



SAN FRANCISCO OPERA PRESENTS  
*DIALOGUES OF THE CARMELITES*, OCTOBER 15–30

Francis Poulenc's 20th-Century Masterpiece, Which Had Its American Premiere with San Francisco Opera in 1957, Returns in Olivier Py's Production  
Conducted by Music Director Eun Sun Kim



Scenes from *Dialogues of the Carmelites* (Photos: Vincent Pontet/Théâtre des Champs-Élysées);  
Eun Sun Kim (Photo: Sasha Arutyunova)

Cast Features Heidi Stober, Michaela Schuster, Michelle Bradley,  
Melody Moore, Deanna Breiwick



Heidi Stober, Michaela Schuster, Michelle Bradley, Melody Moore, Deanna Breiwick

Tickets Available at [sfopera.com](https://sfopera.com) and (415) 864-3330  
Virtual Tickets for October 21 Livestream on Sale Now

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (October 4, 2022) — San Francisco Opera's Centennial Season continues with Francis Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites* (*Dialogues des Carmélites*) at

the War Memorial Opera House, October 15–30. Caroline H. Hume Music Director Eun Sun Kim conducts the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, Chorus and soloists in this powerful, 20th-century masterwork in the acclaimed production by French director Olivier Py.

Based on the true story of an order of Carmelite nuns who faced execution by guillotine during the French Revolution, the opera is a testament to the bonds that hold people together amid social instability and political violence. Poulenc's vibrant score includes one of the most musically ingenious final scenes devised for the lyric stage, a shattering, sublime and unforgettable denouement.

*Dialogues of the Carmelites*, with a libretto by the composer adapted from a screenplay by Georges Bernanos and older sources, had its world premiere at Milan's Teatro alla Scala in 1957. It quickly emerged as a modern operatic masterpiece with premieres in Paris, London and, in its first performances outside of Europe, San Francisco. It's return to the stage of the War Memorial Opera House during San Francisco Opera's 100th season is a celebration of the Company's historic commitment to revitalizing the repertory with new works.

Just as the Company's premiere of *Dialogues of the Carmelites* presented beloved artists in new roles and introduced new performers to its stage, the 2022 presentation offers many significant role and Company debuts. Heidi Stober's "energy and fluid vocal grace" (*San Francisco Chronicle*) have illuminated the War Memorial Opera House stage in many roles since her 2010 debut as Sophie in Massenet's *Werther*. For the first time in her career, the American soprano takes on the role of Blanche de la Force, Poulenc's fearful heroine who must discover her strength as the guillotine looms.

Scheduled to join San Francisco Opera for Verdi's *Ernani* in 2020, soprano Michelle Bradley's much anticipated Company debut was delayed by the pandemic. The fast-rising soprano, acclaimed for her portrayals of Verdi heroines Aida and Leonora (the latter role in both *Il Trovatore* and *La Forza del Destino*), bows for the first time as Madame Lidoine. In her house and role debuts, Michaela Schuster is the Mother Superior, Madame de Croissy. Melody Moore, whose roles with the Company since 2006 span works by Mozart, Puccini and Christopher Theofanidis, assumes the role of Mother Marie.

Soprano Deanna Breiwick makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Sister Constance. Following his acclaimed 2021 debut as Ferrando in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, tenor Ben Bliss

returns as the Chevalier de la Force. Bass-baritone Dale Travis is Blanche's and the Chevalier's father, the Marquis de la Force. Mezzo-soprano Catherine Cook is Mother Jeanne.

The staging by Olivier Py, a co-production between companies in Paris and Brussels, is mounted for San Francisco Opera by stage director Daniel Izzo with sets and costumes by production designer Pierre-André Weitz and lighting designed by Bertrand Killy, all in Company debuts. San Francisco Opera Music Director Eun Sun Kim leads the Company's musical forces in the Company's first presentation of Poulenc's opera in four decades. Chorus Director John Keene prepares the artists of the Opera Chorus.

