



STRATAGEM
ARTISTS

ARTIST DRIVEN COLLABORATION

Laurel Semerdjian Mezzo-Soprano

Laurel Semerdjian, an American mezzo-soprano of Armenian descent, has recently been hailed as "a dramatic and musical tour de force" (Pittsburgh Tribune) for her portrayal of Asakir in Pittsburgh Opera's production of Mohammed Fairouz's *Sumeida's Song*. Her voice has been praised for its "guttural low notes" (Pittsburgh Post Gazette) and "appealing weight, intensity and flexibility." In 2023-2024, Ms. Semerdjian returns to Tacoma Opera to make her role debut as the title role in *Carmen*. On the concert stage, she appears in Verdi's *Requiem* with Symphony Tacoma and for the Masterworks Concert Series with Symphoria. In 2022-2023, Ms. Semerdjian sang Ambassador to Space in Derrick Skye's *Song of the Ambassadors* at Alice Tully Hall and performed an excerpt of the work to open the TED conference in Vancouver, returned to Opera Southwest as Ragonde in *Le comte Ory*, joined Symphoria for Mahler's 2nd Symphony and their Masterworks Concert Series, and sang Zulma in *L'italiana in Algeri* at the St. Petersburg Opera Company.

In 2021-2022, Ms. Semerdjian was featured in a filmed project entitled *Heroes* which was co-produced by Resonance Works and Decameron Opera Coalition. She also joined Symphony Tacoma as the mezzo soloist in *Messiah* and Mozart's *Requiem*, Cape Symphony as the mezzo soloist for Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Opera Southwest for their NYE gala and as Geneviève in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, and Madison Opera as Public Opinion in *Orpheus in the Underworld*. In January 2020, Ms. Semerdjian returned to Pittsburgh Opera, singing the role of Bradamante in Handel's *Alcina*. In the spring of 2020, Ms. Semerdjian made a company debut with Florentine Opera singing the title role in *Le tragédie de Carmen* and was slated to return to Resonance Works to debut the role of Maddalena in *Rigoletto*. In the 2020-2021 season, Ms. Semerdjian returned to Sarasota Opera in the role of Marianna in their production of *Il signor Bruschino* and made her Missouri Symphony debut in their Opera Gala. She was slated to make a role debut with the Young Victorian Theater Company as Ruth in *The Pirates of Penzance* (COVID19), return to Opera Southwest as Geneviève in *Pelléas et Mélisande* (COVID19), and join the Cape Symphony as the mezzo-soprano soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (COVID19).

During the 2018-2019 season, Ms. Semerdjian returned to Pittsburgh Opera as Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*, sang the title role of Benazir Bhutto in a workshop of Mohammed Fairouz's *Bhutto* with Pittsburgh Opera / Beth Morrison Projects, joined Symphony Tacoma as the alto soloist in Handel's *Messiah*, rejoined Tacoma Opera for her debut in the title role of *The Rape of Lucretia*, and performed with Syracuse's Symphoria as the mezzo soloist in Haydn's *Mass in Time of War* and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*. In the summer of 2019, Ms. Semerdjian made company debuts as Flora in *La traviata* with Summer Garden Opera and Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* with Inland Northwest Opera. In the fall of 2019, Ms. Semerdjian returned to Pittsburgh Symphony in the Bruckner *Te Deum* and made her Opera Southwest debut in Bottesini's rarely performed *Ali Babà*.

During the 2017-2018 season, Ms. Semerdjian returned to both Sarasota Opera, as Flora in *La traviata*, and Syracuse Opera, as Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*. She made company debuts with St. Petersburg Opera (Florida) as Dritte Dame in *Die Zauberflöte*, with Pittsburgh's Resonance Works as Ježibaba in *Rusalka*, and with Washington Concert Opera debut as guest soloist in their *Opera's Greatest Heroines* gala concert. She also performed both Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* and Haydn's *Mass in Time of War* with Washington DC's Cathedral Choral Society at the Washington National Cathedral.

Ms. Semerdjian made several significant role debuts throughout the 2016-2017 season. In her return to Bellevue City Opera, she performed her first Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, and in October 2016 she made her Syracuse Opera debut as Tisbe in *La Cenerentola*. In early 2017, Ms. Semerdjian returned to Sarasota Opera for her initial performances of the role of Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*. She also made her Westmoreland Symphony Orchestra debut with her first performances of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*.

