

Saturday, January 21, 2022, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Joyce DiDonato: EDEN

Joyce DiDonato, *mezzo-soprano and executive producer*

Zefira Valova, *violin and conductor*

Il Pomo d'Oro

Manuel Palazzo, *actor*

Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir

Eric Tuan, *artistic director*

Eva Beck-Ruiz, Lauren Brenner, Cassidy Carter, Jasmine Cazier, Elana Cortes, Kasandra Dagnese, Sierra ElginSmith, Aiden Emigh, Eliana Goldstein, Lillian Greenberg, Lucy Henrich, Cooper Heyman, Genevieve Hiller, Makenna Hillyard, Keanna Koehler, Cayden Kurio, Scarlett Lang, Marguerite Laub, Keira Lee, Juliet Malick, Maeve McMullen, Andrea Morales, Allison Newman, Ryan Newman, Lola Olsen, Georgia Orcharton, Veda Pao-Ziegler, Henry Pfister, Mirella Piccolboni, Taryn Rakowski, Juniper Ruyle, Sarah Sullivan, Oona Swartz, Mei Takeuchi, Ava Tarapore, Tanya Thanos, Victoria Van Gelder, Imogen Wade, Naomi Walker

Marie Lambert-Le Bihan, *stage director*

John Torres, *lighting designer*

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“SEEDS OF HOPE”

*Composed by the Children of the Canterbury Choir,
Bishop Ramsey CE School, England, with Mike Roberts*

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the University Musical Society of the University of Michigan;
the Harriman-Jewell Series, Kansas City; Abu Dhabi Music & Arts Foundation;
Stanford Live; and UC Santa Barbara Arts & Lectures.*

*This performance will last approximately 90 minutes
and be performed without an intermission.*

Major support provided by The Bernard Osher Foundation.

COVID-19: Masking is required inside the auditorium, and is strongly recommended, though not required, for indoor lobby/waiting areas as well as outdoor spaces. Up-to-date vaccination is strongly recommended, though not required for entry. The latest information on Cal Performances' COVID-19 safety policies is available at calperformances.org/safety.

Photographing and/or recording this performance is strictly prohibited.



Joyce DiDonato: EDEN

- Charles IVES (1874–1954) *The Unanswered Question* (1906)
- Rachel PORTMAN (b. 1960) *The First Morning of the World* (2021)
Text: Gene Scheer
- Gustav MAHLER (1860–1911) “Ich atmet’ einen linden Duft!”
Text: Friedrich Rückert from *Rückert-Lieder* (1901)
- Marco UCCELLINI *Sinfonia à 5, Op. 7, No. 3* (pub. 1668)
(c. 1603–1680)
- Biagio MARINI (1594–1663) “Con le stelle in ciel che mai”
Text: Anonymous from *Scherzi e canzonette*, Op. 5 (1622)
- Josef MYSLIVEČEK (1737–1781) “Toglierò le sponde al mare”
Libretto: Giovanni Granelli from *Adamo ed Eva* (1771)
- Aaron COPLAND (1900–1990) “Nature, the gentlest mother”
from *Eight Poems of Emily Dickinson*
for voice and chamber orchestra (1958–1970)
- Giovanni VALENTINI *Sonata in G minor, Enharmonic*
(c. 1582–1649)
- Francesco CAVALLI (1602–1676) “Pianti ombrosi” from *La Calisto* (1651)
Libretto: Giovanni Faustini
- Christoph Willibald GLUCK “Dance of the Furies”
(1714–1787) from *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762)
- GLUCK “Misera, dove son!... Ah!, non son
io che parlo” from *Ezio* (1750/1763)
Libretto: Pietro Metastasio
- George Frideric HANDEL (1685–1759) “As with rosy steps the morn”
from *Theodora* (1750)
- MAHLER “Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen”
Text: Friedrich Rückert from *Rückert-Lieder* (1901)

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PROGRAM NOTES

EDEN

ONE SONG · ONE SEED

I don't know yet if it's simply the general times we are living in, or if the "Great Pause" alone has given rise to ever deepening and restless queries within, but as Gene Scheer perfectly captures in the text of "The First Morning of the World": *I am filled with nothing but questions.*

EDEN has emerged as an integral part of the journey towards finding answers. You see, I'm a problem solver, a dreamer, and (yes!) a belligerent optimist who believes in the incredible power of the human spirit to overcome, and—more and more with each passing day—the perfect balance, astonishing mystery, and guiding force of the Natural World around us. How much Mother Nature has to teach us through her awe-inducing majesty, her staggeringly complex simplicity, and her ever-present patience. It's almost as if She has all the time in the world....

