



**MEROLA OPERA PROGRAM SUMMER FESTIVAL
PRESENTS MOZART'S
DON GIOVANNI JULY 31 AND AUGUST 2**

SAN FRANCISCO, July 8, 2014 – The Merola Opera Program presents W.A. Mozart's opera, *Don Giovanni*, at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 31, and 2 p.m. Saturday, August 2, at Everett Auditorium, 450 Church Street in San Francisco.



The cast features baritone **Edward Nelson** as Don Giovanni; bass-baritone **Szymon Wach** as Leporello; bass **Scott Russell** as Il Commendatore; Soprano **Amanda Woodbury** as Donna Anna; tenor **Benjamin Werley** as Don Ottavio; soprano **Karen Chia-Ling Ho** as Donna Elvira; bass-baritone **Rhys Lloyd Talbot** as Masetto; and soprano **Yujin Kim** as Zerlina. Stage director **James Darrah** and conductor **Martin Katz** lead the production.

Based on the legends of Don Juan, the story spans the last twenty-four hours of Don Giovanni's life. With more than 2,000 romantic conquests, Don Giovanni lives life in the fast lane until a mysterious meeting with a statue begins his downward spiral. When he refuses to change his philandering ways, the unrepentant libertine is sentenced to hell by the ghost of the man he killed.

James Darrah, co-founder and director of a new Los Angeles production company, Studio Chromatic, was most recently director and production designer of San Francisco Symphony's production of Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes*. He has been described by the *Chicago Tribune* as "a gifted young American director delivering fresh and stimulating productions".

Conductor Martin Katz, dubbed "the gold standard of accompanists" by the *New York Times* is currently a Professor of Collaborative Piano at the University of Michigan. He has collaborated with the world's most celebrated singers in recital and recording, including Marilyn Horne, Frederica von Stade, Kathleen Battle, David Daniels, Karita Mattila and José Carreras. He previously conducted Michigan Opera's production of *Die Zauberflöte* and Merola Opera Program's productions of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *La Cenerentola* and *L'elisir d'amore*. He is the author of *The Complete Collaborator*, published by the Oxford University Press.

The Merola Opera Program is dedicated to the continuing education and training of the finest young operatic talent and the development of this talent into professional opera singers, coaches and stage directors of the highest artistic caliber. Merola operates in close artistic collaboration with San Francisco Opera but is an independent nonprofit organization. Governed by a separate board of directors, Merola is responsible for its own long-term financial stability and fundraising, and is grateful to the hundreds of loyal members, donors and foundations who support the program.

To download artist pictures, visit www.box.net/merola.

Casting for the July 31 and August 2 *Don Giovanni* is as follows:

Don Giovanni	Edward Nelson
Leporello	Szymon Wach
Il Commendatore	Scott Russell
Donna Anna	Amanda Woodbury
Don Ottavio	Benjamin Werley
Donna Elvira	Karen Chia-Ling Ho
Masetto	Rhys Lloyd Talbot
Zerlina	Yujin Kim

This production is graciously underwritten, in part, by the Bernard Osher Foundation, the Frances K. and Charles D. Field Foundation and the Jack H. Lund Charitable Trust. Martin Katz is sponsored, in part, by Darla and Richard Bastoni, Miss Vivienne E. Miller, and Mike and Rusty Rolland. James Darrah is sponsored, in part, by the Mr. and Mrs. Barlow Ferguson Fund.

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

2014 Merola Summer Festival Calendar of Performances

Merola Opera Program Presents

Schwabacher Summer Concert

7:30 p.m. Thursday, July 17

Tickets: \$40/\$25

Merola Opera Program Presents

Schwabacher Summer Concert

2 p.m. Saturday, July 19

Yerba Buena Gardens, Mission St. between 3rd and 4th Streets

FREE

Merola Opera Program Presents

Don Giovanni

W.A. Mozart

7:30 p.m. Thursday, July 31

2 p.m. Saturday, August 2

Tickets: \$60/\$40/\$25

Merola Opera Program Presents

Merola Grand Finale and Reception

7:30 p.m. Saturday, August 16

Tickets: \$45 Grand Tier & Orchestra Prime/\$35 Orchestra/\$25 Dress Circle

Reception begins at 10 p.m. in the Opera House Café

*Reception tickets are an additional \$50 each

For information on how to become a Merola member, please call (415) 565-6427 or visit

www.merola.org.

Tickets for all performances may be purchased by calling San Francisco Opera Box Office at (415) 864-3330 open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday.

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS:

(L-R) Karen Chia-Ling Ho, Rhys Lloyd Talbot, Edward Nelson, Amanda Woodbury / Kristen Loken

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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, 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.