

Merola Opera Program

Schwabacher Summer Concert

WHEN:
SATURDAY,
JULY 7, 2018
7:30 PM

VENUE:
BING
CONCERT HALL



Photo: Kristen Loken

Program

Schwabacher Summer Concert

Kathleen Kelly, *Conductor*

Aria Umezawa, *Director*

Galen Till, *Costume Design*

Eric Watkins, *Lighting Design*

Samuel Barber: *Vanessa*, Act I: Scene 1

Vanessa: **Brittany Nickell**

Erika: **Megan Grey**

Anatol: **Brian Michael Moore**

Major-Domo: **Andrew Moore**

Giacomo Puccini: *Il tabarro*, Act II: Scenes 1 and 3

Giorgetta: **Marlen Nahhas**

Frugola: **Megan Grey**

Luigi: **Christopher Colmenero**

Michele: **Jaeman Yoon**

Tinca: **Brian Michael Moore**

Talpa: **Andrew Moore**

Armante: **Kendra Berentsen**

Amante: **WooYoung Yoon**

—INTERMISSION—

Georges Bizet: *Les pêcheurs de perles*

Act I: "C'est toi, toi qu'enfin je revois..."

Au fond du temple saint"

Act II: "Me voilà seule dans la nuit..."

Comme autrefois dans la nuit sombre...

De mon amie Fleur endormie...Leïla! Leïla!...

Ton coeur n'a pas compris le mien"

Act III: "L'orage s'est calmé...O Nadir, tendre ami..."

Qu'ai-je vu?...Je frémis, je chancelle"

Leïla: **Kendra Berentsen**

Nadir: **WooYoung Yoon**

Zurga: **SeokJong Baek**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *Don Giovanni*, Act II, Scene 13

Don Giovanni: **Xiaomeng Zhang**

Leporello: **Andrew Moore**

Commendatore: **Jaeman Yoon**

Donna Anna: **Brittany Nickell**

Donna Elvira: **Marlen Nahhas**

Zerlina: **Kendra Berentsen**

Don Ottavio: **Brian Michael Moore**

Masetto: **SeokJong Baek**

This concert is named in memory of Merola's late Chairman, James Schwabacher, and is graciously underwritten, in part, by the Frances K. and Charles D. Field Foundation, the Jack H. Lund Charitable Trust, The Bernard Osher Foundation, and Leslys Vedder in memory of James Forrest Vedder.

Merola's performance at Bing Concert Hall is sponsored, in part, by David Hugle and Haggai Niv, Dana Horner, and Mrs. Helen Breck and Kirby Wilcox.

Kathleen Kelly is sponsored, in part, by Darla and Richard Bastoni, and Bob and Terri Ryan.

Aria Umezawa is sponsored, in part, by Miss Ursula Grunfeld and D.G. Mitchell.

Synopses

Vanessa

Music by Samuel Barber

Libretto by Gian Carlo Menotti

ACT I, Scene 1

When her lover, Anatol, was called away 20 years ago, Vanessa covered all the mirrors in the house and said she would not uncover them until Anatol returned. Now, at last, she has received word that he is coming.

Vanessa, her mother the Baroness, and Erika, Vanessa's niece, prepare for his arrival. Erika tries to distract Vanessa. Vanessa covers her face, as she has covered the mirrors. When Anatol arrives, she tells him that if he still loves her, she will show him her face. From the shadows, he responds that he believes he will love her.

Vanessa throws back her veil and finds herself looking at a man twenty years younger than her Anatol. Horrified, Vanessa rushes out. The Baroness goes to comfort her. The young man explains to Erika that he is Anatol's son and bears the same name.

Il tabarro

Music by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Giuseppe Adami

Act II, Scenes 1 and 3

Luigi, Tinca, and Talpa have been unloading Michele's barge on the Seine. Michele's young wife, Giorgetta, serves them wine as the sun sets.

Unbeknownst to the others, Giorgetta and Luigi are having an affair.

