



SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA

**SAN FRANCISCO OPERA'S 2026–27 SEASON OPENS SEPTEMBER 22 WITH
GIUSEPPE VERDI'S *SIMON BOCCANEGRA***



Eun Sun Kim (conductor); Scenes from Claus Guth's production of *Simon Boccanegra*.
Photos: Cody Pickens (l), Cory Weaver/San Francisco Opera (c, r)

**Music Director Eun Sun Kim conducts international cast headed by
Amartuvshin Enkhbat in American premiere of Claus Guth production
directed by Katherine M. Carter**



Amartuvshin Enkhbat (*Simon Boccanegra*); Eleonora Buratto (*Amelia*); Christian Van Horn (*Fiesco*);
Joshua Guerrero (*Gabriele*); Katherin M. Carter (revival director)

Tickets available at (415) 864-3330 and sfopera.com

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (August 13, 2026; revised September 21) — San Francisco Opera's 2026–27 Season begins Tuesday, September 22 with Caroline H. Hume Music Director **Eun Sun Kim** leading an international cast in Giuseppe Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra*. Last seen on the War Memorial Opera House stage in 2008, the opera will be presented in **Claus Guth's** production from the Hamburg State Opera, remounted for San Francisco Opera by director **Katherine M. Carter**. Chorus Director

John Keene prepares the artists of the San Francisco Opera Chorus for this rarely performed 1881 masterwork.

The story of *Simon Boccanegra* is based on the life of Genoa, Italy's first elected head of state (or doge) who governs a deeply divided society amid plots and intrigue while also enduring the heartache of a fracture within his own family. Set to a libretto by Francesco Maria Piave in 1857, *Simon Boccanegra* was one of the rare misses during Verdi's prolific middle period which yielded such triumphs as *Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore* and *La Traviata*. Nearly a quarter-century later, Verdi emerged from quasi-retirement and thoroughly revised the opera in collaboration with Arrigo Boito, a composer and librettist nearly 30 years his junior. The result was an all-but-new work that stands alongside his late-period masterpieces *Otello* and *Falstaff*, which Verdi also set to libretti by Boito.

German director **Claus Guth**, who enjoyed success last season with a new production of *Salome* at the Metropolitan Opera, originally created his staging of *Simon Boccanegra* for the Hamburg State Opera. His vision, with production designer **Christian Schmidt** and original lighting designer **Wolfgang Göbbel**, emphasizes the power of past events and memory to shape the present, while a gradually descending meteor urges the doge to seize the moment rather than wait for an uncertain future. **Katherine M. Carter**, who directed San Francisco Opera's acclaimed June 2025 revival of Puccini's *La Bohème*, stages the production in its first presentation in the United States with lighting designs remounted by the Company's lighting director, **Justin A. Partier**.

Music Director **Eun Sun Kim** has led operas by Verdi in each of her San Francisco Opera seasons since 2022. In a review of a Verdi concert she conducted, the *San Francisco Chronicle* observed: "Kim created a brisk, robust template that still left room for tenderness and expressive flexibility. Melodic phrases found room to breathe without pulling the performance away from its rhythmic guide rails." *Simon Boccanegra* marks the third season in a row that Verdi, under Kim's baton, will open the Company's season after *Un Ballo in Maschera* in 2024 and *Rigoletto* last year.

Following his house debut in 2024 as Renato in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Mongolian baritone **Amartuvshin Enkhbat** was declared "a revelation" and "the best Verdi baritone we've had here in many years" (*San Francisco Chronicle*). Enkhbat returned last season as the title role in *Rigoletto*, a portrayal for which he is renowned around the world. Enkhbat opens the Company's 104th season as Simon Boccanegra, one of the most coveted roles in the baritone repertoire.

Hailed as "the most precious and complete soprano that the Italian school has produced in recent years" (*Il Foglio*), **Eleonora Buratto** has headlined the operas of Verdi, Puccini and other Italian composers on Europe's leading stages and at the Metropolitan Opera. The Italian soprano makes her Company debut as Amelia Grimaldi, the doge's daughter who was abducted as a child and whose reunion with him after many years apart is at the heart of the opera. American soprano and

former San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow **Toni Marie Palmertree** will perform Amelia at the final performance on September 27.

American bass-baritone **Christian Van Horn**, last seen on the War Memorial Opera House stage in 2024 as Escamillo in Bizet's *Carmen*, returns as Jacopo Fiesco, a patrician who opposes the doge. Among the leading bass-baritones of his generation, Van Horn won praise earlier this year for his performance in Bellini's *I Puritani* which the *New York Times* declared, "muscular and compassionate in equal measure, warm and persuasive." Mexican American tenor **Joshua Guerrero** makes his Company debut as Gabriele Adorno, a nobleman who loves Amelia and who becomes an instrument in the struggle for power.

