



SAN FRANCISCO OPERA PRESENTS NEW PRODUCTION OF
GIUSEPPE VERDI'S *LA TRAVIATA*, NOVEMBER 11–DECEMBER 3

Music Director Eun Sun Kim Leads the First of Her Series of Verdi Titles in
New Production Directed by Shawna Lucey



Eun Sun Kim (Photo: Kim Tae-hwan); Set design by Robert Innes Hopkins; Shawna Lucey (Photo: Ken Howard)

Cast Features Three Major House Debuts:
Pretty Yende, Jonathan Tetelman, Simone Piazzola



Pretty Yende; Jonathan Tetelman; Simone Piazzola (Photos: Kim Fox, Ben Wolf, Francesca Marta)

Register Now for November 11 *Free Opera at the Ballpark* at Oracle Park
Virtual Tickets for November 16 Livestream on Sale Now
The Traviata Encounter Immersive Event on November 19
Tickets Available at sfopera.com and (415) 864-3330

San Francisco, CA (October 13, 2022) — San Francisco Opera presents Giuseppe Verdi's
La Traviata conducted by Caroline H. Hume Music Director Eun Sun Kim in a new staging

by director Shawna Lucey. This new vision of a beloved classic, the first new production of *La Traviata* to be built by the Company in 35 years, will open on November 11 simultaneously at the War Memorial Opera House and on the videoboard at Oracle Park in a free *Opera at the Ballpark* simulcast. The international cast is headed by three stars making their Company debuts: South African soprano Pretty Yende, Chilean American tenor Jonathan Tetelman and Italian baritone Simone Piazzola.

Since its 1853 premiere, Verdi's *La Traviata* has won the hearts of generations of music lovers for its deep emotional resonance and memorable music. With highlights like Violetta's showstopping Act I aria, "Sempre libera," and the tender strings of the opera's prelude, *La Traviata* remains one of the most popular operas in the repertoire. The story follows the Parisian courtesan Violetta Valéry whose love affair with Alfredo Germont leads to devastating consequences when Alfredo's father intervenes.

Director Shawna Lucey said: "Verdi's masterpiece about one of the most incredible women in history lives at the intersection of sex and money. Marie Duplessis, or Violetta as she is known in the opera, through her own ingenuity and tenacity has become Paris' most famous courtesan. When real love sweeps her away, she becomes the victim of the oppressive societal rules she thought she had conquered. Violetta lives her life on display, with no privacy afforded her. In our gorgeous new production set in late 19th-century Paris, the joy and tragedy of history's most famous courtesan shines in every element.

Lucey, who was recently appointed general director of Opera San José, reunites with production designer Robert Innes Hopkins and lighting designer Michael Clark, her collaborators for San Francisco Opera's 2018 production of Puccini's *Tosca*, and is joined by choreographer John Heginbotham.

Music Director Eun Sun Kim previously collaborated with Lucey to present *Tosca* in August 2021 for the Company's return to the Opera House stage from the pandemic shutdown. To open the Company's 100th season this past September, Kim led two opening weekend concerts and the acclaimed world-premiere performances of John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra*. She is on the podium this month for Francis Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. *La Traviata* marks the beginning of Kim's survey of Verdi operas in future seasons. The series, inaugurated with an all-Verdi concert last June, led

the *San Francisco Chronicle* to observe: "Kim created a brisk, robust template that left room for tenderness and expressive flexibility."

Pretty Yende makes her long-awaited San Francisco Opera debut as Violetta. A renowned bel canto interpreter who has won extensive praise in the florid works of Donizetti, Rossini and Bellini, Yende added Verdi's heroine to her repertoire in "a magical performance" (*Opera News*) at the Paris Opera in 2019. Following triumphs with the role in Barcelona, Palermo, Vienna, Hamburg, London and Naples, she brings her celebrated Violetta to an American stage for the first time.

The soprano, who is an exclusive Sony Classical recording artist, will be featured in the next episode of San Francisco Opera's video portrait series, [*In Song*](#). Scheduled for release later this month, *In Song: Pretty Yende* was filmed on location in her native South Africa.

Steeped in the Italian repertoire, Jonathan Tetelman has won wide acclaim in rarities like Zandonai's *Francesca da Rimini* and Verdi's *Stiffelio* along with roles in *La Bohème*, *Rigoletto*, *Pagliacci* and *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Following his appearances as a last-minute cast change at the Tanglewood Festival and with the Berkshire Opera Festival, the *New York Times* proclaimed, "The guy's a total star." Tetelman, who records exclusively for the Deutsche Grammophon label, makes his West Coast operatic stage debut with San Francisco Opera as Alfredo.

