

MEMORIES FROM MEROLA 2014



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Upcoming Events

Top: Edward Nelson and ensemble of
Don Giovanni.

Lower Left: Nian Wang (left, as Federica),
conductor Eric Melear and Matthew
Stump (Count Walter) in the Schwabacher
Summer Concert performing a scene from
Luisa Miller.

Lower Right: Adelaide Boedecker (Stella)
and Julie Adams (Blanche) in *A Streetcar
Named Desire*.

Photos by Kristen Loken Photography.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I hope you enjoyed the Merola 2014 summer as much as I did. As I look at the pictures in this newsletter, I have such delightful memories of this fabulous group of young artists. In addition to being tremendously gifted, they are such a warm, generous group who forged wonderful bonds with each other and with the Merola community during their time here. I miss them already, but I look forward to following them in the opera world.




Jean Kallogg with some of the Merola 2014 participants.

At this past summer's Merola Festival, excitement surrounded the premiere of the new orchestral reduction of Pevini's *A Streetcar Named Desire* (which Merola commissioned from Peter Grunberg). The cast was tailor-made for this iconic story, and the collaboration between Director Jose Maria Condeni (Merola 1999 & 2000) and Conductor Mark Morash (Merola 1987) gave this opera exciting new life. Our Schwabacher Summer Concert highlighted vibrant voices in memorable scenes from seven diverse operas, conducted by Eric Melear (Merola 2002) and directed by Roy Rallo. James Darrah's innovative direction of Don Giovanni brought new insight into this Mozart masterpiece and drew vivid performances from the cast while Martin Katz led in the pit. And all of the Merolani of 2014 shone brightly in the Merola Grand Finale, conducted by Ari Pelto. The evening highlighted the talents of Apprentice Director Omer Ben Seadia in a glittering array of audience favorites.

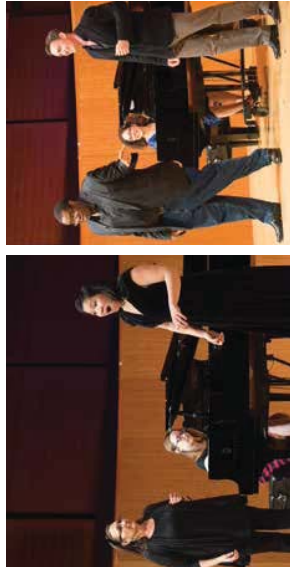
The 2015 Merola Summer Festival Season promises to be just as memorable. Already I'm getting excited reports from Sheri and Mark about the new talent they're finding as they cross the country auditioning. Your 2015 Merola membership renewal packet should arrive shortly. As a renewing member, you'll receive a special invitation to a season preview event in February which will feature a performance by the San Francisco Opera Adler Fellows.

Thank you so much for everything you do to help us support young opera artists. I look forward to sharing another magical Merola summer with you!

Warm Regards,

 Jean Kallogg
 Executive Director, Merola Opera Program



MEROLA 2014 MASTER CLASSES



Top: Collaborative pianist Warren Jones works with Yujin Kim.
 Center Left: World famous soprano and Merola alum Carol Versess offers advice to Karen Chia-ling Ho and apprentice coach Blair Salter.
 Center Right: Renowned bass-baritone Eric Owens gives advice to Alexander Elliott and apprentice coach Sahar Nouri.
 Lower Center: Scott Russell and apprentice coach Kirill Kuzmin work with opera legend Jane Eaglen.

Photos by Kristen Loken Photography.



SCHWABACHER SUMMERT CONCERT



A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE



Left: Adelaide Boedecker (Stella) and Thomas Gunther (Stanley).
 Above: Mingjie Lei (Young Collector) and Julie Adams (Blanche).
 All photos on this page by Kristen Loken Photography.



Above: Maria Fasciano (Cio-Cio San) and Gideon Dabi (Sharpless) in a scene from *Madama Butterfly*.

Far Left: Shirin Eskandani (Mignon) and Anthony Reed (Lothario) in a scene from *Mignon*.

Left: Chong Wang (Don Jose) in a scene from *Carmen* performed at the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival.



