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# UPDATES TO THE SANTA FE OPERA'S 2019 SEASON

## **LA BOHÈME**

GIACOMO PUCCINI

NEW PRODUCTION. LAST PERFORMED IN 2011.

JUNE 28; JULY 3, 6, 12, 19, 29; AUGUST 3, 7, 12, 17, 20, 24

## **LES PÊCHEURS DE PERLES (THE PEARL FISHERS)**

GEORGES BIZET

REVIVAL PRODUCTION. LAST PERFORMED IN 2012.

JUNE 29; JULY 5, 10, 30; AUGUST 8, 16, 23

## **COSÌ FAN TUTTE**

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

NEW PRODUCTION. LAST PERFORMED IN 2007.

JULY 13, 17, 26; AUGUST 1, 5, 13, 22

## **JENŮFA**

LEOŠ JANÁČEK

NEW PRODUCTION. A COMPANY PREMIERE.

JULY 20, 24; AUGUST 2, 6, 15

## **THE THIRTEENTH CHILD**

POUL RUDERS, COMPOSER

BECKY AND DAVID STAROBIN, LIBRETTISTS

NEW PRODUCTION. A WORLD PREMIERE.

CO-COMMISSION AND CO-PRODUCTION WITH ODENSE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.

JULY 27, 31; AUGUST 9, 14, 21

## **RENÉE FLEMING SINGS LETTERS FROM GEORGIA**

WITH THE SANTA FE OPERA ORCHESTRA

PROGRAM:

LETTERS FROM GEORGIA BY KEVIN PUTS

VIER LETZTE LIEDER (FOUR LAST SONGS) BY RICHARD STRAUSS

AUGUST 10

**SANTA FE, NM** — Updates to the 2019 Season were announced today. **Corinne Winters** will sing the role of Leila in *The Pearl Fishers*, replacing Lisette Oropesa, who will make her La Scala debut in the summer of 2019. **Tracy Dahl** will sing the role of Despina in *Così fan tutte*, replacing Rebecca Evans who has withdrawn for personal reasons. **Maxine Braham** (Choreographer/SFO debut) and **Duane Schuler** (Lighting Director) join the creative team of *Jenůfa*.

## **THE 2019 SEASON**

The 2019 season presents five operas in 36 performances, a special recital by celebrated American soprano Renée Fleming with the Santa Fe Opera Orchestra, and two Apprentice Scenes performances, running from June 28 to

August 24, 2019. The Opera's 63rd season, the first to be led by incoming General Director Robert Meya, Artistic Director Alexander Neef, and Music Director Harry Bicket, will explore classic works of the repertory as well as operas new to the Santa Fe Opera and the world's stage.

### **La bohème**

The seamstress and the poet. The singer and the painter. The musician. The philosopher. Young and poor and consumed with love, they led "charming and terrible lives" in 19th-century Paris. They lived in Latin Quarter garrets, furnished mostly with hope for the future. They fraternized with famous writers and artists at the Café Momus, finding a place in a rapidly changing society. They tasted the freedom and perils of a freelance economy; and endured epidemics of passion and jealousy, hunger and disease.

Puccini's boisterous and poignant score is both an evocation of youth and a reminder that our rose-colored glasses may need a stronger prescription.

Here's how director Mary Birnbaum describes her team's approach to this new production: "A lot of times *La bohème* feels like, 'Here are the four bohemians ... and their girlfriends.' It was very important for us to figure out who these women would have been in this 1830's world. Mimì is an archetypal *grisette*, someone who was often an artist's muse and expressed her sexuality in a transactional way (although not as a prostitute). Musetta is a *lorette*, a bit higher up socially, and in our production, she straddles the line between what women wear and what men wear, to see how much more power she can have. As a woman, I'm thrilled to direct this, because I want the women to be complete characters, not symbols, who have a whole journey towards and away from social conventions."

