

Praised for her “dramatic excellence, flexibility, and beauty of her singing” by *Classical Voice America*, Romanian-American soprano Esther Tonea has appeared in concert and recital across the United States, Canada, and Europe.

As Diana in the world premiere of Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer’s *If I Were You*, Tonea stunned audiences and critics alike with “magnificent singing — an ardent, tonally plush performance” (San Francisco Chronicle). In the 2019 season with the Merola Opera Program, she “dazzled as Fiordiligi” (San Francisco Examiner) in the Grand Finale performance with her “gleaming tones and impeccable dynamic control” (San Francisco Chronicle). Tonea’s opera highlights also include the roles of Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Female Chorus in *The Rape of Lucretia*, and Suor Genovieffa in *Suor Angelica*.

No stranger to sacred music, Tonea has appeared as soprano soloist in Haydn’s *Missa in Angustiis* with the Athens Choral Society, Haydn’s *The Creation* with the University of Georgia, Mahler’s *Symphony No. 4* in San Francisco, Mozart’s *Exsultate, jubilate* with Burbank Philharmonic, Saint-Saëns’ *Christmas Oratorio*, and twice in Mozart’s *Requiem in D minor* with California Symphony and Tennessee Wesleyan University. She has also performed with the National Symphony Orchestra and Berkeley Symphony.

Tonea has participated in masterclasses and training programs with Richard Bonyngé, Patricia Racette, Jane Eaglen, Aprile Millo, Martin Katz, Warren Jones, and Marco Gandini. Early in 2019 she performed alongside composer and pianist Jake Heggie at the Herbst Theatre in San Francisco. Tonea has also performed with Maestros Richard Bonyngé, John Morris Russell, George Manahan, Nicole Paiement, Grant Gershon, Donato Cabrera, and Cristian Reif in the US and Europe. Tonea is also a recent resident artist at Tennessee Wesleyan University, where she led a masterclass and gave a recital, *Poetry and Gypsy Songs*.

Tonea’s dramatic flair is best highlighted with her competitive pedigree: she is 2019 Semifinalist for the James Toland Vocal Arts Competition, 2018 finalist for the Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center, and a first-place winner of the New York Lyric Opera National Vocal Competition, Hennings-Fischer Young Artist Competition, Dorothy Van Waynen Competition, and East Bay Opera League Competition. Additionally, Tonea is a District Winner and two-time recipient of the Encouragement Award from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, a three-time scholarship recipient of the Holt Memorial Competition, and a Presser Scholar. She is a winner of the Concerto Competitions at the University of Georgia and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

Tonea is a current Adler Fellow at San Francisco Opera. She holds a Master of Music in Voice from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and Bachelor of Music degrees in Vocal Performance and Cello Performance from the University of Georgia. Prior to the current coronavirus outbreak, she was scheduled to perform Janáček’s *Glagolitic Mass* at Stanford University in March, a newly commissioned work entitled *Love Sweet* by Jennifer Higdon at the University of Georgia, and her Schwabacher Recital Debut with world-renowned pianist Warren Jones in San Francisco. In the meantime, she is collaborating together with her Adler Fellow colleagues in San Francisco Opera’s latest social media series, *Opera is On*, and continuing her studies as an Adler Fellow in preparation for the opera house’s currently slated fall season. To follow Ms. Tonea’s future performances, visit www.esthertonea.com.