



SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA

IN SONG: MEIGUI ZHANG

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#InSongSF

In Conversation Zoom Event with Meigui Zhang, Conductor Darrell Ang
(*Dream of the Red Chamber*) and *In Song* Director Elena Park
Live at 4 pm PT on Thursday, June 16



In Song: Meigui Zhang—(left) Meigui Zhang, (center) Zhang and Zhou Yi (photos: Zane Gan)
(right) Meigui Zhang makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Dai Yu in Bright Sheng and David Henry Hwang's
Dream of the Red Chamber, opening June 14 (photo: Cory Weaver)

San Francisco, CA (June 14, 2022) — San Francisco Opera announces the release of *In Song: Meigui Zhang*, the newest episode in its free, Webby Award-winning *In Song* video portrait series. This 19-minute film features the fast-rising soprano Meigui Zhang, who makes her star-turn debut with the Company tonight in Bright Sheng's *Dream of the Red Chamber* (June 14–July 3), reconnecting with her family in Chengdu, China and sharing performances of Eva Dell'Acqua's "Villanelle," Mozart's "Das Veilchen" ("The Violet"), and the Kazakh folk song, "A Lovely Rose."

In Song: Meigui Zhang is free and available now at sfopera.com/insong, [YouTube](#), [YouTube \(Chinese subtitles\)](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

For Zhang, pursuing her dream of singing opera required being a world away from her homeland and loved ones in her native China. She grew up on the grounds of the Sichuan Conservatory of Music where her parents, a traditional folk singer and a classical tenor, taught and performed. In this new episode of *In Song*, filmed in New York City and Chengdu, Zhang reflects on the words of Dell'Acqua's song "Villanelle," which she performs with pianist Ken Noda: *I have followed for a long time with my eyes / the flight of the traveler... / Since then, my dreaming soul accompanies her through the skies / To the mysterious land!* Zhang and Noda are also featured in Mozart's "Das Veilchen" ("The Violet") in the episode.

The first musical selection of *In Song: Meigui Zhang* captures the soprano performing the Kazakh folk song "A Lovely Rose," with virtuoso musician Zhou Yi playing pipa, a traditional Chinese string instrument. This duet precedes their collaboration this month in *Dream of the Red Chamber* where Zhang portrays the beloved character of Dai Yu on the stage of the War Memorial Opera House and Yi joins the San Francisco Opera Orchestra as qin (pronounced ch'in) soloist. Sheng's opera is based on the eponymous masterpiece of world literature, one of China's four great classical novels. "My duty is to bring this character to life and also to bring the story from the novel to life," said Zhang, "I hope the listeners can be touched through my music ... I think music has the ability to connect all of us."

Though Zhang's journey as an opera singer began in Chengdu and continued in Shanghai, she also has a strong foundation in San Francisco, where she was a Merola Opera Program participant in 2018. Of her performance in the Merola production of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, the *San Francisco Chronicle* said, "The evening's true star ... was soprano Meigui Zhang, who brought both tonal bloom and alert precision to the role of Anne Trulove." After Merola, Zhang was selected to join the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artists Development Program and appeared with the Met in Verdi's *Macbeth* and as Barbarina in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*. This spring, she reprised Barbarina at the Met and appeared as Thibault in that company's new production of *Don Carlos*, the French version of Verdi's grand opera masterpiece.

Zhang's other recent credits include Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Verbier Festival, concert appearances with the Sichuan Symphony Orchestra on tour throughout China, Beethoven's

Ninth Symphony at Beijing's National Centre for the Performing Arts and appearances with the Xi'an and Shenzhen Symphony Orchestras.

San Francisco Opera's *In Song* is a series of intimate video portraits featuring remarkable artists who draw us into their distinctive spheres through stories and song—from classical to bluegrass, spirituals, Samoan and Egyptian songs and mariachi music. Launched in March 2021, the series invites us into the singers' worlds to see how they express themselves through deep connections to song. Episodes featuring sopranos Amina Edris and Meigui Zhang; mezzo-sopranos Jamie Barton (featuring banjo virtuoso Béla Fleck) and J'Nai Bridges; and tenors Arturo Chacón-Cruz and Pene Pati are available at sfopera.com/insong.

The series, produced in collaboration with Lumahai Productions, was recently recognized at the 2022 Webby Awards as a Webby People's Voice Award winner for Best Music Video Series & Channel.

Along with San Francisco Opera's multidisciplinary *Instigators* program and other new digital content initiatives such as the podcast *North Stage Door* and *Atrium Sessions*, *In Song* is made possible, in part, through the Creative Edge Fund, with major support from Carol and Dixon Doll, Peter Fenton and Kate Greer, and Bob Ellis.

IN CONVERSATION WITH MEIGUI ZHANG

and Special Guest Conductor Darrell Ang from *Dream of the Red Chamber*

JUNE 16, 4 PM PT at facebook.com/sfopera

Live Zoom conversation and audience Q&A with *In Song* director Elena Park

Soprano Meigui Zhang discusses the making of *In Song: Meigui Zhang* with director and executive producer Elena Park. Darrell Ang, conductor for San Francisco Opera's production of *Dream of the Red Chamber*, will join the conversation to discuss their collaboration on the opera. Viewers are invited to ask questions. The one-hour, live Zoom conversation is free; register sfopera.com/insong. The event will be streamed at facebook.com/sfopera.

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[Facebook](#), [Instagram](#)

PRESS PHOTOS: High-resolution, downloadable photographs
of *In Song: Meigui Zhang* are available at sfopera.com/press

Running time: 19 minutes

Filmed on location in New York City and Chengdu, China

FEATURING:

Meigui Zhang, soprano and piano

Ken Noda, piano

Zhou Yi, pipa

PERFORMANCES:

"A Lovely Rose"; Kazakh folk song; arrangement by Ding Shan De; adapted for voice and pipa
by Zhou Yi; English translation by Janet Tang

"Villanelle" by Eva Dell'Acqua; text by Frédéric van der Elst; English translation by Luk
Laerenbergh

"Das Veilchen" ("The Violet") by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart; poetry by Johann Wolfgang von
Goethe; English translation by Richard Stokes

A San Francisco Opera/Lumahai Productions collaboration.

Directed by Elena Park

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Yamaha is the official piano of San Francisco Opera.

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