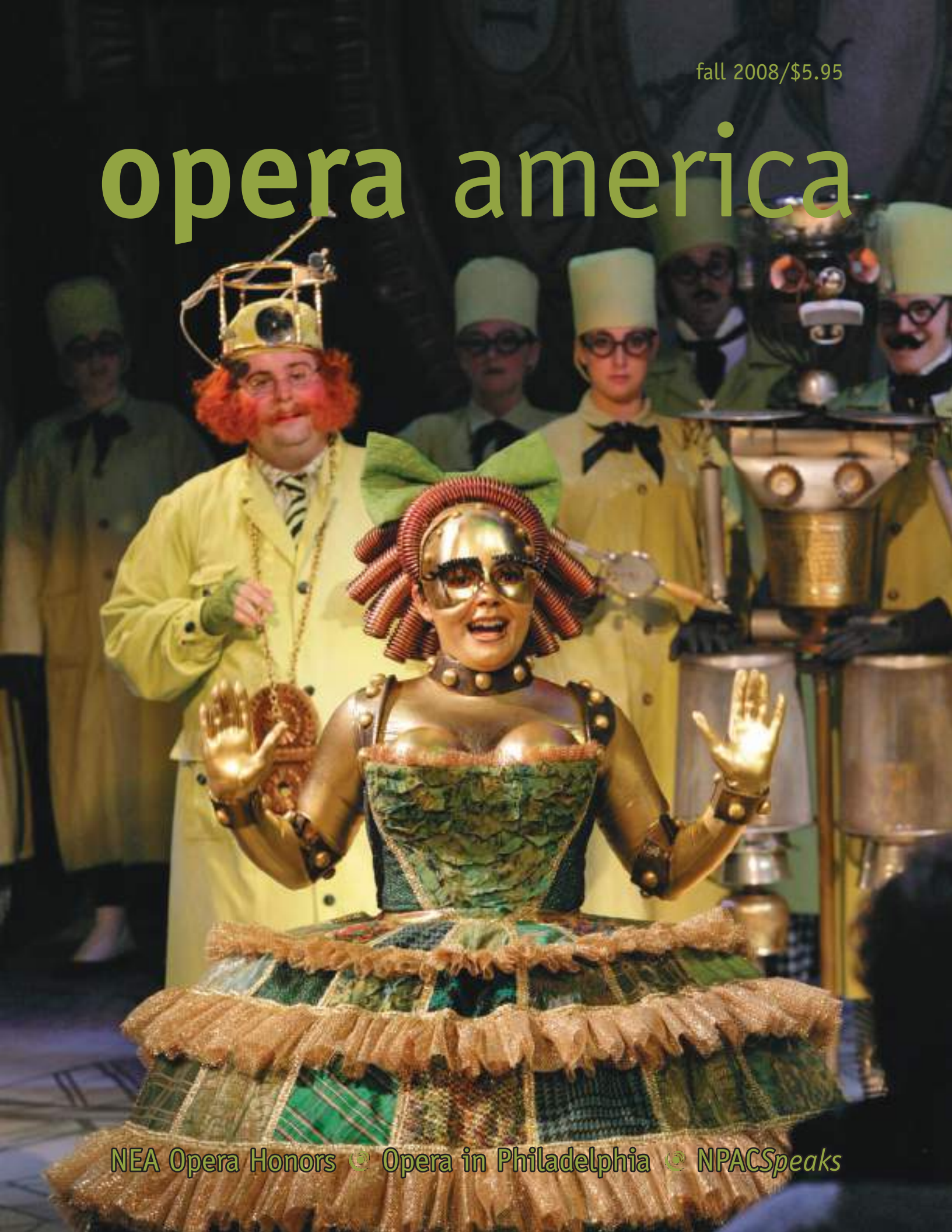


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# opera america



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# PRODUCTIONS FOR SALE



Originally directed by **Chas Rader-Schieber**  
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Originally directed by **Tazewell Thompson**  
Set design by **Donald Eastman**  
Costume design by **Merrily Murray-Walsh**



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Originally directed by **James Robinson**  
Set design by **Allen Moyer**  
Costume design by **Anna Ruth Oliver**

**PLUS** productions of **DIE FLEDERMAUS**,  
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and more. Additional productions available for rental.

# opera america

*The magazine of OPERA America — the national service organization for opera, which leads and serves the entire opera community, supporting the creation, presentation and enjoyment of opera.*

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ON THE COVER: James Ivey as Spalanzani and Ailyn Perez as Olympia in Opera Theatre of Saint Louis's 2008 production of Offenbach's *The Tales of Hoffmann*. The production was directed by Renaud Doucet, with sets and costumes by André Barbe and lighting by Mark McCullough. Photo by Ken Howard.

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The behavior and attitudes of the opera audience are always primary concerns — especially at this moment when summer festivals have just concluded and fall seasons are about to begin. This issue of *Opera America* magazine focuses on audience development and features highlights of two important research projects conducted earlier this year by OPERA America. One examined the profile and opinions of audiences for the Met's HD transmissions to movie theaters. The other mapped audience behavior in Philadelphia, where opera lovers have access to live performances from seven different opera providers.

Among the highlights of the summer festival season occurred here in New York. Zimmermann's *Die Soldaten* was staged at the 67<sup>th</sup> Street Armory as part of the Lincoln Center Festival. Aside from the quality of the work and production, the unusual venue was among of the most important elements of the event. The unfamiliar "theater" opened the audience to a completely new experience — people seemed much more focused in their attention and responsive to the challenging score and unusual staging than they would have been in a familiar Lincoln Center facility. The experience made me reflect on the degree to which expectations about a production are embedded in the performance venue. Such embedded expectations can help reinforce an opera company's identity, but they can also make it more difficult to offer innovative productions and reach new audiences who do not identify easily with the image of the opera house.

Performance venues play a more important role for summer festivals than for traditional opera companies. Who can think of The Santa Fe Opera without immediately picturing the mountains and sunsets, the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis without its beautiful gardens and tent, or Chautauqua Opera without its spectacular Victorian lakeside campus? Many members visited Central City Opera in association with *Opera Conference 2008* and experienced first-hand the inseparability of the company from the historic venue and town in which it performs. (Please forgive me for not naming more even more festivals with unique facilities in this limited space!)

Many of these companies incorporate the enjoyment of their settings into the overall performance experience and actually extend that experience with pre-performance dinner traditions, intermission events and post-performance opportunities to greet the artists.

OPERA America studied the pre-opera and post-performance audience experience nearly a decade ago in a landmark research project, *Observing Opera Attendance*. At most opera companies, the focus on the event commences with the raising of the curtain and concludes with the final bows. But for audience members, the event begins the minute they leave their home or office. Finding a parking space is part of the event. Having a good (or bad!) meal is part of the event. Walking along the sidewalk between the restaurant and the theater past pretty shops (or over mountains of snow) is part of the event. The report documented how much more opera companies can do to make audiences feel welcome and comfortable before, during and after performances.

Audience development is a complex art form of its own that encompasses far more than brochures and Web sites. We work in an ever more competitive art and entertainment environment that requires attention to every aspect of the public's relationship to our companies and to opera itself. As the fall season gets under way, I look forward to learning more about how our members are strengthening their bonds with audiences.

Marc A. Scorca  
President/CEO



Pensacola Opera's 2007 Two Worlds Project. Photo by Ron Besser.

**“MY JOB IS TO PREPARE THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY TO SEE OPERA IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS.”**

Opera companies across the country are seeking innovative ways to become more deeply engaged with their communities and reach new audiences. At **Pensacola Opera**, General Director Sherrie Mitchell and Education Director Tim Kennedy have developed a program that lets deaf students experience opera as creators, performers and audience members. “Deaf youth in this area have no outlet for expressing themselves, for interacting with their peers,” says Mitchell, who had previously worked as a counselor at the St. Augustine School for the Deaf. “They are mainstreamed in school, and while they have interpreters for the classroom, they have no way of communicating with hearing students in the lunchroom, the school bus, the playground.”

Mitchell feels that opera has a lot to offer the deaf community — from the visual spectacle to the closed-captioning provided by supertitles, and even the vibrations of the orchestra in the pit. A collaboration between Pensacola Opera and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS) began with a one-day opera camp as part of a week-long leadership workshop for deaf youth. With the help of interpreters supplied by DHHS, the project employed an artistic method of signing — “almost like a form of singing,” according to Mitchell. The students were tremendously enthusiastic, so the collaboration was expanded the following year; opera staff worked with deaf and hearing students to write and perform *Two Worlds*, a piece designed to build awareness of deaf culture.

That culture challenged Kennedy in many ways, beginning with the fact that deaf students are not encouraged to be writers; English is essentially their second language. He also met some initial resistance from the executive director of DHHS regarding the use of music in the work. “I responded that music is an element of the ‘two worlds’ we are exploring. If we are trying to teach them they can do anything, why not take the thing that seems hardest and present it as a challenge?”

In addition to keeping the company in the public eye, says Kennedy, “Projects like this help us redefine the art form. Our audience is still trained to think of opera in its traditional sense — the ‘top 10’ operas in period sets and costumes. My job is to prepare our entire community to see opera in many different ways. If it uses music to tell a story, it fits my definition of opera.” *Two Worlds* — performed as a benefit for DHHS — consists of a set of vignettes that employ music, signing, poetry and hip-hop to show a day in the life of a deaf student.

This year, Pensacola Opera is soliciting writings from the deaf community to be set to music by a local composer, Joseph Spaniola, who has been researching ways to reach the deaf and hard of hearing audience through experiments with tonality, pitch and timbre. The completed work, which will include spoken parts and signing, will be performed by deaf and hard of hearing teenagers, as well as hearing students. 🎭



Music-Theatre Group's performance space at 10 Jay Street. Photo by Katherine Ehle/OPERA America.

### **"A WAY TO SIGNIFICANTLY ADVANCE ARTISTRY AT A PACE THAT IS NATURAL AND ORGANIC."**

Music-Theatre Group — a company devoted to the creative fusion of dramatic writing, music, dance and the visual arts — has a new venue. Producing Director Diane Wondisford was contacted last fall by Adam Adams, who had worked with the company in the mid-1990s. Adams had a space available in DUMBO, a hip waterfront neighborhood in Brooklyn (the acronym stands for Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass) — would she be interested? "Of course," said Wondisford.

The space initially consisted of two adjacent 30' x 30' x 30' rooms. In collaboration with Adams, Wondisford arranged to tear down the wall between the two spaces. "I spoke with artists and acousticians about how to make the best use of this grand and glorious cathedral-like space. My goal was to make it chameleon-like, so it could work for rehearsals, workshops, performances — so it would really serve the process of making music-theater." In particular, Wondisford worked with designer Donald Eastman, who helped conceive the overall color and look, which includes two large blackboards to be used as sketchpads. The 30' x 60' x 30' room also has a sprung floor, making it suitable for dance.

In addition to readings and workshops of larger works-in-progress, MTG has launched a new series called Hear/See, scheduled for the end of each month. The series offers regular opportunities to introduce, discover and develop artists who reflect the company's aesthetic, including composers, performers, choreographers, writers, visual artists and more.

"The space is an organizing factor, a convening place, a way to significantly advance artistry at a pace that is natural and organic," says Wondisford. "There is a lot of work that simply isn't being developed because it needs a longer time to incubate, and that's an opportunity we can provide at MTG 10 JAY." 🍷

**“A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO BUILD AWARENESS.”**

In October 2007, **Nashville Opera** launched the Raise Your Glasses campaign to establish the Fund for Artistic Excellence and the Noah Liff Opera Center, a 26,000 square-foot facility designed to house a rehearsal studio, offices, an education center, community board room and more. The company has already raised nearly \$10 million toward its \$12 million goal. The campaign, created with the help of an expert PR firm, has also boosted community awareness of the opera company that makes its home in “Music City.”

The company elected to work with Seigenthaler Public Relations because, according to Director of Marketing Reed Hummel, “Our primary responsibility is to produce opera. Given of the size and scope of what we wanted to accomplish, we couldn’t do it all in house *and* produce a season.” The firm’s president, Beth Seigenthaler Courtney, is a board member of Nashville Opera.

The PR firm collaborated with the opera company to identify local celebrities willing to “raise their glasses” on billboards and other outdoor advertisements, along with print materials and a dedicated Web site. Those who lent their images included sports heroes, entrepreneurs, a chef — and of course, a face or two from the Grand Ole Opry.

Like most capital campaigns, Raise Your Glasses relied on the significant contributions of a few major donors. However, says Hummel, “We felt it critical that we involve the general public. The opera can’t be something that just a few wealthy patrons invest in. This was a great opportunity for us to build awareness.” 🍷







Giovanna Casolla and Nicole Biondo in Baltimore Opera Company's production of Verdi's *La forza del destino*. Photo by Michael DeFillippi and courtesy of Baltimore Opera Company.

**“WE HOPE TO BRING PEOPLE INTO THE OPERA HOUSE WHO MIGHT NOT ORDINARILY COME.”**

Baltimore’s Lyric Opera House has played host to a wide variety of entertainments since its opening in 1894; **Baltimore Opera Company** has been the primary provider of operatic entertainments in the 2,400-seat space since 1952. Now, thanks to a collaborative effort between the Lyric Opera House and the Baltimore Opera Company, local audiences will have the opportunity to experience grand opera in another format — HD transmissions from the Metropolitan Opera.

All of the equipment necessary to receive and present the broadcasts has been installed in the historic theater, which is located in downtown Baltimore. The Abell Foundation, a local organization with an interest in community redevelopment, provided the lion’s share of the funding for the new initiative. According to General Director Michael Harrison, the company stands to benefit in several ways. “Even though tickets are not on sale yet, we’ve had a great deal of interest. There is no local theater as large as the Lyric that is presenting the Met transmissions. We hope to bring people into the opera house who might not ordinarily come.”

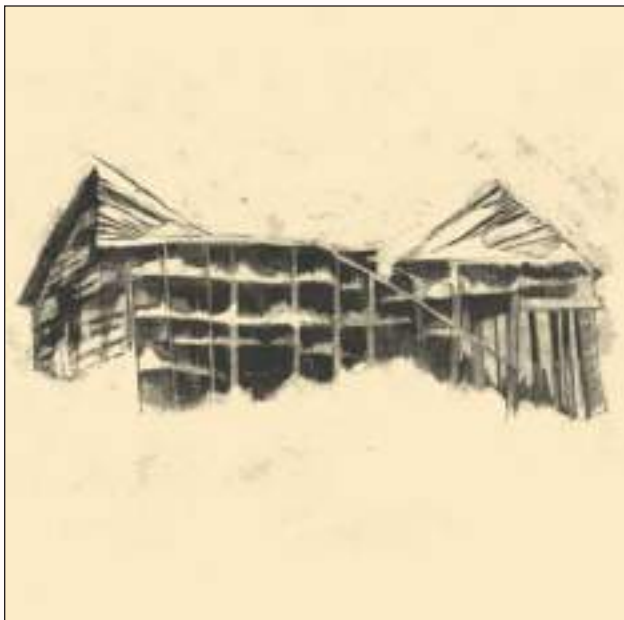
The new technology also stands to enhance production capabilities at Baltimore Opera Company. In recent seasons, the company has worked with director/designer Paolo Micciché to create productions of *La forza del destino* and *Madama Butterfly* that employed projected imagery. “With *Butterfly*, we used a lot of moving images, and the audience was really taken with it,” says Harrison. Previously, the company rented projection equipment, but the Micciché production of *Aida* that will open the 2008-2009 season will employ the same equipment used for the Met HD screenings. 🎬

NEW WORKS IN FALL 2008

*The Bonesetter's Daughter*, a best-selling novel by Amy Tan, forms the basis for a new opera with music by Stewart Wallace and a libretto by the author. The opera tells the story of a troubled Chinese-American woman who learns the horrible secrets of her immigrant mother's past. The production, set in both modern-day San Francisco and the Chinese countryside during the tumultuous events surrounding World War II, will have its world premiere at **San Francisco Opera** in September 2008, with a creative team that includes Steven Sloane (conductor), Chen Shi-Zheng (director), Walt Spangler (sets), Han Feng (costumes), Scott Zielinski (lighting), Leigh Haas (video) and Mark Grey (sound).



Stewart Wallace and Amy Tan with a singing master from Dimen Village in Southeast Guizhou. Photo courtesy of Ken Smith.



*Blizzard Voices* sketch by Watie White.

