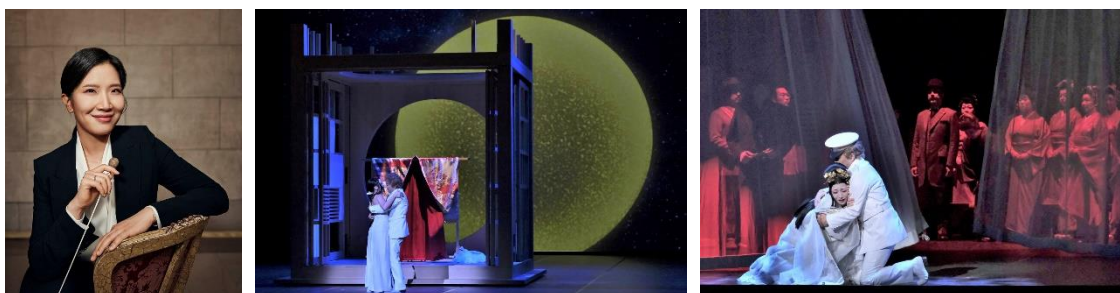




SAN FRANCISCO OPERA'S CENTENNIAL SEASON CONTINUES WITH
NEW CO-PRODUCTION OF *MADAME BUTTERFLY*
WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE, JUNE 3–JULY 1

Music Director Eun Sun Kim Leads Puccini Classic in
New Staging by Japanese Director Amon Miyamoto Featuring
Costumes by the Late Fashion Designer Kenzō Takada



San Francisco Opera Music Director Eun Sun Kim (left). Photo: Cody Pickens;
Scenes from the new production of Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*. Photos: Tokyo Nikikai Opera Foundation

Karah Son Makes Company Debut as Cio-Cio-San with Michael Fabiano as
Pinkerton, Hyona Kim as Suzuki and Lucas Meachem as Sharpless



Tickets available at (415) 864-3330 and [sfopera.com](https://www.sfopera.com)
June 9 Performance Will Be Livestreamed

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (May 11, 2023) — San Francisco Opera's 2023 Summer Season
opens June 3 with Giacomo Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* (*Madama Butterfly*) at the War

Memorial Opera House. Caroline H. Hume Music Director Eun Sun Kim leads the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and a brilliant cast in a new production by visionary Japanese director Amon Miyamoto. San Francisco Opera Chorus Director John Keene prepares the artists of the Opera Chorus.

Known for its many stirring melodies, including Cio-Cio-San's aria "Un bel dì" ("One beautiful day"), the Humming Chorus and the passionate Act I love duet, *Madame Butterfly* is among the most famous operas from the composer of *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, *Gianni Schicchi* and *Turandot*. Miyamoto's production, staged with associate director Miroku Shimada, presents the story from the perspective of Cio-Cio-San's child with Pinkerton, Trouble, who is now a grown man discovering the events that led to his American upbringing.

Director Amon Miyamoto said, "*Madame Butterfly* highlights the clash of cultural and family issues but also the abiding strength of love. In our staging, we see Cio-Cio-San's son, Trouble, now an adult in his early 30s who has grown up experiencing discrimination as a biracial person in 1920s America. Trouble is on a journey to find where he belongs. Can he forgive his father's mistakes by finding himself? This story illustrates the importance of valuing love as the key to a true understanding of people from different cultures and backgrounds."

The new staging, a co-production with The Tokyo Nihonkai Opera Foundation, Semperoper Dresden and the Royal Danish Opera, features the work of set designer Boris Kudlička, lighting designer Fabio Antoci and projection designer Bartek Macias. The costumes are designed by the late fashion icon Kenzō Takada, founder of the global brand and fashion house KENZO, and developed by associate costume designer Sonoko Takeda.

Now in her second season as San Francisco Opera's Music Director, Eun Sun Kim opened the Company's Centennial Season last September with the world premiere of John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra* and also led Francis Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites* and a new production of Giuseppe Verdi's *La Traviata* along with numerous concerts. The *New York Times* [2021 Breakout Star](#) earned praise this season for her "precision and bravado" and "ever-deeper communicative bond with the musicians of the Opera Orchestra" (*San Francisco Chronicle*).

Korean soprano Karah Son makes her Company debut as the unforgettable title heroine, Cio-Cio-San, a role Son has performed on stages across Europe, North America and Australia. *The Sydney Morning Herald* recently said of her performance in the Sydney Opera House, "Her voice spans innocent playfulness, intimate intensity and unflinchingly thrilling moments, singing 'Un bel di, vedremo' with tonal purity and grace of line and without undue portent."

