



**SAN FRANCISCO OPERA PRESENTS MOZART'S *IDOMENEO*
June 14–25 at the War Memorial Opera House**



San Francisco Opera Music Director Eun Sun Kim; Scene from Mozart's *Idomeneo*; Director Lindy Hume
Photos: Stefan Cohen (l), Charlie Kinross/Opera Australia (c), Andrew Walton (r)

Music Director Eun Sun Kim leads Mozart's early masterpiece in new-to-San Francisco Opera production by Australian director Lindy Hume

Cast headed by Matthew Polenzani as Idomeneo, Daniela Mack as Idamante, Ying Fang as Ilia, Elza van den Heever as Elettra



Matthew Polenzani (*Idomeneo*), Daniela Mack (*Idamante*), Ying Fang (*Ilia*), Elza van den Heever (*Elettra*)

**Tickets available at (415) 864-3330 and [sfopera.com](https://www.sfopera.com)
June 20 performance will be livestreamed**

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (May 9, 2025) — San Francisco Opera presents Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Idomeneo* from June 14–25 as part of its 2025 Summer Season at the War Memorial Opera House. Caroline H. Hume Music Director Eun Sun Kim leads these performances of the composer's early

masterpiece, which premiered in 1781 when Mozart was just 25, in a new-to-San Francisco Opera staging by Australian director **Lindy Hume**. Company Chorus Director **John Keene** prepares the artists of the San Francisco Opera Chorus for the opera's choral scenes.

Mozart's *Idomeneo* takes place in the aftermath of the Trojan War when a fateful oath to the gods by a shipwrecked king precipitates an impossible choice between duty to his kingdom and love for his own son. Predating Mozart's famed collaborations with Italian poet Lorenzo Da Ponte (*Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*) and his final masterwork for the stage, *The Magic Flute*, *Idomeneo* marks a turning point for the composer where the one-time child prodigy had emerged as an artist of singular originality and brilliance.

Music Director **Eun Sun Kim**, whose initiative to lead major works by Giuseppe Verdi and Richard Wagner each season continued last fall with *Un Ballo in Maschera* and *Tristan und Isolde*, will for the second time add an opera by Mozart to her San Francisco Opera performances. During the 2024 Summer Season, she conducted *The Magic Flute* with "the supportive grace we've come to expect from her" (*San Francisco Chronicle*). These performances of *Idomeneo* will be her first.

Lindy Hume makes her Company debut directing her production which was first staged by Opera Australia in Melbourne in 2023. The dramatic tensions onstage are enhanced by imagery of the surging seas and craggy coastlines of Tasmania from projection designer **David Bergman** and cinematographer **Catherine Pettman** of Sheoak Films. The presentation also features scenery originally designed by **Michael Yeargan** with additional set design consulting by **Richard Roberts** and the work of costume designer **Anna Cordingley** and original lighting designer **Verity Hampson**, which will be revived by **Justin A. Partier**.

American tenor **Matthew Polenzani** stars as Idomeneo, a role for which he has won widespread acclaim on many of opera's leading stages. The *New York Times* said of Polenzani's portrayal of the Cretan king: "Some tenors singing Idomeneo emphasize the heroic cast of the music. But the role also demands classic Mozartean refinement. Mr. Polenzani combines both qualities in his poignant, gripping performance, singing with melting warmth one moment, virile heft the next."

Daniela Mack, who portrayed Frida Kahlo in Gabriela Lena Frank and Nilo Cruz's *El último sueño de Frida y Diego* and Rosmira in Handel's *Partenope* in recent seasons with San Francisco Opera, returns as Idamante, the role she first sang here as an Adler Fellow in 2008. The mezzo-soprano's journey of discovery and reconnection with her Argentinean roots is the subject of [*In Song: Daniela Mack*](#), an episode of San Francisco Opera's free, video portrait series which was shot on location in Buenos Aires.

"Indispensable in Mozart" declared the *New York Times* about **Ying Fang**. The Chinese soprano makes her house debut as the captured Trojan princess, Ilija. Fang's performances, especially in the

operas of Mozart, have won considerable praise at the Metropolitan Opera, London's Royal Opera, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, the Paris Opéra and Vienna State Opera.