The devastating Blizzard of 1888, also known as the Children's Blizzard, inspired Nebraskan poet Ted Kooser (who served as the 13<sup>th</sup> Poet Laureate of the United States) to write a book of poems entitled *Blizzard Voices*. **Opera Omaha** commissioned composer Paul Moravec to create a dramatic oratorio based on Kooser's poetry. *The Blizzard Voices* will premiere in September 2008.

**Los Angeles Opera** has commissioned *The Fly*, an opera based on George Langelaan's short story and David Cronenberg's 1986 film. The music is by Oscar-winning composer Howard Shore (*Lord of the Rings*), and the libretto is by the Tony Award-winning playwright David Henry Hwang (*M. Butterfly*). *The Fly* is an exploration of the physical and psychological transformation in which a brilliant scientist begins to mutate into a hybrid of man and fly after one of his experiments goes horribly wrong. The opera, which had its world premiere at Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris this summer, will have its U.S. premiere at Los Angeles Opera in September in a production directed by David Cronenberg and designed by Dante Ferretti.

**Music-Theatre Group** will present *Arjuna's Dilemma* at Brooklyn Academy of Music in November. The cross-cultural chamber opera by Douglas J. Cuomo is based on the Hindu epic *Bhagavad Gita*. The score combines the crisp drumming and vocal work of North Indian music with Western choral, improvised and new music idioms. The production, featuring operatic tenor Tony Boulté as Arjuna and Hindustani singer Humayun Khan as Krishna, will be directed by Robin Guarino with choreography by John Kelly and designs by Donald Eastman, Gabriel Berry, Robert Wierzel and William Cusick. Alan Johnson will conduct.



Daniel Okulitch as Seth Brundle in the Paris Opera's 2008 world premiere production of Shore's *The Fly*. Photo by Marie-Noelle Robert.

**Susan Mobley** has been hired as director of marketing for **Austin Lyric Opera** (ALO). Mobley replaces **Molly Browning**, who has moved into the position of director of public relations. Mobley's experience includes several brand management positions at Procter & Gamble in Cincinnati, OH. As president/managing director of Grow! Consulting Group, a marketing consultancy in the San Francisco Bay Area, she worked with companies on strategy, brand building, concept development, advertising and all aspects of business building. She came to ALO from M<sup>3</sup>, an Austin-based media group. Originally from New York City, Mobley is a cum laude graduate of Wellesley College and received her M.B.A. in marketing from Columbia University.

**Esther Nelson** has been appointed **Boston Lyric Opera's** new general and artistic director. Nelson's experience spans three decades; prior to her recent work as a management consultant to artistic organizations in New York, Virginia, Tennessee, Maine and Germany, she spent six years as the general director/CEO of Glimmerglass Opera. Previously, she was the general director/CEO at Nevada Opera Association; the director for Virginia Opera Association; the general director at Triangle Opera Theater (NC); and the director of public relations, marketing and development for New Orleans Opera Association, where she was also responsible for artistic administration.

**Alexander Neef**, current director of casting at the Opéra National de Paris, has been appointed by the board of the **Canadian Opera**

**Company** (COC) to the position of general director as of October 1. Neef has an extensive background as an artistic administrator and casting director. He has worked with the Salzburg Festival and the RuhrTriennale in his native Germany. In addition, he has spent the last year preparing Gerard Mortier's future seasons at New York City Opera. Additionally, **Marion York** has joined COC as director of development after a 10-year absence. York has over 17 years of fundraising experience and is a Certified Fund Raising Executive and holds an M.A. in philanthropy and development from St. Mary's University in Minnesota.

**James E. Schaeffer**, executive director of Long Leaf Opera (Chapel Hill, NC) has been named CEO of New York City's **The Center for Contemporary Opera**; he will retain his position with Long Leaf Opera. He was the conductor of the Goldsboro (NC) Orchestra and principal bassoonist of the orchestras of Virginia Beach, Montgomery (AL) and Cambridge, England. His compositions have been performed at the American Dance Festival, among other venues. Schaeffer holds a B.M. from the University of North Texas and an M.A. in HR management and organizational development from Webster University in Saint Louis. Schaeffer will succeed Richard Marshall who led the company for 25 years.

**George Steel** will become the general director of **The Dallas Opera** on October 1, 2008. Steel, a Maryland native and graduate of Yale University, currently serves as executive director of Columbia University's Miller Theatre, where he launched full-scale opera production,

commissioned ballets, created the Theatre of Ideas series and increased fundraising from \$120,000 to \$1.35 million annually. The founder and conductor of the Gotham City Orchestra and Vox Vocal Ensemble will be the sixth general director in the company's 52-year history. His prior experience includes work as managing producer of the Tisch Center for the Arts, 92nd Street YWYMHA. He has also served as musical consultant to the Leonard Bernstein Office since 2006.

**William Swain** has been hired as general director of **Greensboro Opera Company**. Previously, he was general manager/artistic director for Opera Illinois, where he eliminated a large budget deficit, raised artistic standards and initiated a young artists ensemble for emerging Illinois artists. Prior to his involvement in arts management, Swain's professional career included singing leading baritone roles, coaching acting, and designing and directing opera productions in venues throughout the U.S.

**Laura Canning** has been appointed head of **Houston Grand Opera's** young artist development program, the Houston Grand Opera Studio. Canning succeeds Hector Vasquez, who oversaw the program from 2005 until his departure earlier this year. For the last 10 years, Canning served as artistic administrator for Welsh National Opera. Following her graduation from the University of Cambridge, where she majored in modern and medieval languages, she went to work in the operatic division at London's Athole Still International Management. Canning also worked for Harold Holt Artist Management and the Glyndebourne Festival.

**Los Angeles Opera** Music Director **James Conlon** was awarded the Galileo 2000 Prize from the Fondazione Premio Galileo 2000 on June 25 in Florence, Italy. Founded in 1996, the Galileo 2000 Prize is awarded each year to an artist who has made a significant contribution to music, art and peace in Florence. On May 30, Conlon was also awarded the Medal of the American Liszt Society, given to an individual who has achieved international distinction in performance, writing and/or scholarship particularly associated with Franz Liszt. Conlon is the only conductor to have received the award.

**Lesley Koenig** became assistant manager for production at the **Metropolitan Opera** on August 1; hers is a new position. She oversees all resident designers and directors who handle revivals, and coordinates the activities of creative personnel responsible for new productions. Koenig joined the directing staff at the Met in the 1980s; she was the rare resident director to create a new production, a *Così fan tutte*. Koenig left the Metropolitan Opera for graduate work at Stanford University, and has served as general manager of the San Francisco Ballet. Many of her new duties were previously the responsibility of Joe Clark, the Met's technical director, but he retired at the end of the summer. Clark's replacement, **John Sellars**, will take on purely technical duties.

**George Manahan** has renewed his contract as music director of **New York City Opera** (NYCO) through 2012. He made his NYCO debut conducting *Die tote Stadt* in 1991. In his tenure at NYCO, he

has conducted 53 different operas including two world premieres, four U.S. stage premieres and 41 new productions; he was appointed music director in 1998. He has appeared at Glimmerglass Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Opéra National de Paris, Opera Australia, The Santa Fe Opera, Seattle Opera, Teatro di Comunale di Bologna, Verona Filarmonico, Bergen Festival (Norway), the Casals Festival (Puerto Rico) and was principal conductor with The Minnesota Opera from 1988 to 1996. He received his formal musical training at the Manhattan School of Music, studying conducting with Anton Coppola and George Schick, and was appointed to the faculty of the school upon his graduation in 1976.

**Adam Gustafson** has accepted the position of director of information service with **OPERA America**. Previously, Gustafson taught in London and at Ohio University while completing the coursework for his Ph.D. in interdisciplinary arts. He also earned a M.M. in composition from the Chicago College of Performing Arts. Gustafson worked as a freelance composer while in Chicago. Gustafson will assume responsibility for the entire research portfolio of the organization, as well as most publications. **Kelley Rourke** will continue as editor of *Opera America* magazine. **José Rincón** has joined the staff as development coordinator. He is responsible for coordinating stewardship relationships with donors, assisting with donor prospect research and providing support for other department staff. Rincón holds a B.A. in music from S.U.N.Y. Potsdam and an M.A. in arts administration

from Florida State University. He is a proud native of Burlington, VT. President/CEO **Marc A. Scorca** was listed as one of the *25 Most Powerful People in the Nonprofit Arts* as part of a feature on the Web site of Western States Arts Federation. The listing ranks leaders in the field who intersect with other interest groups and sectors — both nonprofit and for profit — and government. "They are our spokespeople and our strategists; our thinkers and our analysts; they are the ones with influence and power."

**Timothy Myers** has been appointed to the newly-created position of principal conductor and artistic advisor at **Opera Company of North Carolina**. He is active as both a symphonic and opera conductor and his recent engagements have included the American, Jerusalem and Palm Beach Symphonies; the Brooklyn and New York Philharmonics; New York City Opera, American Symphony, London BBC Symphony and the Castleton Residency. Festival appearances have included the Bard Music Festival, Central City Opera and Music Academy of the West. Future engagements include an invitation from Lorin Maazel to the inaugural Castleton Festival, where he will prepare revivals of three Britten operas and alternate performances with Maazel.

**Mark Junkert** was appointed to the position of executive director at **Opera Idaho** upon the retirement of Executive and Artistic Director **Julie Kilgrow**. Previously, Junkert held the positions of managing director of Skylark Opera (St. Paul, MN) and

executive director of the Martina Arroyo Foundation (New York, NY). He has also held positions as executive director of The Collegiate Chorale in New York and executive director of the National Lutheran Choir in Minneapolis. Junkert studied voice and opera in the Graduate School of Music at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He received a B.M. in vocal performance from the University of Denver.

**Timothy O’Leary**, who came to **Opera Theatre of Saint Louis** as executive director in January, will succeed **Charles MacKay** as the company’s general director on October 1, when MacKay becomes general director of **The Santa Fe Opera**. O’Leary will join a leadership team that includes Music Director Stephen Lord and Artistic Director-designate **James Robinson**, who will succeed the late Colin Graham on October 1. Previously, O’Leary served as director of operations and planning at New York City Opera, as managing director of New York’s Gotham Chamber Opera, and as a stage director and assistant stage director for companies including New York City Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Opera Colorado and the Western Opera Theater tour. He is an alumnus of Dartmouth College and San Francisco Opera’s Merola Program.

**Anthony Barrese** has been appointed music director and principal conductor at **Opera Southwest** (Albuquerque, NM), beginning in the company’s 36<sup>th</sup> season, 2008-2009. Barrese’s recent engagements included Boston Lyric Opera, Opera North (New Hampshire) and Sarasota Opera, where he

served as associate conductor from 2003-2004. He was the winner of the 2007 Solti Foundation U.S.A. Award, which recognizes talented young American musicians at the start of their professional careers.

**J. Andrew “Andy” Howard** has been promoted to director of education and community relations at **Orlando Opera**. Howard’s previous positions include publicist at Orlando Opera, director of youth programs for Haile Plantation Golf and Country Club, teaching faculty for Florida Dance Association’s Young Persons Conferences and director of University of Florida’s Mentoring Alliance. He founded JamCo Dance Centre and Entertainment. Succeeding Howard as publicist and associate director of marketing and communications is **Kathleen “Kat” Albert**. Albert most recently worked at BETA Center as public relations coordinator. She received her M.A. in corporate communication and technology from Rollins College and her B.S. in organizational communication from Northeastern University. Also joining Orlando Opera is **Brandi King** as group sales manager. King’s prior sales and marketing experience includes local theater and Fringe Festival involvement, as well as group sales and corporate experiential marketing for trade shows and events.

**Christopher Hahn** has been appointed general director of **Pittsburgh Opera**, having served the company as artistic director since 2000. Since then, he has enriched the company’s repertoire, introduced Baroque and contemporary operas presented in a variety of production styles, and expanded productions

for the Pittsburgh Opera Center, the company’s resident artist training program, to include works ranging from Monteverdi to Britten. Trained as a stage director and actor in his native South Africa, Hahn began his career in opera at **San Francisco Opera**, then moved to the **Los Angeles Opera**. Hahn succeeds Mark J. Weinstein, who moved to **Washington National Opera** as executive director in February.

Portland Opera has named **Clare Burovac** as the company’s first director of artistic administration. A recipient of an OPERA America Fellowship in Opera Production in 1993, she has been a guest stage manager for San Francisco Opera, Los Angeles Opera and Glimmerglass Opera, among many others. She joined Seattle Opera in 1994 as an assistant stage manager, taking on a variety of increasingly demanding positions. Most recently she has been Seattle Opera’s production stage manager and Ring production coordinator. Burovac received her Bachelor’s degree in violin performance from Bowling Green State University.

**Gregory M. Henkel** has been appointed director of artistic administration for **San Francisco Opera**. Henkel’s previous positions include artistic planning manager at Los Angeles Opera and associate artistic administrator at Lyric Opera of Chicago. Henkel has a Master’s degree in music from DePaul University in Chicago and graduated *summa cum laude* from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ. Additionally, **Matthew Shilvock** has been appointed assistant general director as part of a restructuring

of the company's artistic and music departments. In this new role, Shilvock will continue to act as a broad generalist, spearheading many of the company's new initiatives and working closely with the general director as he has done for the last three years. **Beth Sinclair** joined the company as director of human resources. Sinclair has held senior HR positions with many Bay Area companies, including Marin General Hospital, where she was responsible for employee/labor relations, performance management, compensation, recruitment, benefits, compliance, workers' compensation and safety for more than 600 contractual and non-contractual employees. San Francisco Opera Director of Music Administration **Dr. Clifford (Kip) Cranna** received the San Francisco Opera Medal, the highest honor awarded by the company to an artistic professional, on June 20. Cranna oversees the company's musical operations, including the commissioning of new operas and scheduling for future seasons. He currently manages the company's music staff and libraries, and serves as staff musicologist and editor-in-chief of supertitles.

**Matthew Buckman** has been selected as the first executive director of **Townsend Opera Players**. In September, the board modified the company's bylaws, splitting the position of general director into two positions, artistic director and executive director, and appointed Founding General Director Erik Buck Townsend as artistic director. Buckman will start his new position on February 1, 2009. Buckman is currently director of development for the Modesto Symphony Orchestra

Association, and has served the symphony in several capacities since 2005. Prior to that, he studied at California State University, Stanislaus, where he served as the assistant conductor of the Stanislaus Symphony Orchestra.

**Tulsa Opera** has appointed **John Peter "Jeep" Jeffries**, who has been executive director of Opera Grand Rapids since 2001, as executive director. Jeffries has worked throughout North America at both large and small opera companies including Florida Grand Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Portland Opera and Opera Idaho. In his position at Opera Grand Rapids, Jeffries led the company from an operating deficit to surplus through a combination of tactics that resulted in reducing costs and increasing earned and donated revenue. He graduated from the Department of Speech, Communication and Theater at University of Michigan in 1975 with an honors degree.

**Joel Smirnoff**, first violinist of the Juilliard String Quartet and former chair of the violin department at The Juilliard School, has been appointed president of **Cleveland Institute of Music**. Smirnoff's appointment follows the retirement of David Cerone, who was the longest-tenured president in the institute's history, having held the position since 1985. Smirnoff attended the University of Chicago and the Juilliard School, and was a member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra for six years.

**Jay Lesenger** has been named director of opera at Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music.

Lesenger is a stage director and nationally recognized teacher of acting for singers; for five years was an associate professor of music at the University of Michigan/Ann Arbor, where he directed the School of Music Opera Theatre. He has served as artistic and general director of Chautauqua Opera since 1995 and will continue his work with the company. Lesenger is a member of the board of directors of OPERA America.

**Schuler Shook**, a theater planning and architectural lighting design firm, is pleased to announce **Lorna Luebbers** as the newest principal in the firm. Luebbers joined Schuler Shook's Chicago office in 1993. As the firm grew, her responsibilities expanded into marketing and business development. Her prior experience in technical theater and video production, in combination with her training in communication, has made Luebbers instrumental in internal and external communications.