Frugola, Talpa's wife, arrives looking for her husband. When Tinca claims he loves nothing more than to drink, Luigi says drink is the only way to cope with the futility of life. Frugola dreams of being in a cottage with her cat. Giorgetta imagines life in Paris instead of on the barge, and she and Luigi discover they come from the same village just outside Paris. They share their happy memories, but when Michele comes out of the cabin, Luigi realizes he cannot bear to share Giorgetta with her husband. He asks Michele to leave him in Rouen on their next trip. However, when Michele goes back in the cabin, Luigi agrees to return to the barge for a rendezvous with Giorgetta that evening. Giorgetta will light a match to tell him it is safe to come aboard. After Luigi leaves, Michele returns to the deck. He tries to rekindle Giorgetta's love for him by recalling the happier days before the death of their baby a year earlier. He reminds her of how all three of them would fit under his cloak and asks why she no longer loves him.

Giorgetta refuses to respond and escapes into the cabin. Tormented by the thought of his wife's infidelity, Michele worries Giorgetta has a lover, but tells himself it can't be Luigi because he asked to go to Rouen. Tormented by the thought of his wife's infidelity, he lights his pipe.

Les pêcheurs de perles

Music by Georges Bizet

Libretto by Eugène Cormon and Michel Carré

ACT I

"C'est toi, toi qu'enfin je revois..."

Au fond du temple saint"

ACT II

"Me voila seule dans la nuit..."

Comme autrefois dans la nuit sombre...De mon amie fleur endormie...Leïla! Leïla!...Ton coeur n'a pas compris le mien"

ACT III

"L'orage s'est calmé...O Nadir, tendre ami...Qu'ai-je vu?...Je frémis, je chancelle"

After a year away, the hunter Nadir returns to a pearl-diving village in the Far East, where his childhood friend Zurga has recently been chosen as its leader. Nadir and Zurga recall how their friendship was almost destroyed when they both fell in love with a beautiful Hindu priestess. They pledge to stay away from her and preserve their friendship. But Nadir does not tell Zurga that he spent a night with the woman and has loved her ever since. Leïla, the priestess the two friends love, knows she is breaking her vows by loving Nadir. She calms her fears by telling herself Nadir is watching over her. Nadir comes into her sacred enclosure. They declare their love, but Leïla warns him that if they are seen they will be put to death.



Photo: Kristen Loken

Don Giovanni

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte

ACT II, Scene 13

"Già la mensa è preparata"

Don Giovanni feasts alone in his dining room, attended by his servant, Leporello. Though he has invited the statue of the Commendatore (whom Giovanni killed in a duel after attacking the Commendatore's daughter Anna) to dine with him, Giovanni has no actual expectation of the statue appearing. Donna Elvira arrives and begs Giovanni to change his life before

it is too late. Giovanni laughs. Elvira leaves, but screams on her way out. Giovanni sends Leporello to see what is the matter. Leporello screams as well and tells Giovanni that the statue has appeared in response to Giovanni's dinner invitation. When heavy knocks fall on the door, Leporello is too afraid to answer. Giovanni opens the door and finds himself staring at the statue of the man he killed. The Commendatore invites Giovanni to dine in his realm. Giovanni agrees, but when he takes the Commendatore's hand, a chill grips him. The Commendatore commands Giovanni to repent, but Giovanni responds with

defiance. While Leporello watches in terror from beneath the table, the Commendatore drags Giovanni into the underworld. Donna Anna, Don Ottavio, Donna Elvira, Zerlina, and Masetto arrive, determined to confront Giovanni. Instead they find a shaken Leporello who relates the horrifying scene he witnessed. Free of Giovanni, the others ponder the future. Ottavio wants to marry Anna right away, but Anna says she needs a year of mourning first. Elvira declares she will enter a convent. Zerlina and Masetto head home for dinner. Leporello says he will go to the nearest tavern and seek out a less challenging employer.

