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**New Performance Traditions**  
presents



**A chamber opera on the Japanese American WWII incarceration**

**Max Giteck Duykers, Composer & Philip Kan Gotanda, Librettist/Playwright**

**Saturday, February 15, 2025 at 8pm & Sunday, February 16, 2025 at 2pm**  
**Zellerbach Playhouse**

***December 10, 2024***

**New Performance Traditions** is proud to present a gripping new production of ***Both Eyes Open***, an experimental electroacoustic opera by Brooklyn-based **composer Max Giteck Duykers** and Berkeley-based **librettist and playwright Philip Kan Gotanda**, coming up on **February 15 and 16, 2025** at **Zellerbach Playhouse**. This harrowing tale documents the destruction and suffering wrought by the Japanese American World War II incarceration on U.S. soil. Helmed by director **Melissa Weaver** and conductor **David Milnes**, *Both Eyes Open* features baritone **Suchan Kim**; soprano **Zen Wu**; tenor **John Kun Park**; **Eco Ensemble** and guest artist **Joel Davel** on marimba lumina; and the 45+ member **UC Berkeley Chamber Chorus** under the direction of **Wei Cheng**.

***Both Eyes Open*** is supported by the UC Berkeley Japanese American Studies Advisory Committee, a Mellon Project Grant from the Division of Arts & Humanities Dean's Office, Cal Performances, UC Berkeley Department of Music, UC Berkeley Department of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies, Center for Japanese Studies, Townsend Center for the Humanities, the California Civil Liberties Program, and through the generous support of Jerome and Thao Dodson.

***Photo: Albert Levine. Graphic Design: Traci Shiro.***

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**Zellerbach Playhouse**

**2413 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, CA 94720**

**Tickets: \$30 Adults; \$15 Students (with ID)**

**<https://secure-tickets.berkeley.edu/26079>**

**<https://www.beo-opera.com>**

## QUOTES on the PRODUCTION:

### **New Performance Traditions:**

"New Performance Traditions (AKA Paul Drescher Ensemble) is honored to be able to produce this new production of Max Giteck Duykers and Philip Kan Gotanda's chamber opera *Both Eyes Open* in the Zellerbach Playhouse in Feb. 2025. We have worked with the collaborators since the work's inception and first workshops 16 years ago through its glorious premiere in June of 2022 at the Presidio Theatre in San Francisco, and its New York premiere in January 2023. Most new operas never receive a second production, so it is with great excitement and pride that we are able to mount this new production of *Both Eyes Open* with a new and a very compelling cast."

### **Philip Kan Gotanda:**

"*Both Eyes Open* recasts the incarceration of Japanese Americans to show us disturbing truths about America then and America now. In this exciting, experimental opera we mash up the lyrical with the raucous; an ambitious aesthetic with vaudevillian low brow humor. We hope you enjoy the ride: a fresh, new work that reframes the WWII Incarceration of Japanese Americans to resonate with the timely issues of anti-Asian and anti-immigrant hatred."

### **Max Giteck Duykers:**

"Our piece tells a multilayered, emotional story, inspired by true historical events. The score moves from soaring bel canto singing, driving choral textures, contemporary and complex grooves, deep sutra chanting, and haunting electroacoustic sounds; all in service of this heartbreaking love story which moves seamlessly through different time periods, fantasy, dream, and memory. The psychological landscape is painted through sonic accumulation, building to the tense and wondrous climax."

### **Playwright David Henry Hwang:**

"Powerful yet nuanced, complex and deeply human, *Both Eyes Open* touches the spirit as it exposes the psychic wounds which history can leave on a community. Duykers' thrilling and wonderfully enjoyable score evokes the past in order to speak to our world today. He and Gotanda have created a stunning new opera which will make audiences think and uplift their hearts."

### **OperaWire:**

"*Both Eyes Open* demonstrates the strength of opera as an art form and its contemporary relevance. The audience gets crushed by history throughout Duykers' and Gotanda's opera. It hurts to think about it, and it is challenging not to feel ashamed. It is unusual to hear nothing at all when a show ends. So it was in the Flea Theater. Until the cast took their bows to resounding applause, it appeared like few in the crowd knew how to react."

# MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY:



## SYNOPSIS

***Both Eyes Open*** tells a haunting love story and tale of perseverance about a Japanese American farmer, Jinzo Matsumoto, and his wife, Catherine, who are incarcerated in an American concentration camp during World War II. Before leaving their farm, they bury a Daruma Doll on their land. According to tradition, these papier-mâché idols are given when embarking on a challenging endeavor or making of a promise. One eye is painted on the doll to symbolize the commitment, and if success comes, the doll receives its second eye and is burned ceremonially to release its spirit.

At the concentration camp in Rohwer, Arkansas, Catherine dies in childbirth due to inadequate medical facilities. Jinzo begins to question his belief in America, and when forced to sign a questionnaire declaring his loyalty to this country, he signs no-no, refusing to serve in the U.S. armed forces. Because of his decision, Jinzo is labeled a No-No Boy and is transferred to Tule Lake, a high security prison camp for those deemed potential enemies of the state.

After the war, a new Executive Order is issued and Jinzo is free to return to his former life; he goes home to Stockton, California to see his old farm. He discovers the new owner is not a white farmer as he had assumed, but a Japanese American woman, whose husband had been killed fighting for the U.S. with the all-Japanese American 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion in Bruyères, France. She angrily berates Jinzo for being a No-No Boy – a traitor – and refusing to fight while her own husband fought and died for Jinzo's right to live free.

Jinzo is broken. He has lost everything. He finds himself at the railroad tracks where he decides to end his life. Jinzo lies down on the tracks, when the Daruma Doll and the ghost of Catherine appear to guide him to a place of higher understanding. As the train strikes Jinzo, the world freezes. Silence, emptiness. *Ma.*

We leave reality and enter the meta world of Daruma's Bigger Mind, able to understand the entire trajectory of Jinzo's life as a living history. We see the tumultuous world of today as a continuum of the "rich, rotting soil of fertile injustice." The chorus sings, "What will it grow?"



### **Max Giteck Duykers, Composer**

**Max Giteck Duykers** is a composer whose work is dedicated to unusual beauty, unique forms, and collaborative projects. He frequently incorporates technology in performance in a manner which gives the performers room for individual expression. A veteran of multidisciplinary performance, Duykers is also interested in reworking developmental processes for artists to find their collective "sweet spot" and produce work which is personal, confronting, and starkly beautiful.

An album of his music featuring **Ensemble Ipse**, was released on **New World Records** in May 2019, with producer **Judith Sherman**. Of the album, Kathodik.it writes "[Duykers is] an absolutely original voice within the varied horizon of contemporary music." Duykers was also recently commissioned by the **National Parks Service**, **New Music USA** and the **Jerome Foundation** to create a chamber opera for tenor, soprano, baritone, electro-acoustic percussionist (performing the *Marimba Lumina*) and mixed ensemble with the **Paul Dresher Ensemble**. Featuring a libretto by acclaimed playwright and filmmaker **Philip Kan Gotanda**, the piece is a comment on the internment of Japanese Americans during WWII. The piece has been workshopped across the U.S. over the past several years, and was premiered at San Francisco's Presidio Theatre in June 2022, and in NY in January 2023 as part of the **OPERA America New Works Forum**. The piece has also been generously supported by **New York State Council on the Arts**, **The Brooklyn Arts Council**, **California Humanities**, and the **JA Community Foundation**.

His numerous other commissions and premieres include the **Avian Orchestra**, **The Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra**, the **Oakland Youth Orchestra**, the **Seattle Chamber Players**, **Third Angle New Music**, **The BEO String Quartet**, **The Glass Farm Ensemble**, **PUBLIQuartet**, **Anti-Social Music**, **The Stony Brook Contemporary Chamber Players**, violinist **Curtis Stewart**, and numerous other individual performers. Duykers' *Glass Blue Cleft* was recently released by the **Escher String Quartet** on **Bridge Records**. Of the piece, **Three Village Patch** writes "[Glass Blue Cleft] is a piece for lovers of the string quartet, those amazed by how fiery and how dulcet these four-stringed instruments can range in expression." This and other pieces have been featured at music festivals throughout the U.S. and abroad, including the **Seattle Chamber Players'** Icebreaker IV, curated by **The New Yorker's Alex Ross**. His new piece *Vapor/Blood* for seven violas, electronics, and seven dancers, commissioned by the Tiffany Mills Company, premiered at **National Sawdust** in December 2023.

