

CALIFORNIA OPERA

SUMMER OPERA FESTIVAL



Hanna Staley, Soprano Dr. Harvey Edmonds, Tenor Dr. Marshall Flam, Tenor Dr. Don Gaede, Baritone Ericka Kruse, Soprano

Doctors in Concert

August 3* Saturday * 7 PM

THE BIG RED CHURCH

2131 North Van Ness * Fresno * 93704

Boris Nixon, Cello
Timothy Leon, Piano

Dr. John and Avis Ambrose
Dr. Asia Smith, Soprano * Michelle Ryan, Soprano
Laura Castro, Soprano * Camryn Deisman, Mezzo-Soprano

Don Giovanni (Mozart) * La Boheme (Puccini)
Alcina (Handel) * Pearl Fishers (Bizet) * Dido and Aeneas (Purcell)
Beauty and the Beast * Cats * Merry Widow * My Fair Lady

Admission is Free with Welcome Donations
to benefit the neuroscience care of Community Health System

www.CaliforniaOpera.Org

CAL-OPER(A) * 559-225-6737

Doctors in Concert

Edna Garabedian, General Artistic Director

Timothy Leon, Collaborative Pianist

Act I

Dr. Asia Smith
Gospel Medley

Ton coeur n'a pas compris (Pearl Fishers by Bizet)
Dr. Harvey Edmonds and Hanna Staley, Soprano

Tornami a vagheggiar (Alcina by Handel)
Ericka Kruse, Soprano

Ideale by Tosti
Dr. Harvey Edmonds and Boris Nixon, Cello

Là ci darem la mano (Don Giovanni by Mozart)
Dr. Don Gaede and Ericka Kruse

Mi Chiamano Mimi (La Boheme by Puccini)
Dr. Avis Ambrose, Soprano

O Soave Fanciulla (La Boheme by Puccini)
Dr. Harvey Edmonds and Dr. Avis Ambrose

“Dido and Aeneas”

Purcell’s Highlights with Camryn Deisman (Dido), Dr. Don Gaede (Aeneas)
Hanna Staley (Belinda), Laura Castro (Second Woman), Ericka Kruse (Witch)

Intermission

Act II

If I Can’t Love Her from “Beauty and the Beast” * Dr. Don Gaede
I’ve Grown Accustomed to Her Face from “My Fair Lady” * Dr. John Ambrose

Memory from “Cats” * Dr. Avis Ambrose

Mi Mancherai from “Il Postino” * Dr. Harvey Edmonds

Torna a Surriento by de Curtis * Dr. John Ambrose

Stranger in Paradise from “Kismet” * Dr. Marshall Flam

Off to Chez Maxims from “Merry Widow” * Dr. John Ambrose

Try to Remember from “Fantasticks” * Dr. Marshall Flam

A Change in Me from “Beauty and the Beast” * Dr. Don Gaede

Can’t Help Falling in Love * Dr. Marshall Flam

I Believe by E. Levi

Dr. Harvey Edmonds

Laura Castro, Camryn Deisman, Ericka Kruse

Michelle Ryan, Dr. Asia Smith, Hanna Staley



Camryn Deisman (Mezzo-Soprano) is completing her Bachelors of Music Education and Voice at UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music. From Visalia, Camryn has performed in several musicals, including Footloose, Once upon a Mattress, Shrek, and The Wizard of Oz. Camryn has made her California Opera debut in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* while planning for upcoming performances.

Hanna Staley

Returning from her California Opera debut in Bellini's *Norma*, Hanna is a senior voice performance major attending Fresno Pacific University. Recital and choral performances have been at the Idyllwild Arts Festival at the Walt Disney Concert Hall, and she has travelled to Germany, Washington DC, and New York City, performing at Carnegie Hall and at the Sydney Opera House in Honors Performance Series.



