

# SD OPERA Media Release

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## **Tenor Piotr Beczala Kicks Off San Diego Opera's 2016-2017 Season**

*One of today's most sought-after tenors to open season  
with intimate recital at the Balboa Theatre*

*Saturday, September 17, 2016 at 7 PM*

San Diego, CA – San Diego Opera is delighted to announce that tenor **Piotr Beczala** will open San Diego Opera's 2016-2017 season with a recital on **Saturday, September 17, 2016 at 7 PM at the Balboa Theatre**. In demand at the world's leading opera houses and concert halls, Mr. Beczala made his Company debut as Rodolfo in *La bohème* in 2009, returned as Gustav III in *A Masked Ball* in 2014 and sang later that season as the tenor soloist in the Verdi *Requiem*. Piotr Beczala is one of the most sought-after tenors of our time and a constant guest in the world's leading opera houses. The Polish-born artist is acclaimed by audiences and critics alike not only for the beauty of his voice, but also for his ardent commitment to each character he portrays. For this recital, Piotr will be accompanied by pianist **Martin Katz** and will perform a selection of arias and art songs.

"I am very happy to be able to come back to San Diego Opera again, especially with a solo recital. My connection with the company is not as long as other singers, but I am drawn to the warm and professional organization and the high quality of musicianship that the Company is known for around the world," shares Mr. Beczala. "San Diego Opera is a very important part of the classical music world and I am proud to be part of this legacy. I look forward to September 17<sup>th</sup> and I promise to do everything in my power to create an unforgettable evening!"

Tickets to Piotr Beczala in Recital range from \$20 to \$130. A post-recital reception at the Westin is also available for \$50 per person. Subscriptions to the 2016-2017 season are also on sale. A subscription for the three mainstage operas starts at \$111 and subscriptions start at \$171 for a full series including the three mainstage operas, Piotr Beczala in recital, and the Detour series which

includes *Soldier Songs*, and *La tragédie de Carmen*. Subscriptions and single tickets can be purchased by calling (619) 533-7000 or online at [www.sdopera.org](http://www.sdopera.org).

Photos of Piotr Beczala are available online at: <https://sandiegoopera.smugmug.com/2016-2017-Preproduction>

### **Piotr Beczala, tenor**

Piotr Beczala began the 2015-2016 season with performances of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the San Francisco Opera. He returned to the Metropolitan Opera to sing the Duke in *Rigoletto*. Further highlights of the season included a new production of *Werther* at Opéra National de Paris and performances of *A Masked Ball* both at the Bavarian State Opera and Vienna State Opera, as well his debut in the title role of Wagner's *Lohengrin* opposite Anna Netrebko at the Semperoper Dresden. Piotr Beczala was also heard in concert performances of Berlioz' *Damnation de Faust* at the Philharmonie in Berlin, *Werther* at the Salzburg Festival and in concerts across Europe and at Carnegie Hall in New York.

Since his debut as the Duke in *Rigoletto* in 2006, Piotr Beczala is a regular guest at the Metropolitan Opera. Here he has performed in a new production of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* opposite Anna Netrebko, Prince in Dvorak's *Rusalka*, Edgardo in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Rodolfo in *La bohème*, as well as in the title roles of Gounod's *Romeo and Juliette* and *Faust*. In 2011 he accompanied the Metropolitan Opera on a tour to Japan, singing Rodolfo and Edgardo. 2012 saw Piotr Beczala make his role debut as Chevalier des Grieux in *Manon*, alongside Anna Netrebko, conducted by Fabio Luisi. The production was part of the "HD live" series by the Metropolitan Opera and was broadcast live in cinemas throughout the US and over 50 countries world-wide. It was released on DVD, as was his interpretation of the Duke in a new production of *Rigoletto*, alongside Diana Damrau in January 2013, for which he received the ECHO Klassik Award "Singer of the Year" in 2014.

