

# *California Opera Association*

California Opera Guild \* PO Box 9741 \* Fresno \* CA 93794 \* 559-225-6737 (CAL-OPERA) \* WWW.CaliforniaOpera.Org

## **La traviata** **GIUSEPPE VERDI** **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

**General Artistic Direction by Edna Garabedian**  
**Stage Direction and Management by Justine Prado Manro**

Violetta ~ Jamie Bonetto  
Flora ~ Alix Jerinic  
Annina ~ Hanna Staley  
Alfredo ~ David Gustafson  
Marchese d'Obigny ~ Terry Lewis

Germont ~ Gabriel Manro  
Gastone ~ Shawn Taylor  
Barone Douphol ~ Steve Pence  
Dottore Grenvil ~ Rick Adamson  
Guiseppe ~ Dakota Simpson

**Elizabeth Vinson, Opera Chorus Manager**  
Opera Ensemble  
Leslie Bearce \* Ron Bearce  
Laverne Cottet \* Kirk Cruz  
Mario Hong \* Francisco Herrera  
Angela Storey \* TammyJo Vinson  
Palm Readers ~ Elizabeth Vinson and Deborah Cobb

### **Maestro Gregory Magie** **Chamber Opera Orchestra**

Timothy Leon, Piano \* Jordan Williams, Rehearsal Pianist  
Matthew Mazzei, Violin I \* Jeff Fritz, Violin I  
K.C. Simba-Torres, Violin II \* Devinda Gunasekera, Viola  
Boris Nixon (Music Director), Cello  
Flute ~ Carrie Wells \* Bassoon ~ Harmony Mendez  
Oboe ~ Melody Drumm \* Clarinet ~ Steven Madden

### **Dancers and Supernumeraries**

Meaghan McCready  
Jasmín La Carís \* Veronica Chavez  
Jazzmen Moore \* Jennifer Sihavong  
Phie Mura \* Natalia Pavlenko

**Dan Aldape, Wow Productions Lighting**  
**Tom Wolfgang, Technical Direction**  
**Hair and Make-Up, Durand Carter**  
**Production Assistants**  
**Felicia La Barr and Larry Barber**

**Jordan Williams Presenting Supertitles by Timothy Leon**



**Jamie Bonetto** (Violetta) enjoyed an international childhood, training in France, Italy, Holland and England. It was here that she grew to embrace the opera world. Among the many credits to her name, her formal education includes a bachelor's degree from Northwestern University, selected for the George Shirley Opera Program, and selected to study with Signora Magenta of the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan, Italy. She has performed for audiences across the United States and Europe as a leading lady of the operatic and concert stage. Her world outreach performances included the entertainment of the armed forces overseas organization, The IBLA Foundation concerts in Sicily, Italy and many television appearances. Her operatic repertoire includes Norma in Norma, Violetta in La Traviata, Lucia in Lucia di Lammermoor, Amina in La Sonnambula, Rosina in the Barber of Seville, Gilda in Rigoletto, Adele in Die Fledermaus, Odabella in Attila,

The Queen of the Night in the Magic Flute, Manon in Manon, Adina in The Elixir of Love, Madame Goldentrill in The Impresario, Susanna in The Secret of Susanna, and Mimi in La Boheme. Opera Reviews confirmed that "Bonetto was able to craft dazzling, liquid notes and hang them high on the back rafters and pull them back for an extra caress" (Ink Notes). Pacific Tribune noted that, "Jamie Bonetto has a radiant soprano, full of confidence and strength without borders and she can deliver a real trill."

**Alexandra Jerinic**, Mezzo-Soprano (Flora) performed Carmen with California Opera. The roles Flora and Annina in La Traviata, Mother in Amahl and the Night Visitors, Alisa in Lucia di Lammermoor, and La Frugola in Il Tabarro have also proved successful, delightful and excellent as recognized by reviewers Donald Munro and Robert Commanday, founder of San Francisco Classical Voice. Special recognition is for vocal flexibility and range noted by S.F. Classical Voice's review of Elisabetta, Regina D'Inghilterra (Matilde). Alix is highly acclaimed for her portrayal of Hansel in Hansel and Gretel, Dorabella in Così fan tutte and Cenerentola in La Cenerentola. She debuted Fanny Price in the U.S. orchestrated premier of Jonathan Dove's Mansfield Park with Opera Modesto. Other recent role debuts include Ciesca in Gianni Schicchi at the Opera Romana Craiova. As a Master musician, M.M., Ms. Jerinic excels in 20th century, contemporary opera, exemplified by the success of Dinah in Bernstein's Trouble in Tahiti in 2018. Ms. Jerinic premiered the role of Mrs. Hale in the world premiere of John Bilotta's Trifles, and Miss Proctor in the west coast premiere of The Boy Who Grew Too Fast (Menotti). Other concert credits are



the alto soloist in Beethoven's Ninth with the Sequoia Symphony, Mahler's Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen with the Kensington Symphony Orchestra, and guest soloist on tenor Tianfu Zhang's Carnegie Hall recital, and her international concert debut as the alto soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra in Sofia, Bulgaria. Ms. Jerinic resides in the San Francisco Bay Area.