### **Les pêcheurs de perles (The Pearl Fishers)**

For his first stage success, the 25-year-old Bizet blended the best elements of grand opera — including extensive use of the chorus and a plush orchestration — with extraordinarily lyrical arias and duets. The story is set in ancient times on the shores of Ceylon, where Zurga, ruler of the pearl fishers, is reunited with his long-lost comrade Nadir. Their friendship duet, which recounts a mutual passion for the heavenly Leïla, is the epitome of bromance in music. Both men renounced her to save their friendship, but her unexpected return soon traps them again in "the accursed snares of love."

The late Lee Blakeley's production premiered in 2012 and garnered virtually universal critical praise:

"During the somber overture, the pearl divers came onstage carrying their dead chief, presumably a casualty of their hazardous profession. It was a small touch, but emblematic of Lee Blakeley's smart production, the best of this summer's season. Suddenly, the contrived plot made sense ..." *The Wall Street Journal*

"Lee Blakeley directed the production with ceaseless respect, never allowing the work's shortcomings to obscure its strengths ... [The sets, costumes and lighting] yielded a stunning succession of stage images." *The Santa Fe New Mexican*

"Sometimes a straightforward staging — one that is true to the letter and spirit of the work — can be all that's needed for a successful opera performance ... Such is the case with Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers* ... which sets forth the Carmen composer's earlier stage success with admirable clarity." *Chicago Tribune*

### **Così fan tutte**

Mozart and Da Ponte's final collaboration has delighted, confounded, and rewarded viewers ever since its 1790 premiere in Vienna. Their "School for Lovers" sports a highly experienced faculty and a progressive curriculum — required reading and written papers have all been replaced by experiential learning. There's a devil of a final exam, though, especially for two young couples about to be married. It's a lab project in which they dissect the question, "Are you in love, or in love with the idea of love?" They're also required to change partners, and much to their surprise, they discover that being engaged to someone special doesn't preclude being especially attracted to someone else.

Mesmerizingly beautiful music and a profound understanding of the heart illuminate this all-too-human situation, in which we can see ourselves onstage, to both our discomfort and our delight.

"For years *Così* was dismissed as a minor Mozart work, but for me it is a masterpiece," wrote Music Director Harry Bicket. "The poignancy of Mozart's own autobiographical connection with the opera (he married the sister of the woman he was in love with), coupled with some of the most profound and touching music he ever wrote, makes it a timeless exploration of how we learn to love (and lose) each other."

The Santa Fe Opera first staged *Così fan tutte* in its 1957 inaugural season, and has produced it ten times since then. It can also be credited as the opera that shaped the Santa Fe Opera's artistic identity. In 1951, the young John Crosby became a conducting student at Columbia University. He was already a devoted fan of musical comedy and he started attending Metropolitan Opera performances as well. They were staged in the old-school, "park and bark" tradition, with one exception — a *Così fan tutte* directed by actor Alfred Lunt. Here Crosby saw "a carefully, brilliantly rehearsed evening with six superb singing actors." This was the seed that led to the Santa Fe Opera's identity, as an ensemble company that gives equal weight to musical and theatrical values.

### **Jenůfa**

All eyes in the village are on Jenůfa. Her fiancé sees only a trophy wife. Her rejected suitor sees a chance to avenge the most cutting wrongs in his past. Her righteous stepmother sees her own life's tragedy about to recur in her stepdaughter. The results are two unspeakable crimes which ultimately lead to the opera's true theme — that the wounds of troubled lives can be assuaged through acceptance, forgiveness, and hope. Janáček's pioneering score pulses with vibrant rhythms, pungent harmonies, and lyrical declamation.

The composer's career path is unique in opera history. *Jenůfa*, his first success, did not receive a major staging until Janáček was 61. Over the next 12 years a flood of masterpieces followed, including *Káťa Kabanová*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, and *The Makropoulos Case*.