Biographies



SeokJong Baek, Baritone

Hometown: Jeon-Ju, South Korea

Schools: Manhattan School of Music;
Aspen Music Festival and School

Teachers: Ashley Putnam

Major Roles or Experience: Giorgio
Germont (*La traviata*); Marcello (*La
bohème*); Gautru (*Le roi l'a dit*); Tschang,
(*Das Land des Lächelns*)

Other Interests: Reading, exercising,
tennis, hiking, meditating

Awards: 2017 Extraordinary Prize
Sonora International Opera
Competition Francisco Araiza, Mexico;
2017 2nd Prize Alfredo Silipigni Vocal
Competition, New Jersey State Opera;
2017 2nd prize New Jersey Association
of Verismo Opera; 2016
Encouragement Award Opera Index
Vocal Competition, NY; Recipient of
The Mae Zenke Orvis Opera
Scholarship and The Presser
Foundation Scholarship

Upcoming: Resident Artist at Lyric
Opera of Kansas City



Kendra Berentsen, Soprano

Hometown: Portland, Oregon

Schools: Merola Opera Program;
Eastman School of Music;
International Vocal Arts Institute
Blacksburg; International Vocal Arts
Institute Montreal

Teachers: Marlena Malas, Deborah
Birnbaum, Rita Shane, Yelena Kurdina,
Valery Ryvkin, Chuck Hudson

Major Roles or Experience: Juliette
(*Roméo et Juliette*); Zerlina (*Don
Giovanni*); Adele (*Die Fledermaus*);
Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*); Carolina (*Il
matrimonio segreto*); Manon (*Manon*);
Herz (*The Impresario*); Serpina (*La serva
padrona*); Baby Doe (*The Ballad of Baby
Doe*); Frasquita (*Carmen*); Flora (*The
Turn of the Screw*); Zerbinetta (*Ariadne
auf Naxos*); Soeur Constance (*Dialogues
des Carmélites*); Gretel (*Hänsel und
Gretel*); Cunegonde (*Candide*)

Other Interests: Painting, hiking,
running, teaching



Christopher Colmenero, Tenor

Hometown: Burlington, Vermont

Schools: Mannes College; The New
School for Music; SUNY Purchase;
Minnesota Opera Resident Artist;
Opera Saratoga; Chautauqua Opera
Teachers: Frank Lopardo, Julia
Faulkner, Dennis Petersen, Bonnie
Hamilton, Jacque Trussel

Major Roles or Experience: Judge
Danforth (*The Crucible*); Pablo Neruda
(*Il Postino*); Mavra (*Mavra*); Le Prince
Charmant (*Cendrillon*); Tamino (*Die
Zauberflöte*); Rinuccio (*Gianni Schicchi*)

Other Interests: Family, music, New
York Yankees, Italian food

Awards: 2017 Metropolitan Opera
National Council (MONC) Upper
Midwest Regional, 3rd Place; 2017
MONC Minnesota District Winner; 2016
MONC Eastern District Winner; 2015
Giulio Gari International Vocal
Competition Encouragement Award;
2015 Gerda Lissner International Vocal
Competition Encouragement Award;
2014 Richard F. Gold Career Grant;
2014 Chautauqua Opera Young Artist
Encouragement Award



Megan Grey, Mezzo-Soprano

Hometown: Cedar Falls, Iowa

Schools: University of Northern Iowa; Chautauqua Opera Company Young Artist Program

Teachers: Jean McDonald

Major Roles or Experience: Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*); Proserpina (*L'Orfeo*); L'enfant (*L'enfant et les sortilèges*); Mrs. McLean (*Susannah*); Frau Reich (*Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor*); Sorceress and Spirit (*Dido and Aeneas*)

Other Interests: Cooking, kayaking, reading, watching Netflix, playing cello, hanging out with my cats

Awards: Iowa District Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Winner 2018; 1st Place Graduate Division Central Region NATS 2017; 2nd place Classical Singer 2016; Dominick Argento and Carolyn Bailey National Opera Association Vocal Competition Finalist 2015; Schubert Club (MN) Scholarship Winner 2014 & 2015



