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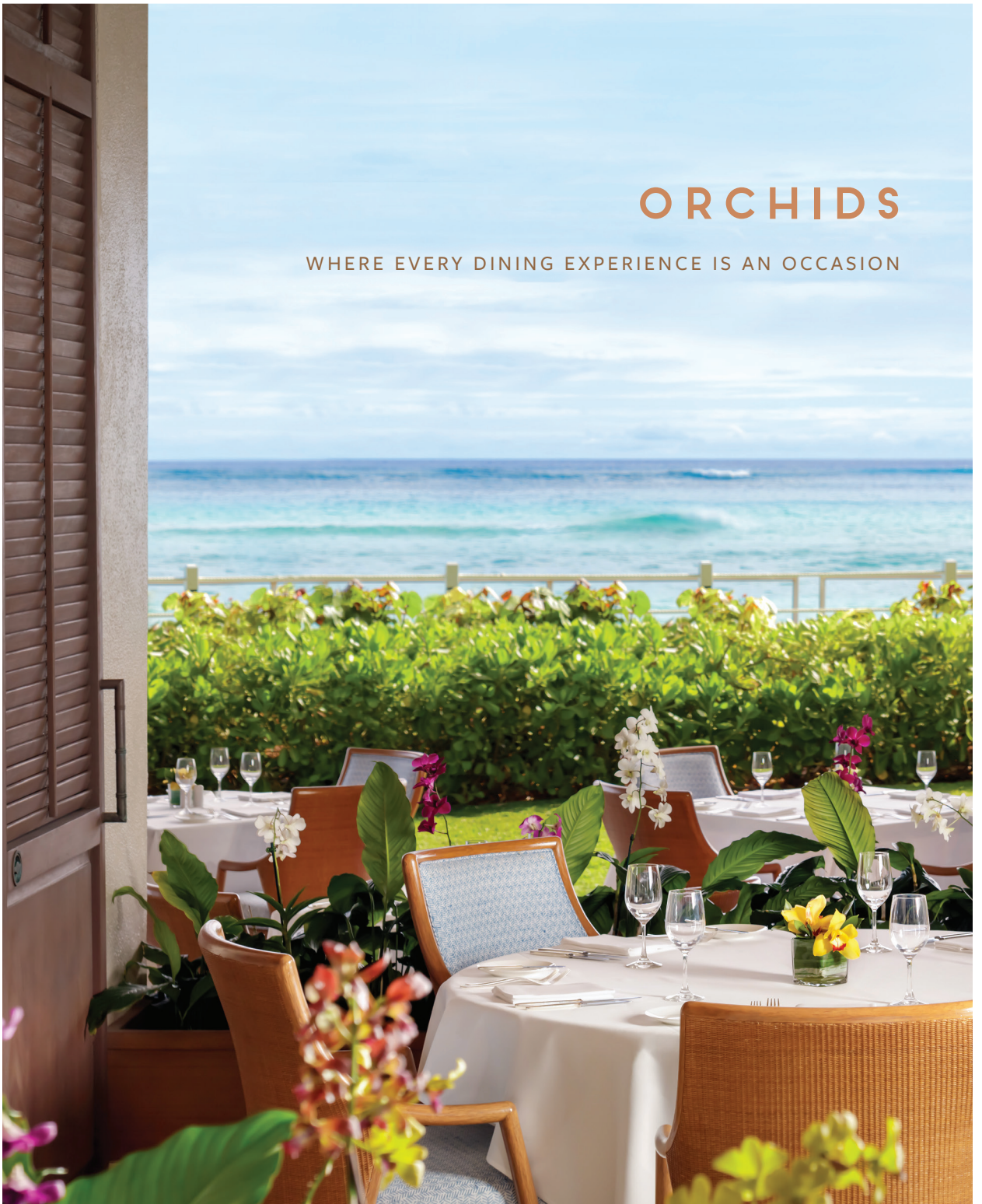
# Gianni Schicchi

**Puccini's only comic opera,  
live at the Neal S. Blaisdell Concert Hall**

Friday, April 28 | 7:30 pm  
Sunday, April 30 | 4:00 pm

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## Aloha and welcome

to your Hawai'i Opera Theatre's final production of the 2022/2023 Season: Puccini's comic masterpiece *Gianni Schicchi*!

