

For Immediate Release

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San Diego Opera Announces 2010 International Season

“Season of Desire” marks 45th International Season

- A Desire for Love: Puccini’s *La bohème* opens the season with the debut of tenor **Piotr Beczala** as Rodolfo and soprano **Ellie Dehn**. San Diego’s own **Priti Gandhi** sings Musetta in the return of this widely popular production.
- A Desire for Freedom: Last seen in San Diego in 1981, Verdi’s biblical epic *Nabucco* (*Nebuchadnezzar*) features French soprano **Sylvie Valayre** as Abigaille, American baritone **Richard Paul Fink** as Nabucco and the debut of American bass **Raymond Aceto** as Zaccaria
- A Desire for Passion: Gounod’s tragic *Romeo and Juliet* welcomes the Company debuts of American tenor **Stephen Costello** as Romeo and his real life wife, **Ailyn Pérez**, as Juliet.
- A Desire to Live: San Diego favorite, *La traviata*, closes the season with American soprano **Elizabeth Futral** as Violetta and the Company debut of Romanian tenor **Marius Brenciu** as Alfredo.
- Subscriptions begin at \$90 for three operas and \$120 for a full-series of operas.

San Diego, CA – Important artist debuts and four stunning operas, all with themes of desire, make up the 2010 San Diego Opera season.

The season opens on **January 30, 2010** with Giacomo Puccini’s incredibly popular *La bohème*. This bittersweet tragedy, about two “bohemians” – a poet and a seamstress – who discover love and loss go hand in hand, features the Company debut is Polish tenor Piotr Beczala as Rodolfo who will sing this role just weeks before reprising it at the Metropolitan Opera. Not yet 30, exciting soprano Ellie Dehn makes her Company debut as Mimi. San Diego’s very own international opera star, the Indian-born soprano Priti Gandhi, sings her role debut of Musetta.

Stage director E. Loren Meeker makes her San Diego Opera directing debut and San Diego Opera's resident conductor Karen Keltner leads from the podium.

Verdi's rousing ode to freedom, *Nabucco*, opens **February 20, 2010**. Following the plight of the Jews and their persecution by the Babylonian King Nabucco, this opera has not been performed by San Diego Opera since 1981. French soprano Sylvie Valayre, who made her Company debut last season in *Tosca*, returns to sing Abigaille. American baritone Richard Paul Fink returns as Nabucco and American bass Raymond Aceto makes a Company debut as Zaccaria. Lotfi Mansouri returns to direct the staging and Edoardo Müller leads the orchestra.

Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet* opens on **March 13, 2010** as the third opera of the season. Shakespeare's timeless tragedy comes to the stage with real-life husband and wife duo; tenor Stephen Costello, winner of the 2009 Richard Tucker Award, and soprano Ailyn Pérez as Romeo and Juliet. Stage director Cynthia Stokes makes her Company debut and San Diego Opera's Karen Keltner bring her mastery of the French repertoire to the podium.

The 2010 season concludes with Verdi's *La traviata* which opens on **April 17, 2010**. American soprano Elizabeth Futral, last seen as Nedda in *Pagliacci*, returns to sing Violetta and Romanian tenor Marius Brenciu makes his Company debut as Alfredo with English baritone Alan Opie singing Germont. Australian stage director Andrew Sinclair returns to stage the opera and Italian conductor Renato Palumbo makes his Company with these performance.

"Our 2010 season is the ideal way to enjoy extraordinary singers while hearing some of the most sublime music opera offers. You may have seen *La bohème*, you may recall *La traviata* and you may remember the beauty of *Romeo and Juliet* but opera is about more than just seeing; it is also about hearing and San Diego Opera continues its tradition of engaging the best voices in the world," comments San Diego Opera General and Artistic Director Ian Campbell. "In *La bohème* we will hear two of the most elegant and exciting singers today, Piotr Beczala and the young Ellie Dehn who is not yet 30 and already singing at the world's greatest houses. Verdi's *Nabucco*, heard here only once in previous seasons, brings the powerful Richard Paul Fink to San Diego to sing the title role. *Romeo and Juliet* features an exciting new American tenor, Stephen Costello with his real life wife, Ailyn Pérez, to provide as romantic a *Romeo and Juliet* as you'll ever see and hear. In *La traviata*, Elizabeth Futral and another new tenor, Marius Brenciu, will bring their glorious voices together to showcase the wonderful melodies you've come to love. We welcome two stage directors for the first time, E. Loren Meeker (*La bohème*) and Cynthia Stokes (*Romeo and Juliet*), joining Lotfi Mansouri and Andrew Sinclair who return for *Nabucco* and *La traviata*. We also introduce an Italian conductor new to us, Renato Palumbo, who joins Karen Keltner and Edoardo Müller to lead the San Diego Symphony. New singers, a new conductor, new stage directors, and a mix of popular and rarely heard operas ensures that there is much to see and hear in the 2010 season.

