POCKET OPERA

2027 Season



Nicolas A. Garcia
General Director

Donald Pippin
Founder

Discover the Magic of Opera in English!

2027 Season Schedule

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Best seats at the best price:
Free exchanges: Change of plans? No problem!
Ticket insurance: Lost tickets? No worries!
Spectacular savings:
Save on additional tickets at
your subscription price!



Madame Butterfly - Giacomo Puccini
Music Director: Temirzhan Yerzhanov
Stage Director: Melody Tachibana King
Feb 26 - MVCPA
Feb 28 - Legion of Honor
March 7 - Hillside Club

Rigoletto - Giuseppe Verdi
Music Director: Thomas Shoebotham
Stage Director: Eugene Brancoveanu
Apr 16 - MVCPA
April 18 - Legion of Honor
April 25 - Hillside Club

The Soldier's Tale & Scalia/Ginsburg - Igor Stravinsky/Derrick Wang
Music Director: Kyle Naig
Stage Director: Nicolas A. Garcia
June 4 - MVCPA
June 6 - Legion of Honor
June 13 - Hillside Club

The Magic Flute - W.A. Mozart
Music Director: Mary Chun
Stage Director: Elly Lichenstein
July 9 - MVCPA
July 11 - Legion of Honor
July 18 – Hillside Club

To Our Beloved Audience,

Fifty years! It hardly seems possible, but in 2027 Pocket Opera celebrates half a century of bringing opera to Bay Area audiences. As we mark this extraordinary milestone, I can think of no better way to honor our past than by doing what Pocket has always done best—bringing you great music, wonderful singers, and a few surprises along the way.

We begin by bringing back one of the great successes of last season, Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*. Our groundbreaking bilingual production, sung in both Japanese and English, was embraced by audiences and nominated for Best Opera Production in the San Francisco Classical Voice Audience Choice Awards. So many of you asked us to bring it back, and for our 50th anniversary, we are delighted to do just that.

Next comes one of Verdi's greatest masterpieces, *Rigoletto*. Dark, passionate, and thrilling, this is grand opera at its most powerful—and an ideal work to experience in Pocket Opera's intimate setting. We are especially thrilled to welcome back Eugene Brancoveanu in the title role, following his unforgettable Pocket debut in *Tartuffe*.

Then, something completely different! We pair Derrick Wang's brilliant comedy *Scalia/Ginsburg* with Stravinsky's hauntingly beautiful *The Soldier's Tale*. Longtime Pocket favorite Brian Thorsett returns to our stage after more than a decade to play Justice Scalia, joined by the marvelous Courtney Miller as Justice Ginsburg. Paired with Stravinsky's dark tale of a soldier who trades his violin to the Devil, it promises to be one of the most unusual evenings we have ever presented.

We close our anniversary season with Mozart's beloved *The Magic Flute*. This new co-production brings one of opera's most enchanting adventures to the Pocket stage, filled with magic, comedy, romance, and some of the most glorious music Mozart ever wrote—a fitting finale to our 50th season.

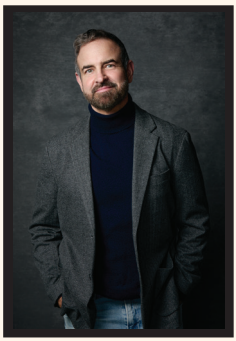
And we have even more to celebrate! Our San Francisco home, the beautiful Gunn Theater at the Legion of Honor, was named Best Small Venue in the San Francisco Classical Voice Audience Choice Awards. We have always known there is something magical about experiencing opera in that jewel-box theater, and apparently you agree!

Fifty years is an extraordinary achievement for any arts organization. Pocket Opera has survived, grown, and flourished because generations of artists, staff, board members, volunteers, donors—and above all, audiences like you—have believed in what we do. As we enter our next half-century, I am enormously grateful to everyone who has made this improbable, wonderful little opera company possible, with a special thank you to Donald Pippin, who started it all.

From all of us at Pocket Opera, thank you for fifty remarkable years. Now, let's begin the next fifty.

With deepest gratitude,

Nicolas A. Garcia



General Director
Pocket Opera

Madame Butterfly

GIACOMO PUCCINI

Following its triumphant debut last season, Pocket Opera reprises its acclaimed Madame Butterfly—a story of longing, cultural collision, and devastating betrayal. Reimagined as it might actually have sounded in Nagasaki, when East meets West, this heart-wrenching masterpiece returns in our moving bilingual Japanese/English production.