This is only the second time in our history that HOT has presented *Schicchi*. The previous time was in 2006 as part of *Il trittico*, a triptych of operas (with *Il tabarro* and *Suor Angelica*) by Puccini that premiered at the Metropolitan Opera in 1918. Puccini's original concept was to set three stories from Dante's *Divine Comedy*, but *Schicchi* was the only one to retain this literary source. Although it continues to be paired with one or both of the other *trittico* operas, it has become more usual for *Schicchi* to be presented alone – as we are doing – or with a short opera by another composer.

After *Il trittico*'s premiere, *Gianni Schicchi* became an immediate hit with audiences, while the other two operas were received with less enthusiasm. This proved true at the Rome and London premieres, so Puccini's publisher pressed him to abandon the less successful elements. Puccini initially resisted breaking up the trio but relented by 1920. *Gianni Schicchi* has subsequently become the most-performed part of *Il trittico*.

Gianni Schicchi is actually a historical figure, Gianni Schicchi de' Cavalcanti, a 13th-century Florentine knight. In his *Inferno*, Dante visits the Circle of Impersonators and sees a man viciously

attacking another. The attacker is none other than Schicchi, condemned to Hell for impersonating Buoso Donati and changing his will to favor Schicchi. Lucky for us, Puccini emphasized the “comedy” part of the *Divine Comedy* and allowed for a much happier ending for the scheming knight!

“This is only the second time in our history that HOT has presented *Schicchi*.”

As you probably are aware, these performances will be our last in the Blaisdell Concert Hall until after the planned renovations which will hopefully be completed in time for us to return by Fall 2024. But we have a really exciting season planned for you in 2023/2024 and I hope you will join us on that journey. See page 14 for more information.

Mahalo nui loa for making Hawai'i Opera Theatre a part of your life. We would not be here without you!

Much aloha,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Morgan'.

**Andrew Morgan**  
General Director  
Hawai'i Opera Theatre



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# A New Vision

*This is an exciting time for your Hawai'i Opera Theatre's future, and we are proud to announce our rearticulated Mission, Vision, and Values statements, which will guide the continued development of our organizational culture and shape our purpose in Hawai'i and beyond.*

## Mission

Hawai'i Opera Theatre enriches the quality of life in our island communities through the inspirational power and joy of opera.

## Vision

Hawai'i Opera Theatre (HOT) believes that different perspectives, cultural histories, life experiences and personal stories enrich the operatic repertoire and have the potential to make meaningful local and worldwide impacts. As a regional company, HOT is committed to supporting and engaging creators and music lovers who reflect the diversity of Hawai'i.

## Values

### Hawai'i Opera Theatre believes that:

Opera is for everyone

Opera can tell all stories through music

Opera is a complete and collaborative artform, integrating the elements of visual art, words, vocal and instrumental music, drama, and dance

Opera plays an important role in building a robust and sustainable community that can have worldwide impact

Opera is integral to a well-rounded education, teaching valuable skills in teamwork, personal expression, literacy, and confidence

## We hold these core values close to our hearts:

### Aloha

approaching everything we do and say, every day, with utmost respect

### Mālama

caring for and cherishing our community, our artform, our company and everyone in it

### 'Ohana

extending our family to include everyone of all backgrounds

### Integrity

conducting our business in ways that are trustworthy, honorable, and transparent

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# Gianni Schicchi

*Composed by Giacomo Puccini*

*Italian Libretto by Giovacchino Forzano*

## Cast

**Gianni Schicchi**

Joshua Jeremiah

**Lauretta**

Maria Valdes

**Zita**

Blythe Iakuinipua'okahana Kelsey

**Rinuccio**

Brian Vu\*

**Gherardo**

Adam Flowers

**Nella**

Leslie Goldman

**Gherardino**

Sydney Branch†

**Betto di Signa**

Robert Ellsworth Feng‡

**Simone**

Ricardo L. Lugo\*

**Marco**

Chung-Wai Soong

**La Ciesca**

Laurie Rubin

**Maestro Spinelloccio/Ser Amantio di Nicolao**

Kip Wilborn

**Pinellino**

Benoit Weber

**Guccio**

Taj Gutierrez\*

**Uncle Buoso**

Suzanne B. Engel

## Artistic Team

**Conductor**

Mark Morash

**Director**

Gregory Keller

**Répétiteur**

Ronny Michael Greenberg

**Lighting Designer**

Sandy Sandelin

**Costume Designer**

Katherine James

**Wig and Makeup Designer**

Mei Chibana

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**I**n an elegant chamber in 1959 Florence, all the relatives have gathered around the bed of the rich patriarch, Buoso Donati. After a long illness, he has died. As they piously express their love and devotion for the recently departed, it's clear they are all interested in just one thing: the contents of his will.

