

## PROGRAM

Verdi

**Otello**

*Opera in Four Acts, sung in Italian  
with English Supertitles*

**Act I: The harbor of Cyprus**

**Act II: A chamber in the castle**

Intermission

**Act III: The great hall of the  
castle**

**Act IV: Desdemona's chamber**

**Cast**

OTELLO: Carl Tanner, tenor  
DESDEMONA: Kelebogile Besong, soprano  
IAGO: Stephen Powell, baritone

EMILIA: Margaret Lattimore, mezzo soprano  
CASSIO: Norman Shankle, tenor  
RODERIGO: Eric Barry, tenor

LODOVICO: John Paul Huckle, bass  
MONTANO: Jeffrey Mattsey, baritone  
HERALD: Kerry Wilkerson, bass baritone

DANCERS: Sophia Oddi and Kayla Aguila  
CHOREOGRAPHER: Sophia Oddi

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—  
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**This concert is being recorded for broadcast on  
Sunday, July 31, 2022 at 7 p.m. on Classical KUSC.**

*Performance at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts  
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall*

2021-22 Hal & Jeanette Segerstrom Family  
Foundation Classical Series

## VERDI'S OTELLO

**Preview talk with Dr. Jacob Sustaita @ 7 p.m.**

**Thursday, April 7, 2022 @ 8 p.m.**

**Saturday, April 9, 2022 @ 8 p.m.**

**Tuesday, April 12, 2022 @ 8 p.m.**

Carl St. Clair, conductor  
Robert Neu, stage director  
Pacific Chorale, Robert Istad, artistic director  
Pacific Symphony  
Southern California Children's Chorus,  
Lori Loftus, founding director  
Pacific Symphony

### **Creative Team**

Go Button Productions, scenic designer  
Katie Wilson, costume designer  
Ora Jewell-Busche, wig and makeup designer  
Kathy Pryzgod, lighting designer  
Emily Yoder, properties coordinator  
Chadwick Creative Arts, Supertitles

This production of *Otello* is generously  
underwritten, in part, by

**The Janet Curci Family Foundation**  
**Drs. Hana and Francisco J. Ayala**  
**Honorable H. Warren and Janet Siegel**  
**Mark Nielsen**  
**The Isadore C. and Penny W. Myers Foundation**

Pacific Symphony's Opera-Vocal Initiative  
is sponsored by **Opera FOCUS**

# PROGRAM NOTES

## **Otello** **Opera in Four Acts** **Music by Giuseppe Verdi** **Libretto by Arrigo Boito** **Based upon the play *Othello*** **by William Shakespeare**

### **Verdi, *Otello* and Shakespeare**

"Ecco il leone!" sneers the exultant, villainous Iago as the fallen Otello writhes at his feet at the end of Act III. "Behold the lion!" Though his words are ironic, they could've been a fitting tribute for the great Giuseppe Verdi when he was composing *Otello* around 1886. Then in his seventies, he was the national hero who all but dominated Italian arts and letters. He was revered the world over. But he was also in retirement, jealous of his privacy, and a bit of a grouch. About the last thing he wanted was another big project. Even so, the writer Arrigo Boito knew how to tempt him: with a libretto based on Shakespeare's *Othello*. Revamped for the opera house, Boito's schema for *Otello* is faithful to the original, but reorders events to streamline and clarify the action. Boito knew that once Verdi saw the libretto, he would be hooked. But he couldn't know that the result would be one of the greatest operas ever written, and perhaps the greatest transcription of any Shakespeare play into another form of art.



*Otello* is special for many reasons, especially because Shakespeare was special to Verdi. He passionately admired Shakespeare's plays throughout his adult life, and while they inspired him, their allure was also dangerous. Verdi's opera *Macbeth* (1847), despite flashes of brilliance, does not succeed in capturing the fullness of Shakespeare's Scottish play in music. After that, he wrestled with the bard's monumental *King Lear* for decades, never progressing beyond musical sketches. During his most productive years he had greater success adapting works by other great writers, such as Victor Hugo (for *Rigoletto*, 1851) and Alexandre Dumas (for *La Traviata*, 1852).

