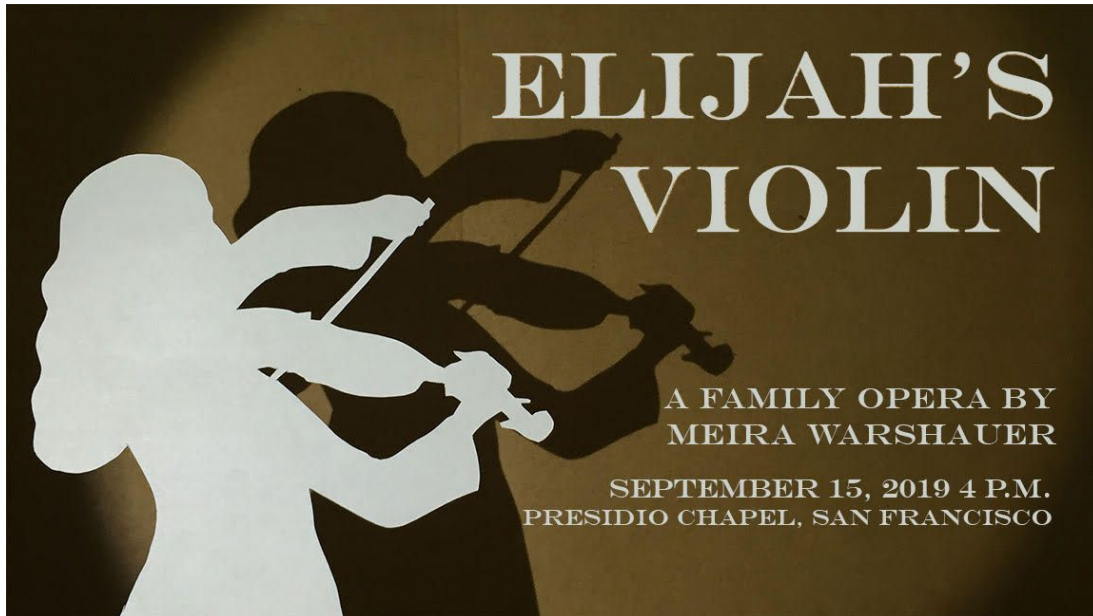




# ***Interfaith Center at the Presidio***

**Unleashing the Power of Interreligious Cooperation**

*Sunday Concerts at Presidio Chapel*



Libretto by Susan Levi Wallach and Meira Warshauer  
A semi-staged performance of the opera-in-progress

Jonathan Khuner, Music Director; Yefim Maizel, Stage Director  
Ofer dal Lal, Chorus Master; Jason Sherbundy, Pianist/coach  
Christopher Andersen, Stage Manager & Production Assistant

*Cast in order of appearance:*

Sergio Gonzalez, Prince Raphael  
Jacqueline Kerns, Princess Shulamit  
Cantabile Youth Singers, Children of the Forest ,  
Demons, Angels, Singing Trees, and more  
Chung-Wai Soong, Mycologist and Elijah  
Mariya Kaganskaya, Auntie Malka  
Alize Rozsnyai, Zohara

*Cantabile Youth Singers*

Samika Arun, Marcena Hawkins, Rosie Kline, Preethi Kumar  
Priya Kumar, Violet Pasmooij, Christina Pugh, Phoebe Wright  
Elena Sharkova, Artistic Director; Lori Bammesberger, Associate Conductor

*Chamber Ensemble*

Terrie Baune, violin; Stacey Pelinka, flute; Natalie Raney, cello; Jason Sherbundy, piano

*Covers*

Marina Davis, Princess Shulamit; Tania Mandzy Inala, Auntie Malka; Rachel Beninghof, Zohara

## Scene Settings

### Prologue—Hide and Seek

A dank, shadow-filled room in the palace home of Prince Raphael and Princess Shulamit.

### Scene I

The edge of the forest.

### Scene II

A sunny garden in a glade.