As part of the ongoing effort to keep opera accessible and affordable to as wide an audience as possible, the lowest seat price for subscribers is \$30, making subscription packages for three operas available for as little as \$90, and a full season available for only \$120. Single ticket prices will be announced in the winter.

Pre-production artwork is available online at: <http://www.sdopera.com/pressphotos/>

Purchasing Tickets

Three or four-opera subscriptions for the 2010 International Season are now available. Regular subscriptions range from \$90 - \$720 (some Saturday subscriptions slightly higher) and can be purchased by calling (619) 533-7000 or online at www.sdopera.com.

For information about single tickets please visit www.sdopera.com. Single ticket prices will be announced in the winter.

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 26 years by General Director and Artistic Director Ian D. Campbell, San Diego Opera produces performances of the highest artistic quality while remaining financially stable.

www.sdopera.com

San Diego Opera 2010 International Season Performance

Schedule

La bohème

Giacomo Puccini

| | | |
|----------|------------------|--------|
| Saturday | January 30, 2010 | 7:00pm |
| Tuesday | February 2, 2010 | 7:00pm |
| Friday | February 5, 2010 | 8:00pm |
| Sunday | February 7, 2010 | 2:00pm |

Nabucco

Giuseppe Verdi

| | | |
|----------|-------------------|--------|
| Saturday | February 20, 2010 | 7:00pm |
| Tuesday | February 23, 2010 | 7:00pm |
| Friday | February 26, 2010 | 8:00pm |
| Sunday | February 28, 2010 | 2:00pm |

Romeo and Juliet

Charles Gounod

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|----------|----------------|--------|
| Saturday | March 13, 2010 | 7:00pm |
| Tuesday | March 16, 2010 | 7:00pm |
| Friday | March 19, 2010 | 8:00pm |
| Sunday | March 21, 2010 | 2:00pm |

La traviata

Giuseppe Verdi

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|----------|----------------|--------|
| Saturday | April 17, 2010 | 7:00pm |
| Tuesday | April 20, 2010 | 7:00pm |
| Friday | April 23, 2010 | 8:00pm |
| Sunday | April 25, 2010 | 2:00pm |

La bohème

Giacomo Puccini

Sung in Italian with English translations above the stage

Last performed by San Diego Opera in 2005

Production owned by San Diego Opera

January 30, February 2, 5 and 7 (matinee), 2010

Mimi: Ellie Dehn*

Musetta: Priti Gandhi

Rodolfo: Piotr Beczala*

Marcello: Jeff Mattsey

Schaunard: Malcolm MacKenzie

Colline: Alfred Walker

Alcindro/Benoit: Scott Sikon

Director: E. Loren Meeker*

Conductor: Karen Keltner

Sets: John Conklin

Costumes: Martin Pakledinaz

*San Diego Opera debut

One of the most popular operas ever written, Puccini's *La bohème* tells the story of friends Rodolfo and Marcello who share a studio in Paris's Latin Quarter. Rodolfo has fallen in love with his neighbor, Mimi, while Marcello is in love with Musetta, his ex-girlfriend and an unrepentant flirt. Tensions flare and relationships are challenged; Marcello and Musetta over his jealousy and Rodolfo and Mimi over the fact that she is very sick and Rodolfo is too poor to take care of her properly. The story takes a tragic turn when Mimi's health worsens and Rodolfo realizes even love is not a strong enough force to delay the inevitable. One of the greatest love stories ever told features some of the greatest music ever composed including the famed "Musetta's Waltz" and the melodic "Mi chiamano Mimi" ("They call me Mimi"). Audiences familiar with this opera will welcome Ellie Dehn and Piotr Beczala to San Diego for these performances, while those new to opera will see why *La bohème* is one of the most popular operas in the entire repertoire.

Select cast biographies for *La bohème*

Ellie Dehn, Mimi

San Diego Opera debut. American soprano Ellie Dehn's recent performances include her Los Angeles Opera debut as Freia in *Das Rheingold*, Agathe in *Der Freischütz* at Grand Théâtre de Genève and Madame Cortese in *Viaggio a Reims* at Spain's Bilbao as well as at Rome's Accademia di Santa Cecilia. She made her Metropolitan Opera debut as Mrs. Naidoo in *Satyagraha* and also appeared as Marguerite in *Faust* at the Metropolitan Opera in the Parks series. Other notable engagements include Jemmy in *Guillaume Tell* and Anne Trulove in *The Rake's Progress* at Rome's Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Cressida in *Toilus and Cressida* at the Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* at the Ravinia Festival. Upcoming engagements include her house debut at La Scala, Milan as Antonia in *The Tales of Hoffman*, Musetta in *La bohème* at The Metropolitan Opera, the Contessa in *The Marriage of Figaro* for her house debuts at San Francisco Opera and Houston Grand Opera, Donna Anna at the Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich, and her Santa Fe Opera debut as Rosaura in *Life is a Dream*.