All have hopes for a legacy, and all have fears that others will beat them to it. Buoso's brother-in-law, Betto, has heard that the old man has left everything to a monastery, and this sends the relatives scrambling to find the will. But Buoso's young nephew Rinuccio believes he has been well remembered and hopes his inheritance will enable him to marry his beloved Lauretta, the daughter of Gianni Schicchi.

As newcomers in the clannish city of Florence, Schicchi and Lauretta are frowned upon by most of Buoso's family. When Rinuccio finds the will, he withholds the contents until his snobbish cousins accept his engagement to Lauretta. They agree, but with one condition: A legacy from Buoso must leave the couple respectably rich in the eyes of their Florentine neighbors.

# Synopsis

With Schicchi and Lauretta on the way, the will is unfurled, and its contents leave the family moaning in amazed disappointment: Betto was right. And after all, what need has a monastery for such riches? With wealth seemingly so close yet out of reach, the real bereavement begins. No one can think of a remedy, and an alliance with Schicchi is now unthinkable. When he arrives with Lauretta, father and daughter are shunned...at first. But Gianni Schicchi is nothing if not crafty. The love-struck Lauretta pleads with him, and Schicchi—despite wanting nothing to do with the Donatis—agrees to look at Buoso's will to see what might be done. Unfortunately, the arrangements seem ironclad. Unless...

First, Schicchi sends Lauretta out of the room, protecting her from knowledge of his scheme. Then, confirming that only those present know of Buoso's death, Schicchi orders the body removed. Ready to take Buoso's place on the deathbed, he instructs the relatives to send for the notary. When he reveals his plan to impersonate Buoso and dictate a new will before "dying," the entire family unites, overcoming all complications and even helping him with the disguise, even though—as Schicchi reminds them—the punishment for falsifying a will is exile from Florence and loss of a hand.

When the notary arrives, Schicchi histrionically dictates a new will, declaring all previous versions invalid. As the bequests mount, so do the family's tense expectations. When he declares that Buoso's house and the bulk of his estate are to be bequeathed to his "devoted friend Gianni Schicchi," they are outraged. In the presence of their notary, the horrified family is helpless—but Schicchi now has the dowry he needs to unite his daughter with the man who loves her.

As the opera draws to a close, Gianni Schicchi turns to us in the audience, asking us to agree that Buoso's wealth could find no better purpose. And could any daughter's loving father disagree? Though the immortal Dante consigned this schemer to hell, when he begs our forgiveness, it is hard to say no.



*HOT dedicates these performances in memory of*

## **Robert B. Bunn**

(1933-2022)

### **Singer, Supporter, and Lifelong Lover of Opera.**

Bob was born in 1933 in Boise, Idaho, and moved to Honolulu when he was three years old. He was in the Punahou School Glee Club and had lead roles in musical theater, including productions of *Gilbert & Sullivan*. At Harvard University, he sang in their Glee Club and was particularly proud of singing with the Boston Symphony. In 1958, he took Frances “Patsy” Bunn on their first date—a performance of *Don Giovanni* in Boston.

After returning to Hawai‘i to practice law in 1961, he devoted himself to supporting and making music. He sang with the Symphony, Opera, and Honolulu Choruses as well as gathered around the piano with family and friends. He joined the Symphony board of directors in the 1960’s and was instrumental in developing their opera program. Bob and Patsy

were leaders in the founding of HOT in 1980. From then until his passing, he served as a board member, a President, general counsel, financial contributor, and general all-around enthusiastic supporter of HOT. Bob and Patsy regularly opened their home for many Opera events and gatherings hosting visiting artists and talent. They often planned travel around the schedules of mainland and European opera companies. He collected extensive recordings, regularly listened to the Saturday afternoon performances of the MET and had the full libretto of every opera he ever attended.

Bob’s heart and soul was with the Opera. He is survived by his wife Patsy, four children, and eight grandchildren, all of whom have been deeply influenced by his passion for music and HOT.



