

GIACOMO PUCCINI

MADAMA BUTTERFLY

Love, betrayal, and sacrifice

OCTOBER 6, 9, 12, 14, 2018
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PITTSBURGH OPERA
2018-19 SEASON



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We dedicate these performances of MADAMA BUTTERFLY to the memory of Tito Capobianco.



Tito and Gigi Capobianco stand in front of their portrait in the Founders' Room with General Director, Christopher Hahn.

*F*ew people have had a greater impact on Pittsburgh Opera than our former General Director Tito Capobianco, who passed away September 8th.

In his 17 years with us from 1983-2000, he grew our operating budget from less than \$1 million to \$5 million, and added a \$6 million endowment. Tito spearheaded our use of English supertitles above the stage, which we now take for granted but was revolutionary at the time. He also oversaw our move from Heinz Hall to the more spacious Benedum Center. Perhaps Tito’s longest-lasting impact, however, was the creation of our Resident Artist Program. Now hailed as one of the country’s leading training programs for young singers, the program has fostered the careers of stellar singers who perform across the globe.

Tito was born in 1931 in La Plata, Argentina. Initially trained as a singer, he later turned to directing and emigrated to the United States. His impressive resume includes directing critically-acclaimed productions at the New York City Opera and Metropolitan Opera, stints as artistic director of the Cincinnati Opera Festival and Cincinnati Opera, and General Director of San Diego Opera. In addition, he was an accomplished teacher at such prestigious institutions as the Juilliard School, the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia, and the Yale School of Music. Pittsburgh Opera was indeed fortunate to have this accomplished, visionary man at our helm for so long.

Tito leaves a lasting legacy, including his two sons, four grandchildren, and a street named after him adjacent to the Benedum Center.

LETTER FROM OUR BOARD LEADERSHIP



DEAR FRIENDS,

Welcome to the 2018-19 Season of Pittsburgh Opera!

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Pittsburgh Opera, we welcome you to the Benedum Center for the first production of this season—the powerful classic story of **Madama Butterfly**.

This season marks the 80th anniversary of Pittsburgh Opera and a significant milestone in the life of the company. Over the generations, Pittsburgh Opera has become a pillar of the artistic community. We are known nationally for high artistic standards, the quality of our Resident Artists, and the extent of our community engagement. We are grateful to all who have given of their time, talent, and treasure to support Pittsburgh Opera these many years. We are indebted to your generosity.

This season, in addition to classics like **Madama Butterfly** and **La bohème**, you will also have the chance to enjoy works such as **Glory Denied** at the Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters and **afterWARDS-Mozart's IDOMENEO Reimagined** at Pittsburgh CAPA Theater. This range of quality operatic works and superb talent is made possible because of your generous philanthropy to Pittsburgh Opera. Your gifts help us cover the costs of production, pay stipends for our resident artists, support arts education programs, and a host of programming that has built the reputation of this company as a leader among the nation's opera companies.

The 80th Anniversary Campaign is our opportunity in this generation, through your financial support, to preserve and build upon the artistic quality of Pittsburgh Opera for generations to come. We ask that you join with us and show your support of our work by making a campaign gift to Pittsburgh Opera. Our new Director of Development, Michael Braxton, welcomes the chance to speak with you about how your gift can impact the artistic future of Pittsburgh Opera. Please call him at (412) 281-0912 ext. 259 or email him at mbraxton@pittsburghopera.org.

Thank you for your continued support. We hope that you enjoy tonight's performance and welcome to the new season.

GENE WELSH
Board President

MICHELE FABRIZI
Board Chair

LETTER FROM OUR GENERAL DIRECTOR



DEAR FRIENDS,

Welcome to Pittsburgh Opera's 80th anniversary season! Whether you are joining us for the first time or the fiftieth, we are delighted that you're here to experience Puccini's powerful **Madama Butterfly**.

Our cast features returning favorites plus a brilliant Pittsburgh Opera debut. Russian soprano Dina Kuznetsova, described as "marvelous" as Cio-Cio-San at the English National Opera in London, sings with us for the first time.

When you hear her tonight, you'll know why we cast her. Joining Dina are familiar faces such as Cody Austin (**La traviata**, 2016) and Michael Mayes (**Moby-Dick**, 2018). Making her Pittsburgh Opera homecoming is our recent Resident Artist Laurel Semerdjian, who is quickly becoming known around the country as a stellar Suzuki.

Madama Butterfly is the first of six operas we are producing this season. We would love to see you again soon. If you don't have season tickets, full and partial-season plans are still available. A subscription starts at just \$47; apply tonight's ticket towards one and access exclusive benefits. Please visit the table in the center of the Grand Lobby for details.

You may not know this, but ticket sales only cover about 25% of our expenses each year. We rely on the generosity of people like you, who believe in our mission and our important role in the community, to supplement your ticket purchases with an additional gift. Please consider a gift to our 80th Anniversary Campaign at pittsburghopera.org/give, or see one of our representatives in the lobby.

While the world has changed in the past 80 years, our commitment to bringing you opera of the finest caliber has not wavered. With your support we will continue to do so for many, many decades.

Warm regards,

CHRISTOPHER HAHN
General Director

KNOW

the arts are the
highest form of
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PNC is proud to be a patron of the Pittsburgh Opera. Because we believe in and support all that the arts contribute to our community.



THE CAST

GIACOMO PUCCINI MADAMA BUTTERFLY

by Giacomo Puccini
with an Italian libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa. Based in part on the short story "Madame Butterfly" (1898) by John Luther Long, which was dramatized by David Belasco.

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE:

Lt. B.F. Pinkerton	Cody Austin
Goro	Julius Ahn
Suzuki	Laurel Semerdjian**
Sharpless	Michael Mayes
Cio-Cio-San	Dina Kuznetsova+
Cousin	Veronica Schmidt
Mother	Charlene Canty
Aunt	Judith Robb Jenkins
The Imperial Commissioner	Tyler Zimmerman*
The Official Registrar	William Buchanan
The Bonze	Brian Kontes
Prince Yamadori	Benjamin Taylor*
Kate Pinkerton	Antonia Botti-Lodovico*
Trouble	Kaylena Gould (October 6 & 12) Aidyn Rayan Dasgupta (October 9 & 14)

THE ARTISTIC TEAM

Conductor	Antony Walker
Stage Director	Linda Brovsky
Set Designer	John Gunter
Costume Designer	Alice Bristow
Lighting Designer	Andrew David Ostrowski
Wig and Makeup Designer	James Geier
Assistant Conductor	Glenn Lewis
Chorus Master	Mark Trawka
Associate Coach/Pianist	James Lesniak
Assistant Director	Matthew Haney*
Stage Manager	Cindy Knight

Production created for the L.A. Opera
Scenery designed by John Gunter
Made available courtesy of Utah Symphony | Utah Opera
Costumes designed for Utah Symphony & Opera by
Alice Bristow

+ Pittsburgh Opera debut
* Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist
** Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist alumna
Cast subject to change without notice.

Pittsburgh Opera presents
Madama Butterfly, first performed on
February 17, 1904 at La Scala in Milan.

These performances mark the 18th
production of **Madama Butterfly** at
Pittsburgh Opera, the most recent
in 2013.

