



*Return to the Opera  
Gala Event*

*featuring Puccini's*  
**MADAME  
BUTTERFLY**





LYRIC  
OPERA  
of ORANGE  
COUNTY

PUCCINI'S  
**MADAME  
BUTTERFLY**

Part of our 'Return to the Opera' Gala  
November 14, 2021  
5:00 - 8:00 PM

Fête The Venue  
3101 Red Hill Ave  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Tickets: [lyricoperaoc.org](http://lyricoperaoc.org)  
Food & Beverage \$100  
VIP Seating & Benefits \$150-250

Act I & II: 1 hour 10 minutes

Intermission: 30 minutes

Act III: 20 minutes

## *Act 1*

Japan, at the turn of the 20th century. Lieutenant Benjamin Franklin Pinkerton of the U.S. Navy inspects a house overlooking Nagasaki harbor that he is leasing for 999 years, subject to monthly renewal. With the house comes a care taker, Suzuki, and a new bride, Cio-Cio-San, known simply as Butterfly. The American consul Sharpless arrives breathless from climbing the hill. Pinkerton describes his philosophy of the fearless Yankee roaming the world in search of pleasure. He is not sure whether his feelings for the young girl are love or a whim, but he intends to go through with the marriage ceremony. Sharpless warns him that the girl may view the marriage differently, but Pinkerton brushes off such concerns, saying someday he will take a real American wife. He offers the consul whiskey and proposes a toast. Butterfly arrives for the wedding ceremony. Butterfly explains that her family was once prominent but lost its position, and she has had to earn her living as a geisha. Cio-Cio-San shows Pinkerton her few possessions and quietly tells him that she has been to the Christian mission and will forgo her Buddhist upbringing and convert to her husband's religion. After the ceremony the festivities are interrupted by the Bonze, Butterfly's uncle, a Buddhist priest. He curses the girl for going to the mission and rejecting her ancestral religion.



Pinkerton orders everyone to leave, and as they go, the Bonze publicly shuns Cio-Cio-San. Pinkerton consoles Butterfly with sweet words. Determined to embrace a happy life in marriage, she turns her focus back to her new husband and leads him inside to the wedding bed.

## *Act 2*

Three years have passed, and Cio-Cio-San awaits her husband's return at their home. Suzuki prays to the gods for help, but Butterfly berates her for believing in lazy Japanese gods rather than in Pinkerton's promise to return one day. Sharpless appears with a letter from Pinkerton. As he attempts to read Pinkerton's letter, he suggests that Butterfly should consider other suitors. In response, she presents the consul with the young son she has had by Pinkerton. She says that his name is "Sorrow," but when his father returns, he will be called "Joy." Sharpless is too upset to tell her more of the letter's contents. He leaves, promising to tell Pinkerton of the child. A cannon shot in the harbor announces the arrival of a ship. Butterfly and Suzuki take a spyglass to read the name of the vessel—it is Pinkerton's. Overjoyed, Butterfly joins Suzuki in decorating the house and patio with flower petals. Night falls, and Butterfly settles into a vigil watching over the harbor.

## *Act 3*

Dawn breaks, and Suzuki insists that Butterfly get some sleep. Butterfly enters the house before Sharpless appears with Pinkerton. They are accompanied by an American woman and Suzuki understands immediately that this is Pinkerton's new wife. Overcome with guilt Pinkerton runs to escape confrontation. Cio-Cio-San rushes in looking for Suzuki. Grasping the situation, she agrees to give up her son but insists Pinkerton return for him. Dismissing everyone, Butterfly takes out a dagger, choosing to die with honor rather than live in shame. She is interrupted momentarily when the child comes in, but Butterfly says goodbye and sends him away.

