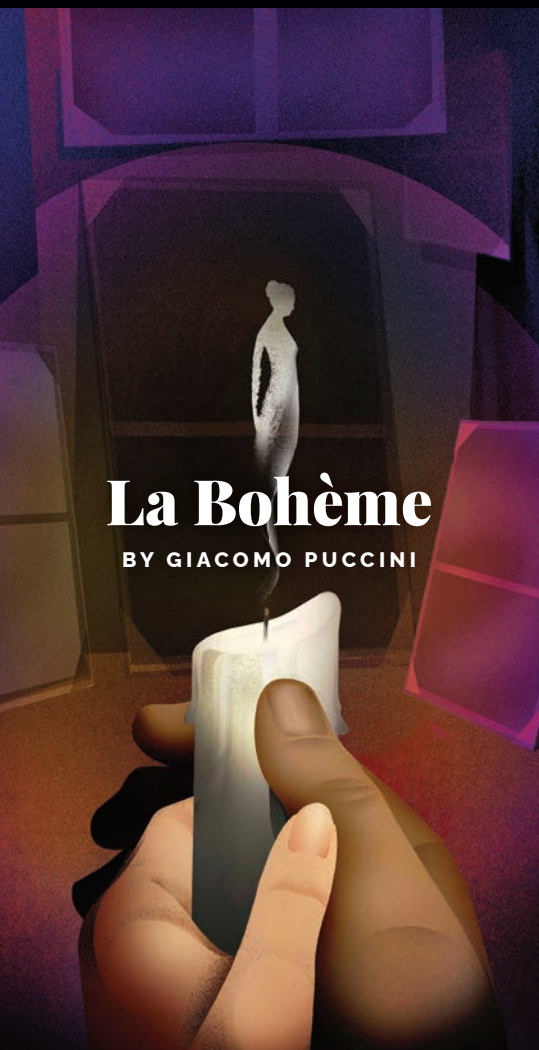
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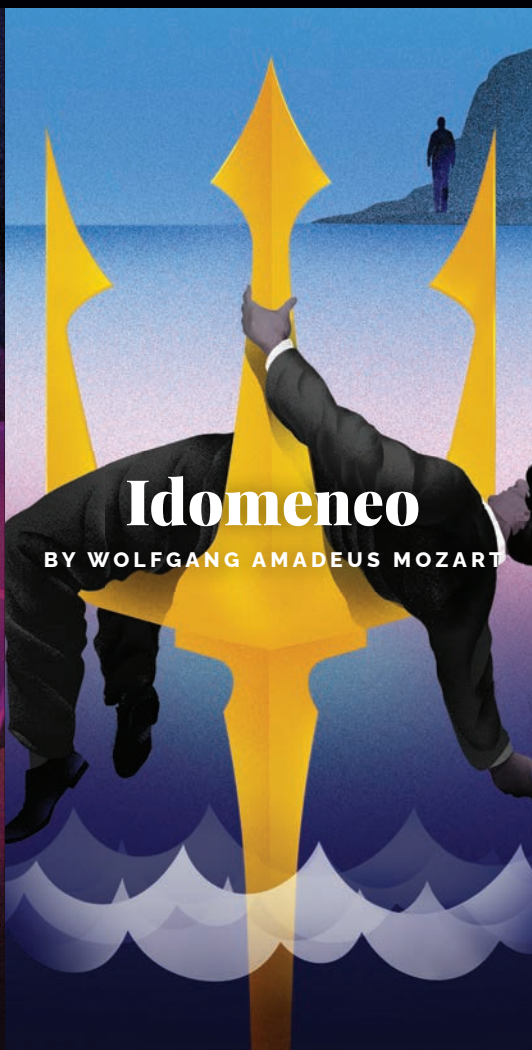
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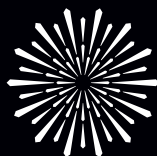
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