

Sunday, June 3, 2012, 3pm
Zellerbach Hall

San Francisco Opera Orchestra

Nicola Luisotti, *conductor*

with

Amit Peled, *cello*

PROGRAM

Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953) Symphony No. 1 in D major, Op. 25, “Classical”
Allegro
Larghetto
Gavotte: Non troppo allegro
Finale: Molto vivace

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) Cello Concerto No. 1 in C major, H. Vllb:1
Moderato
Adagio
Allegro molto

Amit Peled, *cello*

INTERMISSION

Luigi Cherubini (1760–1842) Symphony in D major
Largo — Allegro
Larghetto cantabile
Minuetto: Allegro non tanto
Allegro assai

San Francisco Opera
David Gockley, *General Director*
Nicola Luisotti, *Music Director*

Cal Performances' 2011–2012 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953)
Symphony No. 1 in D major, Op. 25, “Classical”

Composed in 1916–1917. Premiered on April 21, 1918, in Leningrad, conducted by the composer.

“In the field of instrumental music, I am well content with the forms already perfected. I want nothing better, nothing more flexible or more complete than sonata form, which contains everything necessary to my structural purpose.” This statement, given to Olin Downes by Prokofiev during an interview in 1930 for *The New York Times*, seems a curious one for a composer who had gained a reputation as an ear-shattering iconoclast, the *enfant terrible* of 20th-century music, the master of modernity. While it is certainly true that some of his early works (*Scythian Suite*, *Sarcasms*, the first two Piano Concertos) raised the hackles of musical traditionalists, it is also true that Prokofiev sought to preserve that same tradition by extending its boundaries to encompass his own distinctive style. A glance through the list of his works shows a preponderance of established Classical forms: sonatas, symphonies, concertos, operas, ballets, quartets, overtures and suites account for most of his output. This is certainly not to say that he merely mimicked the music of earlier generations, but he did accept it as the conceptual framework within which he built his own compositions.

Prokofiev’s penchant for using Classical musical idioms was instilled in him during the course of his thorough, excellent training: when he was a little tot, his mother played Beethoven sonatas to him while he sat under the piano; he studied with the greatest Russian musicians of the time—Glière, Rimsky-Korsakov, Liadov, Glazunov; he began composing at the Mozartian age of six. By the time he was 25, Prokofiev was composing prolifically, always brewing a variety of compositions simultaneously. The works of 1917, for example, represent widely divergent styles—*The Gambler* is a satirical opera; *They Are Seven*, a nearly atonal cantata; the *Classical Symphony*, a charming miniature. This last piece was a direct result of Prokofiev’s

study with Alexander Tcherepnin, a good and wise teacher who allowed the young composer to forge ahead in his own manner while making sure that he had a thorough understanding of the great musical works of the past. It was in 1916 that Prokofiev first had the idea for a symphony based on the Viennese models supplied by Tcherepnin, and at that time he sketched out a few themes for it. Most of the work, however, was done the following year, as Prokofiev recounted in his *Autobiography*:

“I spent the summer of 1917 in complete solitude in the environs of Petrograd; I read Kant and I worked hard. I had purposely not had my piano moved to the country because I wanted to establish the fact that thematic material worked out without a piano is better.... The idea occurred to me to compose an entire symphonic work without the piano. Composed in this fashion, the orchestral colors would, of necessity, be clearer and cleaner. Thus the plan of a symphony in Haydn’s style originated, since, as a result of my studies in Tcherepnin’s classes, Haydn’s technique had somehow become especially clear to me, and with such intimate understanding it was much easier to plunge into the dangerous flood without a piano. It seemed to me that, were he alive today, Haydn, while retaining his style of composition, would have appropriated something from the modern. Such a symphony I now wanted to compose: a symphony in the classic manner. As it began to take actual form I named it *Classical Symphony*; first, because it was the simplest thing to call it; second, out of bravado, to stir up a hornet’s nest; and finally, in the hope that should the symphony prove itself in time to be truly ‘classic,’ it would benefit me considerably.” Prokofiev’s closing wish has been fulfilled—the *Classical Symphony* has been one of his most successful works ever since it was first heard in Leningrad in 1918.