Duykers is a founder and co-director of **Ensemble Ipse**, a contemporary music performance group based in NYC. Ipse's mission is to find common threads in works whose stylistic profiles appear, on the surface, as divergent. We present recent music that transcends aesthetic categorization and strive to create a forum for composers and sound artists on the edges of the mainstream of contemporary music, as well as those who have been traditionally underrepresented, including women, LGBTQIA+, and BIPOC. Since forming in 2016, Ipse has premiered 42 works, 14 of them commissions, performed works from numerous calls for scores for emerging composers from around the world, received grants from the **New York State Council on the Arts**, the **Brooklyn Arts Council**, **New Music USA**, the **Queens Council on the Arts**, **NET/TEN**, and the **Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University**, as well as numerous donations from its large donor network.

Duykers has also been commissioned to compose music for over 50 theatrical, dance, film, and multimedia projects in the New York City area. With the theater group **Prototype** he was an artist-in-residence at **HERE Arts Center** in 2002-2004, and in 2000-2001 he worked for **Philip Glass' The Looking Glass Studios** and **Dunvagen Music Publishers**, where he did studio recording, Pro-Tools post-production, music sequencing, music copying and music editing for the **Philip Glass Ensemble**, film scoring projects, and operatic works. He received a BM from **Oberlin Conservatory** where he studied composition with **Randy Coleman**, and has recently completed his Ph.D. at **Stony Brook University** where he studied with **Sheila Silver**. At Stony Brook he was also honored with the **2012 Ackerman Award for Excellence in Music**. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife Rebecca and sons Quinlan and Liev.

<https://www.jealousgods.com>



***Philip Kan Gotanda, Librettist***

Over the last four decades, librettist **Philip Kan Gotanda** has specialized in investigating the Japanese American family writing a cycle of works in theater, film, song and opera that chronicle Japanese America from the early 1900s to the present. Mr. Gotanda holds a law degree from UC Law San Francisco and studied pottery in Mashiko, Japan with the late Hiroshi Seto. Mr. Gotanda is a respected independent filmmaker. His 3 films: *Life Tastes Good*, *Drinking Tea*, *The Kiss*, all have been official entries at the Sundance Film Festival. Mr. Gotanda adapted his play, *The Wash*, into a feature film, directed by Michael Toshiyuki Uno. *The Wash* is one of the first films about the Asian American family to have a theatrical release. A CD of Mr. Gotanda performing his original songs in a 1980 concert with violinist DH Hwang is now available at Yokohama, Ca. Records. Mr. Gotanda wrote the oratorio for the Kent Nagano piece, *Manzanar: An American Story*, an orchestral work about the World War II incarceration of Japanese Americans.

Mr. Gotanda is a recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship. He is an inaugural recipient of the Dramatists Guild Foundation's 2021 Playwrights Legacy Initiative, a two-year award acknowledging Mr. Gotanda's body of work in American Theater. Mr. Gotanda is a recent inductee into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Mr. Gotanda is a professor with the Department of Theater Dance and Performance Studies at the University of California at Berkeley. He resides at the Gotanda Art Plant in the Hills with his wife, Alameda Arts Commissioner and novelist, Diane Takei Gotanda and their cotton de tular, Cosimo.