Ms. Semerdjian also fulfilled two seasons as a Resident Artist with Pittsburgh Opera (2014-2016). Her responsibilities included performances of the roles of Mother Goose in *The Rake's Progress*, Meg in *Little Women*, Gertrude Stein in Ricky Ian Gordon's opera *27*, Fenena in *Nabucco*, Emilia in *Otello*, Eduige in *Rodelinda*, Asakir in *Sumeida's Song*, and covering the title role of *Carmen*. In the summer of 2015, she performed Cherubino in Bellevue City Opera's inaugural production of *Le nozze di Figaro*, and in the previous summer, she sang Mercédès in *Carmen* as a Vocal Fellow at Music Academy of the West, under the guidance of legendary mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne. As an Apprentice Artist with Sarasota Opera, she covered Inez in the company's 2014 production of *Il trovatore*.

Ms. Semerdjian holds a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of North Texas and a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Arts with a minor in Music Industry from the University of Southern California.

Laurel Semerdjian, Mezzo-Soprano



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Opera/Musical

Carmen*	<i>Carmen</i>	Tacoma Opera	2023
Zulma	<i>L'Italiana in Algieri</i>	St. Petersburg Opera	2023
Ragonde	<i>Le comte Ory</i>	Opera Southwest	2023
Public Opinion	<i>Orpheus in the Underworld</i>	Madison Opera	2022
Geneviève	<i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i>	Opera Southwest	2022
Marianna	<i>Il Signor Bruschino</i>	Sarasota Opera	2021
Geneviève (COVID19)	<i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i>	Opera Southwest	2020
Ruth (COVID19)	<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>	Young Victorian Theater Company	2020
Maddalena (COVID19)	<i>Rigoletto</i>	Resonance Works	2020
Carmen	<i>Le Tragédie de Carmen</i>	Florentine Opera	2020
Bradamante	<i>Alcina</i>	Pittsburgh Opera	2020
Morgana	<i>Ali Babà</i>	Opera Southwest	2019
Dorabella	<i>Così fan tutte</i>	Inland Northwest Opera	2019
Flora	<i>La traviata</i>	Summer Garden Opera	2019
Lucretia	<i>The Rape of Lucretia</i>	Tacoma Opera	2019
Benazir Bhutto	<i>Bhutto</i> (Fairouz - workshop)	Pittsburgh Opera/Beth Morrison Projects	2018
Suzuki	<i>Madama Butterfly</i>	Pittsburgh Opera	2018
Ježibaba	<i>Rusalka</i>	Resonance Works	2018
Suzuki	<i>Madama Butterfly</i>	Syracuse Opera	2018
Dritte Dame	<i>Die Zauberflöte</i>	St. Petersburg Opera	2018
Flora	<i>La traviata</i>	Sarasota Opera	2017
Suzuki	<i>Madama Butterfly</i>	Sarasota Opera	2017
Tisbe	<i>La Cenerentola</i>	Syracuse Opera	2016
Mother Goose	<i>The Rake's Progress</i>	Pittsburgh Opera	2016
Gertrude Stein	<i>27</i> (Gordon)	Pittsburgh Opera	2016
Meg	<i>Little Women</i> (Adamo)	Pittsburgh Opera	2016
Fenena	<i>Nabucco</i>	Pittsburgh Opera	2015
Carmen+	<i>Carmen</i>	Pittsburgh Opera	2015
Asakir	<i>Sumeida's Song</i> (Fairouz)	Pittsburgh Opera	2015
Sonia+	<i>The Aspern Papers</i> (Argento)	Dallas Opera	2013
Veronica	<i>Dr. Miracle</i> (Bizet)	Dallas Opera	2013

Oratorio/Concert

Mezzo Soloist*	<i>Requiem</i> (Verdi)	Symphony Tacoma	2024
Mezzo Soloist*	Masterworks Concert Series	Symphoria	2024
Ambassador to Space	<i>Song of the Ambassadors</i> (Derrick Skye)	TED	2023
Mezzo Soloist	<i>Symphony No. 2</i> (Mahler)	Symphoria	2023
Ambassador to Space	<i>Song of the Ambassadors</i> (Derrick Skye)	Alice Tully Hall	2022
Mezzo Soloist	<i>Requiem</i> (Mozart)	Symphony Tacoma	2022
Mezzo Soloist	<i>Symphony No. 9</i> (Beethoven)	Cape Symphony	2022
Mezzo Soloist	NYE Gala	Opera Southwest	2021
Mezzo Soloist	<i>Messiah</i>	Symphony Tacoma	2021
Soloist	<i>Heroes</i>	Resonance Works/Decameron Opera Coalition	2021
Mezzo Soloist	Opera Gala	Missouri Symphony	2021
Mezzo Soloist (COVID19)	<i>Symphony No. 9</i> (Beethoven)	Cape Symphony	2021
Mezzo Soloist (COVID19)	<i>Requiem</i> (Mozart)	Symphony Tacoma	2020
Mezzo Soloist	<i>Te Deum</i> (Bruckner)	Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra	2019
Mezzo Soloist	<i>Symphony No. 9</i> (Beethoven)	Symphoria	2019
Mezzo Soloist	<i>Missa in tempore belli</i> (Haydn)	Symphoria / Cathedral Choral Society, Washington DC	2018
Mezzo Soloist	<i>Symphony No. 9</i> (Beethoven)	Cathedral Choral Society, Washington DC	2018
Mezzo-Soloist	<i>Opera's Greatest Heroines</i> Gala Concert	Washington Concert Opera	2018
Mezzo Soloist	<i>Diary of One Who Vanished</i> (Janáček)	Janáček Academy (premiere of orchestral version)	2012

