

# Opera in the Park

BY SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2026 | 1:30PM  
ROBIN WILLIAMS MEADOW, GOLDEN GATE PARK

## PROGRAM

### NATIONAL ANTHEM

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ORCHESTRA

### GLINKA: Ruslan and Lyudmila

#### Overture

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ORCHESTRA

Glinka’s famous overture to his 1842 opera, *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, starts off at a breathless pace with a frenzied passage for strings before introducing a sweepingly lyrical melody for the cellos. Various themes then weave together, punctuated by the timpani, as the piece rushes to a roaring finish.

### LEONCAVALLO: Pagliacci

#### Si può?!

AMARTUVSHIN ENKHBAT

Tonio, one of a troupe of traveling *commedia dell’arte* players, steps in front of the curtain to begin the performance, explaining that the composer wishes to present a genuine “slice of life” and show that, despite their comic posturing, the actors onstage are flesh-and-blood beings with true human feelings.

### LEONCAVALLO: Pagliacci

#### Nedda! . . . Silvio, a quest’ora

TONI MARIE PALMERTREE  
AND THOMAS MOLE

In this dramatic and rapturous duet, Nedda’s young lover, Silvio, urges her to leave her husband and run away with him. At first she refuses, crying, “Do not tempt me!” But after his intense pleading (“Then why did you bewitch me?”), she gives in to his persuasion.

### BOITO: Mefistofele

#### Ecco il mondo

CHRISTIAN VAN HORN

On the Witches’ Sabbath surrounded by his devilish followers, the demon Mephistopheles sardonically holds up a glass globe of the Earth, sneering at the vain futility of the pathetic planet and the folly of the human creatures who inhabit it. At the aria’s climax he smashes the globe, shouting “Behold the Earth!”

### HANDEL: Alcina

#### Tornami a vagheggiar

SOFIA GOTCH

Morgana, sister of the sorceress Alcina, has fallen in love with the handsome, young “Ricciardo”—actually the woman Bradamante in disguise (it’s a long story...)—and in a lively and tuneful aria requiring great vocal agility, she begs “him” to return her love and remain faithful.

### WEBER: Der Freischütz

#### Durch die Wälder

CHRISTOPHER SOKOLOWSKI

Max, the “Free-Shooter” of the opera’s title, is a huntsman who hopes to win the hand of his beloved Agathe in a marksmanship contest, but in his recent attempts, his shooting skills have failed him. In his aria, he recalls that he used to travel “through the forests, through the meadows” with a light heart, but now he succumbs to despair.

### DONIZETTI: Don Pasquale

#### Quel guardo il cavaliere

HEIDI STOBER

The sprightly Norina is reading aloud from a gushy romantic novel about a knight who was captivated by a lady’s glance. With a laugh, she confidently declares that she, too, knows all the tricks to ensnare a man.

### INTERMISSION

### LEONCAVALLO: Pagliacci

#### Intermezzo

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ORCHESTRA

Canio, head of a troupe of comedians, has just learned that his wife, Nedda, is unfaithful, but he has only a brief moment to voice his bitter grief before getting ready for the next show. The eloquent intermezzo provides a bridge between the “real world” and the supposedly comic scene to come, echoing stirring music from the Prologue which reminded us that actors are human beings who feel real sorrow and pain.

### PUCCINI: Madame Butterfly

#### Un bel di

ELEONORA BURATTO

Though three years have passed, Butterfly assures her doubtful maid Suzuki that her husband, Pinkerton, will return to her “one fine day.” She imagines the joy that she will feel when she finally catches sight of him coming up the hill. Meanwhile, she resolutely exclaims, “I wait for him!”

### THOMAS: Hamlet

#### O vin dissipe la tristesse

THOMAS MOLE

Hamlet meets with the troupe of actors who will perform a play for the court. Perhaps feigning madness, he spurs them on by singing a feverish drinking song calling for wine and laughter to dispel his sadness.

### R. STRAUSS: Ariadne auf Naxos

#### Es gibt ein Reich

MARY HOSKINS

In this opera within an opera, Ariadne has been abandoned by her lover Theseus and left heartbroken on a deserted island with nymphs as her only company. She mourns her lost love, longing to reach the realm of death, and exults in the joy of the ensuing afterlife.

### PUCCINI: Manon Lescaut

#### Donna non vidi mai

JOSHUA GUERRERO

The Chevalier des Grieux has just met a young girl being set to a convent, who told him “My name is Manon Lescaut.” In love at first sight, Des Grieux rhapsodizes that he has never seen a woman like her and that he longs to tell her of his love.

### VERDI: Simon Boccanegra

#### Orfanella il tetto umile

ELEONORA BURATTO  
AND AMARTUVSHIN ENKHBAT

Amelia is the adopted daughter of the wealthy Grimaldi family. Simon Boccanegra, the doge of Genoa, visits her hoping she will marry one of his courtiers. She tells him of her past and shows him a locket bearing a picture of her dead mother. Comparing Amelia’s picture with his own, Boccanegra realizes that she is his long-lost daughter. Finally reunited, they are overcome with joy.

### ZANDONAI: Giulietta e Romeo

#### Giulietta! Son io!

CHRISTOPHER SOKOLOWSKI

In Riccardo Zandonai’s 1922 opera on the Romeo and Juliet story, Romeo arrives at Juliet’s tomb in grief, unaware of the sleeping potion that has only simulated her death. In his passionate aria he prepares to take poison, sorrowfully calling out, “How can I wake you? With what cry, what tears, what ardent kiss?”

### TCHAIKOVSKY: The Queen of Spades

#### Ya vas lyublyu

GABRIEL NATAL-BÁEZ

Prince Yeletsky is engaged to Lisa, but she has become strangely distant and aloof. In his aria, he pours out his emotions to her, telling her that he loves her beyond measure and would do anything for her, though her remoteness torments him.

### LARA

#### Granada

JOSHUA GUERRERO

The Mexican composer Agustín Lara’s popular song “Granada” dates from 1932 and celebrates the historic city of Granada in southern Spain, a place of bullfights, beautiful seductive eyes, and torrid love affairs. The song ends with the words “Granada, your land is full of lovely women, blood, and sun!”