



MEROLA OPERA PROGRAM PRESENTS
WORLD PREMIERE OF COMMISSIONED WORK
BY JAKE HEGGIE & GENE SCHEER

IF I WERE YOU

August 1-6, 2019 in San Francisco

WHAT: *If I Were You*, by distinguished American composer Jake Heggie and noted librettist Gene Scheer, will be the first-ever commissioned work in the Merola Opera Program's 62-year history. Loosely based on the novel *Si j'étais vous* by the French-American writer Julien Green, *If I Were You* is a contemporary story of identity with echoes of classical literature, from *Faust* to *Jekyll and Hyde*. The lead character is Fabian Hart, an aspiring writer who yearns for adventure and a way out of his stifling existence. Brittomara, a shape-shifting devil, appears to him in many guises, finally offering Fabian a supernatural power that will allow the writer to transfer his soul into other people's bodies, taking up the day-to-day existence of each host, while their displaced souls languish in a shadowy netherworld. Thus begins the journey of *If I Were You* as Fabian moves his increasingly lost soul from person to person in search of a better identity, leaving a trail of human wreckage and hollow shells. It will be conducted by Nicole Paiement, Founder and Artistic Director of Opera Parallèle, and directed by Keturah Stickann, known for bringing to stage new productions of *Orphée*, *Rigoletto*, and *La rondine*, among many others. *If I Were You* will be presented August 1-6 (times below) at the Herbst Theatre with two alternating casts.

WHERE: Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness Ave, San Francisco

SHOWS: 7:30pm, Thursday, August 1* – Herbst Theatre
2:00pm, Saturday, August 3** – Herbst Theatre
2:00pm, Sunday, August 4* – Herbst Theatre
7:30pm, Tuesday, August 6** – Herbst Theatre
*Pearl cast
**Emerald cast

TICKETS: \$35-\$80

Ticket discounts are available for groups of 10 or more. \$15 student tickets available in limited quantity in advance at San Francisco Opera Box Office.

INFO: For information or to order tickets visit <http://merola.org> or call the San Francisco Opera Box Office at **415-864-3330**. The box office is open Monday, 10:00am-5:00pm, and Tuesday through Friday, 10:00am-6:00pm.

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PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here:
<http://www.cbpr.co/press/IfIWereYou>