Laura Castro, soprano, discovered her love for opera accidentally. After finding herself in choir due to a scheduling mix-up in her first year of high school, Laura became forever immersed in the world of music. Laura studied with esteemed professionals, including Dr. Errik Hood, Dr. Maria Briggs, and Dr. Anthony Radford. At Fresno State, she earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in music, with an emphasis in vocal performance, graduating in the spring of 2024. During her time at Fresno State, she performed the role of Mother in the university's fall 2023 production of *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and the Mother in the spring 2023 production of *Hansel and Gretel*. Additionally, Laura sang in several opera scenes and programs at Fresno State, including *The Marriage of Figaro* (Countess), *The Grapes of Wrath* (Rosasharn), *The Rape of Lucretia* (Lucretia), and Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*. With other university programs, she was featured in scenes from Bizet's *Carmen* (Mercédès) and Menotti's *The Consul* (Magda). Laura is very excited to be making her debut with California Opera.

Ericka Kruse, Soprano

Ericka Kruse is a multidisciplinary artist who has been featured in several theatrical productions and films, including one of the first national productions of “Madagascar: A Musical Adventure” (Skipper), and the world premiere of “The Garden” (Eve), loosely based on the biblical story of Adam and Eve. Ericka can be seen in the YouTube web series “Black Girl Single” (Puja) and recently performed in the audio play “House of Dogs” (Taryn), available on the LA Theatre Bites website. She enjoys singing in a variety of styles and holds a Bachelor’s (B.Mus.) from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and a Master’s (M.Mus.) from Ohio University. Ericka became a new mom exactly 6 months ago - “Happy 6 months, Toussaint!” - and is hoping to publish her first book of a children’s book series this year.



Timothy León



A uniquely diverse artist, equally adept as an operatic tenor, a conductor and a pianist. He specializes in Italian repertoire singing lead roles in Norma, La Traviata, Don Giovanni, and Madama Butterfly, featured with such companies as Los Angeles Philharmonic, LA Opera, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Pacific Chorale, Pacific Repertory Opera, Golden State Pops Orchestra, Nevada Opera Theater and in Europe with Opera Toscana, New Operafestival di Roma and Tuscia Operafestival. Maestro León conducts opera and concert music and his credits include Pagliacci and Suor Angelica for StageWorks Festival in D.C., Le Nozze di Figaro, La Traviata, Suor Angelica, La Boheme in Italy for Tuscia Operafestival, as well Stabat Mater of Pergolesi, Esultate Jubilate of Mozart, the International Lyric Academy of Rome

and Viterbo and served as Artistic Advisor and Conductor for Tuscia OperaFestival, Pacific Opera Project, Redlands Bowl Summer Music Festival, Pacific Repertory Opera, and the Narnia Festival in Italy, and has conducted, performed with, and directed several California Opera programs. He has maintained private vocal and opera studios in Los Angeles and Denver, and currently is expanding his support to better reach the Fresno artistic community!

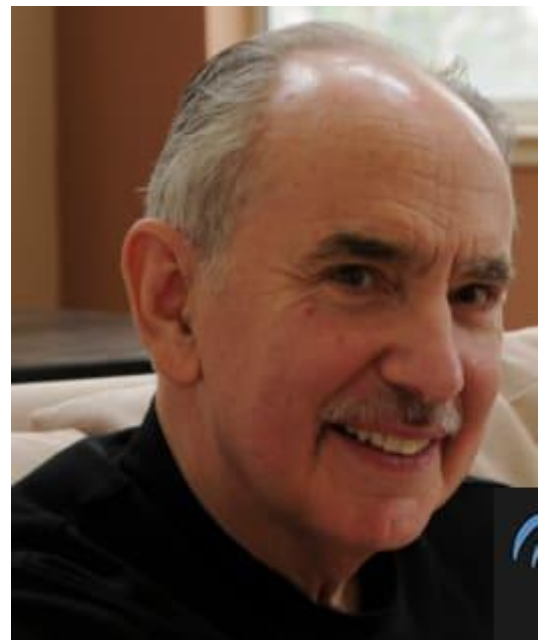


Dr. Don Gaede (Baritone) has enjoyed performing with California Opera, Roger Rocka's, and has been a major supporter and participant in the Fresno opera scene. He sings several different styles of music ranging from jazz to opera, and recently completed an album of lullabies, inspired by his 2 grandchildren. Don attended UCSB where he was in the Schubertians singing group. For Fresno Opera companies, he has performed several lead and supporting roles, and sang in the choir at his Unitarian Universalist Church putting on solo and ensemble performances in numerous venues throughout the city including a performances to benefit many charitable causes. He has participated in the Doctor's Concert since 2015. From Fresno, Dr.

