

SD OPERA

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San Diego Opera and La Jolla Music Society Announce Isabel Leonard and Pablo Sáinz-Villegas in Concert

**Thursday, December 1, 2022
The Baker-Baum Concert Hall at The Conrad Prebys
Performing Arts Center**

First co-presentation between San Diego Opera and LJMS, Continues Company's Mission for Partnerships

San Diego, CA – San Diego Opera and La Jolla Music Society are excited to announce the co-presentation of **mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard and guitarist Pablo Sáinz-Villegas in concert on Thursday, December 1, 2022 at 7:30 PM at the Baker-Baum Concert Hall at The Conrad Prebys Performing Arts Center**. Isabel Leonard, one of today's brightest opera stars, joins one of the world's greatest guitar players for an intimate performance that will conjure the magnificent musical traditions of Spain. Back in October 2021, Pablo Sainz-Villegas was invited by Peter Gelb of The Met Opera to join forces, in part, with opera superstar Isabel Leonard in a worldwide broadcast live from Versailles. Following its success, the two artists decided to work creatively to build out a special vocal-guitar program for a limited-run tour in the United States, featuring popular arias and songs beloved around the world.

Praised by Billboard as “the soul of the Spanish guitar”, Pablo Sainz-Villegas has become a worldwide sensation known as today's greatest guitarist. As described by The New York Times, his “virtuosic playing characterized by irresistible exuberance” conjures the passion, playfulness, drama, and rich musical heritage of La Rioja, his homeland. His performances include appearances with the Chicago Symphony, Berlin Philharmonic, and Los Angeles Philharmonic at Hollywood Bowl.

Isabel Leonard is a Grammy Award-winning mezzo-soprano who has performed leading roles in every major opera house in the world including The Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, and Vienna State Opera; as well as in concert on the stages of Carnegie Hall, Salzburg Festival and The Kennedy Center. She is on the Board of Trustees of Carnegie Hall. In 21/22 she returned to The Metropolitan Opera for *Cendrillon* and *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Komponist), Washington National Opera for *Come Home: A Celebration of Return* and *Carmen*, and The Santa Fe Opera for *Carmen*.

“I’m thrilled to be presenting this concert by the esteemed mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard. This will be the third time San Diego Opera has presented singers in the perfect acoustic of the Baker-Baum Concert Hall, but this is the first time for us to do so in partnership with the La Jolla Music Society, which I hope will be the beginning of an ongoing relationship,” shares San Diego Opera General Director David Bennett. This concert continues San Diego Opera’s mission of strategic partnerships with other San Diego cultural organizations including the San Diego Symphony, San Diego Ballet, La Jolla Playhouse, Fern Street Circus, Animal Cracker Conspiracy, and more.

Tickets are now on sale to supporters and donors of San Diego Opera and LJMS. Tickets will go on sale to the general public, if they are available, at a later date. Tickets range from \$44-\$115. For tickets and more information please call 619.533.7000 Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM.

Pre-production artwork is online at: <https://sandiegoopera.smugmug.com/20222023-PreProduction-Artwork/>

Artist Bios

Isabel Leonard, Mezz-soprano

San Diego Opera debut. Three-time Grammy Award winning artist Isabel Leonard has established herself as one of the most in demand performers as a star on the world’s leading stages and screens. The 2021 – 2022 season sees her return to The Metropolitan Opera in her role debut as Der Komponist in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, a return to the role of Cherubino in the Richard Eyre production of *Le nozze di Figaro*, and in the title role in Laurent Pelly’s production of *Cinderella*. Ms. Leonard also makes her debut in the title role of *Carmen* in both Francesca Zambello’s production at Washington National Opera, conducted by music director Evan Rogister, and in Santa Fe Opera’s production conducted by Harry Bicket. Ms. Leonard also appears in Washington National Opera’s reopening gala, *Come Home* as well as a concert commemorating the anniversary of September 11th with the National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Giancarlo Nosedà. In recital this season, she appears at the Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Connecticut. The 2020 – 2021 season saw Ms. Leonard’s role debut as Musetta in James Robinson’s production of *La bohème* with Palm Beach Opera, as Maria in *West Side Story* with Opera Naples, and an *All-Star* concert with Austin Opera which was broadcast on PBS. Scheduled engagements also included the title role in *Carmen* with Houston Grand opera, Maria in *The Sound of Music* with the Glimmerglass Festival, Donna Elvira in a new production of *Don Giovanni* at The Metropolitan Opera, and Roméo in Berlioz’s *Roméo et Juliette* with the LA Philharmonic. Highlights of Ms. Leonard’s career include the title roles in *Carmen*, *La Périchole*, *Cendrillon*, *Marnie*, and *Der Rosenkavalier*, as well as Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Angelina in *La Cenerentola*, Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, Zerlina and Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, Sesto in *La clemenza di Tito*, Charlotte in *Werther*, Blanche de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Costanza in *Griselda*, Musetta in *La bohème*, and Sesto in *Giulio Cesare*. Ms. Leonard regularly appears on the stages of the world’s leading opera stages including The Metropolitan Opera, Opéra National de Paris, Wiener Staatsoper, Los Angeles Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, San Francisco Opera, Aix-en-Provence Festival, Salzburg Festspiele, and Teatro Comunale di Bologna. She regularly enjoys collaboration with esteemed conductors including Valery Gergiev, Seiji Ozawa, Antonio Pappano, Charles Dutoit, Gustavo Dudamel, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Yannick Nézet-Seguin, Franz Welser-Möst, Plácido Domingo, Edward

