



**MEROLA OPERA PROGRAM PRESENTS**  
**DON GIOVANNI**

August 1 & 3 at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music  
Caroline H. Hume Concert Hall

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (12 June 2024) — **Merola Opera Program** continues its Summer Festival season with a fully staged production of *Don Giovanni*, Mozart’s vivid retelling of the Don Juan legend, with libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte. World-renowned soprano **Patricia Racette** (Merola ‘88), who captivated audiences at major opera houses around the world before launching her career as an in-demand director, returns to Merola to helm this production. Internationally acclaimed conductor **Stefano Sarzani** will make his Merola debut with this opera, set to one of Mozart’s richest and most lyrical scores. *Don Giovanni* combines comedy and tragedy, following an unrepentant rake who comes up against a trio of determined women and one implacable statue. *Don Giovanni*, the third production in the **Merola Opera Program’s** Summer Festival, will be presented at 7:30pm, Thursday, August 1, and 2:00pm, Saturday, August 3, at the **San Francisco Conservatory of Music Caroline H. Hume Concert Hall**, 50 Oak St., San Francisco. For more information or to purchase tickets (\$35/\$65 - single tickets, \$10 for ages 25 and under or those attending their first Merola production), visit [merola.org/summerfestival](https://merola.org/summerfestival) or call the San Francisco Box Office at **415-864-3330**.

*Don Giovanni*, which premiered on October 29, 1787, in Prague, features one of Mozart’s most acclaimed arias, “Madamina, il catalogo è questo,” as well as other favorites including “Non mi dir,” “Dalla sue pace,” and the love duet, “Là ci darem la mano.” The two-act opera follows the charismatic yet unscrupulous nobleman as he seduces and deceives his way through life, culminating in a chilling moment of retribution when he refuses to repent, and his fate is sealed.

Featured in this work are Merola artists baritone **Hyungjin Son** as Don Giovanni, soprano **Lydia Grindatto** as Donna Anna, soprano **Viviana Aurelia Goodwin** as Donna Elvira, bass-baritone **Donghoon Kang** as Leporello, soprano **Moriah Berry** as Zerlina, tenor **Michael John Butler** as

Don Ottavio, bass-baritone **Justice Yates** as Masetto, and bass-baritone **Benjamin R. Sokol** as the Commendatore.

The creative team assembled to bring Mozart's masterpiece to life includes **Patricia Racette** (Director), **Stefano Sarzani** (Conductor), **Andrew Boyce** (Scenic Designer), **Annie Smart** (Costume Designer), **David Tkach** (Lighting Designer), **Ian Winters** (Projection Designer), **Colm Seery** (Choreographer), and **Dave Maier** (Fight Director).

### **ABOUT DIRECTOR PATRICIA RACETTE**

**Patricia Racette** (Merola '88) has forged a major career as a vocalist in the most acclaimed opera houses and concert stages of the world for more than 30 years. More recently, her passion for the art form has expanded to the arenas of stage director and master teacher. As an internationally recognized soprano, she has sung leading roles at the major houses of the world, including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Royal Opera House, La Scala, Paris Opera, Gran Teatre del Liceu, Teatro Real, Bayerische Staatsoper, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Canadian Opera Company, Ravinia Festival, Houston Grand Opera, Dallas Opera, and San Diego Opera. She established herself as a great interpreter of Janáček and Puccini, gaining particular acclaim for her portrayals of the title roles of *Madama Butterfly*, *Tosca*, *Jenufa*, *Káťa Kabanová*, and all three lead soprano roles in *Il tritico*, and continued to make her mark in repertory expansion that includes triumphant portrayals of Strauss' *Salome*, Minnie in *La fanciulla del West*, Katerina in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Elle in *La voix humaine*, and Kostelnicka in *Jenufa*. She also made her mark on The Met: Live in HD series in *Madama Butterfly*, *Tosca*, *Pagliacci*, and *Peter Grimes* as well as appearing as a favorite host for multiple other productions and outreach programs. As a champion of new works, Racette has created roles in a number of world premieres: three works of Tobias Picker including her groundbreaking performance as *Emmeline* at Santa Fe Opera, Leslie Crosbie in Paul Moravec's *The Letter* at Santa Fe Opera, and Love Simpson in Carlisle Floyd's *Cold Sassy Tree* at Houston Grand Opera. She made her directorial debut with a new production of *La traviata* for Opera Theatre of St. Louis. She continues to be sought after for master classes and workshops to foster artistry in the next generation of classical singers. In January 2017, she presented the pilot program of her intensive seminar, Integrative Artistry, at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, which she subsequently offered at The Juilliard School and Washington National Opera. She also received a Grammy Award in 2017 for Best Opera Recording for her performance as Marie Antoinette in the Los Angeles Opera's production of John Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles*.

