

A woman in a vibrant red dress is the central figure, her head tilted back and eyes closed in a serene expression. Her right arm is raised, with her hand resting on her head. The background is a large, flowing purple fabric that creates a sense of movement and depth. The overall color palette is rich and dramatic, with the red of the dress contrasting sharply with the purple of the fabric and the warm tones of the background.

MARÍA DE BUENOS AIRES

The
Florentine
Opera

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The Florentine Opera and Milwaukee-based artist Phe collaborate to present *Covers*, a unique fusion of opera melodies with soul-pop style. This exciting performance features the Summer Studio Ensemble, showcasing emerging opera artists under the direction of pianist Lara Bolton. Experience a captivating blend of genres and talents!

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MARÍA DE BUENOS AIRES

PROGRAM INFORMATION

- 04 From the General Director & Board President
- 05 Board of Directors
- 06 Credits
- 09 From the Director
- 10 Program Notes
- 11 Synopsis
- 12 Conductor
- 13 Stage Director
- 14 Biographies
- 19 Florentine Opera Staff
- 20 Anello Society
- 21 Commemorative Gifts
- 22 Annual Donors



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**From General Director & CEO MAGGEY OPLINGER and
Board President DR. DAVID PARIS**

When we speak about the breadth of opera, tango king Piazzola's *María de Buenos Aires* is a stellar example. This opera tells the dark tale of tango seducing and condemning a young woman to a life on the fringes; a woman who then discovers her freedom and rebirth in the afterlife as a shadow. The Atlanta Opera created an immersive new production in February 2017, directed by Artistic Director Tomer Zvulun. We're honored to have Brian August and Zvulun's new adaptation, prepared specifically for Turner Hall. This is one of the largest spaces to host this piece, and gave us ample room to emphasize tango as the central character in the opera.

We often perform pieces written centuries ago. Piazzola brought this to the stage for the first time in 1968. Inspired by a lover, debuted by a new girlfriend after the breakup (the lover's husband wouldn't give the composer her hand!), the magnetism of María is key to the storytelling and reminiscent of Piazzola's obsession with both muses. Her name isn't chosen by chance; it's easy to find parallels with Mother Mary throughout. So while the composition is newer, the story is timeless. María's life isn't easy, but it's dramatic; and the music is mesmerizing.

As we celebrate the wealth of melody and drama in this piece, we encourage you to revel in the swirling performance, one that can't be contained by the stage. Follow the dancers, the voices, and the sounds of Buenos Aires, and be seduced as María was. After all, this is everything we love about opera. When we speak about the international appeal and impact of opera, pieces like this entrance us. Discovering a place, a culture through gorgeous storytelling and music can be as addictive as the tango. Fortunately, our experience uplifts and moves us, rather than condemning us to restlessly roam the streets of Buenos Aires!

In this final production of our 90th season, we thank you for being part of the Florentine's history. So many Milwaukeeans have enjoyed a performance just as you are today, and so many have supported our artists and education efforts after being inspired here. Thank you, for participating in any format. As we move toward our first century, we look forward to visiting favorites, expanding our artistic horizons, and always welcoming the new and experienced opera curious to our performances. Please consider joining us next season, and bringing someone to experience opera for the first time. After all, we can't tango alone! Enjoy every moment, and know that we are grateful for your presence.



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**Please ensure all cellular phones, pagers, and watch alarms are turned off prior to the performance.
No photography or videography is allowed by audience members during the performance.**

LATE SEATING:

Guests arriving late will be seated at a suitable pause in the performance. Please be advised that guests arriving after the performance has begun may miss substantial portions of the performance.

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MARÍA DE BUENOS AIRES

By Astor Piazzolla
Libretto by Horacio Ferrer

May 17 & 19, 2024
Turner Hall Ballroom

Performed in Spanish with English Supertitles
1 hour, 45 minutes, with one 20-minute intermission

CONDUCTOR AND PIANO: Pablo Zinger
STAGE DIRECTOR: Brian August

ORIGINAL CHOREOGRAPHER: Jeremias Fors
CHOREOGRAPHER: Gustavo Russo
CHOREOGRAPHER: Florencia Lucano

CAST

Solange Merdinian* María / Shadow María
Blas Canedo González* El Duende
Gustavo Feulien* El Payador / Porteño /
Ladron antiguo mayor / Analista primero / Voz de Ese Domingo
Gustavo Russo* Tango Dancer
Florencia Lucano* Tango Dancer
Jerek Fernández+ Ensemble
Renata Herrera Ensemble
Nicholas Lin Ensemble
Laura McCauley+ Ensemble
Brandan Sanchez+ Ensemble
Tzytle Steinman+ Ensemble

* Florentine Opera Debut + Baumgartner Studio Artist

This production of *María de Buenos Aires* is an original
production from Atlanta Opera.