EDEN is an invitation to return to our roots. To remember. It is an overture to contemplate the sheer perfection of the world around us, and to explore whether or not we are connecting as profoundly as we can to the pure essence of our being. It is a clarion call to consider if our collective suffering and confusion isn't perhaps linked to the aching separation from something primal within and around us.

During the pandemic, I closely observed the flowers that emerged from the ground as the "real world" went quiet. Despite our pressing issues of shutdowns and closures, these wondrous miracles arrived—unassuming and unheralded—bursting out of their seed coverings after the long winter's sleep, modestly employing the water and soil at hand to reach ever upwards towards the sky, soaking up the full glory of the sun. All were in service of fulfilling their destiny: simply to bloom in their singular incarnation, nourishing the bees and butterflies dependent on them, asking for nothing in

return. When their job was done, almost imperceptibly and without fanfare, they dissolved back into the earth to nourish the soil and rest well before they would be needed again.

The trees, dormant over the dark and cold winter of isolation, still found the way to blossom, bearing fruit and giving welcome shade without any expectation of bonus or reward: they simply fulfilled their natural objective and then gently let go of their fading leaves to prepare for a well-earned rest, completing the inexorable Circle of Life.

When I stop to truly look around, and I dare to connect with this world of wonder rather than the harsh, lifeless one of cement, wires, and industry, I am transported to a place that seems to exist simultaneously both in the stars and deep within. I feel *connected*. I begin to break free of the cables and waste around me, and sense that I'm an integral part of something bigger. A seed is awakened within me.

But the doubt persists, often in the darkest hours of the night: *What can I alone do? What difference can I possibly make?*

And the truth is, I'm not at all sure of the answer. The immense, deafening pain and destruction of the world at large often overwhelms me. Any hope of "saving it" seems to float farther and farther away.

This is precisely when I seek out the comfort and connection of Music: with each passing day, I trust more and more in the perfect balance, astonishing mystery, and guiding force of the Musical World with which we are blessed. Storytellers and creators from Handel to Ives, from Rückert to Portman, who have so much to teach us as they sort through the simple complexity of our human dilemma and search for universal truths, give us guidance and wisdom to aid us in our questioning.

Time often seems to stand still when absorbed in the integrated harmonies and rich poetry of great music, and in this beau-

tiful suspension we are afforded the gift to examine, expand, and feel. We connect. The painful separation begins to dissipate, and we are empowered to act.

EDEN itself is a call to action to build a paradise for today. To fertilize, nourish, and protect the pure bliss that the deepest part of us knows and yearns for: the unpolluted perfume of a linden branch; the comforting shade of an old tree; the breathtaking sanctity of pure love; the generosity of the endless light that breaks open for us every single morning; the dying to the world we once knew, only to embrace and live alone in our heaven, our love, and our song.

The way I look at it, this is the precise moment in time when each of us is called to participate in the nourishing and healing of our world and our hearts: repairing where broken, rebuilding where barren, replenishing where exhausted. Both Nature and Music are showing us the way. Will we answer the call?

With that in mind, I ask you: *In this time of upheaval, which seed will you plant today?*

—Joyce DiDonato

Charles Ives

The Unanswered Question

Charles Ives was an American original whose musical style was far ahead of his times. Although *The Unanswered Question* was probably written in 1906, it was not premiered until 1946, when composer Elliott Carter (a great fan of Ives' music) arranged for its performance at Columbia University's Second Annual Festival of Contemporary Music.

Ives was also a religious man of transcendentalist leanings. His first title for this work was "A Contemplation of a Serious Matter or The Unanswered Perennial Question." Its unusual ensemble combines strings, a solo trumpet—here replaced by Ms. DiDonato's wordless voice—and an atonal flute quartet. In a note, Ives shed light on its meaning:

The strings play *ppp* throughout with no change of tempo. They are to represent “The Silences of the Druids—who Know, See, and Hear Nothing.” The trumpet [or voice] intones “The Perennial Question of Existence,” and states it in the same tone of voice [and notes] each time. But the hunt for “The Invisible Answer” undertaken by the flutes and other human beings becomes gradually more active, faster, and louder... “The Fighting Answerers”... seem to realize a futility, and begin to mock “The Question”... After they disappear, “The Question” is asked for the last time, and the “Silences” are heard beyond in “Undisturbed Solitude.”