Opera in two acts.

Sung in Italian with English texts
projected above the stage.

Supertitles by Christopher Bergen.

Estimated performance time:
2 hours, 45 minutes with 1 intermission.

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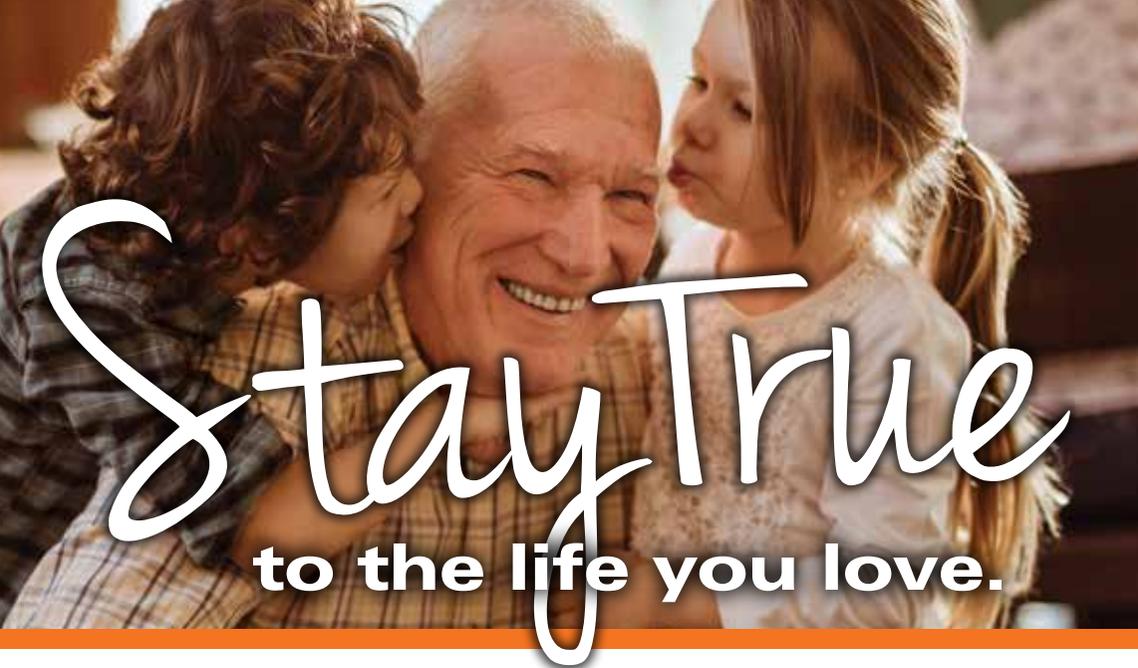
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SYNOPSIS

MADAMA BUTTERFLY

ACT I.

Nagasaki, around 1900. U.S. Navy Lieutenant B. F. Pinkerton inspects the house he has leased for 999 years from a marriage broker, Goro. Included with the house are three servants including Suzuki, the maid. They are expecting the bride, Cio-Cio-San, known as Madama Butterfly, whom Pinkerton has purchased for 100 yen. To the American Consul, Sharpless, Pinkerton describes the carefree philosophy of a sailor roaming the world in search of pleasure (*Dovunque al mondo*). For the moment, he is enchanted with the fragile Butterfly, but when Sharpless warns that Butterfly may not take her vows so lightly, Pinkerton brushes aside such scruples, saying he will one day marry a “real” American wife. Butterfly is heard in the distance joyously singing of her wedding (*Ancora un passo or via*). Entering surrounded by friends and family, Pinkerton’s fifteen-year-old bride tells him how she had to earn her living as a geisha when her family fell on hard times. In a quiet moment (*Vieni, amor mio!*), Butterfly displays her few possessions—including figures of her ancestors—and then reveals that she has converted to Christianity. The celebration is interrupted by Butterfly’s uncle, a Buddhist monk, who curses Butterfly for having renounced her ancestral religion. Pinkerton angrily sends the guests away. Alone with the distraught Butterfly, he dries her tears (*Viene la sera*) and they proclaim their love under the immense starry sky (*Vogliateme bene, un bene piccolino*).

20-Minute Intermission

ACT II.

Scene 1. Three years later, Butterfly waits for her husband’s return. As Suzuki prays (*E Izaghi ed Izanami*), her mistress stands with her eyes fixed on the harbor. When Suzuki shows her how little money is left, Butterfly urges her to have faith—one fine day Pinkerton’s ship will appear on the horizon (*Un bel di vedremo*). Sharpless brings a letter from the lieutenant, but before he can read it to Butterfly, Goro appears with a handsome and wealthy suitor, Prince Yamadori. Brusquely dismissing both broker and prince, Butterfly insists her husband has not deserted her. Sharpless tries again to read the letter and suggests Pinkerton may not return (*Ora a noi*). Butterfly triumphantly carries in her child, Trouble, proclaiming that as soon as Pinkerton knows he has a son he surely will come back. If he does not, she would rather die than return to her former life. Both moved and frustrated by her blind faith, Sharpless leaves without revealing the rest of the letter. Butterfly, on the point of despair, hears a cannon shot. Now delirious with joy on seeing Pinkerton’s ship entering the harbor, she orders Suzuki to help fill the house with blossoms (*Flower Duet: Una nave de guerra*). Expecting Pinkerton to come running, Butterfly settles down to wait with Suzuki and little Trouble (*Humming Chorus: Coro a bocca chiusa*).

Scene 2. When Pinkerton still has not arrived at dawn, Suzuki insists that Butterfly rest. Before long, Sharpless enters with Pinkerton and Kate, his American wife. When Suzuki realizes who the woman is, she tearfully agrees to aid in breaking the news to her mistress. Seized with remorse, Pinkerton bids an anguished farewell to the scene of his former happiness (**Addio, fiorito asil**) and then rushes away. When Butterfly comes in expecting to find him, she finds Kate instead. Guessing the truth, the shattered Butterfly agrees to give up her child if his father will return for him. Then, sending even Suzuki away, she takes out the dagger with which her father committed Seppuku and bows before a statue of Buddha, choosing to die with honor rather than live in disgrace. As she raises the blade, Suzuki pushes the child into the room. Sobbing farewell, Butterfly sends him into the garden to play, then stabs herself (**Con onor muore**). As she dies, Pinkerton is heard calling her name.