David Alden's staging of *Jenůfa* won the Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Opera Production when it was first produced at English National Opera, and its revival there in 2016 received more critical acclaim:

"The sexual, emotional and religious resonances in Janáček's work are fully explored in a deeply humane production strong on psychological detail." *The Guardian*

"David Alden's staging ... takes this coruscating music-drama a notch higher, turning the screw of the drama inexorably, shatteringly, ultimately movingly. Janacek's uplifting conclusion ... is one of the most beautiful 'happy ends' in opera." *The Sunday Times*

"A brilliantly effective production." *The Independent*

### **The Thirteenth Child**

Forget about magic beans and bowls of porridge — this fairy tale is a "down-to-the-wire" thriller, inspired by the Brothers Grimm. A paranoid king banishes his twelve sons in favor of Lyra, the thirteenth child. When Princess Lyra learns about her long-lost brothers, she embarks on a quest to find them. And then, like all the best fairy tales, it has an enchanted forest, riddles, a handsome prince, an ogre, a horrible mistake and a nearly impossible feat for Princess Lyra to perform if everything is to be put right.

Poul Ruders is one of today's most highly acclaimed composers. His operatic setting of *The Handmaid's Tale* has been hailed as "an outstandingly effective piece of music theater" by *Opera News* and as "a riveting, kaleidoscopic score" by *The New York Times*. *The Thirteenth Child* is Ruders' fifth opera and the Santa Fe Opera's sixteenth world premiere.

"In 2010, I finished what I thought would be my last opera," said composer Poul Ruders. "But being a composer, I knew that somewhere there was a subject lying in wait for me to put my paws on. For a Dane to do a Hans Christian Andersen story would be too obvious! So I went for The Brothers Grimm instead. In reading through their stories, I kept coming back to this one, which I think is emotionally very potent.

"As opposed to *The Handmaid's Tale*, which is an opera for grown-ups, I would say that *The Thirteenth Child* is good for all ages, including children, who I hope will find it kind of scary. If not, I haven't done my job very well. I think if you can sit through a Harry Potter movie and enjoy it and not have to leave the bedroom light on at night, you'll love this!

"I am overwhelmed with joy and pride and humility that my fifth opera will be premiered at this fantastic venue next summer."

### **Renée Fleming sings *Letters from Georgia***

with the Santa Fe Opera Orchestra

Renowned American soprano Renée Fleming makes her Santa Fe Opera debut on Saturday, August 10, 2019. The Santa Fe Opera Orchestra, under the baton of Music Director Harry Bicket, collaborates with Ms. Fleming on Kevin Puts' *Letters From Georgia* and Richard Strauss' *Vier letzte Lieder (Four Last Songs)*.

Winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for his debut opera *Silent Night*, Kevin Puts has been hailed as one of the most important composers of his generation. Critically acclaimed for a richly colored, harmonic, and freshly melodic musical voice that has also been described as “emotional, compelling, and relevant,” his works, which include three operas, four symphonies, and several concertos, have been commissioned, performed, and recorded by leading orchestras, ensembles, and soloists throughout the world. *Letters from Georgia* was commissioned by the Eastman School of Music with generous support from Bette and Joseph Hirsch.

In a review of *Letters* performed by Ms. Fleming and the Eastman Philharmonia at Alice Tully Hall in November 2016, *Berkshire Fine Arts* wrote: “Puts goes inside the words to find his matching notes and phrases. He, with Fleming as his interpreter, takes us inside O’Keeffe’s heart and soul. This is where Puts stands out. While moving, big stories are chosen by other composers for their songs and operas, Puts limits his landscape and goes to the depths of the volcano, before the roaring hot lava of his notes erupt.”

“It will be a thrill and an honor to share my music — through the brilliant artistry of Renée Fleming — with the audiences at Santa Fe Opera,” wrote composer Kevin Puts. “Ms. Fleming and I worked together closely on this exploration of the letters of American icon Georgia O’Keeffe from the very start. Our collaboration continues to be an immense joy, and I believe her voice and artistry truly inspire my best work.”