The work is in the four movements customary in Haydn’s symphonies, though at only 15 minutes it hardly runs to half their typical length. The dapper first movement is a miniature sonata design that follows the traditional form but adds some quirks that would have given old Haydn himself a chuckle—the recapitulation,

for example, begins in the “wrong” key (but soon rights itself), and occasionally a beat is left out, as though the music had stubbed its toe. The sleek main theme is followed by the enormous leaps, flashing grace notes and sparse texture of the second subject. A graceful, ethereal melody floating high in the violins is used to open and close the *Larghetto*, with the gentle pizzicato middle section reaching a brilliant *tutti* before quickly subsiding. The third movement, a *Gavotte*, comes not from the Viennese symphony but rather from the tradition of French Baroque ballet. The finale, the most brilliant movement of the Symphony, calls for remarkable feats of agility and precise ensemble from the performers.

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)
Cello Concerto No. 1 in C major, H. VIIb:1

Composed during the early 1760s.

Haydn was among the most industrious composers in the history of music. He summarized his philosophy of no-nonsense professionalism when he wrote, “I know that God has bestowed a talent upon me, and I thank Him for it. I think I have done my duty and been of use in my generation by my works. Let others do the same.” His talent for simple hard work and seemingly boundless fecundity was apparent as soon as he joined the musical staff of the Esterházy family in 1761, his employer for the next half century. Not only did he compose, but he was also general administrator of the music establishment, chief keyboard player for chamber and orchestral concerts, and conductor of the orchestra. Regarding the press of Haydn’s duties, the noted scholar H. C. Robbins Landon related an amusing anecdote from those years: “He was extremely busy at this time, and when he wrote out the score of the First Horn Concerto he mixed up the staves of the oboe and the first violin and wrote on the score, as he corrected his mistake, ‘Written while asleep.’”

Haydn was never so rushed, however, that he lost concern for the musicians in his charge.

He composed concertos for a number of them so they could show their skills in the best light to their employer. He lived in the same so-called “music building” with them, and became their close friend and trusted advisor. He was a witness at many of their weddings, and he even stood as godfather to a number of their children. One who extended to him this last honor was the cellist Joseph Franz Weigl, a close friend for many years. It was for Weigl that Haydn wrote the lovely C major Cello Concerto as one of the products of those fertile early years with the Esterházy. The Concerto was certainly played at one of the palace concerts, after which Haydn entered its opening measures into a catalog of his compositions that he compiled in 1765. The piece then disappeared for 200 years.

Though Haydn may have written as many as a half dozen concertos for cello, it was long thought that only one had survived—that in D major. Some works once attributed to him proved to be spurious; others were lost. It was this latter fate that had apparently befallen the C major Concerto, whose only trace seemed to be the listing in Haydn’s 1765 catalog and another entry by his assistant, Joseph Elssler, in an 1805 index. Ironically, it was the upheaval of the Second World War that rescued the work from obscurity. After the war, the Czech National Library’s confiscation of all the great private collections in the country resulted in a mountain of manuscripts that took scholars years to catalog. Near the bottom of the pile, in the former holdings of the Counts of Kolovrat-Krakovsky, Oldrich Pulkert and Robbins Landon discovered a complete set of parts for the C major Concerto in 1961. “Here,” wrote Landon, “is the major discovery of our age, and surely one of the finest works of the period.” The Concerto has come round full circle, from one of Haydn’s most important early works, to total obscurity, to an established place in today’s cello repertory. A similar happy circle pertained to the composer’s relationship with the Weigl family. The child to whom Haydn was godfather was, like his father, named Joseph, and the son became one of the most popular and successful composers of comic opera in Vienna. He never forgot Haydn.

When Haydn’s health broke and he was living his last days in a comfortable Vienna apartment, one of his most frequent visitors was the younger Weigl. He came to share with the older composer the respect and love that had maintained the family friendship for 50 years, a friendship whose beginning was marked by this Concerto.

