



SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA

SAN FRANCISCO'S MOST GLAMOROUS FUNDRAISER OF THE YEAR, *OPERA BALL*, LAUNCHES 104TH SEASON, SEPTEMBER 12



Simon Boccanegra (photo: Hans Jörg Michel); *Opera Ball* 2025 dinner; *Opera Ball* 2026 co-chairs Jennifer Walske and Sydney Leung (photos: Drew Altizer Photography)

Italian Palazzo-Inspired Gala Dinner, New Buffet Dinner Soirée and After-Party at San Francisco City Hall

Music Director Eun Sun Kim Conducts Opening of Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra* Starring Amartuvshin Enkhbat, Eleonora Buratto, Christian Van Horn

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (July 22, 2026) — To raise the curtain on San Francisco Opera's 104th season, San Francisco Opera and San Francisco Opera Guild present *Opera Ball* on Saturday, September 12, 2026. The festive evening includes a cocktail reception, dinner and after-party in San Francisco's City Hall along with the opening night performance of Giuseppe Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra* in the War Memorial Opera House. *Opera Ball* is co-chaired by Sydney Leung and Jennifer Walske and proceeds directly support San Francisco Opera and San Francisco Opera Guild's artistic and education programming. This year's *Opera Ball* is dedicated to Diane B. Wilsey for her extraordinary generosity as Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor for 20 years, making possible *Opera Ball*, the opening night performance and *Opera in the Park*.

Co-Chairs Sydney Leung and Jennifer Walske said: "*Opera Ball* is more than the opening night of the opera season—it is one of the Bay Area's defining fall galas. On September 12, *Opera Ball* guests will step into a Genoese palazzo inside City Hall, inspired by Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra*, complete with smoky Negronis, abundant antipasti and lemon tiramisu. Most importantly, every ticket supports our house of creativity, San Francisco Opera, and brings the transformative power of music education to

K-12 students throughout the Bay Area through San Francisco Opera Guild. We are deeply grateful for the continued partnership and support of our fellow opera lovers, philanthropists, patrons and corporate sponsors. We look forward to celebrating this magnificent evening with you!"



Eun Sun Kim, Amartuvshin Enkhbat, Eleonora Buratto,
Christian Van Horn, Joshua Guerrero, Claus Guth, Katherine M. Carter

Continuing her commitment to performing a work by Verdi each season, Caroline H. Hume Music Director **Eun Sun Kim** conducts the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, Chorus and a cast of top international artists for the opening performance of *Simon Boccanegra*, Verdi's late-period drama about political and familial intrigue set under the backdrop of 14th-century Genoa, Italy. Mongolian baritone **Amartuvshin Enkhbat** returns in his third year in a row opening the Company's new season, this time in his exciting role debut as Simon Boccanegra. Portraying lovers in the opera, Italian soprano **Eleonora Buratto** (Amelia and Maria) and Mexican American tenor **Joshua Guerrero** (Gabriele Adorno) both bow on the War Memorial Opera House stage for the first time, and bass-baritone **Christian Van Horn** portrays Jacopo Fiesco, Boccanegra's political rival. **Katherine M. Carter** (*La Bohème*) revives **Claus Guth's** staging in a production from Hamburg State Opera.

Beginning at 5 p.m., **Opera Ball** guests arrive on the red carpet and promenade to a festive cocktail reception in the Beaux-Arts rotunda of San Francisco's City Hall, transformed into a magnificent Italian palazzo by event designer **J. Riccardo Benavides**, founder and creative director of Ideas Event Styling. Benavides' décor will be inspired by the grandeur of Genoa's historic estates and the rich political drama of the evening's opera, *Simon Boccanegra*. A lavish culinary experience created by the local chefs of **McCalls Catering & Events** will follow at 6 p.m. Guests then make their way across Van Ness Avenue to the War Memorial Opera House for the 8 p.m. performance of *Simon Boccanegra*. After the curtain goes down, the after-party at City Hall awaits. Attendees can dance the night away to DJ **heyLove** (pictured right) and live music by **The Cosmo Alleycats** and **Big Crush** and lounge with their favorite late-night beverage accompanied by sweet and savory bites. This season, the Opening Night festivities include a new Buffet Dinner Soirée. Tickets include drinks, buffet dinner and after-party at City Hall.