**Robin Guarino** has been named the J. Ralph Corbett Distinguished Chair in Opera at the **University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music** (CCM). Previously, Guarino worked with emerging artists at the Juilliard School, the Manhattan School of Music, Mannes College of Music, New York University, UCLA and San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera and Adler Fellowship Programs. She has worked as a stage director for the Metropolitan Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Seattle Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Virginia Opera and Chautauqua Opera. Guarino received her M.F.A. from Bard College. 🎭

### HONORING EXCELLENCE IN OPERA TRUSTEESHIP

OPERA America proudly announces the second annual **2009 National Opera Trustee Recognition Program**. The program honors opera company trustees for exemplary leadership, support and audience building efforts on behalf of their respective opera companies. The well-being of opera companies and, in effect, the communities in which they perform depends to a great extent on these three critically important areas.

OPERA America’s commitment to recognizing excellence in governance stems from a core belief that the strength of an opera company is directly linked to the quality of governance demonstrated by its board members. OPERA America’s National Opera Trustee Recognition Program acknowledges and celebrates the service of extraordinary trustees whose efforts help to ensure the health of opera companies and the art form’s availability for future generations.

The 2008 Awardees were: Jane Robinson (Florida Grand Opera), Sally Levy (Opera Theatre of Saint Louis), G. Whitney Smith (Fort Worth Opera) and Betty W. Healey (Opera Birmingham).

Professional Company Members are invited to nominate trustees for the 2009 National Opera Trustee Recognition Program. Complete information will be mailed to general directors in late September. **The deadline for nominations is October 20, 2008.**

The 2009 Awardees will be announced in November 2008. The Award event, including a reception, dinner, award presentations and a brief program of new works excerpts will take place in New York City on **Saturday, February 21, 2009.**

For more information or to receive an invitation to the 2009 Award event, please contact José Rincón at 212-796-8620, ext. 208, or [jrincon@operaamerica.org](mailto:jrincon@operaamerica.org).

OPERA America’s National Trustee Recognition Program is made possible by the generous support of **Bank of America.** 

### SAVE THE DATES

**Singer Training Forum**  
October 18, 2008  
New York, NY  
The Singer Training Forum gathers twice each year to discuss critical issues concerning the training and career development of young artists. For more information, contact Anne Choe by e-mailing [AChoe@operaamerica.org](mailto:AChoe@operaamerica.org).

**Opera Conference 2009**  
April 29 - May 2, 2009  
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Make plans now to attend *Opera Conference 2009*, hosted by **Houston Grand Opera**. Alex Ross, music critic for *The New Yorker* and author of the acclaimed *The Rest Is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century*, will be the keynote speaker. Featured productions include *Rigoletto* and the world premiere of André Previn’s *Brief Encounter*. Session information and online registration will be available beginning in fall 2008.



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**Angela Simpson**  
 Cio,  
 Margaret Garner



**James Valenti**  
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 Madame Butterfly

# Four Different Worlds in

Glimmerglass Opera's 2008 Festival Season featured four operas with links to Shakespeare. For each production, a separate creative team created a distinctive world within a space evocative of the story.



## Giulio Cesare in Egitto

Lyubov Petrova as Cleopatra (left photo) and Laura Vlasak Nolen (right photo) as Giulio Cesare in Glimmerglass Opera's 2008 production of Handel's *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*. Photos by Cory Weaver/Glimmerglass Opera.

Robin Guarino directed Handel's *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*. "The piece is constantly shifting from public to private, from political maneuvers to a more interior landscape. What is really great about the space is that it allows you to frame that. You can move from a very specific location, like a military camp, to a landscape of the mind." The costumes were designed by Gabriel Berry; lighting was by Robert Wierzel.

# a Globe-Inspired Space

Shakespeare, all performed on a single set by Associate Artistic Director John Conklin.

recreation of the “wooden O” — the Globe Theatre — that served as Shakespeare’s artistic home.



## Das Liebesverbot



Ryan MacPherson as Luzio (left photo) in Glimmerglass Opera’s 2008 production of the American fully-staged premiere of Wagner’s *Das Liebesverbot*. Photos by Cory Weaver/Glimmerglass Opera.

“*Das Liebesverbot* has such a massive scale in terms of the sound, the vitality of the music,” said director Nicholas Muni. “The opera needs a space that has some kind of massiveness to it.” Within the large physical structure, he chose a 1950s setting for Wagner’s early comedy: “The essence of the opera has to do with a burgeoning sexuality coming up against a very conservative force. I felt the fifties was both recent enough to be recognizable, yet distant enough.” Costumes for this production were designed by Kaye Voyce; lighting was by Mark McCullough.



# Kiss Me, Kate

Courtney Romano as Bianca and Jonathan Fiske Hill as Hortensio (left photo) and Michael Mott as First Gangster and Brad Nacht as Second Gangster (right photo) in Glimmerglass Opera's 2008 production of Porter's *Kiss Me, Kate*. Photos by Cory Weaver/Glimmerglass Opera.

"We knew we didn't want that rustic look that has become so associated with *Kiss Me, Kate* — the town square, the brown village," said director Diane Paulus, who imagined a musical version of *Taming of the Shrew* previewing not in mid-century Baltimore, but at present-day Glimmerglass Opera. "Since our 'offstage' world is set in 2008, for the play within the play we thought, 'What would it be like if Madonna did an Elizabethan number in her next tour?' We wanted style and edge. We started looking at what was coming out of haute couture houses today — there are lines of clothes with these elaborate collars and ruffs and tights." Anka Lupes designed the costumes; lighting was by Jane Cox.



## I Capuleti e i Montecchi



Sarah Coburn as Giulietta (left photo) and the Glimmerglass Opera Chorus (right photo) in Glimmerglass Opera's 2008 production of Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*. Photos by Cory Weaver/Glimmerglass Opera.

The production of Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* offered a spare, asymmetrical configuration of scenery. "I want to draw imagery from the bodies and voices of the singers, their movement and their stillness," said director Anne Bogart. "The most important thing for me in both theater and opera is that the audience's imagination is provided space to create. What is the very least that we impose that might allow the audience to dream? With the Bellini opera I want the space to feel luscious, inviting, mysterious and like an open playing field." Bogart worked with frequent collaborators James Schuette (costumes) and Christopher Akerlind (lighting). ©

# the PHILADELPHIA

## audience development

An array of cultural attractions is part of the appeal of living in a major metropolitan area. City dwellers typically have their choice of several theater companies, as well as multiple museums and galleries. Until recently, however, most cities have been served by a single opera company. This is beginning to change: Across the country, the lone local opera provider increasingly has company. New opera companies are springing up on a regular basis, allowing the opera-hungry — or the opera-curious — new ways to encounter the art form, often sharply differentiated from those offered by the establishment company.

At *Opera Conference 2006* in Seattle, a group of producers met to discuss the phenomenon of “One City, Many Opera Companies.” The response to the changing opera landscape ranged from wary to welcoming, and anecdotal evidence could be found to support a variety of positions. Whether the newer entrants were viewed as competitors or collaborators, one thing was clear: their existence changes the dynamics of producing and marketing opera. If opera providers that share a city are to further their own missions, they may benefit from developing strategies for fostering a healthy, cooperative local opera ecology.

Because of the tremendous interest in the topic, OPERA America, with the



Boyer College student Miyuki Hashimoto as Fedra in the 2008 production of Cavalli's *L'Egisto*. Photo by Temple University Photography/Joseph Labolito.

**Temple University Opera Theater** offers fully-staged productions featuring the students of the Boyer College music programs. These students receive professional training within the context of a large, modern research university. Last year, performances included *L'Egisto* (Cavalli) and *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* (Ravel) / *Le Rossignol* (Stravinsky).

generous support of the William Penn Foundation, commissioned **TRG Arts** and **Shugoll Research** to provide the industry with a better understanding of the impact of having a relatively large number of opera companies in one community. Philadelphia — with seven opera providers — was selected for the study.

Of particular interest was the relationship among the audiences: Did they inter-relate or crossover among companies? Were they different demographically? How do they perceive opera in Philadelphia? The research also sought knowledge that could help each of the seven companies build and maintain audiences. Excerpts from the

# LP HIA project: in a lively opera ecology

study — both TRG’s database analysis and Shugoll Research’s attitudinal research — are provided below. For detailed findings, log in to [www.operaamerica.org](http://www.operaamerica.org) to view the full report.

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY BY TRG

The Philadelphia market supports a robust array of opera offerings from seven companies: Opera Company of Philadelphia, Center City Opera Theater, ConcertOPERA Philadelphia, Opera North, Academy of Vocal Arts Opera Theatre, Curtis Institute’s Curtis Opera Theatre and Temple University.

Dual-pronged research was designed and implemented in April and May 2008 to measure and illuminate understanding of this model multiple-company opera community. To examine patron behavior, TRG conducted a proprietary database study of four years of transactions (subscription and single ticket purchases, as well as donations) among 36,000 patrons of the five Philadelphia opera companies that could provide study data. TRG’s project partner, Shugoll Research, studied perceptions and attitudes through a mail survey of a selected sample of those 36,000 patrons.

## Expectations and Surprises

At the outset of this work, there was an expectation that Philadelphia’s opera patrons would demonstrate crossover

behavior among several of the companies performing in their community. The research findings proved otherwise. Some 94% of the operagoers studied are



Curtis Opera Theatre’s 2007-2008 production of Mozart’s *Le nozze di Figaro*. Photo by David Swanson.

The **Curtis Opera Theatre** is the performing entity of the Curtis Vocal Studies Department. Each season the Curtis Opera Theatre presents at least four fully-staged performances and concert productions in the Prince Music Theater, Perelman Theater at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts and the Curtis Opera Studio. The 2008-2009 season includes *Don Giovanni* (Mozart), *Impressions of Pelléas* (Debussy/Brook), *The Medium* (Menotti) and *Il viaggio a Reims* (Rossini). Curtis students will also be featured in a production of Berg’s *Wozzeck*, presented by Kimmel Center Presents in association with Opera Company of Philadelphia.



The Opera Company of Philadelphia's East Coast premiere production of DiChiera's *Cyrano*. Photo by Kelly & Massa Photography.

**Opera Company of Philadelphia (OCP)** bills itself as the city's "only producer of grand opera." The company, which was established in 1975 through a merger of the Philadelphia Grand Opera Company and the Philadelphia Lyric Opera Company, performs in the historic Academy of Music. The company's 2008-2009 mainstage season opens with a new production of *Fidelio*, designed by acclaimed sculptor Jun Kaneko, and continues with productions of *The Italian Girl in Algiers*, *Turandot* and *L'Enfant et les sortilèges/Gianni Schicchi*. In the intimate Perelman Theater — with only 650 seats — the company will present Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*. OCP patrons will also be offered the opportunity to purchase tickets to Berg's *Wozzeck*, presented by Kimmel Center Presents in association with the Curtis Institute of Music.

ticket buyers for only one of the seven companies. Just 6% were crossover ticket buyers for two or more companies (also called multi-buyers). Nine out of 10 multi-buyers attended Opera Company of Philadelphia, the city's largest company that stages the most performances.

The attitudinal research, detailed below, yielded another surprising finding: Philadelphia operagoers do not appear to be aware of the rich opera landscape in their city.

The research team observed that the level of crossover and levels of awareness and familiarity combine to create an audience-building opportunity for Philadelphia's opera companies. Operagoers need

to know about and understand the performing options available to them before making any purchase decisions. Clearly, each of the companies will benefit from sharpening their communications messages, as well as increasing the reach and frequency of well-targeted ticket offers.

#### **The Power of Community**

Further analysis revealed that even the relatively low level of crossover activity creates audience development opportunities for all seven companies.

Transactional data showed that Opera Company of Philadelphia (OCP) is generating 85% of all new ticket buyers for the city's other opera companies. (This is

unsurprising, given that OCP produces and markets opera on a greater scale than any other company studied.) Patrons who first attend OCP and then cross over to make a purchase with one of the other companies represent a significant portion of the other companies' new patrons. Crossover patronage overall accounts for 29% of new patrons at the Academy of Vocal Arts, 23% at Center City Opera and 24% at the Curtis Institute.

OCP benefits from communal patron behavior in Philadelphia, as well. The benefit was found in further examination of the way patrons are retained as they move toward greater investment within the organization and the community. While the patron migration study found that OCP brings in the largest number of new patrons, it also revealed that OCP has the highest rate of patron attrition. (In this study, attrition is defined as patrons who were active anytime during the study period and were no longer active by the end of the study period.) OCP's attrition rate is 74%; its colleague companies' is 53%. Sadly, as TRG studies and other industry research has documented in recent years, losing three out of every four new patrons is normal in American performing arts organizations.

The silver lining in this situation appeared in data analysis of patron retention. TRG compared the behavior of patrons with transactions in only one company (unique buyers) to behavior of patrons with multi-organization transactions. Patrons who attended more than one opera company had a retention rate of 85%, while those with transactions at only one company had a retention rate of 50%.

This, TRG concludes, is good news — especially for Opera Company of Philadelphia. The company accounts for 90% of crossover with the other opera companies. OCP also has a program that communicates schedules for other operas in the metro area. The data suggests that OCP's practice of encouraging crossover ultimately can help OCP retain patrons



Buyer Frequency	All Organizations	Active in 2007	Inactive in 2007	Attrition Rate	Retention Rate
Unique Buyers	38,325	18,093	18,232	50%	50%
Multiple Organization Buyers	2,380	2,015	365	15%	85%

over time as it creates patronage for the other companies.

### Opportunities, Assets and Further Inquiry

The cross-pollination of audiences within a community has benefits for organizations in Philadelphia as this study and other TRG work in the field has corroborated. Increasing crossover will create new buyers for some companies and stronger patronage through retention at other companies. Joint discussion of these findings already has generated productive dialog among Philadelphia's opera companies. They are looking for more ways to collaborate effectively and with cost-efficiency. This study also contributes to the industry's growing evidence surrounding the significance of patron retention to audience development and growth. Stronger, longer retention patterns for multi-buyers reported here should encourage each of the companies to work for repeat and crossover attendance. As noted above, OCP is able to market on far greater scale than any of the other local providers, so it is the best-positioned to develop audiences for opera in general. Given the demonstrated link between crossover attendance and retention, OCP has a vested interest in encouraging its patrons to attend opera at other local companies. (Currently, only 10% of OCP audiences exhibit crossover behavior.)

The smaller opera companies make very specific contributions to Philadelphia's opera ecology. Their marketing efforts are more targeted. They do not present as many barriers — or perceived barriers — to attendance (e.g., formality, inconvenience, expense). The data show that patrons of smaller companies are much more likely than OCP patrons to

attend opera at multiple companies; they also exhibit greater loyalty.

These findings further suggest that Philadelphia's major pipeline for new opera patrons, the Opera Company of Philadelphia, is over-acquiring new patrons and under-retaining them. The company immediately recognized both its immediate requirements for reducing patron attrition and the value of its leadership in promoting the whole opera community. OCP already is initiating strategic thinking that can have benefits

community-wide, as well as to its own audience development efforts.

Philadelphia's opera companies have an additional asset for patron prospecting and retention. They share participation in the Philadelphia Cultural List Cooperative provided by the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance. The Cooperative is an approval-based online resource for exchanging lists and patron information. It offers each of the participating companies access to prospective patrons already doing business in Philadelphia's broad and



Nina Yoshida Nelsen and Angela Meade as the sisters Dorabella and Fiordiligi in the Academy of Vocal Arts production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. Photo by Paul Sirochman.

Like the Curtis Institute of Music, **The Academy of Vocal Arts** (founded 1934), offers tuition-free training to exceptionally talented and committed young singers who have the potential for international careers. Students are presented in professional performances to a wide community. The 2008-2009 season includes Donizetti's *Anna Bolena*, *Don Pasquale* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*, as well as Respighi's *La fiamma*.

diverse cultural and arts community. The study team notes that the Cooperative will continue to be an invaluable tool in audience development efforts for Philadelphia's opera organizations. The overarching need to convey each company's unique position in Philadelphia's rich arts and cultural landscape is clear. Individual company perception issues were not explored in this study. However, the overall findings suggest that communication of each company's brand and unique patronage propositions is critical. Specific refinements for each company would be better informed by further brand analysis and patron perception research. Meanwhile, this study's attitudinal research findings provide sound overall parameters that can be considered for immediate application.

## ATTITUDINAL RESEARCH BY SHUGOLL RESEARCH

In addition to understanding whether opera lovers realize the depth of programming in the Philadelphia area, the project team used the opportunity to collect information that would help each company build audience and increase donors. The goals of the attitudinal research are to:

- Determine attitudes about opera in Philadelphia
- Assess awareness of and attendance at opera companies
- Determine obstacles to attending opera in Philadelphia
- Assess factors affecting interest in attending and supporting opera
- Assess method for learning about opera in Philadelphia
- Determine a profile of Philadelphia opera lovers

## Methodology

TRG pulled a sample from the databases of five Philadelphia opera companies that agreed to participate in the research: Center City Opera Theater, Curtis Opera Theatre, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Temple University Opera Theater and The Academy of Vocal Arts Opera Theater. Lists included representation of subscribers, donors, individual ticket purchasers and prospects.

