

audiences REIMAGINED

OPERA CONFERENCE 2014 | JUNE 20-23

HOSTED BY  SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA

CONFERENCE PROGRAMMING DETAILS

GENERAL SESSIONS

General Sessions bring together the entire conference constituency to explore topics that affect all aspects of the opera field. These sessions include:

- **Opening Session.** *Opera Conference 2014* opens with discussion and music as legendary mezzo-soprano **Frederica von Stade** and composer **Jake Heggie** explore the dynamics of successful relationships between artists, among artists and opera companies, and with the public. Attendees will be inspired by their artistry and learn from their success in developing a contemporary American opera repertoire that embraces opera's cherished traditions and wins new audiences for the art form.
- **Achieving Civic Impact.** Arts organizations of all kinds are increasingly expected not only to produce excellent art, but also to be partners in community development and responsive to community needs. This subtle but profound shift in what elected officials, institutional funders and individual donors need and want from opera companies brings a host of opportunities and challenges for everyone in the field. **Alan Brown**, principal, WolfBrown, will present emerging frameworks for artistic vibrancy and civic impact, and explore interconnections between the two. Alan will propose a coordinated research effort to gain a fuller understanding of the diverse ways in which Americans experience opera, and how opera companies impact their communities.
- **Re-Imagining Impact: The User Experience.** The User Experience (UX) is a driving force across all sectors that examines how consumers interact with products and services. More than ever, consumer behavior and input inform companies in developing more meaningful, tailor-made experiences, made possible through radical advances in research, design and technology. Speakers include Twitter's #EditorialGuerrilla **James Buckhouse**; **Paul Chasan**, urban designer/urban planner, San Francisco Planning Department; **Erika Hall**, co-founder, director of strategy, Mule Design; **Laura Kusumoto**, manager, innovation technology services, Kaiser Permanente; **John McMahan**, executive director for operations and digital products, Meyer Sound; and **Ben Nelson**, founder and CEO, Minerva Project. Following the talks, attendees will explore demonstrations and mini-workshops to learn how companies are leveraging this customer-focused strategy.
- **Leadership Begins at the Top.** Strong opera companies have strong boards led by volunteers who devote time and resources to advance company missions. **John Gunn**, chairman of San Francisco Opera, will kick off a panel of board leaders including **Carol Henry**, chairman of Los Angeles Opera's Executive Committee, and **Kenneth G. Pigott**, president of Lyric Opera of Chicago. They will discuss new works, new audiences and financial stability from the trustee perspective.

OPEN SESSIONS

Twenty-two open sessions will be offered during the course of *Opera Conference 2014*, addressing the needs of staff, trustees, volunteers and other industry professionals in the areas of artistic and artist training, management, development, finance, marketing, public relations, volunteerism and technical/production. These sessions are:

- Achieving Greater Patron Lifetime Value
- Affordable Care Act: For Individuals
- Aliens of Extraordinary Ability: Visas, Insurance and Taxes
- All in the Family: Audience Retention Strategies
- Boards Beyond Fundraising
- Branding and Messaging for Fundraising
- Change is Good: Artistic and Organizational Planning
- Composition in the Board Room, Too
- Dead or Alive? The State of Subscriptions in the 21st Century
- DIY Video Projects for Opera Education
- From Aida to Zorn: Finding Your Audience's Blueprint
- Leading Collective Impact
- A New Benefits Paradigm: The Affordable Care Act and Opera Employers
- New Technology Partnerships
- *New Works Sampler* Libretto Reading
- Next Gen Opera Educators
- Not-For-Profit Audit Update
- Opera PR 2.0: Building a Relationship With Today's Media
- Optimizing the Role of the Board
- Rebooting Your Volunteer Organizations
- Recording and Simulcasting: The Real Expenses and Outcomes
- Thinking Outside the (Drop)Box

SEMINARS

These workshops provide an extended opportunity for in-depth learning about a focused topic, prior to the start of the main conference. *Opera Conference 2014* seminars include:

- Tools for Every Manager: Leadership and Interpersonal Communication
- More Moves Management
- Media Training Boot Camp
- Understanding Your "Corporate Culture" and Mobilizing Stakeholders

FORUMS

As part of the effort to identify and respond to challenges in the field, OPERA America has established a number of artistic and administrative network Forums to advance understanding in critical areas of the industry. Several of these Forums will meet during the conference, including the:

- New Works Forum
- Singer Training Forum
- Technical/Production Forum
- Finance, HR & Administration Forum

ARTIST INTENSIVE

Leading opera artists and administrators provide vital career advice at this special one-day workshop featuring feedback auditions, portfolio reviews and one-on-one mentoring sessions with industry experts, as well as panel discussions and presentations on a variety of professional development topics for artists at all stages of career advancement. Participating professionals include **Richard Bado**, Rice University and Houston Grand Opera; **David T. Little**, composer; **William Powers**, Pittsburgh Opera; **Ryan Taylor**, Arizona Opera; **Dona D. Vaughn**, director and Manhattan School of Music; and **Melissa Wegner**, The Metropolitan Opera.