Opera Ball 2026 sponsors include Diane B. Wilsey (20th year as Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor, pictured left), Scharffenberger Cellars (Sparkling Wine Sponsor), Villa Italia Gourmet Food & Wine (White Wine Sponsors), Hertelendy Vineyards (Red Wine Sponsor), Walske Foundation (Benefactor Party Sponsor), Consulate General of Italy in San Francisco (*Opera Ball* Pre-Party Sponsor), J. Riccardo Benavides Event Styling (Event Design), McCalls Catering & Events (Catering), The Caviar Co. (Caviar Sponsor) and Haute Living San Francisco and Nob Hill Gazette (Media Sponsors). Special thanks to Bvlgari; DJ heyLove; Filoli Historic House & World-Class Garden; Massimo Carnelos, Consul General of Italy; The Huntington Hotel; Oscar de la Renta; Soirée Valet and Villa Taverna.

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TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Tickets for *Opera Ball 2026* range from \$2,000 to \$10,000 for individuals, with the option to purchase a table for 10. All tickets include cocktail reception, dinner, after-party, and a tax-deductible donation to San Francisco Opera (FMV \$350). *Opera Ball* tickets do not include performance tickets. For more information, please call (415) 864-3330 or visit sfopera.com/operaball.

Tickets for the Buffet Dinner Soirée are \$450. Tickets include drinks, buffet dinner and after-party.

Tickets for *Opera Ball* and the Buffet Dinner Soirée are sold separately from *Simon Boccanegra* performance tickets. Tickets for the opening night performance of *Simon Boccanegra* are \$37–\$456. See sfopera.com for specific availability and prices.

For tickets, visit sfopera.com, call (415) 864-3330 or visit the Box Office in the lobby of the War Memorial Opera House at 301 Van Ness Avenue.

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Saturday, September 12, 2026

Opera Ball

5 p.m. Cocktail Reception

6 p.m. Dinner

11 p.m. After-Party

City Hall

1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102

Buffet Dinner Soirée

6 p.m. Cocktails, Wine and Dinner Buffet

11 p.m. After-Party

City Hall

1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102

Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra*

8 p.m. Opening Night Performance

War Memorial Opera House

301 Van Ness Avenue

San Francisco, CA 94102

San Francisco Opera is sponsored, in part, by Dr. & Mrs. William M. Coughran, Julie Dickson, Jerome & Thao Dodson, Dagmar Dolby, Carol & Dixon Doll, Bertie Bialek Elliott, The Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation for the Arts, Louise Gund, John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn, The Jen-Hsun & Lori Huang Foundation, Franklin & Catherine* Johnson, Edmund W. & Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund, Bernard & Barbro Osher, Marieke & Jeff Rothschild, Jan Shrem* & Maria Manetti Shrem, Dianne Taube, Phyllis C. Wattis Endowment Funds, Diane B. Wilsey, Barbara A. Wolfe, and Anonymous (2).

*deceased

Opera Ball 2026 is made possible, for the 20th year, by Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey.

Simon Boccanegra is made possible, in part, by Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey. Additional support is provided by Bertie Bialek Elliott, John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn, The Jen-Hsun & Lori Huang Foundation, San Francisco Opera Guild, Marieke & Jeff Rothschild, Denise Littlefield Sobel, Dianne Taube, The Thomas Tilton Production Fund, and Barbara Moller Ward.

Jan Shrem & Maria Manetti Shrem, through the Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund.

Yamaha is the official piano of San Francisco Opera.

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PRESS PHOTOS: High-resolution, downloadable *Opera Ball* event images and production photos of *Simon Boccanegra* are available at sfopera.com/press.

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