

PREVIN'S

A Streetcar Named Desire

PRESS KIT



PRESENTS

A Streetcar Named Desire

Opera in three acts

Music by André Previn Libretto by Philip Littell First performed by San Francisco Opera, September 19, 1998. Sung in English with English supertitles. Supported, in part, by a grant from the San José Office of Cultural Affairs.

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YOUNG COLLECTOR Xavier Prado BLANCHE DUBOIS Ariana Strahl EUNICE HUBBELL Cabiria Jacobsen STELLA KOWALSKI Stacey Tappan Sara Duchovnay* OLD RELATIVE Teressa Foss STANLEY KOWALSKI Matthew Hanscom Eugene Brancoveanu* HAROLD "MITCH" MITCHELL **Kirk Dougherty** STEVE HUBBELL **Michael Boley** DOCTOR SILAS ELASH NURSE Teressa Foss

*Appears in the 5/1 performance

CONDUCTOR Ming Luke **Matthew Piatt*** STAGE DIRECTOR Brad Dalton FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER Wesley Daniel SET DESIGN **Brad Dalton** COSTUME DESIGNER Johann Stegmeir LIGHTING DESIGN **David Lee Cuthbert** WIG AND MAKEUP DESIGN **Vicky Martinez** PROPERTIES MASTER Lori Scheper-Kesel TECHNICAL DIRECTOR John Draginoff ASSISTANT STAGE DIRECTOR **Karyn Morton** PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER Allie Bailey

CAST

PRINCIPAL COACH Ronny Greenberg MUSIC STAFF Veronika Agranov-Dafoe Victoria Lington SUPERTITLE CUEING Victoria Lington

*Appears in the 4/29 and 5/1 performances



Act I

SCENE 1

Blanche DuBois has suffered the loss of both her ancestral home and her job when she arrives in New Orleans to visit her sister, Stella, who has married Stanley Kowalski, an ex-GI trucker.

SCENE 2. A FEW DAYS LATER

Stanley, infuriated by Blanche's artificial airs, her suggestive behavior, and what he regards as her loss of his wife's birthright, is determined to expose the lies about her past.

SCENE 3. THAT NIGHT

During a poker game Blanche meets Harold Mitchell (Mitch), a workmate of Stanley's, who is very devoted to his dying mother. Blanche sets her sights on him. Stanley, drunk, breaks up the evening and strikes Stella, whom he regards as siding against him with Blanche. After this violence, and contrary to Blanche's advice, Stella returns to Stanley's bed. The next morning Stanley overhears Blanche entreating her sister to leave him.

Intermission (20 minutes)

Act II

SCENE 1. SOME WEEKS LATER

Stanley tells Blanche that he has a friend who is making inquiries about her past. When he and his now-pregnant wife go out for the evening, Blanche begins a sad and half-hearted flirtation with a young paper boy. She later goes out with Mitch on a date.

SCENE 2. THAT NIGHT

Mitch unburdens his heart to Blanche who, in turn, tells him of her brief marriage to a young homosexual man and how she blames herself for his suicide.

Intermission (15 minutes)

Act III

SCENE 1. SOME WEEKS LATER, BLANCHE'S BIRTHDAY

Mitch is late for the party. Stanley, who feels that both his home and marriage are threatened by Blanche, breaks up the celebration when he reveals to Stella that his friend has discovered Blanche's unsavory reputation in Laurel for an affair with a young man, and the fact that she had been told to leave town. After handing Blanche a one-way ticket back home, Stanley tells her that Mitch now knows everything and will not be coming around again.

SCENE 2. LATER THAT NIGHT

Stella has been taken to a hospital for a premature delivery. Mitch, drunk, invades the apartment and bitterly reproaches Blanche: Just as her desperate hopes lie with him, his lie with her. They have both lost their emotional refuge. His denunciation of her as someone too unclean to enter his mother's house is a terrible betrayal.

SCENE 3. LATER

This betrayal is completed when Stanley, as a last act of cruel retribution, rapes Blanche.

SCENE 4. SOME DAYS LATER

Blanche prepares to leave for a fictitious cruise with an old admirer. While in fact, Stella, unable to believe Blanche's accusations against Stanley, is packing Blanche's clothes as she is being sent to an insane asylum.

This synopsis was written by the late Colin Graham, who directed the world premiere of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and is reproduced here with the permission of San Francisco Opera.