Gaede completed his undergraduate work at the UC Santa Barbara then graduated in the top 10% of his Loma Linda University School of Medicine class. Dr. Gaede completed his internship and residency in Internal Medicine then a fellowship in Vascular Medicine at the renowned Cleveland Clinic specializing in vascular and circulation disease, advancing techniques in ultrasound and sclerotherapy.

Dr. Harvey Edmonds (Baritenor)

Performing with the University Choir and Men's Glee Club at UC Berkeley, later establishing the California Opera Guild as President, Harvey presented neuro-musicology lectures for festival artists. Dr. Edmonds specializes in brain and spinal cord diseases, after attending UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine. In Fresno, he sang with the professional High Holiday Choir for 7 years then began studying operatic technique. Dr. Edmonds performed King Melchior in Amahl and the Night Visitors, Mr. Gobineau in The Medium, Buff in The Impresario, Schlendrian in The Coffee Cantata,



Peter in Hansel and Gretel, Thomas Bouche in Down in the Valley, and Dr. Grenvil in La Traviata. As a Tenor, he performed King Kaspar in Amahl and the Night Visitors, and participated in the California Opera Arts and Education Festival concert series. He gave his first recital at Erna's Elderberry House in where he performed 14 arias and duets in Italian, French, German, and Russian. In 2015 at the inaugural DOCTORS at the MET concert he sang as Don Carlo, selections from Verdi's Don Carlo. Thereafter, Dr. Edmonds entertained audiences with selections from the role of the Duke in Rigoletto to the Phantom from Phantom of the Opera.

Dr. Marshall Flam (Tenor) is well-known

among medical circles and is now retired from his renowned practice in Hematology and Oncology in Fresno, also board certified in Internal Medicine, continues his passion for the opera arts and musical performance. Dr. Flam graduated from State University of New York Downstate Medical University and completed his residency at University of Colorado. He completed fellowships at the University Utah Med Center and Dana Farber Cancer Center. He served in teaching capacities with the University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine as an Associate Clinical Professor as he contributed meaningful research studies, manuscripts, and publications to several significant medical journals. Dr. Flam began with the California Opera during the inaugural performance of what became the annual Doctors Concert, which marked the first of many wonderful musical performances and artistic collaborations ahead. With the California Opera Association, Dr. Flam continues his ongoing support for the development of the Fresno fine arts and cultural landscape and wellness through nourishment of the mind, body, and spirit.



Dr. Asia Smith Fresno, comes from a unique blend of traditional and contemporary creative styles. She uses this exciting blend to bring a fresh wind to the artistic world. Her educational background and lifetime experience has enabled her to equip, empower, and encourage the people she comes in contact with. She inspires others to view life from a different perspective and offers new and innovative ways to consider creative thinking and expression. Dr. Asia's passion is the development of the whole person. She is always working to motivate others while giving them distinctive tools and strategies to apply to any situation. Asia considers it an honor to have obtained an Associate of Theology, Bachelors in Music Performance & Biblical Studies, Masters in Ministry, Doctorate in Divinity, and her PhD in Biblical Counseling. Dr. Asia Smith loves music, reading and living life!

Avis Ambrose (Lyric Soprano)

Avis resides in the Fresno area with her husband Dr. John Ambrose and performed with Fresno opera groups, including roles in *Così fan tutte*, *Macbeth*, *Rigoletto*, *Marriage of Figaro*, *Magic Flute*, *Carmen*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Manon Lescaut*, *Madame Butterfly*, *La Traviata*, *La Bohème*, *Aida*, and *La Cenerentola*. She performed in oratorio, special events in Fresno, and with the opera choruses of Fresno and Taconic Operas. Avis also performed as a vocal artist with BB King and in NYC as well as with recordings and children's theatre. Avis has performed with the Doctor's concert since it first began as an annual tradition.