## Director's Notes

I suspect many of you sitting here tonight have never heard of *Gianni Schicchi* [pronounced “Johnny” / “SKEE-kee”] or know what an influential masterpiece this magnificent short opera is. Whether this is your first introduction to this work or you’re a Puccini veteran, you are in for an entertaining evening. It is so wonderful to be able to have live theatre again and take a break from our Covid-era binge watching of Netflix, Hulu, and HBO. But like it or not, this opera is directly responsible for many of those TV shows, as *Gianni Schicchi* was the first, true “sitcom” — paving the way for Lucy and Ricky, then Mary and Rhoda, and even Jerry, Elaine, George and Kramer.

Puccini certainly knew the work of the 18th C. Italian writer Carlo Gozzi, whose stories, taken from the Persian epic, *Haft Peykar*, told of the Chinese ice princess Turandot and became the source material for Puccini’s final, ground-breaking opera. Gozzi is notable because he had begun to write down the *lazzi*, or comic bits of slapstick, that had been performed for centuries by the Italian *commedia dell’arte* characters. These were stock characters that represented fixed social types, like the foolish and greedy old man, the devious and sexually precocious maidservant, the blustering military officer full of false bravado and liquor, and the pompous and bumbling doctor, sputtering Latin malapropisms. At the center of the story was always the two innocent young lovers, or *innamorati*, for whom Love finally saves the day — but only after seemingly insurmountable obstacles of parental opposition and lack of money.

Some of these stock characters can be traced back to the earliest Roman comedies, and these well-known plots and plays were revived annually at the carnivals in Venice, influential court weddings and civic holidays. Yet none

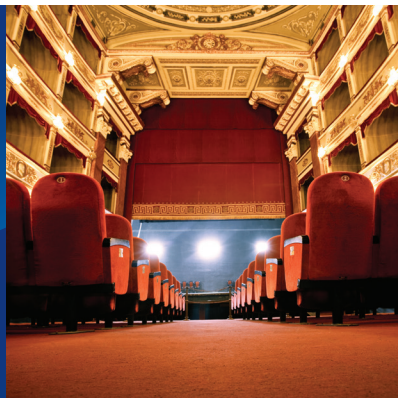
of these comic “bits” (or *lazzi*) had ever been written down — only handed down generation to generation — and in the process many of these bits had become ossified and stale.

As Hamlet says, Comedy must “hold the mirror up to Nature,” yet that reflection of truth shifts and morphs greatly with every generation. Now we look at an old Jerry Lewis movie or a Three Stooges skit, and what made us laugh as a kid seems overdone and tired. The outward form of the comedy has become fossilized, occluding the inner human truthfulness of the situation, so these old comedies appear melodramatic and ridiculous to modern eyes. While Gozzi was intrigued with recapturing and cataloging these archaic comic “bits”, it is really his contemporary, Carlo Goldoni, who succeeded in revitalizing this archaic art form.

“As Hamlet says,  
*Comedy must ‘hold the  
mirror up to Nature’*”

The playwright Goldo literally blew the dust off these stock types and reinvented them into unique, quirky, “modern” individuals with specific wants and desires. He applied Aristotelian rules of unity of time and space to each play — it must occur within a short time, which has become hugely blown out of proportion. This dilemma forces even the most virtuous characters to use vice in order to overcome their ever-mounting obstacles. (Think of Lucy in the chocolate factory.) Chaos and misunderstanding must build and build until the sunshine of Virtue finally outshines the mechanics of Vice in the end, love and money are showered on the two young lovers, and order is restored... at least until tomorrow’s chaos begins again.

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Goldoni revolutionized comedy so we cared about the young lovers and rooted for them to win, just as we are emotionally invested in Lucy getting to have lunch with William Holden, or Mary Tyler Moore finally besting her ornery boss, Lou Grant — no matter how kooky or extreme their actions. Their struggles ultimately reveal a shared humanity between stage (or TV) and audience, which magically unifies all of us in the comic reality of the often-absurd struggles we humans face on a daily basis.