The C major Cello Concerto was written during the years of transition from the Baroque to the Classical era, and shows traits of both the old and new styles. Its harmonic and melodic components are largely of the modern type, while certain formal characteristics and modes of expression look back to the models of preceding generations. The first movement gives the impression of an old-fashioned stately procession, much in the grand style of Handel’s orchestral works. Also backward-looking is the movement’s abundance of thematic material. At least six melodic ideas are presented by the orchestra in the first 20 measures alone, far more than the one or two upon which most of Haydn’s later movements are founded. This technique is closer to that of the opening orchestral section of the Baroque concerto, with its little treasury of motivic material that is mined throughout the movement, than to the two or so contrasting themes found in the exposition of the typical Classical concerto form.

This Concerto is one of the very few works in which all of the three movements are in the same form, as though Haydn were experimenting to discover what sort of musical material best fit into this particular construction. Each movement comprises alternations between the orchestra and the soloist, the basic formal principle of the Baroque concerto. There are four orchestral sections interspersed with three for the cellist. Unlike the Baroque model, however, the three cello sections take on the properties of exposition, development and recapitulation with the intervening orchestral episodes serving as introduction, interludes and coda. The soloist is provided with an opportunity for a cadenza in the closing orchestral coda. There are only two exceptions to this pattern in the Concerto: the second movement has no orchestral interlude

before the soloist’s recapitulation and there is no cadenza in the last movement.

Much of the charm of this Concerto lies in the manner in which the vigorous young composer poured the new wine of sentiment and melody into the old bottles of form and nobility of spirit. It is of such music, and of the man who wrote it, that Mozart said, “He alone has the secret of making me smile and touching me to the bottom of my soul.”

Luigi Cherubini (1760–1842)
Symphony in D major

Composed in 1815. Premiered on May 1, 1815, in London, conducted by the composer.

Beethoven wrote to him, “I value your works more highly than all other compositions for the stage.” Schubert maintained that *Medea* was his favorite opera and Brahms called it “the highest peak of dramatic music.” The wealthy Berlin banker Abraham Mendelssohn, who could have consulted any musician in Europe, presented his brilliant son Felix to him for his evaluation and guidance. He ruled over the Paris Conservatoire for 20 years and Napoleon made him his music director. Luigi Cherubini, composer, conductor, teacher, administrator, theorist and music publisher, was among the most highly regarded musicians of the early 19th century. Today, though he wrote 39 operas, an entire repertory of sacred music, cantatas and ceremonial pieces, chamber works, keyboard compositions, marches, dances, pedagogical treatises and orchestral scores, Cherubini is largely remembered for just a handful of opera overtures, a rare revival of *Medea*, two Requiems, a single symphony and some disparaging remarks that Hector Berlioz made about him in his memoirs.

Luigi Cherubini was born into a musical family in Florence in 1760 and trained in the rudiments of the art by his father, harpsichordist at the city’s Teatro della Pergola, and several local teachers; he was composing by age 13—Mass movements, dramatic *intermezzi*, a

cantata in honor of Duke Leopold of Tuscany (later Emperor Leopold II), the Habsburg noble then ruling northern Italy. When Cherubini turned 18, Leopold subsidized his study in Bologna and Milan with Giuseppe Sarti, who helped the young musician polish his skills in sacred music, try his hand at some instrumental sonatas, and contribute several arias for secondary characters to his operas. The success of Cherubini's first opera (*Il Quinto Fabio*, 1779) encouraged him to write eight more stage works during the next five years that were performed across Italy. His music attracted the attention of Georg Nassau Clavering, an English nobleman living in Florence, through whose influence he was appointed house composer for King's Theatre in London in 1784. A visit to Paris the following summer, however, when the Italian expatriate composer and court violinist Giovanni Battista Viotti arranged for the performance of one of his works at the celebrated Concerts Spirituels and introduced him to the French queen, Marie Antoinette (sister of Cherubini's old patron Duke Leopold in Florence), led to his permanent move to that city in 1786; he fulfilled his first commission from the Paris Opéra (*Démophon*) in 1788.