When Verdi produced these operas, modern-day Italy was just emerging as a unified nation, and his success reached into every facet of Italian life and culture; his operas dominated the country's national art form and made him its most famous citizen. And yet, he was often melancholy and sometimes irritable, especially toward the end of his career, when it seemed that the tide of music history might leave him behind. By the 1870s, Wagner's revolutionary music dramas had taken hold outside Italy, and Italian music critics and opera fanatics were looking to the next big Italian thing: the shocking grittiness of *Verismo* composers like Puccini, Leoncavallo and Mascagni, whose sizzling librettos Verdi envied.

Verdi produced his politically charged Manzoni Requiem in 1874, but insisted that by then he had retired from composing for the stage. Still, the publisher Giulio Ricordi felt sure that the master had another great opera in him. And so did one of Verdi's erstwhile critics, the multi-talented Arrigo Boito, a leading Italian writer of his generation. Boito had once criticized Verdi's operas as "old-fashioned" and composed a more "modern" one of his own, *Mefistofele*. It contains some spectacular music and theatrical effects, but none of it is in Verdi's league, and Boito knew it. He was far more skilled as a poet and dramatist, and like Verdi, he venerated Shakespeare.

When Ricordi and Boito took a meeting with Verdi, they came prepared to coax, cajole and conciliate. But more importantly, they came with Boito's compelling first draft of *Otello*. It was not long before Verdi and his erstwhile rival began an intense collaboration on a libretto that—like the score that goes with it—is one of the highest achievements of its kind. It distills Shakespeare's five-act, four-thousand-line tragedy into an eight-hundred-line drama that builds almost unbearable tension and pathos into four swift acts. As for the music, Verdi composed it at a level of mastery that can only come after a lifetime, and he had absorbed the lessons that Wagner and *Verismo* offered him.

Boito's libretto preserves and concentrates every theatrical element. Each line of text in the opera has a parallel source in Shakespeare's (with the exception of Iago's "credo," his snarling manifesto of evil). Some critics on "both sides of the aisle"—that is, musical and literary—have dared to say that this operatic adaptation surpasses its source.

*Otello* was greeted with public and critical enthusiasm at its 1887 premiere at La Scala, when Verdi was 73. But

happily, the story does not end there. For one thing, the ensuing years have brought mounting appreciation, leading to the special status *Otello* enjoys today. For another, it resulted in a later and equally great collaboration by Verdi, Boito and Shakespeare: *Falstaff*, based mostly on *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Verdi began working with Boito on this magical work in 1889, at age 76, and completed it three years later, as he was approaching age 80—ending his career on a buoyant note of comedy. Like *Otello*, it continues to sound sophisticated and ageless, gaining stature year by year.

## The Story of *Otello*

### Act I

As a storm rages in the harbor, the people of Cyprus anxiously await the arrival of the new governor, Otello, from a naval battle with the Turks. Hoping for the worst, his vengeful ensign Iago is disappointed when the ship arrives safely. The victorious Otello announces that the enemy fleet has been destroyed as the citizens cheer.

Amid dockside celebrations, Iago works the crowd to further his own nefarious ends, first offering to help the

young Venetian gentleman Roderigo to seduce Otello's wife Desdemona. Then, envious of Cassio's appointment as captain of the navy and knowing that Cassio can't hold his liquor, Iago sings a sinister drinking song, goading Cassio to drink more than he can handle.

When former governor Montano enters and calls for Cassio to begin his watch, he is surprised to find Cassio drunk; Iago falsely calls this a nightly occurrence. Roderigo provokes the staggering Cassio, who attacks him. Montano tells Cassio to calm down, but Cassio draws his sword, threatening Montano. Cassio and Montano begin to duel, and Iago sends Roderigo to call the alarm. Montano is wounded; Otello intervenes, ordering Montano and Cassio to lower their swords. "Honest Iago" denies any knowledge of how the duel began.

Desdemona enters, and Otello is upset that her rest has been disturbed. He demotes Cassio; calm is restored. With the crowd and the storm having receded, Otello and Desdemona sing together under a now-starlit sky, recalling their courtship in a rapturous love duet—their last moment of happiness together.