The lists were populated to include as many contacts as possible from the smaller companies so as not to skew the response rate toward the larger companies. The distribution of names provided to the sample was fairly similar across organizations. Mail surveys were used to reach as many contacts as possible from the various company databases. The questionnaire was developed by Shugoll Research, and the comments of TRG, OPERA America and the

local Philadelphia companies were incorporated.

A total of 5,393 surveys were mailed and were distributed across the various subgroups for each company. A total of 702 surveys were collected, yielding a response rate of 13%. The margin of error for a sample size of 702 is +/- 3.8 percentage points at a 95% significance level.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Implications and recommendations are based on study findings and the interpretation of those findings by the analyst.

*Opera lovers in the Philadelphia area are not fully aware of the diversity of opera offerings available. Most do not realize there are more companies in the area than similar metro areas, and they have only average satisfaction levels with the opera*



Sharon Rhinesmith, Ross Druker, Sungji Kim, Ernest Jackson and Matthew Brouillet perform in ConcertOPERA Philadelphia's 2007 production of Daniel Francoi-Esprit Auber's *Fra Diavolo*, conducted by Dan Rothermel. Photo by Christopher Lupone.

Since 1995, **ConcertOPERA Philadelphia** has provided a venue for rising professional singers to gain experience. The concert format "allows one to intimately experience the beauty and intricacies of the music and follow the story line in a simpler setting." In spring 2008, the company presented Auber's *Fra Diavolo* at St. Monica's Parish Auditorium (Berwyn, PA) and Philadelphia's Ethical Society Building. Upcoming concerts include *Lakmé* (2009) and *The Bohemian Girl* (2010).

**Center City Opera Theater** was founded in 1999 with three objectives: to produce well-known, new and less-familiar opera and musical theater in an intimate setting; to provide opportunities for emerging opera and theater professionals who are becoming known for their excellence; and to be an active arts educator in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. The company, which has already presented two regional premieres (Adamo's *Little Women* and Floyd's *Of Mice and Men*) and commissioned a new chamber orchestration of Liebermann's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, has commissioned a new opera from composer Peter Westergaard and librettist Renee Weiss: *The Always Present Present*. In spring 2009 they will present Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*.

offered in the area. Perhaps as a result, two moderately important reasons respondents give for not attending more opera are that they say they cannot find enough operas they want to see and they perceive that only a small number of operas are offered each year. These findings suggest the benefit of potential collaboration of companies to promote the richness of opera in the market. While the smallest companies would clearly benefit from this increased exposure, building opera awareness will also increase the audience for the larger companies.

*New York opera companies draw away a portion of the audience that could be patronizing local companies.* This leaves Philadelphia operagoers with less money remaining to spend on hometown companies. This is another justification for a collaborative effort to credential Philadelphia-area opera and increase opera attendance locally.

*Name recall (unaided awareness) of smaller companies in the market is very low, and familiarity with what those companies produce is even lower.* This hugely diminishes the potential market for these companies. These companies must increase their awareness among consumers. Since marketing budgets at small companies are usually limited, lower-cost tools such as e-mail blasts and public relations efforts to plant stories in the local media should be employed. E-mail to a company's current database can help make these people more familiar with what a company does. To increase its awareness

and broaden its market, a smaller company might trade e-mail lists with other smaller companies so its message reaches new people.

*Smaller companies with more moderate ticket prices should promote the fact that they provide opera that is accessible to all.* The leading reason people say they don't attend more opera is the high cost of tickets. Offering discounted tickets is likely to motivate someone to try a new opera company. Given the market's lack of familiarity with smaller companies, it is likely consumers are unaware of the current accessibility of prices.

*There is a potential audience for companies that perform lesser-known titles in the classic tradition (as opposed to contemporary opera) and those that cast young, emerging professionals in leading roles.* Audiences have moderate interest in trying a new company that offers this programming, and these attributes should be clearly communicated. Other attributes that some find appealing are promotion of

opera education in the community, availability to racially diverse audiences and performances in intimate settings. Positionings that do not resonate are providing performance opportunities for African-American artists, staging lesser-known contemporary operas, casting college and graduate students in lead roles and presenting operas in English. Companies committed to these types of work must communicate to the public why they are important and deserve support.

*Audience members may be motivated to try a company that performs in convenient venues.* Companies, especially smaller ones, should concentrate on marketing to those who live and work within a 10-mile radius of their venue. This finding also justifies bringing work (whether staged performances, concert versions or artist appearances) into the community (at theaters, schools, churches and synagogues, recreation centers, etc.). Factors of moderate potential to inducing trial of a company are free parking and communicating how a company is different from others.

*The most important driver of subscribing is past experience with a company.* This underscores the importance of inducing trial, even if done through discounting. Other factors important in choosing to subscribe that must be clearly communicated to potential buyers are exchange privileges, best seats, same seats for each performance, discounts and that subscribing ensures that you will see some opera each year.

**Opera North**, Pennsylvania's only African-American opera company, was founded by Sister Mary Elise of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament to create performance opportunities for gifted African-American vocal artists, musicians and conductors. For the past 30 years, the company has continued to fulfill this vision by presenting opera productions, recitals, concerts and Black History programs that feature celebrated and rising African-American artists, as well as providing an array of education and outreach programs — the company's Opera in the Schools reaches 3,200 children each year. The company's 2008 season featured concert performances of three operas by prominent African-American composers: *A Bayou Legend* (William Grant Still), *Blake* (H. Leslie Adams) and *Egypt's Nights* (Leslie Savoy Burrs).

Strategies with the most potential to motivate donations are showing potential donors that a company needs all levels of donations and appreciates even small gifts, and communicating that donations allow a company to do the highest quality of work. While Philadelphia's opera companies can use these findings in creating development messages, they must realize that the most persuasive messages often vary from company to company.

Direct mail and e-mail, in addition to The Philadelphia Inquirer, are the ways operagoers most often get programming information. Companies should utilize these media if their resources permit.

### Looking Forward

As with all research efforts led by OPERA America on behalf of its members, the final report is really the first step. This summer, the Philadelphia opera community began a concerted effort to work together and develop initiatives that responded to the findings in the report. "The research has given us a quantifiable reason for OCP to work with others in our community for cross-promotion," says David Devan, managing director of Opera Company of Philadelphia. "The smaller companies are very good at retention. Their numbers may be smaller, but they are committed. On the other hand, their attraction efforts are not as effective, because they can't market on the same scale that we can. If we work together, we hope we can maximize our strengths. I think being in a multi-opera community provides more opportunities than barriers.

"The study indicates far less crossover than any of us expected," continues Devan. "Clearly just putting the information out there — listings on our Web site — isn't doing it. That's too passive. We have to be targeted and direct to change behavior. We want to work on targeting a set of customers who have been in our system for three years but who have not attended opera elsewhere. What happens if we offer them a discount to see *Lucia* at AVA? The research shows that the more opera people see, the more opera they will see." ©

Special thanks to TRG Arts and Shugoll Research, as well as all the companies that participated in this project. Have a question you'd like to investigate? OPERA America is pleased to partner with its member companies on regional research projects that may illuminate a particular issue for the field. For more information, contact MScorca@operaamerica.org.

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# Recognizing American Opera's Brightest Lights

By Barrymore Laurence Scherer

**W**ith the exceptions of chant and unaccompanied solo song, opera is probably classical music's oldest continuous genre. Invented just before 1600, it predates the symphony and string quartet, as well as the multi-movement concerto, all of them 18<sup>th</sup>-century developments. Therefore, it is no small matter that America, which as a nation came relatively late to opera, has produced an enormous wealth of operatic talent. OPERA America counts 114 professional companies in 43 states in its membership. Over half of these companies were established after 1970, and one quarter of the total were established since 1980.

The success of opera within the United States, in any era, can be traced to the talented individuals — from singers to impresarios — who devote their life to the art form. In celebration of these individuals, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), under the leadership of Chairman Dana Gioia, has established a new lifetime achievement award: the NEA Opera Honors. The inaugural recipients of the award — Leontyne Price, Carlisle Floyd, Richard Gaddes and James Levine — will be officially recognized on October 31, 2008 in Washington, D.C.

Although these awards mark the first time the U.S. government has honored individual achievement in opera, our country boasts a rich legacy of opera talent. Not surprisingly, American singers were the first of our artists to claim their place on the international stage. Victorian pioneers like Clara Louise Kellogg and Emma Nevada were succeeded in the earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century by a growing contingent of unimpeachable American stars: Geraldine Farrar, Rosa Ponselle, Grace Moore and Lawrence Tibbett are but four stellar names in a constellation that continued to expand after World War II.

That post-war era also witnessed the rise of American opera itself as more and more composers struck pay dirt with new works that proved themselves 20<sup>th</sup>-century classics. In this endeavor they were supported by the increasingly noteworthy efforts of American conductors, stage directors and impresarios, whose ranks grew exponentially through each decade and whose combined artistry not only built an ever-broadening public for opera but also transformed this nation from an imitator of European opera into a distinctive creative and musical influence.

Admittedly, opera in America has been up against the same challenges that face the rest of the fine arts in recent years, obliged to compete for the attention of a public distracted by other attractions for its leisure time. Nevertheless, opera continues to captivate audiences with new works, with new interpretations of standard repertoire and with innovative methods to educate and expand the opera-loving public. Thanks to the apparently limitless energies of gifted, creative participants in what is essentially the most glorious, satisfying — and admittedly maddening — business on earth, the American opera industry is thriving. The inaugural recipients of the NEA Opera Honors display the talent and dedication that have been so important to the continued growth of the field.

## Leontyne Price



Leontyne Price in the world premiere of Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra*. Photo by Louis Melançon and courtesy of The Metropolitan Opera Archives.

Described by Harold C. Schonberg in *The New York Times* as “the Stradivarius of singers,” Price has long embraced the music of American composers — she made her 1952 Paris debut in Virgil Thomson’s *Four Saints in Three Acts* and subsequently toured Vienna, Berlin, London, Paris and other cities as Bess in the Robert Breen production of *Porgy and Bess* (opposite William Warfield as Porgy and Cab Calloway as Sportin’ Life). Of all American composers, however, Price enjoyed a particularly fruitful relationship with Samuel Barber. In 1954, she gave the premiere of his *Hermit Songs* at New York City’s Town Hall, with the composer at the piano, and Barber went on to write many pieces for her, not the least of which was the role of Cleopatra in his opera, *Antony and Cleopatra*, composed for the opening night of the new Metropolitan Opera House at Lincoln Center.

Price’s recitals always include songs by American composers and Negro spirituals. Many of her performances have been widely viewed on special telecasts. In 1997, Price’s own book, *Aida*, introduced children to one of opera’s greatest heroines. She continues to be a powerful advocate not only for the art she loves, but for human rights.

## Carlisle Floyd

**Carlisle Floyd** has been the embodiment of an American classic for over half a century, thanks not just to his ability to compose music of immense dramatic power and memorable lyrical appeal, but also to a sensitive linguistic ear that has enabled him to match his beautifully crafted music to the authentic cadences of regional American speech. Two of his works, *Susannah* (1955) and *Of Mice and Men* (1970), are as much a part of the standard repertoire as the operas of Mozart, Verdi and Puccini, while other Floyd operas, among them *The Passion of Jonathan Wade* (1962; revised, 1990), *Bilby’s Doll* (1976), *Willie Stark* (1981) and *Cold Sassy Tree* (2000) are widely performed in the United States and abroad.

Moreover, as a teacher, Floyd has forged a concomitant legacy. In 1976, after teaching at South Florida University since 1947, he was appointed the M. D. Anderson Professor of Music at the University of Houston. In Houston, he and David Gockley established the Houston Grand Opera Studio, which for more than three decades has helped train young artists in the full spectrum of opera.



Carlisle Floyd and Catherine Malfitano, who created the role of Doll Bilby in the Houston Grand Opera premiere of *Bilby’s Doll*. Photo courtesy of Houston Grand Opera Archives.

## Richard Gaddes



The Santa Fe Opera. Photo by Robert Reck and courtesy of The Santa Fe Opera.

**Richard Gaddes** has devoted much of his professional life to nurturing two of the nation's most important regional opera companies: The Santa Fe Opera and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. He joined the former as artistic administrator in 1969 at the invitation of its founder, the late John Crosby. In 1976, he himself founded the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, remaining at the helm until 1985. Meanwhile, he maintained his ties with Santa Fe as a consultant, returning there full-time in 1994 and succeeding Crosby as general director. Throughout his tenure at both companies, Gaddes made a reputation for programming much adventurous repertoire, both old and new, imaginative casting and productions, building audiences and spotting young stars before others did. A former vice president of OPERA America, he has served on many arts boards and is, at present, a member of the board of directors of the Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts. His list of honors includes the National Institute for Music Theatre Award and the Young Audiences' Cultural Achievement Award. For Gaddes, there is a poignant valedictory note to his selection for an NEA Opera Honor, for it comes on the eve of his retirement this September from The Santa Fe Opera.

## James Levine

The orchestra **James Levine** first conducted upon his arrival at the Metropolitan Opera in 1971 was hardly the sleek, finely-tuned symphonic instrument it is today. Indeed, with all due respect to his superb gifts as an interpreter of a wide repertoire of opera and symphony, one of his greatest achievements as an American conductor has been to transform the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra into one of the finest orchestras in the world. Moreover, in an era characterized by the jet-setting maestro spending relatively brief time in one place, Levine has been a throwback to an earlier age.

During Levine's almost four decades as the company's music director, he and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra have been an admirable fixture in the operatic firmament. He has led Met premieres of works by numerous composers, including Mozart, Verdi, Stravinsky, Berg, Schoenberg, Rossini, Berlioz and Weill, as well as the world premieres of two American operas, John Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles* and John Harbison's *The Great Gatsby*. In addition, he established an ongoing series of concerts with the Met Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, exploring symphonic repertoire and thus further honing their musical versatility. At the same time, Levine has continued to work as an accompanist and chamber musician, and has led orchestras around the world, forging especially close relationships with the Vienna Philharmonic and Chicago Symphony orchestras. From 1999 to 2004, he was chief conductor of the Munich Philharmonic. In 2004, Levine became music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, with which he has continued to champion American music, introducing new works by such composers as Elliott Carter, William Bolcom, Milton Babbitt, Charles Wuorinen and John Harbison.



James Levine. Photo by Koichi Miura.

Not only are these NEA Opera Honors of profound national significance, they also represent a personal triumph for the man who conceived of them, the distinguished poet, music critic and NEA Chairman, Dana Gioia. A native Californian of Italian and Mexican descent, Gioia is an award-winning poet whose three full-length collections of poetry, as well as eight chapbooks, have achieved international acclaim. His 1991 volume *Can Poetry Matter?* was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle award, and as an influential critic he is credited with helping to revive the role of poetry in American public culture. His poetry collection, *Interrogations at Noon*, won the 2002 American Book Award. Since 2003, when he became chairman of the NEA, Gioia has garnered enthusiastic bi-partisan support in the United States Congress for the mission of the Arts Endowment. Moreover, he has strengthened the national consensus in favor of public funding for the arts and arts education. (*Business Week* magazine referred to him as “The Man Who Saved the NEA.”)

While writing this article, I addressed a series of questions to Chairman Gioia, and his answers are not only illuminating, but eloquent, powerful statements about the state of the arts today:

***These awards represent the very first NEA Opera Honors. Can you tell me how this idea came to pass?***

The U.S. government does not do enough to recognize and honor the nation’s artists. This indifference is apparent everywhere in official federal culture. Let me offer just one example of our governmental mindset. If you look at the currency of European nations, it often bears the portraits of composers, poets and painters — Verdi, Mozart, Goethe, Pushkin, Elgar, Dante. American currency invariably bears the portraits of presidents and cabinet members. Art is not officially considered an enterprise of national pride or importance.

When I arrived at the NEA six years ago, I felt that once we resolved the various problems the agency faced — and there were a great many at that time — we needed to address the larger cultural issues, especially the increasing marginalization of the arts in our society. A new class of official national honors seemed like one worthy project to undertake. It took the U.S. over 200 years to create its first official arts award, the National Medal of Arts, in 1985. There had been no new award created in a quarter of a century.