Rachel Portman

The First Morning of the World

In British composer Rachel Portman, Joyce DiDonato has found a kindred spirit who is equally stirred by the beauties of the natural world. Best known as a composer of scores for more than 100 films and television programs, in 1996 Portman became the first woman to win the Academy Award for Best Score for *Emma*. More recently, she has turned to orchestral and chamber music that reflects her life living in the English countryside near London. “I had spent a lot of time immersed in nature,” she says, “and I wanted to try [to] express the beauty of what I see.... We’re increasingly unconnected to the natural world. We don’t seem to be part of the land; we seem to use it as a resource instead.”

Portman’s collaborator for “The First Morning of the World” is American composer/writer Gene Scheer, who has created librettos for Jake Heggie’s *Moby Dick*, Tobias Picker’s *An American Tragedy*, and many other operas. “The First Morning of the World” was commissioned by Linda Nelson in memory of Stuart Nelson.

Breathing in the fresh air of that first morning in Eden, this beautiful song introduces this program’s themes and poses the questions of how to recover the peace of an untouched paradise. The predominance of

woodwinds and, especially, flutes evoke the birdsongs of that long-ago world while the clarity of the vocal lines throws emphasis on the eloquent text. Magically, Portman and Scheer pull us into a state of being completely in the moment, absorbing “the language of the trees...the grammar of the earth.”

Gustav Mahler

“Ich atmet’ einen linden Duft”

from *Rückert-Lieder*

After Gustav Mahler had exhausted the naive folkloric poetry of the *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* collection in his earlier songs, he turned with equal passion to Friedrich Rückert (1788–1866), a sophisticated Franconian poet and scholar whose verse was refined, delicately beautiful, and often given to word-play.

In 1901–02, Mahler set five Rückert poems for voice and orchestra—and simultaneously for voice and piano—while composing his Fifth Symphony. They were united by their introspective moods and their intimate connection with Mahler’s personal experiences and philosophy. Joyce DiDonato has chosen two of them to be sung at different moments in this concert. First comes “Ich atmet’ einen linden Duft” (“I breathed in a delicate scent”) from Rückert’s series of spring poems. The poet plays with the different meanings of two similar German words, *linden* (delicate) and *Linden* (lime tree). Mahler described this song as “the feeling one experiences in the presence of a person one loves...two minds communicating without any word needing to be spoken.” It also perfectly captures the wondrous scent of the linden blossom.

Marco Uccellini

Sinfonia à 5, Op. 7, No. 3

Though we don’t know the exact year, Marco Uccellini was born into a noble Italian family and probably received his musical education at the seminary of Assisi. His

skills on the violin as well as his expansive creative powers led him to serve long periods at the Este court in Modena—where he also served as *maestro di cappella* at Modena’s cathedral—as well as at the Farnese court in Parma. He was especially renowned for his instrumental music, which made new technical demands on the violin, including the extension of its range into higher registers, the employment of virtuosic runs, and the first use of *scordatura* tunings.

From Uccellini’s seventh book of instrumental music published in 1668, we will hear this sonata for violin and organ. In many sections of contrasting tempos and meters, it resembles a Baroque dance suite more than a sonata. Its fourth section is built around a tuning challenge for the violinist that was a Uccellini specialty: a slow theme of chromatically descending scales that are later sped up and reversed to ascend chromatically.

Biagio Marini

“Con le stelle in ciel che mai”
from *Scherzi e canzonette*

A prominent composer of the Italian early Baroque period, Biagio Marini was also a virtuoso violinist who joined Claudio Monteverdi’s orchestra at San Marco in Venice in 1615. He subsequently led a peripatetic career performing and composing for most of Italy’s princely courts, as well as in Belgium and Germany. Marini was best known for his innovative instrumental music, but he also wrote light-hearted, dancelike vocal music, and a splendid example is the strophic song “Con le stelle in ciel che mai” (“Who has ever seen the Sun?”) from his *Scherzi e canzonette* of 1622. Though the author of its text is unknown, the elaborate imagery is obviously the work of a court poet. Though it speaks of the “chaste Cupid,” this poem is about the birth of the Christ child on a winter night during the reign of Augustus, which brings sunlight to the darkest night and blossoming flowers to the

barren earth. Its infectious triple-meter pace is set by the *chitarrone*, an Italian bass lute much loved in this era.

