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Gounod's French Masterpiece, *Faust*, Returns to San Diego Opera

The stars of last season's *Romeo and Juliet*, Ailyn Pérez and Stephen Costello return as Marguerite and Faust.

San Diego Favorite, American bass-baritone Greer Grimsley returns as Méphistophélès

San Diego, CA – San Diego Opera's 46th International Season continues on **Saturday, April 23, 2011** with Charles Gounod's masterpiece of French opera, *Faust*. Returning after their triumphant Company debuts in last season's *Romeo and Juliet*, American soprano **Ailyn Pérez** returns as Marguerite and American tenor **Stephen Costello** returns as Faust. Joining them is San Diego favorite, American bass-baritone **Greer Grimsley** who's dastardly Méphistophélès will ignite the Civic Theatre stage. Making a Company debut as Valentin is American baritone **Brian Mulligan**. Rounding out the cast is New Zealand mezzo soprano **Sarah Castle** as Siebel, American mezzo soprano **Jane Bunnell** as Marthe Schwerlein and American baritone **Scott Sikon** as Wagner. American stage director **David Gately** stages the production and Resident conductor **Karen Keltner** brings her mastery of the French repertoire to the podium.

Performed in French with English translations above the stage, *Faust* was last performed by San Diego Opera in 2001 and tells the story of aged philosopher Faust and the deal he strikes with the Devil for youth and vigor and the chance to pursue his love interest, the young and beautiful Marguerite.

The sets and costumes of *Faust* are owned by Lyric Opera of Chicago. The sets and costumes were designed by **Robert Perdziola**. The Lighting Designer is **Michael Whitfield**.

Faust was composed by Charles Gounod to a libretto by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré after Carré's *Faust et Marguerite* and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust, Part 1*. *Faust* received its world premiere at the Théâtre Lyrique in Paris on March 19, 1859. These performances will mark the eighth time this opera has been performed by San Diego Opera with other performances taking place in 1966, 1970, 1974, 1980, 1981 (Palm Springs), 1988 and 2001.

A broadcast of this opera will appear on KPBS Radio (89.5 FM / 89.1 FM La Jolla / 97.7 FM Calexico) on Sunday, June 11, 2011 at 7PM.

Electronic Press Kits for this opera, including multimedia content can be found online at: <http://www.sdopera.com/Company/News/PressKits/2011>

The Cast

Ailyn Pérez, Marguerite

American soprano Ailyn Pérez made her San Diego Opera debut last season as Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*. She made her professional debut at Palm Beach Opera where she sang Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* and Soeur Constance in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. She recently performed Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra* at Berlin's Deutsche Staatsoper, Amelia at Milan's Teatro alla Scala, Violetta in *La traviata* for Wiener Staatsoper, Juliette with the Salzburg Festival, the Four Heroines in *The Tales of Hoffmann* with Opera Theatre of St. Louis and Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* with Michigan Opera Theatre, Boston Lyric Opera as well with the Salzburg Festival on a tour of Japan. Other notable performances include Violetta in *La traviata* with Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Amor in the world premiere of *Concierto para Mendez* with Los Angeles Opera and Gilda in *Rigoletto* for Opera Carolina. She has also toured the United States and Mexico on tour with Andrea Bocelli. Other roles in repertoire include the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Adina in *The Elixir of Love*, Suzel in *L'amico Fritz*, Mimì in *La bohème* and Anna in *Le villi*. She was the 2007 winner of the Shoshana Foundation Career Grant.

Stephen Costello, Faust

American tenor Stephen Costello made his San Diego Opera debut last season as Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* and returned earlier this season as Singer in *Der Rosenkavalier*. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 2007 as Arturo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and was then invited to sing Edgardo that same season. He recently created the role of Greenhorn for the world premiere of *Moby-Dick* for The Dallas Opera, made his Vienna Staatsoper debut in Rodolfo in *La bohème*, sang Cassio in *Otello* with the Salzburg Festival, Edgardo at Fort Worth Opera, Camille in *The Merry Widow*, Leicester in *Mary, Queen of Scots (Maria Stuarda)* and the title role of *Roberto Devereux* with The Dallas Opera, Christian in *Cyrano* and Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* with the Opera Company of Philadelphia and at Italy's Spoleto Festival, Romeo with Baltimore Opera and The Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* at Deutsche Opera Berlin. He made his professional debut as Rodolfo in *La bohème* with Fort Worth Opera and his European debut as Nemorino in *The Elixir of Love* with Opéra National de Bordeaux. He was awarded a 2007 Career Grant for the Richard Tucker Music Foundation, as well as a 2006 Sara Tucker Study Grant. He won first prize in the 2006 George London Foundation for Singers Competition as well as First Prize and Audience Prize in the Giargiari Competition as well as First Prize in the Licia Albanese Puccini Foundation Competition.

