

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Members of Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir perform at Yoshi's nightclub at Jack London Square each year.

## History of Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir Performing Dept. a rigorous music education for young singers

By Allyson Aleksey

### Part 5 in a series

The most advanced program in the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir, the Performing Department, is comprised of students in grades 5 through 12.

In this program, choral teachers challenge the students further through advanced music theory, ear training, and sight singing, along with foreign language diction, healthy vocal technique, resonance, breathing, vowel formation, performance, and storytelling. Students will expand on the basic building blocks of choral singing that were instilled in both the kinder and training department.

Its four choral groups – Concert Choir, Ensemble, Ecco, and Ancora – represent the pinnacle of children's choral training and performance.

Singers in these groups have studied music for several years. The students are admitted into

the groups following a vocal placement. In the performing department, singers are given more creative liberty and reach new heights of personal expression, deepening their relationship with music. Singers now understand the complexities of their vocal range, and are able to practice with this in mind.

Beyond the music, students also begin to form their own "musical personalities and identities," and often make lifelong bonds with like-minded friends within the choir. The majority of students in the senior department began the program in the kinder or training department, and have likely joined their peers at sleepaway camps, in recitals and on tours. All singers are required to participate in a number of performances throughout the year.

All performing department choirs perform in the Candlelight Concert in December, the Winter Concert and/or New Music Concert in mid-spring, the Spring Sing! Concert in late Spring, and

the Bon Voyage Concert in June when the touring vocal groups have their final concert before leaving for international choral competitions.

Singers are also likely to participate in supplementary opportunities, like Jazz and Beyond, and the Ancora Recital. In the past, some students have opted to work with a current composer on a new work.

There is a big emphasis on touring in this department. International choral competition has been a centerpiece of the choir's program since 1984. Since its founding, Piedmont Children's Choir has performed in 26 countries and 13 states in the U.S. It has been an invited choir in 19 choral competitions in Europe, Asia, and North America, and has a display case filled with gold and silver medals from the most prestigious choral competitions in the world.

*The final part of the series will explore international touring and competition.*

## SF Ballet collaborates with Pacific Northwest Ballet in *Sequentia*



SF Ballet's Jahna Frantziskonis is featured in *Sequentia*.

By Allyson Aleksey

San Francisco Ballet presents *Sequentia*, a choreographic chain letter to keep dancers and patrons connected during the global pandemic. Ten San Francisco Ballet dancers are connected through their movement in this choreographic chain letter.

The film originated with a dancer who improvised a six-second solo to the music, and this choreography was passed along to the next dancer who picked up where the previous one left off.

From the San Francisco Ballet, to New York City Ballet, to American Ballet Theatre, the "digital letter" started at the beginning of shelter-in-place restrictions and continues more

than six months later through October in Seattle. In the video, patrons can view Pacific Northwest Ballet's take on Seattle's cityscape, working around and in-between the wildfires that have plagued the West Coast this year.

San Francisco Ballet dancers who are featured include Tiit Helimets, Misa Kuranaga, Cavan Conley, Jahna Frantziskonis, Daniel Deivison-Oliveira, Myles Thatcher, Yuan Yuan Tan, Diego Cruz, Dores André, and Joshua Jack Price.

The featured video for San Francisco is produced by Helimets and edited by Ben Estabrook.

You can view the film on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhFuJEaVBtQ>.

## SF Playhouse to premiere Yasmina Reza's *Art* October 24



Bobak Cyrus Bakhtiari (left) Johnny Moreno, and Jomar Tagatac star in the San Francisco Playhouse production of *Art*.

By Allyson Aleksey

San Francisco Playhouse will premiere *Art* by Yasmina Reza on Saturday, October 24. The premiere will be streamed live and will be available to view for two weeks.

The play explores how colleagues and friends can turn on each other when divided into opposing camps. There is a special focus on the complex layers of friendship, while at the same time maintaining a comedic tone. The play asks the question: Are we who we think we are, or are we who our friends think we are? Directed by Bill English, *Art* is

translated by Christopher Hampton. It casts Bobak Cyrus Bakhtiari as Yvan, Johnny Moreno as Serge, and Jomar Tagatac as Marc.

Reza is a French playwright and novelist based in Paris whose works have won many awards and received critical and popular international success. *Art* received the 1998 Tony Award and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Play.

The London production of *Art* received the Olivier Award as Best Play in 1996. The original National Theatre production of *Life x 3* also earned a 2001 Olivier Award nomination for

Best Play. Her other noteworthy plays include *After a Burial*, *The Passage of Winter*, and *The Unexpected Man*.

Theater fans can watch the video stream anytime between October 24 and November 7. For more details, and to purchase tickets, visit [https://www.sfplayhouse.org/sfph/2020-2021-season/art/?utm\\_source=San+Francisco+Playhouse+Email+List&utm\\_campaign=0b7398f863-act-one-art-october-6&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_f48dd1dbbd-0b7398f863-95687278&mc\\_cid=0b7398f863&mc\\_eid=c94f943dd5](https://www.sfplayhouse.org/sfph/2020-2021-season/art/?utm_source=San+Francisco+Playhouse+Email+List&utm_campaign=0b7398f863-act-one-art-october-6&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f48dd1dbbd-0b7398f863-95687278&mc_cid=0b7398f863&mc_eid=c94f943dd5).

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