### Act II

Iago advises Cassio to ask Desdemona's help for Otello to reconsider the demotion. Desdemona and her maid Emilia, who is Iago's wife, walk in the garden, where Cassio approaches Desdemona. Watching from inside, Iago voices his allegiance to an evil, vengeful God. He pretends not to notice as Otello enters, instead calculatedly musing on signs of Desdemona's infidelity so Otello will overhear him. With feigned reluctance, Iago finally hints that Cassio and Desdemona are having an affair. Iago "warns" Otello against jealousy, and the die is cast.

When Desdemona approaches Otello on Cassio's behalf, he puts her off, complaining of headache; as she persists, he grows impatient. She offers to wrap his head in a handkerchief he once gave her, linen embroidered with strawberries. Otello throws it to the ground, Emilia retrieves it and Iago wrests it from her.

Now suspicious, the agonized Otello confronts Iago for proof of Desdemona's infidelity. Iago claims to have heard Cassio talking in his sleep, warning Desdemona to conceal their love, adding that he saw Cassio carrying Desdemona's strawberry-embroidered handkerchief just the day before. Otello screams for blood, swearing vengeance on Desdemona in a duet with Iago.

### Act III

Ambassadors are en route from Venice, but Otello is preoccupied with the scheming Iago, who offers to talk with Cassio as Otello eavesdrops. Desdemona enters and again intercedes for Cassio, angering Otello, who asks her to bind his head with the strawberry-embroidered handkerchief. His warnings and accusations escalate until she is driven away protesting her innocence. Iago then returns with Cassio, manipulating their conversation to



Credit : Ken Howard /Metropolitan Opera



sound like Desdemona is his lover. When he maneuvers him into producing Desdemona's handkerchief, he ensures that it is seen by Otello, whose ire rises as bugles announce the triumphant arrival of the Venetian delegation. As Cassio withdraws, Iago advises Otello to kill Desdemona by suffocating her in her bed and offers to kill Cassio himself. Otello promotes him to captain.

Lodovico, Desdemona, Emilia, Roderigo and the Venetian delegation enter. When the Venetian Lodovico inquires about Cassio's absence, Iago tells him that Cassio is out of favor. Desdemona expresses hopes he will soon be restored, provoking Otello, who curses her and is about to strike her when he is restrained by Lodovico. Otello then calls for Cassio, who has been appointed as governor of Cyprus so Otello can be recalled to Venice; announcing this news, Otello interpolates vulgar accusations about Desdemona, shocking all present and forcing the dazed Desdemona to the ground. Seething, he orders everyone to leave. He curses Desdemona when she tries to comfort him and finally collapses as the crowds outside praise his victory and his glory. Iago gloats over the agony of the "lion of Cyprus."

## Act IV

Preparing for bed, Desdemona asks her maid Emilia to lay out her bridal gown. Desdemona says that if she dies, she wants to be buried in the gown. She then recounts the sad life of her mother's servant Barbara and the lament that Barbara used to sing, not realizing that she is describing her own life as well. As Emilia leaves, both women are filled with foreboding. In her Ave Maria, Desdemona asks the Virgin Mary to pray for the innocent in their hour of death, and then falls asleep.

Wearing his sword, Otello silently enters and kisses his wife three times. When she awakens, Otello asks her if she has prayed that night, saying she must die because he loves her, and he does not wish to condemn her soul. He insists that she loves Cassio. She asks God's mercy both for herself and for Otello, but also struggles, denying his accusations. Otello strangles her; the distraught Emilia re-enters and says Cassio has killed Roderigo. Now barely alive, Desdemona softly repeats that she is innocent, but dies without blaming Otello. Emilia accuses Otello of murder; when he retorts that Iago gave him proof of Desdemona's infidelity, she calls for help. Cassio, Iago and Lodovico enter. The truth of Iago's duplicity emerges as Emilia, Iago's own wife, angrily reveals his lie about the incriminating handkerchief. Montano enters and says that Roderigo, with his dying breath, has explained Iago's plot. Iago draws his sword and flees; Otello, faced with the consequences of his own baseless jealousy, draws his dagger and stabs himself, falling beside Desdemona and dying upon a kiss. 🌿

*Michael Clive is a cultural reporter living in the Litchfield Hills of Connecticut. He is program annotator for Pacific Symphony and Louisiana Philharmonic, and editor-in-chief for The Santa Fe Opera.*