Piotr Beczala, Rodolfo

San Diego Opera debut. Polish tenor Piotr Beczala recently performed Riccardo in *A Masked Ball* with the Berlin Staatsoper, Alfredo in *La traviata* with Bayerische Staatsoper, Deutsche Opera

Berlin and in Tokyo, the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* with Teatro alla Scala, Teatr Wielki in Warsaw and the Metropolitan Opera, Lensky in *Eugene Onegin* and Tamino in *The Magic Flute* with San Francisco Opera, the title role of *Werther* with Oper Frankfurt, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* at Opernhaus Zurich as well as with the Salzburg Festival, *Faust* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Zurich and at the Metropolitan Opera. He has a long association with De Nederlandse Opera, Théâtre Royal La Monnaie, Opéra National de Paris, Bilbao Opera, Hamburgische Staatsoper, Oper Frankfurt, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Berlin Staatsoper, Wiener Staatsoper, Opernhaus Zurich, San Francisco Opera and the Metropolitan Opera. Additional roles in his repertoire include Vaudémont in *Iolanta*, Jenik in *The Bartered Bride*, Belmonte in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, Orombello in *Beatrice di Tenda*, Italian Singer in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Camille de Rosillon in *The Merry Widow*, the Prince in *Rusalka*, Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* and the title role of *Don Carlo*. An active recording artist, many of his performances can be found on CD and DVD including *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, *The Merry Widow*, *La Traviata*, *Rigoletto*, *The Magic Flute* and *Don Giovanni*, among others.

Priti Gandhi, Musetta

Indian-born soprano Priti Gandhi made her San Diego Opera debut as the Mexican Woman in *A Streetcar Named Desire* in 2000, returning as Second Lady in *The Magic Flute* in 2001 and 2006, Emilia in *Otello* in 2003, Varvara in *Katya Kabanova* in 2004, Inez in *Il trovatore* in 2007, the High Priestess in *Aida* in 2008 and the Second Niece in *Peter Grimes* in 2009. Other appearances include her New York City Opera debut in *Carmen*, *Lakmé* and The Fox in *The Little Prince* for Tulsa Opera, the High Priestess with Seattle Opera, Opera Pacific debut in *The Magic Flute*, Waltraute in *Walküre* with Paris Châtelèt, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* at the Theatre of the Estates, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* with Austin Lyric Opera, Echo in *Ariadne auf Naxos* for Seattle Opera, the title role of *La Cenerentola* at Dayton Opera, her Los Angeles Opera debut in *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, her role debut of Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* with Caramoor Music Festival and her New York Philharmonic debut in *Elektra* at Lincoln Center.

E. Loren Meeker, Director

San Diego Opera debut. American stage director E. Loren Meeker was assistant director for San Diego from 2005-2007 she has also served on the directing staff at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, Florida Grand Opera and Central City Opera where she was the 2006 recipient of the John Moriarty Award. She has received critical acclaim for recent productions of *Die Fledermaus* at San Francisco Opera and Penn State University, *Hansel and Gretel* at Opera Providence, *Quilters* at The Opera House at Boothbay Harbor, *Albert Herring* at Red House Opera Group and *The Game* at the Kennedy Center as part of its Millennium Stage Series. Also known as a choreographer her work includes *Vanessa* at Central City Opera, *Orpheus in the Underworld* at Glimmerglass Opera and *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* with Houston Grand Opera. She recently returned to the Lyric Opera of Chicago where she worked on *Manon Lescaut*, *Lulu*, *Tristan und Isolde* and *The Abduction from the Seraglio*.

Karen Keltner, Conductor

San Diego Opera's Resident Conductor, Karen Keltner, has been associated with the Company since 1982 and has conducted a broad repertoire including last season's *Don Quixote*. Other operas which she has conducted for San Diego Opera include *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*. She has conducted with Opéra National du Rhin, Strasbourg, New York City Opera, Anchorage Opera, Kansas City Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, and Opera Carolina. Karen Keltner gives master classes for singers in universities and cities where she guest conducts.