### La Traviata, The Story

As a successful courtesan, Violetta maintains a salon in Paris attended by both aristocratic and bourgeois societies. Finding herself attracted to a younger man, Alfredo, and aware of the fact that she is suffering from debilitating tuberculosis, she reacts by proclaiming her independence in the tour-de-force aria *Sempre Libera*. We then find Violetta decided to give in to her feelings for Alfredo and leaves Paris for the country, where she (in opposition to traditions) is financially responsible for herself and her lover. She leaves her profession and sacrifices her income and social life to follow her heart. Society's condemnation appears in Alfredo's father, Germont. Though he was also previously with Violetta, Germont persuades her to end the relationship with his son to save his family's reputation. Torn by the weight of sacrifice, Violetta returns to her former life. Though she never ceases to love Alfredo, she is confronted by him and shamed amidst her friends. Only after Alfredo's father reveals the coercion that caused Violetta to leave him does Alfredo forgive her and return to her side. Sadly, the disease has progressed and Violetta is dying when he arrives. Their short-lived reunion is punctuated by the reiteration of her love and devotion for Alfredo.



**Steve Pence** (Barone) appeared as a soloist with most of the major classical music groups in Southern California, including The Los Angeles Philharmonic, The Los Angeles Opera, The Los Angeles Master Chorale, The Pasadena Symphony, and The Long Beach Symphony. He has also performed solos internationally with National Orchestra of Uruguay, The London Philharmonic, and The National Orchestra of Peru. Steve is especially known for his solo work in Brahms' Ein Deutches Requiem and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, though he has sung much of the concert repertoire, including Bach's B-minor Mass, St. John Passion, and St. Matthew Passion, Haydn's Lord Nelson Mass, Maria Theresa Mass, Creation Mass, and Creation, Mendelssohn's Elijah, Handel's Messiah, and the Requiem Masses of Mozart and Verdi. In 2015, he created the role of The Kaiser in John Powell's A Prussian Requiem, a role he recorded with The London Philharmonic and tenor Javier Camarena under the baton of Jose Serebrier on the album Hubris. Steve's opera roles include Sarastro in the Die Zauberflöte, King Alonzo in Hoiby's The Tempest, and Figaro in Le Nozze di Figaro. He has lent

his voice to numerous films including Pacific Rim, The Secret Life of Pets, Despicable me 2, Star Wars: The Last Jedi, and Star Wars: Rise of Skywalker. He can be heard as a soloist on the score of Happy Feet 2.

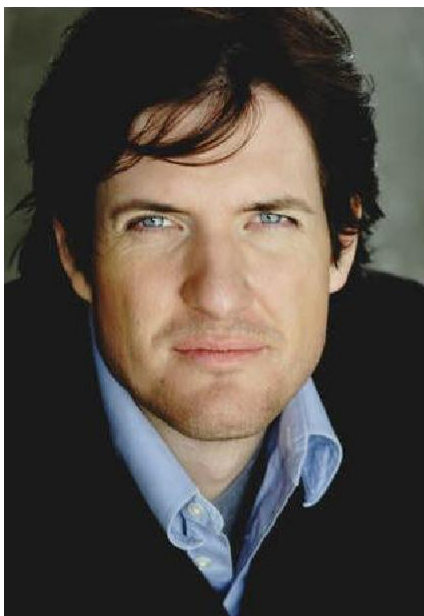


**David Gustafson** (Alfredo) had previous appearances with West Bay Opera include Cavaradossi (Tosca), the title role in Otello, Radames (Aida) and Calaf (Turandot). Internationally recognized for his robust, expressive voice, he made his San Francisco Opera debut in 2010 as Sentinelle (Cyrano Di Bergerac). Most recently he was heard as Edgardo (Lucia di Lammermoor) Eugene Opera, Turiddu (Cavalleria Rusticana) and Canio (Pagliacci) Opera San Luis Obispo, Otello (Otello) West Bay Opera/Festival Opera co-production, and as Cavaradossi (Tosca), Tony in the world premiere of Heart of the Soldier at San Francisco Opera, and he made his operatic concert debut in Tokyo. Gustafson's roles cover a wide range, from Radamès, Calaf, Pinkerton, Rodolfo (La bohème) and Alfredo (La traviata) to Ernesto (Don Pasquale), Don Ottavio (Don Giovanni), Tamino (The Magic Flute), Ferrando (Così fan tutte), Ramiro (La cenerentola), Lionel (Martha), Beppe (Pagliacci), Alfred (Die Fledermaus), Nemorino (The Elixir of Love), and others. A frequent oratorio singer, Gustafson has sung masses of Beethoven, Verdi, Mozart, Schubert and Haydn, Messiah (Handel), Magnificat in D

and cantatas of J.S. Bach, as well as Carmina Burana (Orff), The Seven Deadly Sins (Weill) and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. In addition, he sang the world premiere, presented by Eugene Symphony, of Robert Kyr's Symphony No. 9 as well as its European premiere in Denmark. We was heard as Count Almaviva (Il barbiere di Siviglia) with the Shanghai Broadcasting Orchestra, for the Chinese premiere of the Rossini masterpiece. London performances at Abbey Road Studio, London, led to recording Prince Hal/Henry V (Gordon Getty's Plump Jack) with the London Philharmonia. Gustafson headlined the Gala Opening Concert of the Cesky Krumlov International Music Festival in the Czech Republic.