Twice recorded by Renée Fleming, Richard Strauss’ cycle *Vier letzte Lieder* (*Four Last Songs*) has become one of the most widely performed works of her repertory. Also of great significance to the company, this piece was last performed by the Santa Fe Opera Orchestra at founder John O’Hea Crosby’s memorial service in 2003. These two great forces combine to perform Strauss’ resplendent and serene union of music and poetry.

“Richard Strauss wrote his first song when he was 6 years old, and he continued to write songs all of his life,” wrote Ted Libby for NPR. “His *Four Last Songs*, written just a year before his death at age 85, is an intentional summary of his life and work. When it came close to the end, it was fitting that Strauss would look back over his career — in which he had carried on a love affair with the soprano voice — and write songs for soprano and orchestra. The last two of the *Four Last Songs* are called “Beim Schlafengehen” (Going to Sleep) and “Im Abendrot” (At Twilight). The poetic impulse in these songs speaks of the ends of things, but it also looks out over the horizon of eternity.”

“My Santa Fe Opera debut is exciting for me on a number of levels,” wrote Renée Fleming. “I’ll be singing two great, contrasting orchestral works with conductor Harry Bicket and The Santa Fe Opera Orchestra. The first is the transcendent *Four Last Songs* of Strauss, a work I’ve sung more than anything else and never tire of. Its epic poetry, mirroring the stages of life, is a perfect fit for the stunning scenery of Santa Fe. The other piece is Kevin Puts’ *Letters from Georgia*, inspired by a Santa Fe icon, Georgia O’Keeffe. She was an original thinker and groundbreaking artist, forging her own path at a time when women weren’t given that opportunity. It will be a powerful experience to sing her own words in the landscape that she loved.”

## 2019 DEBUTS:

**Ilker Arcayürek** (Tenor), **Anshuman Bhatia** (Lighting Design), **Mary Birnbaum** (Director),  
**Maxine Braham** (Choreographer), **Emily D’Angelo** (Mezzo-soprano), **Paul Daniel** (Conductor),  
**Johannes Debus** (Conductor), **Paul Tate DePoo III** (Scenic Design), **Alexander Dodge** (Scenic Design),  
**Charles Edwards** (Scenic Design), **Anthony Clark Evans** (Baritone), **Bradley Garvin** (Bass-baritone),  
**York Kennedy** (Lighting Design), **Camellia Koo** (Costume Design), **Lorin Latarro** (Choreography),  
**Grace Laubacher** (Scenic Design), **David Leigh+** (Bass), **Alexander Lewis** (Tenor),  
**Will Liverman+** (Baritone), **Kirsten MacKinnon** (Soprano), **Jax Messenger** (Lighting Design),  
**Timothy Myers** (Conductor), **Tamara Mumford** (Mezzo-soprano), **Aaron Rhyne** (Projection Design),  
**Rita Ryack** (Costume Design), **R. B. Schlather** (Director), **Richard Smagur III+** (Tenor),  
**Darko Tresnjak** (Director), **Vanessa Vasquez** (Soprano), **Terese Wadden** (Costume Design),  
**Laura Wilde+** (Soprano)

**2019 RETURNING ARTISTS:**  
(WITH MOST RECENT OR UPCOMING SANTA FE OPERA ENGAGEMENT)

SINGERS:

**Ben Bliss** (*Doctor Atomic* 2018), **Mario Chang** (*Lucia di Lammermoor* 2017),  
**Tracy Dahl** (*Orfeo ed Euridice* 1990), **Joshua Dennis** (*Fidelio* 2014), **Rod Gilfry** (*Ariadne auf Naxos* 2018),  
**Soloman Howard** (*Madame Butterfly* 2018), **Amanda Majeski** (*Ariadne auf Naxos* 2018),  
**Susanne Mentzer** (*Così fan tutte* 2007), **Zachary Nelson+** (*Lucia di Lammermoor* 2017),  
**Jarrett Ott+** (*Candide* 2018), **Robert Pomakov** (*Cold Mountain* 2015),  
**Patricia Racette** (*La Fanciulla del West* 2016), **Dale Travis** (*The Magic Flute* 2010),  
**Corinne Winters** (*Dr. Sun Yat-sen* 2014)