Nothing in opera buffa had ever been written on this model before Puccini took pen to paper and composed *Gianni Schicchi*, and it turned out to be a masterpiece of comic timing and ensemble singing. Puccini's genius is on full display here. There is one standout aria which you all will recognize from a brunch playlist, Lauretta's beautiful and pleading "O mio babbino caro" — but in all honesty it is an audacious suicide threat designed to manipulate her father, publicly demanding that she be allowed to wed her lover, Rinuccio, or else. Her boyfriend sings a beautiful ode to Florence and its great artists, but the rest of the opera is an ensemble composition more intricately woven than a spider's web. Musically interlocking, ebbing and flowing, deftly shifting from agitato to deep depression within a few bars. Sheer, utter, comic genius — like a magician keeping a dozen porcelain plates simultaneously spinning on bamboo sticks.

If *Gianni Schicchi* is the fore-bearer to sitcoms, it is also the "sui generis" of the great Italian cinema. The opening moaning and sighing of the grieving relatives that quickly dissolves and deteriorates into vicious gossip is classic 1960's Italian cinema — like the satirical *Divorce Italian Style*, or the great films of Fellini: *La Dolce Vita*, *8-1/2*, and *Amarcord*. Each character is a detailed and specific portrait which also exemplifies the familiar, colorful eccentricities

of the Italians themselves: the bossy and terrifying Nonna; the pompous and cranky old Uncle; the drunk ne'er-do-well cousin; the social-climbing aristocratic snobs; and the frumpy, overwhelmed middle-class parents, completely exacerbated by their hell-raiser of the child.

There's an age-old debate in Italian opera. Which comes first — the music or the words? Literally, it is usually the words, or the libretto, off of which the composer writes the music. But then doesn't the music take the lead, giving the words pulse and life? "Prima la musica, dopo le parole" or "prime le parole e dopo la musica?" And here Puccini answers this conundrum with a solid: "Sì!" — meaning he's balanced the two perfectly, like that plate-spinning magician.

So, not only is *Gianni Schicchi* a genius musical composition, but it is also the first true "situation comedy" enfolding in a natural and seamless way in real time, and it embraces its Italian identity with humor, sarcasm and love. It's a love letter to ensemble music making, it is a love letter to Florence, and it is a love letter to Love. It's a masterpiece of unity that unfolds in 55 minutes of sheer and utter chaos! How beautiful, how Italian, how human.

And how lucky are we to be able to experience this masterpiece as an audience member, breathing life once again into these jaded, manipulative characters and re-animating their darkest desires of pride, greed, and envy for our shared delight. And it is Gianni Schicchi who makes the ultimate sacrifice of spending eternity in Hell for the love of the two innocents, for whom the universe is still bright, shiny and unspoiled... at least until tomorrow.

 **Gregory Keller**  
Director



# Announcing our 2023/2024 Mainstage Season!

*With the Blaisdell Concert Hall closed for renovations starting this summer, Hawai'i Opera Theatre is on the move for the 2023/2024 Season!*

All three operas will be original productions created by HOT taking full advantage of three unique spaces.

Next season, explore opera's power in the intimate setting of the Moanalua High School Performing Arts Center, experience the magic in the open creative space with “opera-in-the-round” at the Blaisdell Arena, and find romance under the stars at the Waikiki Shell.



**Join us next season!**

Call our Box Office (808) 596-7858 for more info and tickets!

# An American Dream

**October 13, 14, & 15**

**Moanalua High School Performing Arts Center**

Set during World War II, this gripping contemporary opera explores the lives of two women: a Japanese-American facing relocation to an incarceration camp and a German-Jewish immigrant grappling with the unknown fates of those left behind in Germany. Moanalua's Performing Arts Center is the perfect space for this intimate and heart-wrenching opera that examines a dark part of America's past.



# Pagliacci

**February 16 & 18**

**Blaisdell Arena**

A dramatic tale of love and betrayal, *Pagliacci* revolves around a traveling commedia dell'arte troupe. When the company arrives to perform in a bustling town, the secrets and jealousies among them threaten to explode onstage - with deadly consequences. The Verismo style combines realistic theater with raw emotional music. The Blaisdell Arena is ideal for this creative and untraditional production, directed by HOT's very own Jamie Offenbach.



# La Bohème

**April 26 & 28**

**Waikiki Shell**

Four struggling bohemians – a poet, a painter, a musician, and a philosopher – are living together in Paris when one freezing Christmas Eve, their lives are changed forever. *La Bohème* is a perennial favorite as one of the most romantic love stories to ever grace the opera stage. HOT's season finale, featuring an all-Asian principal cast, is not to be missed! Enjoy romance and opera under the stars at the beautiful Waikiki Shell.