Josef Mysliveček

“Togliero le sponde al mare”
from *Adamo ed Eva*

Listeners will probably detect a resemblance in Czech opera composer Josef Mysliveček’s aria “Togliero le sponde al mare” (“I’ll loose the sea from its shores”) to Mozart’s music of the 1770s, for during that decade he and the considerably younger Mozart, who had met Mysliveček in Bologna in 1770, were close friends. Mozart in one of his letters home described the Czech as “full of fire, spirit, and life,” and frequently borrowed themes from him for use in his own compositions.

Though born in Prague, Mysliveček spent his entire musical career in Italy, where he was a prolific composer of *opera seria*. And that is the style we find in his oratorio *Adamo ed Eva*, premiered in Florence in 1771. This work does not take place in the bliss of the Garden of Eden, but after Adam and Eve’s expulsion during which they are guided by the Angel of Mercy and the Angel of Justice. Sung by the more exacting Angel of Justice, “Togliero” is a dramatic *da capo* aria full of the vocal virtuosity that was a Mysliveček specialty and driven at a ferociously unforgiving pace.

Aaron Copland

“Nature, the gentlest mother”
from *Eight Poems of Emily Dickinson*

His creativity rooted in instrumental music, Aaron Copland had composed few songs before writing his vocal masterpiece, *Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson*, between 1949 and 1950. While searching anthologies of verse, he encountered a poem by Dickinson (1830–1886), the reclusive genius of Amherst, Massachusetts, and was immediately captivated. “There was something about her personality and use of language that was

fresh, precise, utterly unique—and very American,” he wrote. “The more I read, the more her vulnerability and loneliness touched me. The poems seemed the work of a sensitive yet independent soul.”

Copland’s own musical style—by then as spare and incisive as Dickinson’s verse—was an ideal match for his chosen poet. In 1958, he began orchestrating the Dickinson songs and finally published those that best suited this medium as *Eight Poems of Emily Dickinson*.

The exquisite “Nature, the gentlest mother” is the cycle’s first song. As in Portman’s “The First Morning of the World,” its scoring is dominated by woodwinds, which imitate the fluttering of wings and the trilling of birds to begin the song. Arcing over a broad range, the vocal line, nevertheless, illuminates every word and phrase of this enchanting poem to perfection.

Giovanni Valentini **Sonata in G minor, *Enharmonic***

A slightly younger contemporary of Monteverdi, the composer and poet Giovanni Valentini was probably born in Venice and studied music there under Giovanni Gabrieli. He became a virtuoso keyboard artist, specializing in the enharmonic clavicymbalum, a large harpsichord with a keyboard of 77 keys spanning four octaves. Valentini’s multiple talents won him important positions in Poland, Graz, and finally at the Viennese court of the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II. His music is often daring in its harmonies and makes much use of chromatic half steps that could be readily produced on his enharmonic harpsichord. We will hear his intriguing Sonata in G minor, *Enharmonic*, which is an antiphonal dialogue between two instrumental groups. Its brooding motive, repeated many times at the beginning, gradually becomes more elaborate and animated.

Francesco Cavalli **“Pianti ombrosi” from *La Calisto***

Joining the choir of Venice’s San Marco as a boy soprano in 1616 and tutored by Monteverdi, Francesco Cavalli in time became his successor in translating the new form of opera from a courtly pastime to a popular entertainment for paying audiences in Venice’s public theaters. Twenty-seven of his operas survive, and their combination of melodious arias with risqué plots have made them very appealing today. Perhaps the most often performed is *La Calisto* (1651), the tale of the beautiful nymph Calisto who is wooed by the amorous Jupiter, come to earth to restore order after a devastating war. Since Calisto is a follower of the virgin goddess Diana, he disguises himself as Diana to get past her defenses. The poignant air “Pianti ombrosi” (“Shade-giving plants”) is sung by Calisto in Act I as she mourns Nature’s beauty that has been destroyed by the recent war.

Christoph Willibald Gluck **“Dance of the Furies,”** **from *Orfeo ed Euridice*** **“Misera, dove son!...**

Ah!, non son io che parlo” from *Ezio*
Christoph Willibald Gluck’s prominent place in musical history was secured by his opera *Orfeo ed Euridice* of 1762, in which he reformed the excesses of high Baroque opera by stripping away its elaborate vocal virtuosity and placing the musical emphasis on a clear and streamlined expression of the drama’s text. First we will hear one of *Orfeo*’s most famous excerpts, the “Dance of the Furies,” when Orfeo is opposed at the gates of Hades by the infernal spirits, who refuse him entrance until enchanted by his song. Here furious strings are lashed by terrifying dissonances.