Original Stage Director Tomer Zvulun
Original Scenic Designer Christopher S. Dills
Original Costume Designer Joanna Schmink

CREATIVE TEAM

Connie Yun* Lighting Designer
Erica Cartledge Hair, Wig and Make-up Designer
Dyan Yoder Supertitles Design and Translation
Savannah Valigura Production Stage Manager
Marcie Friedman Assistant Stage Manager

Musicians

Ensemble Curated by the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra

Rodolfo Zanetti* Bandoneón
Federico Diaz* Guitar
Hillary Horton Flute
David Perry Violin
Sahada Buckley Violin
Allyson Fleck Viola
Trace Johnson Cello
Jeremy Attanaseo Double Bass
Andrew Miller Percussion
Fumiyasu Kawase+ Synthesizer

* Florentine Opera Debut + Baumgartner Studio Artist

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From the Director BRIAN AUGUST

"The little girl was born on a day that God was drunk." According to director Tomer Zvulun, *María de Buenos Aires* is a "kaleidoscopic fusion of movement, song, poetry, and despair, exquisitely crafted to capture the essence of tango culture. Set in a slum nightclub ca. 1900, *María* sidelines the traditional narrative in favor of a poetic and fantastical immersion. So when I sat down to conceive this production, I thought, 'Instead of adapting a venue to a theatre piece, why not choose a space that actually enhances the theatrical experience?' That's when we hit upon Turner Hall.

"If you haven't experienced this unique masterpiece, the best advice I can give you is to let go of your expectations (especially for a linear narration) and immerse yourself in the poetic nature of this sensual piece."

María de Buenos Aires is about a forgotten music, a forgotten dance, and a forgotten people. Cast in the gauzy hues of surrealistic poetry, the show explores the social conditions that gave rise to the tango. Initially considered vulgar and immoral, the tango followed an unlikely journey from the slums of Buenos Aires to the clubs of Paris. Only after it became an international sensation did it permeate the rest of Argentine society.

The tango originated in the 19th century when male workers, mainly from Germany and Italy, streamed into the Río de la Plata basin. Looking for jobs that didn't exist, countless souls became mired in vast dockside slums already crowded with cowboys (or "gauchos") and freed African slaves. With no opportunity, few women, and no means of escape, these slum communities became pressure cookers. Different styles of music blended, including the waltz, the polka, the habanera, and African rhythms, to become the cultural expression of prostitutes and knife fighters.

Piazzolla completed *María de Buenos Aires* in 1968 using a libretto by writer, tango musician, and historian Horacio Ferrer. Swimming in surrealistic haze, Ferrer's language doesn't completely make sense. But when the title character introduces herself, she tells you everything you need to know about her: "I am María of Buenos Aires. I am my town. María tango, slum María, María night, María fatal passion, María of love! Of Buenos Aires, that's me!"

In each aspect (the town, the slum, the night, fatal passion, and love), the composer leans on Catholic imagery to craft a continuous cycle of life, death, and resurrection. *María de Buenos Aires* is a Passion play. María "dies" each time she sells her body ("And I'll still burn another life for two coins," she sings). And when her life ends, she persists in spirit form until her rebirth at the end. María's resurrection does not point toward salvation, however. Instead, it is a commentary on the cycle of poverty. And with it comes a sense of inevitability and broken dreams, which remain at the heart of the tango.

"I sing a tango nobody ever sang, and I dream a dream nobody ever dreamt because tomorrow is today, and yesterday comes afterward."