### Scene III

Deep in the woods.

### Scene IV

Outside Elijah's cave.

### Scene: V

Back in the palace room.

## Synopsis

Hide and seek. Just a harmless game—or is it? Princess Shulamit, a teen in search of her identity, is hiding from her brother Prince Raphael, when she finds an enchanted mirror. Believing her reflection will reveal her true self, Shula falls prey to a mirror demon that captures her soul and leaves her frozen in stone. A horrified Prince Rafi sets out to save his sister. He ventures into the demon-filled forest, encountering a mushroom gatherer who tells him he needs Malka, a healer. Rafi finds the old woman with her niece Zohara, a healer-in-training. Auntie Malka instructs Zohara to go with Rafi and find Elijah's violin, a magical instrument which can release the imprisoned melodies of the heart and free Shula. But there's a catch: Zohara must not only play the violin but do so with true intent and a pure heart of her own. Zohara learns to turn within and focus on her breath in order to overcome her fear and self-doubt and connect with her inner strength. After a frightening night alone in the forest, the two find Elijah, who entrusts Zohara with his violin. Back at the palace, the violin, in Zohara's hands, plays the song of Shula's heart, freeing her from the demon's hold and restoring her soul.

Adapted from the Jewish folktale *Elijah's Violin*, in *Elijah's Violin and other Jewish Fairy Tales*, retold by Howard Schwartz, Harper and Rowe, 1983.

## About the Artists

**Librettist Susan Levi Wallach** writes poetry and short stories. Her work has appeared in such print journals as *Bacopa Literary Review*, *Bayou*, *Southern California Review*, and *American Athenaeum* as well as online. Her short story "Simon of the Desert" was the basis for an independent film. In 2018, her poem "Penelope's Side of the Story" was a finalist in the Faulkner-Wisdom Writing Competition. She is a co-winner of the Thomas Wolfe Fiction Prize. In addition, her portfolio includes several thousand general-interest, technical, and business articles; she won a Keith L. Ware Communications Award for a story published by the Fort Jackson Leader. She holds an MFA from Vermont College of Fine Arts. For further information, see her website: [lingolit.wordpress.com](http://lingolit.wordpress.com).

**Music Director Jonathan Khuner** has conducted over 100 operatic productions, mostly for West Edge Opera (earlier Berkeley Opera). These have included traditional repertory, as well as such new works as Jake Heggie's *The End of the Affair*, Suprynowicz' *Caliban Dreams* and Mazzoli's *Breaking The Waves*. Over these four decades Khuner has held positions as assistant conductor with the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. In 1992-3 he was Resident Conductor at the New Israeli Opera, Tel Aviv, where he conducted 3 operas and performances of the Tel Aviv Symphony. He was prompter for Wagner's *Ring* at the Bayreuth Wagner Festival in 1996, and in 2013 led *Tannhäuser* for the State Theater in Tirana--Albania's first ever production of a Wagner opera. Khuner also conducted Doug Cuomo's *Arjuna's Dilemma* in Kathmandu in 2016, Nepal's first domestically produced opera. He also appears frequently as lecturer and recital accompanist.

**Stage Director Yefim Maizel** has directed and assisted in the former Soviet Union, Europe, Japan and the U.S. Companies include Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Washington Opera, Mariinsky Opera, Wexford Opera Festival, Saito Kinen Festival, Santa Fe Opera, Opera Pacific, Michigan Opera Theater and Opera Santa Barbara. Recently, Yefim directed productions of Verdi's "Nabucco" and "Il Trovatore" in Kazan, Russia. The productions had great success both with critics and audiences. The prestigious opera festival Chaliapin in Kazan opened with these productions in February of 2016 and 2018. Since 1999 Yefim Maizel has been engaged as a Guest Stage Director at the Metropolitan Opera. In 2005, he established the non-profit Opera Academy of California (OAC) where he serves as CEO, Artistic Director and Stage Director. Mr. Maizel enjoys working with young singers in his San Francisco studio, coaching them on audition techniques and preparation for performances of arias, scenes or complete roles.