Simon Boccanegra holds an esteemed place in San Francisco Opera history. Originally scheduled to open the 1940 season as a West Coast premiere event, it had to be postponed to a non-opening position in the 1941 season because of baritone Lawrence Tibbett's cancellation due to ill health. The Company has since presented Verdi's tragedy with brilliant casts. Operatic legends such as Tibbett, Leonard Warren, Tito Gobbi and Dmitri Hvorostovsky have performed the title role with the Company, while Renata Tebaldi, Kiri Te Kanawa, Carol Vaness and Barbara Frittoli have all appeared as Amelia. For the role of Fiesco, San Francisco Opera has presented a roster of basses who are among the art form's leading luminaries of the past century: Ezio Pinza (1941), Boris Christoff (1956), Giorgio Tozzi (1960), Martti Talvela (1975), Cesare Siepi (1980), Samuel Ramey (2000) and Vitalij Kowaljow (2008).

Performed in Italian with English supertitles, the three performances of *Simon Boccanegra* are scheduled for September 22 (7:30 p.m.), 25 (7:30 p.m.), 27 (2 p.m.), 2026.

POST-PERFORMANCE TALKBACK WITH EUN SUN KIM: Sunday, September 27

Following the Sunday, September 27 matinee of *Simon Boccanegra*, San Francisco Opera Music Director **Eun Sun Kim** will host a post-performance talkback with tenor Joshua Guerrero (Gabriele Adorno in *Simon Boccanegra*). Ticketholders are invited to gather for this discussion about producing a large-scale work like *Simon Boccanegra*, both on the stage and behind the scenes.

PRE-OPERA TALKS

Multi-faceted artist and producer **Sidney Chen** presents a 20-minute overview of *Simon Boccanegra* beginning 55 minutes prior to each performance for ticketholders. An audio recording of the talk will be made available at sfopera.com/simon-boccanegra.

TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Tickets for *Simon Boccanegra* are priced from \$30 to \$447. Subscriptions for San Francisco Opera's 2026-27 Season are priced from \$136 to \$2,634 for Full Series (6 productions), \$69 to \$1,743 for Half Series (2-4 productions) and a Design Your Own (DYO) option (minimum three operas). 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. Contact the San Francisco Opera Box Office at 301 Van Ness Avenue, call (415) 864-3330 or visit sfopera.com. For information about subscriber benefits and special series subscriptions, including the Student & Teacher Series offering 50% off select Full, Half and DYO Series, visit sfopera.com/subscribe.

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 the 5, 21, 49 and F Market Street bus lines. For public transportation information, visit bart.gov and sfmta.com.

Gifts of all sizes help create San Francisco Opera's programs and are greatly 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 2026-27 Season, visit sfopera.com.

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SIMON BOCCANEGRA CASTING AND CALENDAR

*San Francisco Opera Debut ♪Role Debut †Current Adler Fellow

◇Adler Fellowship Graduate +Merola Opera Program Graduate

All performances take place at the War Memorial Opera House (301 Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco), unless noted.

SIMON BOCCANEGRA by Giuseppe Verdi

September 22 (7:30 p.m.), 25 (7:30 p.m.), 27 (2 p.m.), 2026

Original production of the Hamburg State Opera

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave after Antonio García Gutiérrez's play *Simón Bocanegra*; revised by Arrigo Boito

Approximate running time: 2 hours, 50 minutes with 1 intermission

Performed in Italian with English supertitles

World premiere:

Venice, Teatro La Fenice; March 12, 1857

Revised: Milan, Teatro alla Scala; March 24, 1881

San Francisco Opera premiere:

November 1, 1941

Most recent:

September 2008

Cast:

Simon Boccanegra
Amelia/Maria

Jacopo Fiesco
Gabriele Adorno
Paolo Albiani
Pietro
Captain of the Guard
Amelia's servant

Amartuvshin Enkhbat♪
Eleonora Buratto*
Toni Marie Palmertree♪♠ (9/27)
Christian Van Horn
Joshua Guerrero*
Aleksey Bogdanov♪+
Gabriel Natal-Báez♪†+
Christopher Jackson♪
Stella Hannock♪

Creative Team:

Conductor
Original Director
Revival Director
Production Designer
Original Lighting Designer
Revival Lighting Designer
Chorus Director
Fight Director

Eun Sun Kim
Claus Guth*
Katherine M. Carter
Christian Schmidt*
Wolfgang Göbbel
Justin A. Partier
John Keene
Dave Maier

San Francisco Opera Orchestra and San Francisco Opera Chorus

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Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey.

Simon Boccanegra is made possible, in part, by Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey.

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San Francisco Opera live streams are made possible, in part, by George & Leslie Hume.

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

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