Friday, February 26 - 7:30pm
Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts
Sunday, February 28 - 1:30pm
Legion of Honor
Sunday, March 7 - 1:30pm
Hillside Club

Music Director: Temirzhan Yerzhanov
Stage Director: Melody Tachibana King

Presented courtesy of Pacific Opera Project

Madame Butterfly
GIACOMO PUCCINI



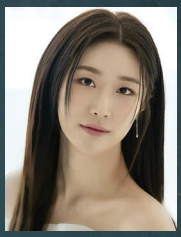
Hannah Cho*
Cho-Cho San



Josephine Lee**
Cho-Cho San



Chester Pidduck
Pinkerton



HaYoung Jung *
Suzuki



Akane Ota**
Suzuki



Anders Fröhlich
Sharpless



Joachim Luis
Goro



Pheobe Dinga
Kate Pinkerton



Chung-Wai Soong
The Bonze



Kevin Gino
Yamadori



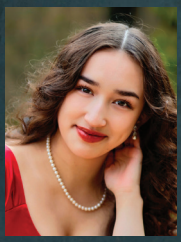
Wayne Wong
Imperial Commissioner



Mayo Tsuzuki
The Mother



Makiko Ueda
The Aunt



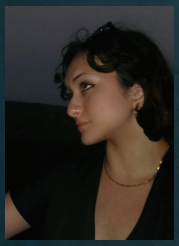
Alliana Lily Yang
The Cousin



Justin Baptista
The Registrar



Donzheh Pidduck
Trouble



Keiko Kiyaska
Ensemble



Michael Nicer
Ensemble



Tetsuya Taura
Ensemble

*** February 26th and February 28th**

**** March 7th**

Rigoletto

GIUSEPPE VERDI

Rigoletto is a father desperate to protect his innocent daughter from the ruthless world that surrounds them—a world where passion can be deadly. He is also the vicious-tongued jester in the court of the lascivious Duke of Mantua, where a fateful curse sets a deadly chain of events in motion.

Friday, April 16 - 7:30pm
Mountain View Center
for the Performing Arts
Sunday, April 18 - 1:30pm
Legion of Honor
Sunday, April 25 - 1:30pm
Hillside Club

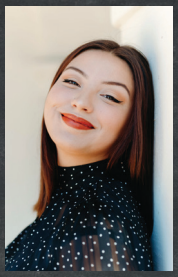


Music Director: Thomas Shoebotham
Stage Director: Eugene Brancoveanu

Rigoletto
GIUSEPPE VERDI



Eugene Brancoveanu
Rigoletto



Elizabeth Gaitan
Gilda



Kevin Gino
The Duke



Joshua Hughes
Sparafucile



Sonia Gariaeff
Maddalena



Matt Hidalgo
Borsa



Julio Ferrari
Marullo



Josh Black
Count Ceprano



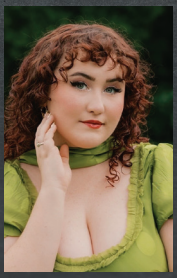
Spencer Dodd
Monterone



Abigail Bush
Countess Ceprano



Alix Jerinic
Giovanna



Jordan Riek
The Page



Adam Chase
The Execution Usher



Katherine Feller
Ensemble

"Pocket Opera pulled it off with ease, exceptional skill, and delectable charm."
~ OperaWire

POCKET OPERA TURNS 50!

A GOLDEN AFTERNOON OF SONG, CELEBRATION, AND COMMUNITY



POCKET OPERA

ANNUAL GALA

~~ CELEBRATING 50 YEARS ~~

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2027

12:30pm-4:00pm

THE UNIVERSITY CLUB

800 Powell Street, San Francisco

Together, we'll celebrate our remarkable history and raise a glass to the next 50 years of music, laughter, and unforgettable performances!











Invite your friends and get a table!