## Giuseppe Verdi

**Born:** October 10, 1813 in Le Roncole, Italy

**Died:** January 27, 1901, in Milan, Italy

### Otello

**Composed:** Verdi completed the work in three short bouts of composition. The first, very brief, was in March 1884, five years after the first drafts of the libretto began. The second, the principal one, from December 1884 to April 1885, and the third from the middle of September to early October 1885

**World Premiere:** February 5, 1887 at Teatro alla Scala in Milan

**Instrumentation:** three flutes including piccolo, three oboes including English horn, three clarinets including bass clarinet, four bassoons, four French horns, four trumpets, three trombones, one tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, strings and SATB chorus

**Estimated duration:** Approx. 3 hours

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Tenor Carl Tanner has established an international career performing in the world's most prestigious opera houses including The Metropolitan Opera, Opera National de Paris, Washington National Opera, Royal Opera House Covent Garden,

Deutsche Oper Berlin, Teatro alla Scala, Teatro Real Madrid, New National Theatre of Tokyo and the Gran Teatre del Liceu de Barcelona, among others. In the 2018 – 19 season, Mr. Tanner performed the title role of Verdi's *Otello* at the Metropolitan Opera to great acclaim. The occasion also marked Gustavo Dudamel's house debut. Immediately prior to this, he performed *Otello* at the Bolshoi Opera and Savonlinna Opera Festival. Recent engagements at The Metropolitan Opera have included Radames in *Aida*, Turiddu in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Canio in *I Pagliacci*, Florestan in Beethoven's *Fidelio* (canceled due to COVID), Luigi (cover) in *Il Tabarro*, Manrico (cover) in *Il Trovatore* and the title role in *Samson* (cover).

Other notable performances include Luigi in *Il Tabarro* for the Royal Opera House with Maestro Pappano, Radames with Opéra de Massy, Deutsche Oper Berlin and the Gran Teatre del Liceu; Canio in *I Pagliacci* with the Korean National Opera, Opera North Carolina; *Otello* with the Gran Teatre del Liceu and Opera Hong Kong; Calaf in Puccini's *Turandot* with Hamburgische Staatsoper, *Tosca* at Deutsche Oper Berlin, *La Fanciulla del West* at the Opéra Royal de Wallonie de Liège, *Madama Butterfly* at the Opéra National de Paris, *Il Trovatore* at the Semperoper in Dresden, *Carmen* at the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino under the baton of Zubin Mehta and at the Teatro alla Scala and at the Teatro San Carlo; and *La Gioconda* in Berlin and the Teatro Real de Madrid. His Royal Opera House debut was as Cavaradossi in *Tosca*. 🌿

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS



**Soprano Kelebogile Besong made her North American debut as Aida with Pacific Symphony in 2017.** This season, she makes her role debut as Desdemona with the orchestra. She joins Opera Saratoga in her role debut as Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly*.

Last season, she sang Aida at Theater Dortmund and also recently sang Countess Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Hyogo Performing Arts Center in Japan. She joined the Edinburgh International Festival for Musetta in *La bohème* and sang Dido in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* at Festival d'Aix-en-Provence.

Recent performances include: Fiordiligi in *Così fan Tutte* at the Bregenzer Festspiele; Violetta in *La Traviata*, Giorgietta in *Il tabarro* and Dejanira in Weill's *Royal Palace* with Opéra National de Montpellier; Musetta in *La bohème* at Grange Park Opera; Micaela in *Carmen* with Opera Africa; Contessa in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Tampere Opera; the title role in Kálmán's *Gräfen Mariza* with the Johannesburg Symphony; and Venus in John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* and the Sorceress in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* at the Innsbrucker Festwochen der Alten Musik. She created the role Gabisile in the Opera Africa's world premiere of *Ziyankomo and the Forbidden Fruit* by Phelelani Mnomiya, sang the title role in the Zulu opera *Princess Magogo* at Den Norske Opera in Oslo, and Echo in *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Opéra Royal de Wallonie. 🎭



**Baritone Stephen Powell has been lauded by *The Wall Street Journal* for his "rich, lyric baritone, commanding presence, and thoughtful musicianship."** An alumnus of the Lyric Opera of Chicago Center for American Artists, he has sung Marcello in *La*

