



SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA

*OPERA BALL AND OPENING NIGHT CONCERT INAUGURATE
SAN FRANCISCO OPERA'S SECOND CENTURY*



Roberto Alagna and Aleksandra Kurzak; Eun Sun Kim with the San Francisco Opera Orchestra; *Opera Ball 2022*
Photos (l to r): Lukasz Rajchert, Kristen Loken, Drew Altizer Photography

Opera's Dazzling Couple, Roberto Alagna and Aleksandra Kurzak,
Open Company's 101st Season on Sep. 8 with an *Opening Night Concert*
Conducted by Music Director Eun Sun Kim

Opera Ball: The Elixir of Opera Festivities Take Place in
San Francisco City Hall and the Opera House

Opening Weekend Celebrations Include Free *Opera in the Park*, Sep. 10

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (August 31, 2023) — To inaugurate San Francisco Opera's second century, the Company and San Francisco Opera Guild jointly present *Opera Ball* on Friday, September 8, 2023. This festive evening, titled *The Elixir of Opera*, includes a reception, dinner and after-party in San Francisco's City Hall along with a celebratory *Opening Night Concert* in the War Memorial Opera House. As the evening's musical centerpiece, the concert features Caroline H. Hume Music Director Eun Sun Kim and the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus with star soloists Roberto Alagna and Aleksandra Kurzak. *Opera Ball 2023* is co-chaired by Francesca Gutierrez Amann and Sue Graham Johnston and proceeds from the benefit gala support the artistic and educational initiatives of San Francisco Opera and San Francisco Opera Guild.

Known throughout the world of opera for his “commitment and brightly shining tone” (*New York Times*) in an artistic resume encompassing the art form’s greatest stage heroes, superstar tenor Roberto Alagna makes his first appearance with the Company in the *Opening Night Concert*. The 101st season-opening event marks the return of soprano Aleksandra Kurzak to the War Memorial Opera House following her 2012 Company debut as Gilda in Giuseppe Verdi’s *Rigoletto* which the *San Francisco Chronicle* hailed as “nothing short of remarkable.” The husband-and-wife duo, who have been touted opera’s “power couple,” will perform a program of operatic arias and duets with selections from Mascagni’s *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Saint-Saëns’ *Samson et Dalila*, Leoncavallo’s *Pagliacci* and Puccini’s *Tosca* and *Manon Lescaut*, along with popular songs and other favorites. San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow Olivia Smith will join the couple for an excerpt from *Cavalleria Rusticana*.

Beginning at 5 p.m., *Opera Ball* guests arrive on the red carpet and promenade to a festive cocktail reception in the Beaux-Arts rotunda of San Francisco’s City Hall, transformed by event designer J. Riccardo Benavides. A lavish culinary experience created by the local chefs of McCalls Catering & Events will follow at 6 p.m. Guests then make their way across Van Ness Avenue to the War Memorial Opera House for the 8 p.m. 101st season *Opening Night Concert* with Roberto Alagna, Aleksandra Kurzak, Music Director Eun Sun Kim and the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus. After the last calls of “bravi!” ring out in the auditorium, the after-party at City Hall awaits. Attendees can dance the night away to live music or lounge with their elixir of choice, sweet and savory bites and enjoy the revelry.

This year, a special *Cocktail Dinner Celebration* will be offered in partnership with the BRAVO! Club that includes the dinner reception, concert and after-party (BRAVO! Club membership is not required for the *Cocktail Dinner Celebration* package).

Tickets packages for the *Opening Night Concert* with After-Party, as well as concert-only tickets, are also available.

LIVESTREAM: *Opening Night Concert*, September 8 at 8 p.m. PT

The *Opening Night Concert* will be livestreamed (no on-demand access is available for this concert). Livestream tickets are available now for \$27.50. For more information visit sfopera.com/digital/livestream.

OPENING WEEKEND OF THE 2023–24 SEASON

The opening weekend festivities of San Francisco Opera's 101st season continue after the *Opera Ball* and *Opening Night Concert* on Friday, September 8:

OPERA IN THE PARK: Sunday, September 10 at 1:30 p.m.



Opera in the Park. Photos: Drew Altizer Photography

On Sunday, September 10, Robin Williams Meadow in Golden Gate Park is the alfresco setting for *San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park*. The annual free concert is conducted by Music Director Eun Sun Kim and features the San Francisco Opera Orchestra with soloists from the fall season. Bring a picnic and enjoy a musical day in the park at this beloved Bay Area tradition.

FLOWER PIANO, Saturday, September 9

San Francisco Opera will participate at *Flower Piano*, the popular outdoor event featuring 12 pianos at the San Francisco Botanical Garden in Golden Gate Park. On Saturday, September 9 from 3-4 p.m., San Francisco Opera pianist Ronny Michael Greenberg will perform virtuosic piano arrangements of grand opera and operetta, paired with Impressionistic works that capture the serenity of the garden. Presented by Gardens of Golden Gate Park and Sunset Piano, *Flower Piano* is free with a ticket to the San Francisco Botanical Garden (1199 9th Avenue). For complete program and ticket information, visit sfbg.org/flowerpiano.

