SIGNATURE EVENT
AND FUND-A-NEED CATALOG

60TH ANNIVERSARY GALA
SUNDAY, JUNE 11, 2017
SAN FRANCISCO CITY HALL
Dear Merola Patron:

Thank you for attending Merola’s 60th Anniversary Gala! The generosity and support of people like you have been the lifeblood of the Merola Opera Program for the past six decades. Merola is now widely regarded as the foremost opera training program for aspiring singers, coach accompanists, and stage directors.

Your Gala ticket and your support through Signature Events and the Fund-a-Need provide vital support to Merola’s 12-week training program and help nurture the opera stars of tomorrow.

During the upcoming summer, the 2017 Merola artists (whom you will meet at the Gala) will have the rare opportunity of studying, coaching, and participating in master classes with renowned coaches and singers from around the world. They will also perform in two fully staged opera productions, the Schwabacher Summer Concert, and the Merola Grand Finale, all with full orchestra. All tuition, transportation, and housing are provided free of charge, and each artist receives a weekly stipend. Since 1999, Merola alumni are also eligible to receive up to $12,000 in career grants, which provide valuable assistance at a critical moment in their careers, for career building necessities such as coachings, voice lessons, travel to auditions and competitions, and intensive language study in Europe.

While Merola operates in close artistic collaboration with San Francisco Opera, it is an independent nonprofit organization, governed by a separate board of directors. Therefore, Merola is responsible for its own fundraising, primarily from loyal members and patrons like you.

We hope you meet with, and talk to, the amazing young Merola artists who will be joining us at the Gala on June 11th.

Thank you,

Robert B. Mison
Gala Chair

**MEROLA OPERA PROGRAM 60TH ANNIVERSARY GALA**

Valet parking on the Polk Street side of City Hall

5:15 PM
Cocktail Reception and Signature Event Silent Auction
The Rotunda, San Francisco City Hall

6:15 PM
Dinner
North Light Court, San Francisco City Hall

7:30 PM
Fund-a-Need
North Light Court, San Francisco City Hall

8:00 PM
60th Anniversary Gala Concert
Herbst Theatre, San Francisco War Memorial & Performing Arts Center

Dessert After-Party, Dancing, and Signature Event Silent Auction—Immediately Following the Concert
Green Room, San Francisco War Memorial & Performing Arts Center
Valet pick up in front of the San Francisco War Memorial & Performing Arts Center; Valet closes at 11:45 PM.

60th Anniversary Gala Concert Sponsor
Barbara K. Jackson

2017 Merola Artists Dinner Sponsor
Miss Vivienne E. Miller
The Merola Opera Program gratefully acknowledges all those who have made this evening possible.

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Carol & Dixon Doll
Priscilla & Keith Geeslin
David Gockley & Linda Kemper
Pitch & Cathie Johnson
Gretchen B. Kimball
Karen J. Kubin
Fred M. Levin & Nancy Livingston
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Mr. Christopher E. Wiseman & Mr. Eric W. Sleigh

*As of May 17, 2017
$10,000  Make an Artist’s Debut Possible
In recognition of your $10,000 donation, a future Schwabacher Debut Recital featuring a Merola alum will be dedicated in your honor. Vocal recitals are a vital part of young artists training—allowing them to explore the powerful union of text and music in intimate settings. James Schwabacher, one of Merola’s founders, was a lifelong champion of art song and making this art form accessible to emerging artists.

$5,000  Kick Start a Career
Your $5,000 donation will help recent Merola alums audition for opera companies around the world—covering transportation, hotels, and accompanist fees. One of the challenges of launching an opera career is being heard by casting professionals. Merola Career Grants help young artists secure engagements around the world—from Milan to Milwaukee, from Paris to Pittsburgh.

$2,500  Support Merola Public Master Classes
Your $2,500 donation will help Merola public master classes thrive, connecting today’s great artists with tomorrow’s emerging stars. These forums bring together young artists and master teachers such as Jane Eaglen, Warren Jones, and Martin Katz—as well as the public—for a heady combination of music and enlightenment.

$1,000  Inspire the Next Generation of Opera Artists
Your $1,000 donation will help maintain the excellence of the more than 500 individual and group coachings offered during a Merola summer. From role preparation and fencing lessons to diction and acting classes, every coaching session is an essential part of a Merola artist’s training.

$500  Make Sure Merola Artists Look Their Best
Your $500 donation will help provide Merola artists with professional costumes and concert attire. In addition to costumes for our summer productions, Merola also provides emerging artists with the tuxedos and gowns required for concerts, recitals, and competitions.

$250  Fund a High “C”
For every 10 donations of $250, a 2017 Merola artist will sing a beautiful high “C” at the Gala. $250 helps cover the costs of air travel, language study, vocal coaching, and orchestra rehearsals—among many other key components of a Merola summer.

