

# SD OPERA Media Release

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## **Jake Heggie’s Chamber Opera, *Three Decembers*, Continues San Diego Opera’s Season as Part of the dētour Series**

*Mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade reprises role she  
created for the world premiere*

*San Diego Opera performs at PHAME Theatre for the  
first time in the Company’s History*

**San Diego, CA** – Jake Heggie’s chamber opera, *Three Decembers*, continues the Company’s dētour Series when it opens on **Friday, March 8, 2019 at PHAME** (Patrick Henry Arts, Music, Entertainment) Theatre for three performances. Additional performances are March 9 and 10 (matinee), 2019. This chamber opera, which is a meditation on the family we want versus the family we actually have, marks the welcome return of legendary mezzo-soprano **Frederica von Stade** as Madeline Mitchell, reprising the role she created for the world premiere of this opera. Also reprising the role she created for the world premiere is soprano **Kristin Clayton** in her house debut as Beatrice Mitchell. Baritone **Steven LaBrie** also makes his Company debut as Charlie Mitchell. Conductor **Adam Turner** makes his Company debut alongside stage director **Karen Tiller**. The scenic, lighting, and projection designer is **Peter Dean Beck** and the costume designer is **Helen E. Rodgers**.

*Three Decembers* takes place in the month of December over the years 1986, 1996 and 2006 and tells the story of Madeline Mitchell, a famous actress, and her two adult children as they struggle to know and love each other.

San Diego Opera is incredibly excited to present at the PHAME Theatre for the first time in the Company’s history. Located on the campus of Patrick Henry High School (6702 Wandermere Dr., San Diego, CA 92120) this brand-new 500 seat facility includes state-of-the-art acoustic architecture and lighting while retaining its intimacy to make it an exciting new venue for the Company to perform in.

Performed in English with English text above the stage, these are the first performances of *Three Decembers* by the Company.

*Three Decembers* will have a radio broadcast on **Saturday, June 29, 2019 at 8 PM** on KPBS radio, 89.5 FM (97.7 FM Calexico) and online at [www.kpbs.org](http://www.kpbs.org)

Pre-production photos can be found online at: <https://sandiegoopera.smugmug.com/San-Diego-Opera-2018-2019-PreProduction-Artwork/>

## **The Cast**

### **Frederica von Stade, Madeleine Mitchell**

American mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade made her Company debut in 2016 as Mrs. Winnie Flato in Jake Heggie's *Great Scott*. She made her Metropolitan Opera debut in 1970 and she has sung nearly all of her great roles with that company. In January 2000, the company celebrated the 30th anniversary of her debut with a new production of *The Merry Widow* specifically for her, and in 1995, as a celebration of her 25th anniversary, the Metropolitan Opera created a new production of *Pelléas et Mélisande* for her. In addition, she has appeared with every leading American opera company, including San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Los Angeles Opera. Her career in Europe has been no less spectacular, with new productions mounted for her at Teatro alla Scala, Royal Opera, Covent Garden, the Vienna Staatsoper, and the Paris Opera. She is invited regularly by the finest conductors, among them Claudio Abbado, Charles Dutoit, James Levine, Kurt Masur, Riccardo Muti, Seiji Ozawa, André Previn, Leonard Slatkin, and Michael Tilson Thomas, to appear in concert with the world's leading orchestras, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, London Symphony Orchestra, Washington's National Symphony, and the Orchestra of La Scala. A noted bel canto specialist, she excelled as the heroines of Rossini's *La Cenerentola* and *The Barber of Seville* and Bellini's *La sonnambula* and is noted for her Marguerite in Berlioz' *La damnation de Faust*. Other notable roles in her repertory include title role in *The Merry Widow* and Desirée Armfeldt in *A Little Night Music*. Her repertoire is continually expanding with the works of contemporary composers. She created the role of Tina in The Dallas Opera's world premiere production of *The Aspern Papers*, and Madame de Merteuil in *Dangerous Liaisons* and Mrs. Patrick De Rocher in *Dead Man Walking*, both for San Francisco Opera.