Gardner, James Levine, Edo de Waart, James Conlon, Marin Alsop, Sir Andrew Davis, Michele Mariotti, Harry Bicket, Andris Nelsons, and Michael Tilson Thomas. Orchestral highlights include appearances with Cleveland Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, and Vienna Philharmonic, and San Francisco Symphony, among others. Television and film appearances include an appearance on the season 43 finale of Sesame Street in Murray Monster's "People in Your Neighborhood" segment, scenes from Terrence McNally's *Masterclass* directed by Nicole Alexander, and as a regular host of The Metropolitan Opera's Live in HD broadcasts. Ms. Leonard was named recipient of the prestigious Richard Tucker Award and currently has three Grammy Awards for Michael Tilson Thomas' *From the Diary of Anne Frank* on SFS Media, Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges* on Decca, and *The Tempest* from The Metropolitan Opera on Deutsche Grammophon. She currently resides in New York and sits on the Board of Trustees at Carnegie Hall and on the Artistic Advisory Board of ArtSmart.

Pablo Sáinz-Villegas, Guitarist

Praised as "the soul of the Spanish guitar", he has become a worldwide sensation known as this generation's greatest guitarist. Pablo Sáinz-Villegas has been acclaimed by the international press as the successor of Andrés Segovia and an ambassador of Spanish culture in the world. Since his early debut with the New York Philharmonic under the baton of Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos at Lincoln Center, he has played in more than 40 countries and with orchestras such as the Israel Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the National Orchestra of Spain. Plácido Domingo hailed him as "the master of the guitar" from the beginning their multiple collaborations together. They most recently released "*Volver*", a duo album with Sony Classical and their performances have taken place in unique stages around the world such as the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium in Madrid to an audience of over 85,000 people, at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles and on a floating stage on the Amazon River televised internationally for millions. Pablo's "virtuosic playing characterized by irresistible exuberance" (The New York Times) make him one of the most acclaimed soloists by prestigious conductors, orchestras, and festivals. In 2019 Pablo will make his debut with the Chicago Symphony and he will be a special guest at the tribute concert for Plácido Domingo at Guadalajara's stadium in Mexico. As a solo recitalist, he will perform for the first time at the Harris Theater in Chicago, at San Francisco Performances and at Boston's Celebrity Series. He will also continue touring with his trio band along with a special presentation this year at the iconic Blue Note Jazz Club in New York. Pablo Sáinz-Villegas has appeared on some of the world's most prominent stages including the Carnegie Hall in New York, the Philharmonie in Berlin, Tchaikovsky Concert Hall in Moscow, the Musikverein in Vienna and the National Center for the Performing Arts in Beijing. During his last season he played at the Grant Park Music Festival in Chicago to an audience of 11,000 people and highlights of his past international tours with orchestras include the Amsterdam Sinfonietta, the National Orchestra of Spain and the New Zealand Symphony. The success of his performances has translated into repeated invitations from conductors such as Juanjo Mena, Miguel Harth-Bedoya, Carlos Kalmar and Alondra de la Parra. Regularly invited to perform at corporate and governmental events, he has played at special events for the Real Madrid Foundation and on several occasions before members of the Spanish Royal Family as well as other heads of state and international leaders such as the Dalai Lama. As an active recording artist, Billboard Magazine named him "the global ambassador of Spanish guitar" after his solo album, "*Americano*", quickly made its debut to the top 15 on their charts under the Harmonia Mundi label. He also recorded the famed three concerti by Joaquín Rodrigo with the National Orchestra of Spain. As a passionate promoter of the development of new repertoire, he has made numerous world premieres including the first composition for guitar by five-time Academy Award-winner John Williams. Sáinz-Villegas was inspired to take guitar lessons at age six and gave his first public performance at just seven years old. Over the years, he accomplished an impressive collection of over 30 international awards, including the Segovia Award which he won at age 15 and the coveted gold medal at the inaugural Parkening International Guitar Competition. As a lifelong dreamer, educator and philanthropist, he founded in 2006 the non-profit project "The music without borders legacy", with the mission of bringing music to humanize people's environment and to promote the understanding among different cultures.