At Teatro alla Scala in Milan, Piotr Beczala made his debut in 2006 singing The Duke in *Rigoletto*, returning later as Rodolfo in *La bohème*. The tenor also opened the 2013-2014 season singing Alfredo in a new production of Verdi's *La traviata*. Piotr also regularly sings with the State Operas in Munich and in Vienna. On the stage of the National Theatre in Munich, he interpreted the Prince, Alfredo, the Italian Singer in *Der Rosenkavalier*, and the title role of Massenet's *Werther*. During the Munich Opera Festival, he was heard as Alfredo in *La traviata*. In Vienna he performed Romeo in *Romeo and Juliette*, under the baton of Plácido Domingo. Since his debut as Alfredo in 2008, he has returned to Vienna annually singing Faust, Edgardo and Rodolfo. In 2012 he made his debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona, singing concert performances of *Faust*. At the Royal Opera Covent Garden in London he made his debut in *Der Rosenkavalier* and returned singing in *Faust*, *Rigoletto*, *Eugene Onegin*, *La bohème*, *Romeo and Juliette*, *La traviata* and Verdi's *Requiem*. His United States debut saw him perform as Lenski at the San Francisco Opera, followed by Tamino in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and Rodolfo in *La bohème*. He sang guest performances at the Nederlandse Opera, Théâtre de la Monnaie/de Munt, Staatsoper Hamburg, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Staatsoper Berlin, Grand Théâtre de Genève, Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Teatr Wielki (Warsaw), and the Mariinsky Theatre, amongst many others.

He is a regular guest at the Salzburg Festival. Since his debut as Tamino in 1997 he has sung Prince in *Rusalka*, Romeo in *Romeo and Juliette*, the cantata *Rinaldo* by Johannes Brahms under the baton of Sir Elliott Gardiner at the Whitsun Festival and Rodolfo in *La bohème* opposite Anna Netrebko during the Summer Festival. The production was broadcast on TV and released on DVD by Deutsche Grammophon. He also sang with Anna Netrebko in concert performances of Tchaikovsky's *Iolanta* in 2011. In 2013 he was heard in Verdi's *Requiem* with the Wiener Philharmoniker and Riccardo Muti conducting.

In addition to his operatic work, he has sung many of the great choral and orchestral vocal works with the world's most distinguished orchestras and maestri. Celebrating his 20th stage anniversary, Piotr Beczala gave a concert at Theatre Wielki in Warsaw in 2012. Also in 2012 he sang the New Year's Eve concerts at the Semperoper Dresden for the second consecutive year. The concerts, which were led by Christian Thielemann, were broadcast on TV and released on CD and DVD by Deutsche Grammophon. In 2014 he joined a spectacular group of colleagues for Le Concert de Paris, an annual concert event and celebration at the Eiffel Tower with an estimated live audience of more than half a million people.

Piotr Beczala was born in Czechowice-Dziedzice in Southern Poland and received his initial vocal training at the Katowice Academy of Music, where he was given instruction by such illustrious singers as Pavel Lisitsian and Sena Jurinac. His first engagement was at the Landestheater Linz and in 1997 he became a company member of the Zürich Opera. The Zurich audience heard him as Alfredo in *La traviata*, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, the title role of *Faust*, Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, Elvino in *La Sonnambula*, and also as the soloist in orchestral songs by Richard Strauss, Riccardo in *A Masked Ball* as well as Rodolfo in *La bohème*.

He is represented on dozens of CDs in a vast array of works, ranging from staples of the repertory, including *Faust* live from Vienna (Orfeo) and *La traviata* from Munich (Farao), which was nominated for a 2008 Grammy Award, to such rarely-heard works as Szymanowski's *Król Roger* and Offenbach's *Rheinnixen* (Accord) and Johann Strauss II's *Simplicius* (EMI). In addition, Piotr Beczala sings on a recording of *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Natalie Dessay in the title role and Valery Gergiev leading the Mariinsky Opera on the Company's own label. Three solo aria CDs have been released on the Orfeo label. "Salut", featuring French and Italian arias (2008), was followed by "Slavic Opera Arias", with repertoire by Borodin, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Rachmaninoff, Moniuszko, Żeleński, Nowowiejski, Smetana and Dvořák. *Opera News* declared it #1 on its list of 2011's "Twelve Best Recital Discs" & it received *Classica's* coveted "Choc de l'année 2011". He recorded "Heart's Delight – The Songs of Richard Tauber" for Alliance Entertainment. In 2013 a Verdi album was released. Since 2012 Piotr Beczala is an exclusive artist of Deutsche Grammophon and released his second album "The French Collection" with the yellow label in February, 2015.