Simone Piazzola was scheduled to appear with San Francisco Opera in *Ernani* before the pandemic and now makes his belated Company debut as Giorgio Germont. Piazzola is known for his moving portrayals in many of Verdi's works, including *Rigoletto*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Attila* and *La Forza del Destino*. His Germont in *La Traviata* was hailed by Arts Beat LA as "displaying a true baritone with an intensity of tone that appears to be very well suited to the big Verdi roles. He is an artist to watch."

Completing the cast are Taylor Raven as Flora Bervoix, Adam Lau as Dr. Grenvil, current San Francisco Opera Adler Fellows Timothy Murray (Marchese d'Obigny), Edward Graves (Gastone) and Elisa Sunshine (Annina), Michael Jankosky (Giuseppe), William Bryan (a Messenger) and Andrew Pardini (Flora's Servant).

La Traviata entered San Francisco Opera's repertory on the final night of the Company's second season in 1924. On that occasion, San Francisco Opera founder Gaetano Merola conducted a cast of operatic legends: prima donna Claudia Muzio, tenor Tito Schipa and baritone Giuseppe De Luca. Throughout the Company's first century, *La Traviata* has been presented with leading artists and is among the top five most performed operas in San Francisco Opera history. Following Muzio, the long line of Violettas who have performed with the Company includes Licia Albanese, Leyla Gencer, Anna Moffo, Joan Sutherland, Beverly Sills, Patricia Racette and Ailyn Pérez.

Sung in Italian with English supertitles, the eight performances of *La Traviata* are scheduled for November 11 (7:30 p.m.), 13 (2 p.m.), 16 (7:30 p.m.), 22 (7:30 p.m.), 25 (7:30 p.m.), 27 (2 p.m.), 30 (7:30 p.m.); December 3 (7:30 p.m.), 2022.

OPERA AT THE BALLPARK: Free Simulcast of La Traviata, Friday, November 11



Opera at the Ballpark (Photos: Stefan Cohen)

Enjoy Verdi's immortal masterwork and witness the Company debuts of three opera stars for free, all while enjoying ballpark concessions under the stars. On Friday, November 11 at 7:30 p.m., just as Eun Sun Kim gives the down beat and the curtain rises for the first time on director Shawna Lucey's new production of *La Traviata* at the Opera House, audiences on the field and in the stands at Oracle Park, the picturesque home of the San Francisco Giants, will share in the opening night excitement.

In partnership with the San Francisco Giants, San Francisco Opera presents *Opera at the Ballpark*, the popular Bay Area live music event that brings San Francisco Opera performances to Oracle Park's stunning 71-foot-high x 153-foot-wide, 4K videoboard for free. Since 2007, *Opera at the Ballpark* has attracted more than 300,000 attendees.

Registration is recommended but not required. For more information about this free community event visit sfopera.com/ballpark.

LIVESTREAM: *La Traviata*, Wednesday, November 16

San Francisco Opera offers livestreams for each of its 2022–23 productions so audiences around the world can experience the Company's Centennial Season. The Wednesday, November 16 performance of *La Traviata* will be livestreamed at 7:30 p.m. PT. The performance will also be available to watch on demand for 48 hours beginning on Thursday, November 17 at 10 a.m. PT. Virtual tickets for the livestream and limited on-demand viewing are \$27.50 For tickets or more information about livestreams, visit sfopera.com/digital.

THE TRAVIATA ENCOUNTER, Saturday, November 19

The Traviata Encounter, a one-night-only event, offers attendees the opportunity to experience Eun Sun Kim leading the internationally renowned cast in the first act of *La Traviata* and then enjoy an immersive evening in the transformed lobbies of the Opera House. Created in collaboration with Shawna Lucey and the *La Traviata* creative team, the encounter draws inspiration from the opera itself, inviting guests into Violetta's world. Burlesque performers, a gambling room, special food and drink offerings, dancing and selfie-worthy moments will complete the encounter. Recommended for audiences ages 21 and over. Tickets range from \$39–\$189. For more information, visit sfopera.com/encounter.

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD OPERA PREVIEW: *LA TRAVIATA*

San Francisco Opera Guild presents an Opera Preview on *La Traviata* by lecturer and San Francisco Opera Dramaturg Emeritus Dr. Clifford "Kip" Cranna. The 90-minute preview provides in-depth insights into the opera's history, composer, story and music.