Renowned as one of today's leading dramatic sopranos, **Elza van den Heever** returns to the War Memorial Opera House stage where she began as a young artist with the Merola Opera Program and as an Adler Fellow. She takes on the Greek princess who loves Idamante, Elettra, a role that helped propel her career to stardom. Van den Heever's previous triumphs with San Francisco Opera include Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* while still an Adler Fellow and Leonore in a new production of Beethoven's *Fidelio* during the Company's 2021 return from the pandemic shutdown where "her lustrous soprano rang out in gorgeously ascendant arches" (San Francisco Classical Voice).

Tenor **Alek Shrader**, who recently appeared with the Company as Emilio in *Partenope* alongside his wife, Daniela Mack as Rosmira, reprises Arbace, the role he performed in 2008 while still an Adler Fellow. Shrader's roles with San Francisco Opera have included Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and David in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

The cast includes bass-baritone and third-year Adler Fellow **Jongwon Han** as the Voice of the Oracle and a quartet of Adler Fellows making house debuts: sopranos **Georgiana Adams** and **Mary Hoskins** (Cretan Women), tenor **Samuel White** (High Priest of Neptune and Trojan Man) and **Olivier Zerouali** (Trojan Man).

Following its American premiere in 1947 at the Berkshire Music Festival at Tanglewood, *Idomeneo* first arrived at San Francisco Opera in 1977. The production by visionary director/designer Jean-Pierre Ponnelle was conducted by John Pritchard, a long-time *Idomeneo* champion who helped secure the opera's place in the repertoire. The cast was headed by Eric Tappy as Idomeneo, Maria Ewing as Idamante, Christiane Eda-Pierre as Ilia, Carol Neblett as Elettra and George Shirley as the High Priest. In 1989, Maestro Pritchard, then San Francisco Opera's first Music Director, led the Company's new production by director John Copley which starred Wieslaw Ochman in the title role, Karita Mattila as Ilia and Hans Peter Blockwitz as Idamante for the Company's only presentation of Mozart's revised version with the King's son rewritten for tenor. On October 17, 1989, the Loma Prieta earthquake caused the *Idomeneo* performance scheduled for that evening to be canceled. Within three days, the Company was presenting semi-staged presentations of Verdi's *Otello* and *Aida* along with *Idomeneo* at the Masonic Auditorium while the safety of the Opera House was secured. Donald Runnicles, the Company's second Music Director, led revivals of the Copley production in 1999 and 2008.

This season's five performances of *Idomeneo* will be sung in Italian with English supertitles and are scheduled for June 14 (7:30 p.m.), 17 (7:30 p.m.), 20 (7:30 p.m.), 22 (2 p.m.) and 25 (7:30 p.m.).

LIVESTREAM on June 20 at 7:30 p.m. Pacific

The third performances of *Idomeneo* on Friday, June 20 at 7:30 p.m. Pacific will be livestreamed to viewers in the United States and Europe. Tickets, which include a 48-hour on-demand viewing period beginning at June 23 at 10 a.m. Pacific, are \$27.50. For tickets and more information, visit sfopera.com/digital/livestream.

POST-PERFORMANCE TALKBACK WITH EUN SUN KIM: Sunday, June 22



Eun Sun Kim at a post-performance talkback. Photo: Reneff-Olson Productions

Following the Sunday, June 22 matinee of *Idomeneo*, Eun Sun Kim will gather with audience members in the auditorium for a post-performance talkback. Ticketholders are invited to attend this live Q&A with San Francisco Opera's Music Director to learn about the behind-the-scenes work that goes into producing opera.

TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Tickets for *Idomeneo* range from \$28–\$438 and are available at the San Francisco Opera Box Office (301 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco), by calling (415) 864-3330 and online at sfopera.com. San Francisco Opera Box Office hours are Monday 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m.–6 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m.–6 p.m. (Saturdays phone only). A \$2 per-ticket facility fee is included in Balcony 1, 2 and 3 zone prices; all other zones include a \$3 per-ticket facility fee.

Tickets for the June 20 livestream are \$27.50 each. For more information, visit sfopera.com/digital/livestream.