### **Kristin Clayton, Beatrice Mitchell**

San Diego Opera debut. Notable appearances for American lyric soprano Kristin Clayton include the world premiere of Jake Heggie and Terrence McNally's *At the Statue of Venus* for the grand opening of Denver's new Caulkins Opera House, Beatrice Mitchell with Houston Grand Opera and the San Francisco Opera, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* for Walnut Creek Opera, Nedda in *Pagliacci*, Fiordilgi in *Così fan tutte*, Madame de Tourvel in *The Dangerous Liaisons*, Wellgunde in *Das Rheingold* for San Francisco Opera, Echo in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Mimì in *La bohème*, Violetta in *La traviata* and Magda in *La rondine* for Chautauqua Opera, Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* with the Kalamazoo Symphony, Norina in *Don Pasquale* and Micaëla in *The Tragedy of Carmen* with Festival Opera in Walnut Creek. While a member of the San Francisco Opera Center and an Adler Fellow, she performed in Showcase productions of *King Priam* as Andromache and *Ezio* as Onoria. At Wolftrap Opera, she sang Donna Anna and the First Lady in *The Magic Flute* and as a member of San Francisco Opera's Merola Program, she sang Rosalinde and Adele in *Die Fledermaus* with Western Opera Theatre. Additional opera credits include the Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Micaëla in *Carmen*, Virtue in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, the title roles in *Zaïde* and *Suor Angelica* and a Wood Nymph in *Rusalka* for the San Francisco Opera. Her orchestral

engagements with the San Francisco Symphony have included a tribute to Leonard Bernstein and a semi-staged revival of *On the Town*. She recently performed the Verdi *Requiem* with Modesto Symphony and Poulenc's *Gloria* and Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the San Mateo Masterworks Chorale.

**Steven LaBrie**, Charlie Mitchell

San Diego Opera debut. American baritone Steven LaBrie's notable appearances include Escamillo in *Carmen* with Sarasota Opera, Riolo in *Florenzia en el Amazonas* with Florida Grand Opera, Figaro in *The Barber of Seville* with Opera Hong Kong and Lyric Opera Baltimore, Marcello in *La bohème* with Opera Omaha, and the Count in *The Marriage of Figaro* with North Carolina Opera. In concert, he has been heard in *Carmina Burana* with the San Antonio Symphony and Brahms's *Requiem* with the Tulsa Symphony. He has also appeared with the New York City Ballet singing the baritone solos of *Estancia* both in New York City and on tour in Paris, and made his Carnegie Hall debut as the soloist in Matthias Pintscher's *Songs from Solomon's Garden* with the American Composers Orchestra. He has received numerous awards and honors including a 2016 Top Prize Award and a 2013 Encouragement Grant from the George London Music Foundation, Second Place from the Gerda Lissner International Vocal Competition as well as the Judges Award with the Opera Index Competition. In 2010, he was an Encouragement Award winner in Washington, DC for the Metropolitan Opera National Council. He was also awarded First Place in The Dallas Opera Guild Vocal Competition and Second Place in the Palm Beach Opera Competition in 2008, where he performed in the grand winner's concert accompanied by the Palm Beach Opera Orchestra. That same year, he was awarded Second Place at the Parkinson Competition and was a recipient of the Sergio Franchi Scholarship. In 2006, Mr. LaBrie was a Third Place winner of The Dallas Opera Vocal Competition, where he was also awarded The Mozart Award for best aria interpretation. Additionally, he has been awarded the Grand Prize at the Florida Grand Opera Young Patronesses of the Opera Competition, Fourth Prize at both the Licia Albanese Puccini Foundation Competition and the Giulio Gari Foundation Competition and recently the 2015 Gilda Morelli Prize for Best Vocal and Dramatic Interpretation of an Aria at the Concurso Nacional de Canto Carlo Morelli in Mexico City, which was especially chosen by Francisco Araiza.

**Adam Turner**, Conductor

San Diego Opera debut. American conductor Adam Turner is the Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor at Virginia Opera. Notable appearances there include *Der Freischütz*, *Samson and Delilah*, *The Seven Deadly Sins/Pagliacci*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *La bohème*, *Roméo and Juliette* and *The Flying Dutchman*. Other engagements include Händel's *Messiah* with the Virginia Symphony and Theo Popov's *The Halloween Tree*, which he also conducted with the American Lyric Theater at Arizona State University, *Three Decembers* and *Sweeney Todd* with Hawaii Opera Theatre, a Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program Holiday Concert with Washington National Opera, *Carmen* with Central City Opera, *Roméo and Juliette* at Lyric Opera Baltimore, *Lost in the Stars* at Washington National Opera, *Sweeney Todd* for Eugene Opera, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Dead Man Walking*, *Carmen*, *La bohème*, *Man of La Mancha*, and *Oklahoma!* with Central City Opera, *Don Giovanni*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Carmen*, *Brigadoon*, *My Fair Lady*, *Camelot*, and *Noye's Fludde* during his tenure as Resident Conductor at Ash Lawn Opera, and *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *Carmen*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *The Mikado*, *Carousel*, and *Camelot* for Virginia Opera. He first gained recognition during his tenure at Stadttheater Pforzheim in Germany while taking over conducting responsibilities of a production of *Les Misérables*. Prior to his appointment to Virginia Opera he held administrative and music staff appointments at houses across the country including Seattle Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Central City Opera, Portland Opera, Tulsa Opera, Syracuse Opera, and Ash Lawn Opera.