By Renata Herrera and Pablo Zinger, Conductor

Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992) was an Argentine composer, bandoneón player, and arranger. His music revolutionized traditional tango into *Nuevo Tango*, which incorporates elements of jazz and classical music. *Nuevo Tango* was controversial in Argentina as some critics believed the traditions of the Argentine tango would be lost to new generations. His compositions were seen as such an affront to national pride that a taxi driver once refused Piazzolla service because he “killed the tango”. Slowly, *Nuevo Tango* gained popularity in Europe and North America and was also embraced by the more progressive members of the Argentine public. As *Nuevo Tango* grew in global fame, even the most traditional tango lover in Argentina eventually grew to love Piazzolla’s music, transforming him from a villain to a national hero.

The following is an excerpt from The New York Times article, “**A Composer Defying Categories**” by Pablo Zinger (1998):

Despite Piazzolla’s description, “*Maria de Buenos Aires*,” [...], is not really an opera as we know it. The vocal interventions are more often recited than sung; the singing is written for tango or cabaret performers, and the original orchestra was a mere extension of Piazzolla’s own quintet, of bandoneon, violin, guitar, piano and bass, with strings, flute and percussion, adding up to only 11 players. What’s more, the original performances were oratoriolike events, in which the singers, narrator and band shared the stage, almost statically.

The music of “*Maria de Buenos Aires*” is choice Piazzolla. The vocal segments feature memorable melodies in a variety of styles, from the composer’s trademark pulsating tangos to dreamy milongas and waltzes, and even the odd march. The music beneath the recitation lends inspiring background without being obtrusive, and the instrumental segments rank among the best examples of Piazzolla’s output. The theme “*Fuga y Misterio*,” for example, weaves a superb fugue out of a 12-bar syncopated theme chock-full of notes, segues into a powerful tutti and ends in a quiet Baroque arioso.

As a teen-ager, [Uruguayan-born poet Horacio] Ferrer met Piazzolla, who was 12 years older, in 1948, when the composer was a band leader in Buenos Aires. After the publication of Ferrer’s first book of tango-inspired poems, in 1967, Piazzolla suggested that they work together on a piece for musical and poetic theater. They rented a summer house in the tiny seaside resort of Parque del Plata, Uruguay, and wrote most of “*Maria*” together during 30 days of frantic work.

The significance of these efforts cannot be overestimated. Latin American opera and musical theater are rare commodities outside and even within Latin America, and “*Maria de Buenos Aires*” has had a motley performance career. The original run was a financial disaster. “My father had to sell everything to keep the show going, even his modest Fiat 600 car, in order to pay the carpenters for the scenery,” the composer’s son, Daniel Piazzolla, said recently. Reviews were mixed, and the few foreign performances did not materialize until much later.

Part of the problem with exporting the work may have stemmed from the libretto, which is written in Lunfardo, the slang of the Buenos Aires and Montevideo demimonde and of many tango lyrics. An obscure dialect of Spanish incorporating Italian, French and Portuguese expressions, Lunfardo is hard even for Spanish speakers to understand.

Then, too, the story is bound to confound those expecting a traditional opera plot. Mr. Ferrer’s poetry mixes a surreal and symbolic cocktail of the common life of the Rio de la Plata, the mythical world of tango and prostitution, and Roman Catholic religion and rituals.

Did you know...the bandoneón is a type of concertina (similar to the accordion) which is popular in Argentina and Uruguay, particularly in tango ensembles. Born in Argentina, Astor Piazzolla’s family moved to New York City when he was four years old. His father shared tango music to teach his son about his homeland. One day, he spotted a bandoneón in the window of a New York City pawnshop. By age thirteen, Piazzolla was so proficient on the bandoneón that Carlos Gardel, one of the most important figures in tango history, invited him to join his tour. Piazzolla’s father, however, decided he was too young. Luckily for Piazzolla, his father’s disapproval saved his life. It was the same tour that ended in a fatal plane crash for Gardel and his orchestra. Piazzolla would joke that if his father hadn’t stopped him, he would be “playing the harp, instead of the bandoneón”.

Synopsis

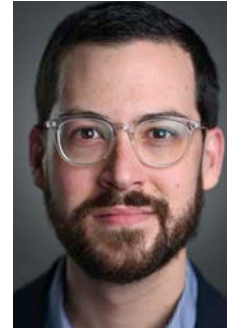
María’s life is the story of tango as told by El Duende (a Latin American goblin, prone to mischief and changing its appearance, the spirit of Buenos Aires) and El Payador (an improvisational singer from a folk music tradition of Argentina, *la payada*). El Duende conjures María from a crack in the sidewalk, blending a handful of bandoneon (a tango instrument) with his own voice. He speaks of future Marías.