Andrew Moore, Bass-Baritone

Hometown: Point Pleasant, NJ

Schools: Rutgers University; International Vocal Arts Institute NYC
Teachers: Eduardo Chama, Mignon Dunn

Major Roles or Experience: St. Peter (*Der Mond*); Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*); Rocco (*Fidelio*); Adonis (*Venus and Adonis*); Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*); L'arbre (*L'enfant et les sortilèges*)

Other Interests: Italian cooking, watching scary movies, traveling the world

Awards: Victoria J. Mastrobuono Scholarship Recipient, 2017; Michael Fardink Memorial Award 2017; MM Finalist, Curtis 2017; Alfredo Silipigni Competition with New Jersey State Opera, Finalist 2017



Brian Michael Moore, Tenor

Hometown: Cincinnati, Ohio

Schools: Merola Opera Program; Los Angeles Opera Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist Program; Aspen Music Festival and School; Brevard Music Festival; Manhattan School of Music
Teachers: Stephen King, Mark Oswald, Karl Resnik

Major Roles or Experience: Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*); Spoletta (*Tosca*); Nathanaël (*Les contes d'Hoffmann*); Remendado (*Carmen*); Macduff (*Macbeth*); Pedrillo (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*)

Other Interests: Building computers, baking, taking care of my pet chinchilla

Awards: Una Finestra sui Due Mondi, Spoleto Festival; Western Region Finalist, Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions; Eastern Region Finalist, MONC Auditions



Marlen Nahhas, Soprano

Hometown: Houston, Texas

Schools: Oklahoma City University; Indiana University; Lyric Opera of Kansas City Resident Artist; Central City Opera Apprentice Artist; Utah Festival Opera Festival Artist

Teachers: Vinson Cole, Carol Vaness

Major Roles or Experience: Cio-Cio San (*Madama Butterfly*); Rosalinde (*Die Fledermaus*); Violetta (*La traviata*); Antonia (*Les contes d'Hoffmann*)

Other Interests: Musical theatre, good coffee, travel, great food, Walt Disney World

Awards: Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, 1st Place Indiana District - 2015, 2016; 1st Place Kansas City District - 2018; Michael Ballam International Opera Competition, 1st Place; Central City Opera Bonfils-Stanton Young Artist Award



Brittany Nickell, Soprano

Hometown: Coral Springs, Florida

Schools: Jacksonville University; Manhattan School of Music; Music Academy of the West

Teachers: Nikki Li Hartliep

Major Roles or Experience: Elizabeth (*Second Nature*); Madame de Volanges (*The Dangerous Liaisons*); Lady Macduff (*Macbeth* by Bloch); Anna Maurant (*Street Scene*)

Other Interests: Reading, going to the movies, makeup, cooking vegan recipes

Awards: Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Northeastern District Winner 2018; Premier Opera Competition Finalist 2017; The Opera Index Award 2017; Alan and Joan Taub Ades Competition, 3rd place 2016



Jaeman Yoon, Baritone

Hometown: Seoul, South Korea

Schools: Mannes School of Music

Teachers: Arthur Levy, Joshua Greene

Major Roles or Experience: Count (*Le nozze di Figaro*)

Other Interests: Travel, watching funny videos

Awards: Premiere Opera International Vocal Competition, 2017 Grand Prize; The Opera Index, 2017 Major Award; The Giulio Gari Foundation, 2017 Grants Prize; 2016 Merit-based full tuition Scholarship, Mannes School of Music; 2014 Classic Vocal Music Competition of Daegu, Grand Prize; 2012 Hwacheon Bimok Vocal Music Competition, 3rd Prize



WooYoung Yoon, Tenor

Hometown: Seoul, South Korea

Schools: Manhattan School of Music; Kyung Hee University; Martina Arroyo Foundation; Trentino Music Festival

Teachers: Neil Rosenshein, Alfred Kim

Major Roles or Experience: Don José (*Carmen*); Ottokar (*Der Zigeunerbaron*); Tito (*La clemenza di Tito*); Belmonte (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*); Rodolfo (*Luisa Miller*); Riccardo (*Un ballo in Maschera*); Rodolfo (*La bohème*)