### **ABOUT CONDUCTOR STEFANO SARZANI**

**Stefano Sarzani** has worked extensively throughout the United States and Europe for some of the world's most prestigious opera companies including Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Salzburg Summer Festival, Zürich Opernhaus, San Francisco Opera, Den Jyske Opera of Denmark, and Opéra National de Lorraine in France. Sarzani has been part of the musical staff of Lyric Opera of Chicago since 2018. He also conducted for Opera Idaho, Des Moines Metro Opera, and the

Manhattan School of Music. Sarzani has collaborated on Atlanta Opera's *Das Rheingold*, Central City Opera's *Madama Butterfly* and *Billy Budd*; Michigan Opera Theater's *Hänsel und Gretel*, and Opera Maine's *Le nozze di Figaro*. His recent symphonic engagements include concerts with Civic Orchestra of Chicago, San Diego Symphony Orchestra, Symphony NH, Orchestra Filarmonica Marchigiana (Italy), Boise Philharmonic Orchestra, National Repertory Orchestra (Colorado), Orchestra Sinfonica di Sanremo (Italy), and Orchestra Bulgaria Classic. Sarzani's commitment to young musicians and singers brought him to collaborate with and conduct the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra, Ryan Opera Center in Chicago, Des Moines Metro Opera, Sarasota Opera, Classic Lyric Arts, Institute for Young Dramatic Voices, Accademia Lirica di Osimo, and the ensembles of the University of Memphis. He is a recipient of Career Assistance Awards from the Solti Foundation U.S., which also selected him for the Elizabeth Buccheri Opera Residency Program at both Lyric Opera of Chicago and Michigan Opera Theater.

### **ABOUT THE MEROLA OPERA PROGRAM**

The **Merola Opera Program** is widely regarded as the foremost opera training program for aspiring singers, pianists, and stage directors. Merola nurtures the opera stars of tomorrow through master classes and private coaching with opera's most accomplished singers, conductors, and directors. Participants also receive training in operatic repertoire, languages, diction, acting, stage movement, and professional development. Offered free of charge to all participants, the Merola Opera Program is unique in the industry in many ways. It is the only young artist program to provide financial support to developing artists for five years following their participation, offering aid for essential career development expenses including coaching, language classes, and audition travel. Since Carrie-Ann Matheson and Markus Beam formed the new Merola artistic team in 2021, the program has redoubled its efforts to provide exciting new curricula and added focus on preparing the burgeoning artists for extramusical aspects of a performance career. Learn more at [merola.org](http://merola.org).

### **FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:**

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**WHEN:** 7:30pm, Thursday, August 1 & 2:00pm, Saturday, August 3

**WHERE:** **San Francisco Conservatory of Music Caroline H. Hume Concert Hall**  
50 Oak St., San Francisco

**TICKETS:** \$35/\$65 (single tickets), \$10 (ages 25 and under or those attending their first Merola production with code MEROLANEW)

Ticket discounts are available for groups of 10 or more. Group Sales can be contacted at 415-621-4403.

**INFO:** For more information or to order tickets, please visit [merola.org/summerfestival](http://merola.org/summerfestival) or call the San Francisco Box Office at **415-864-3330**. The box office is open Monday, 10:00am-5:00pm, and Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00am-6:00pm (Saturday phones only). The Group Sales 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:  
[https://cbpr.co/press/merola\\_dongiovanni](https://cbpr.co/press/merola_dongiovanni)