-Adpated from *Opera News*

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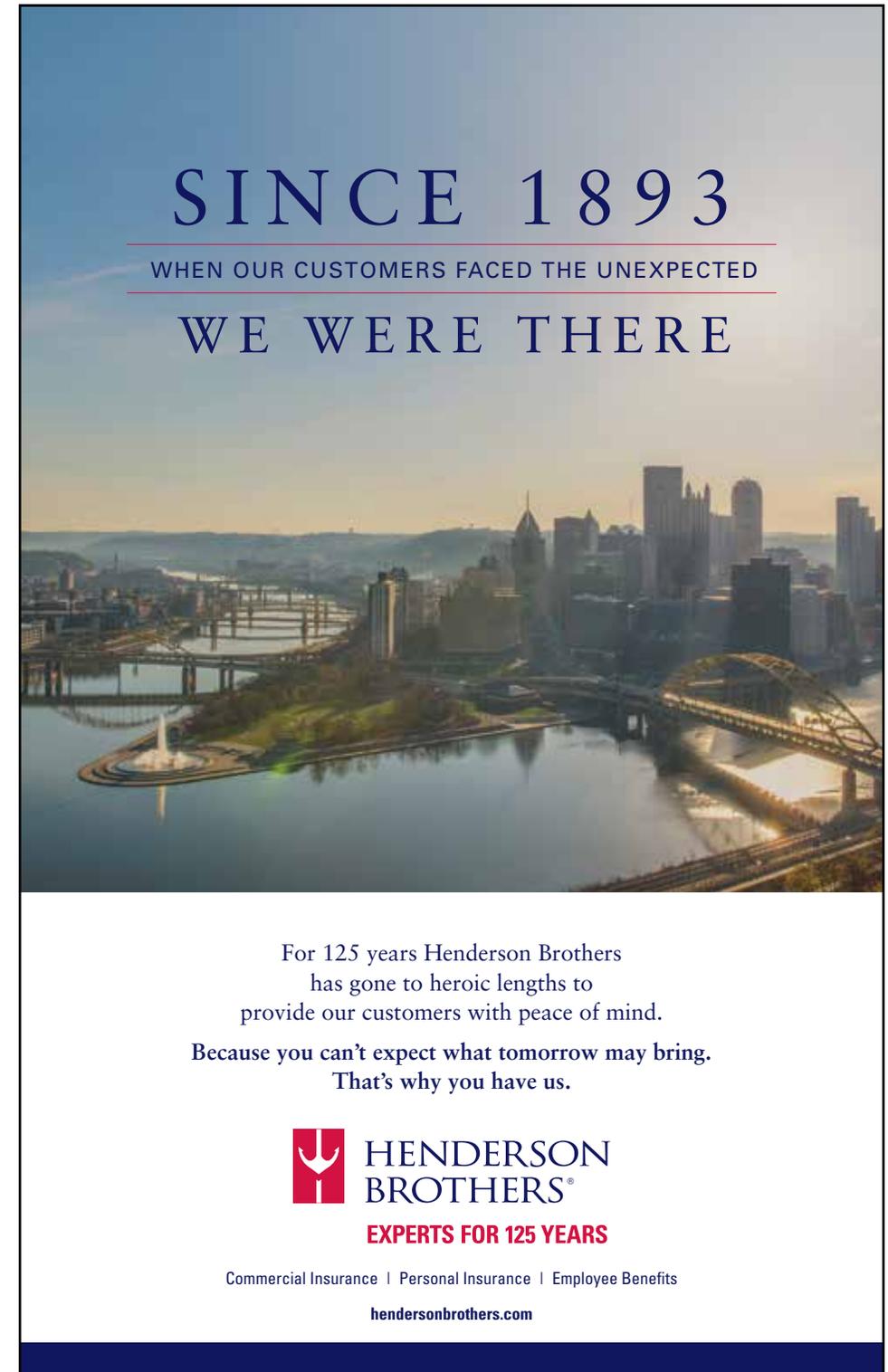
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Wind Instruments
Grainger *Hill Song No. 2*
Verdi *Three Scenes from*
Rigoletto and La Traviata

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VICTOR YAMPOLSKY
GUEST CONDUCTOR

OCT.21.2018

SUNDAY • 7:30 PM

Carnegie Music Hall, Oakland

TICKET EVENT

Glazunov
Valse de Concert No. 2 in F
Major, Op. 51
Shostakovich
Symphony No. 10 in E minor,
Op. 93

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Schubert *Selection of Songs*
for Soprano and Piano
Beethoven *Sonata for Cello*
and Piano No. 3 in A Major,
op. 69

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT: CMUMUSIC.EVENTBRITE.COM

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

MADAMA BUTTERFLY



JULIUS AHN: GORO

Internationally-acclaimed Korean-American tenor Julius Ahn returns to our stage, most recently appearing as Pang/*Turandot* (2017), a role he has also performed with San Francisco Opera, Vancouver Opera, Atlanta Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Cincinnati Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Utah Symphony & Opera, Seattle Opera, and most recently with Tulsa Opera. Mr. Ahn is perhaps best known for his signature role of Goro/*Madama Butterfly*, for which he has received much critical acclaim. He

recently performed the role in his debuts at San Francisco Opera, Vancouver Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Nashville Opera, Opera Carolina, Palm Beach Opera, and at the Royal Albert Hall in London, and in his return to Michigan Opera Theatre. This season, he reprises the role of Goro for Lyric Opera of Kansas City and Virginia Opera. Recently, he grabbed the attention of opera goers as he joined the roster of the Metropolitan Opera for its productions of *The Nose* and *The Magic Flute*, and made his mainstage debut as the Second Priest/*The Magic Flute*. He has since returned to the Metropolitan Opera for *Turandot*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Rigoletto*, and *The Magic Flute*. Additional roles performed include Bardolfo/*Falstaff* (Opera Omaha), Basilio and Curzio/*Le nozze di Figaro* with Lyric Opera Baltimore, Demo/*Giasone* (Chicago Opera) Theater, Tanzmeister and Brighella/*Ariadne auf Naxos* (Boston Lyric Opera), and Monostatos/*Die Zauberflöte* with Pacific Symphony, Michigan Opera Theatre, Hawaii Opera Theatre, Opera Omaha, and Opera Carolina.



CODY AUSTIN: LT. B.F. PINKERTON

American tenor Cody Austin returns to our stage, most recently appearing as Alfredo Germont/*La traviata* (2016). His professional debut was with the Opera Company of Philadelphia as Roderigo/*Otello* in 2009, and he was invited to return the following season to perform Edmondo/*Manon Lescaut*. Upcoming engagements include Pinkerton/*Madama Butterfly* for Central City Opera and Greensboro Opera, Rodolfo/*La bohème* for Grange Park London, and Alfred/*Die Fledermaus* for Opera Tampa. Last season he sang

Pinkerton for Opera på Skåret in Sweden, Don José/*Carmen* (Sarasota Opera), Alfredo (Wichita Grand Opera), and the Glasgow *Requiem* at Carnegie Hall. Recent engagements include the Duke/*Rigoletto* (Opera Santa Barbara), Alfredo/*La traviata*, and Roméo/*Roméo et Juliette* for Virginia Opera, Alfredo for Utah Opera, Lensky/*Eugene Onegin* (Des Moines Metro Opera), Don José/*Le Tragédie de Carmen* for Shreveport Opera, Belmonte/*Abduction from the Seraglio* (Opera Grand Rapids), Faust/*Mefistofele* (Knoxville Opera), Ferrando/*Così fan tutte*, Ottavio/*Don Giovanni*, and Alfredo/*La traviata* for Opera Tampa. While at the Academy of Vocal Arts, he performed Tassilo/*Countess Maritza* (Concert Operetta Theater) and was featured in 2010 as tenor soloist with Peter Nero and the Philly Pops in *The Great American Tenor*. While at the Academy of Vocal Arts, Mr. Austin had the opportunity to perform in *Kat'a Kabanova*, *La traviata*, and *Anna Bolena*. Prior to AVA, he completed graduate work at Indiana University, performing George Gibbs in the world premiere of *Our Town*. He was a young artist at Central City Opera and Opera New Jersey, where he performed in *La traviata* and *The Merry Widow*. He has been featured in concert engagements with the Las Vegas Philharmonic, New Jersey Master Chorale, the Ambler Symphony, Jupiter Symphony, the Hamilton Philharmonic, and Ocean City Pops, performing such works as Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Beethoven's *Irish Songs*, Gounod's *St. Cecilia Mass*, and the Verdi *Requiem*. He was awarded 2nd place in the Dallas Opera Competition, received the Ralph Appelman Award for Vocal Promise, a Mario Lanza Scholarship, the Alfonso Cavaliere Memorial Scholarship, and the Arthur E. Walters Memorial Award.

