



SAN FRANCISCO OPERA EDUCATION

CINDERELLA

PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHY

GREGORY FORTNER, *Director*

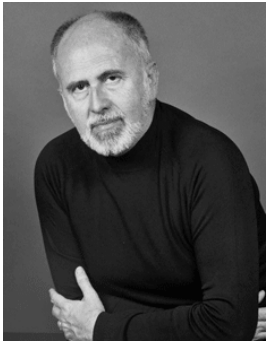


Gregory Fortner (Director) American stage director Gregory Fortner's opera and theater productions have been seen throughout the United States, Brazil, and Romania. His award-winning production of playwright Matei Visniec's play *Old Clown Wanted* has been a selection of international festivals in New York and Romania, and enjoyed long runs in Chicago and New Jersey. The 2011-12 season saw Mr. Fortner make his debuts at the Los Angeles Opera, directing Puccini's *La Bohème*, and at the Aspen Music Festival, directing Verdi's *Falstaff*. This past season Mr. Fortner returned to the LA Opera to direct Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and to teach workshops for the Domingo-Thornton Young Artist Program. He has also directed and taught in the opera program at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music, and continues to work as a member of the directing staff at the Metropolitan Opera, where he has worked since 2006. His work also has been seen at the New National Theater of Tokyo, where he remounted Jean Pierre Ponnelle's iconic production of *La Cenerentola*. Fortner has developed and taught a workshop for young singers based on the work of Columbia theater professor Anne Bogart. The workshop enables young singers to deconstruct elements of time and space in order to create a common language that they can use to create interesting work quickly. His workshop has been given at Florida Grand Opera, Palm Beach Opera, and Opera North in New Hampshire. His credits also include themed entertainment for Disney and Thinkwell Design and Production.

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JESÚS LÓPEZ-COBOS, *conductor*



Jesús López-Cobos (Conductor), made his U.S. debut at San Francisco Opera in 1972 leading *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Aida*; he returned in 1974 for *Luisa Miller* and *Otello*. He recently completed a seven year tenure as Music Director of the Teatro Real in Madrid and maintains the title of Conductor Emeritus of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, having served as the orchestra's Music Director from 1986-2001. Under his leadership for 15 seasons, the orchestra earned international acclaim for its tour performances and its extensive catalogue of recordings for Telarc. Mr. López-Cobos has previously served as General Music Director of the Deutsche Oper Berlin (1981-1990) and Music Director of the famed Lausanne Chamber Orchestra in Switzerland (1991-2000).

Mr. López-Cobos's illustrious career has taken him to centers of music around the world. He has regularly conducted such ensembles as the Berlin Philharmonic, the Radio Symphony Orchestra Berlin, the Concertgebouw Orchestra, the London Symphony, the Vienna Philharmonic, the Vienna Symphony, the Oslo Philharmonic and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. After his first concert with the London Philharmonic Orchestra in 1978, he toured extensively with that orchestra and held the post of Principal Guest Conductor from 1981 to 1986. With his career equally balanced between operatic and orchestral engagements, he has conducted at Milan's Teatro alla Scala, London's Royal Opera House at Covent Garden and the Metropolitan Opera. His years at the Berlin Opera included a major *Der Ring des Nibelungen* cycle, performed at the Berlin Festival, in Japan (where it was that country's first complete "Ring") and at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. His American operatic debut came in 1972 at the San Francisco Opera.

Among the many awards bestowed upon him, Mr. López-Cobos has received the Cross of Merit, First Class, of the Federal Republic of Germany for his outstanding contributions to German culture, and the government of France has inducted him as an Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters. He has also been honored by his own country for his artistic achievements on two occasions; once as the first recipient of the Prince of the Asturias Award, which was presented to him by the Spanish government and the Royal House in 1981, and more recently, in 2001 he was presented with the Medal of Bellas Artes. Mr. Lopez-Cobos also holds an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Cincinnati.