Nabucco

Giuseppe Verdi

Sung in Italian with English translations above the stage

Last performed by San Diego Opera in 1981

Sets and Costumes from Lyric Opera of Chicago

February 20, 23, 26 and 28 (matinee), 2010

Nabucco: Richard Paul Fink

Ismaele: Arthur Shen*

Zaccaria: Raymond Aceto*

Abigaille: Sylvie Valayre

Fenena: Susana Poretzky

High Priest: Alfred Walker

Abdallo: Joseph Hu

Conductor: Edoardo Müller

Director: Lotfi Mansouri

Sets: Michael Yeargan

Costumes: Jane Greenwood

*San Diego Opera debut

Nabucco is often referred to as the opera that cemented Verdi's reputation as a composer. The opera begins with an assault on Jerusalem by Nabucco's army. The Jews have taken Fenena, Nabucco's youngest daughter, hostage in an attempt to keep his armies at bay. Fenena is entrusted to Ismaele, the son of the King of Jerusalem, but the two of them are in love. Leading Nabucco's armies is his elder daughter, Abigaille, who also loves Ismaele. When Nabucco arrives at the Temple, the high priest Zaccaria threatens to kill Fenena but Ismaele intervenes to save her. In the ensuing chaos Nabucco orders the temple destroyed and Ismaele is branded a traitor by the Jews. The Jews now in exile, Abigaille discovers she is not Nabucco's true daughter and plots a coup to place herself on the throne by overthrowing Fenena who has converted to Judaism and has helped reconcile Ismaele with the Jews. Meanwhile, Nabucco has visions of grandeur and declares himself a god. He is hit by a lightning bolt and knocked senseless. Abigaille issues a decree of death for the Jews including Fenena but Nabucco, still weakened by the lightning bolt, pleads for his younger daughter's life but regains his strength and reason at the sight of Fenena being led to her death in chains. Nabucco asks the Jews for forgiveness and commits a final act that will free them. Filled with a gripping plot, and some of the most beautiful music ever composed, including the famed chorus of the Hebrew slaves "Va, pensiero, sull'ali dorate" ("Fly, thought, on golden wings") *Nabucco* will dazzle San Diego Opera audiences.

Select cast biographies for *Nabucco*

Richard Paul Fink, Nabucco

American baritone Richard Paul Fink made his San Diego Opera debut as Pritschitsch in *The Merry Widow* in 1985, returning for Zaretski in *Eugene Onegin* in 1985 and Escamillo in *Carmen* in 1992. Notable engagements in his international career include, Klingsor in *Parsifal*, Kurwenal in *Tristan und Isolde*, George Wilson in *The Great Gatsby* and Edward Teller in *Doctor Atomic* at The Metropolitan Opera, Alberich in the Ring Cycle for The Metropolitan Opera, Seattle Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin and San Francisco Opera, Amonasro in *Aida*, Jochanaan in *Salome* and Don Pizarro in *Fidelio* for Seattle Opera, Telramund in *Lohengrin* for Houston Grand Opera and the Water Sprite in *Rusalka* for Canadian Opera Company. He has appeared with Paris Opéra Bastille, Berlin Staatsoper, the Salzburg Festival, Teatro Real in Madrid, Teatro Municipal in Chile, Washington National Opera, Hamburgische Staatsoper, Sydney Opera and New York City

Opera in roles as varied as Nabucco, Macbeth, Rigoletto, the four villains in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Iago in *Otello*, Scarpia in *Tosca*, Gerard in *Andrea Chenier* and Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress*.

Sylvie Valayre, Abigail

French soprano Sylvia Valayre made her company debut last season in the title role of *Tosca*. She is well known for her portrayals of Lady Macbeth in Verdi's *Macbeth*, Abigail in *Nabucco*, and the title roles of *Norma*, *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La Gioconda* and *Salome* which she has sung at all the world's major houses. She received international attention with her debut at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden for *Nabucco*. She has sung several roles at the Metropolitan Opera including her debut as Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly*, Maddalena di Coigny in *Andrea Chénier* and the title role of *Tosca* which she has also performed in Zurich, Berlin, Washington, Rome, Bologna, Paris, Tokyo and Vienna. Recent engagements include Lady Macbeth for the Glyndebourne Festival, *Tosca* for Opéra National de Paris and *Nabucco* for Deutsche Oper Berlin. Valayre debuted at the Teatro alla Scala in *La Gioconda*, at Lyric Opera of Chicago as Tosca, at San Francisco Opera in *Madama Butterfly*, at the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich in the title role of *Aida*, at Opernhaus Zurich and at the Bolshoi Opera in Moscow in *Nabucco*. She sings in concert throughout Europe and has appeared with all the major Paris orchestras, with Radio France and at the Montpellier Festival.