**Chorus Master Ofer dal Lal** is a conductor living in the San Francisco Bay Area and working internationally. He quickly rose into prominence in the Bay Area as the artistic director of several choirs: San Francisco Bay Area Chamber Choir, Mission Peak Chamber Singers, and WomenSing. He serves on the board of Livermore Valley Opera and has served on the faculty of California State University East Bay, teaching choral conducting for graduate and undergraduate students. Mr. dal Lal first came into prominence as the musical director and conductor of the Jerusalem Oratorio Choir – consisting of 150 singers and one of Israel's leading non-professional choirs. Among the ensembles he has conducted are the world-renowned Stuttgart Chamber Choir (Germany), Berlin Radio Choir (Germany), Oregon Bach Festival Choir and Orchestra (Oregon, USA), Salt Lake Vocal Artists (Utah, USA), Israel Philharmonic Choir (Israel), Voces Nordicae (Sweden), Studium Canticum (Cagliari, Italy) and Manado State University Choir (Indonesia)

### **Cantabile Youth Singers** (Children of the Forest, Demons, Angels, and more)

Founded in 1994 by local music educator Signe Boyer and guided by the artistic leadership of Elena Sharkova since 2004, Cantabile Youth Singers is an internationally recognized choral program providing world-class music education, vocal training, and performance opportunities to Silicon Valley communities with rehearsal locations in Los Altos and Los Gatos, California. Cantabile's unique and innovative music curriculum includes mindfulness and yoga as well as movement and fosters an appreciation for the diversity of humankind, cultures, languages, and the arts. Vocalise, Cantabile's premier choir, has been chosen to perform at such prestigious professional forums as the XX World Symposium on Choral Music (Barcelona, 2017) and the American Choral Directors Association National Conference (2019). Recently, Vocalise earned a Gold Medal in the Interkultur European Choir Games Grand Prix of Nations (2019) and next summer will have the honor of performing at the XXI World Symposium on Choral Music in New Zealand.

### Cast

Tenor **Sergio González** (Prince Raphael), heralded by Classical Voice as singing with "great charm and excellent vocal ability," makes his company debuts with Opera Parallele, Cinnabar Theatre, and Pocket Opera in 2019. González has most recently performed with The Mendocino Music Festival, Pacific Opera Project, and Island City Opera, singing the roles of Prunier in Puccini's *La rondine*, Laurie in Adamo's *Little Women*, Elvino in Bellini's *La sonnambula*, Ernesto in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*, Count Almaviva in Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Belmonte in Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, and Don Ottavio in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Classical Sonoma describes González' "liquid" voice as having, "sparkled with graceful beauty and intelligent musicianship," and lauds, "his subtle mastery of expression and phrasing and his innate integration of singing and physicality." González graduated from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music under the tutelage of Cesar Ulloa. He currently resides in San Francisco, CA

Russian-American Mezzo-Soprano (Auntie Malka) **Mariya Kaganskaya's** recent roles include Teacher in the Santa Fe Opera's world premiere production of *(R)evolution of Steve Jobs*, the recording of which earned the 2019 GRAMMY for Best Opera Recording. For Florida Grand Opera, she has performed Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Paula (*Flores en el Amazonas*), Page (*Salome*), Mrs. Rockefeller/Natalia (*Frida*), and Charlotte

(cover)/Käthchen (*Werther*). At Arizona Opera, she appeared as Tisbe (*La Cenerentola*), Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*), and Third Wood Sprite (*Rusalka*). Other favorite roles include Olga (*Eugene Onegin*), Hostess (*Boris Godunov*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), the title role of *Seise*, La Nourrice (Milhaud's *Médée*), and Dinah (*Trouble in Tahiti*). Awards include First Place in the Lois Alba, St. Petersburg Opera Guild, Butler Opera International, Gershwin International, and Pacific Musical Society competitions, as well as San Francisco District Winner/Western Regional Encouragement Award in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