In 1789, Viotti, with financial backing from the Count of Provence (later Louis XVIII), founded a company at the Théâtre Feydeau to present Italian comic operas in Paris, and appointed Cherubini as the troupe's music director. *Lodoïska*, premiered at the Feydeau in 1791, was Cherubini's first great Parisian and international success, but the outbreak of revolution the following year shut down the company and drove Cherubini to Rouen and then to Le Havre. He returned to Paris in 1794, married a musician's daughter, resumed composing, and got a job teaching at the newly founded music school of the Garde Nationale, reorganized as the Paris Conservatoire two years later. He scored a triumph at the re-opened Théâtre Feydeau in 1797 with *Medea*, which was unprecedented in French opera for its musical originality, dramatic intensity and orchestral color, and another success with *Les Deux Journées* in 1800, but his opportunities diminished when the Feydeau was

merged with the Opéra-Comique in 1801. He tried music publishing for a time, but his income consisted of little more than his Conservatoire salary for the next four years.

In 1805, Cherubini received an invitation to visit Vienna from Baron Peter von Braun, director of the court opera, where several of his operas had been well received. In Vienna, he directed some of his operas, met Haydn (whom he presented with a medal on behalf of the Conservatoire) and Beethoven (Cherubini attended the premiere of *Fidelio* on November 20, 1805), and was ordered by Napoleon, whose troops had overrun the city a week before the *Fidelio* premiere, to organize concerts at his new residences in Schönbrunn and Vienna. Napoleon requested that his music director return to Paris, but when Cherubini arrived there in 1806 he was disappointed to find that audiences by then were preferring lighter fare than he was comfortable dispensing. The unsettled state of his life and his career precipitated a descent into depression for the next two years, when he withdrew from composition and busied himself studying botany and painting while staying at the château of the Prince of Chimay, 150 miles northeast of Paris.

When his interest in creative work was revived by a request in 1809 for a Mass setting from the church in Chimay, Cherubini returned to the capital, where he composed ceremonial music for Napoleon and tried unsuccessfully to re-establish his reputation in the theater with several new operas. His fortunes improved when Napoleon abdicated in 1814 and he was appointed *Surintendant de la Musique du Roi* by the restored Bourbon monarch, Louis XVIII (who had bankrolled the Théâtre Feydeau 25 years before). Cherubini turned increasingly to writing sacred music, including the masterful Requiem in C minor composed in 1816 in memory of the executed Louis XVI, and he was named a director of the Royal Chapel that same year. In 1822, he became head of the Paris Conservatoire, restructuring its curriculum and organization (including admitting women in significant numbers), opening branches in Lille, Toulouse and Marseilles, writing several

instructional and theoretical texts, and acquiring a reputation as an effective if authoritarian and conservative teacher. Among the many prestigious honors that he earned during his lifetime were the *Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur* (1814), *Membre de l'Académie des Beaux-Arts* (1815) and *Commandeur de la Légion d'honneur* (1841), the first musician to receive that title. Cherubini died in Paris on March 15, 1842 (just one month after retiring from the Conservatoire), and was given a state funeral (at which his Requiem in D minor was performed) and buried at Père Lachaise Cemetery. His friend Frédéric Chopin was laid to rest in the adjacent grave seven years later.

Early in 1815, Cherubini received a commission for a symphony, a concert overture and a cantata (*Inno alla Primavera*—"Hymn to Spring") from the newly formed Royal Philharmonic Society of London, a request instigated by Muzio Clementi, another expatriate Italian musician living in Britain whom Cherubini had befriended during his time in England, and Cherubini's old colleague Viotti, who had fled there in 1792 to escape the Revolution. Cherubini arrived in London at the end of February to begin what was to be his only symphony; he completed the score on April 24th and conducted the Philharmonic Society Orchestra in its premiere on May 1st. The work was received poorly. Cherubini did not publish the score (it did not appear in print until 1890 in Leipzig), but in 1829 he reworked the Symphony in D major into his String Quartet No. 2, transposing the music into C major and providing it with a new slow movement. The Philharmonic Society extracted the work from its archives for a performance in 1853, when it earned some critical success, and revived it again in 1864 and 1870. The influential Italian conductor Arturo Toscanini took it into his repertory—it is one of the few 19th-century symphonies by an Italian composer—and recorded it with his NBC Symphony Orchestra in 1952. Though performances and recordings of Cherubini's Symphony have not been numerous, the work retains a place in the repertory as a significant legacy from a composer who helped

to lead music from the studied refinement of High Classicism to the heightened expression of Romanticism.