Raymond Aceto, Zaccaria

San Diego Opera debut. American bass Raymond Aceto has sung many roles for Lyric Opera of Chicago including Comte des Grieux in *Manon*, the High Priest in *Nabucco*, Banquo in *Macbeth*, Basilio in *The Barber of Seville*, Fafner in *Das Rheingold*, the Old Hebrew in *Samson and Delilah*, Nourabad in *The Pearl Fishers*, Alaska Wolf Joe in *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* and Ramfis in *Aida*. Other performances include Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*, the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*, Zaccaria in *Nabucco*, the King in *Aida* for Metropolitan Opera, Escamillo in *Carmen* for Los Angeles Opera, Monterone in *Rigoletto*, Banquo in *Macbeth* and the King in *Aida* for San Francisco Opera, Escamillo in *Carmen* and Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* for Deutsche Oper Berlin, Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra*, Pimen in *Boris Godunov*, Seneca in *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, Sarastro in *The Magic Flute* for Houston Grand Opera, Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville*, Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* and Ferrando in *Il trovatore* for Covent Garden, the role of Ramfis in *Aida* for Vienna Staatsoper, Deutsche Oper Berlin and Arena di Verona, and as Ferrando with Madrid's Teatro Real. Aceto was awarded Richard Tucker Foundation Career Grants and a Sullivan Foundation Award and can be heard in the role of Capellio in Teldec's recording of *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*.

Arthur Shen, Ismaele

San Diego Opera debut. American tenor Arthur Shen has been a resident of Germany's Staatstheatre Braunschweig for three seasons, appearing in roles such as the Duke in *Rigoletto*, Rodolfo in *La bohème*, Alfredo in *La traviata*, the singer in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, Don José in *Carmen*, Gabriele in *Simon Boccanegra* and Des Grieux in *Manon Lescaut*. Other recent engagements include Radames in *Aida* with Utah Festival Opera, Manrico in *Il trovatore* with Utah Festival Opera, Alfredo in *La traviata* with Martinez Opera, Rodolfo in *La bohème* with National Lyric Opera and Des Grieux in *Manon Lescaut*, Roberto in *Le Villi* and Camille in *The Merry Widow* with Dicapo Opera Theatre. He is an active concert recitalist and is also a winner of the Richard F. Gold Career Grant.

Susana Poretsky, Fenena

Israeli mezzo soprano Susana Poretsky made her San Diego Opera debut in 2007 as Margret in *Wozzeck* and returned in 2008 as Anna in *Mary, Queen of Scots (Maria Stuarda)*. Recent

performances include Verdi's *Requiem* with the Washington Concert Chorus, Pauline in *Pique Dame* at the Saito Kinen Festival, a soloist for *Russian Seasons* with the Royal Danish Ballet as well as with the New York City Ballet. Other performances include Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* and Pauline with Los Angeles Opera, Pauline with Washington National Opera, the title role of *Carmen* with Fort Worth Opera, concert performances of *Mlada* with the San Francisco Symphony and Maddalena in *Rigoletto* with the Metropolitan Opera, among others. European engagements include Adalgisa in *Norma* and Charlotte in *Werther* with the Royal Swedish Opera, Fenana at the Arena di Verona, *Carmen* with Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels and Dryade in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at La Scala. Also active on the concert stage, she has appeared with every major orchestra in Israel.

Lotfi Mansouri, Director

Persia born director Lotfi Mansouri is the former General Director of San Francisco Opera and the Canadian Opera and made his San Diego Opera debut in 1973 directing *The Daughter of the Regiment*. Recent productions here include *Rigoletto* in 2009, *Cavalleria rusticana / Pagliacci* in 2008, *Boris Godunov* and *Samson and Delilah* in 2007, *The Barber of Seville* in 2006, *Die Fledermaus* and *Simon Boccanegra* in 2005 along with *Don Carlo*, *Turandot*, *Otello* and *Idomeneo: King of Crete* in previous seasons. He attended UCLA and took U.S. citizenship before becoming resident stage director at Opernhaus Zurich in 1976. He has directed at many opera houses throughout Italy including Teatro alla Scala, Milan. In North America, his work has been seen at the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera and in Chicago, Houston, Santa Fe, Philadelphia, Dallas and many other cities, and he has a lengthy association with Opera Australia at the Sydney Opera House. Six of his productions have been videotaped for telecast and commercial sale: *Mefistofele*, *Orlando furioso*, *Capriccio*, *Turandot*, *The Dangerous Liaisons* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*. In 2009, Mansouri was a recipient of a 2009 NEA Opera Honor in the category of General Director.

Edoardo Müller, Conductor

Italian conductor Edoardo Müller, has led more than 30 productions in San Diego, beginning in 1980 with *Giovanna d'Arco*. Last season he conducted *Tosca*, *Rigoletto* and *Madama Butterfly*. Known worldwide for his mastery of the Italian operatic repertoire, he has enjoyed a long association with the Teatro alla Scala in Milan where he conducted *Aida*, *I due Foscari*, *Il trovatore*, *I masnadieri*, *La forza del destino*, *Ernani*, *The Barber of Seville* and *Anna Bolena*, among others. His career has taken him to the Metropolitan Opera, Teatro Municipal in Santiago, Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, Seattle Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, The Dallas Opera, Cincinnati Opera as well as companies in Paris, Rome and Tokyo.