**Hanna Staley (Annina)** from Clovis, performed with California Opera for five years. She was a cover for the roles of Frasquita and Michaëla in Carmen. She has performed the roles of Iolanthe in Iolanthe, Clotilde in Norma and Pamina in The Magic Flute. She has performed in the chorus in La Traviata, Patience, and also Carmen. She is excited to debut the role of Gretel in Hänsel und Gretel in the Fall of 2023. She has also performed with the Idyllwild Arts Festival Choir at the Walt Disney Concert Hall. She has performed in numerous recitals and masterclasses nationally, and toured internationally with choirs, performing in New York with the Fresno City choirs at Carnegie Hall, Australia with the International Honor Choir Honors Performance Series at the Sydney Opera House, Germany, and Belgium. For nine years, Hanna has served as a cantor at Saint Paul Newman Center. She also currently serves as Vice President of the California Opera Association.



## **Gabriel Manro, Baritone** returns to California Opera as Oroveso.

Multiple Grammy Award winning baritone Manro has been called “a new kind of baritone: not lyric, not helden, not Kavalier, not Bariton-Martin — none of those. Rather, he’s a knock-down baritone.” --San Francisco Classical Voice. Indeed, Manro regularly sings dramatic baritone roles such as Don Carlo di Vargas (*La forza del destino*), Andrei Shchelkalov (*Boris Godunov*), and Tonio (*I Pagliacci*). Opera News describes Manro as “Gifted with a striking, sinister baritone that remains strong, even and sonorous throughout the range, he tears into Verdi’s music with a vengeance.” Gabriel made his professional operatic debut as Third Inmate in Jake Heggie’s ground-breaking opera *Dead Man Walking* for Opera Pacific with Frederica von Stade. He went on to perform the role of Inquisitor in Opera Pacific’s *Candide*. He appeared in numerous contemporary and world-premiere operas and musicals. Off-Broadway, Mr. Manro led the original cast of Center for Contemporary Opera’s production of *Oration* by Line Tjørnhøj. On television, Manro appeared as Joel Lynch and Father Jackson in the European premiere live telecast of William Mayer’s: *A Death in the Family* at

the Hungarian National Theater and Opéra Grand D’Avignon which was voted “audience favorite” opera by Mezzo and TBS Network viewers. In Europe, Gabriel performed Doctor Bartolo (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) with Corfu Opera in Greece. His extensive repertoire and engagements have also included the roles of Bluebeard (*Bluebeard’s Castle*), Count Almaviva, Bartolo, Antonio (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Guglielmo, Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), Don Giovanni (*Don Giovanni*), Die Sprecher, Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Belcore (*L’elisir d’amore*), Frédéric (*Lakmé*), Enrico (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Giorgio Germont (*La traviata*), Schaunard, Coline, Marcello (*La bohème*), Valentin (*Faust*), Dandini, Alidoro (*La Cenerentola*), Alfio (*Cavalleria Rusticana*), Escamillo (*Carmen*), Scarpia (*Tosca*), Don Pizarro (*Fidelio*), and Superintendent Budd (*Albert Herring*). Equally at home in Musical Theater, he has performed numerous roles including Jafar in Walt Disney Company’s original stage production of *Aladdin*, Curly (*Oklahoma!*), Tony (*The Most Happy Fella*), Abner (*Li’l Abner*), Schroeder (*You’re a Good Man Charlie Brown*), Lank Sanders (*Girl Crazy*), Mr. Brownlow (*Oliver!*), Harrison Howell (*Kiss Me Kate*), the Governor (*Man of La Mancha*), and Emile de Becque (*South Pacific*). Mr. Manro is a proud citizen of the Chickasaw Nation and resides in Los Angeles with his screenwriter/opera directing wife, Justine Prado and his beautiful children, Mays and Bernadette. Highlights in 2023 include Manro as Alfio in the Berliner Philharmonie’s production of *Cavalleria Rusticana*.



## **Maestro Greg Magie**

Visiting Fresno from the Central Coast Greg conducts the Cal Opera Chamber Orchestra, following his performances of *Carmen* and *Norma*. A pianist and horn player, Dr. Greg Magie earned his performance degrees from the Eastman School of Music, U. of Redlands, and UCLA. Greg made his conducting debut with the Redlands Symphony then later founded the *Symphony of the Vines*. He has conducted the Cabrillo Music Festival Orchestra, the Rochester Philharmonic, Pasadena Lyric Opera, Arrowbear Music Camp Orchestra, and led the orchestras at Houghton College,



S.F. State University, Pomona College and Graceland University. Dr. Magie directed the Pasadena Lyric Opera Chorus, Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church Choir, and Chancel Choir at First Presbyterian in SLO. Maestro Magie also trained the chorus for COA productions.