María is “born one day when God was drunk”, in the slums of Buenos Aires, accompanied by two guardian angels and doves. There, she grows into a woman in seven days. From the beginning, her fate is inseparably linked to tango and is marked by sadness. María identifies with the city of Buenos Aires: tango, the slums, the night, fatal passion, and love. She becomes the object of men’s desire and jealousy of women. El Payador is in love with María but she rejects him. The center of Buenos Aires seduces María into sex work. She senses her imminent death but knows that her spirit will be preserved in tango. El Duende accuses the bandoneon of corrupting María. On Friday the thirteenth, the cock crows three times, announcing María. She is sentenced to death by thieves and prostitutes. María’s Shadow is condemned to hell, which is the city itself. Only her body remains.

Funeral rites are performed for the first death of María. She is buried by two beggars in the sediment of an espresso. María cries for the first time on her tomb. María’s Shadow haunts Buenos Aires, mourning her own memory. She writes a letter to the trees and chimneys of Buenos Aires expressing her wish to be in heaven. The Shadow falls into the hands of psychoanalysts who dig up memories of the past. She recalls her mother, her father, her first love, and her heart. Drunk in a bar, El Duende encounters three marionettes. He tells them how he was created a thousand years ago. The marionettes promise to bring María back to life. In a miracle conception, María’s Shadow is impregnated by the poetry of El Duende. While a Christmas carol plays, she gives birth to a Child on a Sunday. El Duende describes the birth of all births. To everyone’s surprise, it’s not the Messiah, but a baby girl. The people of Buenos Aires wonder: Who is the child? Is it María resurrected? Is tango no more or not yet?

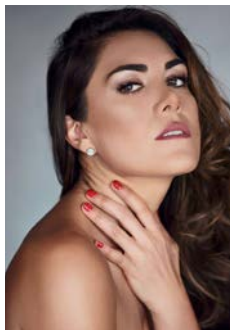


Uruguayan-born New Yorker Pablo Zinger is widely acclaimed as a conductor, pianist, composer, arranger, writer, lecturer and narrator, specializing on Astor Piazzolla, tango, Spanish zarzuela, and Latin American music. He has performed in Spain, Russia, Poland, Slovenia, Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, South Africa, Greece, Germany and Norway. He accompanied Plácido Domingo at Constitution Hall, conducted for Paquito D’Rivera’s at Carnegie Hall, premiered Piazzolla’s *María de Buenos Aires* in Moscow and narrated Piazzolla’s *Pueblo Joven* in Tokyo. He toured for ten years with the Valencia-based Zinger Septet and has written for *The New York Times*, *Opera News*, and lectured for *The New York Philharmonic*. His CD’s include *Tango Apasionado* with Piazzolla, *Chamber Music from the South* and *The Clarinetist*, with D’Rivera, *Las Puertas de la Mañana* (songs of Carlos Guastavino) and two albums of music by Carlos Suriñach. He’s been called “The King of Zarzuela” by *Opera News* magazine and was Musical Director of the Patty Disney Zarzuela Series at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque, NM (2004-2011). Mr. Zinger has conducted the Costa Rica National Symphony, Simón Bolívar Orchestra, Maribor Philharmonic, Montevideo Philharmonic and Pro Opera and Bronx Arts Ensemble with Tito Puente, Dave Valentin, Néstor Torres and John Faddis.