Michael Boley TENOR (OHIO)

Steve Hubbell. In the 2015-2016 season, Michael returns as a Resident Artist with Opera San Jose, singing in Puccini's *Tosca*, Bizet's *Carmen*, and Previn's *Streetcar Named Desire*. A native of Ohio, Michael began his career with Columbus Opera. Mr. Boley appeared there in productions of *La bohème*, *Aida, Rigoletto, Tosca, Carmen, Don Giovanni, Die Zauberflöte, Susannah* and *Camelot*.



An exponent of the romantic French and

full-lyric Italian repertoire, recent performance highlights for the tenor include the title role in *Les Contes de Hoffmann*, Rodolfo in *La bohème*, Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto*, Lenski in *Eugene Onegin* and Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*. Career highlights for the tenor include Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with Helena Symphony Orchestra, Calaf in *Turandot* for Dicapo Opera, the world premiere of Anton Coppola's *La Coupe et les Lèvres* at the Danny Kaye Playhouse in New York City with Inter-Cities Performing Arts and *The Crucible* at the National Theatre of Pécs and the Szeged National Theater in Hungary with performances telecast internationally. With Dicapo Opera in New York City and on tour with National Lyric Opera, Mr. Boley created a significant impression in Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West*. Further successes include his turn as the Chevalier de Danceny in Susa's *The Dangerous Liaisons*, and the Beast in Giannini's *Beauty and the Beast* for Dicapo Opera.

The 2011/2012 season included Scriabin's *Symphony No. 1* with Helena Symphony Orchestra, Eurofest with Opera Naples and *Carmen* with Denyce Graves in a critically acclaimed production for Opera Charleston. The 2012/2013 season featured the tenor as Cléon in Gluck's rarely performed *The Reformed Drunkard* for Little Opera Theater of New York, Lenski in *Eugene Onegin* for Opera Company of Middlebury and Rodolfo in *La bohème* with Staten Island Philharmonic among others.

Michael holds a BA in vocal performance from the College of Wooster and an MM in vocal performance from the University of Akron.



Eugene Brancoveanu Baritone (Romania)

Stanley Kowalski 5/1. Mr. Brancoveanu made his company debut during Opera San José's 2013-14 season, appearing as Leporello in *Don Giovanni*. Recent engagements for Mr. Brancoveanu include Lancelot in *Camelot* with Virginia Opera; "*Songs of a Wayfarer*" in a return to Peninsula Symphony Orchestra; was baritone soloist in Mozart's *Requiem* with Fresno Philharmonic Orchestra; directed *La bohème* and sang Marcello for Livermore



Valley Opera; and sang in recital at Brookings Harbor Friends of Music.

Recent appearances include the Philadelphia Orchestra, the New World Symphony, and the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall, in Michael-Tilson Thomas' *The Tomashevskys*, conducted by the composer, a work which he premiered at Carnegie Hall, has reprised with the New World Symphony, the San Francisco Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and at the Tanglewood Music Center under Seiji Ozawa. He recently returned to the Santa Cruz County Orchestra in Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, sang as soloist in Carmina Burana with Spokane Symphony Orchestra, sang as Marcello in La bohème with Virginia Opera, Gonzalvo in Schreker's *Die Gezeichneten* with Los Angeles Opera, the title role in Don Giovanni with Berkeley Opera, Yeletzky in Pique Dame with the Israeli Opera, soloist with Peninsula Symphony Orchestra, in recital with California's San Francisco Performances concert series. returned to San Francisco Opera as Belcore in L'elisir d'amore, sang Karnak in Lalo's Le Roi d'ys with the American Symphony Orchestra, Count in Le nozze di Figaro with Livermore Valley Opera, and as soloist in *Elijah* with University of California/Davis.

Mr. Brancoveanu is a graduate of the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz and the Universität Mozarteum Salzburg. He is also a recent winner of the National Young Opera Singer Competition in Leipzig, the International Music Award in Loenberg, and the International Opera contest "Ferruccio Tagliavini".



Kirk Dougherty TENOR (CALIFORNIA)

Harold "Mitch" Mitchell. Mr. Dougherty has and will appear this season as Mario Cavaradossi (*Tosca*), and Mitch (*A Streetcar Named Desire*). He made his first appearance at Opera San Jose as a Resident Artist during the 2014-2015 season, as the Duke (*Rigoletto*), Tamino (*Die Zauberfloete*), and Philip in the world premiere of Mark Weiser's Where *Angels Fear to Tread*.



As Don Jose (Carmen), he returned in 2015

to Anchorage Opera, where he previously sang the roles of Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Arturo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) and Joseph Treat in the world premiere of Victoria Bond's *Mrs. President*.