Competitions/Awards

Grant Winner	Gerda Lissner Foundation	2016
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Training

Resident Artist	Pittsburgh Opera	2014-2016
Vocal Fellow	Music Academy of the West	2014
Apprentice Artist	Sarasota Opera	2014
Young Artist	Dallas Opera	2012-2013

Education

MM - Vocal Performance	University of North Texas	2013
BM - Vocal Performance	University of Southern California	2010

* Upcoming Performance + Cover Role

Laurel Semerdjian, Mezzo-Soprano



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Ali Babà, Opera Southwest

"Laurel Semerdjian was a conniving Morgiana who fascinated onlookers with her hijinks and comic timing. She sang with excellent diction and strong tones."

Maria Nockin, *Opera Today* 10/26/19

"I was sorry that Laurel Semerdjian, our Morgiana (Ali's slave) did not have a bigger role because she has a luscious mezzo and was an audience favorite."

Charles Jernigan, *The Itinerant Melomane* 10/29/19

Madama Butterfly, Pittsburgh Opera

"The roles of Suzuki and Sharpless took on greater importance than is the norm, and Laurel Semerdjian and Michael Mayes turned in top-notch performances. Semerdjian's Suzuki was sensitively acted and very well sung, her lovely mezzo-soprano blending perfectly with Kuznetsova's voice in the Flower Duet."

Rick Perdian, *Seen and Heard International* 10/12/18

"Laurel Semerdjian as Suzuki – Cio-Cio-San's maid – immediately stood out as one of the strongest voices, a forceful, plush mezzo bringing emotional heft to the production."

Jeremy Reynolds, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* 08/07/18

"Mezzo-soprano Laurel Semerdjian was all that was expected and more in the role of Suzuki. Her deep, velvety voice was in fine form, and her acting of the role was enchanting. Each time this young artist is heard here, she manages to top her previous performances, and yet gives the impression that she's only just begun to develop what will come to be known as one of the best voices heard on the operatic stage of the early 21st century. Her voice blended with Ms. Kuznetsova's in the well-known "Flower Duet" quite exquisitely."

George Parous, *Pittsburgh in the Round* 08/07/18

Rusalka, Resonance Works

"Laurel Semerdjian (Ježibaba) was outstanding in her truly nightmarish conception of the witch. A wizard of a makeup designer transformed her into a harrowing sight; wild-eyed and disheveled, garbed in layers of rags, she crouched and slithered about the stage, acting the part with animalistic movements and facial expressions that made her a very believable denizen of some formidably deep, dark netherworld. Her voice is perfectly suited to the demands of the music, with ringing top tones eclipsed only by cavernous, rock-solid lows. She injected a trace of wickedly sly humor into her brief scene with the Gamekeeper and his nephew in the third act, and her spitefully hearty laughter at Rusalka's plight was a demonic thrill"

George Parous, *Pittsburgh in the Round* 05/12/18

Madama Butterfly, Sarasota Opera

"[Cio-Cio-San's] handmaiden, Suzuki, was sung by Laurel Semerdjian, whose gorgeous voice, almost a contralto rather than mezzo, was clear, clean and well produced. It was her offstage sobbing when she realized Butterfly was about to kill herself that resonated most with me in that climactic scene. It was heartbreaking."

June LeBell, *YourObserver.com* 02/12/17

"Suzuki, Cio-Cio-San's servant, was tenderly portrayed by Laurel Semerdjian whose warm ingratiating mezzo made the flower duet something special and for giving new life to her phrase 'Povera Butterfly'. One could really sympathize with her conflict in trying to protect Butterfly from her misconceptions. In the end, the sand castle came down with a tsunami Suzuki could not prevent."

Nino Pantano, *Brooklyn Discovery* 03/30/17

Sumeida's Song (Fairouz), Pittsburgh Opera

"Mezzo-soprano Laurel Semerdjian's portrayal of Asakir was a dramatic and musical tour de force... Semerdjian was particularly impressive when Asakir becomes unhinged, a moment when the libretto has her repeat key lines. Her dramatic gestures, including seemingly involuntary twitching, were all the more affecting for being finely graded... Semerdjian was also impressive in handling the musical challenges posed by the musical language Fairouz employs."

Mark Kanney, *Pittsburgh Tribune* 02/22/15