

Celebrated soprano Angela Cadelago to debut in Festival Opera's *Lucia di Lammermoor*



***San Francisco Classical Voice* calls her performances “consistently wonderful....She definitely has 'it'.”**

Tickets are expected to go fast for the highly-anticipated Festival Opera production of Gaetano Donizetti's tragic *bel canto* opera masterpiece, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, opening August 7 for four performances only.

Soprano Angela Cadelago makes her company debut in the title role as the fragile Lucia, who is hopelessly in love with Edgardo, her brother's hated enemy in a longstanding feud between rival Scottish families. The production will also feature the return of such popular Festival Opera artists as tenor Thomas Glenn (Sir Edgardo of Ravenswood), baritone Brian Leerhuber (Lord Enrico Ashton), and bass Kirk Eichelberger (Raimondo Bidebent).

Cadelago has previously performed with Berkeley Opera and the Sonoma City Opera. She spent six weeks in residence with Opera Santa Barbara earlier this year, and has appeared in recital in Denmark and the Spoleto Festival dei due Mondi in Italy. Cadelago is a former Virginia Best Adams Fellow with the Carmel Bach Festival and Metropolitan Opera Regional Audition finalist. Among other critical acclaim, Joshua Kosman of the *San Francisco Chronicle* called her turn in Berkeley Opera's *The Tales of Hoffmann* “a virtuosic quadruple performance as Hoffmann's four love interests - crisp and precise as the mechanical doll Olympia, jaded and knowing as the Venetian courtesan Giulietta....”

The Napa Valley native was both blessed with extraordinary talent and raised in what could be called the family business. “It was music, music, music all the time,” she says with a laugh. “My mother, and also a great uncle, both have beautiful and classically trained voices, and both my parents are working musicians and music teachers. I have numerous relatives who play various instruments in the classical arena. In fact, before I started school, I thought everyone in the world sings or plays an instrument! I still find it bizarre when I walk into a home that has no piano. To me, it's as strange as it would be to not have a sofa.”

Growing up, Cadelago was so shy about singing in front of people that the only time she'd sing anything was in her bedroom with the door closed. From the age of four to 16, she studied piano. Then, in choir class on the first day of high school, Cadelago had an “ah-ha moment.” Even though she didn't know a soul in the room, “the moment we started singing, we were this one ensemble. I had instant friends. I had an instant network of people who shared my love of it. So that was pretty incredible.”

Then came her first voice lesson, a gift from her mother who had an extra one she wasn't going to use. “I don't know what she said that made me finally go, but I'm glad I did, it was life changing,” Cadelago enthuses. “Her teacher encouraged her to go for it, and the more lessons I had, the more I realized I had found my voice, as it were.”

What does Cadelago think is the biggest misconception the public has about opera singers? “Many people don’t fully appreciate what a physical and mental discipline it is, similar to an athlete’s training. Also, the ridiculous – and irrational – pursuit of the career, despite almost constant rejection. I don’t know of any other profession with such a staggering ratio of failure to success. It often takes so long to get a singing career established that there is genuine shock among a singer’s community when it finally starts to happen!”

Performances of Festival Opera’s *Lucia di Lammermoor* are scheduled for 8 pm on August 7, 10, 13; and 2 pm on Sunday, August 15. All performances will take place at the Leshar Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. Tickets are \$39 to \$100, and can be purchased online at www.LesharArtsCenter.org; by calling (925) 943-SHOW; or in person at the Leshar Center box office and Barnes & Noble Bookstore in Walnut Creek. For more information, visit www.FestivalOpera.com.

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