Romeo and Juliet

Charles Gounod

Sung in French with English translations above the stage

Last performed by San Diego Opera in 1998

Sets and Costumes from Utah Symphony and Opera

March 13, 16, 19 and 21 (matinee), 2010

Juliet: Ailyn Pérez*

Romeo: Stephen Costello*

Mercutio: David Adam Moore*

Tybalt: Joel Sorensen

Conductor: Karen Keltner

Director: Cynthia Stokes*

Sets: Eric Fielding

Costumes: Susan Memmott Allred

Friar Laurent: Kevin Langan
Capulet: Scott Sikon
Stephano: Sarah Castle

*San Diego Opera debut

Shakespeare's timeless tragedy comes to life with Gounod's masterpiece *Romeo and Juliet*. In this instantly familiar story, the Montague and Capulet families are at war. Romeo and his friends attend a masquerade ball at the Capulet's house where he sees Juliet and falls in love. After serenading Juliet on her balcony, the two are married in secret by Friar Laurence. Romeo and Juliet hope their union will finally end the feud between the two families but Capulet's nephew, Tybalt, kills Romeo's friend, Mercutio and Romeo avenges his friend's death which leads to his banishment from Verona. Juliet is told by Capulet that she must marry someone else. Friar Laurence gives Juliet a sleeping potion that mimics death which she takes. When news of Juliet's death reaches Romeo he returns to Verona. Finding Juliet "dead" he takes poison but Juliet wakes to see Romeo dying beside her. After a final duet together Juliet stabs herself as Romeo dies, bringing an end to one of the most tragic love stories ever written. With an unforgettable story, four incredible love duets and the husband and wife team of Stephen Costello and Ailyn Perez, *Romeo and Juliet* will move audiences to tears.

Select cast biographies for *Romeo and Juliet*

Stephen Costello, Romeo

San Diego Opera debut. Winner of the 2009 Richard Tucker Award, American tenor Stephen Costello 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 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, 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 Giagiari Competition as well as First Prize in the Licia Albanese Puccini Foundation Competition.

Ailyn Pérez, Juliet

San Diego Opera debut. American soprano Ailyn Pérez made her professional debut at Palm Beach Opera where she sang Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* and Sister Constance in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. She recently performed Juliet 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 with Andrea Bocelli. Other roles in her 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.

David Adam Moore, Mercutio

San Diego Opera debut. American baritone David Adam Moore recently performed Figaro in *The Barber of Seville*, Zurga in *The Pearl Fishers*, Scythian and the Minister in *Iphigénie en Tauride* and Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* with Seattle Opera, Maximilian in *Candide*, Demetrius in *A Midsummer Nights Dream* and Cascada in *The Merry Widow* for Teatro alla Scala, Marcello in *La bohème* for Pittsburgh Opera, Prior Walter in *Angels in America* with Fort Worth Opera, Antonio in *Il vaggio a Reims* with New Israeli Opera, the Count in *The Marriage of Figaro* with Opera Grand Rapids and joined the Honolulu Symphony for *Carmina Burana*. Other notable performances include the title role of *Billy Budd*, Mercutio, Littore in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* and Ned Keene in *Peter Grimes* for New Israeli Opera, Figaro in *The Barber of Seville* for Staatsoper Hannover as well as the title role of *Don Giovanni*, a role he also performed for the Kiel Oper. He has also performed Belcore in *The Elixir of Love* for Opera Pacific, Pilot in *The Little Prince* for Tulsa Opera, Laurent in *Thérèse Raquin* for Dicapo Opera, Jake Wallace in *La fanciulla del West* for Seattle Opera, Papageno in *The Magic Flute* with New York City Opera and Tarquinius in *The Rape of Lucretia* with Opera Festival of New Jersey, among many others.

Joel Sorensen, Tybalt

American tenor Joel Sorensen made his San Diego Opera debut as Curley in *Of Mice and Men* in 1999, returning as Camp Williams in *Cold Sassy Tree* in 2001, as Andres in *Wozzeck* in 2007 and as Rodriguez in *Don Quixote* in 2009. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 2000 in *Samson and Delilah*, returning for *Sly*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Der Rosenkavalier* and *War and Peace*. With New York City Opera he has given more than 200 performances since his 1994 debut there as Monostatos in *The Magic Flute*, returning in *Madama Butterfly*, *Falstaff*, *Turandot*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Prince Igor*, *La rondine*, *The Seven Deadly Sins* and *Margaret Garner*, among others. He recently made his Los Angeles Opera debut in *Tosca*, performed King Herod in *Salome* with the Florentine Opera, Pedrillo in *Entführung aus dem Serail* for Atlanta Opera, Mime in *Siegfreid* for Opera Theatre of Pittsburgh, a role he also sang for his British debut at the Longborough Festival. Other companies with which he has sung include San Francisco Opera, Seattle Opera, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Portland Opera and Palm Beach Opera.

