



For Immediate Release

FESTIVAL OPERA ANNOUNCES A TRIO OF ARTIST RECITALS

LUCKY IN LOVE: KINDRA SCHARICH, MEZZO-SOPRANO & JEFFREY LADEUR, PIANIST SEPT 22

NOTHING TO FEAR: SARA COUDEN, CONTRALTO & DEREK TAM, PIANIST OCT. 27

MUSES AND MUSINGS OF AN IMPRESARIO:

ZACHARY GORDIN, BARITONE & DANIEL LOCKERT, PIANIST NOV. 17

PIEDMONT CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Tickets Now on Sale: www.festivalopera.org



Kindra Scharich



Sara Couden



Zachary Gordin

Walnut Creek, Calif. (August 8, 2024) — Festival Opera’s 33rd season will continue into autumn with a trio of Sunday afternoon artist recitals at the intimate **Piedmont Center for the Arts**, 801 Magnolia Avenue, Piedmont. The series will launch September 22 at 4 p.m. with **Lucky in Love** presenting **Kindra Scharich**, mezzo-soprano and **Jeffrey LaDeur**, pianist; continue on October 27, 2024 at 4 p.m. with **Nothing to Fear** featuring **Sara Couden**, contralto and **Derek Tam**, pianist; and conclude November 17, 2024 at 4 p.m. with **Muses and Musings of an Impresario** - a birthday celebration with special guest artists to be announced - showcasing Festival Opera General Director **Zachary Gordin**, baritone and **Daniel Lockert**, pianist.

Earlier in the company’s season, Festival Opera presented two annual Opera in the Park concerts at Orinda Community Park and Walnut Creek Civic Park, featuring beloved community park programs of grand opera and Broadway musical highlights. For the mainstage production at the Leshner Center for the Arts, Festival Opera General Director **Zachary Gordin** and guest stage director **Céline Ricci** presented a double bill of two one-act operas regarding love and betrayal: Francis Poulenc’s riveting mid-1950s monodrama *La Voix humaine* based on iconoclast Jean Cocteau’s play, and Baroque masterpiece *Dido and Aeneas*, by Henry Purcell based on Virgil’s epic work, the *Aeneid*.

Sunday, Sept. 22 at 4 p.m. Lucky in Love

According to Kindra Scharich, “*Lucky in Love* celebrates the centennial anniversary of legendary French composer Gabriel Fauré by highlighting one of his most important song cycles: *La Bonne Chanson*. Inspired by

his passionate love for soprano Emma Bardac and based on the exquisite poetry of Paul Verlaine, Fauré called *La Bonne Chanson* his “most exuberant writing.” Mezzo-soprano Kindra Scharich and pianist Jeffrey LaDeur present this work, alongside other beloved scores that explore *l’amour*!

Sunday, Oct. 27 at 4 p.m. *Nothing to Fear*

Contralto Sara Couden commented, "What do art song and Halloween have in common? Well...monsters. Beasts without and within, love gone horribly wrong, generalized anxiety and existential crises, conversations with death... the world of (mostly) classical music is rife with horrors, and I am excited to introduce as many of them as possible to the audience this October. I will be working with the fabulous and multi-talented pianist Derek Tam, and presenting works by a list of composers including Schubert, Strauss, Wieck, Weill, as well as modern composers Jordan Rutter-Covatto, Erika Oba, and Chris Castro. Don't worry, there's nothing to fear... but fear (/love/death/the beast within) itself."

Sunday, Nov. 17 at 4 p.m. *Muses and Musings of an Impresario*

Baritone Zachary Gordin said, "I am honored to collaborate with this group of Bay Area treasures on this recital series, and most especially to rekindle my work with the incomparable Daniel Lockert in a recital of repertoire and anecdotes that will tell a story of my journey and muses in this life of music. Songs of composers so very dear to me: Schumann, Mahler, Reynaldo Hahn, and Jake Heggie, mixed with a splash of early music and American Songbook classics. Surprise guests to be announced, and a birthday celebration reception including wine, bubbly and treats will follow the program."

Tickets for the Festival Opera Artist Recital Series at the Piedmont Center for the Arts are \$40 pp for each concert or individuals may purchase the discounted price of \$95 for all programs. To purchase online, visit www.festivalopera.org.

Festival Opera (FO) was founded in 1991 by **Dr. Theodore Weis**, who, twenty years earlier had helped create the Arizona Opera Company in Tucson. Past Festival Opera leadership includes the artistic direction tenures of famed soprano **Olivia Stapp**, Maestro **Michael Morgan** of the Oakland Symphony, and is currently led by **Zachary Gordin**. Festival Opera is committed to presenting emerging and local artists in compelling and socially relevant productions of new and classic repertoire. Festival Opera proudly gives emerging artists a venue to hone their craft in leading roles with the guidance and collaboration of established professionals - providing a vital launching pad for their professional future. FO alums have gone on to perform in major opera houses and symphony halls around the globe.

Zachary Gordin began his administrative association with Festival Opera in 2018 as Artistic Advisor, later Artistic Director, and in 2020 was appointed company General Director. A native son of Oakland, Gordin is a highly accomplished baritone singer performing opera repertoire and concert music throughout the country, and is a greatly skilled and insightful piano accompanist; a dedicated health and fitness advocate, the multi-talented musician and impresario is also a builder of harpsichords including the one he played while conducting *Dido and Aeneas*.

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Please connect for interviews, artwork and press credentials.

All programs subject to change.