All monies raised in the Fund-a-Need will be used to support 2017 Merola training and Career Grant activities through the Merola general budget. Thank you for your support!

EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC OF MEROLA Signature Events

In the following pages you will find a preview of Merola’s 2017 Signature Events. Signature Events are special evenings of music or conversation with Merola alumni, current Merola artists, or other opera luminaries in private homes and other exclusive venues around the Bay Area. They are a wonderful way to extend your Merola experience beyond the summer and get to know other Merola supporters.

How often do you have the chance to hear international opera stars in a private living room with only 30 or so other guests and then chat with them over wine and supper? Or go behind the scenes to hear young artists’ insights into opera training today? Whether you dine with Wotan (renowned bass-baritone and 2017 Merola faculty member James Morris), listen to soprano Karen Slack in recital with Jake Heggie in the exquisite music room of Ann and Gordon Getty, or a host of other unique events, you are sure of a magical evening that will linger in your memory for years to come.
KAREN SLACK AND JAKE HEGGIE IN RECITAL AT THE HOME OF ANN & GORDON GETTY

Karen Slack won the hearts of audiences from the moment she stepped on the stage for the Merola Auditions for the General Director in 2002. She continued to do so as an Adler Fellow and in roles on the San Francisco Opera main stage, including her stunning Serena in Porgy and Bess. Witness this brilliant soprano in recital with composer and pianist Jake Heggie (recently commissioned to write an opera for Merola) in the exquisite music room of Ann and Gordon Getty. Enjoy cocktails and hors d’oeuvres before the recital and then chat with the artists over dessert following the performance.

Restrictions: 50 spaces available
Date: Thursday, January 11, 2018
Value: Priceless  Guaranteed Bid: $300
Donors: Karen Slack, Jake Heggie, and Ann & Gordon Getty

LEAH CROCETTO AND TAMARA SANIKIDZE IN RECITAL AT MEYER SOUND IN BERKELEY

Merola audiences knew Leah Crocetto was very special from her incandescent Schwabacher Summer Concert performance in 2008. In the years since, she has made the same indelible impression on opera audiences around the world. Hear this dazzling soprano in recital with fellow Merola alumna Tamara Sanikidze (’09) in the state-of-the-art Pearson Theatre in Berkeley. After the recital, sip wine and talk with the artists over a delicious dinner catered by Grace Street Catering.

Restrictions: 48 spaces available
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017
Value: Priceless  Guaranteed Bid: $300
Donors: Leah Crocetto, Tamara Sanikidze, Meyer Sound, Karen & Lawrence Ames, George & Susan Crow, and Mr. Michael H. Kalkstein & Ms. Susan English

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“I AM FOREVER GRATEFUL TO MEROLA FOR THE EXPERIENCE AND EXPOSURE TO THIS UNBELIEVABLE ART FORM. MEROLA MAKES A DIFFERENCE!!”

—LEAH CROCETTO, MEROLA 2008
—PATRICIA RACETTE, MEROLA 1988
—THOMAS HAMPSON, MEROLA 1980

SIGNATURE EVENT AND FUND-A-NEED CATALOG
60TH ANNIVERSARY GALA
SUNDAY, JUNE 11, 2017
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DINNER WITH WOTAN

Bass-baritone James Morris, the most renowned Wotan of his generation and a 2017 Merola faculty member, shares his insights into opera training and his experiences performing around the world in conversation with Merola Artistic Director Sheri Greenawald. After the discussion, talk with the “King of the Gods,” his wife, soprano Susan Quittmeyer, and Sheri over a formal sit-down dinner catered by John Heiskell, executive chef at San Francisco’s distinguished Villa Taverna. This very special evening will take place in the stunning San Francisco Presidio Heights home of Cora Yang and Myron Marx, M.D.

Restrictions: 15 spaces available
Date: Monday, July 10, 2017
Value: Priceless  Guaranteed Bid: $300
Donors: James Morris, Sheri Greenawald, and Cora Yang & Myron Marx, M.D.

AN EVENING OF CABARET WITH SHERI GREENAWALD AND MARK MORASH

Come to the cabaret—starring our very own Sheri Greenawald and Mark Morash! Before she became San Francisco Opera Center Director, soprano Sheri Greenawald had a major international opera career and was known for both her exquisite voice and her nuanced acting. She and her colleague Mark Morash (’87), San Francisco Opera Center’s Director of Musical Studies, have a cabaret evening planned that is sure to be full of delights and surprises. This not-to-be-missed event will take place in the beautiful San Francisco home of Mary and Craig Henderson. A buffet dinner and wine will be served.