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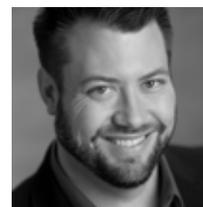
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ANTONIA BOTTI-LODOVICO: KATE PINKERTON

Antonia Botti-Lodovico is a first-year Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist. In the 2018-19 season, she is scheduled to perform *Hansel/Hansel & Gretel* Student Matinee Performance and *Idamante/afterWARDs-Mozart's Idomeneo Reimagined*. Ms. Botti-Lodovico is a graduate of Roosevelt University, where she received her Master of Music. Her credits at Roosevelt include Papagena in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and Madame Herz/*Der Schauspieldirektor*. In 2016 and 2017, she was an Apprentice Artist with the Des Moines Metro Opera. As an Apprentice Artist she performed the role of Rosette/*Manon* and covered the role of Petra/*A Little Night Music*. Her previous engagements also include performances with the Tuscia Opera Festival where she sang the role of Despina/*Così fan tutte* and Nursing Sister/*Suor Angelica*.

Ms. Botti-Lodovico's residency is generously sponsored by Hans and Leslie Fleischer.



BRIAN KONTES: THE BONZE

Bass Brian Kontes returns to our stage, most recently appearing as Dr. Bartolo/*The Marriage of Figaro* (2017). Highlights of the 2018-19 season include debuts at Sarasota Opera as Sarastro/*Die Zauberflöte* and Lieutenant Ratcliffe/*Billy Budd* (Central City Opera). He will also return to the Metropolitan Opera for their production of *Dialogues des Carmélites*, marking his ninth season with the company. Last season included Timur/*Turandot* (San Diego Opera) Don Fernando/*Fidelio* (Boston Baroque), and a return to the Shippensburg Music Festival, where he was featured as the bass soloist in their performance of Brahms *Requiem*. During the 2016-17 season, he returned to The Metropolitan Opera for much of the season, which included assignments in *Salome* and *Manon Lescaut* and was seen live during their new, HD production of *Der Rosenkavalier*. He participated in numerous past productions with the company including *Die Zauberflöte*, *War and Peace*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La Gioconda*, *The Nose*, *La fanciulla del West*, and *Tannhäuser*. Mr. Kontes was a featured soloist for Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with The Park Avenue Chamber Symphony at Carnegie Hall and was a guest soloist with The Florida Bach Festival, where he sang Dvorak's *Stabat Mater*. He also joined the Shippensburg Music Festival as Dr. Grenvil for their concert production of *La traviata*. Additional highlights include Commendatore/*Don Giovanni* (NYCO), Banquo/*Macbeth* (Opera National de Lorraine), Leporello/*Don Giovanni* (Seattle Opera), The Bonze and Yamadori/*Madama Butterfly* (Nashville Opera), Colline/*La bohème* (Piedmont Opera Theatre), Palemon/*Thäis* for both Opera Theater of Saint Louis and Kentucky Opera, and as Dr. Grenvil/*La traviata* (Opera Colorado). He was a first prize winner of the George London Foundation Competition and is a graduate of The Curtis Institute of Music.



DINA KUZNETSOVA: CIO-CIO-SAN

A native of Moscow, soprano Dina Kuznetsova makes her Pittsburgh Opera debut with these performances. She is an alumna of the Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago, starring in a number of productions there including *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *Rigoletto*, *Roméo et Juliette*, and her role debut as Tatyana/*Eugene Onegin*. She has attracted the attention of the world's major opera companies for her outstanding musicianship and compelling stage presence, performing in many of the world's greatest opera houses, including The Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Royal Opera House, Berlin's Staatsoper, Wiener Staatsoper, Munich's Bayerische Staatsoper, and Glyndebourne Festival, in roles such as Pamina, Violetta, Juliette, Lauretta, Donna Anna, and Alice Ford. Her passionate portrayal of Tatyana/*Eugene Onegin* has brought her huge success at Lyric Opera of Chicago, and led to many subsequent productions, including Opera National de Lille and Russian National Orchestra. Ms. Kuznetsova made her outstanding debut as Dvorak's *Rusalka* at Glyndebourne Festival, a role she has since sung at Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, Opera Montpellier, and Teatro Municipal de Santiago. She made her highly-acclaimed debut as Cio-Cio-San at English National Opera. Other recent highlights include *Káťa Kabanová* (Teatro Municipal de Santiago, Staatsoper Hamburg), *Francesca da Rimini* (The Metropolitan Opera), *Desdemona/Otello* (Gulbenkian Orchestra), and *Lisa/Pique Dame* (Sydney Symphony Orchestra). A keen recitalist and chamber musician, she appears regularly at both the New York Festival of Song and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. In 2016-17 and 2017-18 seasons, she starred as *Rodelinda* at Bolshoi Theater in Moscow, as Tatyana at Florida Grand Opera, made role debut as *Jenůfa* at Teatro Municipal in Santiago, portrayed Cio-Cio-San with Cleveland Opera Theater and *Káťa Kabanová* with New Zealand Opera.



MICHAEL MAYES: SHARPLESS

Baritone Michael Mayes returns to our stage, most recently appearing as Starbuck/*Moby-Dick* (2018). At home in both traditional and contemporary operatic roles, Michael Mayes appears in prestigious national and international houses including Washington National Opera, Dallas Opera, Atlanta Opera, Seattle Opera, Teatro Real in Madrid, and the Barbican in London. Critically-acclaimed for his portrayal of Joseph De Rocher in Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*, he recently made his debut in that same role with Teatro Real in Madrid and the Barbican in London. Other Jake Heggie operas Mr. Mayes has performed include *Manfred/Out of the Darkness* with Music of Remembrance, *Charlie/Three Decembers* with UrbanArias, and the world premiere of *Great Scott* with Dallas Opera and San Diego Opera. Additional contemporary performances include: *Older Thompson/Glory Denied* with Nashville Opera, Opera Memphis, and Fort Worth Opera; *Lawrence/The Wreckers* with Bard SummerScape; *Adam/The Canticle of the Black Madonna* with Anima Mundi Productions; *Kinesias* in Mark Adamo's *Lysistrata* with Fort Worth Opera; *Adam/Baden-Baden 1927* with Gotham Chamber Opera; and *Edward Gaines/Margaret Garner* opposite mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves with the Opera Company of Philadelphia and Opera Carolina. Mr. Mayes continues to build an impressive resume in leading traditional opera roles including Jack Rance/*La fanciulla del West*, *Scarpia/Tosca*, *Escamillo/Carmen*, *Sharpless/Madama Butterfly*, and the title role in *Rigoletto*, and recently sang his first *Sweeney Todd* with Atlanta Opera. Upcoming engagements include several important debuts: his Seattle Opera debut as Count di Luna/*Il trovatore*, a role debut of *Wozzeck* with Des Moines Metro Opera, as well as his return to Madison Opera for Tonio and Alfio in their double bill of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*.