Brian is grateful for his continued association with Tomer Zvulun’s production of *María de Buenos Aires*. Brian has previously served as the Associate Director on this production at New York City Opera, New Orleans Opera, and The Atlanta Opera, and he has directed it for Opera San Antonio. Brian’s work is primarily as a Stage Manager where recent credits include Seattle Opera, Detroit Opera, and Houston Grand Opera. Upcoming work includes a return to HGO for his 6th season and spending his 14th summer at Des Moines Metro Opera. Some of his favorite shows he has stage managed in recent years include *Wozzeck*, *The Love for Three Oranges*: Des Moines Metro Opera; *Silent Night*, *Dead Man Walking*: The Atlanta Opera; *The Magic Flute*, *Salome*: Houston Grand Opera. In the Fall of 2022 Brian collaborated on an article titled “Stage Managers Shed Light on Opera’s Hiring Crisis” that was republished by the AFL-CIO. In 2023 Brian was invited to speak on a panel at the United States Institute of Theatrical Technology called “Creating a Humane and Sustainable Environment for Stage Managers.” Brian currently serves as one of the Vice Presidents of the American Guild of Musical Artists where he founded and co-chairs the Staging Staff Caucus, serves on the Work Rules and Contracts Committee, and has participated in numerous negotiation committees. Brian is a proud graduate of Boston University with a BFA in Stage Management, Cum Laude, and holds a certificate in Labor Skills from Cornell University. Brian lives in Houston with his happy rescue dog Rupert.

ARTISTIC

**Solange Merdinian , María**

Acclaimed for her “smoldering stage presence,” (New York Times) her “richly-hued voice” (BBC Music Magazine), the Miami based American-Armenian-Argentinean singer Solange Merdinian has garnered an international reputation for her versatility and interpretation as a recitalist, chamber musician, and opera singer in repertoire ranging from baroque to contemporary, folk, tango, cabaret, and world music.

Highlights include guest soloist with Firdaus Orchestra at the World Expo Dubai (2022), celebrating International Women’s Day as well as the first Livestream Concert with the Orchestra, a Holiday Celebration in December 2023. Other performances include, Carnegie Hall, Weill Recital Hall Solo Recital in 2021 and 2022; Winner of the Pro Musicis Competition 2019; critically praised “tour de force” principal role in *María de Buenos Aires*, Opera Tango by Piazzolla; singing at Madison Square Garden in NYC, representing Argentina with the National Anthem; and French pop debut for the Hollywood movie *The Hundred-foot Journey*: “My mind is a stranger without you”, and a special guest performer at the UN General Assembly for India’s 70th Independence Day with renowned multi-award winner composer and singer AR Rahman.

Since moving to Miami, she has opened the new venue “Sanctuary of the Arts” in Coral Gables, as well as producing and performing their Valentine’s Concert Celebration with guests musicians and dancers. Other Concerts include chamber music concerts with the New Docta Ensemble at Ridotto Concert Series in NY, as well as other festivals and concerts in the Tri-State area. She is now curating a concert with guest artist Kevork Mourad for the 125th Anniversary of the Armenian Diocese of America.

In 2015 she finished a four-year world tour with the Philip Glass Ensemble, in the award-winning production of the landmark opera *Einstein on the Beach* as directed by Robert Wilson, composed by Philip Glass, and choreographed by Lucinda Childs. She has also appeared in “Dawn Upshaw and Friends” (Classical Singer Convention) and Dawn Upshaw and Osvaldo Golijov’s *Composing Song* (Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall).

Solange Merdinian graduated with a Master’s in Voice and Vocal Performance from Bard College-Conservatory, and she received her Bachelor of Music degree from The Juilliard School. She is an effective advocate for social, educational, and cultural programs through music, which is why she is the Co-Founder and Co-Director of the non-for-profit organization, New Docta, and the New Docta Festival. She is the Manager at Steinway and Sons Miami Piano Gallery and she is a member of the Advisory Board of Bard College Conservatory as well as the Sonus Music Festival. She released her first album “Composing Roots” in 2020.

**Blas Canedo González , El Duende**

Baritone Dr. Blas Canedo-Gonzalez is internationally recognized as a deeply musical, persuasive singing actor whose rich, sensual sound, and strong, secure, brilliant instrument connect memorably with both repertoire and audience. Equally at home as a leading man or comedian, he delights in creating authentic characterizations of opera’s many traditional Hispanic and Latino roles, as well as in championing new music, especially that by Latin composers. He has performed more than 30 opera roles including leading roles at national and regional opera houses such as the Houston Grand Opera, Teatro Mayor Julio Mario Santo Domingo, Ópera de Colombia, San Antonio Opera, Fort Worth Opera, Alamo City Opera, Opera in the Heights, Teatro Colsubsidio Roberto Arias Perez, and Teatro Colón de Bogotá. Memorable roles include Dr. Rappaccini (*Rappaccini’s Daughter*, Catán), Everybody (*Lucinda y Las Flores de la Nochebuena*, Mack); and Vidal (*Luisa Fernanda*, Moreno Torroba), and El Duende and El Payador (*María de Buenos Aires*, Piazzolla).