The recitative and aria “Misera, dove son!...Ah!, non son io che parlo” comes from an earlier period of Gluck’s career when he was still wedded to the conventions

of *opera seria* and wrote for Prague the opera *Ezio* to a popular libretto by Pietro Metastasio about the last years of the Roman Empire. Flavia, the daughter of a Roman aristocrat is in love with the general Ezio, but is thwarted by her father's hatred of her lover. In this dramatic *scena* consisting of recitative and *da capo* aria, she bewails her entrapment, caught between warring father and lover. The spare eloquence of the recitative and the beautiful and much slower B section of the aria preview the reform style Gluck would soon adopt.

George Frideric Handel

"As with rosy steps the morn"
from *Theodora*

Despite the fact that it was unpopular with audiences at its 1750 premiere, Handel's penultimate oratorio *Theodora* was his personal favorite and now is one of his most admired late works. The aging composer selected a radically different text for this work: the tragic story of the early Christian martyrs Theodora and Didymus, who died in Antioch in 304 AD during the reign of Emperor Diocletian. With a subject closer to the Catholic than to the Protestant tradition, he took a huge gamble and unfortunately paid the price for it at the box office. The beautiful aria Ms. DiDonato has chosen, "As with rosy steps the morn," is

sung by Irene, the leader of the Christian community and Theodora's confidante; its text employs metaphors from Nature. A calmly majestic *da capo* aria enriched by a subtly active bass part, it reflects Irene's character, firmly grounded and never shaken in her faith. The contrasting B section grows bolder and more radiant as she addresses her Savior.

Mahler

"Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen"
from *Rückert-Lieder*

The program closes with "Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen" ("I have become lost to the world"), considered by many to be the greatest of Mahler's songs. It was composed just after he moved into his tranquil lakeside "composing cottage" at Maiernigg in the Carinthian Alps and seems an expression of his contentment creating in that life-giving setting. The music embodies a sublime calm, expressed mostly in simple diatonic harmonies, like "the repose of a Zen garden," in Henry-Louis de La Grange's words. The seamless sharing of the melodic line between singer and piano achieves the quality of a vocal duet.

—Janet E. Bedell

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

JOYCE DIDONATO, *mezzo-soprano and executive producer*

"The staggering, joyful artistry of Joyce DiDonato reminds us that in any generation there are a few giants. Joyce is not only a great, brave and inspiring artist—one of the finest singers of our time—but she is also a transformative presence in the arts. Those who know her repertoire are in awe of her gifts, and those who know nothing of it are instantly engaged. Joyce sings and the world

is suddenly brighter. She compels us to listen actively, to hear things anew."

—Jake Heggie, Gramophone

Multi-Grammy Award winner and 2018 Olivier Award winner for Outstanding Achievement in Opera, Kansas-born Joyce DiDonato entrances audiences across the globe, and has been proclaimed "perhaps the most potent female singer of her generation" by *The New Yorker*. With a voice

“nothing less than 24-carat gold,” according to the *Times*, DiDonato has soared to the top of the industry both as a performer and a fierce advocate for the arts, gaining international prominence in operas by Handel and Mozart, as well as through her varied and highly acclaimed discography. She is also widely celebrated for the *bel canto* roles of Rossini and Donizetti.

DiDonato’s 2022–23 season includes further touring of her newly released album EDEN around Europe and the USA with Il Pomo d’Oro, Maxim Emelyanychev and Zefira Valova; performances as Virginia Woolf in the Met’s world-premiere production of Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Kevin Puts’ *The Hours*, and as Patricia Westerdorf in Tod Machover’s *Overstory Overture* at Alice Tully Hall in New York and Seoul Arts Center in South Korea; and a residency at Musikkollegium Winterthur.

Recent highlights have included European tours of her Baroque-inspired program *My Favorite Things* with Il Pomo d’Oro, in cities including Edinburgh, Salzburg, Bucharest, Barcelona, Antwerp, and Lisbon, as well as her *Winterreise* and *In My Solitude* recital programs with pianist and long-time collaborator Craig Terry. DiDonato also returned to the Royal Opera House Covent Garden as Irene in Handel’s *Theodora* alongside Julia Bullock and Jakub Józef Orliński.

In opera, her recent roles include Agrippina at the Metropolitan Opera and in a new production at the Royal Opera House; Didon/*Les Troyens* at the Vienna State Opera; Sesto, *Cendrillon* and *Adalgisa/Norma* at the Metropolitan Opera, *Agrippina* in concert with Il Pomo d’Oro under Maxim Emelyanychev; Sister Helen/*Dead Man Walking* at the Teatro Real Madrid and London’s Barbican Centre; *Semiramide* at the Bavarian State Opera and Royal Opera House; and Charlotte/*Werther* at the Royal Opera.

