



SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA GUILD

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD'S *AN EVENING ON THE STAGE* HONORS
MARIA MANETTI SHREM

Sold-Out Benefit Held on the War Memorial Opera House Stage Celebrates
Arts Advocate/Philanthropist for Extraordinary Support of
the Guild and San Francisco Opera



Maria Manetti Shrem at *An Evening on the Stage* (Photo: Drew Altizer Photography)

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (December 2, 2025) — San Francisco Opera Guild's *An Evening on the Stage* gala dinner celebrated **Maria Manetti Shrem** on Wednesday, November 19 at the War Memorial Opera House. The honoree received The Crescendo Award, bestowed by the Guild upon individuals who have demonstrated extraordinary support to the Guild and San Francisco Opera.

Maria Manetti Shrem said: "I deeply commend the Opera Guild—for bringing award-winning educational programs to thousands of students across Northern California. Exposing young people to the magic of music and the enchanting world of the arts is the best investment in the future of a better society."

Now in its twelfth year, the black-tie benefit presented by **San Francisco Opera Guild** offered 265 guests the opportunity to dine on the historic War Memorial Opera House stage, where since 1932 operatic legends like Luciano Pavarotti, Leontyne Price and Renée Fleming have performed. The

evening's décor by J. Riccardo Benavides, in collaboration with event concept curator Eva Zanetti, was inspired by Maria Manetti Shrem's hometown of Florence, Italy.



An Evening on the Stage at the War Memorial Opera House; San Francisco Opera Guild Opera Scouts; baritone Edward Nelson and soprano Leah Crocetto (Photos: Drew Altizer Photography)

Co-chaired by Maria Castellucci and Maryam Muduroglu, *An Evening on the Stage* included a cocktail reception in the War Memorial Opera House foyer, followed by dinner, musical performances, presentation of the 2025 Crescendo Award and dancing on the Opera House stage. Musical guests included former San Francisco Opera Adler Fellows soprano Leah Crocetto, baritone Edward Nelson and pianist Ronny Michael Greenberg performing "Décidi il mio destin . . . tutto scordiam" from Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*, "Pace non trovo" by Liszt, "Parlami d'amore Mariù" by Cesare Andrea Bixio and "Non ti scordar di me" by Ernesto de Curtis. The San Francisco Opera Guild Opera Scouts performed "May the God of Wit Inspire" from Henry Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* and "Santa Maria," and soprano Paloma Siliezar sang "O mio babbino caro" from *Gianni Schicchi*, all with collaborative pianist Paul Dab. McCalls Catering & Events crafted a sumptuous dinner and Vybe Society provided music for the dance floor.



San Francisco Opera Guild President Courtney Labe with *An Evening on the Stage* co-chairs Maria Castellucci and Maryam Muduroglu (left to right); San Francisco Opera General Director Matthew Shilcock with Maria Manetti Shrem; *An Evening on the Stage* dinner setting (Photos: Drew Altizer Photography)

Co-Chair **Maria Castellucci** remarked, "It was an honor to serve as this year's co-chair for our beloved *An Evening on the Stage* event. It is a profound tribute to Maria Manetti Shrem—a true visionary whose generosity and passion for the arts continue to elevate and inspire us all. Maria understands that music is a universal language—one that transcends boundaries, unites communities and enriches our lives in ways words alone cannot express. As we gathered on this special evening, we were reminded of the power of music to connect hearts, ignite imagination, and remind us of our shared humanity."

Co-Chair **Maryam Muduroglu** said: "Over the past twelve years, *An Evening on the Stage* has grown into a cornerstone event, raising awareness, inspiring generosity and making a lasting impact while creating a truly unforgettable experience for our patrons. We are deeply privileged to honor Maria Manetti Shrem, whose vision and lifelong commitment to the arts and education perfectly embody the values that define this evening. Her dedication reminds us of the transformative power of creativity and philanthropy. It is an immense honor to serve alongside such passionate individuals and contribute to the continued cultural vitality of our beloved city of San Francisco."

San Francisco Opera Guild President **Courtney Labe** said, "This year's *An Evening on Stage* transported guests to Florence in celebration of our honoree, Maria Manetti Shrem, whose Italian heritage inspired the night's theme. The sold-out event was truly a magical evening that kicked off the holiday season in style. We are thrilled by its success and deeply grateful to our supporters whose generosity helps our music education programs reach thousands of Bay Area students each year."