**Justine Prado Manro** (Stage Director and Stage Manager), is a professional stage director and manager throughout theaters along the west coast, including Opera San Luis Obispo, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and Golden Gate Opera. Most recently she directed Bartok's *Bluebeard's Castle* and Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* for California Opera and made California Opera performances of *Norma*, *Carmen*, and many others possible. Justine is also a feature and television screen-writer and comic book author. Originally from the Bay Area, she attended the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, and earned her MFA in screenwriting at UCLA. She writes for Emet Comics, and her graphic novel *Finding Molly: An Adventure in Catsitting* is currently available wherever books are sold. She resides in Los Angeles with her husband and family.

## Shawn Taylor

Gastone  
Construction / Painter

Shawn Taylor earned his Music Master's from Cal State Long Beach. He has performed as a chorister with the Long Beach Opera and played numerous roles with Mission Opera, Landmark Opera, Riverside Lyric Opera, Pacific Lyric Opera Association, Repertory Opera Theatre, Celestial Opera, Capitol Opera, and Los Angeles Metropolitan Opera. He has performed in many musicals and Gilbert and Sullivan Shows, sings in several churches throughout Southern California, and is a staff singer for the Santa Clarita Master Chorale, California Philharmonic, and Golden State Pops Orchestra. Shawn has been a Choral Teacher since 1986 in Elementary, Junior High, High School, and was a Vocal Instructor at California Baptist University. He has also taught theatre, and is the vocal coach for the All American Boys Choir. He is a founding member of the Board of Directors of Mission Opera.



## Aerial Arts Fresno

Meaghan McCready \* Jennifer Sihavong \* Phie Mura \* Natalia Pavlenko

Aerial Arts Fresno, the first aerial dance company in Fresno to be built from the ground up.





**Richard Adamson** (Dottore Grenvil) – Rick has served as Resident Stage Director and Technical Director for California Opera. After receiving his BA in voice at Pepperdine University, Adamson earned a graduate degree in music theater direction under Götz Friedrich and August Everding at the Hochschule für Musik und darstellende Kunst in Hamburg. He assisted productions at the Metropolitan Opera in New York (Les Troyens – Fabrizio Melano), the Hamburgische Staatsoper and the Rooyal Opera House Covent Garden (Der Zwerg und Florentinische Tragödie – Adolf Dresen), and the Deutsche Oper (Aida – Götz Friedrich) in Berlin. He designed and directed productions of La Traviata, Così fan Tutte, Madama Butterfly, Lakme and Lucia di Lammermoor, for California Opera, as well as Tosca for Livermore Opera. He provided sets for Sisters of Manzanar and The Barber of Seville for COA, Hansel and Gretel and The Boy Who Grew Too Fast for Golden Gate Opera, and La Boheme for Opera San Luis Obispo. He designed sets for musicals and operas at colleges and regional theaters in Germany, the UK and US.

### **Richard Adamson**

#### ***Thoughts on Verdi's La Traviata***

*Looking at La Traviata some 170 years after the novel upon which it was based was first published, in the light of the "Me Too" movement, provides us with the opportunities to reflect upon the character of its main protagonist, the courtesan Violetta Valarie in much more nuanced ways. The modern audience all too often equates the occupation "courtesan" much in the same way that we tend to see the Geisha figure of Cio-Cio-San in Madame Butterfly. Both the Geisha and the courtesans of 19<sup>th</sup> Century France have little in common with what may emerge in modern audience's mind. Though not accepted members of "polite society" - a hardly recognizable concept in twenty-first century and modern societal understanding – the women who provided companionship and entertainment to gentlemen of the upper classes were seldom uneducated nor untalented. The creators of La Traviata, chose to change "The Lady of the Camelias", the title of the novel and dramatization, to La Traviata – the Transgressor, or "She who has gone astray." In their choice, they reveal the judgmental standard of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Violetta's strength of character is evident from the outset and in many ways, as the opera is a study of her personality and character.*

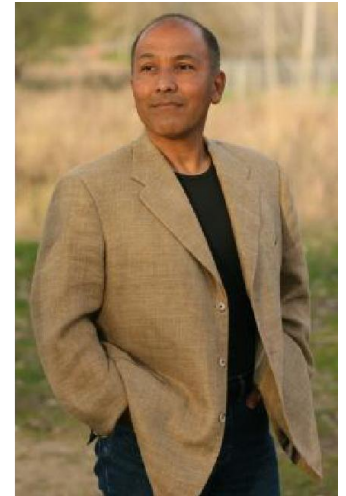


### **California Opera Presents**

#### **HANSEL and GRETEL October 24-29**

Engelbert Humperdinck's magical masterpiece featuring Alexandra Jerinic as *Hansel* and Hanna Staley as *Gretel*, with Elizabeth Vinson as the *Mother*, and Peter Wu as the *Sandman*, in the first youth side-by-side orchestral performance. Featuring the California Arts Academy dance troupe and an interactive children's chorus involving hundreds of school children from across the central valley who will be learning the Gingerbread chorus in class and singing along during school children's performances.

