



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**JAN I. SHREM AND MARIA MANETTI FARROW  
MAKE MAJOR NEW GIFT TO SAN FRANCISCO OPERA  
IN SUPPORT OF MUSIC DIRECTOR NICOLA LUISOTTI  
AND ITALIAN OPERA REPERTORY**

SAN FRANCISCO—San Francisco Opera announced today that Jan I. Shrem and Maria Manetti Farrow have made a commitment of \$3,000,000 to the Company. The news of this gift will be recognized by San Francisco Opera General Director David Gockley on Friday evening, September 9, from the stage of the War Memorial Opera House. With this gift, Mr. Shrem and Ms. Farrow will assume the volunteer leadership role of Chairs of the *Amici di Nicola* of Camerata, a group of visionary San Francisco Opera donors who make major gifts to fund the projects that define the Company's international reputation. They will also establish the Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund at San Francisco Opera to support the greatest interpreters of the Italian repertory working in the opera world today.

*Amici di Nicola* is one of four major funding priorities of Camerata. Members champion and make possible the work of Maestro Luisotti. As Chairs of *Amici di Nicola*, Mr. Shrem and Ms. Farrow will fund all of Maestro Luisotti's San Francisco Opera appearances in the 2012-13 season. Additionally, a 2012-13 production, cast and creative team for an Italian opera will be selected for recognition by Mr. Shrem and Ms. Farrow for their Great Interpreters of Italian Opera Fund.

"On behalf of the entire Company, I want to express my enormous gratitude to Maria and Jan," states David Gockley. "Their generosity is driven by their love of opera and their

enthusiasm for continuing this Company's great legacy in the Italian repertoire at a world-class level." Maestro Luisotti added, "Becoming San Francisco Opera's music director was a dream-come-true for me, in part because of this community's extraordinary passion for great music-making and affection for Italian opera. I am personally honored by Jan and Maria's support and confidence in me. With their help, we will bring the very finest artists in the world to San Francisco over the next three seasons to realize everything Italian opera can and should be."

Maria Manetti Farrow commented, "I have loved opera since I was introduced to it in Florence when I was thirteen years old, and San Francisco Opera has been part of my life since I moved to the city in 1973. I have had the great good fortune to develop close friendships with many artists in the opera world, and have enormous respect for their talent, dedication and sacrifice. I also had the privilege of being one of the first to learn of Nicola's appointment as Music Director, and it has been a thrill to watch him take Italian opera to new heights at the War Memorial Opera House over the past few seasons."

Jan Shrem added, "I was first introduced to Italian opera nearly sixty years ago as a college student in Salt Lake City. I am so grateful to have the ability today to help others discover great new performances of these eternal works. When Maria and I learned about the Opera's Camerata program—how we could be especially supportive of the projects Nicola cares most about and Italian opera in particular—we knew we wanted to play a major role."

#### ABOUT JAN SHREM

Jan Shrem is the proprietor of Clos Pegase Winery in California's Napa Valley. Born of Jewish-Lebanese heritage in Colombia, Mr. Shrem grew up in Jerusalem from the age of 2; he moved to the United States at age 16 to finish high school and attend college. While studying for his Master's Degree at UCLA, he made a visit to Japan and ended up staying there for thirteen years, creating a successful publishing business which he continued in Europe. He eventually sold the business to pursue his passion for wine and art, studying enology at the University of Bordeaux before returning to California to create his 450-acre wine estate, Clos Pegase. Mr. Shrem's passion for wine and art is reflected in the winery, which features a signature building by Michael Graves, twenty thousand square feet of aging caves, and an art collection of nearly one thousand works.

Mr. Shrem is a Member of the Director's Circle, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the

board of the Family Winemakers of California; and is a founding member of Festival del Sole. He has chaired numerous charity wine and art auctions for schools and museums and has hosted or contributed to hundreds of fundraisers for museums, universities, and wine societies with his humorous lecture, "*Bacchus the Rascal: A Bacchanalian History of Wine Seen Through 4000 Years of Art.*"

#### ABOUT MARIA MANETTI FARROW

Maria Manetti Farrow is an international businesswoman and patron of the arts. She was born in Florence, Italy and then moved to the United States in 1973, making her home in Northern California. She maintains residences in San Francisco, Napa Valley and in Florence, Italy. In the 1980s, Ms. Manetti Farrow revolutionized the high-end designer accessory market by creating and managing United States and Canadian distribution lines for premium leather goods, including legendary producers Gucci, Fendi and Mark Cross. For more than a decade, her business, with a staff of 120 employees, operated at the highest levels throughout the retail world, anticipating and setting trends with remarkable success. Her prescience foresaw an industry downturn which led her to leave the business at a highpoint of her career and return "to the earth" where she owns and personally manages Villa Mille Rose, a 60-acre estate in Napa Valley replete with vineyards, olive and fruit orchards, and flower and vegetable gardens.

Ms. Manetti Farrow is a grower and collector of fine wines, and produces upscale Balsamic Vinegar and Tuscan Style Extra Virgin Olive Oil that has won the Gold Medal at the Los Angeles County Fair for the last ten years. Her olive oil is now served at some of the country's top restaurants, including the French Laundry in Yountville and its sister restaurant, Per Se, in New York. Ms. Manetti Farrow is involved in numerous philanthropic, civic and performing arts organizations throughout the cities of San Francisco, New York, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, Florence, London, Paris and St. Petersburg, Russia.

#### ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO OPERA CAMERATA

In 1577, a group of scholars, artists, and philanthropists known as the Florentine Camerata joined forces in order to reinvent ancient Greek theater. Instead, they made history by devising a new art form that came to be known as opera. In October 2010, San Francisco Opera formed its own Camerata: a group of visionary donors who fund the projects that define the

Company's international reputation. In addition to maintaining their annual support of the Company's infrastructure, Camerata members make multi-year commitments to enable the endeavors that make San Francisco Opera one of the world's leading opera companies.

San Francisco Opera opens the 2011-12 season Friday, September 09 with a gala performance of Giacomo Puccini's masterpiece, *Turandot*. Nicola Luisotti conducts an international cast along with the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus in the critically acclaimed David Hockney production. For complete details, visit [sfopera.com](http://sfopera.com).

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For further press information or photographs, visit [www.sfopera.com/press](http://www.sfopera.com/press) or contact Jon Finck at (415) 565-6472 / [jfinck@sfopera.com](mailto:jfinck@sfopera.com)  
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