<https://www.philipkangotanda.org>





***Melissa (Missy) Weaver, Director***

Director **Melissa Weaver** has directed the collaborative creation of more than forty original music theater works. As General Director of First Look Sonoma, with partner, tenor John Duykers, Missy is currently developing text for *Heart of the Great Divide* with composer Philip Aaberg. Weaver was a founding member of Bay Area's George

Coates Performance Works, the Paul Dresher Ensemble and of Main Stage West, where she recently directed Stef Smith's *Swallow* and S. Massicotte's *Mary's Wedding*. She directed and designed original operatic works for the Paul Dresher Ensemble, Long Beach Opera, and West Edge Opera. She directed Rinde Eckert's *The Gardening of Thomas D.*, Virko Baley's *Holodomor. Red Earth Hunger* at Kiev Opera and the Gerald Lynch Theater; and directed Kurt Rohde's *Bitter Harvest*, a farmer's oratorio with Kent Nagano and the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra. Weaver collaborated with Amanda Moody on *Serial Murderess*, on *Caliban Dreams*, and on *D'Arc, woman on fire*, with music by Jay Cloidt. With music by Miguel Frascioni, she wrote and directed *Trespass Knot* and *Hand to Mouth*, also with *Both Eyes Open* "visual alchemist" Matthew E. Jones. Weaver was an artist-in-residence at CalArts from 2000-05, directing 5 original pastiche operas.



***David Milnes, Conductor***

**David Milnes** serves as Music Director of the Eco Ensemble, Berkeley's internationally recognized professional new music ensemble in residence, as well as the UC Berkeley Symphony Orchestra. In his early years, he studied piano, organ, clarinet, cello and voice, and briefly entertained a career as a jazz pianist, appearing with Chuck Mangione, Gene Krupa, Billy

Taylor and John Pizzarelli. After studying with Charles Rosen, Otto-Werner Müller, Herbert Blomstedt, Erich Leinsdorf and Leonard Bernstein, Milnes won the prestigious Exxon Conductor position with the San Francisco Symphony at age 27, where he appeared frequently on the New and Unusual Music Series. He also served as Music Director of the highly acclaimed San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra which he led on its first European tour. He became a Professor at UC Berkeley in 1996 and currently serves as Chair of the Department of Music.

A dedicated proponent of new music, Milnes has led many performances with Earplay, the Empyrean Ensemble, Composers Inc., and the Left Coast Chamber Ensemble. As Music Director of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players he commissioned and premiered new works from around the world from such composers as Phillipe Leroux, Liza Lim, Edmund Campion, Shulamit Ran, Zhou Long, Kui Dong, Earl Kim, Jorge Liderman and Cindy Cox. With the ECO Ensemble he has conducted works by Pierre Boulez, Giorgi Ligeti, Jonathan Harvey, Beat Furrer, Harrison Birtwistle, Franck Bedrossian, Andrew Imbrie and Ivan Fedele. He has made recordings of music by John Anthony Lennon, James Newton, Edmund Campion, Jorge Liderman and Pablo Ortiz.

Milnes has led the UCBSO and Eco Ensemble on four European tours since 2014, each featuring new music from Berkeley composers. In performance, he has collaborated with Pinchas Zukerman, Chanticleer, Frederica von Stade, Dawn Upshaw, Anna Netrebko, Bill T. Jones, and Paul Hillier, and has appeared at the Venice Biennale and Santa Fe, Tanglewood, Aspen, Other Minds and Monadnock music festivals.

<https://music.berkeley.edu/people/david-milnes>



### **Suchan Kim, Baritone - "Jinzo Matsumoto"**

OperaWire last reviewed **Suchan Kim** in January 2023 for his performance in librettist Philip Kan Gotanda's and composer Max Giteck Duykers' powerful chamber opera *Both Eyes Open*. In that opera, Kim portrayed Jinzo, a Nisei man interred at during World War Two. Jinzo was no Don Giovanni; rather, he was a broken man, so ashamed of his behavior that he commits suicide.

Kim demonstrated his versatility as a singer-actor and created a Don Giovanni that was a bit off-kilter, almost maniacal. At one point, in a scene seemingly ripped from a Tarantino film, he places a gun to Leporello's head, terrorizing his poor servant. Giovanni laughs the whole thing off and tosses the gun away (which is then stolen by the onstage Actress). It was a bonkers moment that came out of nowhere and put the audience on the edge of their seats. While unexpected, it showed his character as someone who is quick to demonstrate his power to get his way, whether with Leporello or the women. But it also showed Giovanni as a quintessential sociopath. He raped a woman, killed her father, and moved on, with zero empathy for the destruction left in his wake.