Greer Grimsley, Méphistophélès

American bass-baritone Greer Grimsley made his San Diego Opera debut in *Lohengrin* in 2000, returned for *Fidelio* in 2003, *Samson and Delilah* in 2007 and as Scarpia in *Tosca* in 2009. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut as Captain Balstrode in *Peter Grimes* and has returned as Escamillo in *Carmen*, Jokanaan in *Salome*, Scarpia in *Tosca*, Telramund in *Lohengrin* and Amfortas in *Parsifal*. Recent engagements include Wotan in Seattle Opera's Ring Cycle, Don Pizarro in *Fidelio* with Opera Company of Philadelphia, Portland Opera and the Portuguese National Opera, Kurwenal in *Tristan und Isolde* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Jokanaan in *Salome* with operas of Santa Fe, Vancouver and San Francisco and Scarpia in *Tosca* with L'Opera de Montreal, Opera Colorado and Lyric Opera of Kansas. Other roles include *The Flying Dutchman*

in Lithuania and Seattle Opera, the title role of *Macbeth* with Vancouver Opera, Amonasro in *Aida* with Portland Opera and Méphistophélès in *Faust* with New Orleans Opera. A frequent singer in Europe, Grimsley has performed leading roles at Deutsche Oper Berlin, Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Royal Danish Opera, Prague National Theatre, Aarhus-Den Jyske Opera in Denmark, the Scottish Opera and the Stadttheater Basel in Switzerland, among others.

Brian Mulligan, Valentin

San Diego Opera debut. American Baritone Brian Mulligan's notable opera performances include Valentin in *Faust*, Albert in *Werther*, Ragueneau in *Cyrano de Bergerac* opposite Plácido Domingo, and Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* for San Francisco Opera. With the American Symphony Orchestra, he was seen in the role of Titus in Magnard's rarely performed *Bérénice* at Carnegie Hall and symphonic highlights included a return to Ravinia for Mahler's *Das klagende Lied* and *Elijah* with the Arizona Symphony. Upcoming performances include a return to the Metropolitan Opera as Valentin, the title role in Adam's *Nixon in China* with San Francisco, his debut with the Washington National Opera as Enrico in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* and the title role in *The Death of Klinghoffer* with Opera Theatre of St. Louis. He is a winner of a Richard Tucker Career Grant and is the 2006 winner of the International Hans Gabor Belvedere Vocal Competition, only the third American in the competition's history to win this coveted prize.

Sarah Castle, Siebel

New Zealand mezzo soprano Sarah Castle made her San Diego Opera debut in 2007 as Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro*, returned in 2008 as Lola in *Cavalleria rusticana* and last season as Stephano in *Romeo and Juliet*. Recent engagements include the title role in Tan Dun's *Marco Polo* for the Netherlands Opera, Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro* for Seattle Opera, Fox in *The Cunning Little Vixen* for Israeli Opera, Nicklausse in *Les Contes D'Hoffmann* for Teatro Real, Hansel in *Hänsel und Gretel* and Ruggiero in *Alcina* for Opera Australia and Prince Orlovsky in *Die Fledermaus* with Opera Company of Philadelphia. She has sung Dryad in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Siegrune in *Die Walküre* and Tisbe in *Cinderella* for Covent Garden, Oberto in *Alcina* for San Francisco Opera and Staatsoper Stuttgart, Olga in *Eugene Onegin* at Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Flosshilde in both *Das Rheingold* and *Götterdämmerung* and Grimgerde in *Die Walküre* with Bayreuther Festspiele and *Carmen* for both Opernhaus Zürich and New Zealand Opera.