Guests at the special event included San Francisco Opera General Director Matthew Shilvock; San Francisco Opera Association President Jack Calhoun and Board Chair Barbara Wolfe; President of the Board of Trustees of the San Francisco War Memorial & Performing Arts Center and past honoree Diane B. Wilsey; and past stage dinner honorees Paul Pelosi, Gordon Getty, Jake Heggie and Frederica von Stade.

San Francisco Opera General Director **Matthew Shilvock** said: "I am in constant awe of the passion and devotion that Maria has for the arts. She holds the well-being of our institutions and our artists deep in her heart, and she works tirelessly to keep the arts vibrant, vital and at the very highest levels of excellence. Maria has enriched the artistic soul not only of our city, but of the world, bringing people and ideas together with such care and philanthropic generosity. I am thrilled that she is being celebrated with such a high honor from the San Francisco Opera Guild."

Tickets for *An Evening on the Stage* event were priced from \$1,500 through \$10,000. Proceeds support San Francisco Opera Guild's innovative education programs that reach thousands of students in Greater Bay Area schools.

Previous *An Evening on the Stage* honorees include Charlotte Mailliard Shultz, Diane B. Wilsey, Gordon Getty, Franklin P. ("Pitch") Johnson, Jr., Dianne and Tad Taube, Cynthia and John Gunn, Carol and Dixon

Doll, The Littlefield Family, Frederica von Stade, Jake Heggie, Karen J. Kubin, Mary and Bill Poland, and Nancy and Paul Pelosi.

An Evening on the Stage is made possible through the generous support of presenting sponsor TriplePoint Capital; event sponsors Five Star Bank, Neiman Marcus and Van Cleef & Arpels; wine sponsors Scharffenberger Cellars and Castellucci Napa Valley; and media sponsors Haute Living San Francisco and Nob Hill Gazette. Special thanks to Drew Altizer Photography, J. Riccardo Benavides Event Styling, Cheree Berry Paper & Design, Leah Crocetto, Paul Dab, Ronny Michael Greenberg, McCalls Catering & Events, Edward Nelson, Paloma Siliezar, Soirée Valet, Vybe Society, Eva Zanetti and Mauro Aprile Zanetti.

MARIA MANETTI SHREM



San Francisco Opera Guild and San Francisco Opera celebrate visionary philanthropist Maria Manetti Shrem for her unwavering commitment and lifelong dedication to the arts, music, education, Italian cultural heritage and healthcare. Through her extraordinary generosity, Maria has transformed the San Francisco Bay Area, the state of California, New York City, Firenze and communities around the world—leaving a lasting mark on countless lives and institutions. Together with her late husband, Jan Shrem (1930–2024), Maria has championed artists, scientists and those in need, supporting more than 60 programs across 45 organizations.

In the United States, beneficiaries include San Francisco Opera Guild, San Francisco Opera, UC Davis, the Metropolitan Opera, Festival Napa Valley, UC Berkeley—Cal Performances, San Francisco Symphony, ArtSmart, SFMOMA, de Young/Legion of Honor and SFFILM. In Europe, her philanthropy extends to The King's Foundation, The Royal Drawing School, American Friends of the Louvre, Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Museo Novecento, Venetian Heritage, Italia Trust Foundation, Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi and the Andrea Bocelli Foundation. She also funds a Global Sojourns Giving Circle scholarship in Africa, empowering future women leaders.

In 2016, Maria and Jan co-founded the Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum of Art at UC Davis. In 2024, Maria endowed UC Davis' College of Letters and Science with its largest gift in its history—creating eight permanent endowments and launching the Arts District in January 2025.

Through her steadfast support of San Francisco's leading cultural institutions, Maria has played a vital role in ensuring that creativity and excellence continue to flourish in our community. Her direct support of San Francisco Opera Guild's music and arts education programs has opened doors for aspiring artists and K–12 students across the Greater Bay Area—nurturing creativity, academic achievement and personal growth for learners of all backgrounds.

ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD

Founded in 1939 and this year celebrating its 86th anniversary, San Francisco Opera Guild is an opera education organization in Northern California. Its mission is—"to give voice to potential"—reinforcing the social emotional benefits of the arts for all ages in forward-thinking, philanthropic programming committed to fostering the future of opera and musical arts. San Francisco Opera Guild is responsible for some of the most prestigious events on the Bay Area's philanthropic calendar, including partnering with San Francisco Opera on the season-opening *Opera Ball* benefit. The Guild's education programs reach thousands of arts lovers of all ages in K-12 classrooms and after-school programs, as well as employing opera experts to share the beauty of this art form through the Opera Previews series, workshops and school outreach for children as young as kindergarten. For more information about San Francisco Opera Guild and its programming, please visit sfopera.com/Opera-Guild.

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