During Act two, Kim's Don Giovanni broods in a chair, his arms across his chest, and with a withering stare. His lack of success with Zerlina turned him into a petulant man-child.

Kim's lyricism was on display as he took on his lines with clean articulation through the speedier recitatives and fast passages, which aided in bringing out the unstable and violent aspects of the character. His rendition of 'Fin ch'han dal vin, A.K.A. the Champagne aria" was well sung with buoyancy in his voice.

With Giovanni's famous serenade, "Deh, vieni alla finestra," Kim showcased the sense of charm and seduction in his voice, adeptly conveying the character's intentions. He used and maintained control of dynamics, adding to the seductive quality of the piece.

The final scene, perhaps one of the most dramatically intense scenes in opera, was brilliantly performed by Kim. The brooding Giovanni morphed into pure defiance; in his mind no one is as



strong and 'manly' as he, not even a statue, come to life. But his mocking insolence turns into terror, requiring a quick switch in tone and delivery." **OperaWire**

"Suchan Kim is a compelling baritone with a sophisticated, stentorian voice. Sporadic bright moments show a youthful and somewhat naïve guy with no idea what lies in front of him. The audience witnesses a man's entire existence destroyed by injustice and cruelty. Kim had to get through the emotional maze in just 80 minutes, not over the course of three or four hours, and he managed the gauntlet wonderfully." **OperaWire**

"As Rabbi David, the fully professional if still young baritone Suchan Kim's terrific singing rather eclipsed the Young Artists' honest work. Kim showed full command of legato and dynamics and projected a strong, burnished sound with seeming effortlessness." **Classical Voice North America**

"Suchan Kim commanded each scene he appeared in with a focused, muscular baritone and brought the house down with a virtuosic portrayal of the increasingly drunken servant, Germano." **The New York Times**

"Equally malleable and expressive was the singing of baritone Suchan Kim's meddlesome servant Germano, a sort of Figaro on steroids (and booze), who acted with zeal and athletic skill." **OPERA NEWS**

"Baritone Suchan Kim sang Tarquinius with a voice seductive warmth and overpowering strength." **OPERA NEWS**

"The evening ended, for instance, with a powerhouse vocal display from soprano Marina Boudart Harris and baritone Suchan Kim. In the duet from Act 3 of Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin" - the lone non-Italianate ringer - Boudart Harris' flair and well-placed high notes made a fine match with Kim's suave and fluent contribution." **San Francisco Chronicle**

"Suchan Kim offered a swaggering, self-assured Giovanni and a warm, richly developed baritone." **THE VIRGINIA GAZETTE**

"Kim defined a singing actor. He made the role his. In fact, he was a take home memory, so total was his amusing portrayal. He embraced the fun, while offering a rich, full voice that overflowed with warmth and lots of appeal." **THE VIRGINIA GAZETTE**

"Suchan Kim (Tobias Mill) magnetizes the audience to him throughout the evening, with a sumptuous baritone voice and precisely communicative Italian. He is wonderfully funny without ever becoming cartoonish, and sustains a level of energy in both voice and deportment that left me exhausted just watching him." **OPERA TODAY**

Suchan Kim (Baritone), a native of Busan, South Korea, recently sang the role of Enrico in Opera in Williamsburg's production of Donizetti's Lucia di Lammermoor. He has performed as a resident in San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program as well as with The Metropolitan Opera Education, The Metropolitan Opera Guild, Opera Philadelphia, The Atlanta Opera, Carnegie Hall, Mannes Opera, Dallas Opera's The Hart Institute for Women Conductors, Opera Grand Rapids, Sarasota Opera, The Phoenicia International Festival of The Voice, Opera in Williamsburg, Tacoma Opera, First Look

Sonoma, Paul Drescher Ensemble, Presidio Theater, Bare Opera, Opera Vezimra, New Rochelle Opera, Teatro Grattacielo, New Amsterdam Opera, Decameron Opera Coalition, Light Opera of New Jersey, Loft Opera, Opera Ithaca, Barn Opera, Teatro Lirico D'Europa, The Palmetto Opera, Amore Opera, Sinfonietta of Riverdale, The New York Concert Opera, New York Grand Opera, New York Lyric Opera, Jamestown Concert Association, Fairfield County Chorale, Lyric Chamber Music Society of New York, Sign & Sing, NYU IMPACT Conference, MidAmerica Productions, National Theater of Korea, Seoul Arts Center and several opera companies in South Korea.