He made his company debut at the Sarasota Opera's 2014 Winter Festival, singing ten performances of Manrico in an uncut version of *Il Trovatore*. Kirk Dougherty was recently a soloist with the American Symphony Orchestra in Bruch's oratorio *Moses* at Carnegie Hall and with the Glacier Symphony in *Das Lied von der Erde*. He also appeared in concert with Opera Delaware and as Manrico at Baltimore Concert Opera during the 2013-2014 season.

In past seasons, he has performed with many notable musical organizations, such as the Castleton Festival, Central City Opera, Utah Festival Opera and Musical Theatre, Opera Naples, Helena Symphony, Salt Marsh Opera, Duluth Festival Opera, Manhattan Concert Productions at Carnegie Hall, and many others.

A graduate of the Eastman School of Music, he began his professional training as an Master of Music student at Eastman Opera Theatre, as an AGMA apprentice artist at Central City Opera, and as a festival artist at Utah Festival Opera. He was more recently a resident artist at Tri-Cities Opera and at Opera San Jose.



Sara Duchovnay Soprano (pennsylvania)

Stella Kowalski 5/1. Ms. Duchovnay is returning to Opera San José in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Most recently Sara appeared with Opera Santa Barbara as Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, with Hidden Valley Opera Ensemble in Carmel CA as Della in David Conte's *Gift of the Magi*, and with West Edge Opera as Rosina in Paisiello's *II barbiere di Siviglia*.



Passionate about new works, Sara was pleased to originate the role of Dorothea in

Allen Shearer's opera Middlemarch in Spring, which premiered in San Francisco in March of 2015. The opera, adapted from George Eliot's novel Middlemarch, garnered critical acclaim. During the 2013-2014 season, Sara made her Opera San José debut in the role of Nannetta in Falstaff, and later in the season revisited the delightful production as the Nannetta cover while she was a studio artist with Opera Santa Barbara. In the summer of 2014, Sara sang the role of Blonde in Abduction from the Seraglio and covered the title role in Lucia di Lammermoor with the Southern Illinois Music Festival. She also sang the role of Soprano 1 in West Edge Opera's triumphant production of Philip Glass and Allen Ginsberg's opera Hvdrogen Jukebox, which was hailed as "transfixing, especially as delivered by a superb cast" by The San Francisco Chronicle, who also commended Ms. Duchovnay for her "sweet toned and vigorous contributions". Of the moving final scene, San Francisco Classical Voice wrote "Duchovnay, who was impressive throughout, here topped the ensemble like a macabre Maraschino".

A native of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, Sara holds a Bachelor of Music from the Hartt School of Music and a Master of Music from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Sara is a student of mezzo-soprano Catherine Cook.



Silas Elash Bass (pennsylvania)

Doctor. Resident artist Silas Elash returns in 2015-16, performing the roles of Dr. Bartolo (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Zuniga (*Carmen*), and the Doctor (*A Streetcar Named Desire*). Last season, Mr. Elash appeared as Sparafucile and Monterone (*Rigoletto*), Haly (*The Italian Girl in Algiers*), the Cabman (*Where Angels Fear to Tread*), and Sarastro (*The Magic Flute*.) Other roles performed during his residency at Opera San José include Pistola (*Falstaff*), the Commissioner (*Mada-*



ma Butterfly), the Commendatore (*Don Giovanni*), Nourabad (*The Pearl Fishers*), Frank (*Die Fledermaus*), Ferrando (*Il trovatore*), the Voice of Nettuno (Idomeneo), Dr. Grenville (La traviata), Méphistophélès (Faust), Scarpia (*Tosca*), Bartolo (*The Barber of Seville*), Colline (*La bohème*), Count Des Grieux (*Manon*), Don Magnifico (*La Cenerentola*), Bartolo (*The Marriage of Figaro*), and Rambaldo (*La rondine*).

The path that carried him to opera and Opera San José was not the traditional path taken by most artists. The unique quality of a youthful sound in a mature instrument is a result of the fact that singing emerged later in his life and pulled him away, to the delight of audiences, from his first career as an electrical engineer. Good solid instruction and an engineering mind, relentlessly seeking the understanding of vocal production and solid technique, have yielded remarkable results. His vocal gifts, combined with his solid technique, produce a powerful and consistent presence every time he takes the stage.

Winner of the "Wagner Society Award" in the 2010 Irene Dalis Vocal Competition, he was recognized for his potential as a Wagnerian singer. The Dalis competition has seen him as a finalist in 2010, 2012 and 2013.

Mr. Elash was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and has resided in California for most of his life.