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GARY MARDER, *Lighting Designer*



Gary Marder (Lighting Designer) Resident lighting designer for San Francisco Opera, Gary Marder makes his Company debut this fall with his designs for *Mefistofele*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. His work has been seen at venues across the globe, including *The Magic Flute* in Sydney; *La Traviata* at Turin's Teatro Regio as well as in Tokyo; *The Makropulos Case* and *Samson et Dalila* at Houston Grand Opera; *Samson et Dalila*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Carmen*, *Peter Grimes*, and *Norma* at San Diego Opera; *Dialogues des Carmélites* with Palm Beach Opera; *La Clemenza di Tito* in Toronto; *Tosca* with Opera New Jersey; *Aida* at the Dallas Opera; and in Boston, Connecticut, Barcelona, and Baden Baden. Marder served as assistant resident lighting designer for the Metropolitan Opera for twelve seasons and associate resident lighting designer at New York City Opera for five years. His work in theater

includes *Big River*, *The Tempest*, *Pinocchio*, and *Death of a Salesman*; Broadway and off-Broadway productions include *A Terrible Beauty*, *Tru*, *Grand Hotel*, *Gypsy*, and *Annie II*.

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JEAN-PIERRE PONNELLE, *Production*



Jean-Pierre Ponnelle (Director) World-renowned designer and director Jean-Pierre Ponnelle (1932–1988) began his long relationship with San Francisco Opera designing the Company productions of Orff's *Die Kluge* in 1958 and designed both sets and costumes for the U.S. premiere of *Die Frau ohne Schatten* in 1959. Ponnelle's additional productions here include *La Cenerentola* (the first American project in which he served as both director and designer), *Carmen*, *Falstaff*, *Rigoletto*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Così fan tutte*, *Lear*, *Otello*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Tosca*, *Turandot*, *La Bohème*, *Il Prigioniero*, and *Idomeneo*. The Paris native studied at the Sorbonne and in 1952 created the scenery for the world premiere of Hans Werner Henze's first opera, *Boulevard Solitude*. During the 1950s, he designed productions for the principal German theaters and made design debuts at the Vienna State Opera, the Rome Opera, and the Opéra-Comique in Paris. Televised productions included *Idomeneo* and *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Met and *Die Zauberflöte* at the Salzburg Festival, as well as filmed versions of *Madama Butterfly*, *Carmina Burana*, *Rigoletto*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *La Cenerentola*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *La Clemenza di Tito*, and the three extant Monteverdi operas.

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PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHY

IAN ROBERTSON, *Chorus Director*



Ian Robertson (Chorus Director) Recipient of the 2012 San Francisco Opera Medal, Ian Robertson has been chorus director and conductor with San Francisco Opera since 1987, having prepared more than 300 productions for the Company. He was awarded the Olivier Messiaen Foundation Prize in 2003 for his artistic contribution to the preparation of the Company's North American premiere of *Saint François d'Assise*. Robertson made his San Francisco Opera conducting debut with *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and has since led performances of *Falstaff*, *Lohengrin*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, *Don Carlo*, *Turandot*, *Il Trovatore*, and *La Bohème*. He has led the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus in many concerts, including the Company's recent Stern Grove appearance, and he has conducted *Così fan tutte* and *La Périchole* for San Francisco Opera Center and frequently led Merola Opera Program's Grand Finale concerts. Other North

American opera credits include productions with Sarasota Opera, Edmonton Opera, and Philadelphia's Curtis Opera Theatre. Before joining San Francisco Opera, Robertson was head of music and chorus director of Scottish Opera, where he led numerous productions, including *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *The Pearl Fishers*, *The Secret of Susanna*, and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. The Scotland native trained at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and the University of Glasgow; he studied conducting under Sir Alexander Gibson. Robertson is currently the artistic director of the San Francisco Festival Chorale, which performed this summer at the Grand Teton Music Festival, and the San Francisco Boys Chorus. A 2009 trip with the San Francisco Boys Chorus took him to the inauguration of the President of the United States, and this summer he led performances with the Boys Chorus in St. Petersburg, Russia and Copenhagen.



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COMPOSER BIOGRAPHY

GIAOCHINO ROSSINI, *Composer*



Gioachino Antonio Rossini (February 29, 1792 – November 13, 1868) is one of the most prolific, enduring and popular composers in the history of opera. He wrote 39 operas, including the famous *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville*), *La Cenerentola* (*Cinderella*), and *Guillaume Tell* (*William Tell*). His musical style is characterized by distinctive, song-like melodies that, combined with his operas' lighthearted stories, have captivated audiences to the present day.