San Francisco Chapter

Wednesday, November 9 at 6 p.m., Zoom Webinar

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

For more information about Opera Previews, visit sfopera.com/operapreviews.

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.

Tickets for *La Traviata* 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. 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. 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.

Registration for the free November 11 *Opera at the Ballpark* simulcast is available at sfopera.com/ballpark.

Virtual tickets for the November 16 livestream of *La Traviata* are \$27.50. For more information, visit sfopera.com/digital.

Tickets for *The Traviata Encounter* range from \$39–\$99. VIP Box-level tickets are also available at \$189. Visit sfopera.com/encounter.

Each presentation of *La Traviata* at the War Memorial Opera House features a 25-minute Pre-Opera Talk by music history professor Robert Hartwell. 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.

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 and sfmta.com.

Gifts of all sizes help create San Francisco Opera's programs and are much appreciated. To donate visit 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.

CASTING AND 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

LA TRAVIATA by Giuseppe Verdi NEW SAN FRANCISCO OPERA PRODUCTION

November 11 (7:30 p.m.), 13 (2 p.m.), 16 (7:30 p.m.), 22 (7:30 p.m.), 25 (7:30 p.m.), 27 (2 p.m.), 30 (7:30 p.m.); December 3 (7:30 p.m.), 2022

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave after the play *La dame aux camélias* by Alexander Dumas fils
Approximate running time: 3 hours including two intermissions
Sung in Italian with English supertitles

First performance:	Venice, March 6, 1853
First SFO performance:	October 4, 1924
Most recent SFO performances:	October 2017

Cast:

<i>Violetta Valéry</i>	Pretty Yende *
<i>Alfredo Germont</i>	Jonathan Tetelman *
<i>Giorgio Germont</i>	Simone Piazzola *
<i>Gastone</i>	Edward Graves ♪†
<i>Baron Douphol</i>	Philip Skinner ++
<i>Marchese d'Obigny</i>	Timothy Murray †
<i>Doctor Grenvil</i>	Adam Lau * ♪+
<i>Flora Bervoix</i>	Taylor Raven ♪+
<i>Annina</i>	Elisa Sunshine †
<i>Giuseppe</i>	Michael Jankosky ♪
<i>Messenger</i>	William Bryan ♪
<i>Flora's Servant</i>	Andrew Pardini * ♪

Creative Team:

<i>Conductor</i>	Eun Sun Kim
<i>Director</i>	Shawna Lucey
<i>Production Designer</i>	Robert Innes Hopkins
<i>Lighting Designer</i>	Michael Clark
<i>Choreographer</i>	John Heginbotham
<i>Chorus Director</i>	John Keene

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

Opera at the Ballpark: Free Live Simulcast of Verdi's La Traviata

November 11 at 7:30 p.m.

Oracle Park, 24 Willie Mays Plaza, San Francisco

Baseball and opera fans alike can experience Giuseppe Verdi's *La Traviata* at Oracle Park, the home of the San Francisco Giants. See and hear Music Director Eun Sun Kim lead the internationally acclaimed artists of San Francisco Opera, all while enjoying ballpark concessions and an evening under the stars. Registration is recommended but not required. For more information about this free community event, visit sfopera.com/ballpark.

The Traviata Encounter

Saturday, November 19 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets start at \$39

War Memorial Opera House, 301 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco

Experience the first act of Verdi's *La Traviata* with Eun Sun Kim leading a cast of international opera stars. The immersive evening continues in the transformed lobbies of the Opera House with the art of burlesque performers, a gambling room, special food and drink offerings, dancing and selfie-worthy moments. Recommended for audiences ages 21 and over. For tickets and more information, visit sfopera.com/encounter.

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, 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.

La Traviata is made possible, in part, by Barbara A. Wolfe; Jerome L. and Thao N. Dodson; John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn; Burgess and Elizabeth Jamieson; the Edmond W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund; Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem; and the Thomas Tilton Production Fund.

The Traviata Encounter is made possible, in part, by the Creative Edge Fund with major support from Carol and Dixon Doll, Peter Fenton and Kate Greer, and Bob Ellis.

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.

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

For further press information, please contact San Francisco Opera Communications:

Julia Inouye (415) 565-6430 / jinouye@sfopera.com

Jeffery McMillan (415) 565-6451 / jmcmillan@sfopera.com

Teresa Concepcion (415) 565-6470 / tconcepcion@sfopera.com