**Kirk Cruz** of Fresno, departed briefly to San Francisco to secure agency representation and engaged as a professional actor. Kirk attended Fresno State as a Theater major and Dance minor in 1995. He's been involved in the San Francisco Community College and Fresno Community College Theater and Opera Workshop departments. Kirk has worked on projects locally throughout the Fresno opera scene and most recently served the opera in the capacity of theatre and drama coach for the 2021 through 2023 California Opera Arts and Education Festivals, performing in the recent productions of Norma, Amahl and the Night Visitors, and Madame Butterfly. Other notable productions have included Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice, A Winter's Tale, the Mikado, Pirates of Penzance, Magic Flute, and Marriage of Figaro. His performing Group "Brisa Espanola" continued successfully through diverse venues, featuring live flamenco guitar, dance, and song, with a special interest in combining flamenco and theatre arts. A dynamic performer and entertainer, he adds drama and original story lines to Brisa Espanola's performances.



**Jasmín la Carís** is an acclaimed choreographer and dancer known for her expertise in Contemporary Ballet and Flamenco. She performs at renowned venues and her production "Literary Movements" made history. In 2015, Jasmín introduced "The Art of Dance," a captivating monthly performance series that mesmerized audiences with its intensity. The success of this venture inspired her to create "Pas De Peinture," a work celebrating color, leading to ANGL choreography in fashion. Jasmín collaborated with notable figures, including choreographer Manuel Gutierrez for a Flamenco performance titled "KOMPAZ" at the Nokia Theater in LA. She also participated in prestigious events like Padres Contra el Cáncer with actress Eva Longoria and Verizon's Latino Entrepreneur of the Year celebration at the MOLAA in LA. In 2022, Jasmín choreographed "City Dances" at FCC, providing college dance students with a transformative opportunity to learn Flamenco and perform in her piece "Transcendence." She also performed with internationally acclaimed dancer Mizuho Sato in San Francisco and at the 2023 California Arts and Culture Summit. Jasmín creatively collaborates with her husband, Omar Naré, as they explore the boundaries of Nuevo Mariachi music and dance. Jasmín la Carís continues to make a lasting impact on the dance world, captivating audiences with extraordinary performances.

#### ***Dance Education Programming Development***

**Veronica Chavez** is a teaching artist and dancer based in Fresno, California. She holds a BA in Latin American Literature and Ethnic Studies as well as a diploma in Arts Instruction with a specialty in Mexican Folk Dance from the Azueta Regional Dance Institute in Xalapa, Veracruz. With over 20 years of experience studying and teaching Mexican Dance and Culture Veronica has been invited to present her original research and culture based workshops at Fresno State, Arte Americas, Fresno City College as well as the U. of Washington. As a dance educator she creates programming for students of varying ages and abilities that include both movement and cultural knowledge and history components. She is currently pursuing her MA in Multilingual Multicultural Education at Fresno State.





Giuseppe Verdi, 1880 © Adrien Marie from <https://www.operanorth.co.uk>

## Verdi and *La traviata* in Opera History

*La traviata* was written by one of the best-loved operatic composers in history – Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901). Born in Italy, Verdi composed 26 different operas, looking for strong subjects featuring relatable, human characters, often breaking with convention. He had a knack for taking figures marginalized by society and telling their stories – putting them centre stage. A courtesan suffering from tuberculosis, a disease which was rampant at the time, is the perfect example. In 1852, Giuseppe Verdi saw a play adaptation of Alexander Dumas fils' scandalous 1848 novel *The Lady of the Camellias*, and was so inspired that, according to reports, he immediately began to compose music for what would become *La traviata*. The commission from La Fenice in Venice allowed this idea to become an opera on "a subject for our own age." However, to put a courtesan on the stage was controversial enough, and Verdi's wish for contemporary dress and staging was rejected. The premiere in March 1853 was not a huge success, mainly due to casting – acclaimed soprano Fanny Salvini-Donatelli did not apparently make a believable consumption sufferer and was heckled by the audience. However, after some revisions, and with a new Violetta, *La traviata* began to spread like wildfire, reaching Vienna, London, Paris, and New York by 1856. Today it remains the most popular opera worldwide, still breaking audience's hearts 170 years later. *La traviata* features one of opera's most famous tunes: 'Brindisi'. In Act I, Alfredo is persuaded to make a toast and in rip-roaring waltz time, sings 'Libiamo, libiamo ne' lieti calici' (which could be roughly translated as 'let's get drunk'), with Violetta, and then the whole chorus, joining in! The opera opens on a very different note, with a Prelude which trails the whole piece. The first sounds are a lonely and ominously tragic melody in B minor played by the violins only. The audience knows from the off that this story won't end well... The music for Violetta herself changes throughout the piece as her character develops, making the role very challenging. Her showstopping aria 'Sempre libera' ('Always free') in Act I is full of vocal fireworks, mirroring her whirlwind of a life, while in Act II, she has expansive passages expressing huge emotions, as real love and real heartbreak change her. In Act III as she nears the end, Violetta's music has an almost spiritual quality. Verdi also sometimes breaks up her vocal line with rests, depicting her struggle to breathe.