These values are correspondingly instilled in communities worldwide as part of his Artist-In-Residence collaborations with orchestras and festivals. Through his various initiatives he has shared his music with more than 35,000 children in Spain, Mexico, and United States.

Get Connected

Pre-Opera Lectures

These 30-minute informative lectures for the main stage operas take place in the Civic Theatre one hour prior to every performance and offer wonderful insights into the production audience members are about to see. These lectures are free to all ticket holders.

Post-Opera Talkbacks

Join the cast, crew, musicians and artists right after the performance of the main stage operas for an engaging, entertaining and informative Q&A session moderated by a San Diego Opera staff member. These lectures are held in the Civic Theatre and are free to all ticket holders.

San Diego Opera Podcast Series

These insights into the singers and productions can be enjoyed by opera fans as well as those who are new to the art form. Casual and fun, this is a great way to learn about our artists and the operas they star in. Watch online at <http://www.sdopera.org/Company/Education/Podcasts>. These videos are also available on our YouTube Channel: <http://www.youtube.com/SanDiegoOpera>

San Diego Opera on Twitter

Get frequent updates about San Diego Opera and opera in general by following us on Twitter. Follow tweets from backstage during a performance and learn about special offers and contests before anyone else by following us @SDOpera.

San Diego Opera on Facebook

San Diego Opera's Facebook page offers a place for fellow opera fans to discuss performances, opera news, connect with other fans and get up-to-date information on upcoming events. Look for "San Diego Opera" at <https://www.facebook.com/SanDiegoOpera/>

San Diego Opera on YouTube

Now viewers can watch a large portion of San Diego Opera's programming at their convenience on YouTube. Archived versions of *OperaTalk!*, *Stars in the Salon*, *Opera Spotlight*, our video podcast series and much more can be found on the San Diego Opera channel at: <http://www.youtube.com/SanDiegoOpera>

San Diego Opera on Instagram

A picture is worth a thousand words! Take a look at what happens backstage and in the office on San Diego Opera's Instagram page. <http://instagram.com/sandiegoopera>

Purchasing Tickets

Single tickets for this concert are only available to subscribers and supporters of San Diego Opera and LJMS. Tickets, if available, will go on sale in the Fall for the general public. Tickets are \$44-\$115.

For our most current information about tickets please visit www.sdopera.org or call 619.533.7000

San Diego Opera 2022-2023 Season

El último sueño de Frida y Diego
and 6 (matinee), 2022

Isabel Leonard and Pablo Sáinz-Villegas in concert

Gabriela Lena Frank

October 29, November 1, 4,

December 1, 2022

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| <i>The Puccini Duo: Suor Angelica/Gianni Schicchi</i> Giacomo Puccini 2023 | | February 11, 14, 17, and 19 (matinee), |
| <i>Tosca</i> (matinee), 2023 | Giacomo Puccini | March 25, 28, 31, and April 2 |
| <i>Ghosts</i> (matinee), 2023 | Nicolas Reveles | April 14, 15, and 16 |
| <i>The Falling and the Rising</i> (matinee), 2023 | Zack Redler | May 12, 13, and 14 |

Mission:

The mission of San Diego Opera is to deliver exceptional performances and exciting, accessible programs to diverse audiences, focusing on community partnerships, and the transformative and expressive power of the human voice.

Vision:

San Diego Opera will be recognized globally as a leading example of adaptability, innovation and sustainability, promoting diversity on stage, in our repertoire, and in our staff and leadership, with a commitment to world-class and emerging talent, and innovative use of technology.

Values:

- Through excellence in innovative programming and education and a commitment to equity, San Diego Opera provides a lasting cultural service to our diverse community.
- Our tradition of exceptional productions of grand opera is augmented with new expressions of opera in diverse settings.
- Our deep commitment to our community propels us to embrace inclusivity, accessibility and affordability.
- Through fiscal responsibility and nimble adaptation to changing environments, we ensure the future of San Diego Opera for our community.

www.sdopera.org

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