Cynthia Stokes, Director

San Diego Opera debut. Recent engagements include *Margaret Garner* for Opera Carolina, and *Madama Butterfly* for Opera Company of Philadelphia. She directed new commissions for Los Angeles Opera and Houston Grand Opera including *Murder at the Opera*, which she co-wrote with composer Edward Barnes and has directed for such noted opera companies as Los Angeles Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Cincinnati Opera, Opera Carolina, Opera Company of Philadelphia, The Florentine Opera, Opera Pacific, Los Angeles Philharmonic and The Bakersfield Symphony. An accomplished theatre director, Ms. Stokes has directed for American Conservatory Theatre, The Piccolo Spoleto Festival, Wellfleet Harbor Actor's Theatre, Manhattan Punchline, North Coast Rep, and Creede Rep.

Karen Keltner, Conductor

San Diego Opera's Resident Conductor, Karen Keltner, has been associated with the Company since 1982 and has conducted a broad repertoire including this season's *La bohème*, last season's *Don Quixote* as well as, *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*. Other engagements have been with Opéra National du Rhin, Strasbourg, New York City Opera, Anchorage Opera, Kansas City Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, and Opera Carolina. Karen Keltner gives master classes for singers in universities and cities where she guest conducts.

La traviata

Giuseppe Verdi

Sung in Italian with English translations above the stage

Last performed by San Diego Opera in 2004

Sets and costumes from San Francisco Opera

April 17, 20, 23 and 25 (matinee), 2010

Violetta: Elizabeth Futral

Alfredo: Marius Brenciu*

Germont: Alan Opie*

Marquis D'Obigny: Scott Sikon

Gaston: Joseph Hu

Douphol: Nicolai Janitzky

Conductor: Renato Palumbo*

Director: Andrew Sinclair

Sets: John Conklin

Costumes: David Walker

* San Diego Opera debut

Verdi's tragic opera *La traviata* tells the story of Alfredo Germont, a man who falls in love with the courtesan Violetta. Because she is in love for the first time, Violetta lives happily with Alfredo in the country. Alfredo's father is not happy with this arrangement and convinces Violetta to give up Alfredo in order to protect his family's reputation. Violetta agrees and returns to Douphol, her former boyfriend. Unaware of his father's actions, Alfredo humiliates Violetta in public, causing his father to disown him and Douphol to challenge Alfredo to a duel. Realizing the foolishness of his ways, Alfredo repents to Violetta and she forgives him in her final act of life. With some of the most beautiful music ever written for the stage, *La traviata* will remind audiences why this opera has endured to be one of the most popular works ever composed.

Select cast bios for *La traviata*

Elizabeth Futral, Violetta

American soprano Elizabeth Futral made her San Diego Opera debut as Stella in *A Streetcar Named Desire* in 2000, a role she originated for the world premiere in San Francisco in 1999 and returned in 2008 to sing Nedda in *Pagliacci*. Recent performances include Violetta at Washington National Opera, Los Angeles Opera, San Francisco Opera and Deutsche Oper Berlin, the role debut of Anne Trulove in *The Rake's Progress* with Opera de Oviedo and the title role of *Daphne* at Deutsch Oper Berlin. **She recently created the role of Laura Jesson in the world premiere of André Previn's *Brief Encounter* with Houston Grand Opera** as well as the role of Princess Yueyang for the world premiere of *The First Emperor* at the Metropolitan Opera. She also performed the world premiere of Ricky Ian Gordon's *Orpheus and Euridice*, a song cycle for piano, soprano and clarinet, as part of Great Performers at Lincoln Center. In recent seasons she has appeared with Washington National Opera in *The Elixir of Love*, Los Angeles Opera in *La traviata* and New York City Opera for *Semele*. Futral has a long and close association with the Lyric Opera of Chicago where her roles have included Violetta, Adina in *The Elixir of Love*, the title role of *Partenope*, Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* and Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro*. Other companies with which she is associated include Berlin Staatsoper, Gran Teatre del Liceu, Bayerische Staatsoper, Dallas Opera, Teatro Municipal in Santiago and Houston Grand Opera. An accomplished recording artist her extensive discography includes Meyerbeer's *L'Etoile du nord*, Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire* (also on DVD) and Philip Glass's *Hydrogen Jukebox*, among many others.