Teressa Foss soprano (california)

Old Relative/Nurse. Teressa Foss appears as the Old Relative and the Nurse in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Recent engagements for Ms. Foss include appearances with West Bay Opera, Verismo Opera, Lyric Theatre of San Jose, Viva La Musica, Jarvis Institute, and the Italian Foundation of Monterey/ 500g Palermo. She has recently been a featured soloist in the Franzen Studio Community Concert Series at the First Unitarian Church of San Jose and Opera Night at Caffe Frascati in downtown San Jose.



Other venues at which Ms. Foss has performed include the Hollywood Bowl, Berkeley Repertory, Phoenix Theatre of AZ, Lambs Players (San Diego), GeVa Theatre, Indra's Net Theater, 42nd Street Moon, Willows Theatre, Boston Court, Virago Theatre, Fullerton Civic Light Opera, Cabrillo Stage, PCPA Theaterfest, Reprise! (Los Angeles), Ensemble Theatre Santa Barbara, Fountain Theatre, Odyssey Theatre, Colony Theatre, Valley of the Moon Chamber Ensemble, and the L'ermitage Foundation.

Ms. Foss received her BA in Theatre Arts at UCLA.



Matthew Hanscom Baritone (Minnesota)

Stanley Kowalski. In his second year as a member of Opera San José's resident ensemble, Matthew Hanscom performs the roles of Scarpia (*Tosca*), Figaro (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Escamillo (*Carmen*) and Stanley (*A Streetcar Named Desire*). Last season, Mr. Hanscom was featured in the title role of Rigoletto, Taddeo (*The Italian Girl in Algiers*), Gino Carella (*Where Angels Fear to Tread*), and Papageno (*The Magic Flute*).



Mr. Hanscom began 2014 in his sixth season at Sarasota Opera, appearing as Comte de Toulouse in Verdi's *Jérusalem* and covering Figaro in *II barbiere di Siviglia*. Highlights from past seasons include Schaunard in Puccini's *La bohème*, a "fully realized portrait" of Slim in Carlisle Floyd's *Of Mice and Men*, and Ping in Puccini's *Turandot*.

Awards and accolades received include being named international finalist in the Neue Stimmen International Singing Competition in Gütersloh, Germany. He is a former national semi-finalist in the Palm Beach Opera Vocal Competition as well as a former national semi-finalist in Houston Grand Opera's Eleanor McCollum Competition for Young Singers. In consecutive years he was a district winner, followed by a national semi-finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and can be seen in the documentary film "The Audition".

Possessing both bachelor's and master's degrees in music from Northwestern University in Evanston, IL, Mr. Hanscom is an alumnus of many of premiere training programs such as Wolf Trap Opera's Filene Young Artist Program, the Santa Fe Opera, the Merola Opera Program, Opera Theatre of St. Louis' Gerdine Young Artist Program, Chicago Opera Theater, Sarasota Opera Studio, and Central City Opera.



Cabiria Jacobsen MEZZO-SOPRANO (CALIFORNIA)

Eunice Hubbell. Ms. Jacobsen makes her company debut in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. During the 2015-2016 season, Cabiria appeared as Cousin Hebe in *H.M.S. Pinafore* with The Lamplighters of San Francisco. At Anchorage Opera, she performed Mercédès in Bizet's *Carmen*. Cabiria will return to Musical Café to premier *The Right Note*, a musical adaptation of Shakespeare's Twelfth Night.



In the 2014-2015 season, Cabiria sang the

role of The Fox in Rachel Portman's inspiring opera, *The Little Prince* with Opera Fayetteville, and reprised the role of Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro* with Salt Marsh Opera. She made her Carnegie Hall debut as alto soloist in Mozart's *Coronation Mass* with DCINY. With the little OP-ERA theatre of new york, she appeared as Ernestina in Rossini's *Opportunity Makes the Thief*, and returned to the Bronx Opera to perform the role of Julia in the East Coast premiere of Kirke Mechem's *The Rivals*.

Cabiria was a 2012-2013 Emerging Artist at Virginia Opera. Formerly a Resident Artist at Tri-Cities Opera, she performed several roles there, including Dorabella/*Così fan tutte*, Suzuki/*Madama Butterfly* and Nick-lausse/*Les contes d'Hoffman* on the mainstage, as well as Hansel/*Hansel and Gretel*; La Ciesca/*Gianni Schicchi*; and Mom and Grandma/*Little Red Riding Hood* in their chamber opera and outreach series.

