

Valéry Ryvkin

Conductor



In little more than half a decade, conductor Valéry Ryvkin has proven himself an Artistic Director on the move, aligning the creative talents of artistic planning, and superb music-making alongside an extraordinary insight into administration, fundraising, and incorporation of an arts institution into the fabric of the community. In doing so, Ryvkin has become the Maestro for the next generation. Since becoming Artistic Director of Opera Santa Barbara 6 years ago, Maestro Ryvkin has moved the company from a classy 'mom and pop' effort to a respected and highly cultivated institution with a budget of \$1,200,000 - while also bringing to the company the concept of a Festival Season: a Puccini Festival in 2006 and a Verdi Festival in 2007. His organizational impact was equally felt as the new Artistic Director of the Greensboro Opera, when, during his first season in 2005-06, he was personally instrumental in bringing the company its very first \$1,000,000 donation - a hallmark in the company's 25 year history. Given today's financial environment, it was an achievement of envious proportions. As a result of his creative

leadership, Opera Santa Barbara recently was able to make the extraordinary announcement that composer Stephen Schwartz of Broadway fame - *Wicked*, *Godspell*, *Pippin*, *Pocahontas*, *Prince of Egypt* - has been commissioned to write his very first opera, *Séance*, for the company, to be conducted by Maestro Ryvkin in a world premiere in the Fall 2009.

On the guest conducting front, Valéry Ryvkin yet again made a huge impression leading the 2007 season debut of *Boris Godunov* for San Diego Opera while featuring the Italian bass Feruccio Furlanetto as the Czar. "Under the loving and sympathetic conducting of Valéry Ryvkin, a native of St. Petersburg . . . the work took on an almost chamber opera quality . . . revealing how Mussorgsky used his palette of orchestral colors sparingly and tellingly, with a sense of theme and character appropriateness", noted the *Los Angeles Times*. He returns to San Diego Opera in April of 2008 for a production of *Aida*. Meanwhile, his conducting activities in Santa Barbara take him on a varied journey in the operas *Rigoletto*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Roméo and Juliette*, *Otello*, *Turandot*, *La Bohème*, *Hänsel und Gretel*, as well as an Opera Gala Concert celebrating the 25th Anniversary of his Greensboro Opera. During the 2005-06 season, Maestro Ryvkin conducted the Grand Finale Concert of the famous Merola Program at the San Francisco Opera, followed by a Night of Rising Stars concert at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. During the 2001 season, he led the North American premiere of Rimsky-Korsakoff's opera *May Night* at the Sarasota Opera, while taking on the huge responsibility for the complete preparation at the Metropolitan Opera of the production of Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* at the personal request of Valéry Gergiev.

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