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LAUREL SEMERDJIAN: SUZUKI

Former Resident Artist Laurel Semerdjian returns to our stage, most recently seen as Mother Goose/*The Rake's Progress* (2016). In the 2015-16 season, she also appeared as Fenena/*Nabucco*, Meg/*Little Women*, and Gertrude Stein/*27*. In 2014-15, she was seen as Emilia/*Otello*, Eduige/*Rodelinda*, and Asakir/*Sumeida's Song*. In the 2018-19 season, she rejoins Tacoma Opera for her debut in the title role of *The Rape of Lucretia*, and performs with Syracuse's Symphoria as mezzo soloist in Haydn's *Mass in Time of War* and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*. She will also sing the title role in the workshop of Mohammed Fairouz's new opera, *Bhutto*, a co-commission with Beth Morrison Projects and Pittsburgh Opera. In the 2017-2018 season, she returned to both Sarasota Opera, as Suzuki/*Madama Butterfly*, Flora/*La traviata*, and Syracuse Opera, as Suzuki/*Madama Butterfly*. She made company debuts with St. Petersburg Opera (Florida) as Dritte Dame/*Die Zauberflöte*, Pittsburgh's Resonance Works as Ježibaba/*Rusalka*, and Washington Concert Opera as a guest soloist in their Opera's Greatest Heroines gala concert. Throughout the 2016-17 season she made her Westmoreland Symphony Orchestra debut with her first performances of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*. In her return to Bellevue City Opera she performed her first Dorabella/*Così fan tutte*, and in October 2016 she made her Syracuse Opera debut as Tisbe/*La cenerentola*. In Summer 2015, Ms. Semerdjian made her Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra debut as part of Three Rivers Arts Festival and portrayed Cherubino/*Le nozze di Figaro* (Bellevue City Opera). Ms. Semerdjian was born in San Diego, CA and raised in Tacoma, WA. She holds a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of North Texas and a Bachelors of Music in Vocal Arts with a Minor in Music Industry from the University of Southern California.



BENJAMIN TAYLOR: PRINCE YAMADORI

Benjamin Taylor is a second-year Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist. In the 2018-19 season, he is scheduled to perform Older Thompson/*Glory Denied* and Schaudard/*La bohème*. In 2017-18 he performed Sciarrone/*Tosca*, Brian/*The Long Walk*, and Captain Gardiner/*Moby-Dick*. Mr. Taylor received his Master of Music from Boston University, where he also earned his Performer's Certificate with Boston University's Opera Institute. While at BU, He performed the roles of Demetrius/*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Guglielmo/*Così fan tutte*, Escamillo/*La Tragédie de Carmen*, Prior Walter/*Angels in America*, Alvaro/*Florencia en el Amazonas*, Coyle/*Owen Wingrave*, and Des Grieux/*Le Portrait de Manon*. For the past three summers Mr. Taylor has been a Gerdine Young Artist (2015, 2016) and Richard Gaddes Festival Artist (2017) at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, where he performed Fiorello/*The Barber of Seville*, Cowardly Giant/*Shalimar the Clown*, Yamadori/*Madama Butterfly*, and covered Figaro/*The Barber of Seville*, Marcello/*La bohème*, Musik Teacher/*Ariadne auf Naxos*, Sharpless/*Madama Butterfly*, and Lawyer Huld and various roles/*The Trial*. In 2016, Mr. Taylor also performed as Marcello with Crested Butte Festival, and Yamadori in Berkshire Opera Festival's inaugural season. Mr. Taylor received his Bachelor's of the Arts at Morgan State University where he sang Tom/*Blue Monday* with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, as well as various roles around the Maryland area.

Mr. Taylor's residency is generously sponsored by Dr. Jean Anne Hattler.



TYLER ZIMMERMAN: IMPERIAL COMMISSIONER

Tyler Zimmerman is a first-year Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist and is scheduled to perform as Colline/*La bohème*. In the 2017-18 season, he completed his final year of his Master's studies at the Curtis Institute of Music, where he performed the role of Sam/A *Quiet Place*. He returned to the Chautauqua Institute for his 7th summer where he sang the roles of Dr. Dulcamara/*L'elisir d'amore* and Escamillo/*Carmen*. In the 2016-17 season he continued his studies at the Curtis Institute of Music, where he was seen

as Edward Teller/*Doctor Atomic* in a new production led by R.B. Schlather. He made his Albany Symphony debut singing as the Baritone Soloist in Beethoven's *9th Symphony*. Mr. Zimmerman spent his summer in Santa Fe as an Apprentice Artist with the Santa Fe Opera, where he covered the role of Melisso/*Alcina*. In 2015-16, he sang the roles of Colline/*La bohème*, Bretigny/*Manon*, Figaro/*Le nozze di Figaro* (Curtis Opera Theatre), and La Roche/*Capriccio* (Opera Philadelphia in a co-production with Curtis Opera Theatre). He returned to the Detroit Symphony Orchestra (First Soldier/*Salome*) and the Chautauqua Music Festival (Der Sprecher/*Die Zauberflöte*, Monterone/*Rigoletto*). In 2014-15, he sang the role of Antonio/*Le nozze di Figaro* at the Juilliard School. He joined the Detroit Symphony Orchestra as Sciarrone/*Tosca* alongside Patricia Racette and James Valenti and returned to the Chautauqua Music Festival to sing Il Re/*Ariodante* and Alcindoro/*La bohème*. No stranger to modern works, he took part in the North American premiere of Peter Maxwell Davies' *Kommilitonen!* at the Juilliard School along with extensive work with Ricky Ian Gordon during the summers of 2012 and 2014. He has also appeared in public masterclasses with Dolora Zajick, Craig Rutenberg, Christine Brewer, Sherrill Milnes, Daniel Ferro, Richard Bonyng, and many others.

Mr. Zimmerman's residency is generously sponsored by Jim and Judith Matheny.