Consider sponsoring one or two artists who will join you and your guests for lunch

☐ **Yes I wish to attend the Gala & Auction**

☐ **Please reserve a FULL table for 12 for $2,000** [$800 tax-deductible] $ _____

☐ **Please reserve a HALF table for 6 for $1,000** [$400 tax-deductible] $ _____

☐ **Please reserve _____ ticket(s) at $185 each** [$85 tax-deductible] $ _____

☐ **I/We cannot attend but wish to celebrate Pocket Opera's 2027 Season with a tax-deductible donation** $ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED **$ _____**

Contact Information

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Name

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City State Zip

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Home Phone Cell

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E-mail

Payment Options

☐ Enclosed please find my check made payable to "Pocket Opera"

Please charge my: ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

_____
Card #

_____
Exp date

_____
Security code

Get your tickets today!

Single Tickets

General: $89
Age 62 and over: $79
Age 30 and under: $45

Single tickets to Hillside Club and Legion of Honor are currently available for purchase only by mail or phone. Online sales will be available late 2026. Single tickets to Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts will only be available directly from MVCPA's website and box office in 2027.

How to Order:

By Phone: **(415) 972-8934**
Mon-Fri 12-4pm

By Mail: Complete the order form with your credit card info or check, and mail to:
Pocket Opera
469 Bryant Street
San Francisco, CA 94107-1316

In Person: At each venue's box office one hour before curtain.
Subject to availability.
Group Sales: 10+ for one performance qualifies for group rate.
Call for information.
Student Rush: When available, day of show $20 (with a valid Student ID)

Performance Locations

Gunn Theater at the Legion of Honor in Lincoln Park
100 34th Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94121

The Hillside Club
2286 Cedar Street
Berkeley, CA 94709

Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts
500 Castro Street
Mountain View, CA 94041

Flexibility and Savings with your Subscription

Attend all four operas for only $296 and enjoy a 17% discount from the single ticket price.

Devise your own three-opera season for only $231 and enjoy a 14% discount from the single ticket price.

Need more flexibility? Choose our Pick-a-Pair option and attend two operas for $154 while still enjoying a 14% discount.

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Best seats at the best price:
Buy 2, 3, or 4 Operas and save!
With a purchase of any of our opera subscription packages, you are entitled to a discount on additional single tickets.

Seats will be assigned to subscribers first before single tickets go on sale!

Free exchanges

Change of plans? No problem!
Just give us a call.

Ticket insurance

Lost ticket? No worries!

Elsewhere Society

With a donation of $300 or more, become a member of our Elsewhere Society. Members will have seating assigned first, followed by subscribers, then by single ticket orders in the order received.

Become an Elsewhere Member!

www.pocketopera.org

Scan to purchase tickets online:

POCKET OPERA 2027 Season ORDER FORM

TEAR ME OUT & MAIL ME IN
Please use a pen that does not smudge on this paper.

Enter the no. of seats for each opera, per venue.
Attending two or more different operas entitles you to a subscription, which features a **discounted rate** for all tickets that you purchase.

Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts Fridays at 7:30 PM *Please note that tickets for these performances will be provided by the MVCPA Box Office. Please allow for additional processing time after ordering.*		# of Tickets
MADAME BUTTERFLY	Friday 2/26	
RIGOLETTO	Friday 4/16	
SOLDIERS TALE & SCALIA/GINSBURG	Friday 6/4	
THE MAGIC FLUTE*	Friday 7/9	

Gunn Theater at The Legion of Honor Sundays at 1:30 PM		# of Tickets
MADAME BUTTERFLY	Sunday 2/28	
RIGOLETTO	Sunday 4/18	
SOLDIERS TALE & SCALIA/GINSBURG	Sunday 6/6	
MAGIC FLUTE*	Sunday 7/11	

Hillside Club Sundays at 1:30 PM		# of Tickets
MADAME BUTTERFLY	Sunday 3/7	

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State/Zip _____

Email _____

Phone (C) _____ (H) _____

Please send me my tickets via:

☐ Email
☐ Mail

Requests

☐ I have limited mobility and prefer a seat with easier access.
☐ I need a wheelchair space.

All venues now have assigned seating.
Seating maps are available at our website, pocketopera.org. If there is an area or specific seat you prefer please note in the space below.

_____

_____

_____

RIGOLETTO	Sunday 4/25	
SOLDIERS TALE & SCALIA/GINSBURG	Sunday 6/13	
THE MAGIC FLUTE*	Sunday 7/18	

*Co-production with Mercury Theater.