Jane Bunnell, Marthe Schwerlein

American mezzo soprano Jane Bunnell made her San Diego Opera debut in 1988 as Inez in *Il trovatore*, returning the same year as Siebel in *Faust*, and again in 1999 as Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel*. Recent engagements include Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* with Oper der Stadt Bonn and her Lyric Opera of Chicago debut as Marthe Schwerlein. She has enjoyed as long relationship with the Metropolitan Opera where her varied roles include Anino in *La clemenza di Tito*, Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*, Nicklausse in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*, Meg Page in *Falstaff*, Ascagnio in *Les Troyens*, Dryad in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Emilia in *Otello*, Stephano in *Romeo and Juliet* and Siébel in *Faust*. She has performed with Houston Grand Opera, The Dallas Opera, New York City Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Seattle Opera, Vienna Volksoper, Oper der Stadt Köln and the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, among others.

Scott Sikon, Wagner

Since his San Diego Opera debut in 1991 as Superintendent Budd in *Albert Herring*, American bass-baritone Scott Sikon has sung more than twenty roles here including Schaunard in *La*

bohème, Dikoi in *Katya Kabanova*, Steve Hubble in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Montano in *Otello*, Morales in *Carmen*, Curio in *Julius Caesar in Egypt*, the Second Philistine in *Samson and Delilah*, the First Journeyman in *Wozzeck*, Antonio in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Reinmar von Zweter in *Tannhäuser* and Sacristan in *Tosca*, Count Monterone in *Rigoletto* and The Bonze in *Madama Butterfly*. He has performed throughout the United States with Utah Opera, Arizona Opera, Houston Grand Opera, San Francisco Opera, New York City Opera, The Dallas Opera, Hawaii Opera Theatre, Cincinnati Opera and Cleveland Opera. His European debut was at the Vienna Volksoper in the premiere of *The Number 11 Bus*. An active concert artist, Sikon has performed with the Spoleto Festival USA, the San Antonio Symphony and the Arkansas Symphony.

Karen Keltner, Conductor

San Diego Opera's Resident Conductor, Karen Keltner, has been associated with the company since 1980 and has conducted a broad repertoire including last season's *La bohème*, *Romeo et Juliet*, and unexpectedly, the opening night of *La traviata*. Among the other productions which she has conducted for San Diego Opera are *Don Quixote*, *The Pearl Fishers*, *Samson and Delilah*, *Wozzeck*, *Carmen*, *The Conquistador*, *Così fan tutte*, *Thérèse Raquin*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *The Lighthouse*, *Cold Sassy Tree*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and *Rigoletto*. Guest engagements have been with the Washington National Opera, New York City Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, the Opera Company of Philadelphia, Winnipeg and Vancouver Operas (Canada), and l'Opéra National du Rhin, France, among many others. 2011 marks her 15th season as conductor with the Utah Festival Opera where in addition to conducting opera and concerts, she also indulges her passion for the American musical by conducting each summer productions which have included *South Pacific*, *Carousel*, *Guy and Dolls*, *The Most Happy Fella*, *1776*, *The Sound of Music*, *Man of La Mancha*, and *I Do, I Do!*, among others.

David Gately, Stage Director

American stage director David Gately made his San Diego Opera debut in 2002 directing *Don Pasquale* in the "wild west" production, a production also seen at Kentucky Opera, Opera Colorado, Calgary Opera, Chautauqua Opera, Virginia Opera, Dayton Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Opera Omaha, Edmonton Opera and Fort Worth Opera. Recent productions of note include *The Elixir of Love* with Dallas Opera and Atlanta Opera, *Madama Butterfly* with Seattle Opera, *La bohème* with Florida Grand Opera, *Carmen* in New Orleans, *The Tales of Hoffmann* with Edmonton Opera, *The Magic Flute* with Cincinnati Opera and Vancouver Opera, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Florentine Opera and Glimmerglass Opera, *Falstaff* with Opera Omaha and *Rigoletto* with Utah Opera. Other recent productions include *The Barber of Seville* with Washington National Opera, Opera Colorado and Manitoba Opera, *Simon Boccanegra* for L'Opéra de Montreal and *Before Night Falls* with Fort Worth Opera where he also directed an acclaimed production of *Dead Man Walking* and *Cinderella*, among others.