The Symphony opens with a genteel slow introduction, carefully balanced between strings and winds, that pauses before the entry of the main theme, which comprises a muscular motive announced by unison strings and a suave, arching melody led by the violins. A vigorous, contrapuntal transition leads to the second theme, shaded at first into a wistful minor key but becoming graceful in its second part before the exposition closes with a more forceful passage. The development section contrasts permutations of the muscular and suave motives of the main theme. The recapitulation omits the muscular opening motive but returns the rest of the materials of the exposition before the movement culminates in a coda based on the forceful closing theme.

The sonata-form *Larghetto* takes for its themes two complementary melodies: the first is a succession of graceful phrases; the second is more sustained in nature. The dramatic potential of the first subject is explored in the development section before a brief conversation of solo woodwinds provides a bridge to the recapitulation. Though the third movement is given the old-fashioned title *Minuetto*, the energy and full scoring of its outer sections bring it close to the Beethovenian scherzo, qualities for which the woodwind colors, throbbing accompaniment and dark harmonies of the central trio provide expressive and formal balance. The finale is another sonata form, but the movement gives little importance to the violins' brief, lyrical second theme, instead forming its principal character around the dynamic rhythms and precise counterpoint of the opening subject.

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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ORCHESTRA

Nicola Luisotti, *Music Director, Caroline H. Hume Endowed Chair*Patrick Summers, *Principal Guest Conductor*Giuseppe Finzi, *Resident Conductor***FIRST VIOLIN**Kay Stern, *Concertmaster*Laura Albers, *Associate Concertmaster*Heidi Wilcox, *Assistant Concertmaster*

Jennifer Cho

Dawn Harms

Lev Rankov

Barbara Riccardi

Robert Galbraith

Leonid Igudesman

Mariya Borozina

Asuka Annie Yano

Joseph Edelberg[‡]**SECOND VIOLIN**Virginia Price-Kvistad, *Principal*Martha Simonds, *Associate Principal*Beni Shinohara, *Assistant Principal*

Eva Karasik

Leslie Ludena

Gerard Svazlian

Linda Deutsch Twohy

Craig Reiss

VIOLACarla Maria Rodrigues, *Principal*Sergey Rakitchenkov, *Associate Principal*Paul Nahhas, *Assistant Principal*

Patricia Heller

Jonna Hervig

Natalia Vershilova

Joy Fellows

CELLODavid Kadarauch, *Principal*Thalia Moore, *Associate Principal*David Budd, *Assistant Principal*

Nora Pirquet

Emil Miland

Victoria Ehrlich

Ruth Lane

DOUBLE BASSJoseph Lescher, *Principal*Jonathan Lancelle, *Associate Principal*Steven D'Amico, *Assistant Principal*

Shinji Eshima

Mark Drury

FLUTEJulie McKenzie, *Principal*

Patricia Farrell

Stephanie McNab

PICCOLO

Stephanie McNab

OBOEMingjia Liu, *Principal*Deborah Henry, *Assistant Principal*

Janet Popesco Archibald

ENGLISH HORN

Janet Popesco Archibald

CLARINETJose Gonzalez Granero, *Principal*Joanne Burke Eisler, *Assistant Principal*

Anthony Striplen

BASS CLARINET

Anthony Striplen

BASSOONRufus Olivier, *Principal*Rufus David Olivier[‡]Robin Elliott[†]Shawn Jones[‡]**CONTRABASSOON**Robin Elliott[†]Shawn Jones[‡]**HORN**William Klingelhoffer, *Co-Principal*Kevin Rivard, *Co-Principal*