Mezzo-soprano **Jacqueline Kerns** (Princess Shulamit) is a recent graduate of Northwestern University, where she studied voice with Sunny Joy Langton and history in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences. Her training credits include Opernfest Prague (2019), Houston Grand Opera's Young Artist Vocal Academy (2019), Seagle Music Colony (2018), and SongFest (2015). Her stage credits include Didymus from Handel's *Theodora* (Northwestern University Opera Theater), Ernesto from *Billy Goats Gruff* by Davies (Seagle Music Colony), Tango Singer from Harbison's *The Great Gatsby* (Seagle Music Colony), Barbarina from Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* (Notre Dame de Namur Opera Theater) and Hansel from Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* (cover, NDNU Opera Theater). She has appeared as a guest soloist with the Northwest

Indiana Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Kirk Muspratt. She appears regularly as a recitalist in the San Francisco Bay Area.

**Alize Rozsnyai** (Zohara), a soprano “displaying profound imagination and control” (Philadelphia Inquirer), is a commanding young artist in repertoire ranging from baroque to contemporary. This season she debuts as Zina in *Dark Sisters* (Muhly) with Opera Fayetteville, Soprano Soloist in Mozart’s *Missa Solemnis*/Haydn’s *Lord Nelson Mass* under the baton of Gregory Geheern, and Phyllis in *Iolanthe* at the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival in Harrogate, England. Recently, Alize performed at Carnegie Hall as soloist in Berio’s *Sinfonia*, Kennedy Center performing her own original English translation of Schönberg’s *Pierrot Lunaire*, originating roles of Lila (*Cold Mountain*/Jennifer Higdon), First Andy (Andy: a Popera), Silvana in *A Flourish of Green* (Mazzoli) as workshops with Opera Philadelphia, and covered *Jane Eyre* in *Jane Eyre* (Louis Karchin) with Center for Contemporary Opera. Company solo credits include: Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro, Italy, The Princeton Symphony, Cape Cod Symphony, Chautauqua Opera, San Diego Opera, and Den Nye Opera of Bergen, Norway.

**Chung-Wai Soong** (Elijah/Mycologist) has sung with ensembles and companies in Australia and the US, including West Bay Opera, Victoria State Opera, Melbourne International Festival, Cappella SF, Volti and Artists Vocal Ensemble. His extensive repertoire encompasses many genres and includes world premieres of David Chesworth’s *Sabat Jesus*, Lisa Bielawa’s made-for-streaming opera, *Vireo*. His concert work includes bass solos in the Requiems of Fauré, Mozart and Dvořák, Berlioz’ *L’Enfance du Christ*, Schubert’s *Mass in G Major*, Mozart’s *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore*. Opera roles include Erster Nazarener (*Salome*), L’Ufficiale del registro (*Madama Butterfly*), Masetto (*Don Giovanni*), Biterolf (*Tannhäuser*), Count Almaviva (*Le Nozze di Figaro*) as well as the Handel roles of Zebul (*Jephtha*) and Gobrias (*Belshazzar*). A longtime member of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, he has also appeared as soloist in concert and opera,

including in *Peter Grimes*, and as Mityukha in *Boris Godunov*. He was bass soloist in Beethoven’s *Choral Fantasy* conducted by Kurt Masur, which he has also performed at the Ojai Festival with Jeremy Denk.