***Why do you feel this an opportune moment to create this award?***

Let me answer this question in two ways — one political, the other artistic. In political terms, the moment to create these new awards was right because we have now successfully rebuilt the public credibility of the Arts Endowment. After being caught up in destructive controversies for nearly 20 years, we have re-established the agency’s leadership and created a new consensus in Washington about the importance of federal support for arts and arts education.

In artistic terms, opera seemed a wonderful place to begin. Opera encompasses both music and theater with all the associated arts. And in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, American opera has indisputably come of age. Our singers, musicians, composers, directors, designers and companies are second to none in the world. Most important perhaps, we have entered a great age for new opera and are seeing the creation of an American operatic repertory.



Dana Gioia, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, discusses Leontyne Price’s award during the NEA Opera Honors session at the 2008 National Performing Arts Convention in Denver, CO. Photo © Glenn Ross/National Performing Arts Convention.





Dana Gioia, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts; Plácido Domingo, general director of Washington National Opera; Marc A. Scorca, president and CEO of OPERA America; and Wayne Brown, director of music and opera at the National Endowment for the Arts, answer questions about the NEA Opera Honors at the May 13, 2008 press conference in New York City. Photo by Katherine Ehle/OPERA America.

***How are these different from, say, the Opera News awards?***

The main difference is that the NEA Opera Honors come from the U.S. government. These are official federal awards like the National Medal of Arts. They represent the federal government officially honoring artists for their contributions to the nation. The NEA awards also contain a \$25,000 stipend — the same as our lifetime achievement award in jazz.

***Will there be future awards and if so, will they include other opera creators (stage directors, designers, orchestras, opera companies)?***

The NEA Opera Honors will be an annual event. We will continue to honor great singers, composers, musicians and advocates. I also expect that future awards will be expanded to include other important contributors to American opera. Opera is an intrinsically collaborative art, and the Arts Endowment will try to reflect that quality in the awards. Anyone can nominate an individual or creative team for consideration for future awards.

***Is this a kind of lifetime achievement award? Are there specific achievements attributable to each honoree for which they were chosen?***

Yes, the NEA Opera Honors are lifetime achievement awards. They are intended to celebrate individuals who have made a significant historical contribution to the art. The honorees should be people who have worked at the summit of the art.

***Are there thoughts of creating an award for rising opera personalities (as opposed to established ones)?***

No one award program can achieve every goal. The NEA Opera Honors are intended to be a highly visible national award from the United States of America to recognize artistic achievement of the highest level. The awards are designed to focus the nation's attention on a few great artists. This goal will be difficult enough to accomplish in our increasingly dumbed-down public culture. By honoring the greats in opera, we will be increasing the stature and saliency of the entire field, which will benefit everyone in the art. The NEA has other means of helping rising talent in our hundreds of regular grants.

***And, most important, what does this new award mean, both to you as a poet and notable librettist and to the national and international opera community?***

As an American poet, I am proud to have helped nudge the nation to acknowledge, perhaps even to cherish, the extraordinary artistic genius it possesses. Art and artists have a larger role to play in American society than either they or the government currently admit.

These changes have a special meaning for the American opera community, which has so often been seen as rarified and elitist. This award recognizes that opera is a foundational civic art that enriches the lives of the community and the nation. Europeans understand the civic nature of the performing arts. I learned that lesson at home from the Italian side of my own family. It's odd how these things unfold. What began with my Sicilian father playing me Caruso records as a child will end up as an official ceremony in Washington. @

For more information about attending the Awards Concert in Washington, D.C. and to learn about how your organization can participate in extending awareness about the NEA Opera Honors and the 2008 Honorees, please contact Peter McDowell at [PMcdowell@operaamerica.org](mailto:PMcdowell@operaamerica.org) or by telephone at 212-796-8620, ext. 204.

# The Performing Arts Community Speaks

by Kelley Rourke



From left: Daniel Stone, senior associate of AmericaSpeaks, facilitates the AmericaSpeaks Town Hall Meeting at NPAC. A Frequent Flyers aerialist performs at the NPAC Opening Party. Conferees participate in an AmericaSpeaks Caucus session at NPAC. Photos © Glenn Ross/National Performing Arts Convention.

**T**he 2008 *National Performing Arts Convention* (NPAC) was staffed largely by individuals from each of the participating national service organizations. Most of us were assigned roles similar to those we took at our own conferences — speaker wrangler, session monitor, registration clerk. Twelve of us found ourselves embarking on a new adventure as part of the “Theme Team” — a group assigned to work with the staff of AmericaSpeaks to develop a common agenda based on discussions held by nearly 4,000 people at some 200 different tables in 10 different rooms.

Collecting and synthesizing information was not really a new task for me and my colleagues: our jobs regularly require us to condense two days of intense discussion among, say 30 singer training professionals, into a brief report. However, none of us had ever attempted such an enormous project. A total of 3,739 members of the performing arts community, representing 1,813 organizations and all 50 states, attended the 2008 *National Performing Arts Convention*. (Nearly 600 of those delegates joined us for *Opera Conference 2008*.)

AmericaSpeaks, an organization based in Washington, D.C., specializes in large scale “town meetings” — it has led thousands of individuals in building consensus around such topics as the redevelopment of the World Trade Center site, the rebuilding of post-Katrina New Orleans, statewide health care reform in California and the national childhood obesity epidemic. A team of experts from AmericaSpeaks led the performing arts community in identifying our collective strengths and weaknesses, and eventually developing an action agenda.

Three Caucus sessions were held over the course of the Convention. At each one, delegates were randomly assigned to tables of 10, led by a trained facilitator who summarized group decisions on worksheets. One or two members of the Theme Team roved each room. Once each Caucus session was completed, we reviewed worksheets, sorting them into common themes and counting how frequently each idea or issue came up. We then copied themes onto large Post-it notes and placed them on easels, grouping common ideas together and finally drafting statements that best represented the intent of the delegates — based on both the worksheets and the discussions we heard.

On the final day of the Convention, all delegates gathered together for a 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Town Meeting. By that point, the AmericaSpeaks process had allowed us to identify three key challenges/opportunities, as well as a variety of strategies for approaching them. Using hand-held electronic voting devices, the community voted on — and committed to — strategies to advance the field. For each challenge, we identified initiatives to be undertaken on a national level (led by national service organizations), on a local level (led by the performing arts community within a particular region) and on an individual/organizational level. The top choices in each category are listed below; visit [www.performingartsconvention.org](http://www.performingartsconvention.org) for more information.

**The Challenge/Opportunity: The increasing diversity of our communities creates an opportunity to engage a variety of ages, races, identities and cultures in our audiences and organizations.**

**National Strategies:**

- Charge national service organizations to create dialogue at convenings, create training programs, promote diverse art and artists and partner with grassroots organizations that are already connected to diverse communities - 43%
- Diversify boards, management and staff in all national arts organizations - 26%
- Create a media campaign with artists from diverse communities, including celebrities, to provide exposure to diverse art - 15%

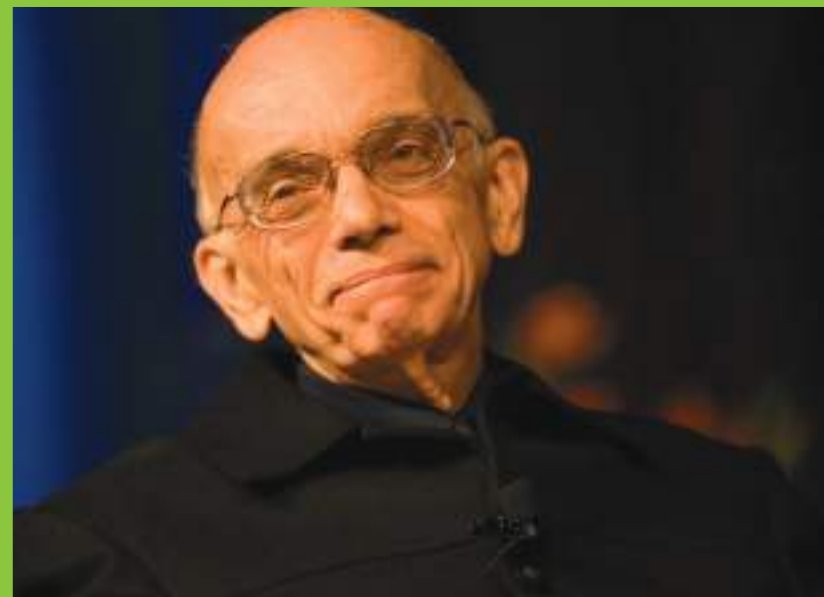
**Local Strategies:**

- Open an honest dialogue across community groups and sectors to share priorities and identify barriers to participation - 31%
- Partner within the arts, as well as with community organizations, to build relationships - 23%
- Expand beyond traditional venues to establish new points of access - 17%

**Organizational/Individual Strategies:**

- Discover arts in your community offered by cultures other than your own and establish peer relationships - 37%
- Set a long term-goal and plan to have staff, board, programming and audiences reflect the demographics of your community - 32%
- Program more diverse artists and content - 15%

“Institutions have become more concerned with their own stability and growth than that of artists. If the institutions don’t put the artists first, no one else is going to.”



From left: Conferees participate in the the AmericaSpeaks Town Hall Meeting at NPAC. José Antonio Abreu addresses conferees at the “Radical Ideas from Beyond Our Borders” general session at NPAC. Photos © Glenn Ross/National Performing Arts Convention.



From left: The Denver March Pow\*Wow performs at "The Power of Community Building" general session at NPAC. Eric Booth addresses conferees during the AmericaSpeaks Town Hall Meeting at NPAC. Photos © Glenn Ross/National Performing Arts Convention.

## The Challenge/Opportunity: The potential of arts education and lifelong learning in the arts is under-realized.

### National Strategies:

- Devise an advocacy campaign to promote the inclusion of performing arts in core curricula - 36%
- Enlist artists as full partners in all aspects of arts education through training and creating an AmeriCorps/WPA-type program - 22%
- Lobby for education reform, including rescinding No Child Left Behind - 20%

### Local Strategies:

- Mobilize and collaborate with K-12 and higher education institutions to strengthen arts education and arts participation as core curriculum - 23%
- Strengthen relationships with school boards and policy makers through lobbying, electing arts-friendly officials, involvement in local politics - 17%
- Integrate arts teaching in educators' professional development and integrate teaching programs in artist organizations - 16%

### Organizational/Individual Strategies

- Lead lifelong education programs that actively involve people in multigenerational groups; make the arts part of a lifelong wellness plan - 23%
- Directly engage teachers to integrate the arts into their teaching and create professional development programs to address their needs - 19%
- Commit your entire organization to arts education in mission, budget, programs and collaborations - 13%

“We haven’t told our story well enough. Look at science. It can take 25 years and millions of dollars of public funds to come up with a cure for a disease. No one criticizes scientists for 24 years of ‘failure.’ I want to see the same kind of thinking around making art.”

**The Challenge/Opportunity: Our communities do not sufficiently perceive the value, benefits and relevance of the arts, which makes advocacy and building public support for the arts a challenge at every level.**

**National Strategies:**

- Organize a national media campaign with celebrity spokespersons, catchy slogans (e.g., “Got Milk”), unified message and compelling stories - 27%
- Create a Department of Culture/Cabinet-level position which is responsible for implementing a national arts policy - 23%
- Lobby elected political officials for pro-arts policy and funding; demand arts policy platform from candidates - 14%

**Local Strategies:**

- Create an arts coalition to get involved in local decision-making, take leadership positions and strengthen relationships with elected officials - 21%
- Forge partnerships with other sectors to identify how the arts can serve community needs - 21%
- Foster cross-disciplinary conversations to share data and best practices, develop common goals and create joint activities/performances - 14%

**Organizational/Individual Strategies**

- Build relationships with non-arts groups, including governments, corporations, community development organizations, etc. - 26%
- Create opportunities for active participation in the arts for all ages (including interactive Web sites, open rehearsals, etc.) - 24%
- Expand relationships across the community to find and develop new leaders (e.g., through board development) and local champions for the arts - 12%

The AmericaSpeaks process was exhaustive — and exhilarating. However, identifying opportunities and strategies is only a first step. The national service organizations have committed to working on national strategies to advance the performing arts community, and we will be seeking the assistance and input of our members as we move forward on the agenda we defined together. Over the coming months, we will be working with our constituencies to interpret the results and ensure our plans honor the spirit of the robust discussions that took place in Denver. We also look forward to learning about the initiatives you undertake at a local, organizational and individual level. @



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# The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD: Who Attends, and Why?

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*The Metropolitan Opera: Live in HD* transmissions represent the biggest news in recent operatic history. During the 2007-2008 season, the second year of the initiative, the HD transmissions reached a total worldwide audience of more than 935,000. (The collective membership of OPERA America reported an annual live opera attendance of approximately 3.7 million in 2006, the most recent year for which data is available.)

What does this mean for the Met, and what does it mean for opera across the country? Most regional companies have found opportunities to study and participate in the new phenomenon in their region. In many cases, they have encouraged existing patrons to attend, and they have established a presence in movie theaters to entice movie-goers to attend live, local opera. They have observed audiences closely, noting how they are different from — and similar to — the audiences in their theaters.

While the anecdotal information gathered by individual opera companies has sparked a number of interesting discussions, opera professionals were hungry for more data. OPERA America, in cooperation with the Metropolitan Opera, partnered with **Shugoll Research** and a number of member companies to survey audiences and analyze the impact of the Met's HD transmissions. The survey, the first of its kind, had the following goals:

- Profile the HD audience
- Determine the preferred form of opera: Live or HD
- Identify reasons for attending the HD transmissions
- Assess reactions to HD transmissions
- Identify the attendance decision process

## Methodology

OPERA America asked its member companies across the U.S. and Canada to distribute surveys in movie theaters showing two HD broadcasts — *La bohème* and *Peter Grimes*. Shugoll Research created the

questionnaire, with input from both OPERA America and the Metropolitan Opera. Staff from 34 opera companies in 32 different metropolitan areas handed out questionnaires and pencils to people entering each theater. Before the transmission began, at intermissions, and at the end of the program, staff collected completed surveys, which also could be left in collection boxes.

A total of 263 surveys were made available to each opera company for distribution. If company representatives surveyed at both *La bohème* and *Peter Grimes* (not all did), they handed out half the surveys at each performance. The number 263 surveys per company was determined based on an estimated response rate of 38% and the desire to receive about 100 surveys per company. A total of 100 surveys is adequate to provide some broad analysis by market. At most companies, more than 100 surveys were collected. The total received was 5,306. Assuming all 8,942 surveys were handed out (an unlikely assumption), the response rate was a very strong 59%. This provides data for the total sample that are accurate within +/- 1.37% at a 95% confidence level.

Because the profile of the audience attending may be impacted by the appeal of the operas shown, the project team intentionally included a traditional, popular opera (*La bohème*) and a more contemporary one (*Peter Grimes*).

Shugoll Research keypunched the self-administered questionnaires, tabulated the data and produced the final report. The analysis, conclusions and recommendations excerpted below represent the views of the project team. To view the complete report, log in at [www.operaamerica.org](http://www.operaamerica.org).

## ConCluSionS And ReCoMMendA tionS

*The transmissions have shown success in attracting people (about one in five attendees) who have not been to live opera in the last two years, and some who*

have never attended opera at all. The core audience for HD transmissions is moderate and frequent opera goers. Programming choices appear to have an effect. Recent non-attendees of live opera were twice as likely to see *La bohème*, a more traditional opera, than *Peter Grimes*, a more contemporary opera.

Attendees find the ticket price for HD transmissions reasonable. This suggests there may be room to increase prices and still retain audience. However, the moderate price may account for the larger number of people attending.

The Met HD transmissions are quite popular as a new/additional way to experience opera. About three quarters of the respondents in the survey attended for the second time or more, and high numbers say they will continue to attend in the future. Further, the majority say they enjoy attending both the Met's HD transmissions and live opera equally. They also realize that HD doesn't replace live opera — most say they are very likely to attend live opera in the future.

Just over half attending Met HD transmissions say they are very likely to attend a performance at the Met if they are in New York. This suggests that the HD transmissions portray the Met brand very positively.

