

SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA

IN SONG: J'NAI BRIDGES

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Today at 4 pm PT live:

In Conversation with J'Nai Bridges, with special guest Damien Sneed

San Francisco, CA (March 11, 2021) — San Francisco Opera today released the first episode of *In Song*, the Company's new six-part video series. *In Song: J'Nai Bridges* is free and available at [sfopera.com](https://www.sfopera.com), [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com).

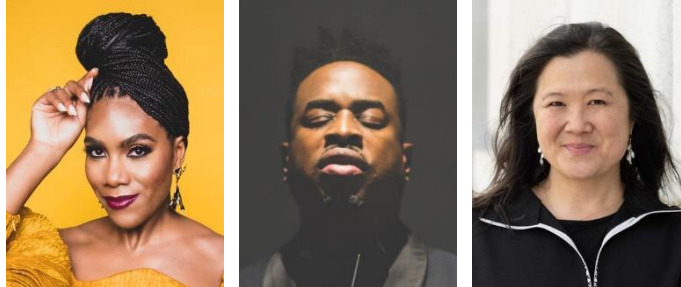
In Song is a series of intimate video portraits featuring remarkable San Francisco Opera artists who draw us into their distinctive spheres through stories and song—from classical to bluegrass to spirituals. In each episode, a singer invites us to see who they are in the world, their cultural backgrounds and how they express themselves through deep connections to song.

Mezzo-soprano J'Nai Bridges launches the series today, March 11. The episode takes viewers to her hometown of Tacoma, Washington to meet her "village"—the family, elders and members of her community who have guided her way. Performances feature a medley of spirituals and Schumann's "Widmung," filmed on January 29 at the Blue

Gallery in New York City with pianist Damien Sneed, drummer Jonathan Barber and London-born, Nigeria-raised bass player Michael Olatuja.

In Conversation with J'Nai Bridges

Live Zoom conversation and audience Q&A with Bridges and special guest Damien Sneed, moderated by *In Song* director Elena Park
TODAY AT 4 PM PT



J'Nai Bridges (Photo: Dario Acosta); Damien Sneed (Photo: Starlic); Elena Park (Photo: Kristen Loken)

J'Nai Bridges discusses the creation of *In Song: J'Nai Bridges* with director and executive producer Elena Park and J'Nai's frequent collaborator and pianist, Damien Sneed. Viewers are invited to ask questions. The one-hour, live Zoom conversation is free; register [here](#). The event will also be streamed to [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#).

NEW ORIGINAL DIGITAL RELEASES FROM SAN FRANCISCO OPERA IN SONG / ATRIUM SESSIONS / NORTH STAGE DOOR

Last month, San Francisco Opera Tad and Dianne Taube General Director Matthew Shilvock announced three new programs sharing the beauty, storytelling and community of opera in original, short-form digital content. The Company is collaborating with creative producer and strategic advisor Elena Park, founder of Lumahai Productions, to realize these new digital initiatives. These programs are made possible, in part, through generous gifts to the Creative Edge Fund, founded by Carol and Dixon Doll. All programs are free and available at sfopera.com, [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#).

- Five additional episodes of *In Song* will be released in the coming months featuring mezzo-soprano Jamie Barton, who takes on music from classical to bluegrass as *In Song* visits her family in the foothills of Johns Mountain where her father taught her to sing harmony in the back pew of their church; Egyptian-born,

New Zealand soprano Amina Edris, who shares a beautiful French song and traditional Egyptian music that infused her childhood in Cairo; and tenor Pene Pati, who welcomes us into his world of traditional Samoan and classical music.

- Enter the emotional world of intimate music making music with the *Atrium Sessions*, beautifully captured offerings shot in the Company's Dianne and Tad Taube Atrium Theater and Bryan Education Studio. The first sessions will showcase a number of the Company's favorite Bay Area artists, including soprano Rhoslyn Jones, mezzo-soprano Laura Krumm, baritones Edward Nelson and Efraín Solís and bass-baritone Michael Sumuel, all graduates of the San Francisco Opera Center's training programs. They will perform miniature masterpieces by Claude Debussy, Clara Schumann, Florence Price, Noël Coward and Gabriela Lena Frank, among others. The series of short videos will premiere in April with new releases shared every few weeks.
- The podcast *North Stage Door* takes listeners into the swirl of creativity, stagecraft and performance at San Francisco Opera. Lively stories and insightful interviews open a window into the complex inner workings of this vibrant company and the many aspects necessary to make a rich, multi-faceted art form come to life. The pilot episode will feature guests including baritone Lucas Meachem, director Matthew Ozawa, soprano Patricia Racette and Pixar's Pete Docter. In conjunction with the Company's drive-in performances of *The Barber of Seville* at the Marin Center this April and May, audiences will hear about how this familiar work has been specially adapted to meet the demands of these singular times, illustrating how the Company is forging a creative path forward during the pandemic. The four-episode podcast series, hosted by San Francisco Opera's Chris Largent, premieres in April.

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In Song: J'Nai Bridges

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In Song: J'Nai Bridges

Running time: 15 minutes

Featuring:

J'Nai Bridges, mezzo-soprano

Damien Sneed, piano
Michael Olatuja, bass
Jonathan Barber, percussion

Performances:

Spiritual medley – “I’m Determined to Walk with Jesus” music and lyrics by Rev. Richard Wright;
“I Don’t Feel No Ways Tired” music by James Cleveland; arrangements and musical direction by
Damien Sneed
“Widmung” by Robert Schumann, text by Friedrich Rückert, translation by Richard Stokes

Directed by Elena Park and Molly McBride
Executive Producers: Matthew Shilvock and Gregory Henkel
Executive Producer: Elena Park
Producer: Molly McBride
Editor: Steven E. Mallorca

Director of Photography: Justin Ervin
Audio Engineer and Editor: Randall Crafton
Camera: Taylor Ballantyne and Elizabeth Halberstadt
Associate Producer: Ras Dia

A San Francisco Opera/Lumahai Productions collaboration

The *In Song* series is made possible, in part, by the Creative Edge Fund, founded by Carol and
Dixon Doll.

PRESS PHOTOS: High-resolution, downloadable photographs of *In Song: J’Nai Bridges* are
available at sfopera.com/press.

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