*bohème* with that company. His Atlanta Symphony debut as Marcello in concert performances of *La bohème* was under Robert Spano's direction. He has appeared as soloist with many of America's leading orchestras, including the Detroit Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra and San Francisco Symphony in repertoire including Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Mahler's Eighth Symphony and Handel's *Messiah*. Recent opera credits include Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Los Angeles Opera), Scarpia in *Tosca* (Minnesota Opera), Germont in *La Traviata* (Seattle Opera), the title in *Rigoletto* (Portland Opera and San Diego Opera) and the title role in *Sweeney Todd* with Michigan Opera Theatre. 🎭



**Mezzo-soprano Margaret Lattimore has been praised for her "glorious instrument" and dubbed an "undisputed star...who has it all—**looks, intelligence, musicianship, personality, technique and a voice of bewitching amber color," by *The*

*Boston Globe*. While she began her career singing the florid works of Handel, Rossini and Mozart, Lattimore expanded her repertoire in recent seasons to include the works of Mahler, Verdi and Wagner, making her one of the most versatile mezzo-sopranos performing today.

She made her Metropolitan Opera debut as Dorotea in *Stiffelio* with Plácido Domingo and later appeared in the PBS *Great Performances* broadcasts of *Stiffelio* and *Madama Butterfly*. Since her house debut at The Metropolitan Opera, Lattimore has performed the role of Gertrude in *Roméo et Juliette*, Praskowia in *The Merry Widow* and the roles of Meg Page in *Falstaff* and Jordan Baker in *The Great Gatsby*, both under the baton of the James Levine. Additionally, she has joined the esteemed house for productions of *Eugene Onegin*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *The Exterminating Angel* and *Iolanta*. 🎭



**Tenor Norman Shankle is currently enjoying worldwide acclaim for his portrayals of Mozart and Rossini's most famous tenors.** *The Boston Globe* called Shankle "a real find, a singer of elegance, grace and conviction," and the *San Francisco Chronicle* praised him equally as "clearly a singer to watch."

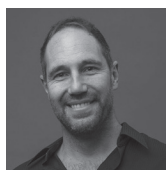
This past summer he returned to Northern Lights Music Festival as Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* and performed a Gala Concert for Knoxville Opera. This season, engagements include the tenor soloist in Mozart's *Requiem* and Adolphus Hailstork's *A Knee On a Neck* as well as Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* for the National Philharmonic; Beethoven's Ninth Symphony for Helena Symphony, Wesley Harris in *Sanctuary Road* for North Carolina Opera and will join the Tulsa Opera for *Salome*. 🎭



**Tenor Eric Barry was the winner of the first Bel Canto Prize at the Maryland Lyric Opera Competition.**

The Spanish-American singer is "making an impressive mark" on opera and concert stages "with a clear timbre, evenness of projection and exceptional sensitivity" (*Opera News*). A seasoned master of the standard repertoire, his engagements have included Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*) and Alfredo (*La Traviata*) for Shreveport Opera; Edgardo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*),

Rodolfo (*La bohème*) and The Duke of Mantua (*Rigoletto*) for Amarillo Opera; Lionel (*Martha*) and Jenik (*The Bartered Bride*) for Boston Midsummer Opera; Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) for Opera Memphis; Rodolfo (*La bohème*) for North Carolina Opera, Opera Memphis, Pittsburgh Opera and the Teatro Comunale di Sulmona; Arbace (Rossini's *Ciro in Babilonia*) at the Caramoor Music Festival; Rossini's *Otello* for Opera in the Heights; Eginhard (Schubert's *Fierrabras*) for Bard Summerscape; Anthony Hope (*Sweeney Todd*) and Tom Rakewell (*The Rake's Progress*) for Wolf Trap Opera. 🎭



**Bass John Paul Huckle studied at Indiana University under the legendary bass Giorgio Tozzi.**

He made his professional debut as Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* with Cleveland Opera. After further

studies, he moved to Europe and became a member of the Young Ensemble of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, where he performed roles such as Steuermann (*The Flying Dutchman*) and Second Armored Guard (*The Magic Flute*). During his time in Berlin, he also made his debut in Italy at the Teatro Regio di Torino in smaller roles in *Boris Godunov*, *Madama Butterfly* and *Parsifal*. Huckle then joined the ensemble of the Teatro Carlo Felice Genova, and made his debut as Simone in *Gianni Schicchi* alongside Rolando Panerai. His roles encompassed Timur in *Turandot*, Colline in *La bohème*, Frère Laurent in *Roméo et Juliette*, Dansker in *Billy Budd* and Zuniga in *Carmen*.