A portion of those who have not attended opera in the last two years say they are very likely to attend live opera in the future or attend a performance at the Met if they are in New York. This implies that the HD transmissions may serve to reintroduce these recent non-attendees to opera. Some non-attendees specifically say they went to the HD transmissions to see if they liked opera. Thus, the transmissions may truly be creating a new audience for opera. These findings are something that will benefit regional companies and the Met alike.

While some attended an HD transmission to see what it is all about, the most important reasons for going are a desire to see the specific opera offered and to see as much opera as possible. While not the primary reason for attending, supporting reasons include the accessibility of the transmissions, particularly their convenient location, the physical comfort of the theater, availability of parking and price.

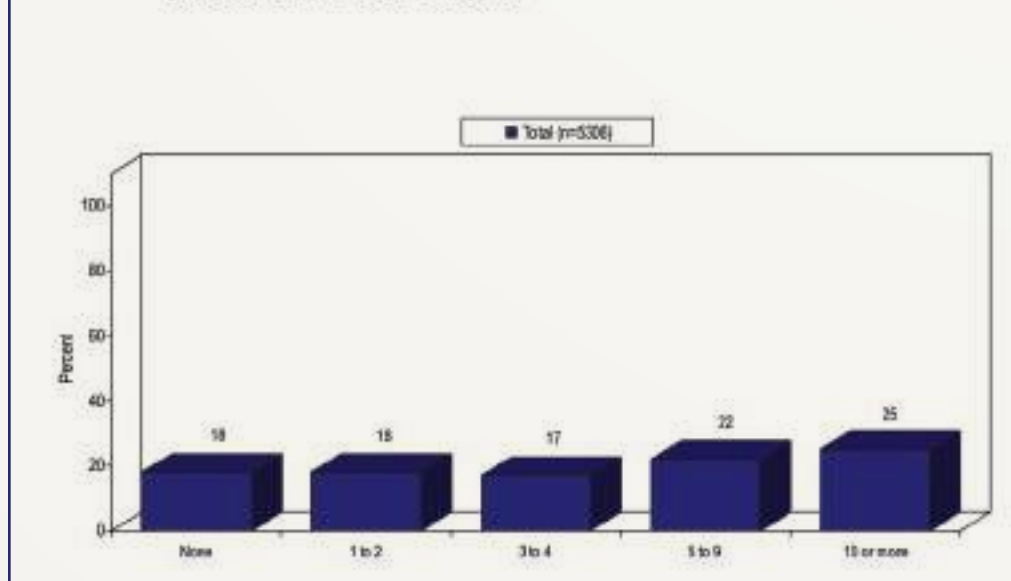
### AudienCe PProfile

Nearly one in five (18%) of HD transmission attendees have not been to a live opera in the last two years (see Figure 1). This suggests that the transmissions do bring a significant number of people not currently attending live opera to performances. Nevertheless, the core audience attending HD transmissions are moderate opera goers (35% attended live opera 1-4 times in the last two years) and frequent opera goers (47% attended 5 or more performances in the last two years, with 25% attending 10 or more).

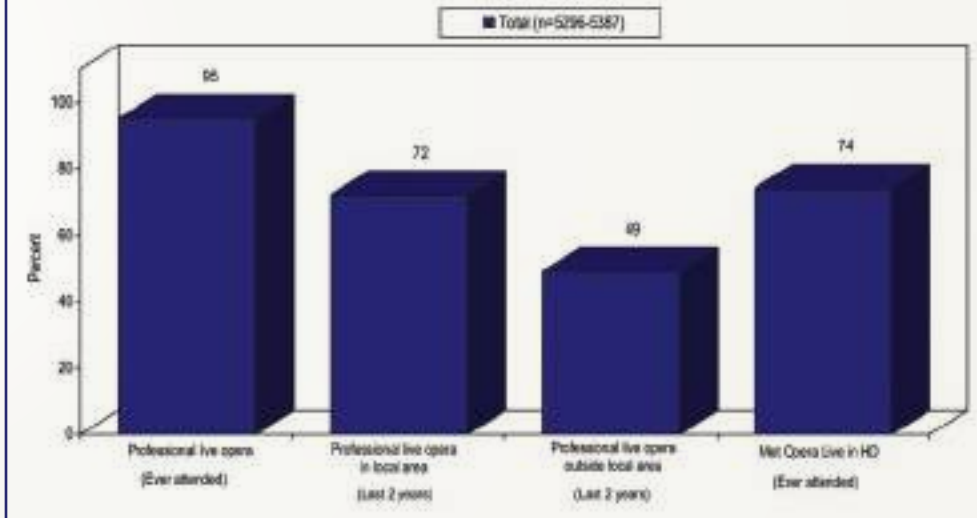
The number of recent non-opera attendees varies by city and is as high as about one out of every three in the HD audience. There does not seem to be a relationship between the size of city or prominence of opera companies in a market and the number of recent non-attendees.

Of those who had not attended live opera in the past two years, 27% had never seen a live opera

**Figure 1: Number Of Live Opera Performances Attended In Last 2 Years**

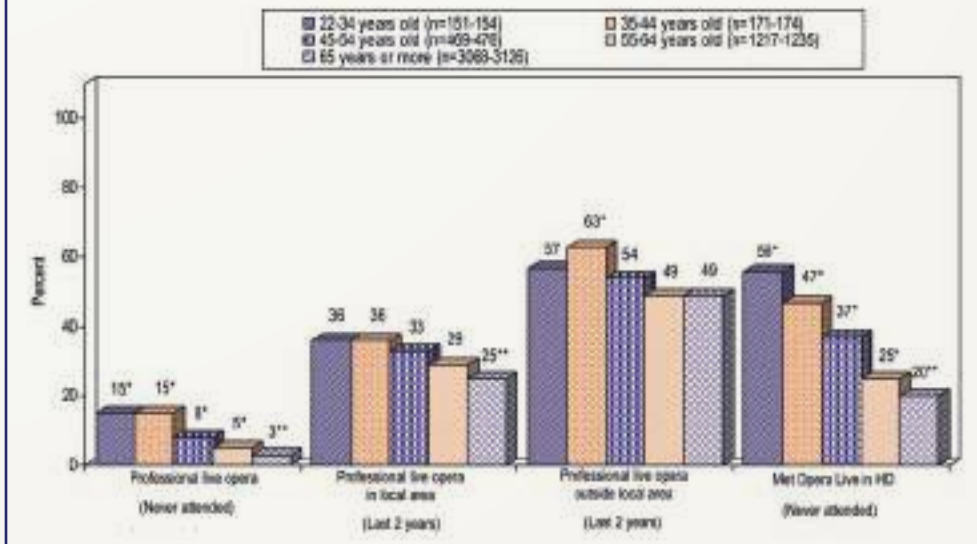


**Figure 4: Previous Opera Attendance**



live opera in the last two years specifically in their local area. Nearly half of HD attendees (49%) saw live opera outside their home market in the last two years, suggesting significant interest in opera. Interestingly, additional analysis shows that of those attending live opera, 7% only attended outside their local area, 31% attended only locally and 41% attended both locally and outside the area. The Met HD transmissions have a high return rate. Nearly three quarters (74%) had previously attended a transmission (again, see Figure 4).

**Figure 5: Percent Not Previously Attended Opera By Age**



The likelihood of having never been to the opera is slightly higher for “non-traditional” opera-going segments including those under age 45 (15% each of those 22-34 and 35-44) (see Figure 5), non-whites (10%) (see Figure 6), and those with incomes under \$50,000 (7%) (see Figure 7). It also is higher for first time HD attendees (11%) (see Figure 8).

These same groups are also slightly less likely to have been to the opera in their local area in the last two years than their colleagues. Thirty-six percent each of those 22-34 and 35-44 years old did not attend, nor did 34%

performance. This nets out to about 5% of all Met HD transmission attendees who have never seen live opera. Looked at another way, 95% of those attending a transmission have attended live opera at some time (see Figure 4). Nearly three out of four (72%) saw

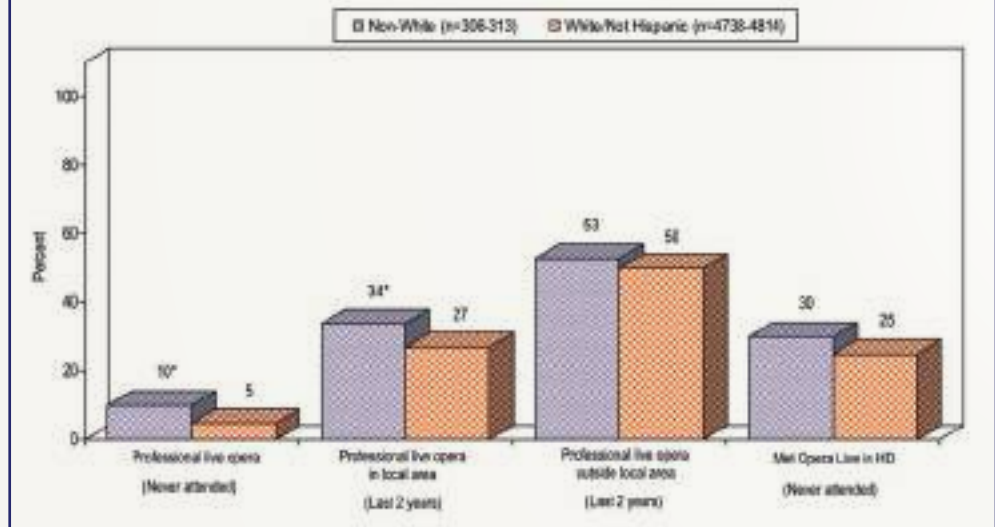
of non-whites and 34% of those with incomes under \$50,000.

It appears that the type of opera shown impacts the HD audience profile. For the traditional opera *La bohème*, about one quarter (24%) of the HD audience



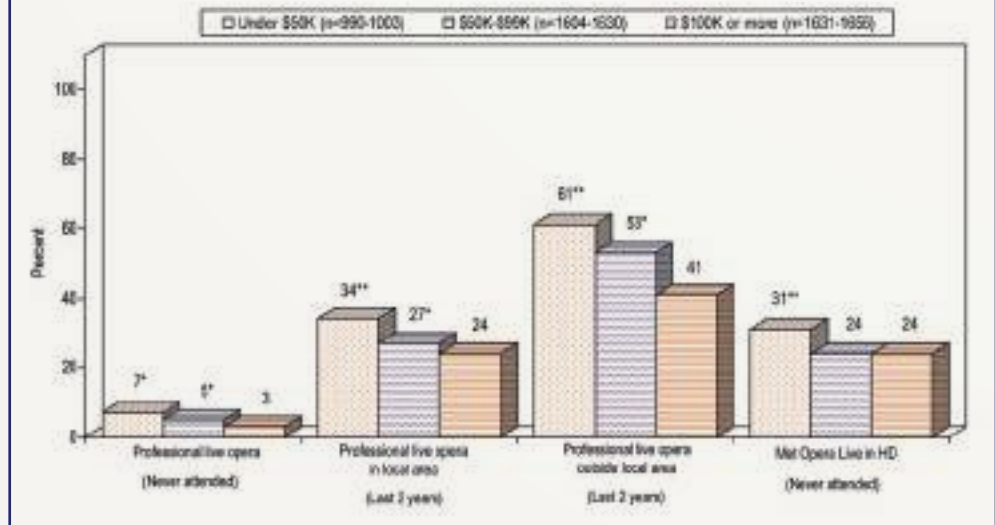
had not seen live opera in the last two years. This number drops to 12% for the more contemporary *Peter Grimes*. Conversely, about one in three (34%) in attendance at *Peter Grimes* saw 10 or more live operas in the last two years versus 16% for *La bohème*. Similarly, *La bohème* attracted fewer people who had at some time attended live opera than *Peter Grimes* (93% vs. 97%), who had seen local live opera in the last two years (66% vs. 80%), seen live opera out of town (43% vs. 58%), and seen a previous HD transmission (70% vs. 80%).

**Figure 6: Percent Not Previously Attended Opera By Ethnicity**



Few parties attending the transmissions included people younger than 25 years old (6%), with 1% of all parties having someone under 13, 1% having someone from 13 to 17, and 4% having someone from 18 to 24. The choice of operas studied may have impacted the number of younger attendees. One might expect more at operas more typically marketed to a younger audience — such as *The Magic Flute* or *Hansel and Gretel* — or, for a teenage and 20-something audience, *Romeo and Juliet*.

**Figure 7: Percent Not Previously Attended Opera By Income**

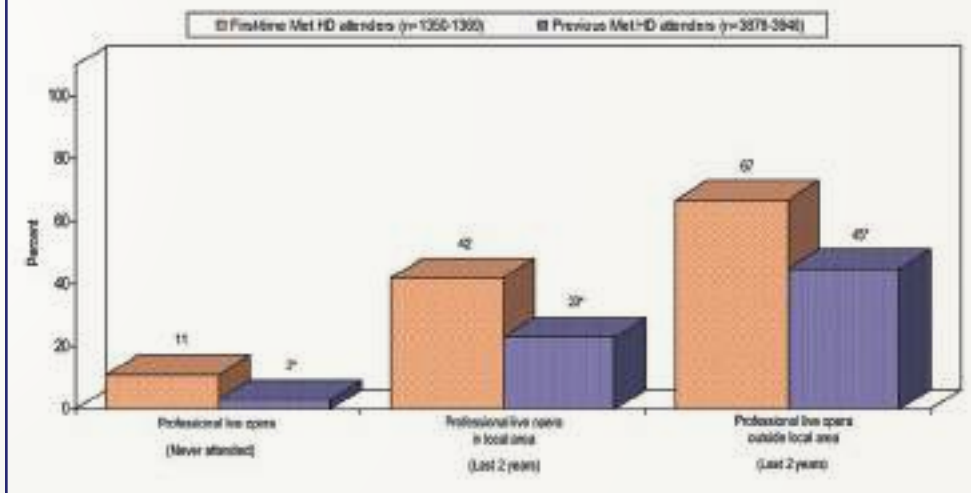


Most people attending the transmissions came with others (14% came alone). Most had two people in their party (45%), with a significant number having 3-4 people (30%) and some having 5 or more (11%).

The people attending HD transmissions are highly “involved” in opera and the Metropolitan Opera (see

Figure 14). In the last two years, most (72%) have listened to a Met Saturday matinee radio broadcast. Significant numbers have subscribed to *Opera News* (28%), seen opera live at the Met (25%), been a member of the Metropolitan Opera (21%) and listened to the Met on SIRIUS Satellite Radio or Rhapsody online (11%).

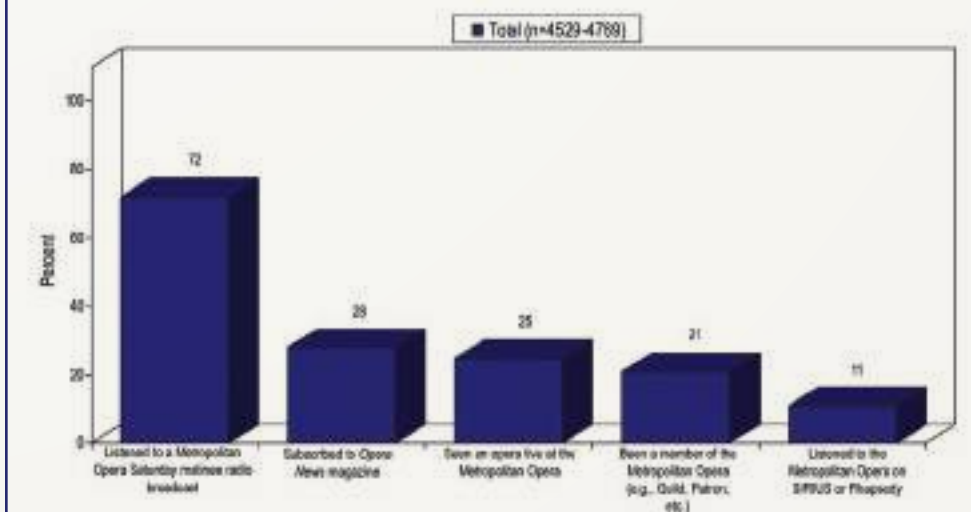
**Figure 8: Percent Not Previously Attended Opera By Previous Met HD Experience**



While more frequent live opera attendees (those who have seen five or more operas in the last two years) are more likely than less frequent or non-attendees to say they prefer live performances, over half say they like both.