Calculate your total.

SUBSCRIPTIONS	# of Subscriptions	Subtotals
4-Opera Subscriptions at **$296** each		
Additional Single Seats at **$74** each		
3-Opera Subscriptions at **$231** each		
Additional Single Seats at **$77** each		
Pick-a-Pair at **$154** each		
Additional Single Seats at **$77** each		

Not subscribing but still need tickets?

SINGLE TICKETS	# of Tickets	Subtotals
Regular Tickets at **$89** each		
Senior Tickets (62+) at **$79** each		
Under 30 Tickets at **$45** each		

Make a Tax-Deductible Contribution	
TOTAL	

Ensure Pocket Opera's Future: *Join the Elsewhere Society*

Help bridge the gap between our ticket price and the real cost of producing opera. For a contribution of $300 or more, enjoy priority seating in the Orchestra sections' first rows, advance notice of the upcoming season, invitations to members-only special events … and our gratitude!

Provide payment information.

☐ Enclosed is my check payable to POCKET OPERA
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Signature _____

Complete your order.

Mail to: 469 Bryant Street, San Francisco, CA 94107
Phone Orders: (415) 972-8934
Email: info@pocketopera.org

2027 Production Teams



Melody Tachibana King
Stage Director
Madame Butterfly



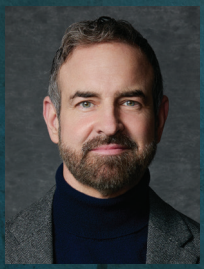
Temirzhan Yerzhanov
Music Director
Madame Butterfly



Eugene Brancoveanu
Stage Director
Rigoletto



Thomas Shoebotham
Music Director
Rigoletto



Nicolas A Garcia
Stage Director
Scalia/Ginsburg &
The Soldier's Tale



Kyle Naig
Music Director
Scalia/Ginsburg &
The Soldier's Tale



Elly Lichenstein
Stage Director
The Magic Flute



Mary Chun
Music Director
The Magic Flute

TEAR ME OUT & MAIL ME IN
Please use a pen that does not smudge on this paper

Join us for our **2027 Gala** *to celebrate as Pocket Opera turns 50!*



Names & Entrée Choice

Your name: _____ ☐ Chicken or ☐ Vegetarian

Guest 1: _____ ☐ Chicken or ☐ Vegetarian

Guest 2: _____ ☐ Chicken or ☐ Vegetarian

Guest 3: _____ ☐ Chicken or ☐ Vegetarian

Guest 4: _____ ☐ Chicken or ☐ Vegetarian

Guest 5: _____ ☐ Chicken or ☐ Vegetarian

Guest 6: _____ ☐ Chicken or ☐ Vegetarian

Guest 7: _____ ☐ Chicken or ☐ Vegetarian

Guest 8: _____ ☐ Chicken or ☐ Vegetarian

Guest 9: _____ ☐ Chicken or ☐ Vegetarian

Guest 10: _____ ☐ Chicken or ☐ Vegetarian

Guest 11: _____ ☐ Chicken or ☐ Vegetarian

ELSEWHERE SOCIETY DONORS

While attempting to raise money for the 1983 season, Pocket Opera's management continually received polite declines, suggesting that they look "elsewhere" for funding. Pocket Opera found itself in that space between "too big for community funds" and "too small for civic arts funds."

So, they looked to long-time loyal supporters, the audience, for assistance and ... The Elsewhere Society was born!

The Elsewhere Society Members listed here have made their donations of $300 or more between September 2025 and September 2026. They receive priority seating at all performances, advance season notice, invitations to VIP events and, of course, our gratitude.

Corporate, Foundation & Government Support

Campini ~ Opera America ~ Pippin Trust
Margaret Haas Family Fund

Individuals Giving $10,000+

James Clavin ~ Angel Donor
Dr. George & Bay Westlake
Hendrika Neys ~ Carol Hurst

Individuals Giving $5,000+

Cherie Sorokin ~ Mel & Yen Bachmeier
Pamela Sebastian ~ Paul Sack
William Sweeting

Individuals Giving $2,500+

Laura & Stephen H. Olson ~ Paul & Sylvia Lorton Jr.
Peggy Hill ~ Ann L. Williamson ~ Justin Marsh & Jory Sandusky
Jane Neilson ~ Karen Fox ~ Mari Kodama ~ Lisa Moore
Roland & Lois Feller