A proud native of Brooklyn, NY, Cabiria attended Northwestern University, graduating with bachelor's degrees in Voice as well as Drama. Cabiria joined the joint MM/Resident Artist program at Binghamton University and Tri-Cities Opera with a full scholarship and teaching assistantship. Since graduating, she has performed with ensembles throughout the United States.



Xavier Prado TENOR (CHILE)

Young Collector. Mr. Prado returns to Opera San José for *A Street Car Named Desire*. Xavier is an emerging young tenor native of Chile. Recent roles include Lindoro for Opera San Jose's production of *L'Italiana in Algieri*, Tamino in *Die Zauberflote* with Guild Opera Company, Ernesto in Pocket Opera's *Don Pasquale*, Il Duca in *Rigoletto* with Pacific Lyric Opera, Rodolfo in *La Boheme* with Ridgecrest Opera Guild and with the Pacific Palisades Symphony, Alfredo in *La Traviata*



with Antelope Valley College Opera and Monsieur Vogelfanger in Center Stage Opera's production of *Der Schauspieldirektor*.

Mr. Prado currently studies with tenor Gabriel Reoyo-Pazos. He sings with ensembles all over California, including the Los Angeles Lawyers Philharmonic and Legal Voices in the Walt Disney Concert Hall, California Philharmonic Chorale, Golden State Pops Choral, Opera Chorus of Los Angeles & the Dream Orchestra, Antelope Valley Symphony and Master Chorale, Ridgecrest Opera Guild, Santa Barbara Chorale Society, Opera in Castellano, Cameretta of Los Angeles, and the Pacific Palisades Symphony.



Ariana Strahl Soprano (California)

Blanche DuBois. Soprano Ariana Strahl makes her company debut during the 2015-16 season, appearing as Blanche in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Ms. Strahl has been most recently seen onstage debuting as Micaela in the Komische Oper's Revival of Sebastian Baumgarten's *Carmen*. Other roles performed include the First Lady (*The Magic Flute*), La Ciesca (*Gianni Schicchi*), Peep-Bo (*The Mikado*), Suor Genovieffa (*Suor Angelica*), Monica (*The Medium*), Mrs. McLean



(*Susannah*), and the title role in Handel's *Semele*. On the concert stage, she has appeared in the role of the Mother in Stephen Paulus' *The Three Hermits* and as the Soprano soloist for John Rutter's *Mass of the Children*.

In 2011, Ms. Strahl was chosen for the Young Artists Program at the Komische Oper Berlin. During her two seasons at the Komische Oper, she debuted such roles as Ännchen in Calixto Bieto's *Der Freischütz*, Sandman and Dew Fairy (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Micaela and Frasquita (*Carmen*), the First Wood Sprite (*Rusalka*), Papagena (*The Magic Flute*), Mrs. Pasek (*Cunning Little Vixen*), and the roles of Fortuna, Damigella, and Drusilla in Monteverdi's *Poppea* (adapted by Elena Kats-Chernin for Barrie Kosky's *Monteverdi Trilogy*).

In 2006, Ms. Strahl advanced to the Regional level of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions (Central Region). Here she was awarded an Honorable Mention, and lauded by the jury for her promise and talent at the young age of twenty. She returned to the Illinois District in 2013, and won first prize. In 2014 She was once again named a District Winner, this time in San Francisco, where she was also awarded third prize at the James Collier Awards.

Ms. Strahl received her Bachelor of Music from Illinois Wesleyan University in 2007. She currently resides in Berkeley, California and studies with soprano Ruth Ann Swenson.



Stacey Tappan Soprano (California)

Stella Kowalski. Soprano Stacey Tappan makes her company debut during the 2016-17 season, appearing as Stella Kowalski in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Recent engagements for Ms. Tappan include *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene* with San Francisco Opera, Clorinda (*La Cenerentola*) with Los Angeles Opera, and the title role in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Arizona Opera.



On the concert stage, she has been a fea-

tured soloist with Opera Siam in their performance of *Suriyothai*, and recently appeared with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra in performances of *Tenebrae* and Mozart's *Requiem*.

Ms. Tappan was a member of the Juilliard Opera Center and an ensemble artist with the Santa Fe Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, and Wolf Trap Opera, before making her professional debut with Houston Grand Opera as Beth in *Little Women*, broadcast on PBS' Great Performances, released on CD by Ondine and on DVD by Naxos.

Her awards include grants from the Elardo Competition and the Solti Foundation U.S., first place in the Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation competition, finalist in the MacAllister and Houston Grand Opera Eleanor McCollum competitions, the Richard F. Gold Career Grant, the Lucrezia Bori award, and first place from the New York Singing Teachers Association.



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