Other Interests: Skiing, cooking, astronomy, cosmology, learning great singing from great singers and coaches, traveling to all the beautiful places in the world, surfing

Awards: Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Eastern Region Finalist 2018; Finalist, Vienna Summer Music Festival Competition 2017; Finalist, Altamura/Caruso International Voice Competition 2017; Finalist, Alfredo Silipigni Vocal Competition 2017; Honorable Mention, Metropolitan International Vocal Competition 2016; 2nd Prize, Korean Vocal Competition 2011

Upcoming: Empire Opera: Belmonte (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*)



Xiaomeng Zhang

Baritone

Hometown: Wenzhou, China

Schools: The Juilliard School; Manhattan School of Music; Shanghai Conservatory of Music; Bel Canto at Caramoor

Teachers: Marlena Malas

Major Roles or Experience: Tancredi (*Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*); Kuligin (*Káťa Kabanová*); Minskman (*Flight*); Fernando (*Fidelio*); Licinio (*Aureliano in Palmira*); Giove (*La Calisto*); Schaunard (*La bohème*); Giovanni (*Don Giovanni*)

Other Interests: Cooking, swimming

Awards: MONC New England Regional 2nd place; Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation IVC Encouragement Award; Dallas Opera Guild Competition Finalist



Kathleen Kelly, Conductor

Kathleen Kelly, who returns to Merola where she was an apprentice coach in 1991 and 1992, enjoys a wide-ranging and dynamic musical life as a pianist, opera coach, conductor, and master teacher. The first woman and first American named as Director of Musical Studies at the Vienna State Opera, Kathleen joined the faculty of the University of Michigan in 2015 as that school's first Coach/Conductor of Opera. Kathleen was an assistant to James Levine at the Metropolitan Opera from 1997–2006, specializing in works of Wagner, Strauss, and Berg. While music director of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, she conducted her own chamber

music arrangement of *Hansel and Gretel* in a remarkable production by Basil Twist. From 2003–2008 Kathleen was also the Music Director of the Berkshire Opera, conducting two productions each summer and overseeing the young artist program.



Aria Umezawa, Director

Currently completing her second year as a San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow, Aria Umezawa is the first stage director to be awarded the fellowship in 15 years. She is the cofounder of the Toronto-based, independent opera company Opera 5, and served as its artistic director from 2012 to 2017. In addition, she is the creator, writer, and director of the web series *Opera Cheats*, and she was the 2016 Merola Apprentice Stage Director, where her staging of the Merola Grand Finale concert was praised by the *San Francisco Chronicle*: "Over the decades, I've never seen the job dispatched with the elegance, verve and sheer theatrical imagination that Aria Umezawa brought to it on Saturday night in the War Memorial Opera House. This young Canadian artist ... marshalled her fellow Merolini with the dexterity of an experienced master."

Orchestra

VIOLIN I

Craig Reiss
Tatiana Freedland
Carol Kutsch
Julie Kim
Josepha Fath
Alice Kennelly
Daryl Schilling
Dan Flanagan
Karen Shinozaki

VIOLIN II

Joe Edelberg
Eva Karasik
Elizabeth Corner
David Wilson
Maxine Nemerovski
Gulnar Spurlock
Baker Peeples

VIOLA

Melinda Rayne
Patrick Kroboth
Caroline Lee
Daria D'Andrea
Oscar Hasbun
Maria Caswell

