



SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

DEPARTMENT OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND COMMUNITY OFFERS INTERACTIVE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT OPERA COMPOSER GIUSEPPE VERDI IN OCTOBER



Giuseppe Verdi (credit: Giovanni Boldini); *Rigoletto*, 2017 (Photo: Cory Weaver/San Francisco Opera);
Viva Verdi 1859 political drawing (artist unknown)

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (September 21, 2021) — San Francisco Opera's Department of Diversity, Equity and Community (DEC) has announced new *Opera Aficionado* online discussions in October focused on the life and work of Italian opera composer Giuseppe Verdi. Topics for the Zoom discussion series include Verdi's early life; one of the composer's most popular masterpieces, *Rigoletto*; favorite musical moments from his body of work and Verdi's gift for writing for the human voice. The live, 75-minute *Opera Aficionado* discussions offer music lovers around the world a front-row seat to scholarly talks and an opportunity to dialogue with fellow opera enthusiasts and special guests. Speakers in October are San Francisco Opera Dramaturg Emeritus Kip Cranna, professors Robert Hartwell and Alexandra Amati and *Opera Aficionado* host Cole Thomason-Redus.

For tickets and more information, visit sfopera.com/aficionado

OPERA AFICIONADO OCTOBER CALENDAR

(programs subject to change)

This October, San Francisco Opera's interactive online discussion series, *Opera Aficionado*, celebrates the 208th birthday of Italian opera composer Giuseppe Verdi. From his early works to favorite moments, our scholarly speakers will explore the man and his music and help us understand why opera lovers go gaga for Giuseppe!

- Sunday, October 3, 1 pm: The Young Verdi: Preparing for Greatness

Speaker: Kip Cranna

Verdi was not a child prodigy. He was 28 by the time of his initial big success. But much glory and many masterpieces were to follow. San Francisco Opera's Dramaturg Emeritus Kip Cranna will trace the young composer's early development, outlining the forces that shaped him and the family tragedies he overcame. Audio and video examples will introduce us to his first published composition, his first opera, his first comedy (also his first flop!) and his first big hit.

- Sunday, October 10, 1 pm: Verdi's Birthday Party: Exploring Our Favorite Moments of Verdi

Speakers: Kip Cranna and Cole Thomason-Redus

What are your favorite moments of Verdi? Join us on the anniversary of the composer's birth for a grand celebration of his most praiseworthy measures of composition. Kip and Cole will discuss and share the music of Verdi they love best.

- Sunday, October 17, 1 pm: *Rigoletto*

Speaker: Robert Hartwell

Rigoletto, perhaps Verdi's first mature masterpiece, is among the most widely performed of all operas. Based on a scandalous play by Victor Hugo, Verdi has infused this elemental story of betrayal and revenge with some of his greatest music. But *Rigoletto* is more than a compelling story with a profusion of hit tunes: under its veneer of accessibility is a sophisticated and even revolutionary work. Frequent guest speaker Robert Hartwell joins us once more to explore this beloved and multilayered masterpiece.

- Sunday, October 24, 1 pm: Verdi and the Human Voice

Speaker: Alexandra Amati

The music of Giuseppe Verdi displays a passionate love for the human voice. With more than 50 works to his name, only a handful of them lack this most natural of instruments. From his selection of voice types for specific characters to the way in

which his melodic writing morphs as the characters evolve, the human voice serves as his most important tool in dramatic storytelling. Alexandra Amati returns to *Opera Aficionado* to explore how the music of Verdi gives us all something to sing about.

TICKETS: \$5–\$40

Students, educators and individuals in need: \$5/session.

General admission: \$20/session, discount available for multiple-sessions order.

Enable another person to attend*: \$40.

*This is not a tax-deductible contribution.

Tickets are available until noon on the day of each event at sfopera.com/aficionado.

San Francisco Opera is sponsored, in part, by The Dolby Family, Carol and Dixon Doll, Bertie Bialek Elliott, Peter Fenton and Kate Greer, Keith and Priscilla Geeslin, Gordon Getty, John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn, Burgess and Elizabeth Jamieson, Franklin and Catherine Johnson, Edmund W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund, Steven M. Menzies, Bernard and Barbro Osher, Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem, Dianne and Tad Taube, Phyllis C. Wattis Endowment Funds, Diane B. Wilsey, and Barbara A. Wolfe

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