*Artistic Director,* DIANA FARRELL

*Music Director,* SUNG CHANG

Cio-Cio-San ..... JESSICA CHOI  
Lt. Pinkerton ..... HUGO VERA  
Suzuki ..... BETTY FEINBLATT  
Sharpless ..... MICHAEL O'HALLORAN

featuring

The Child ..... BRITTANEY TALBOT  
Shakuhachi ..... SHIH-WEI WU

## *Orchestra*

Concert Master ..... Heesun Kim  
1st Violin ..... Yeon Sun Huh, Eun Han  
2nd Violin ..... Tim Joo, Walter Park  
Viola ..... Si Tran  
Cello ..... Wonsun Keem, Jaewon Ahn  
Shakuhachi, Percussion ..... Shih-wei Wu  
Piano ..... Sung Chang

## *Cover Artists*

EMY GREENSTOCK, Cio-Cio-San  
MICHAEL CRUZ, Pinkerton  
JESSICA MAMEY, Suzuki  
ANDI DANA, Sharpless

## *Production*

Production Manager ..... Ashley Chaney  
Surtitles ..... David Headland  
Technical Manager ..... Jared Hughes

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Maggie Thompson

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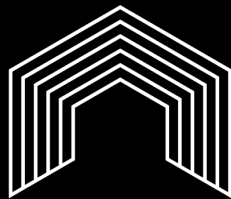
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PRESIDIO LIFE



With an extensive background in music, dance, and theatre, **Diana Farrell** has garnered attention for her insightful and sensitive work as a stage director and vocal coach. She is the Artistic Director for Lyric Opera of Orange County and has become a frequent judge and panelist for competitions, grant committees, and young artist training programs around the country. In addition to Lyric Opera OC, she has created stage productions for Pacific Lyric Association, and Opera Western Reserve among others.

As a singer, Diana has been hailed for her "golden voice." Her most recent stage performances include the titular role of Puccini's *Tosca*, Magda in Menotti's *The Consul*, and Verdi's *Lady Macbeth*, for which her "passionate intensity..." earned high

praise as she "consistently sang with beauty and sensitivity." She has also appeared in the roles of Rosalinde (*Die Fledermaus*), Contessa Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Micaëla (*Carmen*), Anna Maurant (*Street Scene*), Berta (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Miriam (Lee Hoiby's *The Scarf*), and the title role of *Amelia Goes to the Ball*, among others, with companies such as The Crested Butte Music Festival, Nightingale Opera Theatre, and Simsbury Light Opera.

When not focusing on opera, Diana performs with the Pacific Chorale. Highlights from past concert engagements include Beethoven's 9th Symphony Soprano Soloist with Poway Symphony Orchestra, a performance of Berlioz's *Les Nuits d'été* with the Dana Symphony Orchestra, an appearance with the Miami Valley Symphony Orchestra, and the *Messiah* soprano soloist with the Westfield Festival Choir and Orchestra. Diana is the winner of multiple awards throughout her career, completing her formal studies with an Artist Diploma from the Cleveland Institute of Music.

Pianist **Sung Chang** is known for his outstanding technical abilities, musical maturity, and sensitive yet powerful expression that shines through the keys. He has received critical acclaim for his “poetic imagination, superb technical skills, and, most importantly, a deep emotional connection to whatever music he plays” by Jeffrey Kahane. Born in Seoul, Korea, Sung Chang gave his debut concert at the age of five. At 16 he was accepted into the prestigious Korea National University of Arts, and his musical virtuosity attracted international attention when he became the youngest ever to win the Nagoya International Piano Competition in Japan. Since then, Chang has gone on to win more than ten international competitions around



the world including in the United States, Germany, Italy, Korea, and Japan. His impressive list of awards from the major international piano competitions includes the first prize and the audience prize at the Chopin-Gesellschaft Hannover Internationaler Klavierwettbewerb, the first prize and the special award for the "Best Performance of a Virtuoso Piece" at the Bösendorfer USASU International Piano Competition, a silver medal with two special prizes in "Best Performance of a Work by a Classical Composer" and "Best Performance of a Work by a Spanish, Latin American or Impressionistic Composer" at the San Antonio International Piano Competition, and a silver medal at the New Orleans International Piano Competition. Chang currently resides in Los Angeles, California after completing further studies at the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover in Hannover, Germany and the USC Thornton School of Music.