His role credits include Don Giovanni and Leporello in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Count and Figaro in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Guglielmo in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, Papageno in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Hoël in Meyerbeer's *Dinorah*, Enrico in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Belcore in Donizetti's *L'Elisir D'amore*, Marcello and Schaunard in Puccini's *La Bohème*, Ford in Verdi's *Falstaff*, Alfonso in Donizetti's *La Favorita*, Silvio in Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci*, David in Mascagni's *L'Amico Fritz*, Roberto in Verdi's *I vespri siciliani*, Marullo in Verdi's *Rigoletto*, Giorgio Germont and Barone Douphol in Verdi's *La Traviata*, Tarquinius in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*, Dandini in Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, Germano in Rossini's *La Scala di Seta*, Tobia Mill in Rossini's *La cambiale di matrimonio*, Yamadori and Bonzo in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, Escamillo and Dancaïre in Bizet's *Carmen*, Le Marquis de la Force and Jailier in Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Hermann and Schlemil in Offenbach's *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, Salieri in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Mozart and Salieri*, Paquiro in Granados' *Goyescas*, Fiorello and L'Ufficiale in Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Le chat and L'horlage comtoise in Ravel's *L'Enfant et Les Sortilèges*, Simeon from Debussy's *L'Enfant Prodigue*, Payador from Piazzolla's *María de Buenos Aires*, Father in Kamala Sankaram's *Thumbprint*, Bass in Ricky Ian Gordon's *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, King Solomon in Dina Pruzhansky's Hebrew opera '*Shulamit*', Jinzo Matsumoto in Max Giteck Duykers and Philip Kan Gotanda's *Both Eyes Open*, Lum May in Gregory Youtz and Zhang Er's Tacoma Method. The Critic in John Gilbert's multimedia opera '*Rotation*', Strange Man in Faye Chiao's '*Island of the Moon*' and Leonitis in 5<sup>th</sup> Grader of St. David's School and Thomas Cabaniss' '*A Hero's Journey*'.

He was an Eastern District Winner in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in 2011 and he received the Opera Award from Mannes Opera in 2013. Mr. Kim holds a Bachelor of Music from Korea National University of Arts and a Master's Degree and a Professional Studies Diploma from Mannes College, the New School for Music. He studies with Arthur Levy.

<https://www.suchankim.com>



***Zen Wu, Soprano - "Catherine Matsumoto"***

**Zen Wu** is a dramatic coloratura soprano from the East Bay. Trained as a vocalist and multi-instrumentalist in a wide range of genres, she regularly performs and records as a soloist and guest musician with many groups including the New York Philharmonic, LA Philharmonic, San Diego Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Beth Morrison Projects, Musica Sacra, Cathedral Choir of St. John the Divine, SEM Ensemble, and Ensemble Ipse.

After having been a chorister in the Bay Area's own Crystal Children's Choir since the age of 6, Wu began her formal studies in classical voice at UC San Diego, where she was immersed in experimental performance in addition to training in traditional vocal repertoire and technique. Wu sang two seasons with the San Diego Opera before making her professional mainstage debut and moving to New York, where she is currently based as a freelance classical artist specializing in contemporary and sacred music.

<https://www.zenopera.com>



***John Kun Park, Tenor - "The Daruma Doll"***

A Korean-American tenor from Los Angeles, CA, **John Kun Park** has been described as "a clarion tenor," "that floats his high notes with ease and emotional fervor.

John will begin the 24/25 season with Opera on the James, debuting as Rodolfo in Puccini's *La Boheme*. He will then join New Performance Traditions for a new composition production of *Both Eyes Open* by Max Duykers, and return to West Bay Opera as the titular character of Verdi's *Otello*.

