



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Merola Opera Program presents its 2016 Grand Finale performance Saturday,
August 20 at 7:30 pm at the War Memorial Opera House in San Francisco**

**Merola 2016 artists perform staged scenes and musical excerpts from works by
Bizet, Bernstein, Donizetti, Offenbach, Mozart, J. Strauss, Puccini, Berlioz, Britten,
Humperdinck, Flotow, Glück, and Rossini**

SAN FRANCISCO, July 13, 2016 – The [Merola Opera Program's](#) Summer Festival concludes with its 2016 artists performing in the Merola Grand Finale Saturday, August 20 at 7:30 pm at the War Memorial Opera House in San Francisco. Conductor Rory Macdonald will lead the orchestra and 2016 Merola Apprentice Stage Director Aria Umezawa will stage the program, featuring works by Bizet, Bernstein, Donizetti, Offenbach, Mozart, J. Strauss, Puccini, Berlioz, Britten, Humperdinck, Flotow, Glück, and Rossini. The performance is a culmination of the 12-week Merola Opera training program, and all 23 of the 2016 Merola singers will perform, under the coaching and direction of their fellow artists. A special artists' reception follows the Grand Finale (tickets sold separately).

The program and casting is as follows (not in performance order):

Linda di Chamounix (Donizetti)

“Linda! Linda!... Da qual dì che t’incontrai”

Linda – Adelaide Boedecker

Carlo – Isaac Frishman

Les Pêcheurs de Perles (Bizet)

“C’est toi, toi qu’enfin je revois...Au fond du temple saint”

Nadir – Amitai Pati

Zurga – Andrew Manea

Die Entführung aus dem Serail (Mozart)

“Durch Zärtlichkeit und Schmeicheln... Ich gehe doch rate ich dir”

Blonde – Jana McIntyre

Osmin - Matthew Anchel

Orfeo ed Euridice (Glück)

“Ecco un nuovo tormento... Che farò senza Euridice?”

Euridice – Teresa Castillo

Orfeo – Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen

Idomeneo (Mozart)

“Quando avran fine omai...Padre, germani, addio”

Ilia – Shannon Jennings

Il viaggio a Reims (Rossini)

“Sola ritrovo alfin...Nel suo divin sembiante”

Corinna – Teresa Castillo

Cavaliere Belfiore – Josh Lovell

Anna Bolena (Donizetti)

“Dio che mi vedi in core...Sul suo capo aggravi un Dio”

Anna Bolena – Mary Evelyn Hanglely

Giovanna Seymour – Taylor Raven

Les Troyens (Berlioz)

“Les Grecs ont disparu... Malheureux roi! Dans l'éternelle nuit”

Cassandre – Tara Curtis

Les contes d'Hoffmann (Offenbach)

“Elle a fui, la tourterelle!”

Antonia – Chelsey Geeting

Martha (Flotow)

“Nancy! Julia! Verweile!... Letzte Rose, wie magst du”

Lady Harriet – Yelena Dyachek

Lionel – Brian Michael Moore

Hänsel und Gretel (Humperdinck)

“Halt! Hokuspokus, Hexnschuss!”

Die Hexe – Boris Van Druff

Gretel – Chelsey Geeting

Hänsel – Alexandra Schenck

Don Giovanni (Mozart)

“Don Ottavio, son morta!... Orsai chi l'onore”

Donna Anna – Sarah Cambridge

Don Ottavio – Isaac Frishman

Billy Budd (Britten)

“Claggart! John Claggart! I'm not so easily deceived”

Captain Vere – Kyle van Schoonhoven

Billy Budd – Josh Quinn
Claggart – Matthew Anchel

Béatrice et Bénédict (Berlioz)

“Comment le dédain pourrait-il mourir?”