**Edna Garabedian**, Dramatic Mezzo-Soprano, as opera founder, master teacher, coach, and stage director has performed to critical and popular acclaim in the United States and throughout Europe and Asia. Ms. Garabedian is widely well known to opera audiences, as a world-renowned mezzo-soprano and leading lady of opera, performing and directing across the world's finest opera stages. Ms. Garabedian most recently stage-directed operas in Italy, Romania, Mexico, and California after completing production for two Hollywood films, and appeared in with the National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia. Just a few of the companies with which she has performed opera's favorite lead roles include: Munich Opera, Frankfurt Opera, Kassel Opera, Nurnberg Opera, Hannover Opera, Staatsoper Bonn, the Spoleto Festival, New York City Opera, San Francisco Opera, Los Angeles Music Center Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Seattle Opera, Houston Opera, San Diego Opera, Baltimore Opera, Kansas City Lyric Opera and Portland Opera. These roles have included

Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Amneris in *Aida*, Azucena in *Il Trovatore*, Grangane in *Tristan und Isolde*, Klytemnestra in *Elektra*, Herodias in *Salome*, Eboli in *Don Carlos*, Kontchakovna in *Prince Igor*. At the Hannover Opera, she performed Amneris and the title role of *Carmen*. Ms. Garabedian is notably acclaimed for Czech Opera to which her repertoire includes Kabanicha in *Katya Kabanova* with the Los Angeles Music Center Opera. Ms. Garabedian made several profound debuts including the Spoleto Festival as Agatha in Menotti's *Maria Golovin*, Edmonton Opera as Katisha in *The Mikado* and Virginia Opera as Madam Flora in *The Medium*, and Waltraute in *Die Walkure* for Florentine Opera. Ms. Garabedian recently completed a Fest contract with the Staatsoper Bonn at the invitation of Gian Carlo Del Manaco singing all three roles in *Il Trittico*, the Mother and the Nexe and Gertrude in *Hansel and Gretel*, Wowkle in *Fanciulla del West*, Herodias in *Salome*, Emilia in *Otello* and Kostelnicha in *Jenufa*. She has numerous awards to her credit including winner of the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, Baltimore Opera Auditions, and Nationals of the Metropolitan Opera competitions. Ms. Garabedian has taught at the International Music Institute of Sao Paulo, Brazil, has been Chairman of Voice and Opera at the University of Connecticut and University of the Pacific, and served as Professor of Voice on faculty of Northern Illinois University, California State University at Fresno, American University and San Francisco University. Recently, Ms. Garabedian has been appointed Ambassador of International Artistic Exchange and as Artistic Director of Opera Company of Hangzhou, in the capital of Zhejiang province, Republic of China where she directed *Carmen* and returned to Taiwan for further artistic development of the provinces. Ms. Garabedian continues as Artistic Director for the San Francisco's Golden Gate Opera productions with recent features of *Carmen*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Suor Angelica*, *Pagliacci*, and *Hansel and Gretel*. She recently directed *Gianni Schicchi* in Romania and additional works in Italy. As founder of the Fresno Grand Opera and as CEO and Artistic Director of California Opera Association in Fresno, Ms. Garabedian directed *La Traviata*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Il Trovatore*, *Carmen*, *La Sonnambula*, *The Magic Flute*, *Hansel and Gretel*, and several cantatas and opera buffa works, along with many of Menotti's operas including *Maria Golovin*, *The Consul*, *The Medium*, *Old Maid and the Thief*, and the *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and *Chip and His Dog* for children. Ms. Garabedian has been integral in promoting the premieres of contemporary operas, such as Victor Kioulaphides' *Silver Swan*, Paul Stuarts' *Kill Bear Comes Home* and the *Sisters of Manzanar* and *The Peacock Princess* composed by Maestro Zang Zong. As an adjudicator for many major music competitions, she recently judged the United States International Chinese Music Competition and the Leoncavallo Competition in Italy. As a coach and master teacher, Ms. Garabedian also provides private consultations and masterclass tours, and her own private students have progressed to grand prize competitions and performances at the Metropolitan Opera in New York and Teatro alla Scala. She has been revered for her therapeutic work with challenging and rehabilitating voices, and for her emphasis on physical strengthening, role and repertoire development, stage deportment, dramatic presentation, vocal pedagogy, and technique.

