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**CAL PERFORMANCES AND SAN FRANCISCO OPERA PRESENT
SOPRANO ANGELA GHEORGHIU
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2008 AT 7:30 P.M. AT ZELLERBACH HALL**

San Francisco Opera Orchestra Performs Under the Direction of Marco Armiliato

BERKELEY, August 4, 2008—Romanian soprano **Angela Gheorghiu**, hailed as “undoubtedly the most distinctive and recognizable soprano voice in the world today” (*The Times*, London), inaugurates Cal Performances’ 2008-2009 season with her debut at Zellerbach Hall **Saturday, September 6 at 7:30 p.m.** A rare force combining beauty, dramatic stage presence and a rich voice of a wide range, Gheorghiu has enjoyed international stardom for almost two decades. After her 2007 San Francisco Opera debut, Gheorghiu returns with a program of songs written by Giacomo Puccini and Giuseppe Verdi, among others. She is joined onstage by the **San Francisco Opera Orchestra**, with conductor **Marco Armiliato**, whom the *New York Times* has dubbed “one of the [Metropolitan Opera]’s great young finds...supple, graceful [and] rhythmically buoyant”.

This concert is the first of three co-presentations with the San Francisco Opera. Jake Heggie’s *Three Decembers*, featuring Frederica von Stade (December 11-14) and Salvatore Licitra’s visit to Zellerbach Hall (January 10) round out the trio of events.

PROGRAM

At her Cal Performances debut, Gheorghiu will sing a collection of songs and arias favoring the Italian classics and reprise several of her noted operatic roles. The evening opens with an orchestral arrangement, followed by **Giuseppe Giordani**’s “Caro mio ben.” The first half also features two Puccini works: “Ch’il bel sogno di Doretta” from *La Rondine*, with which she made her San Francisco Opera debut in 2007; and “Un bel di vedremo” from *Madama*

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Butterfly. The first act concludes with Verdi's "Pace, Pace, Mio Dio" from *La Forza del Destino*.

Following intermission, Gheorghiu and the San Francisco Opera Orchestra return with **Ernesto de Curtis's** "Non ti scordar di me," "Siboney" by the Cuban composer **Ernesto Lecuona**, and "Les filles de Cadix" by **Léo Delibes**. In a nod to her native Romania, Gheorghiu will also sing **George Grigoriu's** "Muzica." Gheorghiu finishes the evening with "O Sole Mio" by Eduardo di Capua, a popular classical song that has been performed and covered by various artists, from The Three Tenors to Elvis Presley.

ANGELA GHEORGHIU

Angela Gheorghiu was born in Adjud, Romania and graduated from the Bucharest Music Academy in 1990. After making her international debut at Covent Garden as Mimi in *La Bohème*, Gheorghiu returned to the Royal Opera House stage in 1994 in a critically acclaimed performance of Violetta in *La Traviata*, which was recorded and broadcast by BBC. Her performance prompted the production's conductor, Sir Georg Solti, to recall a rehearsal when "I was in tears. I had to go out. The girl is wonderful. She can do everything." Since then, Gheorghiu has climbed to superstardom, a constant favorite at major concert halls and opera houses around the world.

In addition to Mimi and Violetta, Gheorghiu's roles include Magda in *La Rondine*, *Tosca's* eponymous heroine and Nedda in *Pagliacci*. Gheorghiu has released numerous award-winning recordings on EMI and Decca labels, including *Tosca* (2001); *La Bohème* (1999); *La Rondine* (1997), which was awarded *Gramophone's* Best Opera Recording and Record of the Year, Choc du Monde de la Musique, two Diapason d'Or honors and the Deutsche Schallplattenkritik-Preis; and *Casta Diva* (2001), a compilation of arias from *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *William Tell*, among others. Her popularity and influence in the classical music world and beyond have earned her numerous honors, including *La Medaille Vermeille de la Ville de Paris* and the title *Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres* given by the French government.

Named among the "100 Most Beautiful Women in the World" by *FHM* magazine, Gheorghiu appeals to a population beyond the classical world. In 2000, she starred in a Benoit

Jacquot-directed cinematic adaptation of *Tosca*, attracting fans of opera and film. Gheorghiu's popularity with audiences was on full display in June 2008 when she sang with her husband, French tenor Roberto Alagna, at Prospect Park in Brooklyn, NY: the Metropolitan Opera concert drew in a crowd of an estimated 50,000, crushing all previous attendance records at the venue. In August 2008, Gheorghiu will be featured in an official Olympic cultural event, a concert series titled "Divas in Beijing," featuring leading operatic superstars such as soprano Renée Fleming, tenor Salvatore Licitra and baritone Dmitri Hvorostovski—all of whom have graced Cal Performances' stages.

Future engagements include her return to the San Francisco Opera in November 2008 in *La Bohème*. Her portrayal of Mimi has been hailed as "emotionally convincing, multifaceted... [in] a way that you don't see or hear very often" (*Los Angeles Times*).

MARCO ARMILIATO

Conductor **Marco Armiliato** studied at the Paganini Conservatory in his native Genoa and made his debut at the Teatro la Fenice di Venezia in 1995. He has regularly conducted the San Francisco Opera Orchestra since his debut with the company in 1997, notably in repeat productions of Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera*. Sought internationally for his interpretations of French and Italian repertoire, Armiliato has conducted at Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, Covent Garden, Teatro dell'Opera di Roma and the Deutsche Oper in Berlin, among others. He returns annually to the Metropolitan Opera and frequently conducts at Wiener Staatsoper.

In the symphonic field, Armiliato has led concerts throughout Europe, the United States and Japan. Armiliato's close association with The Three Tenors and The Three Sopranos has taken him to Melbourne and Madrid, alternating with fellow conductor James Levine. He also enjoyed a collaborative relationship with Luciano Pavarotti outside of The Three Tenors partnership, conducting many of Pavarotti's concert performances.

In 1992 Armiliato was appointed principal conductor of the Symphony Orchestra of Sofia, with which he has toured France, Switzerland, Spain and Portugal.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Angela Gheorghiu**, soprano, in concert with **San Francisco Opera Orchestra** with **Marco Armiliato**, conductor, on **Saturday, September 6, 2008** at **7:30 p.m.** in **Zellerbach Hall** are priced at \$35.00, \$50.00, \$75.00, and \$100.00. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens, other students and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$5 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988 or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperformances.org.

For select performances, Cal Performances offers UCB student, faculty and staff, senior and community rush tickets. Rush tickets are announced two hours prior to a performance and are available in person only at the Ticket Office beginning one hour before the performance; quantities may be limited. Rush ticket sales are limited to one ticket per person; all sales are cash only. Rush ticket prices are \$10.00 for UCB students; \$15.00 for UCB faculty and staff (UCB ID required) and seniors age 65 or older; and \$20 for all other community members. Information is available at (510) 642-9988, press 2 for the rush hotline, two hours prior to a performance only.

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CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Saturday, September 6 at 7:30 p.m.

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

Special Event

Angela Gheorghiu, soprano
Marco Armiliato, conductor
San Francisco Opera Orchestra

Program:

Giordani/"Caro Mio Ben"

Puccini/"Ch' il bel sogno di Doretta," from *La Rondine*; "Un bel di vedremo," from *Madama Butterfly*

Verdi/"Pace, Pace, Mio Dio" from *La Forza del Destino*

de Curtis/"Non ti scordar di me"

Lecuona/"Siboney"

Delibes/"Les filles de Cadix"

Grigoriu/"Muzica"

di Capua/"O sole mio"

Tickets: \$35.00, \$50.00 and \$75.00, \$100.00, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door.

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