CONDUCTORS:

**Harry Bicket** (*Candide* 2018), **Jader Bignamini** (*Rigoletto* 2016)

DIRECTORS:

**David Alden** (*Alcina* 2017), **Shawna Lucey** (*The Italian Girl in Algiers* 2018)

DESIGNERS:

**Rick Fisher** (*Madame Butterfly* 2018), **Jon Morrell** (*Maometto II* 2012),  
**Jean-Marc Puissant** (*Madame Butterfly* 2018), **Brigitte Reiffenstuel** (*Madame Butterfly* 2018),  
**Duane Schuler** (*Candide, The Italian Girl in Algiers* 2018)

CHORUS MASTER:

**Susanne Sheston** (*Candide, Madame Butterfly, Doctor Atomic, The Italian Girl in Algiers* 2018)

+former Santa Fe Opera Apprentice

## LA BOHÈME

MUSIC BY GIACOMO PUCCINI

WORDS BY LUIGI ILlica AND GIUSEPPE GIACOSA

June 28; July 3, 6, 12, 19, 29; August 3, 7, 12, 17, 20, 24

Sung in Italian with Opera Titles in English and Spanish.

A new Santa Fe Opera production. Last performed in 2011.

Premiered February 1, 1896, Teatro Regio, Turin.

Conductor	Jader Bignamini
Director	Mary Birnbaum*
Scenic Design	Grace Laubacher*
Costume Design	Camellia Koo*
Lighting Design	Anshuman Bhatia*
Chorus Master	Susanne Sheston
Mimi	Vanessa Vasquez*
Musetta	Kirsten MacKinnon*
Rodolfo	Mario Chang
Marcello	Zachary Nelson+
Schaunard	Will Liverman*+
Colline	Soloman Howard
Benoît/Alcindoro	Dale Travis

\*debut, +former Santa Fe Opera Apprentice

# LES PÊCHEURS DE PERLES (THE PEARL FISHERS)

MUSIC BY GEORGES BIZET

WORDS BY EUGÈNE CORMON AND MICHEL CARRÉ

June 29; July 5, 10, 30; August 8, 16, 23

Sung in French with Opera Titles in English and Spanish.

A revival of Santa Fe Opera's 2012 production.

Premiered September 30, 1863, Théâtre Lyrique, Paris.

Conductor	Timothy Myers *
Director	Shawna Lucey
Scenic Design	Jean-Marc Puissant
Costume Design	Brigitte Reiffenstuel
Lighting Design	Rick Fisher
Chorus Master	Susanne Sheston
Production	Lee Blakeley
Leïla	Corinne Winters
Nadir	Ilker Arcayürek *
Zurga	Anthony Clark Evans *
Nourabad	Robert Pomakov
*debut	

# COSÌ FAN TUTTE

MUSIC BY WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

WORDS BY LORENZO DA PONTE

July 13, 17, 26; August 1, 5, 13, 22

Sung in Italian with Opera Titles in English and Spanish.

A new Santa Fe Opera production. Last performed in 2007.

Premiered January 26, 1790, Burgtheater, Vienna.

Conductor	Harry Bicket
Director	R. B. Schlather *
Scenic Design	Paul Tate DePoo III *
Costume Design	Terese Wadden *
Lighting Design	Jax Messenger *
Fiordiligi	Amanda Majeski
Dorabella	Emily D'Angelo *
Despina	Tracy Dahl
Ferrando	Ben Bliss
Guglielmo	Jarrett Ott+
Don Alfonso	Rod Gilfry
	Dale Travis (July 17)

\*debut, +former Santa Fe Opera Apprentice

## JENŮFA

MUSIC BY LEOŠ JANÁČEK

WORDS BY THE COMPOSER, BASED ON THE PLAY *JEJÍ PASTORKYŇA* BY GABRIELA PREISSOVÁ

July 20, 24; August 2, 6, 15

Sung in Czech with Opera Titles in English and Spanish.