# IN MEMORY OF

**California Opera** remembers Jim and Carol Dice and all of our opera family who left lasting impressions. Among the many angels who worked years endlessly and enthusiastically to bring opera to the community:



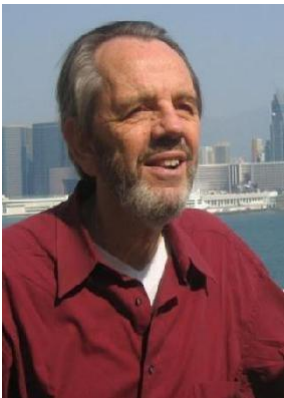
**William "Bill" Yannuzzi (1930-2006)**

**Steve Wall (1952-2020)**

**Arsen Marsoobian (1934-2021)**

**Gloria Garabedian Taylor (1938-2011)**

**WITH SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF Thomas Henry Sonnichsen and Gertrude "Trudy" Elaine Hogg Sonnichsen**, who were early underwriters of California Opera programs, garnering major support of the Exxon Mobile Foundation. Their daughter Jamie Bonetto performs in dedication to her parents.



**Phil Kimble (1935-2016)**

## Memories of the Executive Director, Dr. Diane Nixon

**Steve Wall** ~ Remembering the times we shared with all of these selfless people is so important to me personally. It was with Steve Wall that I sat in the lighting booth during our first production of *Norma* many years ago at Tower Theatre. I had so much fun kicking back with him watching the performance as he so effortlessly worked the lighting board. That was one of my fondest memories among many. Edna loved to share her reports of their creative ideas together. She was truly devastated to learn of his loss. One minute they were talking about his plans for this *Norma* production then she called hours later to say he would not be continuing this journey with us in body, but in spirit. We dedicate this production to Steve, who will always be remembered.

**Phil Kimble** ~ The most dedicated opera fan and life lover, Phil never missed a performance, always stayed for a meal after each event, and worked closely with each artist building self-esteem, making us all believe in ourselves and others. Phil, you're truly special.

**Nicola Iacovetti** ~ What a wonderful man to work with. He was so passionate about the music. I will always remember the time we shared talking about every little detail of the opera world that he dedicated his whole life to building.

**William Yannuzzi** ~ We remember Bill expertly training singers and his graciousness with every recommendation about how to do things better. His loss was profound as he created a space in opera never again refilled.

**Fred Schlotthauer** ~ When Fred so enthusiastically brought all of his supplies to our very first Opera Guild meeting, I realized what true opera support was all about – offering yourself to help make ideas and dreams possible through ingenuity, commitment, and belief in the power of the outcome.

**Gloria Taylor** ~ As Edna's first cousin, she met with opera later in life, bringing an elegance to the guild through her excellence in baking, most genuine and beautiful smile, and exquisite charm.

**Arsen Marsoobian** ~ Arsen impressively brought leadership, gallantry, and class to everything he did. Seeing him walk into the lobby before each show, I always knew we were in good hands and everything would be more than okay.

**Pat Gebbs, Roxie Jizmejian, Gladys Peters, Jeanne Durnell, MaryAnne Prody, Ray Ensher, Larry Bluestone, and John Donaldson** ~ As the very first opera fans to call about an upcoming program, their good cheer, appreciation, and anticipation of upcoming events always made me feel like we were doing something right that had a lot of meaning in so many lives. These truly nice people touched my life greatly with their goodness.

**William May** ~ What a wonderful person and chorister. He always took the time to say something funny, cute, or nice to me, which would make me stop, laugh, and so much appreciate the people who worked so committedly in the opera chorus. Bill was to have performed in our last *Norma* production, rehearsing with us just prior. We dedicate this performance to you Bill too and hope you will be able to hear us.

# CALIFORNIA OPERA

*Collaborating to support and sustain the influence of western classical music and international traditions on the tapestry of our global society \* presenting affordable, high-quality traditional, contemporary, and premiere works in ways that are innovative and meaningful \* appealing to dedicated opera fans and first-time opera interests \* promoting good will and community involvement through outreach, education, and the participation of children and families in the arts \* providing support for emerging talent, from youth artists to internationally recognized stage veterans, to impart role and repertoire development, stage experience, career advancement, and exposure.*

## **California Opera Chorus and the Opera Guild are inviting new members.**

The chorus is booming beautifully, as they have been rehearsing weekly to bring audiences lively opera ensemble experiences. California Opera welcomes new voices and embraces fresh ideas each week. Similarly, the California Opera Guild continues with the goals of enhancing membership, cultivating leadership, and supporting volunteerism to improve opera-tune-ities in Fresno. Please call 225-6737 (CAL-OPERA) or email [californiaoperaguild@gmail.com](mailto:californiaoperaguild@gmail.com) for more information about how to join the chorus or the guild today!