More recent career highlights include Angelotti in *Tosca* at the Festival Lyrique-en-Mer; Zio Bonzo in *Madama Butterfly* and Dottore Grenvil in *La Traviata* at the Teatro Carlo Felice Genova; King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde* with the Janáček Philharmonic Orchestra; and Quinault in *Adriana Lecouvreur* at the Teatro Carlo Felice Genova. 🎭



**Bass Jeffrey Mattsey is renowned worldwide for the signature baritone roles that define his prominent career.**

He has been a house favorite at The Metropolitan Opera for more than 20 years and over 100

performances. Recently, he performed the role of Mayor Shinn in *The Music Man: In Concert* with Pacific Symphony, Uncle John in *The Grapes of Wrath* with Michigan Opera Theatre and Alfred Doolittle in *My Fair Lady: In Concert* with Utah Symphony. Additionally, he reprised the role of Germont in *La Traviata* with Northern Lights Music Festival.

After making his Metropolitan Opera debut in *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, Mr. Mattsey returned to the house as Marco in *Gianni Schicchi*, Mercutio and Paris in *Roméo et Juliette*, Silvano in *Un ballo in maschera*, Schaunard in *La bohème*, Joe Castro in *La Fanciulla del West* and Marullo in *Rigoletto*. After enjoying his 100th performance with the company as Señor Cascada in *The Merry Widow*, Mattsey returned to The Metropolitan Opera as Montano in Bartlett Sher's new production of *Otello*, Marullo in the Rat-pack inspired setting of *Rigoletto*, and for their productions of *Die Fledermaus* and *L'elisir d'amore*. Most recently, he joined the esteemed house to reprise the role of Señor Cascada in *The Merry Widow*, sing the role of Padre Parson in *The Exterminating Angel* and for their productions of *Così fan tutte*, *Romeo et Juliette*, *La Fanciulla del West*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Otello* and *La Traviata*. 🎭



**Baritone Kerry Wilkerson made his Carnegie Hall debut in June 2017 to rave reviews as baritone soloist in the Vaughan Williams *Sancta Civitas*.**

He was an esteemed member of the United States Army Chorus, singing

and conducting for world leaders, Supreme Court Justices and dignitaries of many nations.

A resonant singer with unique evenness in register, Wilkerson has sung professionally with the United States Air Force Singing Sergeants and the acclaimed Robert Shaw Festival Singers in prestigious concert halls throughout the United States and Canada. He is well-known to Washington, DC audiences through his solo recitals and regular guest appearances with groups such as the Handel Choir of Baltimore, the National Philharmonic Chorale and Orchestra, City Choir of Washington and the Oratorio Society of Virginia. 🎭

Special thanks to **Lyric Opera of Orange County** for providing all of the Supernumeraries in our *Otello* production.

**Supernumeraries**

Sara Blanton  
Juana Carrillo  
Mary Frances Conover  
Devon Crowe  
Kelsey Fahy  
Sarah-Jane Finch

Brianna Finnell  
Amy Long  
Lindsay Mack  
Antonio Serrano  
Nicholas Thurbottle



**Robert Neu, known for his highly theatrical and musically sensitive work, has directed over one hundred productions of operas, musicals and plays across the country.** Neu's recent productions include *The Magic Flute*, *L'Enfant*

*et les sortilèges* and *La Traviata* for Pacific Symphony, among many others. Neu teaches masterclasses in audition techniques for the University of Minnesota's opera department, is a former resident director at Lyric Arts Theater and former artistic director of Skylark Opera Theatre. He is a graduate of The Juilliard School and is co-founder of Angels & Demons Entertainment, a production and arts consultancy organization. In 2021, Neu was named Vice President of Artistic Planning of Utah Symphony | Utah Opera.