Keith Green

Brian McCarty

Lawrence Ragent

TRUMPETAdam Luftman, *Principal*

William Holmes

John Pearson

TROMBONEMcDowell Kenley, *Principal*

Donald Kennelly

David Ridge

TUBA & CIMBASSO

Zachariah Spellman

TIMPANI

John Burgardt

PERCUSSIONRichard Kvistad, *Principal/Associate Timpani*

Patricia Niemi

HARP

Olga Rakitchenkov

LIBRARIAN

Carrie Weick

ORCHESTRA MANAGER

Tracy Davis

[†] *Leave of absence*[‡] *Season substitute*

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA, one of the world's leading producers of opera since its inception in 1923, has long been a pioneer in introducing world and North American premieres, as well as presenting major artists in celebrated role debuts. Originally presented over two weeks, the Company's season now contains approximately 75 performances of ten operas between September and July. In 2007, San Francisco Opera celebrated the 75th anniversary of its performing home, the War Memorial Opera House. The venerable Beaux-Arts building was inaugurated on October 15, 1932, and holds the distinction of being the first American opera house that was not built by and for a small group of wealthy patrons; the funding came thanks to a group of private citizens who encouraged thousands of San Franciscans to subscribe.

David Gockley became San Francisco Opera's sixth general director in January 2006 after more than three decades at the helm of Houston Grand Opera. During his first months as general director, Mr. Gockley took opera to the center of the community with a free outdoor simulcast—the first in the Company's history—of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* in May 2006. Subsequent simulcasts, including six at AT&T Park, have reached nearly 150,000 opera fans. In 2007, Mr. Gockley led San Francisco Opera to take these innovations even further, creating the Koret-Taube Media Suite. The first permanent high-definition broadcast-standard video production facility installed in any American opera house, the Koret-Taube Media Suite gives the Company the permanent capability to produce simulcasts and other projects, including OperaVision, where retractable screens provide full stage, close-up and midrange ensemble shots in high-definition video for patrons in balcony seats. Mr. Gockley ushered in another first for San Francisco Opera in spring 2008, when the Company presented four operas in movie theaters across the country. These operas, in addition to eight other titles, are now available to theaters and performing arts venues as part of the Company's Grand Opera Cinema Series. In 2007, Mr. Gockley also launched

radio partnerships with San Francisco's Classical KDFC and the WFMT Radio Network in Chicago, returning regular San Francisco Opera broadcasts to the national and international radio airwaves for the first time in 25 years.

San Francisco Opera's first two general directors, Gaetano Merola and Kurt Herbert Adler, regularly conducted for the first six decades of the Company's history. In 1985, the Company appointed Sir John Pritchard as its first permanent music director, and he was followed by Donald Runnicles in 1992. During his tenure, Maestro Runnicles championed new repertory ranging from world premieres to American and West Coast premieres. After 17 years with San Francisco Opera, Maestro Runnicles stepped down as music director in 2009 and was succeeded by Nicola Luisotti. Born and raised in Italy, Maestro Luisotti made his international debut in 2002 and has led productions with the world's leading opera companies. He also serves as principal guest conductor of the Tokyo Symphony and was recently appointed music director of the Teatro di San Carlo in Naples.

Since its inception, San Francisco Opera has embodied a spirit of innovation by presenting the world premieres of *Blood Moon* (1961), *Angle of Repose* (1976), *The Dangerous Liaisons* (1994), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1998), *Dead Man Walking* (2000), *Arshak II* (2001) and *Doctor Atomic* (2005). Under the leadership of David Gockley, the Company has added three new operas to that list: Philip Glass and Christopher Hampton's *Appomattox* (2007), Stewart Wallace and Amy Tan's *The Bonesetter's Daughter* (2008), and *Heart of a Soldier* (2011) by Christopher Theofanidis and Donna Di Novelli. Future commissions include Mark Adamo's *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene*, Tobias Picker and J. D. McClatchy's *Dolores Claiborne*, and a co-presentation with Cal Performances of Nolan Gasser and Carey Harrison's *The Secret Garden*, all three to be presented in 2013.

San Francisco Opera offers a comprehensive array of acclaimed training programs and performance opportunities for young artists under the auspices of the San Francisco Opera Center

and the Merola Opera Program (each a separate institution). Both are led by renowned soprano Sheri Greenawald.