ANTONY WALKER: CONDUCTOR

Music Director Antony Walker celebrates his thirteenth season at Pittsburgh Opera in 2018-19. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 2011 with Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, and has returned to The Met since then to conduct *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *The Pearl Fishers*, and *The Magic Flute*. Maestro Walker enjoys superlative reviews not only for his Pittsburgh Opera productions, but also his recent concert performances of Donizetti's rarely-performed *Maria di Rohan*, Massenet's *Hérodiade*,

and Beethoven's *Leonore* at Washington Concert Opera. In 2010, Maestro Walker made debuts at English National Opera in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, at Canadian Opera Company in *Maria Stuarda*, and at The Santa Fe Opera in *Madama Butterfly*. In 2016 Maestro Walker was proud to conduct Rossini's monumental *Semiramide* in Florence, Italy, where the operatic art was born. He currently serves as Artistic Director of Washington Concert Opera in Washington D.C., founding Artistic Director and Conductor Emeritus of Pinchgut Opera in Australia, and was Music Director of Cantillation and the Orchestra of the Antipodes for almost two decades. He was Chorus Master and Staff Conductor for Welsh National Opera from 1998-2002 and Musical Director of Sydney Philharmonia Choirs from 1992-97. Since his conducting debut in 1991, Maestro Walker has led nearly 200 operas, large-scale choral and orchestral works, and numerous symphonic and chamber works with companies in Europe, North America, and Australia. His extraordinary career includes engagements with Opera Australia, Welsh National Opera, New York City Opera, Teatro Comunale Bologna, Orchestre Colonne (Paris), Wolf Trap Opera, Merola Program at the San Francisco Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Glimmerglass Festival, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Vancouver Opera, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, and Sydney Opera House Orchestra.



LINDA BROVSKY: STAGE DIRECTOR

Linda Brovsky returns to the Pittsburgh Opera, having previously directed *Rigoletto* and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Her innovative productions are found at the Seattle Opera, San Francisco Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Los Angeles Opera, San Diego Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Cincinnati Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, Atlanta Opera, and the Lyric Opera of Kansas City. Recent credits include her critically-acclaimed production of *Don Quichotte* for the Canadian Opera

Company, *La traviata* (Cincinnati Opera), *Tosca* (Intermountain Opera), *La cenerentola* (Syracuse Opera), *Der Zigeunerbaron* (Manhattan School of Music), and *The Wizard of Oz* (Skylight Music Theatre). Upcoming engagements include a new production of *Countess Maritza* for Opera Pacific Victoria in British Columbia and *L'elisir d'amore* for Indiana University. Ms. Brovsky has nurtured several World Premieres including David Carlson's *The Midnight Angel* (Opera Theatre of St. Louis/Glimmerglass Opera), Scott Eyerly's *The House of the Seven Gables* (Manhattan School of Music), and Claude White's children's opera *Love, Death and High Notes*. U.S. Premieres include Lowell Liebermann's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Florentine Opera), Siegfried Matthus's *The Loves and Death of Cornet Christoph Rilke* (Manhattan School of Music), and the Revised Edition of Conrad Susa's *Black River* (Opera Theatre of St. Louis). In demand as an arts writer and lecturer, she has been a contributor to *Biography Magazine* as well as a guest speaker for the National Arts Club—PEN International, the Guggenheim Museum's "Works in Progress" series, and the American Opera Project's "New Works" series.

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ANDREW DAVID OSTROWSKI: LIGHTING DESIGNER

Mr. Ostrowski continues his association with Pittsburgh Opera with these performances. He has also designed Pittsburgh Opera productions of **Salome** (2016), **The Barber of Seville** (2016), **Carmen** (2015), **La bohème** (2014), **La cenerentola** (2013), **Rigoletto** (2012), **Tosca** (2012), **The Marriage of Figaro** and **Carmen** (2010), **Rigoletto** (2005), **La traviata** (2004), **La bohème** and **A Midsummer Night's Dream** (2003), **La cenerentola** and **Street Scene** (2002). He has designed for Madison Opera and Opera Theatre of Pittsburgh. Mr. Ostrowski was the lighting director for an international tour of **Porgy and Bess** from 1998 to 2004 that was in every Western European country except Portugal. His international credits also include his own productions in Ireland, Sweden, France, and Scotland. Locally, he has designed for Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera, Pittsburgh Public Theater, Pittsburgh Ballet, City Theatre, Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theater, Quantum Theatre, The Rep for Pittsburgh Playhouse, The Conservatory Company at Point Park University, The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, Barebones Productions, and others. Nationally he has designed for The Asolo, North Shore Music Theater, The Srdn, Dallas Summer Musicals, Merrimack Repertory Theater, Spoleto Festival USA, The National High School Musical Theater Awards, and others. He has designed over 300 productions, many of them locally, since 1991. Mr. Ostrowski was the recipient of the 2010 Frankel Award for his contributions to Art in Western Pennsylvania. He also received a National Merit Award from the Kennedy Center for the Arts.



JAMES GEIER: WIG & MAKEUP DESIGNER

James Geier returns to Pittsburgh Opera for a fifteenth season after recently completing his fourteenth season at Cincinnati Opera. He formerly worked as a staff makeup artist and wigmaker for a decade with San Francisco Opera and, more recently, as resident wig and makeup designer for Florida Grand Opera. Mr. Geier is a graduate of the Theatre Arts Department at Brandeis University and completed apprenticeships with both the San Francisco and Santa Fe operas. He has worked for several film companies, including Lucasfilms Ltd., as well as an impressive number of opera, ballet, and theatre companies. His credits include the Denver Center Theatre Company, Cincinnati Shakespeare Company, Cincinnati Ballet, Spoleto Festival USA, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Baltimore Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, Seattle Opera, Tulsa Opera, Fort Worth Opera, Opera Omaha, Portland Opera, the Bolshoi Ballet, Kirov Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Fresno Grand Opera, and American Ballet Theatre.



GLENN LEWIS: ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Glenn Lewis, a native of Rochester, New York, has worked as Pittsburgh Opera Head of Music since January 2008. He has served as pianist, vocal coach, and assistant conductor primarily to Music Director Antony Walker on most of the main stage productions of the past several seasons. These include **Tosca**, **Eugene Onegin**, **Samson & Dalila**, **Rigoletto**, **Don Giovanni**, **The Grapes of Wrath**, **Orphée**, and **Aida**. Mr. Lewis made his conducting debut in 2009 with the Resident Artist production of **Don Pasquale** and has since conducted **Little Women**, **Dark Sisters**, **Hänsel und Gretel**, among others. In April 2018, he made his debut with Syracuse Opera conducting **Madama Butterfly**. In February 2017 he conducted **The Abduction from the Seraglio** with Dayton Opera. In the spring of 2016, he was in Washington, D.C. at the Kennedy Center working as an assistant conductor for the **Wagner Ring Cycle** at the Washington National Opera. For 17 seasons he has been on the staff of the Santa Fe Opera. There he has worked on productions including **Wozzeck** and **Salome** with Maestro David Robertson and **Peter Grimes** with Maestro Alan Gilbert. Mr. Lewis worked for 11 years in the opera houses in Cologne and Düsseldorf, Germany, where he conducted productions of **La cenerentola**, **Orpheus in the Underworld**, **Zar und Zimmermann**, and **My Fair Lady**. While there, he assisted Maestri James Conlon, John Fiore, Donald Runnicles, among others, on works including **Elektra**, **The Makropulos Case**, **Der Rosenkavalier**, and **Meistersinger von Nürnberg**. Past engagements include the Metropolitan Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago. He is a frequent recitalist in solo, chamber, and vocal repertoire. He holds degrees in piano performance from Ithaca College, Northwestern University, and an Artist Diploma in Opera Coaching and Conducting from Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.