Much in demand on the concert and recital circuit, DiDonato has held residencies

at Carnegie Hall and at London’s Barbican Centre; toured extensively in the United States, South America, Europe, and Asia; and appeared as guest soloist at the BBC’s Last Night of the Proms. Other concert highlights include the Berlin Philharmonic under Sir Simon Rattle, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique under Sir John Eliot Gardiner, the Philadelphia Orchestra under Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and the Accademia Santa Cecilia Orchestra and the National Youth Orchestra USA under Sir Antonio Pappano.

An exclusive recording artist with Warner Classics/Erato, DiDonato’s expansive discography includes Berlioz’s *Les Troyens*, which in 2018 won the Recording (Complete Opera) category at the International Opera Awards, the Opera Award at the *BBC Music Magazine* Awards, and *Gramophone*’s Recording of the Year; and Handel’s *Agrippina*, which won the *Gramophone* Opera Recording and Limelight Opera Recording of the Year awards in 2020. Her other albums include a celebrated *Winterreise* with Yannick Nézet-Séguin; *Songplay*; *In War & Peace*, which won the 2017 Best Recital *Gramophone* Award; *Stella di Napoli*; her Grammy Award-winning *Diva Divo*; and *Drama Queens*. Other honors include the *Gramophone* Artist of the Year and Recital of the Year awards, and an induction into the *Gramophone* Hall of Fame.

ZEFIRA VALOVA, violin/conductor

Zefira Valova was born in Sofia, where she obtained a master’s degree at the National Music Academy. From 2009 until 2011, she specialized in Baroque violin at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, having studied with Lucy van Dael.

From 2003 until 2008, Valova was concertmaster of several orchestras in Bulgaria, as well as the National Youth Orchestra of the Netherlands. She appeared as a soloist with the Academic Symphony Orchestra Sofia, Classic FM Radio Orchestra,

Chamber Orchestra Orpheus, and Ars Barocca Ensemble, named Ensemble of 2007 by the Bulgarian National Radio.

Valova is among the founders of the Sofia Baroque Arts Festival, the only annual event dedicated to early music and historically informed performance in Bulgaria. As a member of the European Union Baroque Orchestra in 2008, working with Roy Goodman, Lars Ulrik Mortensen, and Enrico Onofri, she began her work in the historical performance practice.

Valova has been concertmaster of Il Pomo d'Oro since 2015, mainly under the direction of Maxim Emelyanychev. Since 2016, she has conducted the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra within their early music series.

Last season she appeared as concertmaster of Il Pomo d'Oro performances with Joyce di Donato, Ann Hallenberg, Franco Fagioli, Jakub Józef Orliński, and Edgar Moreau. She collaborates with Helsinki Baroque Orchestra on wide range of Baroque, classical, and Romantic repertoire.

Valova has also collaborated with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, La Chambre Philharmonique, B'Rock, Les Ambassadeurs, and others. She appears in chamber music ensembles with pianists Olga Pashchenko and Vasily Ilisavsky, guitarist Izhar Elias, and recorder player Erik Bosgraaf.

Zefira Valova was a prize winner of the competition of the Jumpstart Jr. Foundation, which provided her with a violin made by Lorenzo & Tomaso Carcassi, 1760, Florence.

IL POMO D'ORO

The ensemble Il Pomo d'Oro was founded in 2012. It is characterized by an authentic, dynamic interpretation of operas and instrumental works from the Baroque and Classical periods. The musicians are all well-known specialists and are among the best in the field of historical performance practice. To date, the ensemble has worked with con-

ductors Riccardo Mihasnasi, Maxim Emelyanychev, Stefano Montanari, George Petrou, Enrico Onofri, and Francesco Corti. Concertmaster Zefira Valova also leads the orchestra in various projects. Since 2016, Maxim Emelyanychev has been its chief conductor, and since 2019, Francesco Corti has been principal guest conductor.

Il Pomo d'Oro is a regular guest in prestigious concert halls and festivals all over Europe. After the worldwide success of the program *In War and Peace* with Joyce DiDonato, in 2020 Il Pomo d'Oro and Maxim Emelyanychev presented *My Favorite Things* with the singer; it is now on tour worldwide with EDEN, the latest program and album of Il Pomo d'Oro, Maxim Emelyanychev, and the American mezzo-soprano.