Restrictions: 24 spaces available
Value: Priceless  Guaranteed Bid: $250
Date: Monday, September 25, 2017
Donors: Sheri Greenawald, Mark Morash, and Mary & Craig Henderson
TRACY DAHL AND MARTIN KATZ IN RECITAL

Enjoy a sparkling evening with two musical masters as soprano Tracy Dahl (‘85) and renowned collaborative pianist and 2017 Merola faculty member Martin Katz perform in recital. Tracy Dahl has been hailed for her brilliant coloratura and effervescent stage presence from La Scala to the Met. Martin Katz has been dubbed “the gold standard of accompanists” by the New York Times. This exciting collaboration between two distinguished artists will take place in the lovely San Francisco home of Betty Newman. Wine and a buffet dinner will be served.

Restrictions: 30 spaces available
Date: Wednesday, August 2, 2017
Value: Priceless  Guaranteed Bid: $250
Donors: Tracy Dahl, Martin Katz, Betty Newman, and Carol A. Weitz

RENAE RAPIER AND BRYNDON HASSMAN IN RECITAL

Mezzo-soprano Renée Rapier (‘10 & ’11) dazzled Merola audiences, went on to become an Adler Fellow, and has since brought down the house at venues ranging from Opera Parallèle to LA Opera to San Francisco Opera. Hear this dynamic artist in recital with Bryndon Hassman (’89 & ’90) in the charming Piedmont home of Marie and Leonard Collins. Cocktails and a buffet dinner will be served.

Restrictions: 24 spaces available
Date: Sunday, August 27, 2017
Value: Priceless  Guaranteed Bid: $250
Donors: Renée Rapier, Bryndon Hassman, and Marie & Leonard Collins
ARYEH NUSSBAUM COHEN AND JOHN CHURCHWELL IN RECITAL

Multi-talented countertenor Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen wowed Merola audiences in 2016 and recently went on to win the coveted 2017 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Hear this exciting artist in recital with John Churchwell (‘96), Head of Music Staff at San Francisco Opera. After the recital, talk with the two artists over wine and a buffet dinner in the elegant home of Emily Marcus in San Francisco.

Restrictions: 30 spaces available
Date: Monday, March 19, 2018
Value: Priceless   Guaranteed Bid: $250
Donors: Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen, John Churchwell, Emily Marcus, Mike & Rusty Rolland, and Beatrice & Paul Gomory

TONI MARIE PALMERTREE AND ROBERT MOLLICONE IN RECITAL

In 2015, Toni Marie Palmertree was a Merolini. Last year, as an Adler Fellow, she covered the title role in Madama Butterfly and stepped in to play Cio-Cio-San on the stage of the War Memorial Opera House to rave reviews. This year she will perform Liu in Turandot (alternating with Leah Crocetto). Hear this star-in-the-making in recital with fellow Merola alum Robert Mollicone (‘11) in the beautiful San Francisco home of Ben and Marina Nelson. Wine and a buffet dinner will be served.

Restrictions: 25 spaces available
Date: Monday, October 23, 2017
Value: Priceless   Guaranteed Bid: $250
Donors: Toni Marie Palmertree, Robert Mollicone, Ben & Marina Nelson, and Drs. Richard & Pamela Rigg
EDWARD NELSON, ANTHONY REED, AND RONNY MICHAEL GREENBERG IN RECITAL

Baritone Edward Nelson and bass Anthony Reed both captivated Merola audiences in 2014. Since then both have gone on to become Adler Fellows and give acclaimed Schwabacher Debut Recitals. Hear these two rising stars in recital with fellow 2014 alum, and Adler Fellow, Ronny Michael Greenberg. This exciting event will take place in the magnificent Queen Anne home of Mrs. Edward J. Taaffe, which was built in 1890 and designed by noted architect Clinton Day. Wine and a buffet dinner will be served.

Restrictions: 40 spaces available
Date: Friday, July 7, 2017
Value: Priceless    Guaranteed Bid: $250
Donors: Edward Nelson, Anthony Reed, Ronny Michael Greenberg, Mrs. Edward J. Taaffe, and Jayne & Peter Davis

BRAD WALKER AND RONNY MICHAEL GREENBERG IN RECITAL

Baritone Brad Walker has charmed and delighted audiences from his 2015 Merola summer to his San Francisco Opera main stage roles as an Adler Fellow. Hear this talented artist in recital with fellow alum Ronny Michael Greenberg (’14), in the lovely San Francisco loft of Edwin Waite and Davidson Bidwell-Waite. Wine and hors d’oeuvres will be served.