Béatrice – Alexandra Schenck

Bénédict – Amitai Pati

Trouble in Tahiti (Bernstein)

“There’s a law”

Sam – Cody Quattlebaum

La Cenerentola (Rossini)

“Ma dunque io sono un ex...Un segreto d’importanza”

Dandini – Josh Quinn

Don Magnifico – Nicholas Boragno

I Puritani (Bellini)

“Or dove fuggo io mai?...Ah, per sempre io ti perdei”

Riccardo – Josh Quinn

Die Fledermaus (J. Strauss)

“Herr Chevalier, ich grüsse sie!..Brüderlein, Brüderlein und Schwesterlein”

Eisenstein – Kyle van Schoonhoven

Frank – Cody Quattlebaum

Rosalinde – Mary Evelyn Hangley

Adele – Jana McIntyre

Ida – Teresa Castillo

Orlofsky – Taylor Raven

Falke – Andrew Manea

Chorus – tutti Merolini

Tickets are \$45 for Orchestra Premium and Grand Tier Premium, \$35 for Orchestra and Grand Tier, and \$25 for Dress Circle. Tickets can be purchased by calling the San Francisco Opera Box Office at (415) 864-3330 or by visiting sfopera.com.

A Merola Grand Night Mix pre-performance reception will be held in the War Memorial Veterans Building’s recently renovated Green Room from 6 to 7 pm, featuring an open wine bar and light nibbles. Tickets are \$25. A post-performance reception (10 pm) with the artists takes place in the Green Room. A separate \$50 ticket is required for admission to the post-performance reception. For reception tickets, please call the San Francisco Opera Box Office at (415) 864-3330.

The first Merola Grand Finale was held in 1957 as both a concert and an audition for San Francisco Opera’s general director. In 1976 the concert was opened to the public as the Merola artists’ final performance of the summer. Showcasing the progress made by the Merola artists during the course of the program and highlighting their unique talents, this year’s Merola Grand Finale will feature all 23 Merola 2016 singers. The five 2016 Merola apprentice coaches, Jonathan Brandani, John Elam, Noah Palmer, Nicolò Sbulz, and Jennifer Szeto, are involved in musical preparations for the concert.

Conductor **Rory Macdonald** has graced the podium of many of the world’s leading opera houses, including the Sydney Opera House, National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, Canadian Opera

Company, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, and San Francisco Opera. His extensive conducting engagements include the London Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, Hallé Orchestra, Wiener KammerOrchester, and Vancouver Symphony, among many other notable groups.

Merola 2016 Apprentice Stage Director **Aria Umezawa** is the Artistic Director of the Toronto-based independent opera company Opera 5, and the creator, director, and writer of the webseries “Opera Cheats.” As a lover of new and obscure operas, Umezawa has directed the Canadian premiere of several works including Milton Granger’s “Talk Opera,” Darren Russo’s “Storybook” (commissioned by Opera 5), and the North American premiere of Cavalli’s “Artemisia” (Helios Opera, Boston). She has been praised for her irreverent, post-modern, wondrous and quirky visual style.

ABOUT THE MEROLA OPERA PROGRAM

Led artistically by San Francisco Opera Center Director and internationally acclaimed soprano Sheri Greenawald, the [Merola Opera Program](#) is an independent nonprofit organization that operates in collaboration with 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 29 positions. Throughout the summer, the Merola artists participate in master classes and private coachings with opera’s most accomplished singers and performers. Participants, which include singers, apprentice coaches, and an apprentice stage director, also receive training in operatic repertory, foreign languages, diction, acting, and stage movement. The Merola program artists appear in public performances throughout the summer. The Merola Opera Program Summer Festival includes two staged operas, a scenes program, and a concert, accompanied by full orchestra.

Offered free of charge for all participants, the Merola Opera Program is unique in the industry in many ways. Merola is the only young artist program to provide financial support to developing artists for five years following participation. In the past year alone, more than \$150,000 was distributed to more than 100 artists, supporting their essential career development costs including coachings, language classes, and audition travel. In addition, only Merola graduates are considered for participation in San Francisco Opera’s Adler Fellowship program. In 2016, the Merola Opera Program has two returning Merola artists, Adelaide Boedecker, soprano (2014), and Tara Curtis, mezzo-soprano (2015).

Many Merola events are available only to members. Merola members enjoy the opportunity to sit in on select master classes and attend other special events with the young artists for a behind-the-scenes look at the training process. For information on how to join, visit [merola.org/join](#). This season, Merola is proud to announce the return of the *Merola ConneXion* program, which provides up to 50 full memberships to Northern California junior high and high school students, plus college undergraduate and graduate students. Each membership includes passes to Merola’s productions, master classes, and special events. Interested students can find the application on line by visiting [merola.org](#). For more information about the Merola Opera Program, please visit [merola.org](#) or call (415) 936-2324.