**Robert Istad, who "fashions fluent and sumptuous readings" (*Voice of OC*) with his "phenomenal" artistry (*Los Angeles Times*), was appointed Pacific Chorale's artistic director in 2017.** Under his leadership, the chorus continues to expand its

reputation for excellence for delivering fresh, thought-provoking interpretations of beloved masterworks, rarely performed gems and newly commissioned pieces.

His artistic impact can be heard on two recent recordings featuring Pacific Chorale: "Mahler's Eighth Symphony" with the Los Angeles Philharmonic conducted by Gustavo Dudamel on Deutsche Grammophon (2021), for which he prepared the chorus, and "All Things Common: The Music of Tarik O'Regan," which he conducted on Yarlung Records (2020). Istad has also prepared choruses for such renowned conductors as Esa-Pekka Salonen, John Williams, John Mauceri, Keith Lockhart, Nicholas McGegan, Vasily Sinaisky, Sir Andrew Davis, Bramwell Tovey, Carl St.Clair, Eugene Kohn, Giancarlo Guerrero, Marin Alsop, George Fenton and Robert Moody.

He regularly conducts and collaborates with Pacific Symphony, Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, Sony Classical Records, Yarlung Records, Berkshire Choral International and Long Beach Symphony. An esteemed educator, Istad is professor of music and director of choral studies at California State University, Fullerton, where he was recognized as CSUF's 2016 Outstanding Professor of the Year. He conducts the University Singers and manages a large graduate conducting program, in addition to teaching courses on conducting and performance practice. Istad, who is on the executive board of directors of Chorus America and serves as Dean of Chorus America's Conducting Academy, is in demand as guest conductor, lecturer and clinician.



**Lori Loftus is the Founding Director of the Southern California Children's Chorus (SCCC).** Her abilities as a choral conductor have taken her around the world as both a performer and clinician. She is also acclaimed

for her skills as a keyboardist, having performed for years under the baton of such renowned maestros as Helmuth Rilling, John Alexander, Carl St.Clair and Zubin Mehta.

In March 2007, Loftus was honored for a lifetime of achievements with the Outstanding Alumni Award for Excellence in Choral Music from her alma mater, California State University, Fullerton. Throughout her career, Loftus has brought intensive and quality education in both music and life principles to thousands of young singers. Many graduates of Southern California Children's Chorus have distinguished themselves in the arts as vocalists, conductors, managers and patrons.

**The Southern California Children's Chorus was founded in 1996 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is "enhancing children's lives through distinguished choral music education and world-class performance."** SCCC currently serves nearly 300 children, ages 5 - 20. A recipient of three Emmy awards, SCCC has gained international acclaim for the quality of its music education program. The choruses are featured frequently at Orange County's Segerstrom Center for the Arts and have thrilled audiences at Carnegie Hall, the Sydney Opera House, Westminster Abbey and the White House. In addition, SCCC has contributed singers for Touchstone and MGM films, television productions and commercials, orchestral, adult choral and opera productions, rock music recordings and many Disney events, both televised and live. Its Emmy-winning performances include a collaboration with Steven Tyler and Joe Perry of Aerosmith in a stirring rendition of "Dream On" for ESPN's E:60 special, "Boston Strong," as well as a live performance of "What a Wonderful World" with Esperanza Spalding at the 84th annual Academy Awards.

#### **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHILDREN'S CHORUS ROSTER**

Devon Alaniz	Joseph Meinstein
Elianna Alaniz	Samuel Meinstein
Ashmita Bhowmik	Sofia Mendez
Emily Chang	Kristen Norris
Mykela Jenaya Del Rosario	Emma Pinza
Lauren Doan	Annie Qu
Bena Feng	Diya Ramesh
Gracie Finley	Norah Wang
Irisa Huang	Quintessa Wendell
Eshika Abbaraju	Ysabel Wilhoit
Cailey Lockitch	Maddie Wrate



