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***Great Performances* Presents a Behind-the-Scenes Look at John Adams, Peter Sellars and San Francisco Opera’s “Girls of the Golden West” Premiering Friday, November 1 on PBS**

With J’Nai Bridges, Julia Bullock and more

Synopsis:

Exploring the making of San Francisco Opera’s “Girls of the Golden West,” telling the turbulent story of the California Gold Rush, ***Great Performances: Land of Gold*** premieres Friday, November 1 at 9 p.m. on PBS ([check local listings](#)), pbs.org/gperf and the [PBS App](#). With the opera’s title referencing Puccini’s 1910 romantic opera “The Girl of the Golden West,” Pulitzer Prize-winning composer **John Adams** and famed director **Peter Sellars’** opera tells a harsher and more complex story through the letters of writer Louise Clappe who lived in a miners’ settlement in 1850. Spotlighting the behind-the-scenes action during the opera’s rehearsal process, the documentary highlights the creative process as actors and creative team grapple with the historical significance of the material and bringing it to the stage. Two stories are told: One on stage in the present day, and one in the past through the opera. Soprano **Julia Bullock** stars in the opera as Louise Clappe with mezzo-soprano **J’Nai Bridges** as Josefa Segovia, two women among the many men caught up in the quest for wealth in the lawless mountains.

Talent:

- Jon Else – Director
- John Adams – Music
- Julie Bullock – Soprano, Louise Clappe in “Girls of the Golden West”

- Davóne Tines – Bass-baritone, Ned Peters in “Girls of the Golden West”
- J’Nai Bridges – Mezzo-soprano, Josefa Segovia in “Girls of the Golden West”
- Ryan McKinny – Bass-baritone, Clarence King in “Girls of the Golden West”
- Paul Appleby – Tenor, Joe Cannon in “Girls of the Golden West”
- Hye Jung Lee – Soprano, Ah Sing in “Girls of the Golden West”
- Elliot Madore – Baritone, Ramone in “Girls of the Golden West”
- Lorena Feijoo – Dancer, Lola Montez in “Girls of the Golden West”
- Kai Brothers – Actor, Fayette in “Girls of the Golden West”

Noteworthy Facts:

- This is Jon Else’s third documentary with Adams, following “Wonders Are Many: The Making of Doctor Atomic.”
- This is one of several Adams and Sellars collaborations, following operas “Nixon in China,” “The Death of Klinghoffer,” “Doctor Atomic,” and “I Was Looking At The Ceiling and Then I Saw The Sky.”
- “Girls of the Golden West” is based on Louise Clappe’s “The Shirley Letters from California mines in 1851-52,” available in the Library of Congress.

Series overview:

For more than 50 years on PBS, **Great Performances** has provided an unparalleled showcase of the best in all genres of the performing arts, serving as America’s most prestigious and enduring broadcaster of cultural programming. Showcasing a diverse range of artists from around the world, the series has earned 67 Emmy Awards and six Peabody Awards. The [Great Performances website](#) hosts exclusive videos, interviews, photos, full episodes and more. The series is produced by The WNET Group. **Great Performances** is available for streaming concurrent with broadcast on [PBS.org](#) and the [PBS App](#), available on iOS, Android, Roku streaming devices, Apple TV, Android TV, Amazon Fire TV, Samsung Smart TV, Chromecast and VIZIO.

Production credits:

An AfterImage Public Media Production in association with Bread and Butter Films, “Land of Gold” was directed by Jon Else and produced by Jon Else and Camille Servan-Schreiber; Richard Berge is executive producer. For **Great Performances**, Bill O’Donnell is series producer and David Horn is executive producer.

Funding:

Series funding for **Great Performances** is provided by The Joseph & Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation, the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation, the LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust, the Thea Petschek Iervolino Foundation, Jody and John Arnhold, the Abra Prentice Foundation, Inc., The Starr Foundation, The Philip and Janice Levin Foundation, the Jack Lawrence Charitable Remainder Trust Worchell Lawrence, Seton J. Melvin, Sue and Edgar Wachenheim III, the Blanche and Hayward Cirker Charitable Trust, Leni and Peter May, the

Estate of Worthington Mayo-Smith and Ellen and James S. Marcus. Funding for “Land of Gold” was provided by the Carol Franc Buck Foundation, the Catapult Film Fund, the Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program, David Fleishhacker, the Fleishhacker Foundation and the Kate W. Cassidy Foundation.

Websites: <http://pbs.org/gperf>, <http://facebook.com/GreatPerformances>, [@GPerfPBS](https://twitter.com/GPerfPBS), <http://youtube.com/greatperformancespbs>, giphy.com/great-performances
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About The WNET Group

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