DON GIOVANNI



Above: (left to right) Yujin Kim (Zerlina), Rhys Lloyd Talbot (Masetto), Ben Wierley (Don Ottavio), Amanda Woodbury (Donna Anna) and (center) Szymon Wach (Leporello).
 Top Right: Scott Russell (Commerdatore), Edward Nelson (Don Giovanni) and the ensemble of Don Giovanni.
 Right: (left to right) Edward Nelson (Don Giovanni), Karen Chia-ling Ho (Donna Elvira) and Szymon Wach (Leporello) in a scene from Don Giovanni.



MEROLA SPONSORS RECEPTION



Above: Sponsors Drs. Joan and James Kelly with Merola artist Talya Lieberman (center).
 Top Left: Sponsors (left) Phyllis Kempner and (right) David Stein with Merola artist Amanda Woodbury.
 Far Center Left: Anthony and Carol Stagliano with Merola artist Maria Fasciano.
 Lower Left: Merola master teacher Steven Blier (center) and artists (left) Sahar Nouri, Talya Lieberman, Casey Candebat and Eliza Bonet.
 Left: Merola artist Karen Chia-ling Ho and sponsor Pat Nottingham.

Photos by Kristen Loken Photography.

MEROLA GRAND FINALE



Above: The 2014 Merola Opera Program artists.
 Far Left: Eliza Bonet and the ensemble perform a scene from La Grande-Duchesse de Gêrolstein.
 Left: Julie Adams (Suzel) and Casey Candebat (Fritz) perform the Cherry Duet from L'amico Fritz.

Photos on this page by Kristen Loken Photography.

SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 25, 2015 MEROLA BENEFIT GALA

On April 25, 2015, escape to an evening of old world decadence filled with elegant Viennese waltzes and passionate Hungarian gypsy songs as Merola's Benefit Gala whirls you on *A Waltz Down the Blue Danube* at the graceful InterContinental San Francisco.

Violinists will serenade you as you arrive for the cocktail reception and silent auction. Following the silent auction, feast upon a rich array of culinary delights prepared by the InterContinental's award-winning chefs in a setting inspired by the Danube's shimmering waters. After dinner, the 2015 Adler Fellows will

entertain you with a program of operatic selections carefully chosen by Sheri Greenwald and Mark Morash. The evening will conclude with after-dinner drinks and dancing.

New this year, our most generous ticket holders (\$650 and above) who purchase by December 1, 2014, will be invited to an exclusive patron event on December 10 at Alexis Bittar Jewelers in Pacific Heights. For more information and to register for tickets, contact Kelly Sepich at 415.551.6299 or ksepich@opera.com.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

We extend our sincere appreciation to all donors and acknowledge the following individuals, foundations and corporations for their generous gifts totaling \$250 or more and made between October 1, 2013, and September 30, 2014, in support of the Merola Opera Program. For more information about supporting the Merola Opera Program, please contact (415) 565-6427, e-mail: mop@stopera.com, or visit our website at www.merola.org.

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RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP & JOIN US FOR THE 2015 SUMMER FESTIVAL SEASON Details below.

SEE YOU IN 2015!

As a Merola member you are truly the lifeblood of this program we all love. Your support makes it possible for us to bring talented young opera artists to San Francisco from all over the world and give them the highest caliber training in a safe, supportive environment, free of financial burden.

Your 2015 membership renewal packet will arrive shortly. We hope you will join us for the exciting adventure that will be Merola 2015. Your membership renewal will give you access to a special advance ordering period for our exciting Summer Festival Season— *Don Pasquale*, a double bill of *Gianni Schicchi* and *The Medium*, the Schwabacher Summer Concert and the Merola Grand Finale.

You'll also have a unique behind-the-scenes view of the program as you watch the young artists hone their skills and stretch their artistic wings over the course of the summer—from their first performance on the War Memorial Opera House stage at the Merola Auditions for the General Director to the triumphant Merola Grand Finale. You'll get to know the 2015 Merolini at exclusive master classes (our 2015 faculty will include Ann Murray and Malcolm Martineau), receptions and other special events. And when you watch the 2015



Above: Merola 2014 artist Shirin Eskandani in a master class at Day at Merola, a special members-only event. Photo by Jonathan Chau.

Merolini take the opera world by storm, you'll know that you played a vital role in forging their success.

Thank you for everything you do to help us train and nurture the opera stars of tomorrow. We look forward to sharing Merola 2015 with you. Watch for your renewal packet or call (415) 565-6427 or email Miriam Rosenfeld at mrosenfeld@sfopera.com for more information.