CELLO

Adelle Akiko Kearns
Dina Weinshelbaum
Judyaba
Janet Witharm
Farley Pearce

BASS

Tim Spears
Ken Miller
Michel Taddei
Andrew McCorkle

FLUTE

Stacey Pelinka
Michelle Caimotto

PICCOLO

Leslie Chin

OBOE

Peter Lemberg
Kathleen Conner

ENGLISH HORN

Laura Reynolds

CLARINET

Arthur Austin
Diana Dorman

BASS CLARINET

Karen Sremac

BASSOON

Debbie Kramer
David Granger

HORN

Mark Almond
Bethany Zare
Brian McCarty
Scott Hartman

TRUMPET

William Harvey
Kenneth Olson
Dylan Girard

TROMBONE

Samuel Schlosser
Craig McAmis

BASS TROMBONE

David Ridge

TUBA

Zachariah Spellman

TIMPANI

Mark Veregge

PERCUSSION

Victor Avdienko
Lane Sanders

HARP

Wendy Tamis

CELESTE

Thomas Morris

ORCHESTRA MANAGER

Craig McAmis

LIBRARIAN

Tim Spears

CONTRACTOR

Kent Reed

MUSICAL PREPARATION

Annie Brooks
Matthew Gemmill
James Maverick
Thomas Morris

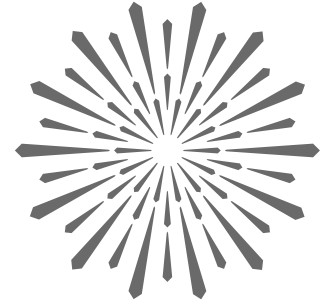
About the Merola Opera Program

Jayne C. Davis, *Chairman*

Carlyn Clause, *President*

Jean Kellogg, *Executive Director*

The Merola Opera Program is widely regarded as the foremost opera training program for aspiring singers, coach accompanists, and stage directors. Merola nurtures the opera stars of tomorrow, presents operatic works that reach a diverse audience, and provides community outreach through educational programs for students and the general public.



**MEROLA
OPERA PROGRAM**

Named for San Francisco Opera's first general director, Gaetano Merola, the Merola Opera Program began during the 1954-55 season and established its full training program in 1957. Each fall, nearly 1,000 young artists apply to the Program. During the 12-week, all-expenses-paid summer training program, they have the rare opportunity of studying, coaching, and participating in master classes with established professionals. Participants also perform in two fully staged opera productions, the Schwabacher Summer Concert, and the Merola Grand Finale, all with full orchestra.

Merola has served as a proving ground for hundreds of artists including Anna Netrebko, Ailyn Pérez, Patricia Racette, Nadine Sierra, Elza van den Heever, Carol Vaness, Deborah Voigt, Joyce DiDonato, Susan Graham, Dolores Zajick, Brian Jagde, Stuart Skelton, Rolando Villazón, Thomas Hampson, Lucas Meacham, and Patrick Summers, among many others. Merola operates in close artistic collaboration with San Francisco Opera but is an independent nonprofit organization, governed by a separate board of directors. Merola is responsible for its own fundraising, primarily from loyal members and foundations.

Merola provides a nurturing environment for young opera artists of the highest caliber to hone their skills and invites passionate supporters to be part of the journey. For information on the Merola Opera Program, please visit merola.org.

James H. Schwabacher (1920–2006) was not only instrumental in the establishment and development of the Merola Opera Program—he became its very heart and soul, demonstrating an unwavering commitment to the next generation of vocal talent. Jim was, first and foremost, a noted tenor and scholar who graced many opera stages. And just as important to him as making music was encouraging others to do the same. Jim took pride in passing on to young artists insights gleaned from his own career and studies, and he conveyed his rigorous musical standards with a gentle and loving touch. In addition to his artistic leadership, Jim provided vital financial and administrative stewardship to Merola, serving as President of the Board of Directors for 29 years and subsequently as Chairman of the Board for 15 years.

Devoted to the future of opera for more than half a century, his leadership continues to inspire us to identify, train, and nurture the world's finest young operatic talent.

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

Merola Opera Program 2018 Summer Festival

Mozart's *Il re pastore* · July 19 & 21
Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* · August 2 & 4
Merola Grand Finale and Reception · August 18

For tickets, visit the SF Opera Box Office at
301 Van Ness Ave, San Francisco or call (415) 864-3330.
For more information, visit merola.org.



MEROLA
OPERA PROGRAM