Greg Sample, Choreographer

San Diego Opera debut. American Greg Sample is a renowned choreographer, dance teacher and performer. He is a graduate of North Carolina School of the Arts and has been a featured dancer with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Celine Dion's *A New Day*, *Phantom of the Opera* and Cirque du Soleil's *Believe* and *Viva Elvis*. Principal appearances include Oprah, Celine's CBS Special, A&E Biography, the World Music Awards, Jerry Lewis Telethons and CNN NYE Special. Sample was honored with the Grand Prize and Paid Engagement Awards in McCallum Theatre's Dance Under the Stars competition. He has worked on *So You Think You Can Dance* and recent choreographic credits include works for SampleDance, Nevada Ballet

Theatre, StealFocus Productions, Quebec's Festival de Danse Encore and Las Vegas Contemporary Dance Theatre, among others.

Dale Anthony Girard, Fight Director

Canadian Dale Anthony Girard made his Company debut last season in *Romeo and Juliet*. He is an award-winning Fight Director, Choreographer and author of the stage combat manual *Actors On Guard*. He is a Second Degree Black Belt in Taekwondo/Hopkido, a founding member of the North Carolina Stuntmen's Association and one of only fifteen recognized Fight Masters in the U.S. by the Society of American Fight Directors. Recent credits include the Metropolitan Opera, The Folger Theatre, Opera Carolina, Arden Theater, Piedmont Opera, Pioneer Theatre, Studio Arena Theatre, and Chautauqua Opera. Recent film credits include *Eyeborgs*, *The Key Man*, *The Trial* and the critically acclaimed *Junebug*. He serves on the faculty of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts as Director of Stage Combat Studies.

Javier Valasco, Choreographer

San Diego Opera debut. Choreographer Javier Velasco has supplied dances for La Jolla Playhouse, Old Globe and San Diego Repertory Theatre, where he has directed and choreographed *A Christmas Carol*, *Cabaret* and *Suds* among others. He currently serves as Artistic Director of the San Diego Ballet creating over 50 original pieces and his ballet has been set to the poems of Kenneth Fearing, *Love: 20 Cents the First Quarter-Mile*. He received Best Choreography by the San Diego Dance Alliance and enjoyed creative relationships with Luis Valdez on the 20th Anniversary production of *Zoot Suit*, *Bandido*, and *Corridos*, with composer Steve Gunderson on the premieres of *Dixie Highway*, *Back to Bacharach* and *David*, and with the The Brontes: *Secret Pleasures*, *Secret Tears* and with Doug Jacobs, founding artistic director of the San Diego Rep. Velasco serves on the Board of Advocates for the San Diego Performing Arts League, is a consultant for the School for Creative and Performing Arts in Chula Vista and was listed among people to watch in the art and theater scene by San Diego Magazine.

Robert Perdziola, Set and Costume Designer

San Diego Opera debut. American designer Robert Perdziola originally designed this production for the Lyric Opera of Chicago. With that Company he recently designed the sets and costumes for *Così fan tutte* and the costumes for *Carmen*. He has also designed productions of *Faust* for the Hannover Staatstheater and Opera Theatre of St. Louis. He debuted at the Metropolitan Opera *Il pirata* and returned to design sets for *Capriccio* for the opening-night gala. Other work includes *L'incoronazione de Poppea*, *Hamlet* and *Ariadne auf Naxos* for San Francisco Opera, *Arabella* for Santa Fe Opera, and *Così fan tutte* for Milwaukee Skylight Theater as well as The Dallas Opera. His Opera Australia production of *Arabella* received five Helpmann Awards. He has an ongoing association with Washington's Shakespeare Theatre Company where his work includes *Don Carlos*, *The Country Wife* and *King John*.

Michael Whitfield, Lighting Designer

Canadian Michael Whitfield made his company debut in 2006 designing *The Barber of Seville*, returned in 2008 for *Cavalleria rusticana/Pagliacci*, last season for *La bohème* and *Nabucco* and earlier this season for *Turandot* and *Der Rosenkavalier*. He has designed for many prestigious opera companies including L'Opera de Montréal, San Francisco Opera, Houston Grand Opera, The Dallas Opera and Los Angeles Opera. He has designed lighting for over 70 productions at the Canadian Opera Company since 1979, including *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *The Queen of Spades* and *Death in Venice*. During his over 25 years as Resident Lighting Director for the Stratford Shakespeare Festival of Canada he has lit over 100 productions including *The Trojan Women*, *Fuente Ovejuna*, *King Lear*, *Othello* and *The Mikado* (including the 1984 engagement of

London's The Old Vic). Whitfield has also designed for numerous theatres, ballet companies and for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

About the Production Sponsors

These performances of *Faust* are dedicated to an **Anonymous Title Co-sponsor** and **Producers' Circle Members Peri and Peg Urvek**.