Soprano **Rachel Beninghof** (Zohara cover) is quickly showcasing her diversity as a performance artist in the Bay Area. A skilled ensemble singer, Beninghof has sung with the Endersnacht ensemble, and will be featured in the world premier of *Connections*, an a capella music drama by Alexander Frank, filming in October 2019. Beninghof’s expert expression brings her success in musical theater. In January, she portrayed Mrs. Nordstrom in *A Little Night Music* with the Stanford Department of Music. This April, she will perform the role of Lily in *The Secret Garden* at Tabard Theatre. Beninghof’s bright timbre has also brought her success in operatic repertoire, most recently as First Lady in Stanford’s 2018 production of *The Magic Flute*. Beninghof received her Bachelors from the Eastman School of Music, and has been a Young Artist with Rochester Lyric Opera and Les Maîtres Sonneurs. She believes in the power of music to face one’s fears, and thanks Meira and Yefim for the opportunity to be a part of Elijah’s Violin.

Mezzo-soprano **Marina Davis** (Princess Shulamit cover) is a recent graduate from The San Francisco Conservatory, where she completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Vocal Performance and a Master of Music in Voice. She also holds a Bachelor of Music from The University of Toronto in Voice Performance. Recent roles include Cherubino, *Le nozze di Figaro* (SFCM 2019) and Hänsel, *Hänsel und Gretel* (SFCM & San Francisco Opera Education 2018). Marina has performed with Opera on the Avalon (2017), the Halifax Summer Opera Festival (2014, 2015), Opera 5 (2014), was a Voice Fellow at Opernfest Prague (2019) and a Young Artist at SongFest (2015). Having an affinity for contemporary music, she has had the privilege of working with composers including Meredith Monk, Ted Hearne, and Julia Wolfe during her time at SFCM. Her awards include, Finalist in American Prize for Art Song/Oratorio, SFCM’s Phyllis C. Wattis

Scholarship (2018), Senior winner of the Symphony by the Bay's Young Artist Concerto Competition (2016), and the University of Toronto's Greta Kraus Award (2014).

**Tania Mandzy Inala** (Auntie Malka cover) has been noted in Opera News for "sheer beauty of voice" and for "sounding warmly luxurious." She is grateful to enjoy a career that spans concert, recital and opera repertoire. Tania has sung with Opera San Jose (Zerlina), Boston Lyric Opera (Frank Martin's *The Love Potion*), Boston Ballet (Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream*), San Francisco Symphony Sound

Box (*Kool-Aid Acid Test #17*), San Francisco Opera à la Carte (Cenerentola), The Midsummer Mozart Festival and at Wigmore Hall. She excels at baroque repertoire and has interpreted many leading Handel roles. Her work in contemporary music includes premieres of Jake Heggie's *Out of Darkness* (covering the role of Zosia), Toshio Hosokawa's *Renka I* at the Royal Albert Hall for BBC Proms composer's portrait, and a recital of the winning songs for the Sullivan International Composer's Competition. Tania has performed as a Marc and Eva Stern fellow at SongFest in LA.

### Chamber Ensemble

**Terrie Baune** is concertmaster of the North State Symphony and the Eureka Symphony, Co-Concertmaster of the Oakland Symphony, a member of the SF-based new music ensemble Earplay, Music Director of the TBAM Festival, and Associate Director of the Humboldt Chamber Music Workshop. Her professional credits include four years as a member of the National Symphony of Washington DC and two years with the Auckland Philharmonia, as well as concertmaster positions with orchestras including the Fresno Philharmonic, Rohnert Park Symphony and the Women's Philharmonic, with whom she participated in dozens of world premieres and recorded the Violin Concerto #5 by Maddalena Lombardini.

**Stacey Pelinka** enjoys performing a broad spectrum of classical music, especially contemporary chamber music. She is a longtime member of the Left Coast Chamber Ensemble, and a founding member of the Eco Ensemble, resident at UC Berkeley and CNMAT. Stacey plays principal flute with San Francisco Opera's Merola Program productions, and is a member of the Berkeley Symphony, the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, and the Midsummer Mozart Festival, and the Santa Rosa Symphony. As a freelancer, she performs with the San Francisco Symphony and Opera as well as other Bay Area ensembles. A certified Feldenkrais Method® practitioner, Stacey teaches Feldenkrais classes for the musicians of the San Francisco Symphony, and her flute teaching has a strong somatic focus. She teaches flute at UC Davis and UC Berkeley. A native of the Bay Area, Stacey attended Cornell University and the San Francisco Conservatory, where she studied with Timothy Day.

