

OPERA SAN JOSÉ

Opera in the Park

Today's Program

Belle nuit, ô nuit d'amour
from *The Tales of Hoffmann* by Jacques Offenbach
Mary Hangley & Courtney Miller

La donna è mobile
from *Rigoletto* by Giuseppe Verdi
Nicolas Vasquez-Gerst

Nedda! Silvio, a quest'ora
from *Pagliacci* by Ruggero Leoncavallo
Mary Hangley and Eugene Brancoveanu

So In Love
from *Kiss Me Kate* by Cole Porter
Courtney Miller

Una furtiva lagrima
from *L'elisir d'amore* by Gaetano Donizetti
Nicolas Vasquez-Gerst

Vissi D'arte
from *Tosca* by Giacomo Puccini
Mary Hangley

Au fond du temple saint (Pearl fishers duet)
from *The Pearl Fishers* by Georges Bizet
Nicolas Vasquez-Gerst & Eugene Brancoveanu

Poisoning Pigeons in the Park
by Tom Lehrer
Courtney Miller

Soave sia il vento
from *Così Fan Tutte* by W.A. Mozart
Mary Hangley, Courtney Miller & Eugene Brancoveanu

Maria
from *West Side Story* by Leonard Bernstein
Nicolas Vasquez-Gerst

The Impossible Dream
from *Man of La Mancha* by Mitch Leigh & Joe Darion
Eugene Brancoveanu

Libiamo ne' lieti calici (The Brindisi)
from *La Traviata* by Verdi
Tutti (Everyone)

Artists



Mary Hangley, Soprano

Soprano Mary Evelyn Hangley is a distinguished alumna of the San Francisco Opera's Adler Fellowship and a 2023 Sullivan Foundation Career Grant recipient. Her San Francisco Opera debut as the Mother in *Hansel and Gretel* was lauded for its "confidence and vocal security." In 2024 she triumphed in the Mozartean repertoire, making her Carnegie Hall debut singing his *Coronation Mass*, Donna Elvira with Opera Omaha and Countess with Opera Modesto.

In 2023, she earned critical acclaim from the San Francisco Chronicle for her "incendiary brilliance" and "bright, luxuriant and fearlessly on point" singing in her triumphant debut as A Woman in Schoenberg's *Erwartung* with West Edge Opera.

Career highlights include Beethoven's 9th Symphony with the San Francisco Symphony, Leonora in *Il trovatore* at Opera San José, and Contessa Almaviva with Minnesota Opera. She has graced stages with The Glimmerglass Festival, Buffalo Philharmonic, and Oakland Symphony, among others.

Courtney Miller, Mezzo-soprano

Opera News aptly praised Courtney Miller's "fluent musicality," for her portrayal of Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro* with Opera Saratoga. Known for her "captivating stage presence" and "excellent sense of comic timing," Courtney excels across genres. During the 2024-25 season, she returned to San Francisco Opera as Warren's Wife in *The Handmaid's Tale*, after making her debut with the company as Sister St. Charles in *Dialogues des Carmélites* in 2022. Also last season, she made her role and company debut with Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera as Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro*, her debut with the San Francisco Choral Society as the Alto Soloist in Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, debuted with the UC Berkeley Chamber Chorus as the Alto Soloist in Ratcliff's *Ode to Common Things*, debuted with West Bay Opera as Teresa in *La sonnambula*, sang the alto solos in the world premier of Fred Cohen's *Nizkor - A Journey of Remembrance* with San Jose State University, and returned to Pocket Opera as Elmire in *Tartuffe*. During the 2025-26 season, Courtney returns to the Opera San José mainstage, Festival Opera for Flora in *La traviata*, revives her one-woman show "Tell me the truth about love," and debuts with Livermore Valley Opera as Despinose in *Così fan tutte*. Additionally, she has sung roles with Detroit Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Madison Opera, and aboard Azamara Club Cruises. Courtney is an award-winning recitalist and concert soloist. She specializes in curated programs that tell compelling stories highlighting female composers. www.courtneyallycmiller.com @mezzomiller



Nicolas Vasquez-Gerst, Tenor

Nicolas Vasquez-Gerst is a Californian tenor who holds BM and MA degrees from the University of California, Santa Cruz. Mr. Vasquez-Gerst has performed in numerous productions with Opera San José, including *Silent Night* by Kevin Puts, the role of Tashtago in Jake Heggie's *Moby-Dick*, and the North American premiere of Alma Deutscher's *Cinderella*. In the 2024-25 season, he appeared as Monostatos in *The Magic Flute*, and he returns to Opera San José for the

2025-26 season to cover Beppe in *Pagliacci*, sing Giuseppe, and cover (with one performance of) Gastone in *La Traviata*. Mr. Vasquez-Gerst has also been a featured soloist with Magic Circle Opera and was a member of the San Francisco Opera Extra Chorus in their 2018 summer production of Wagner's *Ring Cycle*. He recently returned to San Francisco Opera to sing in the chorus in their production of Mozart's *Idomeneo* and will appear in the chorus for *Rigoletto* and *Parsifal* in Fall 2025.

Eugene Brancoveanu, Baritone

Romanian baritone and Tony Award winner Eugene Brancoveanu joined Opera San José as a Resident Artist in 2019, performing in *Die Fledermaus*, *Hansel and Gretel*, and *Il Trovatore*. He returned for *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Carmen*, and *Falstaff*, and starred as Rigoletto in 2024. Last season, he appeared as Octavio Rivera y Moncada in Héctor Armienta's *Zorro* and returns in the 2025-2026 Season to sing Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*.



A former Adler Fellow with San Francisco Opera, Brancoveanu has sung Don Giovanni, Belcore, Enrico, and more. International appearances include the Salzburg Festival, Munich State Opera, and Piccola Scala di Milano.

He toured nationally in Michael Tilson Thomas's *The Thomashefskys*, released by PBS and EMI. With Opera Parallèle, he's performed in *Flight*, *Young Caesar*, and *The Machine*. He studied in Romania and at the Mozarteum in Salzburg.



Veronika Agranov-Dafoe, Pianist

Born and raised in Leningrad (St. Petersburg), Russia, Ms. Agranov-Dafoe first studied piano performance at the Leningrad (St. Petersburg) Conservatory of Music. After immigrating to the United States, she earned a Masters Degree from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. While still working on her degree, Ms. Agranov-Dafoe began working as a rehearsal accompanist at West Bay Opera in Palo Alto. In 2000 she joined the SJSU Opera workshop as a coach and pianist, later started working at Opera San José, where she is now the Head of Music staff. Ms. Agranov-Dafoe is also the pianist for the Unitarian Church of Palo Alto.

OPERA SAN JOSÉ'S 2025-2026 SEASON

Mozart's
COSÌ FAN TUTTE
September 14 - 28, 2025

Puccini's
MADAMA BUTTERFLY
November 16 - 30, 2025

Mascagni's & Leoncavallo's
CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA

PAGLIACCI
February 15 - March 01, 2026

Verdi's
LA TRAVIATA

April 19 - May 03, 2026

Experience the power of the human voice and the thrill of live performance as Opera San José's 2025-2026 season explores love in all its forms—passionate, heartbreaking, joyful, and mysterious. Subscribe today for the best seats, the biggest savings, and a season of unforgettable opera in the beautiful California Theatre.

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