# Artist Profiles

**Joshua Jeremiah**  
Gianni Schicchi



**HOMETOWN:** Myerstown, PA

**RECENT & UPCOMING:**

- Senator McCarthy/others, *Fellow Travelers* (Virginia Opera)
- Melchior, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (OnSite Opera)
- Steersman, *Tristan und Isolde* (Seattle Opera)
- Jupiter, *Orphée aux Enfers* (Opera Company of Middlebury)

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Rigoletto, *Rigoletto* (Arizona Opera)
- Horstmayer, *Silent Night* (Minnesota Opera)
- Il Conte di Luna, *Il Trovatore* (Opera Tampa)

**HOT DEBUT:** *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 2016

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"Ah, la maledizione! A book of operatic misadventures by Joshua Jeremiah"

**Maria Valdes**  
Lauretta



**HOMETOWN:** Atlanta, GA

**RECENT & UPCOMING:**

- Maria, *The Sound of Music* (Charlottesville Opera)
- Micaela, *Carmen* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Younger Alyce, *Glory Denied* (Berkshire Opera Festival)
- Papagena, *The Magic Flute* (The Metropolitan Opera)

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Papagena, *The Magic Flute* (San Francisco Opera)
- Amy, *The Snowy Day* (Houston Grand Opera)
- Gilda, *Rigoletto* (Berkshire Opera Festival)

**HOT DEBUT:** *The Tragedy of Carmen*, 2022

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"In Search of Cute Dogs"

**Blythe**  
**Iakuinipua'okahana**  
**Kelsey**  
Zita



**HOMETOWN:** Honolulu, HI

**RECENT & UPCOMING:**

- Soloist, Studio 101: HOT Dolce Vita (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Featured Soloist, Studio 101: HOT H2O-Water Songs (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Soloist, Studio 101: I'll Be Seeing You: 1940's RADIO HOUR (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Blythe: One Name, One Night (Studio 101/ Hawai'i Opera Theatre)

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Featured Artist, Re-Emerging: HOT Live in Concert
- 3rd Lady, *The Magic Flute* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Po'okela Award-Ursula, Disney's *The Little Mermaid* (Diamond Head Theatre)

**HOT DEBUT:** *Aida*, 2012

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"She Will Have Music Wherever She Goes"

**Brian Vu**  
Rinuccio



**HOMETOWN:** Orange County, CA

**RECENT & UPCOMING:**

- Title role, *Candide* (Glimmerglass Festival)
- Alfredo, *La Traviata* (Opera Omaha)
- Sergio, *Fedora* (The Metropolitan Opera)
- Bryce, *Edward Tulane* (Minnesota Opera)

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- First Place Winner, Lotte Lenya Competition
- Riff, *West Side Story* (Houston Grand Opera)

**HOT DEBUT:** Yes

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**  
"Audacity"

**Adam Flowers**  
Gherardo



**HOMETOWN:** Davis, CA

**RECENT & UPCOMING:**

- King Kaspar, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (HOT Digital)
- Abdallo, *Nabucco* (Claude Heater Foundation, San Francisco)
- 20th Century Trilogy Concert Recital (Sunset Music & Arts, San Francisco)

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Gherman, *The Queen of Spades* (West Bay Opera)
- Cavaradossi, *Tosca* (Phoenix Hall, Osaka)
- Principal Artist-in-Residence, 2001-2006 (Opera San José)

**HOT DEBUT:** *Romeo and Juliet*, 2008

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**  
"Singing for My Supper"

**Leslie Goldman**  
Nella



**HOMETOWN:** Honolulu, HI

**RECENT & UPCOMING:**

- Susan Sowerby/Mrs. Lennox, *The Secret Garden* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Mother, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (HOT Digital)
- Featured Soloist, Studio 101: HOT H2O-Water Songs (Studio 101, Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Anina, *La Traviata* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Frasquita, *Carmen* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Titania, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Chautauqua Opera)

**HOT DEBUT:** *Carmen*, 2017

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**  
"I'm Pretty Too: The Dieting and Dating Diaries of a Desperately Dramatic Diva (pub. 2024)"