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

Saturday, August 20 at 7:30 pm

War Memorial Opera House, 301 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco

Merola Opera Program: Merola Grand Finale

Celebrate with the 2016 Merola young artists one last time before they head out to dazzle audiences around the world. Conductor Rory Macdonald will lead the orchestra and 2016 Merola Apprentice Stage

Director Aria Umezawa will stage the program, featuring scenes from some of opera's most thrilling moments, in works by Bizet, Bernstein, Donizetti, Offenbach, Mozart, J. Strauss, Puccini, Berlioz, Britten, Humperdinck, Flotow, Glück, and Rossini.

Tickets: \$45 Orchestra Premium & Grand Tier Premium, \$35 Orchestra and Grand Tier, \$25 Dress Circle. Tickets can be purchased by calling the San Francisco Opera Box Office at (415) 864-3330 or by visiting sfopera.com.

Receptions: The Merola Grand Night Mix pre-performance reception will be held in the War Memorial Veterans Building's recently renovated Green Room from 6 pm-7 pm, featuring an open wine bar and light nibbles. Tickets are \$25. A post-performance reception (10 pm) with the artists takes place in the Green Room. A separate \$50 ticket is required for admission to the post-performance reception. For reception tickets, please call the San Francisco Opera Box Office at (415) 864-3330.

PRESS: For information, contact Jean Catino Shirk at jean@shirkmedia.com or (510) 332-4195, or Rachel Krasner, Marketing & Events Assistant, at rkrasner@merola.org or (415) 936-2320. To download pictures of the 2016 Merola artists, visit <https://merolaoperaprogram.box.com/s/ffmfa2sj2wxxuko3aftgpxjle6oavy7h> or <https://merolaoperaprogram.app.box.com/s/ex5i5cuwjytwmkmkpqawt7lumh6qcbc/1/6257867329>

2016 Merola Opera Summer Festival *Calendar of Performances*

Thursday, July 21 at 7:30 pm and Saturday, July 23 at 2:00 pm
San Francisco Conservatory of Music, 50 Oak St., San Francisco
Merola Opera Program presents *Transformations* (Conrad Susa)
(performed in English with English supertitles)

Conductor - Neal Goren
Director - Roy Rallo
Scenic Design - Marsha Ginsberg
Costume Design - Christine Crook
Lighting Design - Jax Messenger
Hair/wig and Makeup Design - Marcelo Donari

#1, Princess/Gretel - Teresa Castillo
#2, Anne Sexton/Witch - Shannon Jennings
#3, Good Fairy/Witch - Chelsey Geeting
#4, Rumpelstiltskin/Truman Capote - Boris Van Druff
#5, Caged Man/Dog - Brian Michael Moore
#6, Prince/Fox/Hansel - Isaac Frishman
#7, Iron Hans/Wolf - Andrew G. Manea
#8, King/Hare - Matthew Anchel

What happens to your favorite Brothers Grimm fairy tale characters after they go into the woods? Composer Conrad Susa uses Anne Sexton's poetry to take an irreverent look at what happens after happily ever after.

Tickets: \$65 | \$45 | \$15 Students with ID. Tickets can be purchased by calling the San Francisco Opera Box Office at (415) 864-3330 or by visiting sfopera.com.

Thursday, August 4 at 7:30 pm and Saturday, August 6 at 2:00 pm

San Francisco Conservatory of Music, 50 Oak St., San Francisco

Merola Opera Program presents *Così fan tutte* (Mozart)

(performed in Italian with English supertitles)

Conductor – Mark Morash

Director – Ted Huffman

Scenic Design – Marsha Ginsberg

Costume Design – Christine Crook

Hair/wig and Makeup Design – Marcelo Donari

Ferrando – Amitai Pati

Guglielmo – Cody Quattlebaum

Don Alfonso – Josh Quinn

Fiordiligi – Yelena Dyachek

Dorabella – Alexandra Schenck

Despina – Adelaide Boedecker

Mozart's sharply observed take on romance and fidelity mixes sophisticated comedy and biting drama in a deliciously complex tale that asks the question - Is there such a thing as true love?

Tickets: \$65 | \$45 | \$15 Students with ID. Tickets can be purchased by calling the San Francisco Opera Box Office at (415) 864-3330 or by visiting sfopera.com.