While we endeavor to keep our records correct and current, we apologize for any mistakes.
If you notice an error in our records, please let us know:

info@pocketopera.org

ELSEWHERE SOCIETY DONORS

Individuals Giving $1,000+

Kathleen Beckman ~ Elizabeth Calaway ~ Vallery Feldman
Dustin Finkle ~ Marie Collins ~ Matthew Hill ~ Jeffery Jordan
Kurt Keadle ~ Melody King ~ Sally & Philip Kipper
Nancy Starr & Daniel Kreps ~ Sylvia Lindsey
Sharon & Peter Lingane ~ Martin Low ~ Betty Maddux
Michael Mendelsohn ~ Sue Merrilees ~ Douglas Moore
Mabel Neys ~ Mark Neys ~ Robert Nussbaum & Jennifer Puck
Robert & Donna Oliver ~ Margaret Parker ~ Peggy Otum
Neil Pering ~ Angel Rodriguez ~ Eric & Tracy Schnell
Carolyn Spitz ~ Robert & Elizabeth Stafford
Kimberly Mark Webb
Richard West ~ Gene & Elizabeth Wright

Individuals Giving $500+

Sylvia Ahern ~ Ian Aitchison ~ Anonymous Donor
Helen Berggruen ~ Lock Bingham ~ Victor Cordell ~ Agnes Cronin
Nina Dronkers ~ Susan Dunn ~ Martin Gorfinkel
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Karen Houck ~ Dean Johnson ~ Jeremy Knight ~ George Marin
Birgit Massion ~ Kathleen Miller ~ Jefferson Packer
Baker Peeples & Ellen Kerrigan ~ Mary & John David Peters
Leslie Polgar ~ Emma Popek ~ Judy Reynolds
Krehe & Kathy Ritter ~ Paula Romanovsky ~ Bob & Terry Ryan
Mariangela Sassi & Erik Kokonnen ~ Robert Savoie
Montgomery Slatkin