Rossini was born in Pesaro, Italy on February 29, 1792 to musical parents. As a boy he learned to sing and play the horn, and sang in at least one opera in Bologna. Though he wrote an opera that went unperformed for several years at the age of 13 or 14, the official beginning of his operatic career occurred at the age of 18, with a one-act comedy for the opera in Venice, and further commissions followed from Bologna, Ferrara, Venice, and Milan, where *La Pietra del Paragone* was a success at La Scala in 1812. This opera was one of seven that Rossini wrote in only sixteen months.

This prodigious level of activity continued in the ensuing years, and Rossini first began to win international acclaim for his operas in 1813, though his works were not always met with praise. In 1815 Rossini went to Naples to become the musical and artistic director of the Teatro San Carlo, which led him to focus on serious opera. His contract allowed him to compose for other theatres, and during this time he wrote two of his best comedies, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *La Cenerentola*, both of which premiered in Rome. *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* was written in 1816, and though it was not favorably received at its premiere it quickly became the most loved of Rossini's comic works, with admirers as notable as Beethoven and Verdi. With its elegant melodies, exhilarating rhythms and superb ensemble writing, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* is now often considered to be the greatest of all Italian comic operas, eternally fresh in its wit and its inventiveness. *La Cenerentola*, a charmingly sentimental version of the Cinderella story, followed in 1817. The role of Cenerentola was written with a brilliant and expressive range, and took the leading character on her journey from scullery maid to princess using different musical styles to represent her change of status (from folk tune to sparkling coloratura).

While in Naples, Rossini met leading soprano Isabella Colbran, whom he married in 1822, though unfortunately, they were not happy together for long. Rossini's most important operas through the 1820's show his maturity as a musical dramatist. Among the masterpieces from this period are *Maometto II* (1820) and *Semiramide* (1823), as well as one of Rossini's most important works, *Guillaume Tell* (1829), which was composed while Rossini was working in London and Paris. *Guillaume Tell* is very long and difficult to produce, and is a rich tapestry of his most inspired music, with elaborate orchestration, many ensembles, spectacular ballets and processions in the French tradition.

And then, Rossini suddenly stopped composing for opera. At the age of 37 he retired, and in 1837 he moved to Italy while suffering a prolonged and painful illness. His wife, Isabella, died in 1845, and the next year he married Olympe Pelissier, who had tended to him through his ill health. He hardly composed at all during this period, but in 1855 he moved back to Paris and as his health and humor returned, so did his urge to compose and he wrote a quantity of pieces for piano and voices that he called "Péchés de Vieillesse" (*Sins of Old Age*). Rossini died, universally honored, in Passy on November 13, 1868.

Source: San Francisco Opera Guild



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LIBRETTIST BIOGRAPHY

JACOPO FERRETTI, *Librettist*



Jacopo Ferretti (Librettist) (July 16, 1784 – March 7, 1852) was an Italian writer, poet and opera librettist.

Introduced by his father to literature while very young, in addition to his native Italian, Ferretti mastered not only Latin and Ancient Greek but also French and English, and began writing verse early. Even though he worked in the tobacco industry from the age of about 30 until he was over 60, he was extremely prolific, writing "everything from love letter to odes and welcoming speeches," and numerous opera libretti, all but the few listed below being generally forgotten.

His first big success was *La Cenerentola*, written at great speed for Rossini over Christmas in 1816. Ferretti wrote afterwards how he had agreed to write a libretto on a subject, which the censor vetoed, so he met the composer and the theatre manager to discuss alternatives. He struggled to find a new subject that appealed, but about two dozen were rejected for one reason or another. Ferretti suggested "*La Cenerentola*" ("Cinderella"), and, at last, Rossini decided he liked it. Ferretti

went home and began at once, worked night and day on it, and gave sections to Rossini on Christmas Day. Early on during the production there were problems, but Rossini predicted (correctly) that it would be a great success in the long term.

Ferretti married the singer Teresa Terziani in 1820. Musicians and poets, including Gaetano Donizetti, frequently visited the Ferretti household. Donizetti and Ferretti became good friends, after he arriving in Rome in October 1821 for the preparation of the production of his *Zoraida di Granata*, which was his first major success. Altogether, Ferretti wrote about 70 librettos, the majority of which were for operas presented in Rome.

Source: wikipedia.com