A new Santa Fe Opera production adapted from the English National Opera staging. A company premiere.

Premiered January 21, 1904, National Theatre, Brno.

Conductor	Johannes Debus*
Director	David Alden
Scenic Design	Charles Edwards*
Costume Design	Jon Morrell
Lighting Design	Duane Schuler
Choreography	Maxine Braham
Jenůfa	Laura Wilde*+
Kostelnička Buryjovka	Patricia Racette
Grandmother Buryjovka	Susanne Mentzer
Laca Klemeň	Alexander Lewis*
Števa Buryja	Richard Smagur III*+
Foreman	Will Liverman+

\*debut, +former Santa Fe Opera Apprentice

## THE THIRTEENTH CHILD

MUSIC BY POUL RUDERS

WORDS BY BECKY AND DAVID STAROBIN

July 27, 31; August 9, 14, 21

Sung in English with Opera Titles in English and Spanish.

New Production. A World Premiere.

Co-commission and co-production with Odense Symphony Orchestra.

*Production underwriting support generously provided by David Henry Jacobs.*

Conductor	Paul Daniel*
Director	Darko Tresnjak*
Scenic Design	Alexander Dodge*
Costume Design	Rita Ryack*
Lighting Design	York Kennedy*
Projection Design	Aaron Rhyne*
Choreography	Lorin Latarro*
Chorus Master	Susanne Sheston
Lyra	Kirsten MacKinnon
Queen Gertrude	Tamara Mumford*
Frederic	Joshua Dennis+
Drokan	Bradley Garvin*
King Hjarne	David Leigh*+

\*debut, +former Santa Fe Opera Apprentice

# RENÉE FLEMING SINGS LETTERS FROM GEORGIA

WITH THE SANTA FE OPERA ORCHESTRA

HARRY BICKET, CONDUCTOR

August 10, 8:00 PM

Program:

*Letters from Georgia*

Composed by Kevin Puts with original text

*Vier letzte Lieder (Four Last Songs)*

Composed by Richard Strauss with text by Hermann Hesse and Joseph von Eichendorff

## 2019 SEASON INFORMATION

### PERFORMANCE START TIMES

June 28 – July 27, 8:30 PM

July 29 – August 24, 8:00 PM

### FAMILY NIGHTS

Special performances of all five productions during the season are designated Family Nights, providing opportunities for families to attend mainstage performances. The prices for both adults and accompanying children are greatly discounted from the regular ticket prices. Dates and prices are to be announced. Learn more at [SantaFeOpera.org/family-nights](http://SantaFeOpera.org/family-nights).

### APPRENTICE SCENES

Fully-staged scenes from the operatic repertory showcasing the remarkable talent of Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Singers and Technicians will be presented on two consecutive Sunday evenings, August 11 and 18, 2019. More in the "Learn More" section at [SantaFeOpera.org/apprentice-opportunities](http://SantaFeOpera.org/apprentice-opportunities).

### 2019 TICKETS

Tickets to the 2019 season are on sale now online at [santafeopera.org/2019-season](http://santafeopera.org/2019-season), by telephone 505.986.5900 (toll free 800.280.4654), or in person at the box office.

### 2019 SUBSCRIPTION PACKAGES

Ticket buyers can save up to 25% and choose from seven renewable series or select the best dates to fit their schedule with a flexible Compose-Your-Own package. A payment plan is also available for all subscriptions, and renewable series subscribers have the added benefit of making ticket exchanges for the same production without incurring a service charge. For further information, please visit Santa Fe Opera's website at [santafeopera.org/subscriptions](http://santafeopera.org/subscriptions).

*The mission of The Santa Fe Opera is to advance the operatic art form by presenting ensemble performances of the highest quality in a unique setting with a varied repertory of new, rarely performed, and standard works; to ensure the excellence of opera's future through apprentice programs for singers, technicians, and arts administrators; and to foster and enrich an understanding and appreciation of opera among a diverse public.*

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