The discography of Il Pomo d'Oro includes a wide range of opera recordings including works by Handel, Vinci, and Stradella; recitals with the countertenors Jakub Józef Orliński, Franco Fagioli, Max Emanuel Cencic, and Xavier Sabata, mezzo-sopranos Ann Hallenberg and Joyce DiDonato, and sopranos Lisette Oropesa, Emöke Barath, and Francesca Aspromonte. Instrumental albums include Haydn's violin and harpsichord concertos as well as a cello album with Edgar Moreau. Other instrumental recordings are dedicated to the violin and harpsichord concertos by J.S. Bach, with Shunske Sato and Francesco Corti as soloists, and to virtuosos violin concertos with Dmitry Sinkovskiy.

In 2021, new albums featured Bach harpsichord concertos with Francesco Corti; *Ombra Compagna* (Mozart concert arias) with Lisette Oropesa; and *Anima Aeterna* with Jakub Józef Orliński. Albums in 2022 included Handel's *Apollo e Dafne* with soprano Kathryn Lewek and bass John Chest; *Mandolin on Stage* with Raffaele La Ragione; Joyce DiDonato's EDEN; and Handel's *Theodora* with a stellar cast (Lisette Oropesa, Joyce DiDonato, Paul-Antoine Bénos-Djian, Michael Spyres, John Chest),

which also introduced Il Pomo d'Oro's new vocal ensemble.

In 2022, the group also started a long-term recording project of Mozart symphonies and selected solo concerts with Maxim Emelyanychev conducting.

Il Pomo d'Oro is official ambassador of El Sistema Greece, a humanitarian project dedicated to providing free musical education to children in Greek refugee camps. The group plays charity concerts and offers workshops and music lessons according to the El Sistema method on a frequent regular basis.

The name of the ensemble refers to Antonio Cesti's opera from the year 1666. Composed for the wedding celebration of Emperor Leopold I and Margarita Teresa of Spain, *Il Pomo d'Oro* was probably one of the largest, most expensive, and most spectacular opera productions in the still young history of the genre; it featured 24 different stage designs, a horse ballet with 300 horses, a fireworks display of 73,000 rockets, and numerous special effects.

For more information, please visit the orchestra's website at www.ilpomodoro.org.

MANUEL PALAZZO, actor

Studying classical ballet from an early age at the Teatro Colon in his native Argentina, Manuel Palazzo has travelled the globe performing in both modern and classical dance, opera, theater, film, and television. A regular at the Metropolitan Opera, as well as a featured dancer at the Teatro Liceu (Barcelona) and Teatro Real (Madrid), he has collaborated with directors Sir David McVicar, Harold Prince, Laurent Pelly, and Robert Lepage. Dance credits include participation with the Carcalla Dance Theater (Beirut), Belgrade National Theater (Serbia), Lanonima Imperial Dance Company (Barcelona), French Cultural Center (Kinshasa), and Teatro Colon (Buenos Aires). Film and television credits include *Blood Ties*, directed by Guillaume Canet, and *Boardwalk Empire*, directed by Martin Scorsese.

IL POMO D'ORO

Zefira Valova
conductor & violin

Violin I

Zefira Valova
Edson Scheid
Dmitry Lepekhov
Laura Andriani
Jesús Merino

Violin II

Nicholas Robinson
Lucia Girardo
Valentina Mattiussi
Naomi Dumas
Katarzyna Olszewska

Viola

Archimede De Martini
Jessica Troy

Cello

Ludovico Minasi
Natalia Timofeeva

Double Bass

Maria Vahervuo
Sue Yelanjian

Theorbo

Gianluca Geremia

Harpsichord

Alberto Gasparido

Flute

Eva Ivanova

Oboe

Christopher Palameta

Clarinet

Francesco Spendolini

Bassoon

Alejandro Perez Marin

Horn

Michael Söllner
Nate Udell

The internationally acclaimed **Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir** offers children throughout San Francisco's East Bay an outstanding program of music training and choral performance. Founded in 1982 by Susan Rahl with artistic director emeritus Robert Geary, PEBC appointed conductor and composer Eric Tuan as its second artistic director in 2019.

The choir has performed with the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, Mark Morris Dance Group, Oakland Symphony, and San Francisco Opera, and at national conventions of the American Choral Directors Association, Chorus America, and the Organization of American Kodály Educators. It has won first prizes at prestigious competitions across Europe, Asia, and the Americas and hosts the triennial Golden Gate International Choral Festival. Recognizing that the creation of art is a forward-thinking endeavor, the choir has commissioned and premiered over 70 new works by living composers and is a three-time recipient of the Chorus America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming.