MARK TRAWKA: CHORUS MASTER

Mark Trawka joined Pittsburgh Opera as Director of Musical Studies for the prestigious Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist Training Program in the 2003-04 season. In the 2006-07 season, he also took on the position of Chorus Master. Mr. Trawka coaches and performs with the Resident Artists and has also accompanied renowned mezzo-soprano Marianne Cornetti in her Pittsburgh recital appearances. He has been a member of the music staff at Houston Grand Opera, Dallas Opera, and Portland Opera (Oregon), where he was principal pianist and assistant chorus master. Mr. Trawka served as coach/accompanist at Chautauqua Opera and at Glimmerglass Festival for many summer seasons. In the summer of 2006, he was director of the resident artist program at Berkshire Opera. He was a music director at Tyrolean Opera Program in the summer of 2014. Mr. Trawka has been a member of the coaching faculty at the renowned Songfest for the last four summer seasons, where he has also conducted choral performances. He made his opera conducting debut at Pittsburgh Opera with the Resident Artist production of Ricky Ian Gordon's **27**. Educated at the Eastman School of Music and the University of Southern California, Mr. Trawka began his operatic career in the Houston Opera Studio and in San Francisco Opera's Merola Program.



JAMES LESNIAK: ASSOCIATE COACH/PIANIST

A native of Kenosha, Wisconsin, James Lesniak joined the Pittsburgh Opera music staff in 2006. After initial studies with Sheila Wiesztort, he received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees at Indiana University, where he studied with pianists Menahem Pressler, Karen Shaw, and Evelyne Brancart. His university credits include music staff work for Mississippi State University and the Indiana University Opera Theatre. Further studies included an apprenticeship with the Domingo-Cafritz

Young Artist Program at Washington National Opera for two seasons, where he gave his stage debut in the non-singing/piano playing role of Lazinski in *Fedora* at the Kennedy Center, accompanying Plácido Domingo in the opera. In addition, Mr. Lesniak has served on the coaching staff of Brevard Music Center, Glimmerglass Opera, Washington National Opera at the Kennedy Center, and the National Symphony. He has been an official pianist for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and also made his conducting debut in 2017 with Pittsburgh Opera's production of composer Laura Kaminsky's *As One*. For the summer months, he frequently returns to the music staff of the prestigious Santa Fe Opera, where recently, he served as Musical Director for their Winter Concert Tour.

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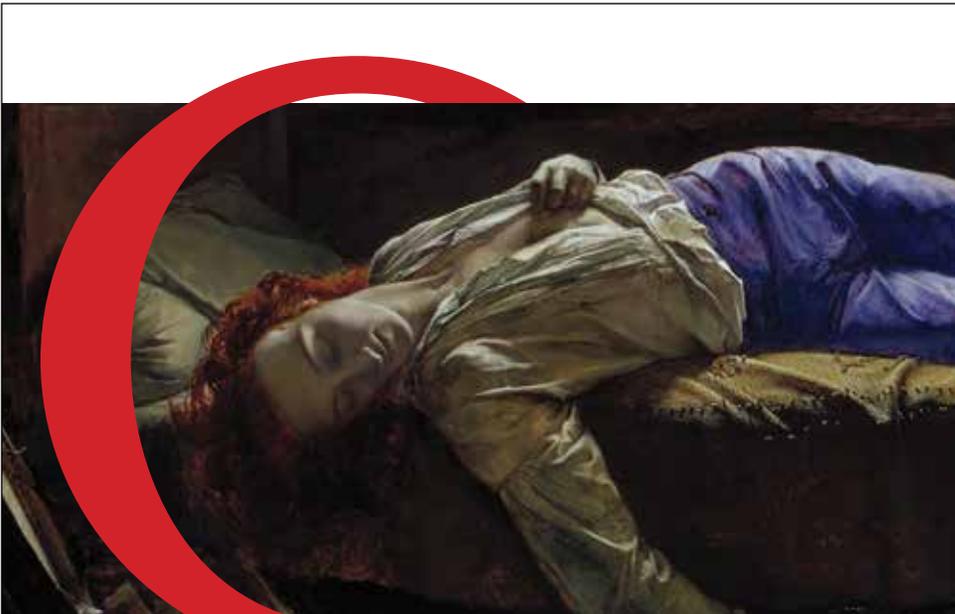
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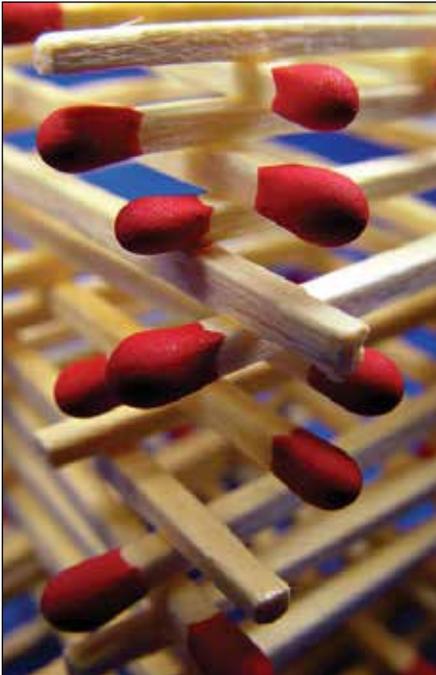
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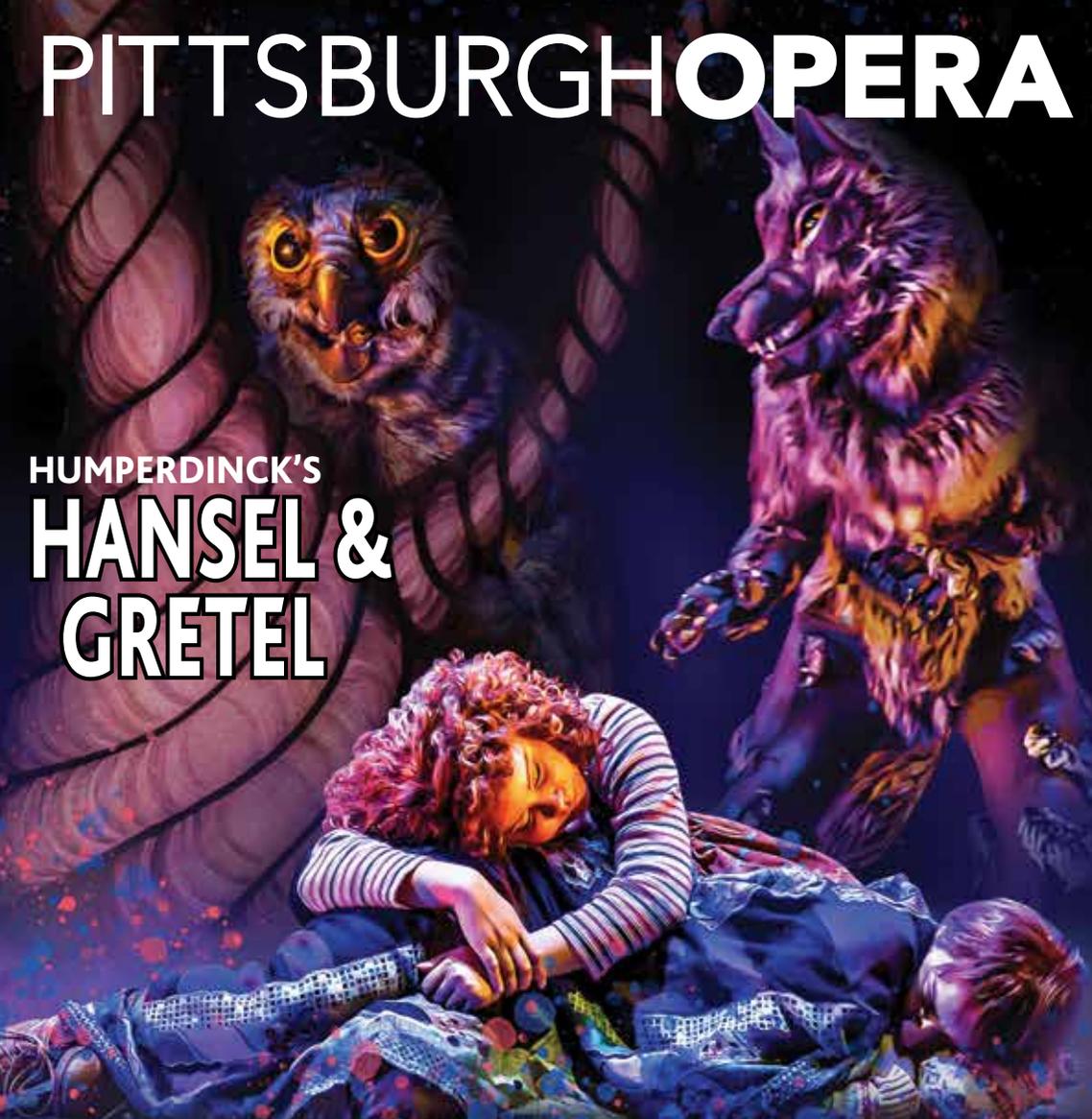