Italian conductor **Nicola Luisotti** has been music director of San Francisco Opera since fall 2009 and holds the Caroline H. Hume Endowed Chair. In the current season he has already lead performances at the War Memorial Opera

House of *Turandot*, *Don Giovanni* and *Carmen*, and continues this summer with *Attila*. Maestro Luisotti's outside engagements during the 2011–2012 season included *Tosca* at Milan's La Scala, in addition to concerts with the Berlin Philharmonic, Madrid's Orquesta Nacional de España, and the orchestras of Cleveland and Philadelphia. Maestro Luisotti was recently appointed music director of the Teatro di San Carlo in Naples; he led Verdi's rarely performed *I Masnadieri* and a concert with the Teatro di San Carlo Orchestra of Puccini's *Messa di Gloria* there this spring. Called "both an original thinker and a great respecter of tradition" by *Opera News*, which featured him on the cover of the July 2011 special issue on conductors, Maestro Luisotti made his San Francisco Opera debut in 2005 conducting *La Forza del Destino* and returned in November 2008 to conduct *La Bohème*. As the Company's music director, he has led acclaimed performances of *Il Trovatore*, *Salome*, *Otello*, *La Fanciulla del West*, *Aida*, *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Madama Butterfly*. Maestro Luisotti has garnered enthusiastic praise from both audiences and critics for his work at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; the Metropolitan Opera; Paris Opera; Vienna State Opera; La Scala; Genoa's Teatro Carlo Felice; Venice's La Fenice; Munich's Bavarian State Opera; Frankfurt Opera; Madrid's Teatro Real; Los Angeles Opera; Dresden's Semperoper; Toronto's Canadian Opera Company; Seattle

Opera; Bologna's Teatro Comunale; and in Tokyo's Suntory Hall. Maestro Luisotti was awarded the 39th Premio Puccini Award in conjunction with the historic 100th anniversary of Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West* at the Metropolitan Opera, which he conducted in 2010. Equally at home on the concert stage, Maestro Luisotti serves as principal guest conductor of the Tokyo Symphony and has established growing relationships with orchestras in London (Philharmonia Orchestra), Genoa, Budapest, Turin, Munich (Bavarian Radio Orchestra), Palermo and Rome (Santa Cecilia Orchestra), as well as the Berlin Philharmonic and the San Francisco and Atlanta symphonies. His expanding discography includes a complete recording of *Stiffelio* (Dynamic) with the orchestra of Trieste's Teatro Verdi, and the critically acclaimed *Duets* (Deutsche Grammophon), featuring Anna Netrebko and Rolando Villazón. Maestro Luisotti is also on the podium of a DVD recording of the Met's *La Bohème*, starring Angela Gheorghiu and Ramón Vargas (EMI).



Israeli cellist **Amit Peled** has performed as soloist with orchestras and in the world's major concert halls, such as Carnegie and Alice Tully halls in New York; Paris's Salle Gaveau; the Wigmore Hall in London; Berlin's Konzerthaus; and Mann Auditorium in Tel Aviv. Mr. Peled is also a frequent guest artist, performing and giving master classes at prestigious summer music festivals, such as the Marlboro Music Festival, Newport Music Festival, Seattle Chamber Music Festival, Heifetz International Music Institute, the Schleswig-Holstein and Euro Arts festivals in Germany, Gotland Festival in Sweden, Prussia Cove Festival in England, the Violoncello Congress in Spain, and the Kfar Blum Music Festival in Israel. As a recording artist, Mr. Peled has released two critically acclaimed CDs, *The Jewish Soul* and *Cellobration*, on the Centaur Records label. Recent engagements include his

debut with the Baltimore and Columbus symphonies, a return to Taiwan for the Brahms Double Concerto with the National Symphony, and performances with the Jerusalem Symphony and Leon Botstein. Mr. Peled has been featured on television and radio stations throughout the world, including NPR's *Performance Today*, WGBH in Boston, WQXR in New York, WFMT in Chicago, Deutschland Radio Berlin, Radio France, Swedish National Radio and Television, and Israeli National Radio and TV. One of the most sought after cello pedagogues in the world, Mr. Peled is a professor at the Peabody Conservatory of Music of the Johns Hopkins University. He plays a rare Andrea Guarneri cello, circa 1689.