John started off his 23/24 season with Opera Grand Rapids reviving Ricky Ian Gordon's *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, as the Tenor 1 soloist, then immediately head to Lancaster, PA to join Penn Square Opera for their "Opera Couples Therapy" concert, where he will headline signature pieces and duets from *Carmen*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, and *Tosca*. He made his company and role debut with Opera Modesto as the iconic Mario Cavaradossi in Puccini's *Tosca*, and finished the 23/24 season with Mid America Productions at Carnegie Hall as their guest Tenor Soloist for Mozart's Coronation Mass. John was also a finalist for the Wagner Society of New York's competition and received an encouragement grant.

After his successful debut as Erik in Wagner's *Der Fliegende Holländer*, with West Bay Opera, John traveled to Berlin and debuted as Bacchus in Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Berlin Opera Academy. He had also debuted as Rick in John Adams' *I was looking at the ceiling and then I saw the sky*, with

InSeries Opera right before, covering the title role Canio, *I Pagliacci*, with Opera Tampa in March 2023.

John began 2022 with the Los Angeles Philharmonic covering the role of Florestan in Beethoven's *Fidelio* for their collaboration with Deaf West Theatre. Then John joined the Chautauqua Opera's summer season where he covered the role of Mario Cavaradossi in Puccini's *Tosca*, and sang the role of John Adams in Gertrude Stein & Virgil Thompson's *The Mother of us All*.

The 2021 season began digitally for John, with being placed as a semi-finalist for the Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. He also participated in the Annapolis Opera Vocal Competition, where he was placed as a finalist and received an Encouragement Award. John's postponed contract with Des Moines Metro Opera was fulfilled and spent the summer performing in their summer season where he covered both Adolfo Pirelli and Beadle Bamford in Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd*. In October, John joined the Los Angeles Philharmonic to workshop Beethoven's *Fidelio* in collaboration with Deaf West Theater, and will be returning to workshop the role of Florestan in March 2022.

John has performed with various companies and various prestigious young artist programs, debuting roles such as Don Jose *Carmen*, Faust *Faust*, Ismaele *Nabucco*, Siegmund *Die Walküre*, and performing as a feature soloist with companies such as the LA Philharmonic, Des Moines Metro Opera, Chautauqua Opera, Sarasota Opera, Central City Opera, Pittsburgh Festival Opera, and West Bay Opera.

<https://www.johnkunpark.com/>



### ***Joel Davel, Marimba Lumina***

**Joel Davel** is a percussionist who combines his classical training with intimate knowledge and use of electronic music resources to help realize his work and the work of other composers. Davel's diverse career and influences range from traditional acoustic folk and classical music, to jazz, to the highly experimental. He has been a member of Vãn-Ánh Võ's Blood Moon Orchestra since 2020. A close collaborator with composer Paul Dresher, Davel is part of the Dresher-Davel Invented Instrument Duo, Double Duo and Electro-Acoustic Band, often creating work for dance and theater productions as well as premiering works of other composers. Davel has composed and performed live for several dNaga dance productions and appeared in theater productions for The California

Shakespeare Theater, West Edge Opera, and South Coast Repertory. Other long-time performer-composer collaborators include Vãn-Ánh Võ, Amy X Neuburg, Jack West, John and Max Duykers, and Guillermo Galindo. An OperaWire review of the New York premiere of the opera *Both Eyes Open* writes: "The percussionist/sound alchemist [Joel Davel] used four mallets to activate and control a broad variety of sounds, from symphony instruments to sound effects. It was fascinating to witness Davel perform two tasks simultaneously while displaying virtuosity on his hallmark instrument. He incorporated dozens of sounds into the story and emulated extra instruments to give the ensemble's

line more depth....Visually stunning, the projections—combined with Joel Davel’s wizardry—situated the audience in the story."

As circuit board designer and a mentee of electronic music pioneer Don Buchla for over 20 years, Davel continues the design of electronic music instruments, including continued refinement and production of the Buchla Marimba Lumina — Davel’s signature instrument. The Marimba Lumina gives him expressive control by recognizing each of four mallets independently while tracking the mallets location along each bar. Davel holds a Bachelor of Music from Northern Illinois University and MFA from Mills College.

<https://www.absolutedeviation.com/about.html>