Individuals Giving $300+

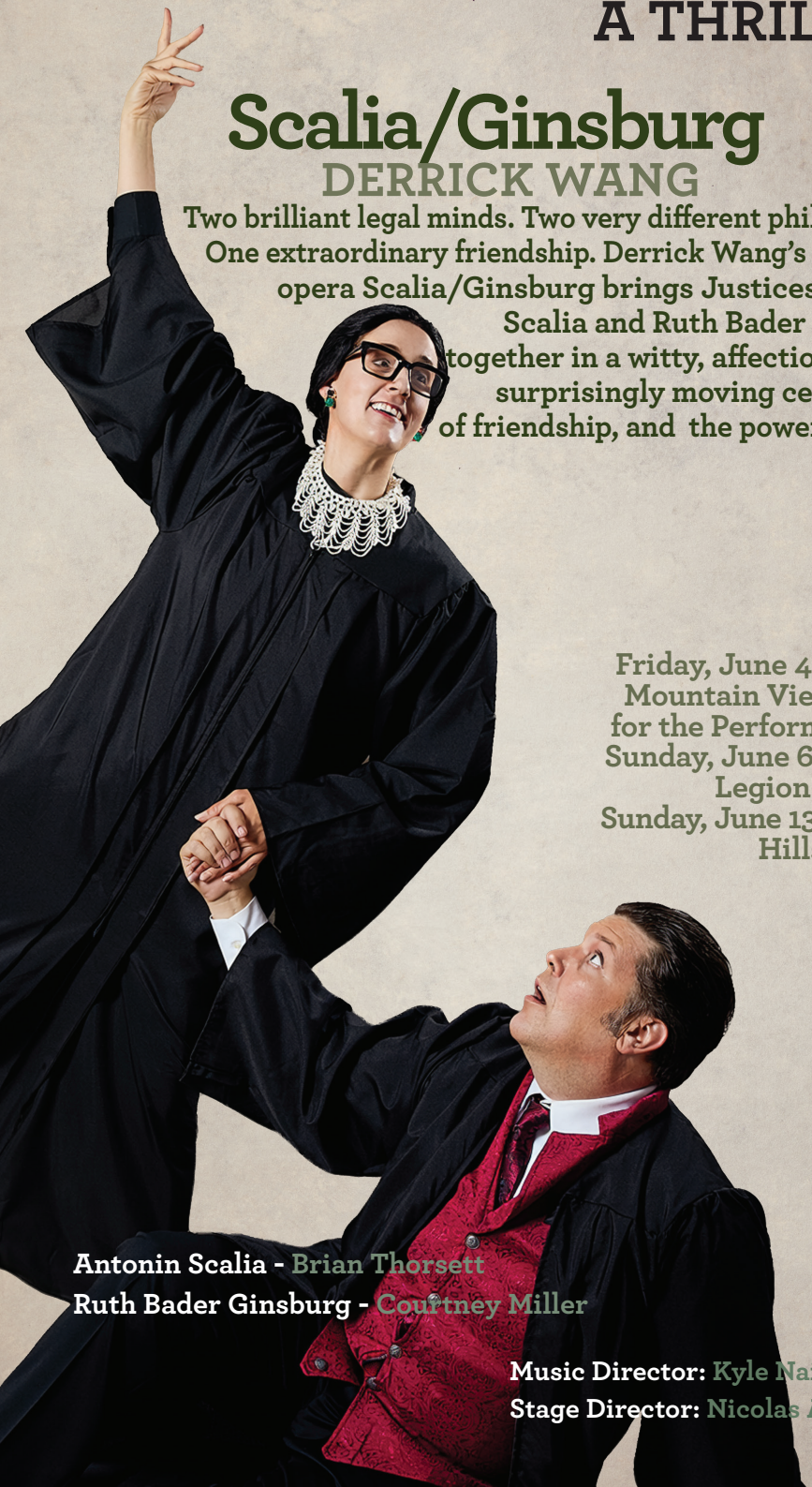
Jane F. Collier ~ Joan Fierberg ~ Candace Fitzgerald ~ Mark Gibson
Andrew Hockman ~ Jean Hyun ~ Georgi Kelly ~ Kathleen Laplante
Mardi Leland ~ Diana Lum ~ Mathew McDearmid
Vivian Oneal ~ James O'Toole ~ Jeanine Valadez
David Yeske ~ David Zebker

A THRILLING

Scalia/Ginsburg

DERRICK WANG

Two brilliant legal minds. Two very different philosophies. One extraordinary friendship. Derrick Wang's delightful opera Scalia/Ginsburg brings Justices Antonin Scalia and Ruth Bader Ginsburg together in a witty, affectionate, and surprisingly moving celebration of friendship, and the power of ideas.



Friday, June 4 - 7:30pm
Mountain View Center
for the Performing Arts
Sunday, June 6 - 1:30pm
Legion of Honor
Sunday, June 13 - 1:30pm
Hillside Club

Antonin Scalia - Brian Thorsett
Ruth Bader Ginsburg - Courtney Miller

Music Director: Kyle Naig
Stage Director: Nicolas A. Garcia

DOUBLE BILL!

The Soldier's Tale
IGOR STRAVINSKY

A soldier makes a dangerous bargain with the Devil in Stravinsky's genre-defying masterpiece. A dazzling fusion of music, theater, dance, and storytelling, this darkly comic, haunting, and exhilarating theatrical work asks what we are willing to sacrifice—and what we might lose in the bargain.



The Soldier - Spencer Greene
The Devil/The Commentator - Kirk Eichelberger

Music Director: Kyle Naig
Stage Director: Nicolas A. Garcia

The Magic Flute

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Mozart's enchanting masterpiece returns to the Pocket stage in a dazzling co-production with Mercury Theater. Filled with soaring music, comic characters, magical creatures, and a quest for love and wisdom, The Magic Flute remains one of opera's most irresistible journeys from darkness into light.