Interestingly, younger HD attendees are more likely to say they prefer to attend live opera over HD transmissions than older people. Despite the lower ticket prices, there are no differences between those with incomes under \$50,000 and those with higher incomes in their preference for attending HD transmissions versus live opera.

**Figure 14: Opera "Involvement"**



**ReASons for Attending hd tRAnSMiSSions**

When asked to name the one most important reason for attending an HD transmission, most (73%) said they wanted to see that particular opera. A small number were curious and said they wanted to see what *The Met: Live in HD* is all about (14%). Those attending *Peter Grimes* (76%) and *La bohème* (71%) are equally likely to say they came primarily because they

wanted to see that particular opera. No other factor tested is a prime reason for attending.

**PReFeRRed foRM of oPeRA**

HD transmissions have certainly found an audience that enjoys them. When asked which they prefer to attend, HD transmissions or in person opera performances, over half (58%) said they enjoy both and 15% actually prefer going to the HD transmissions. About a quarter (27%) acknowledge they prefer live opera.

Since more than one factor may be involved in attending an HD transmission, respondents evaluated the importance of seven other reasons for attending. The additional factor, more important than all others tested, is that they love opera and want to see as

much as possible (73%) (see Figure 20). Mentioned as very important by moderate numbers of people are several attributes of HD transmissions: convenient location (54%), physical comfort of theater (49%), ease of parking (41%) and ticket cost (40%). A small number wanted to see if they liked opera (12%).

When looking at non-traditional attendee groups (infrequent opera attendees, first-time HD attendees, those under 45 years old, non-whites and those with incomes under \$100,000) all groups have the same factors in their top three reasons for attending: want to see as much opera as possible, convenient location and physical comfort of theater. Infrequent opera goers, first time HD attendees, and younger respondents mention seeing as much opera as possible less often than other respondents, but still say it is an important reason for attending. The physical comfort of the theater is particularly important to non-whites, as is ticket price to those with incomes under \$50,000.

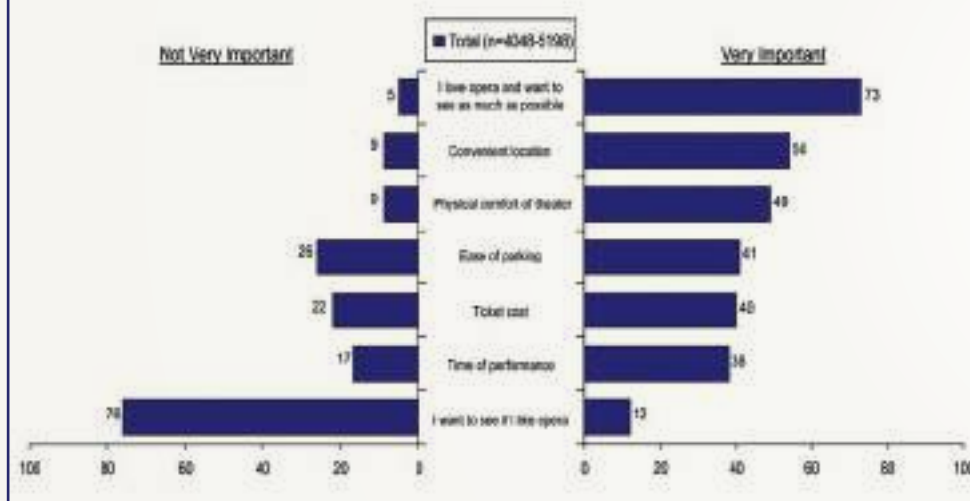
A fair number of recent non-attendees (25%) say a very important reason for attending was to see if they like opera. This is additional evidence that the HD transmissions are playing a role in creating new audiences for opera.

### AudienCe ReActionS to hd tRAnSMiSSionS

Nearly all respondents find the ticket price to HD transmissions at least somewhat reasonable (96%) and the largest number say they are very reasonable (65%). All non-traditional attendee subgroups agree that prices are at least somewhat reasonable. However, younger respondents age 22-34 (34%) and 35-44 (47%) are much less likely to say prices are very reasonable compared to other respondents.

As suggested earlier by the high repeat business rate (those previously attending an HD transmission), nearly

**Figure 20: Importance Of Reasons For Attending**



all respondents (90%) say they are very likely to attend another Met HD transmission. At least two thirds of respondents from each non-traditional opera attendee group say they are very likely to see another Met HD transmission, suggesting the great appeal of the transmissions. The lowest number saying they are very likely to attend again is 69% of 22-34 year olds, still an exceptionally strong number.

Even with the availability of HD transmissions near respondents' homes and the comparatively low cost of tickets, three out of four respondents (75%) say they are very likely to attend live opera in the future and 92% are at least somewhat likely. This suggests the HD transmissions will not deter people from seeking out live opera.

Even a portion of those who haven't been to live opera in the last two years (30%) say they are very likely to attend in the future. This may suggest that the HD transmissions serve to reinvigorate interest in live opera.

About half of those surveyed (51%) say that if they were in New York they would be very likely to attend a live performance at the Met. Thus, the HD transmissions clearly portray the Met brand in a positive light. Over one in four (29%) of those not attending opera in the last two years say they would be very likely to go to the Met if in New York.

## the PRoCeSS of deCiding to Attend

Like live performances, and unlike movies (even though the transmissions were in movie theaters), nearly all ticket buyers (98%) decided to attend the Met HD transmission in advance. If theaters sell out in advance, this could discourage teenagers and those in their 20s, who typically make their entertainment decisions very spontaneously.

Most learned of the HD transmission from either the Met (39%), word of mouth (34%) or press coverage of the series (27%). Thus, the Met's marketing to its own database clearly paid off. Small numbers learned of the transmission from movie theater trailers (11%), newspaper ads (10%), other advertising (10%) or a local opera company (8%).


Those who hadn't seen live opera recently and first-time HD attendees were less likely than others to hear of the transmission from the Met (17% and 15% respectively) and more likely to hear about it from friends, neighbors, colleagues or family (41% and 44% respectively). Those ages 22-34 are the group most

likely to learn of the transmissions from a movie theater trailer (21%).

Few drove long distances to attend a transmission. Most either drove 15 minutes or less (37%) or between 16 and 30 minutes (49%). Only 19% drove more than a half hour to attend.

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The Metropolitan Opera's *Live in HD* initiative was the first of several bold programs designed to make opera accessible to broader audiences in movie houses across the country. OPERA America members continue to explore new ways to utilize this additional point of access to opera in their own communities. As opera companies seek innovative ways to expand their reach, OPERA America looks forward to partnering with them to study methods and results, and to share findings with the field at large. 

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# IN MEMORIAM

**Chicago Opera Theater (COT)** mourns the loss of founder **Alan Stone**, who died Wednesday, July 9, in Lincoln Park at the age of 79. Stone founded Chicago Opera Studio, Inc., which later became Chicago Opera Theater. In addition to the works of Mozart, another COT repertoire characteristic developed under Stone's leadership: American opera. With his guidance, many works received their Chicago professional premieres, including Dominick Argento's *Postcard from Morocco*, Marc Blitzstein's *Regina*, Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah* and *Of Mice and Men*, Lee Hoiby's *Summer and Smoke*, Robert Kurka's *The Good Soldier Schweik*, Virgil Thomson's *The Mother of Us All* and Robert Ward's *The Crucible*. "There simply would be no Chicago Opera Theater without Alan Stone," said current COT General Director Brian Dickie. "COT was his dream, his baby, and his vision. In my early years here in Chicago, I relied much on Alan's great advice, and cherished our

times swapping amusing antidotes over champagne," Dickie continued. "Alan will be greatly missed and the whole of Chicago's opera-loving audience, including myself, will always be immensely grateful for his life's work." COT will dedicate their 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, the 2009 spring festival, to Stone.

Conductor **Nicola Rescigno**, 92, a co-founder of **Lyric Opera of Chicago** and of **The Dallas Opera**, has died of complications following heart failure in a hospital in Viterbo, Italy (near Rome), after suffering a fall. During Lyric Opera of Chicago's inaugural season he led 12 performances of seven operas and, in 1955, 22 performances of eight operas and three ballets. He founded The Dallas Opera in 1957 and again took on the duties of artistic director and principal conductor, opening his first season with *L'italiana in Algeri*. He presented the American debuts of

such major artists as Joan Sutherland, Magda Olivero, Montserrat Caballé, Teresa Berganza, Plácido Domingo and Jon Vickers. Among the American premieres led by Rescigno in Dallas were Handel's *Alcina* (with Sutherland) and Vivaldi's *Orlando furioso* (with Marilyn Horne), the first staged performance of a Vivaldi opera in America. In 1988, Rescigno conducted the world premiere of an American opera, Dominick Argento's *The Aspern Papers*, which was telecast by PBS. In 1974, Rescigno was given the title of general director in Dallas; he returned to being exclusively artistic director following the appointment of Plato Karayanis as general director three years later. Rescigno's survivors include Joseph Rescigno, an American opera conductor who is artistic advisor and principal conductor of the Florentine Opera (Milwaukee, WI). The Dallas Opera will dedicate the performances of the 2008-2009 season to Rescigno. 🌱

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# IN THE WORKS

BY MEGAN YOUNG

## A Listing of New Works and Works in Progress

The ever-expanding landscape of opera can attribute much of its momentum to the development of new opera and music-theater works. OPERA America has been a leader in encouraging new works for more than two decades. Several initiatives, beginning with *Opera for the 80s and Beyond*, encouraged the development of new work. Today, *The Opera Fund* awards grants from an endowment to encourage the creation, presentation and enjoyment of new works.

Twice each year, OPERA America seeks out new works to add to its *North American Works Directory*, an online listing of new opera and music-theater works and works-in-progress. Up-to-the-minute submissions from OPERA America's organizational and individual members are highlighted in the fall and spring issues of *Opera America* magazine. A new, improved version of the North American Works directory will be launched later this fall; at that time, users will be able to obtain more information on the works summarized below, as well as previous listings.

### *Aethelred the Unready* By Richard Wilson

This opera, set in an unspecified time, revolves around a tribunal at which Clio, the classical muse of history, reappraises the reputations of historical figures. Aethelred, who has slept contented in his mediocrity for a thousand years, is jolted awake by his ambitious consort, Emma, and ordered to do whatever he can to improve his standing in the eyes of posterity. The piece was premiered at New York's Merkin Hall on May 13, 2001. With a running time of 75 minutes, *Aethelred the Unready* is scored for seven singers and chamber orchestra.

### *Arjuna's Dilemma* By Douglas Cuomo and Dr. Ramananda Prasad, with text from the Bhagavad Gita

*Arjuna's Dilemma*, a 70-minute chamber opera, melds classical, jazz and traditional Indian musical idioms as it explores ancient themes that remain startlingly timely: conscience and duty in a time of war and the search for self-

knowledge in a changing world. On the eve of the first conflict of a massive civil war, Prince Arjuna finds himself in a state of almost paralyzing confusion: he must lead his army against an enemy that includes family, friends and teachers. The piece, produced by **Music-Theatre Group**, is scored for six vocalists (including an Indian singer) and 12 instrumentalists. It will premiere at Brooklyn Academy of Music on November 5, 2008.

### *The Bonesetter's Daughter* By Stewart Wallace and Amy Tan

Adapted from the best-selling novel by author Amy Tan, this **San Francisco Opera** world premiere tells a resonant story of belated intergenerational understanding that leads to emotional healing. A troubled Chinese-American woman learns the horrible secrets of her immigrant mother's past in this touching and terrifying tale. Composer Stewart Wallace incorporates the timbres and textures of Chinese music into his highly expressive and lyrical score — an American opera with roots

in China. This full length, two-act opera is scheduled to premiere on September 13, 2008.

### *Brief Encounter* By André Previn and John Caird

On May 1, 2009, **Houston Grand Opera** will present the world premiere of this two-act opera based on David Lean's classic film adaptation of a play by Noël Coward. An honest and compassionate look at emotional infidelity, *Brief Encounter* will star Elizabeth Futral and Nathan Gunn as Laura and Alec, the couple torn between love and honor, and Kim Josephson as Laura's bewildered husband. OPERA America will present an online learning course on *Brief Encounter* to coincide with its premiere.

### *The Children's Crusade* By R. Murray Schafer

*The Children's Crusade*, commissioned by **Soundstreams Canada**, is set to premiere on June 9, 2009 as part of Luminato 2009, the Toronto Festival of Arts+Creativity. *The Children's Crusade*

is an opera for over 150 performers, including the Canadian Children's Opera Chorus and the Toronto Consort. Set in the High Middle Ages, this spectacular musical extravaganza is inspired by the actual events of the Children's Crusade of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

**Democracy**  
By Scott Wheeler and Romulus Linney

Commissioned by Washington National Opera for the Domingo-Vilar Young Artists Program, *Democracy* received its premiere on January 28, 2005. The opera is about love and power — both political power as it is exercised in Washington, D.C. and the personal power of two charismatic men and of two strong and principled women. Although the opera is set in 1875, its language and themes are direct and contemporary. This two-act opera, based on two novels by Henry Adams and written for nine singers and

orchestra, is a comedy with a happy, if bitter, ending.

**Inês**  
By James Rolfe and Paul Bentley

*Inês* is a chamber opera inspired by Portuguese Fado currently in development at Queen of Puddings Music Theatre Company. A deeply emotional music form, Fado shares a visceral expressiveness with opera and a poetic intimacy with theater. *Inês* is based on the famous medieval Portuguese story of **Inês de Castro** and adapted to depict life within Toronto's Portuguese community in the 1960s. The opera unfolds against a backdrop of Portugal's war in Angola, the Salazar dictatorship and the Portuguese immigrant experience in Canada.

**The Inventor**  
By Bramwell Tovey and John Murrell

Following the enormous success of *Filumena* (2003) and *Frobisher*

(2007), **Calgary Opera** announced the commission of the company's third full-length opera, *The Inventor*. *The Inventor* tells the story of Sandy Keith, who was a brewer, politician, Good Samaritan, conman, husband to two different women and possibly even a terrorist. *The Inventor* explores the mysteries of Sandy Keith's life, relating the story of a quintessential conman in words and music as lively and intriguing as Keith and the times in which he lived. *The Inventor* will receive its world premiere during the 2010-2011 season.

**Jack Pine**  
By Veda Hille

Premiering in February 2009, *Jack Pine* will be presented throughout British Columbia by **Vancouver Opera**. The opera, written for children and family audiences, tells the story of gnarly and misunderstood Jack as he finds his place among the trees and conveys the splendor of the pine forests that

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once covered much of eastern North America. The work is written in one act in a classical/folk/jazz style and is scored for four singers, piano and banjo.

### *Lillian Alling*

**By John Estacio and John Murrell**

Set to premiere at **Vancouver Opera** in October 2010, *Lillian Alling* will commemorate the company's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season. The opera explores the heroic real-life journey by homesick Russian immigrant Lillian Alling, who traveled on foot from New York City across much of Canada and into the frozen mists of Alaska. Alling's epic trek is shrouded in mystery and rippled with romance. Estacio and Murrell's third collaboration will be approximately three hours in length and written for four principals, four supporting roles, 26-voice SATB chorus and 60-piece orchestra. It is Vancouver Opera's first full-length mainstage commission.

### *Love's Comedy*

**By Kim D. Sherman and Rick Davis**

Written in three acts, *Love's Comedy* draws from an early play of Henrik Ibsen. In 1860s Norway, a brash poet, Falk, proclaims his disgust with conventional love and marriage. A strong-willed young woman, Svanhild, dreams of living a free and courageous life. They resolve to stand against the comical yet tenacious forces of traditional society, but their love, already strained by the poet's ego, is tested when a wealthy businessman offers Svanhild his hand. This lyrical, melodic work is written for nine principal singers, three supporting singers and orchestra.

### *The Parliament of Fowls*

**By John Craton, adapted from Geoffrey Chaucer**

*The Parliament of Fowls* is a one-act comic opera based on the poem of the same name by Geoffrey Chaucer. As the text is from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the

music is designed to reflect a medieval/Renaissance flavor but uses modern instruments rather than period. In it, three male eagles engage in a comic parliamentary debate for the hand of the lone female eagle. Nature intercedes and asks the female her own choice in the matter, and she requests permission to ponder the decision for another year. This 45-minute work is scored for seven principal roles, male chorus and orchestra.

### *The Passion of Serge and Bacchus* **By Allan (Cline) Isaac and Ian Thompson**

*The Passion of Serge and Bacchus* is a two-act opera based on a pre-sixth-century Christian legend as translated by John Boswell. The opera features six principal roles, four supporting roles, SATB chorus, male chorus and full orchestra, although piano accompaniment can also be used. Musically, the piece is written in a romantic, "accessible" style.