Marius Brenciu, Alfredo

San Diego Opera debut. Romanian tenor Marius Brenciu made his professional debut as Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, starting a successful career that has taken him to some of the world's leading houses including Deutsche Oper and Staatsoper in Berlin, Monnaie in Bruxelles, Opéra National de Lyon, Teatro Nacional de Teatro São Carlos in Lisbon, Théâtre de Châtelet and Opéra National de Paris, New Israeli Opera in Tel Aviv, Welsh National Opera, Théâtre du Capitole de Toulouse, Opéra de Genève with a repertory including *La traviata*, *Macbeth*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Nabucco*, *Falstaff*, *Idomeneo: King of Crete* and *The Elixir of Love*. Recent engagements include Nemorino in *The Elixir of Love* with New Israeli Opera, Edgard in *Lucie de Lammermoor* in Amsterdam, Rodolfo in *La bohème* at Hamburgische Staatsoper and New Israeli Opera, Lenski in *Eugene Onegin* with Bayerische Staatsoper, Tokyo Opera Nomori, and Weiner Staatsoper, Alfredo at the Staatsoper in Berlin, Prunier in *La rondine* at the Metropolitan Opera and Gabriele in *Simon Boccanegra* at Hamburgische Staatsoper. An active concert soloist, he has performed with the world's greatest orchestras under the batons of Claudio Abbado, Giuliano Carella, Jacques Delacôte, Valery Gergiev, Paul Goodwin, Charles Mackerras, Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti, Gianandrea Noseda, Seiji Ozawa, Sylvain Cambreling, among others.

Alan Opie, Germont

San Diego Opera debut. English baritone Alan Opie enjoys a long association with English National Opera where his roles include the title roles of *Falstaff*, *The Barber of Seville* and *Doktor Faustus* as well as, Germont, Valentin in *Faust*, Eisenstein and Falke in *Die Fledermaus*, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, Der Spielmann in *Die Königskinder*, Papageno in *The Magic Flute*, Melitone in *La forza del destino*, Malatesta in *Don Pasquale*, Sancho Panza in *Don Quixote* and Taddeo in *The Italian Girl in Algiers*. Recent appearances include Sharpless, Germont, Paolo in *Simon Boccanegra*, Faninal in *Der Rosenkavalier* with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden and the lead role of the world premiere of *For you* at Linbury Theatre, Covent Garden. He has performed Captain Balstrode in *Peter Grimes*, Sharpless, Fieramosca in *Benvenuto Cellini* and Faninal with the Metropolitan Opera. For Bayerische Staatsoper he has performed Beckmesser in *Die Meistersinger*, Sharpless, and Paolo. An active concert performer he performed on the Grammy-award winning recording of *Die Meistersinger* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. With an extensive catalogue of recordings he has recorded for CBS, EMI, Hyperion, Chandos and Decca. His recordings include *Alan Opie Sings Bel Canto Arias*, Britten's *Gloriana*, *Albert Herring* and *The Rape of Lucretia*, among many others.

Renato Palumbo, Conductor

San Diego Opera debut. Italian conductor Renato Palumbo was only 16 when he first conducted Haydn's *Theresienmesse*. He made his operatic debut three years later when he conducted *Il trovatore*. His career has taken him to Teatro alla Scala in Milan, Opéra Bastille in Paris and Covent Garden in London, as well as to the cities of Washington DC, Chicago, Berlin, Tokyo, Bilbao, Barcelona, Genoa, Turin, Parma, Rome, Verona, Florence, Bologna and Palermo, among others. He is well known for his interpretations of the works of Rossini, Marschner, Donizetti, Bellini, Verdi, Meyerbeer, Puccini and Giordano. Operas he has conducted in recent seasons include *Ernani*, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Don Carlos*, *Nebuchadnezzar (Nabucco)*, *Aida*, *La bohème*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Rigoletto* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*, among others. He has been decorated with the Cavaliere della Repubblica for his artistic contributions.

Andrew Sinclair, Director

Australian stage director Andrew Sinclair made his San Diego Opera debut in 2000 with *Lohengrin* followed by *Aida* in 2001 and the highly successful *The Pearl Fishers* in 2004 and

2008, a production he has also directed for New York City Opera, San Francisco Opera, Washington National Opera, Opéra de Montréal, Florida Grand Opera and Opera Colorado. He returned in 2006 to stage *Lucia di Lammermoor*, 2008 for *Mary, Queen of Scots* and last season's *Tosca*. He is a Staff Director with Covent Garden where he has worked on many productions including *Der Rosenkavalier* and both *Lohengrin* and *Der Ring des Nibelungen* with Götz Friedrich. He was also at the Bayreuth Festival with *Lohengrin*. Andrew Sinclair began his association with Opera Australia in 1981, directing new stagings of *La bohème* and *The Bartered Bride*, and from 1983 to 1985 was Principal Resident Director of that company. He has since returned for many productions including *Cavalleria rusticana / Pagliacci*, *Peter Grimes* and *Lohengrin*. Other United States engagements include *Norma* for San Francisco Opera.

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