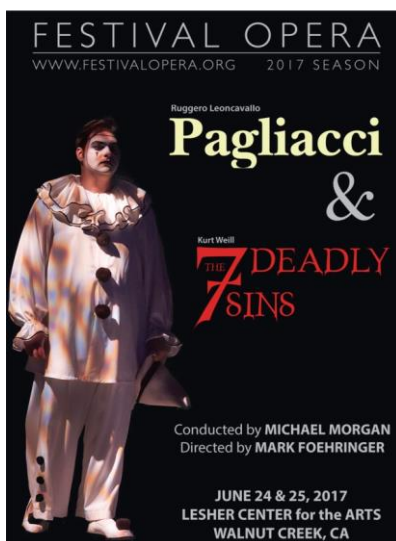




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Passion and Tragedy Collide in Festival Opera's Unusual Pairing of Sinful Operas



Alex Boyer as Canio, courtesy Opera San Jose and Robert Shomler

Ruggiero Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* is a mainstay of opera company repertoires — the story of a troupe of traveling players whose passion, jealousy and rage take center stage. The fury of Canio the clown results in the murder of his unfaithful wife, Nedda, in this play within a play. Because *Pagliacci* is a short opera, it is usually staged as a double-bill, most frequently paired with another Italian work, *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Festival Opera takes a detour from the traditional “Cav-Pag” this season to present the unusual pairing of *Pagliacci* with a 1933 work by Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht called *The Seven Deadly Sins* (*Die sieben Todsünden*). Originally composed as a sung ballet, *The Seven Deadly Sins* was the last major collaboration between Weill and Brecht. The story focuses on Anna, a young woman who leaves home to make her way in the world. Anna is portrayed by two characters — two sides of the same character: Anna I, who sings, and Anna II, who dances. Anna travels to seven cities, each representing a sin, and returns home with the knowledge that great passions can lead to great misfortune. The production will feature professional dancers and singers.

Maestro **Michael Morgan** will conduct the **Festival Opera Orchestra**, with **Lynne Morrow** directing the **Festival Opera Chorus**. Director-choreographer **Mark Foehringer** returns to Festival Opera as stage director and choreographer. He directed and choreographed Festival Opera's 2011 productions *La Traviata* and *The Most Happy Fella*. Tenor **Alex Boyer** makes his Festival Opera debut as the tormented, murderous clown, Canio, in *Pagliacci*.

Soprano **Rebecca Garcia**, who appeared as Juliette in the 2004 production of Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette*, as Paquette in Bernstein's *Candide* in 2005, and as Micaëla in Bizet's



Rebecca Garcia



Laura Bohn

Carmen in 2007, returns to Festival Opera as Canio's unfaithful wife, Nedda. Baritone **Hadleigh Adams** sings the role of Silvio; **Roberto Perlas Gomez** is Tonio; and **Robert Norman** is Beppe in *Pagliacci*. Mezzo-soprano **Laura Bohn** portrays Anna I in *The Seven Deadly Sins*. **Kirk Eichelberger** and **Jonathan Smucker** round out the cast of singers in *The Seven Deadly Sins*, along with a cast of professional dancers.

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Festival Opera's production of *Pagliacci/The Seven Deadly Sins* will have two performances only: Saturday, June 24 at 8:00 pm and Sunday, June 25 at 2:00 p.m. Both performances are at The Leshner Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek, CA. *Pagliacci* will be sung in Italian, and *The Seven Deadly Sins* will be performed in English, both with supertitles. Running time: approximately 2 hours. For more information, visit www.FestivalOpera.org.



Hadleigh Adams



Michael Morgan

UPCOMING EVENTS

Festival Opera's free **Opera in the Park** summer concert will be presented June 11, 2017, in Walnut Creek's Civic Park. Featured artists: **Alex Boyer**, **Rebecca Garcia** and members of the Festival Opera Chorus.

In early 2018, Festival Opera will present the world premiere of ***Rated R for Rat***, a new chamber opera in development with composer in residence **Wang Jie**. The work is a collaboration with the respected new works incubator, American Opera Projects in Brooklyn, NY, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music's Department of Opera and Musical Theater.

About Festival Opera

Festival Opera has emerged as one of the most respected opera companies in the San Francisco Bay Area and one of the top professional performing arts companies based in Walnut Creek. Founded in 1991, the non-profit organization provides opportunities for emerging artists, including San Francisco Opera Adler Fellows and Merola Program artists. Festival Opera strives to make opera accessible and relevant for an increasingly diverse audience.