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TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Ticket packages for *Opera Ball 2023: The Elixir of Opera* range from \$1,500 to \$10,000 for individuals with the option to purchase a table seating 10 (some ticket levels are sold out). For more information, visit sfopera.com/operaball.

Tickets for the BRAVO! Club's Cocktail Dinner Celebration range from \$375–\$650 (some ticket levels are sold out).

Tickets for the *Opening Night Concert* with After-Party range from \$250 to \$400 (some ticket levels are sold out).

Tickets for the *Opening Night Concert* only are \$30–\$300.

For tickets, visit sfopera.com, call (415) 864-3330 or visit the Box Office in the lobby of the War Memorial Opera House at 301 Van Ness Avenue.

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ABOUT THE OPERA BALL 2023 CO-CHAIRS

Francesca Gutierrez Amann is president of Town & Country Club, the fifth-oldest women's club in the United States, and she also serves on the Board of the San Francisco Opera Guild and the Board of Trustees of Vassar College. She is a founding member of the Golden Gate Chapter of National Charity League, a mother-daughter service group in San Francisco. Her professional career was spent in Silicon Valley working in high-tech sales. Amann is a competitive runner on the Impala Racing Team. She was a history major at Vassar College and received an MBA from the Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley.

Sue Graham Johnston is a member of the Board of Directors of the San Francisco Opera Association, where she serves as chair of the Audit Committee and vice-chair of the Directors & Officers Committee. She is on the Advisory Board of the Boston Museum of Science, leading major fundraising efforts for new programming supporting girls and women in STEM. A former CEO, startup executive and technology leader with a passion for manufacturing and digital transformation, Johnston's roles have taken her to Europe, Africa and Asia. She holds a BS in Mechanical Engineering & Product Design, an MS in Manufacturing Systems Engineering and an MBA from Stanford University. She and her husband, Eric, have been active wish granters with Make-A-Wish Bay Area, including being Batman and the Damsel in Distress for Batkid in 2013.

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OPENING NIGHT CONCERT

Friday, September 8, 2023 at 8 p.m.

War Memorial Opera House

301 Van Ness Avenue

San Francisco, CA 94102

Aleksandra Kurzak, soprano

Roberto Alagna, tenor

Olivia Smith, soprano

Eun Sun Kim, conductor

San Francisco Opera Orchestra (Kay Stern, Concertmaster)

San Francisco Opera Chorus (John Keene, Chorus Director)

PROGRAM (approximately 110 minutes)

(subject to change)

"Regina Coeli ... Innegiamo" from *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Pietro Mascagni)

Aleksandra Kurzak, San Francisco Opera Chorus

"Tu qui Santuzza" from *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Mascagni)

Aleksandra Kurzak, Roberto Alagna, Olivia Smith

Intermezzo from *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Mascagni)

San Francisco Opera Orchestra

"Un jour de nous tu détournas ta face ... Arrêtez ô mes frères ... Et nous rend l'espérance" from *Samson et Dalila* (Camille Saint-Saëns)

Roberto Alagna, San Francisco Opera Chorus

Bacchanale from *Samson et Dalila* (Saint-Saëns)
San Francisco Opera Orchestra

"Vissi d'arte" from *Tosca* (Giacomo Puccini)
Aleksandra Kurzak

"Recitar ... Vesti la giubba" from *Pagliacci* (Ruggero Leoncavallo)
Roberto Alagna

"Tu, tu, amore? Tu?" from *Manon Lescaut* (Giacomo Puccini)
Aleksandra Kurzak, Roberto Alagna

"La Spagnola" (Vincenzo Di Chiara)
Aleksandra Kurzak, Roberto Alagna

"Be My Love" (Nicholas Brodsky)
Aleksandra Kurzak, Roberto Alagna

"Cielito lindo" (Quirino Mendoza y Cortés)
Aleksandra Kurzak, Roberto Alagna

"Libertà" (David Alagna)
Aleksandra Kurzak, Roberto Alagna

"Lippen Schweigen" from *The Merry Widow* (Franz Lehár)
Aleksandra Kurzak, Roberto Alagna

"Funiculi funiculà" (Luigi Denza)
Aleksandra Kurzak, Roberto Alagna

"Libiamo" from *La Traviata* (Giuseppe Verdi)
Aleksandra Kurzak, Roberto Alagna, San Francisco Opera Chorus

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE PRESENTS OPERA IN THE PARK
Free Concert Celebrating the Opening of San Francisco Opera's 101st season
sfopera.com/operainthepark.

Sunday, September 10, 2023, 1:30pm
Robin Williams Meadow, Golden Gate Park

Eun Sun Kim, conductor
Stars from San Francisco Opera's Fall Season
San Francisco Opera Orchestra (Kay Stern, concertmaster)
Emcee: Matthew Shilvock, San Francisco Opera General Director

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San Francisco Chronicle Presents Opera in the Park is made possible, in part, by Opening Week Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey. Additional support provided by William and Gretchen Kimball Fund and Kaiser Permanente. Presenting sponsor is the San Francisco Chronicle. Radio partner is Classical KDFC. San Francisco Opera also extends special thanks to San Francisco Recreation & Parks and the San Francisco Parks Alliance.

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PRESS PHOTOS: High-resolution, downloadable artist headshots and event images are available at sfopera.com/press.

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