Dr. John Ambrose



Dr. John Ambrose is an internationally renowned expert in coronary artery disease and is one of the great pioneers in acute coronary syndromes. He published extensively and laid the foundation for current theories on unstable angina, myocardial infarction and the vulnerable plaque, among others. Before coming to Fresno, Dr. Ambrose was the Director of the Cardiovascular Center at the Saint Vincent Catholic Medical Centers in Manhattan. Before that, he was the Director of Cardiac Catheterization at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York. He's been included in every edition of "Best Doctors in

America." Dr. Ambrose sang professionally in New York and continues to sing with his wife. While medicine is his first love, he has always been interested in music. He was an accomplished classical guitarist in New York City and gave a solo guitar concert at the New York Classical Guitar Society in 1980. He sang with his wife in the Taconic opera in New York and for several years in Fresno. He was a featured soloist with the Fresno opera chorus and is grateful to continue this passion for opera with California Opera.



Edna Garabedian, Dramatic Mezzo-Soprano, as opera founder, master teacher, coach, and stage director has performed to critical and popular acclaim in the United States and throughout Europe and Asia. Ms. Garabedian is widely well known to opera audiences, as a world-renowned mezzo-soprano and leading lady of opera, performing and directing across the world's finest opera stages. Ms. Garabedian most recently stage-directed operas in Italy, Romania, Mexico, and California after completing production for two Hollywood films, and appeared in with the National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia. Just a few of the companies with which she has performed opera's favorite lead roles include: Munich Opera, Frankfurt Opera, Kassel Opera, Nurnberg Opera, Hannover Opera, Staatsoper Bonn, the Spoleto Festival, New York City Opera, San Francisco Opera, Los Angeles Music Center Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Seattle Opera, Houston Opera, San Diego Opera, Baltimore Opera, Kansas City Lyric Opera and Portland Opera. These roles have included

Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Amneris in *Aida*, Azucena in *Il Trovatore*, Grangane in *Tristan und Isolde*, Klytemnestra in *Elektra*, Herodias in *Salome*, Eboli in *Don Carlos*, Kontchakovna in *Prince Igor*. At the Hannover Opera, she performed Amneris and the title role of *Carmen*. Ms. Garabedian is notably acclaimed for Czech Opera to which her repertoire includes Kabanicha in *Katya Kabanova* with the Los Angeles Music Center Opera. Ms. Garabedian made several profound debuts including the Spoleto Festival as Agatha in Menotti's *Maria Golovin*, Edmonton Opera as Katisha in *The Mikado* and Virginia Opera as Madam Flora in *The Medium*, and Waltraute in *Die Walkure* for Florentine Opera. Ms. Garabedian recently completed a Fest contract with the Staatsoper Bonn at the invitation of Gian Carlo Del Manaco singing all three roles in *Il Trittico*, the Mother and the Nexe and Gertrude in *Hansel and Gretel*, Wowkle in *Fanciulla del West*, Herodias in *Salome*, Emilia in *Otello* and Kostelnicha in *Jenufa*. She has numerous awards to her credit including winner of the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, Baltimore Opera Auditions, and Nationals of the Metropolitan Opera competitions. Ms. Garabedian has taught at the International Music Institute of Sao Paulo, Brazil, has been Chairman of Voice and Opera at the University of Connecticut and University of the Pacific, and served as Professor of Voice on faculty of Northern Illinois University, California State University at Fresno, American University and San Francisco University. Recently, Ms. Garabedian has been appointed Ambassador of International Artistic Exchange and as Artistic Director of Opera Company of Hangzhou, in the capital of Zhejiang province, Republic of China where she directed *Carmen* and returned to Taiwan for further artistic development of the provinces. Ms. Garabedian continues as Artistic Director for the San Francisco's Golden Gate Opera productions with recent features of *Carmen*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Suor Angelica*, *Pagliacci*, and *Hansel and Gretel*. She recently directed *Gianni Schicchi* in Romania and additional works in Italy. As founder of the Fresno Grand Opera and as CEO and Artistic Director of California Opera Association in Fresno, Ms. Garabedian directed *La Traviata*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Il Trovatore*, *Carmen*, *La Sonnambula*, *The Magic Flute*, *Hansel and Gretel*, and several cantatas and opera buffa works, along with many of Menotti's operas including *Maria Golovin*, *The Consul*, *The Medium*, *Old Maid and the Thief*, and the *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and *Chip and His Dog* for children. Ms. Garabedian has been integral in promoting the premieres of contemporary operas, such as Victor Kioulaphides' *Silver Swan*, Paul Stuarts' *Kill Bear Comes Home* and the *Sisters of Manzanar* and *The Peacock Princess* composed by Maestro Zang Zong. As an adjudicator for many major music competitions, she recently judged the United States International Chinese Music Competition and the Leoncavallo Competition in Italy. As a coach and master teacher, Ms. Garabedian also provides private consultations and masterclass tours, and her own private students have progressed to grand prize competitions and performances at the Metropolitan Opera in New York and Teatro alla Scala. She has been revered for her therapeutic work with challenging and rehabilitating voices, and for her emphasis on role and repertoire development, stage deportment, dramatic presentation, vocal pedagogy and technique, physical strengthening, musicality, and command of the Italian, German, Russian, Czech, Armenian, Spanish, and English languages.