MARIE LAMBERT-LE BIHAN, stage director

Marie Lambert-Le Bihan is a Paris-based opera director and lighting designer. Recent credits include direction and lighting for *Le Villi* (Halle aux grains-Toulouse, conducted by Speranza Scappucci), *La Fille du Régiment* (Opéra Royal de Wallonie, starring Jodie Devos and Lawrence Brownlee), and lighting for *La Casa di Bernarda Alba* (Tenerife, directed by Silvia Paoli).

Currently on tour: *Mon Amant de Saint-Jean*, written with and for Stéphanie d'Oustrac; *Molière et ses musiques* with William Christie and Les Arts Florissants; and the world tour of EDEN with Joyce DiDonato and Il Pomo d'Oro.

Lambert-Le Bihan has staged acclaimed productions of Leoncavallo's *Zazà* (Opera Holland Park) and *La Voix humaine* (Bux-

ton Festival). She was the associate director for *Madama Butterfly* (La Monnaie) and *La Cenerentola* (Opéra de Paris).

Other work includes *The Rain*, a VR-film by artist HeeWon Lee; *Entropy*, a scientific lecture with music by Dopplereffekt; and projects with writer Anne-James Chaton.

Lambert-Le Bihan has collaborated extensively with directors Piero Faggioni and David McVicar. She revived *La Traviata* (Liceu, Madrid, Scottish Opera), *La Clemenza di Tito* (Toulouse, Marseille, Chicago, Liceu), *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (Chicago, San Francisco), *Carmen* (Glyndebourne, Gothenburg), and *Andrea Chénier* (Liceu, Covent Garden). She has also assisted Liliana Cavani, Alfredo Arias, Elijah Moshinsky, Micha Van Hoecke, Lee Blakeley, and Chiara Muti. Lambert-Le Bihan has worked at La Scala, Wiener Staatsoper, Châtelet, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Strasburg, Lille, Tokyo, Maggio Musicale, Ravenna Festival, Bologna, Parma, Turin, Genoa, Montpellier, Bari, Palermo, and Welsh National Opera.

Credits as translator and dramaturg include translating Offenbach's early operetta *Vent du Soir* into Italian (Maggio Musicale), and Giannettini's *Luomo in bivio* into French for Paulin Budge/Ensemble Céladon (upcoming). Lambert-Le Bihan also works as a translator for various publishers specializing in exhibition catalogues and poetry collections. As a performer and director, she has collaborated on plays by Marivaux, Schnitzler, Goldoni, and Calaferte, and Molière.

She grew up in Paris and in England; studied literature in Paris and Bologna; and trained at La Scala.

Other upcoming projects: *Carmen* (Lyric Opera Chicago), *Dialogues des Carmélites* (Opéra Royal de Wallonie, Liège), new productions in Tours and with Opéra Comique. Touring: *Molière et ses musiques* with William Christie/Les Arts Florissants, *Mon amant de Saint-Jean* with Stéphanie d'Oustrac.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

JOHN TORRES, *lighting designer*

John Torres is a New York-based lighting designer working in theater, fashion, motion, print, and exhibitions.

Professionally trained in theatrical lighting design, Torres has designed for artists including stage designer and director Robert Wilson, choreographers Lucinda Childs and Trisha Brown, and directors Yuval Sharon and Zack Winokur. Recent and upcoming theatrical engagements include *Turandot* at Paris Opera and *Tristan und Isolde* at Santa Fe Opera. In fashion, Torres has designed recent shows for Gucci, Bottega Veneta, and Proenza Schouler and is a regular collaborator with fashion photographer Steven Klein. In live music, Torres is a frequent collaborator with Solange Knowles and recently designed the residency for Usher at the Colosseum in Las Vegas. Within the visual art world, Torres has designed the exhibition *Who is Queen?* with artist Adam Pendleton at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and will be collaborating with artist Camille Norment for her upcoming exhibition at Dia Chelsea in New York.

CREDITS

Askonas Holt, *tour management*
Colin Murphy, *production manager*
Zoe Morgan, *stage manager*
Valentin Bodier, *LX board operator*
Javi Castrillon, *set technician*

Sophie Dand & Rachel Walters,
EDEN *engagement managers*
and *partnership liaisons*

Set Created by Escenografia Moia
Sergi Galera Nebot, *technical director*
Joan Font, *design consultant*

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