San Francisco Opera presented the American premiere of *Dialogues of the Carmelites* on September 20, 1957, with Erich Leinsdorf conducting Dorothy Kirsten as Blanche, Claramae Turner as the old prioress, Blanche Thebom as Mother Marie and, in her American opera debut, Leontyne Price as Lidoine. The cast for the 1963 revival included Regina Resnik as Madame de Croissy and Reri Grist as Sister Constance with Lee Venora as Blanche. John Dexter's famous production was presented in 1982 under the baton of Henry Lewis. The outstanding cast on that occasion featured Carol Vaness as Blanche with three renowned interpreters of the other lead roles: Price reprising the role of Lidoine; Virginia Zeani, the original Blanche, as Mother Marie and the great French diva Régine Crespin as the Mother Superior. Each of San Francisco Opera's previous presentations of *Dialogues of the Carmelites* utilized an English translation of the libretto. The Company's 2022 performances are the first to be sung in French using Poulenc's original text.

The five performances of *Dialogues of the Carmelites* are scheduled for October 15 (7:30 p.m.), 18 (7:30 p.m.); 21 (7:30 p.m.), 26 (7:30 p.m.), 30 (2 p.m.), 2022.

#### LIVESTREAM: October 21 Performance

The Friday, October 21 performance will be livestreamed at 7:30 pm PT (only available in the USA and Canada). The performance will be available to watch on-demand for 48 hours beginning on Saturday, October 22 at 10 am PT. Virtual tickets for the livestream and limited on-demand viewing are \$27.50 For tickets or more information about livestreams of San Francisco Opera's 2022 Fall Season, visit [sfopera.com/digital](https://sfopera.com/digital).

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD OPERA PREVIEW SERIES:

*DIALOGUES OF THE CARMELITES*

From October 4–13, San Francisco Opera Guild presents a series of Opera PreviewS on *Dialogues of the Carmelites* by lecturer and San Francisco Opera Librarian Michael Bragg. Each 90-minute preview provides in-depth insights into the opera's history, composer, story and music.

East Bay Chapter

Tuesday, October 4 at 7:30 pm

Lafayette Library and Learning Center, 3491 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette

General Admission: \$10

Marin Chapter

Monday, October 10 at 10:30 am

Aldersly Retirement Community, 326 Mission Avenue, San Rafael

General Admission: \$10

San Francisco Chapter

Monday, October 10 at 6 pm, Zoom Webinar

General Admission: \$10. Register at [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com).

San Jose Opera Guild

Thursday, October 13 at 10 am

Addison-Penzak JCC Silicon Valley, 14855 Oka Road, Suite 201, Los Gatos

Free to San Jose Opera Guild and Addison-Penzak JCC members; General admission: \$10

For more information about Opera Preview, visit [sfopera.com/operapreviews](https://sfopera.com/operapreviews).

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TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Subscriptions to San Francisco Opera's 100th season are now on sale via the San Francisco Opera Box Office at (415) 864-3330 and online at [sfopera.com](https://sfopera.com).

Tickets for *Dialogues of the Carmelites* range from \$26 to \$408 and are available at the San Francisco Opera Box Office, by phone at (415) 864-3330 and online at [sfopera.com](https://sfopera.com). The San Francisco Opera Box Office window is located in the Opera House at 301 Van Ness Avenue. Box

Office hours are Monday 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m.–6 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m.–6 p.m. (Saturdays phone only except during performance season). A \$2 per-ticket facility fee is included in Balcony 1, 2 and 3 zone prices; all other zones include a \$3 per-ticket facility fee.

Virtual tickets for the October 21 livestream of *Dialogues of the Carmelites* are \$27.50. For more information, visit [sfopera.com/digital](https://sfopera.com/digital).

Each presentation of *Dialogues of the Carmelites* at the War Memorial Opera House features a 25-minute Pre-Opera Talk by music scholar Laura Pritchard. Beginning 55 minutes prior to curtain, Pre-Opera Talks are open to tickets holders for the corresponding performance.

COVID-19 safety protocols will be in effect for all performances and events (including proof of full vaccination along with a matching photo ID and well-fitted face masks). For up-to-date information about San Francisco Opera's safety measures, visit [sfopera.com/safetyfirst](https://sfopera.com/safetyfirst).