Critic Mike Greenberg of the Incident Light blog found Mr. Canedo-González “...so deeply musical, so flat-out beautiful, that after a while I found myself wallowing in the sheer sensuality of that sound and not bothering to look at the projected English translations.” Rebecca A. Schuetz’s front page coverage for the *Houston Chronicle* newspaper of Dr. Canedo-Gonzalez at the Houston Grand Opera’s special performance for Houston’s homeless community described his “powerful sound” that generously “swept through the hall” and “filled the room.”

His concert experience includes several seasons as a baritone soloist with the Houston Symphony, other regional orchestras in the US, and major orchestras in Colombia, South America such as Victoria Symphony, Glens Falls Symphony, Symphony of Southeast Texas, Rapides Symphony Orchestra, Sinfónica de Colombia and Filarmónica de Bogotá. He is a winner of the Pavel Lisitsian award for the best baritone voice at the Tenth edition of the Lois Alba competition in Houston.

Dr. Canedo-Gonzalez has been recognized by the Texas House of Representatives with the House Resolution 2365 for his artistic performances and teaching achievements in the State of Texas. He is a graduate of the Moores Opera Center at the University of Houston where he earned his DMA. His research document was titled, “The Spanish Language as a Conceptual and Correlative Measure in Classical Technique.”

Dr. Blas Canedo-Gonzalez is the Chair at the Commercial Music Performance and Visual Arts Program at Lamar State College Port Arthur, a Teaching Artist for the Houston Grand Opera, and the President of the Ibero-American Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing NATS.



Gustavo Feulien, *El Payador*

Hailed by the New York Times as “rich voiced” and by Opera News as “the sonorous baritone Feulien cut a terrifying figure as a wolfish, analytical Scarpia.”, Argentinean-American baritone, Gustavo Feulien, continues his career with great success.

Last season he sang as Payador in Piazzolla’s *María de Buenos Aires* with Opera San Antonio, a role that he also performed in the Teatro Municipal in São Paulo, Brazil and with the Atlanta Opera. He also performed as Zurga in *Les pêcheurs de perles* at the Teatro Colón in Argentina. With New York City Opera, he sang as Silvio in *Pagliacci*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, and as Marcello in *La bohème* in the Bryant Park Summer Concert series. Gustavo performed as Scarpia in *Tosca* with Maryland Symphony Orchestra, with Gulfshore Symphony, Loft Opera and Heartbeat Opera both in New York City.

His New York City Opera debut was as Silvio in *Pagliacci*, a role he also sang with Boheme Opera in New Jersey. Gustavo made his role debuts as Marcello in *La bohème* with Wichita Grand Opera and as Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* with Gulfshore Opera. Gustavo Feulien made a successful European opera debut as Belcore in *L’elisir d’amore* and as Count Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro* as a regular guest artist with Theater Bremen in Germany.

His American career was launched with his Carnegie Hall debut in Faure’s Requiem and with DiCapo Opera, Gustavo Feulien was part of a US tour singing Silvio in *Pagliacci*. With Opera in Williamsburg he performed as Conde di Luna in *Il Trovatore*. One of his signature roles is Escamillo in *Carmen* which he performed in New York, Virginia and Montreal, Canada; as well as the title role in *Don Giovanni*, which he has performed throughout Argentina & USA.

Over the last seasons, Gustavo Feulien has extended his repertoire to include some new Russian signature roles such as the title role in Eugene Onegin, performed in Brooklyn, New York and in Tel Aviv, Israel where he received the IVAI Price for International Singer and Robert in Tchaikovsky’s *Iolanta* performed with Di Capo Opera in NYC.

His debut with Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires was as the baritone soloist in Carmina Burana. Feulien was part of the international cast of Verdi’s *La forza del destino*. He returned to Teatro Colón as the Herald in *Lohengrin* and participated in the production of *Don Giovanni*. He also took part in the world premiere of Mario Peruso’s modern opera *Fedra as Teramenes* and performed at the 100th Anniversary of Teatro Colon’s Celebration Gala. With Opera de Puerto Rico, Feulien has performed as Malatesta in *Don Pasquale*, Belcore in *L’elisir d’amore*, and the Conde in the Zarzuela *La leyenda del beso*.



