



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**MEROLA OPERA PROGRAM SEASON OPENS WITH**  
**SCHWABACHER SUMMER CONCERT**

**Presented at the Herbst Theatre on Thursday, July 5 and free for the community on Saturday, July 7 at Yerba Buena Gardens**

**San Francisco, CA – May 22, 2012** – The Merola Opera Program summer season will open with the popular Schwabacher Summer Concert, presented on Thursday, July 5, at 7:30 PM at the Herbst Theatre and offered to the community for free on Saturday, July 7, at 2 PM as part of the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival. Conducted by San Francisco Opera Resident Conductor **Giuseppe Finzi** and directed by **Roy Rallo**, the Schwabacher Summer Concert features extended scenes from four operas: Donizetti's *Anna Bolena*, Boïto's *Mefistofele*, Bizet's *La jolie fille de Perth* and Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*. Tickets for the concert at the Herbst Theatre are affordably priced and range from \$25 to \$40, with a special student price available.

A native of Bari, Italy, Finzi made his San Francisco Opera debut in 2008 conducting *The Elixir of Love for Families* and returned for performances of *La Bohème* (2008), *The Abduction from the Seraglio* (2009), *Faust* (2010), *La Fanciulla del West* (2010), *Aida* (2011) and *Carmen* (2012), as well as the San Francisco Opera's performances at the 2009 and 2011 Stern Grove Festivals.

Stage director Roy Rallo has worked with Merola often. He has twice staged the Schwabacher Summer Concert (2009 and 2010) and his most recent stage direction included *Il barbiere di Siviglia* in 2011. An internationally acclaimed stage director, Rallo's past work includes a new production of Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos* for the Opéra National de Bordeaux and a new music-theater piece, the *Methusalem Projekt*, for the Nationaltheater und Staatskapelle Weimar.

The Schwabacher Summer Concert is named in memory of **James H. Schwabacher** (1920-2006). Mr. Schwabacher, a noted singer and scholar, was not only instrumental in the establishment and development of the Merola Opera Program – he became its heart and soul, demonstrating an unwavering commitment to the next generation of vocal talent. He provided

vital financial and administrative stewardship to Merola, serving as President of the Board of Directors for 29 years and subsequently as Chairman of the Board for 15 years.

The Schwabacher Summer Concerts are graciously underwritten, in part, by the Frances K. and Charles D. Field Foundation, Rusty Rolland and the Schick Foundation, the Jack H. Lund Charitable Trust and the Grace A. Diem and Alice E. Siemmons Fund. Giuseppe Finzi is sponsored by James Heagy and Roy Rallo is sponsored by Mrs. A. Barlow Ferguson.

**To download artist pictures, visit <http://www.box.net/merola>.**

**Casting for the July 5th and July 7th Schwabacher Summer Concert is as follows:**

***Anna Bolena*** (Gaetano Donizetti)

Giovanna Seymour	<b>Erin Johnson</b>
Anna Bolena	<b>Melinda Whittington</b>

***Mefistofele*** (Arrigo Boïto)

Faust	<b>Chuanyue Wang</b>
Mefistofele	<b>Andrew Kroes</b>
Margherita	<b>Elizabeth Baldwin</b>

***La jolie fille de Perth*** (Georges Bizet)

Le Duc de Rothsay	<b>Joshua Baum</b>
Mab	<b>Erin Johnson</b>
Henri Smith	<b>Yi Li</b>
Un ouvrier	<b>Seth Mease Carico</b>
Ralph	<b>Hadleigh Adams</b>
Le Majordome	<b>Andrew Kroes</b>
Catherine Glover	<b>Melinda Whittington</b>

***The Rakes Progress*** (Igor Stravinsky)

Tom Rakewell	<b>Joshua Baum</b>
Nick Shadow	<b>Seth Mease Carico</b>
Anne Truelove	<b>Elizabeth Baldwin</b>

2012 Season Sponsors include the Bernard Osher Foundation, the Frances K. and Charles D. Field Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts and Rusty Rolland and the Schick Foundation.

**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE: 2012 Calendar of Performances**

**Merola Opera Program**

**Schwabacher Summer Concert**

Thursday, July 5, 7:30 PM

War Memorial Veterans Building, Herbst Theatre

Tickets: \$40/\$25

**Merola Opera Program**  
**Schwabacher Summer Concert**

Saturday, July 7, 2 PM  
Yerba Buena Gardens, Mission St. between 3rd and 4th Streets  
FREE

**Merola Opera Program**  
***Postcard from Morocco***

Dominick Argento  
Sung in English with English supertitles  
Thursday, July 19, 8 PM  
Saturday, July 21, 2 PM  
Cowell Theatre at Fort Mason Center  
Tickets: \$60/\$40

**Merola Opera Program**  
***La finta giardiniera***

W.A. Mozart  
Sung in Italian with English supertitles  
Thursday, August 2, 8 PM  
Saturday, August 4, 2 PM  
Cowell Theatre at Fort Mason Center  
Tickets: \$60/\$40

**Merola Grand Finale and Reception**

Saturday, August 18, at 7:30 PM  
War Memorial Opera House  
Tickets: \$45 Grand Tier & Orchestra Prime/\$35 Orchestra/\$25 Dress Circle  
Reception begins at 10 PM in the Green Room  
(Reception tickets are an additional \$50 each)

**TICKETS:**

Tickets for the July 5 concert are \$25 and \$40, in addition to a student price of \$15.\*

A season discount of 10% applies through June 1 if tickets for the Schwabacher Summer Concert, *Postcard from Morocco*, *La finta giardiniera* and the Merola Grand Finale are purchased together. Tickets for all performances may be purchased by calling San Francisco Opera Box Office at (415) 864-3330: Monday 10 AM – 5 PM and Tuesday through Friday 10 AM – 6 PM or online at [www.sfopera.com](http://www.sfopera.com).

*\*Student tickets must be purchased in person at the Box Office window, located inside the War Memorial Opera House at 301 Van Ness Ave. Valid student ID is required.*

For more information about Merola, please visit [www.merola.org](http://www.merola.org) or phone (415) 551-6299

## **PHOTO CREDITS:**

Giuseppe Finzi / Terrence McCarthy  
Roy Rallo / Courtesy of Roy Rallo

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Led artistically by San Francisco Opera Center Director and internationally acclaimed soprano Sheri Greenawald, the Merola Opera Program is an independent nonprofit organization which operates in collaboration with the San Francisco Opera. Founded in 1957 and named for San Francisco Opera's founder, Gaetano Merola, the Program is recognized as one of the most prestigious operatic training programs in the world. The Merola Opera Program typically receives more than 800 applications for approximately 30 positions. Throughout the summer, the Merola artists participate in master classes and private coachings with opera luminaries. Participants – who include singers, apprentice coaches and an apprentice stage director – also receive training in operatic repertory, foreign languages, diction, acting and stage movement.