Friday, July 9 - 7:30pm
Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts
Sunday, July 11 - 1:30pm
Legion of Honor
Sunday, July 18 - 1:30pm
Hillside Club

Music Director: Mary Chun
Stage Director: Elly Lichenstein

The Magic Flute
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart



Sergio Gonzales
Tamino



Ellen Leslie
Pamina



Joseph Calzada
Papageno



Nicole Koh
Queen of the Night



Robert Feng
Sarastro



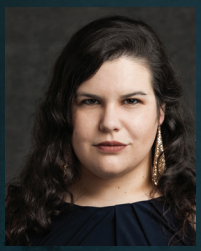
Nicolas Vasquez Gerst
Monostatos



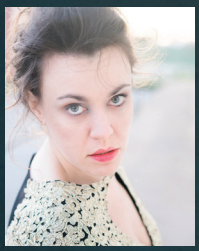
Ash Hurtado
Papagena



Grace Ellen Thompson
1st Lady



Fallon Nunes
2nd Lady



Deborah Rosengaus
3rd Lady



Roy Domoe
The Speaker



Shen Feng Chang
1st Armored Man / 1st Priest



Marcus Timpane
2nd Armored Man/ 2nd Priest



Gene Wright
3rd Priest



Imogen Schvimmer
Ensemble



Liesel Hall
Ensemble

Become an Artist Sponsor

We continue to bring in fresh superstar talent in 2027!

Tony Award-winning performer Eugene Brancoveanu returns to Pocket Opera as our Reznikoff Artist in the title role of *Rigoletto*.



I'd like to use this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude for having been named Reznikoff Artist. When I started my artistic life, 35 years ago in Europe, I took for granted that the arts were state subsidized. In the US, where I have spent the last 24 years performing, it is individuals who believe in our art form and the artists and generously support us, motivated by the sheer desire to keep opera culture alive and thriving.

~ Eugene Brancoveanu

Graduate of both the Merola and Glimmerglass Young Artist Programs, Hurst Artist Brian Thorsett shines as Justice Antonin Scalia in *Scalia/Ginsburg*.



I am beyond humbled to be named the Hurst Artist for 2027 at Pocket Opera. Many years ago, Donald entrusted me with my first leading operatic roles and inspired me to make the most of every word I sang. This sponsorship will allow me to further deepen my artistry and allows the company to put on high-quality productions of important works old and new.

~ Brian Thorsett

Our Greenberg Artist, rising star baritone Joseph Calzada, debuts at Pocket Opera as everyone's favorite birdcatcher, Papageno.



I am incredibly honored and grateful to be named Pocket Opera's 2027 Greenberg Artist. Sponsorship plays a key role in supporting artists and ensuring that opera continues to thrive, and Pocket Opera's longstanding dedication to enriching the Bay Area's cultural scene is truly inspiring. I am excited to be part of an organization so deeply committed to making opera understandable, engaging, and meaningful to our community.

~ Joseph Calzada

A Resident Artist at Opera San Jose, our Sorokin Artist Nicole Koh makes her Pocket Opera debut as the *Queen of the Night.*



I'm very excited and grateful to be Pocket Opera's 2027 Sorokin Artist! Thank you so much for your support, kindness, and encouragement. It means the world to me. I hope to see you this season and thank you in person!

~ Nicole Koh

Artist Sponsorship Benefits & Suggested Donor Levels

Artist Sponsors are vital in helping Pocket Opera bring exceptional talent to our stages year after year. The resources that sponsorships provide go directly to pay artists, as well as underwriting their costuming, rehearsal time, and other expenses. Sponsors are invited to attend a dress rehearsal, take a photo with their sponsored artist, and more.

We greatly appreciate your support of Pocket Opera's artists.

$1,500
Program recognition
Invitation to meet and greet after the performance

$2,500
Program recognition
Invitation to meet and greet after the performance
Attend a dress rehearsal

$5,000
Program recognition
Invitation to meet and greet after the performance
Attend a dress rehearsal ~ Award named in your honor

If you are interested in sponsoring an artist, a single opera performance, a full production or season, please contact gphillips@pocketopera.org

THE POCKET OPERA TEAM

Nicolas A. Garcia, *General Director*
George Phillips, *Office Manager*
Marc Hernandez, *Production / Operations*
Nicola Gruen, *Orchestra Contractor*
Daniel Yelen, *Props Master / Assistant Stage Manager*
Chung-Wai Soong, *Service Specialist*
Michelle Drever, *Social Media Manager*
Paul Yao, *Box Office Assistant*

POCKET OPERA

469 Bryant Street
San Francisco, CA 94107-1316



2027 Season

Opera in English! Live orchestra! Fabulous voices! Sparkling wit!

Find us online!
pocketopera.org
facebook.com/pocketoperasf