Korean-American soprano **Jessica M. Choi** is excited to be singing stateside again after an extended residence in the United Kingdom. Previous roles include: Mimì in *La Bohème*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, La Contessa in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, Nanetta in *Falstaff*, Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*, Josephine in *Pirates of Penzance*, and Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus*. Equally comfortable with contemporary repertoire, she has performed Athena in *Arachne*, Sister Rose in *Dead Man Walking*, and Mrs. Grose in *The Turn of the Screw*.

An accomplished recitalist, Ms. Choi has been featured at the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Britten Theatre, St. Stephen's Church, and the Korean Embassy of London. She has been heard as the soprano soloist in Mozart's *Requiem* and *Krönungsmesse*, and Haydn's *Die Schöpfung*.

Ms. Choi has been recognized both domestically and internationally for her artistry as a semi-finalist in the Orpheus Vocal Competition, a finalist in the Eugene Opera Pacific Northwest Sings Competition, and a winner of the Rio Hondo Symphony and the Music Associates Competitions. She is an Oxenfoord International Scholar and Lotte Johnson Vocal Scholar. She has participated in masterclasses with such luminaries as Dame Felicity Palmer, Malcom Martineau, and Dame Ann Murray. She received her Master of Performance and Postgraduate degree from the Royal College of Music in London and her Bachelor of Music from California State University, Fullerton. Ms. Choi is a community outreach artist for LA Opera

**Tenor Hugo Vera** is described as possessing a “truly heroic voice” that is both “beautiful and brilliant.” Mr. Vera has performed over 50 roles and 65 large choral orchestral works with distinguished companies in the US as part of his musical and artistic development of the full lyric tenor repertoire. In addition to being on The Metropolitan Opera roster for seven seasons, Mr. Vera has sung with such prominent companies such Lyric Opera of Chicago, Spoleto, USA, Kansas City Symphony, New York City Opera, Illinois Symphony, Indianapolis Opera, Opera Memphis, Center for Contemporary



Opera, Aspen Music Festival, Brevard Music Center, Sarasota Opera, the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Glimmerglass Opera, Opera North, The Minnesota Opera, Chautauqua Opera, Nashville Opera, Tanglewood Music Festival and Arizona Opera. As an active recitalist and clinician, he has performed recitals as an Artist in Residence at Dartmouth College, University of Texas-Pan America, Westminster College, Theatre Lawrence, Presbyterian College, GLOW Lyric Theatre, Edinburg Consolidated School District, Lawrence Arts Center, SUNY Oswego and Presbyterian College.

His 2021-2022 season includes performances Pinkerton in “Madama Butterfly” with Indianapolis Opera, Don Jose in “Carmen” with Opera Aegean (Turkey), “Passione” with GLOW Lyric Theatre, debut with Lyric Opera of Orange County as Pinkerton in “Madama Butterfly,” “All is Calm” with Opera North and recitals in Los Angeles, Seattle, Lawrence, KS and Greenville, SC.

Hugo released a new recording in 2020 entitled “Romances and Poems” featuring the works of Russian composer Sergei Taneyev on the Centaur Recording label. Aside from being featured on various Metropolitan Opera Live in HD broadcasts, he can be heard in various world premiere recordings and broadcasts which include Ricky Ian Gordon’s “The Grapes of Wrath” (Minnesota Opera), Craig Bohmler’s “Riders of the Purple Sage” (Arizona Opera) as well Paul Paray’s Mass and DVD of Puccini’s “La Fanciulla del West” (Metropolitan Opera) as well as the virtual world premiere micro-opera, “Wide Awake in the New City” by Lisa Neher.

Mr. Vera enjoyed the privilege of training with several noteworthy young artist programs including the Brevard Music Center, the Tanglewood Music Festival, Aspen Music Center, Chautauqua Opera, The Lyric Opera of Kansas City, The Minnesota Opera, Opera North, Sarasota Opera, and Glimmerglass Opera.