Restrictions: 20 spaces available
Date: Monday, September 18, 2017
Value: Priceless    Guaranteed Bid: $200
Donors: Brad Walker, Ronny Michael Greenberg, Edwin Waite & Davidson Bidwell-Waite, Pamela J. George, and Dr. William W. Kwan
AN EVENING OF WAGNER WITH SARAH CAMBIDGE, KYLE VAN SCHOONHOVEN, AND PETER GRUNBERG

Sarah Cambidge and Kyle van Schoonhoven brought down the house with their Lohengrin duet in the 2016 Schwabacher Summer Concert. Hear these two artists in an all-Wagner recital accompanied by renowned pianist Peter Grunberg. This stirring evening will take place in the music room of the lovely San Francisco home of Peter Winkelstein (once the home of Ansel Adams). Wine and hors d’oeuvres will be served by members of Amici di Merola. Complimentary valet parking will be provided.

Restrictions: 30 spaces available  
Date: Sunday, July 30, 2017  
Value: Priceless  
Guaranteed Bid: $150  
Donors: Sarah Cambidge, Kyle van Schoonhoven, Peter Grunberg, Amici di Merola, and Peter Winkelstein

ARIA UMEZAWA IN CONVERSATION

How does a director collaborate with a conductor to bring an opera production to life? What are the unique challenges of directing opera? Aria Umezawa, 2016 Merola Apprentice Stage Director and current Adler Fellow (only the second in the program’s history), discusses her work staging opera, including the Merola 60th Anniversary Gala Concert and West Edge Opera’s Hamlet, in conversation with Merola President Carlyn Clause. This intimate and illuminating event will take place at the lovely San Francisco home of Carlyn Clause and Alexander Brainerd. Wine and a buffet dinner will be served.

Restrictions: 15 spaces available  
Date: Thursday, October 5, 2017  
Value: Priceless  
Guaranteed Bid: $200  
Donors: Aria Umezawa and Carlyn Clause & Alexander Brainerd
THE JUILLIARD EFFECT

What’s it like to study opera in the city that never sleeps? 2017 Merolini and Juilliard alums Samantha Hankey, Felicia Moore, and Cody Quattlebaum and their apprentice coach colleague Andrew Sun (a graduate of the rival Manhattan School of Music) will perform some of their favorite musical selections and share their experiences studying in the shadow of the Met. The lyrical evening will take place in the lovely St. Francis Wood home of James Heagy. Wine and hors d’oeuvres will be served.

Restrictions: 40 spaces available
Date: Tuesday, August 8, 2017
Value: Priceless  Guaranteed Bid: $200
Donors: Samantha Hankey, Felicia Moore, Cody Quattlebaum, Andrew Sun, and James Heagy

AUCTION RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. The Signature Event Auction will begin at 5:15 pm and close at 11:45 pm. The Merola Opera Program (MOP) reserves the right to extend the time of the auction.

2. For your convenience, we ask our guests to preregister a credit card (MasterCard, Visa, or American Express) prior to the event. (Form is enclosed with this catalog.) Guests who do not preregister a credit card will be contacted the following week if they bid on any Signature Events or participate in the Fund-a-Need.

3. A bid sheet will accompany each item. Bidders may enter their bids by legibly placing their name and bid number on the first available bid line. Each bid line is equivalent to one space at the specified Signature Event. Once a bid is entered, it may not be removed or altered. Placing a bid is considered a contractual agreement to purchase the space at the amount listed on the bid sheet. If a bid number and bid name do not match, the bid name will supersede the bid number.

4. Leadership Circle table and ticket attendees will find instructions enclosed on how to place advance bids. Please contact the MOP office at (415) 936-2311 for more information.

5. A receipt for all Signature Event spaces purchased and Fund-a-Need donations made that evening will be mailed after the event.

6. Signature Event gift certificates will be mailed within two weeks of receipt of payment.

7. Dates, times, and artists are all subject to change. Signature Events are subject to MOP’s right to make any alterations to the program or date as a result of circumstances beyond its reasonable control.

8. MOP reserves the right to withdraw any item at any time before the actual sale.
PAYMENT AND RECEIPT OF ITEMS

1. Payment for all items purchased on the night of the auction must be made that evening. Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or check may be used to make a payment. An Express Checkout form is enclosed with this catalog for your convenience.

2. Sales are final with no exchanges or refunds.

3. Payments are tax deductible only as allowed by law. IRS Revenue Ruling #67-246 reminds buyers that no deduction for an auction purchase price is allowed except to the extent that the taxpayer can show that payment exceeded the fair market value (as listed in this catalog) of an item received or service rendered.

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The Merola Opera Program operates in collaboration with San Francisco Opera Center, Sheri Greenawald, Director, and San Francisco Opera, Matthew Shilvock, General Director, and Nicola Luisotti, Music Director.

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—LEAH CROCETTO, MEROLA 2008

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