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CALL FOR APPLICATIONS — COMPOSERS AND LIBRETTISTS OF COLOR

OPERA America's IDEA Opera Grants (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access) Now Accepting Applications

Generously supported by the Charles and Cerise Jacobs Charitable Foundation

May 24, 2019 (New York) — **OPERA America**, the national service organization for opera and the nation's leading champion for American opera, is pleased to announce the official launch of its newest grant program: **IDEA Opera Grants (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access)**.

OPERA America believes that different perspectives, cultural histories, life experiences and personal stories enrich the operatic repertoire. It is committed to supporting creators who reflect the diversity of the nation.

Two grants will be awarded to composer-librettist teams that identify as African, Latinx, Arab, Asian or Native American and have U.S. citizenship, permanent residence or DACA status. Applicants must be able to demonstrate their ability to create theatrical works for the trained voice and instrumental ensemble.

Each winning team will receive up to \$12,500 to advance their work through workshops, readings or other developmental activities. Grantees will also receive a high-quality video portrait of the team and their work for promotional use. OPERA America will provide complimentary registration, travel and housing to attend a New Works Forum and Opera Conference, where grantees will be able to discuss their work with industry leaders. Finally, the winners will be featured on OPERA America's digital and social platforms and in *Opera America* magazine.

"OPERA America is uniquely positioned as the field's convener and connector to advance the careers of the most talented creative artists," declared Marc A. Scorca, president/CEO of OPERA America. "IDEA Opera Grants enable us to identify and support the development of new works by emerging composers and librettists of color. By facilitating their work, we will help enrich the art form with new creative voices."

Application materials are now available at operaamerica.org/Grants. Letters of intent must be submitted by July 29, 2019, with full applications due by September 9, 2019. Applications will be adjudicated in October 2019, and recipients will be notified later that month.

The IDEA Opera Grants program is made possible through the generosity of the Charles and Cerise Jacobs Charitable Foundation, a family foundation committed to promoting equal rights and social justice through education, music and the law.

“We entrusted OPERA America with shepherding this grant because of its unique position in the opera world and its commitment to diversity,” Cerise Jacobs, president of the foundation, explained. “Creators of color have had little access to ‘mainstream’ opera companies and we are determined to rectify this. We hope the IDEA Opera Grants will be a catalyst for exciting and different stories, soundscapes and perspectives.”

IDEA Opera Grants are the most recent addition to OPERA America's grant programs designed to increase the depth and breadth of the contemporary American opera repertoire. Launched in 2013, the organization's Opera Grants for Female Composers program has awarded nearly \$1 million to composers and opera companies to promote the development of works by women and raise the visibility of women writing for the operatic medium. Since the inception of its granting programs, OPERA America has awarded more than \$19 million to the opera field to support the work of opera creators, companies and administrators.

More information about OPERA America's grant programs is available at operaamerica.org/Grants.



About OPERA America

OPERA America (operaamerica.org) leads and serves the entire opera community, supporting the creation, presentation and enjoyment of opera. The organization is committed to:

- Delivering professional development to artists, administrators and trustees.
- Increasing appreciation of opera through educational and audience development resources.
- Offering technical support and informational services that foster the creation and presentation of new works.
- Fostering equity, diversity and inclusion across all aspects of the opera industry.
- Undertaking national research and representing the field to policymakers and the media.
- Managing the National Opera Center, a custom-built facility that provides a centralized space for collaboration, rehearsal and performance.

Founded in 1970, OPERA America fulfills its mission through public programs, an annual conference, regional workshops, consultations, granting programs, publications and online resources. It is the only organization serving all constituents of opera: artists, administrators, trustees, educators and audience members. Membership includes 150 professional opera companies; 350 associate, business and education members; and 1,600 individuals. OPERA America extends its reach to 80,000 annual visitors to its National Opera Center and over 40,000 subscribers and followers on e-communications and social media. Representing over 90 percent of eligible professional companies, OPERA America is empowered to lead field-wide change.

OPERA America's long tradition of supporting and nurturing the creation and development of new works led to the formation of the Opera Fund, a growing endowment that allows OPERA America to make a direct impact on the ongoing creation and presentation of new opera and music-theater works. Currently, OPERA America awards more than \$2 million each year through its range of grant initiatives.