### *Pimootewin (The Journey)*

**By Melissa Hui and Tomson Highway**

The world premiere of *Pimootewin (The Journey)* was given by **Soundstreams Canada** on February 15, 2008. Inspired by quintessential North American native mythology, the story features Weesageechak (the Trickster) and Misigoo (The Eagle) as they journey across the river to a magic island where the Spirits of the Dead dance every night by the light of the moon. The tale addresses life and death with profound wisdom and humor. The premiere was presented in cooperation with the Elmer Iseler Singers and featured kurokos and puppetry from traditional Japanese theater.

### *RedDust*

**By Matthew Rosenblum, with texts by Ts'ao Hsueh-chin and Gertrude Stein**  
**Opera Theater of Pittsburgh** premiered *RedDust* on May 18, 2007, as part of its Fusion Festival. This

90-minute multimedia chamber opera was commissioned by Sequitur in conjunction with the Opera Theater of Pittsburgh and Meet The Composer's Commissioning Music/USA. The piece features video art by Kurt Ralske and Attack Theater Dancers. From a dramatic standpoint, *RedDust* is based more on sound ideas than plot — the storyline is based on narratives drawn from Gertrude Stein and a Chinese novel called *The Story of the Stone*.

### *The Risk of Flight*

**By Mary Ellen Child**

*The Risk of Flight* is an opera that looks at the nature of flight and the infinite by exploring three experiences of flight: 1930s barnstormers, space exploration and the experience of a mystic, in the character of a knitter who never moves from her rocking chair. Commissioned by **Nautilus Music-Theatre**, the work calls for five singer/actor/movers, a group of four to six musical instrumentalists who are part of the stage action and multi-image video and recorded sounds that are incorporated into the music. Interspersed with the three stories are a series of interludes expressed primarily in music and video imagery.

### *Three Decembers*

**By Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer**

February 29, 2008 marked the premiere performance of *Three Decembers* (formerly known as *Last Acts*) at **Houston Grand Opera**. A chamber work written for three singers and small orchestral ensemble, the piece is an adaptation of a short Terrence McNally play entitled *Some Christmas Letters*. The story follows the life of an actress and mother named Madeline and her two grown children as they struggle to know and love one another. It takes place in a series of three episodes occurring in the years 1986, 1996 and 2006. *Three Decembers* was co-commissioned by **San Francisco Opera** and **Cal Performances**.

*Transit of Venus*

By Victor Davies and Maureen Hunter

Premiered by **Manitoba Opera** on November 24, 2007, *Transit of Venus* is the first opera commissioned for mainstage production in the history of the company. The work is based on

the real-life expeditions of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century French astronomer Guillaume le Gentil de la Galaisière, who twice tried, unsuccessfully, to chart the transit of the planet Venus across the sun. Through this premise, the opera

explores the question of achieving your potential or being with the people you love. *Transit of Venus* is a full-length, three-act opera with full orchestra and a running time of approximately three hours. ©



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# RECENTLY PUBLISHED

BY ALEXA B. ANTOPOL

## Challenges:

### A Memoir of My Life in Opera

Sarah Caldwell; Rebecca Matlock, contrib.

Wesleyan University Press

ISBN 10: 0819568856, hardcover

Founder and long-time director of the Opera Company of Boston, and the first woman to conduct the Metropolitan Opera, Sarah Caldwell was one of America's best known and most adventurous conductors and opera directors. Her career spanned innovative productions of operas including *Voyage to the Moon*, *Don Quixote* and *Madama Butterfly*, as well as projects like "Making Music Together," which in 1988 brought together musicians and composers from the Soviet Union and the U.S. Caldwell's work earned her many honorary degrees, and she received the National Medal for the Arts from President Clinton in 1997. *Challenges* is based on a series of interviews Rebecca Matlock conducted over a period of three years before Caldwell's death in 2006. This intimate memoir gives us Caldwell's perceptions in her own unique, indomitable voice. Matlock is an author, photographer and wife of the former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Jack Matlock; she served on the board of the Opera Company of Boston.

## Brecht at the Opera

Joy H. Calico

University of California Press

ISBN 13: 9780520254824, hardcover

*Brecht at the Opera* looks at the German playwright's lifelong ambivalent engagement with opera. An ardent opera lover in his youth, Brecht later denounced the genre as decadent and

irrelevant to modern society even as he continued to work on opera projects throughout his career. He completed three operas and attempted two dozen more with composers such as Kurt Weill, Paul Hindemith, Hanns Eisler and Paul Dessau. Joy H. Calico argues that Brecht's simultaneous work on opera and *Lehrstück* in the 1920s generated the new concept of audience experience that would come to define epic theater, and that his revisions to the theory of Gestus in the mid-1930s are reminiscent of 19<sup>th</sup>-century opera performance practices of mimesis. Calico is associate professor of musicology in the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University.

## Wagner Beyond Good and Evil

John Deathridge

University of California Press

ISBN 13: 9780520254534, hardcover

John Deathridge presents a view of Richard Wagner based on recent research that does not shy away from some unpalatable truths about what Wagner did, said and wrote, drawing from abundant material already well known but also from less familiar sources, including seldom-discussed letters and diaries and previously unpublished musical sketches. The author suggests that a true estimation of Wagner does not lie in a condemnation of his many provocative actions and ideas; rather, it is to be found in the questions about the modern world and our place in it posed by the best of his stage works, among them *Tristan und Isolde* and *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. He further encourages readers to move beyond the debates that have raged about Wagner toward a fresh and engaging assessment of what he

ultimately achieved. Deathridge is King Edward Professor of Music at King's College London.

## The Life of Messiaen

Christopher Dingle

Cambridge University Press

ISBN 13: 9780521635479, softcover

When 20<sup>th</sup>-century composer Olivier Messiaen died in 1992, he was seen as a deeply religious man whose only sources of inspiration were God and Nature, and whose music progressed along an individual path, impervious to contemporaneous events and the influence of his fellow artists and critics. Christopher Dingle offers a nuanced picture of the man and the musician beyond Messiaen's public persona and examines his private difficulties and creative struggles. Based upon the latest research, including previously overlooked sources, this book provides an introduction to and a new perspective on Messiaen's life and work. Dingle is assistant course director at Birmingham Conservatoire and a member of the review panel for *BBC Music Magazine*.

## The Don Giovanni Moment: Essays on the Legacy of an Opera

Lydia Goehr and Daniel Herwitz

(Editors)

Columbia University Press

ISBN 13: 9780231137553, softcover

Mozart's *Don Giovanni* redefined the terms of power, seduction and morality, and the resulting conflict between the aesthetic and the ethical is rooted in the Enlightenment and romanticism. *The Don Giovanni Moment*, available for the first time in softcover, examines the aesthetic and moral legacy of

Mozart's opera in the literature, philosophy and culture of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The authors in this collection address the opera's impact on the philosophical visions of Kierkegaard, Goethe and Williams and its influence on the literary and dramatic works of Pushkin, Hoffmann, Mörike, Byron, Wagner, Strauss and Shaw. Through analysis of *Don Giovanni's* literary and philosophical reception and its many appropriations, rewritings and retellings, the contributors treat the opera as a vantage point from which theory and philosophy can reconsider romanticism's central themes; the essays continue the debate over the meaning and character of *Don Giovanni* and its legacy.

**Divas and Scholars:  
Performing Italian Opera**  
Philip Gossett  
University of Chicago Press  
ISBN 13: 9780226304878, softcover

Philip Gossett's *Divas and Scholars*, now available in paperback, is an account of how opera comes to the stage. Writing as a fan, a musician and a scholar, Gossett describes problems that attend the production of operas. He begins by tracing the social history of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Italian theaters in order to explain the nature of the musical scores from which performers work; the negotiations between opera scholars, conductors and performers; the issues of ornamentation and transposition in vocal style; matters of translation and adaptation; and aspects of stage direction and set design. He also asks what it means to perform from a critical edition, how one determines what music to perform when multiple versions of an opera exist and the implications of omitting passages from an opera in a performance. Gossett is the Robert W. Reneker Distinguished Service Professor of Music at the University of Chicago. He serves as general editor of *The Works of Giuseppe Verdi* (University

of Chicago Press and Casa Ricordi of Milan) and of *Works of Gioachino Rossini* (Baerenreiter-Verlag, Kassel).

**Opera and Society in Italy and France  
from Monteverdi to Bourdieu**  
Victoria Johnson, Jane F. Fulcher and  
Thomas Ertman (Ed.s)  
Cambridge University Press  
ISBN 13: 9780521856751, hardcover

This volume brings together academic specialists writing on the operatic form from a range of disciplines: comparative literature, history, sociology and philosophy. The work of Pierre Bourdieu, the leading cultural sociologist of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, is used to synthesize recent advances in social science with recent advances in musicological and other scholarship on opera. Through a focus on opera in Italy and France, the contributors draw on their fields both to expand our knowledge of opera's history and to demonstrate the kinds of contributions to the study of opera that stand to be made by different disciplines. Victoria Johnson is an assistant professor of organizational studies at University of Michigan; Jane F. Fulcher is a professor of music and musicology at Indiana University; and Thomas Ertman is an associate professor of sociology at New York University.

**Beethoven's Century:  
Essays on Composers and Themes**  
Hugh Macdonald  
University of Rochester Press  
ISBN 13: 9781580462754, hardcover

Musicologist Hugh Macdonald draws together many of his richest essays on music from Beethoven's time into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, addressing perennial questions of what music meant to the composer and his audiences, how it was intended to be played and how today's audiences can usefully approach it. The volume opens with an analysis of Beethoven's not always generous

regard for his listeners. Other essays probe aspects of Schubert's musical personality, the brief friendship between Berlioz and Schumann, Liszt's abilities as a conductor and Viennese views of Wagner as expressed by Hugo Wolf. Essays on comic opera and trends in French opera librettos in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century reflect the author's long-standing sympathy for French music. Eccentric personalities in the world of music — Paganini, Alkan, Skryabin and Janáček — are brought to life. *Beethoven's Century* concludes with a look at some developments in early 20<sup>th</sup>-century music that have often been neglected. The essays are here revised and updated, and some are printed in English for the first time. Macdonald has taught music at the universities of Cambridge, Oxford and Glasgow, and since 1987 has been Avis H. Blewett Distinguished Professor of Music at Washington University, St. Louis.

**Letters from a Life: The Selected  
Letters of Benjamin Britten,  
1913-1976; Volume Four: 1952-1957**  
Philip Reed, Mervyn Cooke and  
Donald Mitchell (editors)  
Boydell Press  
ISBN 13: 9781843833826, hardcover

This fourth volume of the annotated selected letters of Benjamin Britten, published in association with The Britten-Pears Foundation, covers the years during which he wrote three major works for the stage — the Coronation opera *Gloriana*, the chamber opera *The Turn of the Screw* and the full-length ballet *The Prince of the Pagodas* — as well as important vocal works such as Canticles II and III and the Hardy song-cycle *Winter Words*. Correspondents include librettists William Plomer (*Gloriana*) and Myfanwy Piper (*The Turn of the Screw*) and friends and collaborators such as Edith Sitwell, E. M. Forster, Basil Coleman, Imogen Holst, Francis Poulenc, Lennox Berkeley, the Earl

of Harewood and Britten's partner and principal interpreter, Peter Pears. The volume charts Britten's growing stature as a major figure of the European musical establishment as composer, conductor and pianist, and his continuing involvement with the Aldeburgh Festival, the English Opera Group and Covent Garden. Central to the period is the world trip undertaken by Britten and Pears and the first-hand encounter with the music and cultures of Bali and Japan that were radically to inform Britten's compositional techniques from *Pagodas* onwards. The annotations evoke a key period in 20<sup>th</sup>-century musical and cultural history, and offer a wide range of detailed information for both the Britten specialist and the general reader.

### **Choral Music in the Nineteenth Century**

Nick Strimple

Amadeus Press

ISBN 10: 1574671545

This volume is an indispensable resource for choral conductors, a valuable guide for choral singers and other music lovers and an essential text for educators and their students. As with his first book, *Choral Music in the Twentieth Century*, Nick Strimple reviews 100 years of choral music literature. Strimple covers repertory by Beethoven, Brahms, Verdi, Fauré, Mendelssohn, Dvorák, Bruch, Mahler and others. The text is illustrated with photos and musical examples, and appendices include works lists organized by type of chorus and accompaniment. Strimple is a member of the faculty at University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music.

### **Rossini in Restoration Paris:**

#### **The Sound of Modern Life**

Benjamin Walton

Cambridge University Press

ISBN 13: 9780521870603, hardcover

Most often associated with light-hearted works such as *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Gioachino Rossini produced a sequence of large-scale, serious French operas after his move to Paris in 1824, which responded to the French Restoration and overwhelmed audiences with their musical power. Benjamin Walton traces the shifting patterns of Rossinian criticism from before the composer's arrival in Paris to the end of the 1820s, outlining a musical history that uses immersion in a narrow time period as a way to reconceive the relationships between opera and the world outside the opera house. In place of the comic Rossini of later memory, this book argues for a composer whose music resonated with the experience of contemporary life, and who was integrally bound up in the struggle to define French romanticism at the time. Walton is the university lecturer in music at the University of Cambridge.

### **The Puccini Problem:**

#### **Opera, Nationalism, and Modernity**

Alexandra Wilson

Cambridge University Press

ISBN 13: 9780521856881, hardcover

This book offers a detailed investigation of the reception and cultural contexts of Puccini's music. Alexandra Wilson's study explores the ways in which

Puccini's music and persona were held up as both the antidote to and the embodiment of the decadence widely felt to be afflicting late 19<sup>th</sup>- and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Italy, a politically unified and culturally divided nation. The book focuses on two central, related questions: Puccini's status as a national or international composer and his status as a traditionalist or modernist. In addition, Wilson examines how Puccini's operas became caught up in extra-musical controversies concerning such issues as gender and class. Wilson is lecturer in musicology at Oxford Brookes University.

### **Opera Companies and Houses of the United States: A Comprehensive, Illustrated Reference**

Karyl Lynn Zietz

McFarland

ISBN 13: 9780786438990, softcover

This state-by-state guide to more than 90 opera houses and companies in the U.S. is now available in softcover. Inaugural performances, a history of opera in the city, season repertory, performers and directors for each institution are highlighted. Karyl Lynn Zietz (now Karyl Charna Lynn) is an international opera correspondent who writes for *Opera Now* (U.K.), *Opera-Opera* (Australasia) and *Oper Orpheus International* (Germany). She is also the author of *Opera Companies and Houses of Western Europe, Canada, Australia and New Zealand* (1999, paperback 2008) and four other books focused on opera. 🎭

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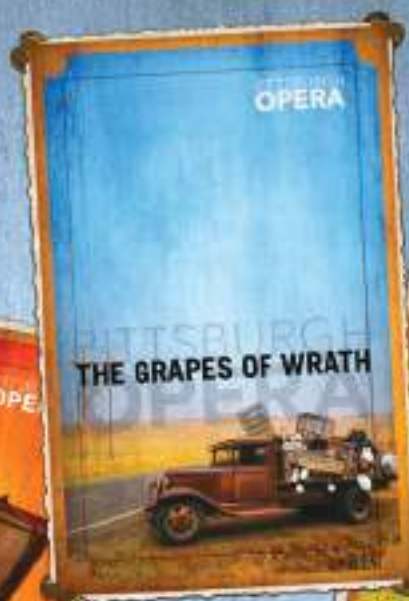
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## TEATRO ALLA SCALA SEASON 08/09

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Opening Night- Live, Dec. 7: Don Carlo (*Verdi*)  
Viaggio a Reims (*Rossini*)

## ITALY'S GRAND OPERAS 2008

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Teatro la Fenice di Venezia: Il Barbiere di Siviglia (*Rossini*)  
Teatro Comunale di Bologna: Norma (*Bellini*)  
Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino:  
Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk (*Shostakovich*)  
Teatro Regio di Parma: Rigoletto (*Verdi*)

## SALZBURG FESTIVAL 2008

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Roméo et Juliette (*Gounod*)  
Don Giovanni (*Mozart*)  
Otello (*Verdi*)

*For information on upcoming operas and participating cinemas, visit [opera.emergingpictures.com](http://opera.emergingpictures.com)*



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