**I-Chin "Betty" Feinblatt** has been featured in numerous professional performances since 2003, including Bach's B minor Mass, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Mozart's *Requiem*, Händel's *Messiah* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. The Latter performance was praised by Timothy Mangan of the Orange County Register as "delicate and aristocratic singing in her solos". Among others, she has performed with Pacific Chorale, Pacific Symphony, Long Beach Camerata Singers, Long Beach Symphony, National Children's Chorus, Boston Pops, John Williams and Andrea Bocelli. In April of 2018 she was a soloist in the East Coast Premier of Philip Glass' *Passion of Ramakrishna* at Carnegie Hall in New York City. Parts of this performance were included in the PBS Documentary *American Voices* in November 2019. Betty obtained her music performance bachelor degree from California States University of Fullerton. She has since focused the majority of her work as a concert soloist and chorister.





**Michael B. O'Halloran**, baritone, graduated from the Manhattan School of Music with a Masters in Classical Voice Performance. He has been seen as Mercutio in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* with Pacific Lyric Association, Don Annibale in Donizetti's *Il Campanello* with Capitol Opera, Marcello in Puccini's *La bohème* with the Marina del Rey Symphony, Mizgir' in the West Coast premiere of Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Snow Maiden* with Independent Opera, Guglielmo in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* with Mission Opera, and Peter in *Hansel and Gretel* with LOOC.

Previously, he has been seen as Marcello in *La Bohème* with Landmark Opera, and Lysander in Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* with Lyric Opera of Orange County. He workshopped the role of Tenorio in Armienta's *Bless Me, Ultima* with

Opera Southwest, and performed the role of the Policeman, as well as covered Orphée in Philip Glass' *Orphée* as an Emerging Artist at Virginia Opera. Michael made his Virginia Opera debut as a Spectrum Resident Artist, singing Il Principe Yamadori and covering Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*.

While at Manhattan School of Music, he was seen as Vernon in *Summer and Smoke*, having the honor of being a part of the world premiere recording, which was hailed as one of the "Top Ten New Recordings" by Opera News.

Mr. O'Halloran was featured as the first American as a junger Künstler Bayreuth as part of the Bayreuther Festspiele, and is a winner of the Aspen Music Festival vocal concerto competition, performing with the Aspen Festival Orchestra. He received first place in the Student Division of the Chicago Bel Canto competition, and first place in Division V of the Chicago area chapter National Association of Teachers of Singing auditions. He has participated in Master Classes with Richard Goode, John Wustman, Frank Corsaro, and Mark Delavan.





**Brittaney Talbot** is a Los Angeles based puppeteer specializing in animatronics, full suit performance, shadow puppetry, and fabrication. She was most recently on national tour with Jurassic World Live Tour as lead "dinoteer" and puppet captain. She was also one of the resident artists at the Natural History Museum of LA, has been a performer with Sony PlayStation's live events, and has been a part of numerous film and television puppet productions. Additionally, she is an avid triathlete, competing as a member of Team USA at World Championship events and coaching the UCLA triathlon team

**Shih-wei Wu** is a multi-instrumentalist, composer, and movement artist. With a background in Classical music and Japanese folk music, Shih-wei performs and writes music that reflects his Taiwanese heritage and the Japanese diasporic communities of Los Angeles.

An experienced collaborator, Shih-wei has performed with award winning contemporary dance company, MULTIPLEX Dance, composed original music for Hyper theater company, Rogue Artist Collective, and created multiple original physical theater work premiered in Hollywood Fringe and West Hollywood Dance Festival. He has appeared in a music video alongside Rihanna and Coldplay as well as performing at the world-famous Hollywood Bowl. Shih-wei's latest project is Red Eye 2 Tokyo, and has just released his first album, Friend I Have Just Met.



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# *Upcoming Events*

## *Opera 101*

February 24, 2022

The Muckenthaler Cultural Arts Center, Fullerton

## *Mozart's Magic Flute*

February 26 & 27, 2022

Sea Country Community Center, Laguna Niguel

## *2022 - 2023 Auditions*

April 2022 - Auditions announced December 2021

St. John's Episcopal Church, Rancho Santa Margarita

## *L'Opéra Petit*

May 2022 – Auditions announced December 2021

OC Music & Dance, Irvine

## *Bizet's Carmen*

June 23 & 24, 2022

The Muckenthaler Cultural Arts Center, Fullerton

## **LIVE:** *Off Book Series*

Summer 2022

Stay Tuned!