## **WHERE DID YOUR DONATIONS GO?**

For 23 years, California Opera remained debt-free - a great accomplishment in the arts, which can continue with the public's help. The tireless dedication of many volunteers, starting with Ms. Garabedian and trickling down throughout and across all levels of the organization keep opera alive Fresno and in the hearts of the artists who entertain you. However, following COVID-19, the costs of venues, mandatory labor, insurance, copies, as well as (well, everything) went up. Whatever you can do to help us cover the costs of festival performances will help us be able to continue showcasing the music of these notable musicians and opera artists from around the world. Please do what you can to help us turn this red writing black ! If everyone who attended the summer performances donated \$20, we would be able to retire the debts accumulated throughout the summer. Many already donated more this summer, and we are grateful that your thoughtful generosity has helped us continue these "opera-tune-ities" and we continue to aspire to do so, debt-free! Please visit [www.CaliforniaOpera.org](http://www.CaliforniaOpera.org) to make your donation today.

**MAJOR FESTIVAL OPERA SPONSORS:** The return of opera to Fresno was made possible by the major support from grants administered by the Small Business Administration. We thank all the foundations, companies, and individuals for your gracious donations to promote greater interest in, exposure to, and attendance of opera in Fresno, made possible in part by Frank and Jamie Bonetto, the EECU of Fresno, and Conductor's Circle Donors Mr. and Mrs. Stanley and Marilyn George, Drs. Marshall and Ximena Flam, Dr. Harvey Edmonds and Carrie Boolootian, Dr. John and Avis Ambrose, and Dr. and Mrs. Don Gaede, Dr. and Mrs. William Podolsky, Bob Boro, and Av Daniels. We extend our special appreciation to Priscilla Bowen of the City of Fresno and Donald Munro of the Munro Review. Heartfelt gratitude for our newest summer donors George Estremera, Madeline Sheldon, Marni Cotter, Stephen Vinson, Daryl Balch, Arlene Bagetakos, Julie Linxwiler, Carol Sliva, Carol Laval, and home hosts Raffi and Deborah Soghomonian, Bob Boro, David Fox, Nadine Marsh, Bill Wolfmann, Andrew and Hannah Manro, Jeffrey Neville, and most especially all the volunteers and individual contributors, members, and businesses in support of the California Opera Guild under the leadership of Frank Vannini, Dakota Simpson, Lisa Sanchez, Madeline Esquivel, Larry Barber, and Boris and Diane Nixon.

**Thank you all for your enduring commitment to the opera arts!**

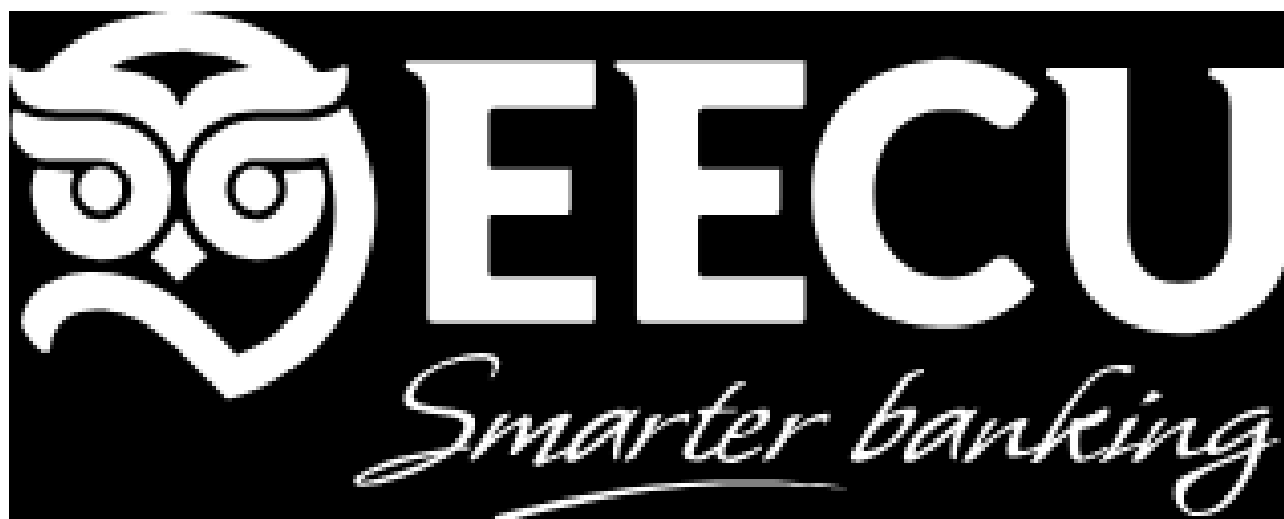
Through so many years, we have survived and continue to thrive through the love of the arts and each other !

~ Edna Garabedian



**NURTURING THE LOVE OF MUSIC.**

**CLASSES, CAMPS, AND BUILDING COMMUNITY, ONE MUSICIAN AT A TIME.**



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EXPLORE  
EXPERIENCE  
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Join us to unleash your creative potential.

**-Melanie Glass**