



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media Contact:**

Kimberly White

[kimberly@mariandgold.com](mailto:kimberly@mariandgold.com)

**San Diego Opera to Present Southern California Premiere of *Fellow Travelers* in July 2026**

*San Diego Opera's presentation plays July 10–12 at the historic Balboa Theatre in San Diego's downtown Gaslamp Quarter*

**SAN DIEGO (July 29, 2025)** – [San Diego Opera](#), one of the city's leading cultural institutions, is proud to announce the Southern California premiere of the opera *Fellow Travelers*, which it will present next summer at the historic Balboa Theatre in downtown San Diego. The production will play July 10–12, 2026.

Based on the 2007 novel by Thomas Mallon, *Fellow Travelers* is a powerful and poignant story that explores the intersection of love, politics and identity during the McCarthy era in 1950s Washington, D.C.

With a hauntingly lyrical score by composer Gregory Spears and a deeply affecting libretto by Greg Pierce, the opera tells the story of Hawkins Fuller and Timothy Laughlin and how they navigate a secret romance in a time of intense scrutiny and fear.

"I saw *Fellow Travelers* about ten years ago," says **David Bennett**, the Joann Clark General Director and CEO of San Diego Opera, "and I've been looking for an opportunity to bring it to our audience ever since. The story it tells of these two men, their relationship, and their choices in the midst of the Lavender Scare and McCarthyism is incredibly moving. The musical score is beautiful and the cast is top-notch. I can't wait to share *Fellow Travelers* with San Diego."

**Director Kevin Newbury** is no stranger to the captivating world of *Fellow Travelers*, having directed the work's premiere and subsequent productions across the country. It will also be a return to San Diego for Newbury, who directed the musical *Eighty-Sixed* at Diversionary Theatre in 2022. Renowned opera conductor and longtime Artistic and Music Director of Houston Grand Opera **Patrick Summers** will conduct the musicians of the San Diego Symphony Orchestra. Tenor **Andy Acosta**, now a San Diego resident, will reprise the role of Timothy Laughlin, a role he has performed in three different productions. Baritone **Joseph Lattanzi** stars as Hawkins Fuller—praised by *The New York Times* as "splendid...luxuriant and robust" for his performance in *Fellow Travelers'* world premiere. Soprano **Vanessa Becerra** will bring to life the role of Miss Lightfoot, following 2024–25 performances with LA

Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, Madison Symphony Orchestra and more. Soprano **Amber R. Monroe** will perform as Mary Johnson following her performance as *Aida* at Washington National Opera this fall. The cast also includes **Marcus DeLoach, Elisa Sunshine, Randell McGee, Kyle Pfortmiller and Jeremy Weiss.**

“I am so thrilled to share this beautiful opera with San Diego audiences,” says director Kevin Newbury. “As we prepare to bring *Fellow Travelers* across the country in celebration of the opera’s tenth anniversary, I have been reflecting a lot on my values as an artist, especially as a Queer artist making work during these uncertain times. I believe in the power of history. I believe in the power of art to build community. And I believe in the power of a good love story. And *Fellow Travelers* is, first and foremost, a good love story.”

Since its world premiere in 2016 at Cincinnati Opera, *Fellow Travelers* has earned national acclaim with performances at major opera houses around the country including those in Chicago, San Francisco, Boston and Arizona. San Diego Opera’s July 2026 production will mark the only California performances of the work next year.

*Opera Magazine* praised it as “seductively beautiful” and *Chicago Tribune* as “one of the most accomplished new American operas.” *Fellow Travelers*’ powerful themes – love, betrayal, identity and the impact of political ideologies on personal lives – have reached audiences beyond the stage through a recent Showtime miniseries adaptation starring Matt Bomer and Jonathan Bailey.

San Diego Opera will present three performances of *Fellow Travelers*: on Friday and Saturday at 7:30 pm, and Sunday at 2:00 pm. The presentation is part of San Diego Opera’s ongoing commitment to the development and furthering of contemporary and innovative new operas.

The same production will also be performed at Seattle Opera, Portland Opera and Glimmerglass Festival in 2026. This Tenth Anniversary Tour of *Fellow Travelers* is co-produced by Up Until Now Collective, led by Jecca Barry and Kevin Newbury.

Tickets are now available only to San Diego Opera season ticket holders. Single tickets go on sale to non-subscribers on Tuesday, September 2, 2025. Subscriptions and single tickets may be purchased either online at [SDOpera.org](https://www.sdogopera.org), or by calling (619) 533-7000.

#### **ABOUT SAN DIEGO OPERA**

Founded in 1965, San Diego Opera has delivered exceptional performances and inspiring educational programs to a wide audience in San Diego for 60 seasons, with a strong focus on community partnerships and the transformative and expressive power of the human voice. With a commitment to innovative storytelling, lifelong learning and engagement, and an awareness of great music’s power to bring audiences together, San Diego Opera provides a lasting cultural service to its community. To learn more, please visit [www.sdogopera.org](https://www.sdogopera.org) or follow @sandiegoopera on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

#### **FELLOW TRAVELERS**

July 10-12, 2026

Balboa Theatre

Stage Director – Kevin Newbury

Conductor – Patrick Summers

Timothy Laughlin – Andy Acosta

Hawkins Fuller – Joseph Lattanzi

Mary Johnson – Amber R. Monroe

Miss Lightfoot – Vanessa Becerra

Senator Joseph McCarthy/ Estonian Frank/ Interrogator – Marcus DeLoach

Lucy – Elisa Sunshine

Tommy McIntyre – Randell McGee

Senator Charles Potter/ General Arlie/ Bartender – Kyle Pfortmiller

Senator Potter's Asst./ Bookseller/ Priest/ Technician/ Party Guest – Jeremy Weiss

*Based on Thomas Mallon's novel, which recently became an acclaimed Showtime miniseries. Timothy Laughlin is an idealistic college grad when he arrives in Washington, D.C. to join the fight against communism. But a chance encounter with a handsome State Department official leads to a secret love affair and heart-wrenching dilemmas. The year is 1953, and Senator McCarthy isn't just looking for communists anymore. Hearing the score Opera Magazine calls "seductively beautiful," you'll be on the edge of your seat for the work the Chicago Tribune calls "one of the most accomplished new American operas."*