His DVD releases include a series of performances from the Zurich Opera including: *Rigoletto*, *La traviata*, *Die lustige Witwe*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *The Magic Flute* and *Simplicius* (all on Arthaus), as well as *Don Giovanni* (EMI). Also available are *Der Rosenkavalier* (TDK) from Salzburg, *Don Giovanni* (Decca), *Rusalka* alongside Renée Fleming (Decca) and *Lucia di*

*Lammermoor* from the MET (DG). Other recent DVD releases include the Beethoven Symphony No. 9 with Christian Thielemann leading the Wiener Philharmoniker (Unitel/C Major) and the Farewell Concert for the Vienna Staatsoper's long standing Intendant, Ioan Holender (DG), among many others.

### **Martin Katz, Pianist**

Pianist Martin Katz's 45-year career has taken him to 5 continents, where he has collaborated with the world's most celebrated singers in recitals and recordings. He has performed extensively with Marilyn Horne, Frederica von Stade, Karita Mattila, Samuel Ramey, David Daniels, Lawrence Brownlee, José Carreras, Cecilia Bartoli, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Kathleen Battle, to name a few, and he has recorded for RCA, CBS, BMG, EMI and Decca labels.

Katz is also active as a conductor and editor. He has led opera productions for San Francisco's Merola program, the BBC, Tokyo's NHK, as well as innumerable performances in Ann Arbor. His editions of baroque and bel canto operas have been performed in Houston, Ottawa, and at the Metropolitan Opera. At the University of Michigan for more than 3 decades, he has chaired the program in collaborative piano and coached vocal repertoire for singers and pianists alike. His students are working all over the world.

He is also an author. Mr. Katz's first opus, *The Complete Collaborator*, has been published by Oxford Univ. Press.

#### **The 2016-2017 International Season**

<i>Piotr Beczala in Recital</i>		September 17, 2016
<i>La Cenerentola (Cinderella)</i>	Gioachino Rossini	October 22, 25, 28 and 30 (mat), 2016
<i>Soldier Songs</i>	David T. Little	November 11, 12 and 13 (mat), 2016
<i>Falstaff</i>	Giuseppe Verdi	February 18, 21, 25 and 26 (mat), 2017
<i>La Tragédie de Carmen</i>	Georges Bizet/Peter Brook	March 10, 11 and 12 (mat) 2017
<i>La traviata</i>	Giuseppe Verdi	April 22, 25, 28 and 30 (mat), 2017

#### **Purchasing Tickets**

Single tickets to Piotr Beczala in recital start at \$20. A post recital reception at the Westin with the artist is also available for \$50 per person. Tickets can be purchased at (619) 533-7000 or online at [www.sdopera.org](http://www.sdopera.org)

Subscriptions to the 2016-2017 season are now on sale. A subscription for the three mainstage operas begins at a low \$111 and subscriptions start at \$171 for a full series including the three mainstage operas, Piotr Beczala in recital, and the Detour series which includes *Soldier Songs*, and *La tragédie de Carmen*. Single tickets will go on sale in the summer. Casts and repertoire are subject to change.

Senior citizen discounts of 15% are available to the mainstage series on Tuesday and Friday subscription packages. Senior citizen discounts of 15% are available to the Detour series on Saturday subscription packages.

Military discounts (active and retired) of 50% are available to the mainstage series on Tuesday and Friday subscription packages. Military discounts of 50% are available to the Detour series on Saturday subscription packages.

For information about single tickets please visit [www.sdopera.org](http://www.sdopera.org). Single ticket prices will be announced in the summer.

#### **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**

The 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)