LEADERSHIP INTENSIVE

Generously supported by the American Express Foundation, the Leadership Intensive identifies the most promising emerging leaders in the field of opera administration and provides them with the skills and contacts needed to advance their careers. The program takes place at *Opera Conference 2014* and at the National Opera Center in New York City. (See the Leadership Intensive [press announcement](#).)

NEW GENERAL DIRECTORS ROUNDTABLE

The New General Directors Roundtable is a peer learning group consisting of recent appointees to their first general director/chief staff officer positions at companies with budgets between \$1 million and \$5 million. Through facilitated discussion and formal presentations, OPERA America responds to the needs articulated by participants, including strategy formulation, staff management, board relations and work/life balance.

BUILDING OPERA AUDIENCES

One of OPERA America's newer grant programs, generously funded by the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, the Building Opera Audiences session features presentations of innovative audience development projects. (See the [2013](#) and [2014](#) Building Opera Audiences press announcements.)

Throughout the conference, a number of special **networking activities** are planned, giving attendees maximum opportunity to strengthen bonds with colleagues and generate ideas.

PERFORMANCES

OPERA America's *New Works Sampler* is an evening of works-in-progress and recent premieres, featuring the wide spectrum of musical styles employed by today's emerging and established composers.

Selections include:

- *Abandoned* from the opera cycle *Ghosts of Crosstown*
Kamran Ince, composer | Jerre Dye, librettist
Produced by Opera Memphis
- "Another Sunrise" from the opera *Out of Darkness: A Triptych of Holocaust Stories*
Jake Heggie, composer | Gene Scheer, librettist
Produced by Festival Opera
- *Breaking the Waves*
Missy Mazzoli, composer | Royce Vavrek, librettist
Produced by Opera Philadelphia

- *Frau Schindler*
Thomas Morse, composer | Ken Cazan, librettist
Submitted by G. Schirmer, Inc. and produced by OPERA America
- *The Long Walk*
Jeremy Howard Beck, composer | Stephanie Fleischmann, librettist
Produced by American Lyric Theater
- *Past the Checkpoints*
David Hanlon, composer | Joann Farias, librettist
Produced by Houston Grand Opera's HGOco

During the conference, attendees have the opportunity to see several productions from host company **San Francisco Opera**, held at the War Memorial Opera House:

- [*Show Boat*](#) by Jerome Kern (music) and Oscar Hammerstein II (book and lyrics).
A true classic of American musical theater, this tale of life on the Mississippi from the 1880s to the 1920s is both a poignant love story and a powerful reminder of the bitter legacy of racism.
- [*La Traviata*](#) by Giuseppe Verdi (music) and Francesca Maria Piave (libretto).
Violetta Valéry may be the most heart-wrenching character in all of opera: a high-spirited but deceptively delicate woman who unexpectedly finds, and then selflessly gives up, the love of her all-too-short life.
- [*Madame Butterfly*](#) by Giacomo Puccini (music) and Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica (libretto).
Puccini's heartbreaking tale of innocence, betrayal and sacrifice returns in a bold and beautiful production.

San Francisco's **Opera Parallèle**, a professional company member of OPERA America, develops and performs contemporary chamber operas, engaging audiences in a compelling new culture of dramatic vocal works. During the conference, the company invites attendees to join them for [*Anya17*](#), by British Composer Award-winner Adam Gorb (music) and Ben Kaye (libretto). *Anya17* was written specifically to raise awareness of the secret world of sex trafficking, where up to 800,000 young women and children are trafficked into the EU every year.

SPECIAL OFFER FOR THE BAY AREA ARTS COMMUNITY

OPERA America has tailored a special conference package of events for patrons, trustees and staff. For just \$95, the package provides access to select conference sessions featuring some of the most influential arts leaders that address vital issues affecting the entire arts industry. Sessions included in the package are:

- Opening Session with Frederica von Stade and Jake Heggie
- Achieving Civic Impact
- Trends in Philanthropy: Post-Recession Realities
- Re-Imagining Impact: The User Experience
- *New Works Sampler*

For more information about *Opera Conference 2014* and to register, visit operaamerica.org/Conference.

For press credentials or interviews, contact Patricia K. Johnson, director of marketing and communications, at PKJohnson@operaamerica.org.

View the entire [conference schedule](#) and [program book](#).

Follow the conference conversation on Twitter with **#OperaConf** and [@OPERAmerica](#).

Watch live-streamed conference sessions at operaamerica.org/Live.

Special Registration Offer for the Bay Area Arts Community at operaamerica.org/SpecialOffer.