Performance Schedule

Saturday, April 23, 2011 at 7 PM

Tuesday, April 26, 2011 at 7 PM

Friday, April 29, 2011 at 8 PM

Sunday, May 1, 2011 at 2 PM

Get Connected For *Faust*

Stars in the Salon (formerly the Artists' Roundtable)

Meet the singers, conductor and director of *Faust* in this free and informal panel discussion on **Thursday, April 14, 2011 at 5:30 PM** in the Beverly Sills Salon, Civic Theatre. Free.

Pre-Opera Lectures

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

San Diego OperaTalk! with Nick Reveles

Join Dr. Nicolas Reveles, San Diego Opera's Geisel Director of Education, for a fascinating half-hour television program on *Faust*. Viewers will learn about the story, music and history of each opera and will pick up rich insight into the structure and composition of the music. *OperaTalk! with Nick Reveles* airs on UCSD-TV. For a complete listing of schedules and where to view it visit: <http://www.sdopera.com/Company/Education/OperaTalk>

San Diego Opera Spotlight

Produced by San Diego Opera and UCSD-TV, the award-winning *San Diego Opera Spotlight* program gives viewers a unique and entertaining look behind-the-scenes of each of San Diego Opera's four main-stage productions. Viewers will see how the singers, directors, conductor and crew work together to create each opera, get a sneak peak at rehearsal footage and hear exclusive interviews with the stars. *San Diego Opera Spotlight* repeats daily throughout the run of the production. For a complete listing of schedules and where to view it visit: <http://www.sdopera.com/Company/Education/Spotlight>

San Diego Opera Podcast Series

In order to help audiences better appreciate the operas in our 2011 International Season, the Education and Outreach Department has developed a series of introductory podcasts hosted by Dr. Nicolas Reveles. These 15 to 20 minute 'conversations' can be enjoyed by opera fans as well as those who are new to the art form. Informal yet informative, this is a great way to prepare for our season. <http://www.sdopera.com/Company/Education/Podcasts>

San Diego Opera on Twitter

Get real-time frequent updates about San Diego Opera by following us on Twitter as well as our #operahistory project. Follow tweets from backstage during a performance and learn about special offers and contests before anyone else by following us @_SanDiegoOpera.

San Diego Opera Blog: Aria Serious

Aria Serious is San Diego Opera's official blog. It focuses on the serious and not-so-serious world of opera with behind-the-scenes looks at our productions, artist interviews and industry as well as pop-culture news. Come and join in the conversation at: <http://ariaserious.blogspot.com/>

San Diego Opera on Facebook

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

San Diego Opera on YouTube

Now viewers can watch a large portion of San Diego Opera's programming at their convenience on YouTube. *OperaTalk!*, The Artist Roundtables and much more can be found on the San Diego Opera channel at: <http://www.youtube.com/SanDiegoOpera>

Purchasing Tickets

Single tickets for all operas are now on sale. Single ticket prices start at \$35, and can be purchased by calling (619) 533-7000 or online at www.sdopera.com.

Three-opera subscriptions for the 2011 International Season are still available. Subscriptions range from \$108 - \$880 and can be purchased by calling (619) 533-7000 or online at www.sdopera.com

Tuesday Night Senior Discounts are also available for a full series four-opera subscription. Proof of age is required. Call (619) 533-7000 or online at www.sdopera.com for more information.

The 2011 International Season

<i>Turandot</i>	Giacomo Puccini	January 29, February 1, 4 and 6 (mat), 2011
<i>Der Rosenkavalier</i>	Richard Strauss	April 3 (mat), 6, 9 and 12, 2011
<i>Faust</i>	Charles Gounod	April 23, 26, 29 and May 1 (mat), 2011
<i>Carmen</i>	Georges Bizet	May 14, 17, 20 and 22 (mat), 2011

General Information

A widely respected member of the international opera community, *San Diego Opera* brings the world's finest artists to San Diego. Founded in 1965, and led for the last 27 years by General Director and Artistic Director Ian D. Campbell, San Diego Opera produces performances of the highest artistic quality while remaining financially stable.

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