Cellist **Natalie Raney** is recognized for her bold and adventurous playing and has performed chamber music with world-renowned musicians such as Kim Kashkashian, Menahem Pressler, Geoff Nuttall, Bonnie Hampton, Roberto Diaz, Norman Fischer, Ian Swensen, Jodi Levitz, and the Arianna String Quartet in venues such as Kennedy Center & Bing Hall. A proponent of new music, Natalie seeks to highlight works by women. She currently serves on faculty at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music Pre-College coaching chamber music and maintains her own private studio in SF. Natalie graduated from the San Francisco Conservatory receiving an Artist Certificate in Chamber Music studying with Jean-Michel Fonteneau. She received her Master of Music degree at Boston University, mentored by Marc Johnson, former cellist of the Vermeer Quartet and received a Bachelor of Music studying with Kurt Baldwin at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. For more information visit [www.natalieraneycello.com](http://www.natalieraneycello.com).

**COMPOSER Meira Warshauer's** music, performed and broadcast worldwide, is inspired by her love for the earth and her personal spiritual journey. Her American Prize-winning *Symphony Living Breathing Earth* was profiled by Aileen LeBlanc for Public Radio International's *Living on Earth*. *Tekeyah (a call)*, Concerto for Shofar, Trombone, and Orchestra, a five-orchestra commission, was aired twice on American Public Media's *Performance Today*. Both works are featured on the 2011 Navona Records release *Living Breathing Earth* (NV5842), which was praised by *Hadassah Magazine* as "a shimmering, joyous and soothing ode to the world's beauty." Her latest CDs, *Coro del Mundo* and *Chevere* on the Ansonica label, include her choral music recorded in Cuba. Earlier, Albany Records released her acclaimed *Streams in the Desert* disk of Torah-based choral/orchestral works.



In addition to many awards, Warshauer has received Fellowships from the MacDowell Colony, Georgia's Hambidge Center and the S.C. Arts Commission. The S. C. Music Teachers Association selected her as Commissioned Composer for 2012, and together with the Music Teachers National Association, commissioned her *Ocean Calling: From the Depths*, for two pianos. *Spirals of Light* for flute, cello, and piano, commissioned by Columbia College, was named a winner in the 2017 National Flute Association's Newly Published Music Competition.

Warshauer's music is published by Hildegard, Lauren Keiser Music, World Music Press and Kol Meira Publications. *Elijah's Violin* is her first opera. More information at [meirawarshauer.com](http://meirawarshauer.com).

## THANKS TO –

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### **Interfaith Center at the Presidio:**

Mary Zamboukos, Staff

Gerald Caprio, Camilla Smith, Rita Semel, Henry Baer, Deon Price, Bryant McOmber, Peter Gleichenhaus, Fred Fielding, Donald Frew, Board of Directors

### **The Presidio Trust**

Join us for "Tawawa House" featuring Spirituals, October 20, 4:00 PM



Terrie Baune



Mariya Kaganskaya



Stacey Pelinka



Rachel Beninghof



Jaqueline Kerns



Natalie Raney



Marina Davis



Ofer dal Lal



Alize Rozsnyai



Sergio Gonzalez



Jonathan Khuner



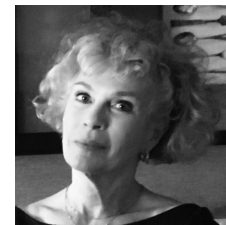
Chung-Wai Soong



Tania Mandzy Inala



Yefim Maizel



Susan Levi Wallach



**Cantabile Youth Singers (left to right):** Samika Arun, Preethi Kumar, Christina Pugh, Marcena Hawkins, Violet Pasmooij, Priya Kumar, Phoebe Wright (Not pictured, Rosie Kline)