American tenor Michael Fabiano returns to the War Memorial Opera House stage to portray Lieutenant B.F. Pinkerton, the U.S. Naval officer who marries Butterfly at the beginning of the opera. Fabiano, who made his San Francisco Opera debut in 2011, has performed many leading roles with the Company, including Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, Cavaradossi in *Tosca* and the title role of Verdi's *Don Carlo*, and won acclaim for his "vocal grandeur—now sweeping and impassioned, now delicately pointed" (*San Francisco Chronicle*). San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow Moisés Salazar performs the role of Pinkerton in the July 1 performance.

Mezzo-soprano Hyona Kim is Cio-Cio-San's servant and confidant, Suzuki. Baritone Lucas Meachem is the U.S. Consul, Sharpless. Tenor Julius Ahn is the marriage broker Goro and baritone Kidon Choi makes his Company debut as the wealthy Prince Yamadori. Actor John Charles Quimpo portrays the adult son of Pinkerton and Butterfly, known in the opera as Dolore or Trouble, and actor Evan Miles O'Hare is the elderly Pinkerton. The cast includes current San Francisco Opera Adler Fellows Jongwon Han as the Bonze and Mikayla Sager as Kate Pinkerton, along with Andrew Pardini, Jere Torkelsen, Kevin Gino, Crystal Kim, Silvie Jensen and Whitney Steele.

Madame Butterfly entered San Francisco Opera's repertory during the Company's second season in 1924. The work, along with *Tosca*, has been presented in 38 previous seasons, the second most in Company history; *La Bohème* is the most performed (45 seasons). Numerous operatic legends have portrayed Cio-Cio-San with San Francisco Opera, from early greats like Elisabeth Rethberg and Lotte Lehmann to later artists including Leontyne Price, Renata Scotto, Pilar Lorengar, Teresa Stratas, Yoko Watanabe, Catherine Malfitano, Diana Soviero, Patricia Racette and Lianna Haroutounian. Czech soprano Jarmila Novotná made her U.S. debut with San Francisco Opera as Butterfly in 1939 and from 1941 to 1969, the opera was frequently presented with San Francisco favorites Licia Albanese (8 seasons) or Dorothy Kirsten (9 seasons) in the title role.

Madame Butterfly was a favorite of Company founder Gaetano Merola who conducted San Francisco Opera's first performance in 1924. While conducting "Un bel dì" in a 1953 summer concert at Stern Grove, the 72-year-old Merola collapsed and died. The baton for this work was taken up in later seasons by, among others, General Director Kurt Herbert Adler, music directors Sir Donald Runnicles and Nicola Luisotti and maestros Sir Charles Mackerras, Marco Armiliato, Fabio Luisi and Yves Abel.

Sung in Italian with English supertitles, the eight performances of *Madame Butterfly* are scheduled for June 3 (7:30 p.m.), 6 (7:30 p.m.), 9 (7:30 p.m.), 18 (2 p.m.), 21 (7:30 p.m.), 24 (7:30 p.m.), 27 (7:30 p.m.); July 1 (7:30 p.m.), 2023.

LIVESTREAM: June 9 performance

The Friday, June 9 performance of Giacomo Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* will be streamed live at 7:30 p.m. PT. The performance will be available to watch on demand for 48 hours beginning on Saturday, June 10 at 10 a.m. PT. Livestream tickets are \$27.50. For more information, visit sfopera.com/digital/livestream.

COMMUNITY PANEL DISCUSSION: June 18, 12–1 p.m.

Before the Sunday, June 18 matinee performance of *Madame Butterfly*, San Francisco Opera's department of Diversity, Equity and Community will host a panel that explores and unpacks a variety of topics relating to the art form of opera and the Company's new staging of Puccini's 1904 work. Free and open to the public, this conversation will be held in the John M. Bryan Education Studio on the 4th floor of the Veterans Building. More information and panelists will be announced at sfopera.com/butterfly.

MADAME BUTTERFLY LOBBY EXHIBITION

San Francisco Opera's department of Diversity, Equity and Community presents *Kaleidoscope: A Journey into Puccini's Madame Butterfly*, a lobby exhibition in different areas of the War Memorial Opera House. Open to ticket holders for June and July performances of Puccini's opera, *Kaleidoscope* is a digital, interactive experience that explores the beauty, controversy and historical context of this operatic classic. Each display throughout the Opera House is adorned with origami butterflies created by incarcerated artists at San Quentin State Prison and includes QR codes for a scavenger hunt-like experience.

PRE-OPERA TALKS & SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD PREVIEW

San Francisco Opera will present a Pre-Opera Talk prior to each performance inside the theater. Beginning 55 minutes prior to curtain, the 25-minute Pre-Opera Talks are open to ticket holders for the corresponding performance.

On June 2 at 6 p.m., San Francisco Opera Guild presents an Opera Preview on *Madame Butterfly* by scholar Alexandra Amati. The 90-minute Zoom lecture provides in-depth insight into the opera's history, composer, story and music. For more information and to register, visit sfopera.com/operapreviews.

TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Tickets for *Madame Butterfly* are priced from \$26 to \$464 and are available at the San Francisco Opera Box Office, by phone at (415) 864-3330 and online at sfopera.com. 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.

Tickets for the June 9 livestream of *Madame Butterfly* will include a 48-hour on-demand viewing option that begins the morning after the performance. Livestream tickets are available now at \$27.50 each. For more information visit sfopera.com/digital/livestream.

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. (Saturday phone only).

For up-to-date information about San Francisco Opera's safety measures, visit sfopera.com/safetyfirst.

All casting, programs, schedules and ticket prices are subject to change. For further information about San Francisco Opera's Centennial Season, visit sfopera.com.

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MADAME BUTTERFLY CALENDAR

* 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)

MADAME BUTTERFLY by Giacomo Puccini NEW SAN FRANCISCO OPERA CO-PRODUCTION

June 3 (7:30 p.m.), 6 (7:30 p.m.), 9 (7:30 p.m.), 18 (2 p.m.), 21 (7:30 p.m.), 24 (7:30 p.m.), 27 (7:30 p.m.);
July 1 (7:30 p.m.), 2023

Libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa

A new San Francisco Opera co-production with the Tokyo Niki Kai Opera Foundation, Semperoper
Dresden and The Royal Danish Opera, Copenhagen

Approximate running time: 2 hours, 41 minutes including one intermission

Sung in Italian with English supertitles

First performance: Milan, February 17, 1904
First SFO performance: September 26, 1924
Most recent SFO performances: December 2016

Cast:

<i>Cio-Cio-San</i>	Karah Son *
<i>Lt. B. F. Pinkerton</i>	Michael Fabiano (June 3, 6, 9, 18, 21, 24, 27) Moisés Salazar ♪‡+ (July 1)
<i>Suzuki</i>	Hyona Kim
<i>Sharpless</i>	Lucas Meachem ++
<i>Goro</i>	Julius Ahn
<i>Prince Yamadori</i>	Kidon Choi *
<i>The Bonze</i>	Jongwon Han *‡
<i>The Imperial Commissioner</i>	Andrew Pardini ♪
<i>Kate Pinkerton</i>	Mikayla Sager ♪‡+
<i>The Official Registrar</i>	Jere Torkelsen
<i>Yakuside</i>	Kevin Gino *♪
<i>Cousin</i>	Crystal Kim *♪
<i>Mother</i>	Silvie Jensen ♪
<i>Aunt</i>	Whitney Steele ♪
<i>Adult Trouble</i>	John Charles Quimpo *♪
<i>Elder Pinkerton</i>	Evan Miles O'Hare *♪
<i>Cio-Cio-San Double</i>	Chiharu Shibata

Creative Team:

<i>Conductor</i>	Eun Sun Kim
<i>Production</i>	Amon Miyamoto *

<i>Associate Director</i>	Miroku Shimada *
<i>Set Designer</i>	Boris Kudlička
<i>Costume Designer</i>	Kenzō Takada *
<i>Associate Costume Designer</i>	Sonoko Takeda *
<i>Lighting Designer</i>	Fabio Antoci *
<i>Projection Designer</i>	Bartek Macias
<i>Choreographer and Dance Master</i>	Colm Seery
<i>Chorus Director</i>	John Keene
<i>Fight Director</i>	Dave Maier

San Francisco Opera Orchestra, San Francisco Opera Chorus and San Francisco Opera Dance Corps

Community Panel Discussion: *Madame Butterfly*

Sunday, June 18, 12–1 p.m.

John M. Bryan Education Studio

Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera, Veterans Building, 4th Floor, 401 Van Ness, San Francisco

Before the Sunday, June 18 matinee performance of *Madame Butterfly*, San Francisco Opera's department of Diversity, Equity and Community will host a panel discussion that explores and unpacks a variety of topics relating to the art form of opera and the Company's new staging of Puccini's 1904 work. Join other opera curious patrons for this special event at the Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera on the 4th floor of the Veterans Building.

San Francisco Opera is sponsored, in part, by Norby Anderson, Jerome L. and Thao N. Dodson, The Dolby Family, Carol and Dixon Doll, Bertie Bialek Elliott, Peter Fenton and Kate Greer, Keith and Priscilla Geeslin, Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation for the Arts, 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.

Madame Butterfly is made possible, in part, by Jerome L. and Thao N. Dodson, Margareta and Staffan Encrantz, Burgess and Elizabeth Jamieson, and Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem.

The Taube Media Suite is made possible in part by Dianne and Tad Taube and John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn.

San Francisco Opera livestreams are made possible, in part by George and Leslie Hume.

Yamaha is the official piano of San Francisco Opera.

San Francisco Opera is supported, in part, by a grant from Grants for the Arts.



San Francisco Opera is a member of

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AMERICA**

PRESS PHOTOS: High-resolution, downloadable artist headshots and production images for *Madame Butterfly* are available at sfopera.com/press.

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