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Individual Giving and Data Associate

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Katy Ohliger
Donna Priore
Krista Reitz
Marie Romanelli
Alan Shadgett
Ingrid Shaw
Warren Smith
Angela Thompson
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Celeste Vitunic
Tess Wilson
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Alex W. Seidel
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Assistant Stage Director

Jason Bray
Costume Shop Manager

Roza Martinovic
Head of Costume Shop & Wardrobe

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Assistant Wardrobe/Key Costume Shop

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Virginia Phillips
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Kari Kramer
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Johnmichael Bohach
Prop Coordinator

James Lesniak
Supertitle Operator

Gordon Crocker
Supernumeraries Captain

To schedule your advertising in Pittsburgh
Opera's program, please call 412-471-1497
or email advertising@culturaldistrict.org.

BENEDUM DIRECTORY

LATECOMERS

To ensure the quality of our productions, latecomers will be taken to the best available seat until intermission. Refunds or exchanges are NOT issued to latecomers.

OBSTRUCTED VISION

Supertitles, the English texts projected above the stage, will be fully visible to most Benedum patrons. However, supertitles will not be visible to anyone seated in row W (center) or the side sections of rows V-ZZ on the Main Floor. By necessary placement of the screen, the architecture of the Benedum precludes visibility in these areas.

CHECK ROOMS

Attended check rooms located on the Gallery and Promenade levels are open during the winter months. Coin-operated lockers are located on the Promenade and Mezzanine levels.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

This theater is equipped with an Automated External Defibrillator.

ELEVATOR

Located off the Grand Lobby, serving various levels of the Benedum.

FIRE EXITS

Located at all levels and clearly marked. Use ONLY in case of emergency.

LOST AND FOUND

Call Benedum Center Lost and Found at 412-456-2604 weekdays.

REFRESHMENTS

Bars are located on the Gallery, Grand Lobby, and Promenade levels. Drinks may be purchased prior to

performances and during intermissions. Beverages are permitted in Trust cups.

STAGE AREA

Limited to performers, staff, and authorized visitors.

RESTROOMS

Lounges for ladies and gentlemen are located on the Gallery, Promenade, and Mezzanine levels. Restrooms for patrons with physical disabilities are located on the Grand Lobby level.

TICKET SERVICES AND BOX OFFICE HOURS

Tickets to all performances may be purchased at the Box Office at Theater Square, Penn Avenue, between Sixth and Seventh Streets. Hours of operation are Monday - Saturday, 9:00 AM - 9:00 PM; Sunday, 12:00 - 6:00 PM. In conjunction, the Benedum Center and Byham Theater box offices will be open on performance days, two hours before curtain time, through intermission.

BAG POLICY

A guest to a Pittsburgh Cultural Trust venue or event may enter with one bag that is no larger than 16" x 16" x 8". The definition of a bag includes, but is not limited to, purses, tote bags, duffel bags, suitcases, knapsacks, backpacks, packages, cartons, paper sacks, briefcases, portfolio cases, binocular cases, camera equipment cases, and any other type of device or vessel used for carrying or concealing items. Bags are subject to search and theatergoers may be requested to open their jackets prior to entering. Guests with prohibited items may return them to their vehicles. Unattended items left outside the facility doors will be discarded to ensure patron safety.

INFORMATION AND TICKET CHARGE NUMBER

MasterCard, Visa, Discover, and American Express are accepted. Ticket Charge operates Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM-6:00 PM; and Saturday and Sunday, 12:00-4:00 PM. Orders received fewer than 5 days in advance will be held for pickup at the Box Office. A \$3.50 charge per ticket will be made on phone orders. Call 412-456-6666 for tickets or Benedum Center show information. All sales are final.

AUDIO COMMENTARY

Pittsburgh Opera offers an Audio Commentary service for patrons with visual impairments during Tuesday performances at the Benedum Center. Through Channel 2 on the Assistive Listening Devices, patrons can hear the supertitles read simultaneously with their appearances on the screen, as well as descriptions of the set, characters, and costumes. Pittsburgh Opera also offers Braille and large-print programs. Inquire at the Education table and Guest Services Center.

NOTIFICATION TO PATRONS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

- Wheelchairs are available for transition from entrance to seat location.
- Wheelchair locations are available on the Main Floor only.
- Restroom facilities for patrons with physical disabilities are located near the Grand Lobby.
- Dog guides accommodated. Please inquire at the Box Office when buying tickets.
- Water cups are available in restrooms or at any bar location for the physically disabled.
- Elevator in Grand Lobby serves various levels of the Benedum Center.
- Door personnel and ushers are available for assistance.
- Notice should be given at time of purchase if a wheelchair or disabled patron location is required.
- Assistive Listening Devices, Braille, and large print programs are available in the Guest Services Center off the Grand Lobby.

BENEDUM CENTER ADMINISTRATION AND TECHNICIANS

Eugene F. Ciavarra
Vice President, Operations

Susan Sternberger
Theater Services Director

Stacy Bartlebaugh-Gmys
Manager of Volunteer Services

Joanna Obuzar
Operations Manager

Gerald Stevens
Facilities Manager

Bernard M. Bloom
Director of Production

Autumn Abernathy
Production Manager

Bryan Briggs
Production Manager

Mick Lohrer
Head Carpenter

Christopher Evans
Sound Engineer

Will Dennis
House Electrician

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USE OF CAMERA AND RECORDING EQUIPMENT IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.



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