Florecia Lucano and Gustavo Russo, *Tango Dancers and Choreographers*

PRODUCTION



Erica Cartledge, *Resident Wig/Makeup Designer*

Erica Cartledge is the Florentine Opera’s Resident Wig + Makeup Designer. Her recent designs include - *La Bohème* (Florentine Opera), *Songbird* (Florentine Opera), *Elixir of Love* (Florentine Opera), *Barber of Seville* (Florentine Opera), *Così: REMIX* (Florentine Opera), *Hunchback of Notre Dame* (Milwaukee Ballet), *Peter Pan* (Milwaukee Ballet), *Covers* (Florentine Opera), *Nutcracker* (Milwaukee Ballet), *Romeo and Juliet* (Florentine Opera), *Luisa Fernanda* (Florentine Opera), *Cinderella & The Child and the Enchantments* (Florentine Opera), *Rigoletto* (Florentine Opera). *La Bohème* (Florentine Opera). Erica has worked on world premiere productions of Don Davis’ opera *Rio de Sangre* and Robert Aldridge & Herschel Garfein’s opera *Sister Carrie* (Florentine Opera). Other Florentine Opera engagements include *The Magic Flute*, *Venus & Adonis/Dido & Aeneas*, *Don Giovanni*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Elixir of Love*, *Elmer Gantry*, *La bohème*, *Julius Caesar*, *La traviata*, *Albert Herring*, *Carmen*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Idomeneo*, *Tosca*, *I Capuleti ei Montecchi*, *Merry Widow*, *Salome*, *Macbeth*. Erica has been a part of all wig and makeup design in Florentine Opera productions since 2006.



Connie Yun, Lighting Designer

Connie Yun (she/her) is a freelance lighting designer based in Seattle, WA and is pleased to make her debut at Florentine Opera. She has most recently designed *Madame Butterfly* for Opera Philadelphia, *Stew and A Case for the Existence of God* for ACT Contemporary Theatre, and *L'Allegro, il Penseroso, ed il Moderato* for Curtis Opera Theater. Other recent opera designs include *The Marriage of Figaro* at Portland Opera and New Orleans Opera, *The Royal Shepherd* at Orpheus PDX, *The Love for Three Oranges* for Des Moines Metro Opera, *La Cenerentola* at Kentucky Opera, and *Trouble in Tahiti* and *Seven Deadly Sins* for Madison Opera. She has also designed for

Seattle Opera, Tacoma Opera, Hawaii Opera Theatre, Palm Beach Opera, Minnesota Opera, Dallas Opera, Arizona Opera, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Academy of the West, and Canadian Opera Company. Upcoming engagements include *Salome and Pelleas and Melisande* for DMMO, *POTUS* for ACT, *The Barber of Seville* for Madison Opera, and *Blithe Spirit* for Seattle Repertory Theatre. Connie is a member of United Scenic Artists Local USA-829 and an ongoing mentor with the ETC Fred Foster Student Mentorship Program.

www.connieyun.com



Dyan Yoder, Supertitles Designer

Dyan Yoder, Supertitle Designer, has been translating and designing supertitles for the Florentine Opera Company and other companies across North America since 2004. A former Company Manager and Stage Manager for the Florentine Opera, she is currently Partner and Show Director of Captus Creative, a technical event production company, where she is sought after for corporate, opera, and ballet show calling and stage management and is a voiceover artist for live events, podcasts, broadcasts, and recordings. She has worked with various talents,

from world leaders, presidents, and dignitaries to musicians covering multiple genres. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she and her team expanded their company and resources by creating a studio that produced virtual, hybrid, and safe productions. Out of these productions, this led to them winning the 2022 Michigan EMMY® for Outstanding Achievement Historical/Cultural. Originally from Brookfield, WI, Dyan majored in Music and minored in Communications at Carroll University. She recently obtained certificates from Safe Sets International, Johns Hopkins University, and Cornell University.

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The Anello Society

The Anello Society is named after the Florentine Opera's visionary founder, John David Anello. This group of visionaries have provided a gift to the Florentine Opera in their wills or estate plans. These planned gifts assure that future financial support to the Florentine Opera remains strong.

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