# Artist Profiles

## Sydney Branch Gherardino



**HOMETOWN:** Mililani, HI

**RECENT & UPCOMING:**

- HOT Dolce Vita (Studio 101, Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- HOT 22-23 Season Preview
- *Dichterliebe: Love Outta the Box* (Studio 101, Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- HOT Education Tour: *Pirates of Penzance*

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Music Teacher of 4 years
- HOT Education Tour: *Aida*

**HOT DEBUT:** *Re-Emerging: HOT Live in Concert*, 2022

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"Animal Care 101"

## Robert Ellsworth Feng Betto di Signa



**HOMETOWN:** Kailua, HI

**RECENT & UPCOMING:**

- Padre Antonio, *Juana* (dell'Arte Opera Ensemble)
- Il Tempo, *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* (dell'Arte Opera Ensemble)
- Soloist, *Dichterliebe: Love Outta the Box* (Studio 101, Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Ben Weatherstaff/Gardener, *The Secret Garden* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- The Bonze/Prince Yamadori, *Madame Butterfly* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Mad Hatter, *The Garden of Alice* (US Premiere, City Lyric Opera)
- Rev. Joseph Twichell, *Harmony* (World Premiere, Seagle Festival)

**HOT DEBUT:** *Re-Emerging: HOT Live in Concert*, 2022

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"A Punderful Life"

## Ricardo Lugo Simone



**HOMETOWN:** San Juan, PR

**RECENT & UPCOMING:**

- Bartolo, *Le nozze di Figaro* (Pittsburgh Opera)
- Hunding, *Die Walkure* (Virginia Opera)
- Fasolt, *Das Rheingold* (Nashville Opera)
- Sacristan, *Tosca* (The Metropolitan Opera)

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Timur, *Turandot* (Virginia Opera)
- The Bonze, *Madama Butterfly* (The Metropolitan Opera)
- Soloist, *Verdi Requiem* (Puerto Rico Symphony)

**HOT DEBUT:** Yes

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"The Pronto Far Tutto from Puerto Rico, by Ricardo Lugo"



## Chung-Wai Soong

Marco



**HOMETOWN:** Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

### RECENT & UPCOMING:

- Un vieux paysan, *Ariane et barbe-bleue* (West Edge Opera)
- Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, *That Week with the Bachs* (Ghiberti Center for Culture)
- The Chamberlain, *Le Rossignol* (West Edge Opera)
- Bass soloist, *Coronation Mass in C* (Chora Nova)

### CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

- Mityuhkha, *Boris Godunov* (San Francisco Symphony)
- Erste Nazarene, *Salome* (West Bay Opera)
- King Melchior, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (HOT Digital)

**HOT DEBUT:** *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, 2020 (HOT Digital)

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"When in doubt, garnish!"

## Laurie Rubin

La Ciesca



**HOMETOWN:** Mililani, HI

### RECENT & UPCOMING:

- Mycelia, *Sensorium X Paola Prestini* (VisionIntoArt)

### CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

- Duet recitals with Frederica Von Stade at Ravinia Festival and Depauw University
- Soloist with Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus

**HOT DEBUT:** *Madame Butterfly*, 2022

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"When Does the Running Stop?"

## Kip Wilborn

Maestro Spinelloccio /  
Ser Amantio di Nicolao



**HOMETOWN:** Odessa, TX

### RECENT & UPCOMING:

- Don Jose, *Carmen* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Canio, *I Pagliacci* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Rienzi, *Rienzi* (Theater Bremen)
- Sigmund, *Die Walküre* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)

### CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

- Conductor, *Allegiance*, Manoa Valley Theatre at the Hawai'i Theatre
- Sam Kaplan, *Street Scene*, Houston Grand Opera/Theater des Westens
- Sam Kaplan, *Street Scene*, Film, Image Entertainment
- Phantom, *Phantom of the Opera* (Pantages Theater)

**HOT DEBUT:** *Il trittico*, 2006

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"Just Getting Started"

# Artist Profiles

## Benoit Weber

Pinellino



**HOMETOWN:** Lons-le-Saunier, France

**RECENT & UPCOMING:**

- Zuniga, Garcia, *Tragedy of Carmen* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Nick Arnstein, *Funny Girl* (Diamond Head Theatre)

**HOT DEBUT:** *The Magic Flute*, 2003

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"Jack of Many Trades, Master of Very Few"