The War Memorial Opera House is located at 301 Van Ness Avenue. Patrons are encouraged to use public transportation to attend San Francisco Opera performances. The War Memorial Opera House is within walking distance of the Civic Center BART/Muni Station and near numerous bus lines, including 5, 21, 47, 49 and F Market Street. For further public transportation information, visit [bart.gov](https://bart.gov) and [sfmta.com](https://sfmta.com).

Gifts of all sizes help create San Francisco Opera's programs and are much appreciated. To donate visit [sfopera.com/donate](https://sfopera.com/donate).

All casting, programs, schedules and ticket prices are subject to change. For further information about San Francisco Opera's 2022–23 Season, visit [sfopera.com](https://sfopera.com).

## CASTING AND CALENDAR

\*\*American Debut \*San Francisco Opera Debut †Role Debut ‡Current Adler Fellow  
+Merola Opera Program Graduate ++Merola and Adler Fellowship Graduate

All performances take place at the War Memorial Opera House, 301 Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco

*DIALOGUES OF THE CARMELITES (DIALOGUES DES CARMÉLITES)* by Francis Poulenc

October 15 (7:30 p.m.), 18 (7:30 p.m.), 21 (7:30 p.m.), 26 (7:30 p.m.), 30 (2 p.m.), 2022

Libretto by the composer after the text from the play by Georges Bernanos, which was inspired by a novella by Gertrud von le Fort and by a scenario by Philippe Agostini and Rev. Bruckberger  
Co-production of Théâtre des Champs-Élysées and Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Bruxelles  
Approximate running time: 3 hours including one intermission  
Sung in French with English supertitles

First performance:	Milan, January 26, 1957
First SFO performance:	September 20, 1957 (U.S. Premiere)
Most recent SFO performances:	October / November 1982

Cast:

<i>Blanche de la Force</i>	Heidi Stober♪
<i>Madame de Croissy</i>	Michaela Schuster*♪
<i>Madame Lidoine</i>	Michelle Bradley*♪
<i>Mother Marie</i>	Melody Moore♪++
<i>Sister Constance</i>	Deanna Breiwick*♪
<i>Marquis de la Force</i>	Dale Travis++
<i>Chevalier de la Force</i>	Ben Bliss♪
<i>The Chaplain</i>	Brenton Ryan♪
<i>Mother Jeanne</i>	Catherine Cook♪++
<i>Sister Mathilde</i>	Taylor Raven♪+
<i>The Jailor</i>	Efraín Solís♪++
<i>M. Javelinot</i>	Efraín Solís♪++
<i>1st Commissioner</i>	Christopher Oglesby♪++
<i>2nd Commissioner</i>	Hadleigh Adams♪++
<i>1st Officer</i>	Hadleigh Adams♪++
<i>Thierry</i>	Efraín Solís♪++
<i>Mother Gerald</i>	Deborah Nansteel+
<i>Sister Claire</i>	Alexandra Sanchez*♪
<i>Sister Antoine</i>	Esther Tonea†♪
<i>Sister Catherine</i>	Chea Kang*♪
<i>Sister Felicity</i>	Mikayla Sager†♪
<i>Sister Gertrude</i>	Gabrielle Beteag†♪
<i>Sister Alice</i>	Jesslyn Thomas♪
<i>Sister Valentine</i>	Anne-Marie MacIntosh†♪
<i>Sister Anne of the Cross</i>	Elisa Sunshine†♪
<i>Sister Martha</i>	Buffy Baggott♪
<i>Sister St. Charles</i>	Courtney Miller♪

Creative Team:

<i>Conductor</i>	Eun Sun Kim
<i>Production</i>	Olivier Py**
<i>Revival Director</i>	Daniel Izzo**
<i>Production Designer</i>	Pierre-André Weitz*
<i>Lighting Designer</i>	Bertrand Killy*
<i>Chorus Director</i>	John Keene
<i>Fight Director</i>	Dave Maier

San Francisco Opera Orchestra and San Francisco Opera Chorus

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PRESS PHOTOS: High-resolution, downloadable production images and artist headshots for *Dialogues of the Carmelites* are available at [sfopera.com/press](https://sfopera.com/press).

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