# PACIFIC CHORALE

Robert Istad • Artistic Director and Conductor

*Phillip N. and Mary A. Lyons Artistic Director Chair*

Kibsaim Escarcega • Interim Assistant Conductor

Andrew Brown • President & CEO



**Pacific Chorale, an Orange County “treasure” with a “fresh viewpoint” that “can sing anything you put in front of it, with polish, poise and tonal splendor”** (*Orange County Register*) has “risen to national prominence” (*Los Angeles Times*) since its inception in 1968. Hailed for delivering “thrilling entertainment” (*Voice of OC*), the resident choir at Segerstrom Center for the Arts is noted for its artistic innovation and commitment to expanding the choral repertoire. It has given world, U.S. and West Coast premieres of more than 35 works, including numerous commissions, by such lauded composers as John Adams, Jake Heggie, James Hopkins, David Lang, Morten Lauridsen, Maurice Ravel, Tarik O'Regan, Karen Thomas, Frank Ticheli, András Gábor Virág and Eric Whitacre. In addition to presenting its own concert series each season, Pacific Chorale enjoys a long-standing partnership with Pacific Symphony, with which the choir made its highly anticipated Carnegie Hall debut in 2018. The chorus also regularly appears with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and has performed with such leading orchestras as the Boston

Symphony, National Symphony, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, San Diego Symphony and Musica Angelica, among others. Pacific Chorale has garnered international acclaim as well, having toured extensively to more than 19 countries in Europe, South America, and Asia, and through collaborations with the London Symphony, Munich Symphony, L'Orchestre Lamoureux and L'Orchestre de St-Louis-en-Île de Paris, National Orchestra of Belgium, China National Symphony, Hong Kong Sinfonietta, Estonian National Symphony and Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional of Argentina, among others. Deeply committed to making choral music accessible to people of all ages, the organization, which has a discography of 14 self-produced recordings and an extensive collection of exceptional free digital offerings, places a significant emphasis on choral music education, providing after-school vocal programs for elementary school students a choral summer camp for high school students and an annual community-wide singing event at Segerstrom Center for the Arts. [PacificChorale.org](http://PacificChorale.org)

## SOPRANO

Rebecca Hasquet  
*Section Leader*  
Lauren Adaska  
Alexandria Burdick  
Chelsea Chaves  
Karla V. Delgado  
Diana Farrell  
Adrien Gonzalez  
Saousan Jarjour  
Barbara Kingsbury,  
*Rita Major Memorial Chair*  
Corinne Larsen-Linza  
Sarah Lonsert  
Katie Martini  
Shannon A. Miller  
Michele M. Mulidor  
Maria Cristina Navarro  
Katherine Scholl Holisky  
Linda Wells Sholik  
Victoria Wu

## ALTO

Jane Hyun-Jung Shim  
*Section Leader*  
Rebecca Bishop  
Mary Clark  
Kathryn Cobb-Woll  
Denean R. Dyson  
Harriet Edwards  
Jessica-Elisabeth  
I-Chin Betty Feinblatt  
Marilyn Forsstrom  
Kathryn D. Gibson  
Kathleen Thomsen Gremillion  
Bonita Jaros  
Pat Newton  
Tina Glander Peterson  
Bonnie Pridonoff  
Sarah Shaler  
Stephanie Shepson  
Emily Weinberg

## TENOR

Daniel Coy Babcock  
*Acting Section Leader*  
*Ron Gray Legacy Chair*  
Mike Andrews  
Dongwhi Baek  
Michael Ben-Yehuda  
Chris Buttars  
Marius Evangelista  
Alan Garcia  
Steven M. Hoffman  
Craig S. Kistler  
Jin Ming Liao  
Zachary Lindquist  
David López Alemán  
Ricardo Martinez  
Gerald McMillan  
Stephan Mitchell  
Jesse Newby  
Carl Porter  
*Singers Memorial Chair*  
Daniel Mizrain Ramon  
Sammy Salvador  
Joshua Tan Tessler

## BASS

Ryan Thomas Antal  
*Section Leader*  
*Ron Gray Legacy Chair*  
Aram Barsamian  
Mac Bright  
James Brown  
Michael Fagerstedt  
Louis Ferland  
Karl Forsstrom  
*Singers Memorial Chair*  
Sean Gabel  
Randall Gremillion  
Jared Hughes  
Matthew Kellaway  
Jonathan Krauss  
Martin Minnich  
Emmanuel Miranda  
Kenneth Moore  
Seth Peelle  
Raphael Poon  
George Reiss  
Antone Rodich  
David Williams