## Taj Gutierrez

Guccio



**HOMETOWN:** Wailua, HI

**RECENT & UPCOMING:**

- Riff Raff/The Rocky Horror Show/Kauai Community Players)
- Anthony, *Sweeney Todd* (Kauai Community Players)
- Jack, *Into the Woods* (Hawai'i Children's Theatre: After Dark)
- Audrey II (voice), *Little Shop of Horrors* (Kauai Community Players)

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Judas, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Diamond Head Theatre)
- Jonathan, *Tick, Tick...Boom!* (Manoa Valley Theater)
- Buddy the Elf, *Elf: The Musical* (Diamond Head Theatre)
- Agatha Trunchbul, *Matilda: The Musical* (Hawai'i Children's Theatre)

**HOT DEBUT:** Yes

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"Just Keep Reachin'"

## Mark Morash

Conductor



**HOMETOWN:** Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada

**RECENT & UPCOMING:**

- *La Traviata* (Calgary Opera)
- *Carmen* (Calgary Opera)
- *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (Calgary Opera)
- *Beatrice and Benedict* (Calgary Opera)

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Director of Musical Studies, San Francisco Opera Center
- Favorite operas conducted: *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre, Opera Santa Barbara, San Francisco Opera Merola Opera Program); *La Cenerentola*, *Così fan tutte* (San Francisco Opera Center Merola Program)
- Playing principal second violin as a teenager in concert for a Victor Borge performance

**HOT DEBUT:** *A Streetcar Named Desire*, 2017

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"What to Expect When You're Expecting."

## Gregory Keller

Director



**HOMETOWN:** Kamuela, HI

### RECENT & UPCOMING:

- *The Pirates of Penzance* (Cedar Rapids Opera)
- *La Bohème* (Jacksonville Symphony)
- *Madame Butterfly* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- *Salome* (Minnesota Orchestra)

### CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

- *La Fanciulla del West* (Metropolitan Opera)
- *Lulu* (Metropolitan Opera)
- *Le nozze di Figaro* (Berkshire Opera)

**HOT DEBUT:** *Madame Butterfly*, 2022

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"Wake me when it's over!"

## Ronny Michael Greenberg

Répétiteur



**HOMETOWN:** Montreal, QC, Canada

### RECENT & UPCOMING:

- *Gianni Schicchi* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- *Tragédie de Carmen* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- *Tosca* (San Francisco Opera)
- *Barber of Seville* (San Francisco Opera)

### CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

- Performed at Carnegie Hall, Place Des Arts (Montreal), & Vienna Konzerthaus
- Worked with San Francisco Opera, Festival Napa Valley, Opera San Jose, Merola Opera Program, & Hawai'i Performing Arts Festival
- Founder of Taste of Talent, a Non-Profit performing Arts Organization that showcases the connective power of Music & Art through innovative and collaborative programs, and promotes entrepreneurial empowerment of Artists

**HOT DEBUT:** *The Tragedy of Carmen*, 2022

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"More Cheese, Please"

## Sandy Sandelin

Lighting Designer



**HOMETOWN:** Honolulu, HI

### RECENT & UPCOMING:

- *Re-Emerging: HOT Live in Concert* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Starlight Series at Waikiki Shell (Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra)
- *Rigoletto* with Quinn Kelsey (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- *Siren Song* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)

### CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

- 40+ years of Lighting in Hawai'i
- 30+ years w/HOT from scene shop to theatre
- 10 summers as Master Electrician at Tanglewood
- Multiple Po'okela Award winner in Lighting Design

**HOT DEBUT:** No

**If my life were a book, it would be called:**

"He Said What?"

# Artist Profiles

## Mei Chibana

Wig & Makeup Designer



**HOMETOWN:** Honolulu, HI

**RECENT & UPCOMING:**

- *Madame Butterfly* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- *Gianni Schicchi* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)
- Gridiron: Society of Professional Journalists Hawaii Chapter, 2023

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Wig & Makeup designer for HOT's *Carmen* and *Madame Butterfly*

**HOT DEBUT:** *The Pirates of Penzance*, 2005

## Katherine James

Costume Designer



**HOMETOWN:** Berkeley, CA

**RECENT & UPCOMING:**

- Designer, Events in Apparel
- Costume Designer, *Soul Surfer* the movie
- Costumer, Julie Taymor's *The Tempest*

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Costume Designer, *Gianni Schicchi* (Hawai'i Opera Theatre)

**HOT DEBUT:** *Salome*, 2002

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