



SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA

**SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ANNOUNCES CAST CHANGE FOR
MOZART'S *THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO*, OPENING ON OCTOBER 11**

**SOPRANO NICOLE HEASTON TO SING THE ROLE OF THE COUNTESS,
REPLACING JENNIFER DAVIS, WHO HAS WITHDRAWN FROM THE
PRODUCTION DUE TO ILLNESS**



Nicole Heaston (photo: Fadil Berisha)

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (September 27, 2019) — San Francisco Opera announces a cast change for Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), opening on October 11. Soprano Nicole Heaston will make her Company debut in the role of Countess Almaviva, replacing Irish soprano Jennifer Davis who has withdrawn due to illness. Ms. Davis, who was due to make her American opera debut with this role, expects to make a full recovery but a lingering virus and persistent cough have prevented her from participating fully in rehearsals and therefore she has determined it best to withdraw from the production and recuperate at home.

Praised by the *New York Times* for her "radiant" and "handsomely resonant voice," American soprano Nicole Heaston has performed recently as Mimi (*La Bohème*) at Houston Grand Opera; the title roles in Handel's *Alcina* and Jommelli's *Didone Abbandonata* at Theater Basel; Countess Almaviva at Hamburg State Opera, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, Opéra de Lille, Norwegian Opera and Boston Lyric Opera; and Mahler's Symphony No. 2 and Brahms' Requiem with the Houston Symphony. Since her debut at the Metropolitan Opera as Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Heaston has appeared there as Ilia (*Idomeneo*), Pamina (*Die*

Zauberflöte) and Echo (*Ariadne auf Naxos*). An alumna of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, Heaston has a long-standing relationship with that company where she has performed the title role of *Roméo et Juliette*, Gilda (*Rigoletto*), Susanna (*Le Nozze di Figaro*) and the title role in the world premiere of *Jackie O*.

Heaston made her European operatic debut as Anne Truelove (*The Rake's Progress*) in Montpellier, sang Zerlina at Deutsche Oper am Rhein, and Drusilla (*L'Incoronazione di Poppea*) for her debuts at the Aix-en-Provence Festival and Vienna Festwochen. Other European appearances include her Italian debut in *Adriano in Siria* at the Fondazione Pergolesi, Haydn's *The Creation* at Teatro Carlo Felice, Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*) for her debut at the Glyndebourne Festival, and the title role in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* for her Semperoper Dresden debut.

San Francisco Opera presents Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* in a new production by director Michael Cavanagh, with sets designed by Erhard Rom, costumes designed by Constance Hoffman and lighting designed by Jane Cox. The production marks the beginning of a multi-year Company project to unveil Mozart and librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte's three operas—*Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Così fan tutte* and *Don Giovanni*—as a trilogy set within an American manor house during three different epochs.

The Marriage of Figaro, set during the post-Revolutionary War period, features an ensemble cast of bass-baritone Michael Sumuel as Figaro and four artists making Company debuts: soprano Jeanine De Bique as Susanna, baritone Levente Molnár as the Count, soprano Nicole Heaston as Countess Almaviva and mezzo-soprano Serena Malfi as Cherubino. Hungarian conductor Henrik Nánási, who made his acclaimed Company debut in 2017 leading Richard Strauss' *Elektra*, will be on the podium.

Sung in Italian with English supertitles, the eight performances of *The Marriage of Figaro* at the War Memorial Opera House are scheduled for October 11 (7:30 pm), October 13 (2 pm), October 16 (7:30 pm), October 19 (7:30 pm), October 22 (7:30 pm), October 25 (7:30 pm), October 27 (2 pm) and November 1 (7:30 pm), 2019.

For tickets and more information, visit sfopera.com or call (415) 864-3330.

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For photographs of *The Marriage of Figaro* cast and production design images, visit sfopera.com/press or contact San Francisco Opera Communications:

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