SUMMER FESTIVAL OPERA

California Opera Association embraces the following objectives:

- collaborating to support and sustain the influence of western classical music and international traditions on the tapestry of our global society
- presenting affordable, high-quality traditional, contemporary, and premiere works in ways that are innovative and meaningful
- appealing to dedicated opera fans and first-time opera interests
- promoting good will and community involvement through outreach, education, and the participation of children and families in the arts
- providing support for emerging talent, from youth artists just starting out to internationally recognized stage veterans, to impart role and repertoire development, stage experience, career advancement, and exposure.

California Opera Chorus and the Opera Guild are inviting new members. The chorus is booming beautifully, as they have been rehearsing weekly to bring audiences lively opera ensemble experiences. California Opera welcomes new voices and embraces fresh ideas each week. Similarly, the California Opera Guild continues with the goals of enhancing membership, cultivating leadership, and supporting volunteerism to improve opera-tune-ities in Fresno. Please call 225-6737 (CAL-OPERA) or email californiaoperaguild@gmail.com for more information about how to join the chorus or the guild today!

MAJOR SUMMER OPERA SPONSORS: Opera in Fresno is made possible by the major support from grants, foundations, companies, and individuals' gracious donations. The promotion of greater interest in, exposure to, and attendance of opera in Fresno, is made possible in part by Conductor's Circle Donor Kaye Bonner Cummings of the BONNER FAMILY FOUNDATION, EECU of Fresno, Frank & Jamie Bonetto, Av Daniels, Carmen Eanni of Miles, Sears & Eanni, Dr. & Mrs. William Podolsky, Dr. Don Gaede, Dr. Harvey Edmonds, Drs. Marshall & Ximena Flam, Dr. & Mrs. Stanley George, with Dr. John & Dr. Avis Ambrose, Dr. Ron Llenado, Mr. and Mrs. Jack & Lureline Bickel. We extend our special appreciation to Fresno City College, California Arts Academy, Dianna's Dance Studio, Simba School of Music, and The Big Red Church of Fresno. Heartfelt gratitude for home hosts David Fox, Bill Wolfmann, and Bob Boro, volunteers, and most especially all the individual contributors, members, and businesses in support of the California Opera Guild under the direction of Boris and Diane Nixon with the leadership of Nicolas and Madeline Esquivel, Julianna Moore, Raffi and Deborah Soghomonian, Larry Barber, and Joyce, Gerry and Jenny Eden.

Thank you all for your enduring commitment to the opera arts!

It is through your enduring love for the arts that opera flourishes in Fresno!

~ Edna Garabedian