**Karen Tiller**, Director

San Diego Opera debut. Stage director Karen Tiller has directed several Hawaii Opera Theatre productions including *Susannah*, *Madama Butterfly*, *The Pearl Fishers*, *Turandot*, *Three Decembers*, *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, and *Sweeny Todd*. Other notable productions include *The Turn of the Screw* at Opera Memphis and *Orpheo et Euridice* at the Opera Festival of New Jersey. Before directing, Ms. Tiller served as Hawaii Opera Theatre's Executive Director for almost ten years.

**Peter Dean Beck**, Scenic/Lighting/Projection Designer

San Diego Opera debut. Peter Dean Beck has designed scenery and/or lighting for over three hundred productions around the country. Among his opera credits are *Falstaff*, *Turandot*, *Manon*, *Don Giovanni*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Romeo and Juliette* for such companies as Atlanta Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Virginia Opera, and Chautauqua Opera. He has designed productions of *Andrea Chenier*, *L'Italiana in Algeri*, *Macbeth*, *Elektra*, and *Tristan and Isolde* for Hawaii Opera Theatre, where he has been principal designer for twenty-five seasons. He has also been designing opera productions for the University of Colorado for sixteen seasons. His other musical theater credits include *West Side Story*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Candide*, *The King and I*, and *Fiddler on the Roof*. He designed *The Indigo Girls Project* for Atlanta Ballet and *Nutcracker* for Ballet Hawaii. He designed a double bill of *le Rossignol* and *Cavalleria Rusticana* for Sakai City Opera in Japan and lit *Cavalleria rusticana/Pagliacci* in Macao and *Don Carlo* in Hong Kong.

**Helen E. Rodgers**, Costume Designer

San Diego Opera debut. Recent work by costume designer Helen E. Rodgers includes *Così fan tutte* and *Falstaff* for Mannes Opera, *Street Scene* for the Manhattan School of Music and Chautauqua Opera, the *Christmas Spectacular* for Radio City Music Hall, and *Die Walküre*, *La bohème*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Susanna* for Hawaii Opera Theatre where she has been a costumer since 2002.

**Performance Schedule**

Friday	March 8, 2019	7 PM
Saturday	March 9, 2019	7 PM
Sunday	March 10, 2019	2 PM

**Get Connected**

***San Diego Opera Podcast Series***

Get to know the artists and operas of the 2018-2019 Season. 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**

Subscriptions to the 2018-2019 season are now on sale. Single tickets are on sale in the summer.

Single tickets start at \$49 for all mainstage performances. Single tickets start at \$35 for all dētour Series operas. Children prices exist, please visit [www.sdopera.org](http://www.sdopera.org) or call 619.533.7000 for more information.

Senior citizen discounts of 15% are available to the Main Stage series on Tuesday and Friday subscription packages. Senior citizen discounts of 15% are available to the dētour Series on Saturday subscription packages.

Military discounts (active and retired) of 50% are available to the Main Stage series on Tuesday and Friday subscription packages. Military discounts of 50% are available to the dētour Series on Saturday subscription packages.

For information about tickets please visit [www.sdopera.org](http://www.sdopera.org) or call 619.533.7000

### **The 2018-2019 Season**

<i>The Marriage of Figaro</i>	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	October 20, 23, 26, and 28 (mat), 2018
<i>All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914</i>	Peter Rothstein	December 7, 8, and 9 (mat), 2018
<i>Rigoletto</i>	Giuseppe Verdi	February 2, 5, 8, and 10 (mat), 2019
<i>Three Decembers</i>	Jake Heggie	March 8, 9, 10 (mat), 2019
<i>Carmen</i>	Georges Bizet	March 30, April 2, 5, and 7 (mat) 2019
<i>One Amazing Night –Stephen Powell and Stephen Costello</i>		May 15, 2019

### **San Diego Opera Mission Statement**

The mission of San Diego Opera is to deliver exceptional vocal performances and exciting, accessible programs to diverse audiences, focusing on community engagement and the transformative power of live performance.

### **San Diego Opera Vision Statement**

San Diego Opera will be recognized internationally as a leading example of adaptability, innovation and sustainability in the operatic arts, promoting diversified programming and unique performance venues with world-class and emerging talent.

### **San Diego Opera Core Values Statement**

Through excellence in innovative programming and education, SDO provides a lasting cultural service to the community.

- Our tradition of excellence in fully staged opera is augmented with new models of opera and venues. Our unique and deep commitment to the community propels us to explore ways of increasing affordability and accessibility.
- Through fiscal responsibility and nimble adaptation to the changing marketplace, we protect the future of San Diego Opera.
- Our educational and community involvement coupled with relevant programming will build the audience of the future.

[www.sdopera.org](http://www.sdopera.org)

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