The War Memorial Opera House is located at 301 Van Ness Avenue. Patrons are encouraged to use public transportation to attend San Francisco Opera performances. The War Memorial Opera House is within walking distance of the Civic Center BART/Muni Station and near numerous bus lines, including 5, 21, 49 and F Market Street. For further public transportation information, visit bart.gov and sfmta.com.

Gifts of all sizes help create San Francisco Opera's programs and are appreciated. To donate visit sfopera.com/donate.

Pre-opera talks take place 55 minutes prior to every performance. The 20-minute overview of *Idomeneo* is presented by Laura Pritchard.

All casting, schedule and ticket prices are subject to change. For further information, visit sfopera.com.

###

IDOMENEO CASTING AND CALENDAR

*San Francisco Opera Debut †Role Debut

‡Current Adler Fellow ◇Adler Fellowship Graduate +Merola Opera Program Graduate

All performances take place at the War Memorial Opera House (301 Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco), unless noted.

IDOMENEO by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

June 14 (7:30 p.m.), 17 (7:30 p.m.), 20 (7:30 p.m.), 22 (2 p.m.), 25 (7:30 p.m.), 2025

Libretto by Giambattista Varesco

Co-production by Opera Australia and Victorian Opera

Approximate running time: 3 hours and 30 minutes including two intermissions

Sung in Italian with English supertitles

World Premiere: Munich; January 29, 1781
First SFO performance: September 10, 1977
Most Recent: October 2008

Cast:

<i>Idomeneo</i>	Matthew Polenzani
<i>Idamante</i>	Daniela Mack◇+
<i>Ilija</i>	Ying Fang*
<i>Elettra</i>	Elza van den Heever◇+
<i>Arbace</i>	Alek Shrader◇+
<i>High Priest of Neptune</i>	Samuel White*†+♪
<i>Voice of the Oracle</i>	Jongwon Han†♪
<i>Two Cretan Women</i>	Georgiana Adams*†+♪, Mary Hoskins*†+♪
<i>Two Trojan Men</i>	Samuel White*†+♪, Olivier Zerouali*†+♪

Creative Team:

<i>Conductor</i>	Eun Sun Kim
<i>Director</i>	Lindy Hume*
<i>Set Designer</i>	Michael Yeargan

<i>Costume Designer</i>	Anna Cordingley*
<i>Original Lighting Designer</i>	Verity Hampson*
<i>Revival Lighting Designer</i>	Justin A. Partier
<i>Projection Designer</i>	David Bergman*
<i>Set Design Consultant</i>	Richard Roberts*
<i>Cinematographer</i>	Catherine Pettman, Sheoak Films*
<i>Chorus Director</i>	John Keene
<i>Fight Director</i>	Dave Maier

San Francisco Opera Orchestra and San Francisco Opera Chorus

San Francisco Opera is sponsored, in part, by Julie Dickson, Jerome & Thao Dodson, The Dolby Family, Bertie Bialek Elliott, Keith & Priscilla Geeslin, Gordon P. Getty, Louise Gund, John A. & Cynthia Fry Gunn, Elizabeth B. Jamieson, in memory of Burgess Jamieson, Franklin & Catherine Johnson, Edmund W. & Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund, Steven M. Menzies, Bernard & Barbro Osher, Barbara Oshman, Marieke & Jeff Rothschild, Jan Shrem & Maria Manetti Shrem, Dianne & Tad Taube, Phyllis C. Wattis Endowment Funds, Diane B. Wilsey, Barbara A. Wolfe and Anonymous.

Idomeneo is made possible by Louise Gund.

Additional support provided by Dr. and Mrs. William M. Coughran; Bertie Bialek Elliott; Denise Littlefield Sobel; Diane B. Wilsey and supporters of the Sixth Opera Fund.

San Francisco Opera livestreams are made possible, in part, by George and Leslie Hume.

San Francisco Opera is supported, in part, by a grant from Grants for the Arts.



San Francisco Opera is a member of

**OPERA
AMERICA**

PRESS PHOTOS: High-resolution, downloadable artist headshots and production images for *Idomeneo* are available at sfopera.com/press.

For further press information, please contact San Francisco Opera Communications:

Julia Inouye (415) 565-6430 / jinouye@sfopera.com

Jeffery McMillan (415) 565-6451 / jmcmillan@sfopera.com

Teresa Concepcion (415) 565-6470 / tconcepcion@sfopera.com