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FALL 2013

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AMERICAN PREMIERE

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Concept, Direction and Scenography by **Jan Fabre**

Text by **Stefan Hertmans**

Music by **Moritz Eggert**

with a recorded score performed by the  
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Troubleyn | Jan Fabre  
Tragedy of a Friendship  
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# 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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FALL 2013

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ON THE COVER:

Alex Lawrence as Belfiore with Ginger Costa-Jackson as Marchesa in The Glimmerglass Festival's 2013 production of Verdi's *King for a Day*, which was directed by Christian R ath, with sets and costumes designed by Court Watson and lighting designed by Robert Wierzel. English translations for Verdi's *King for a Day* (*Un giorno di regno*) by Kelley Rourke. Photo by Karli Cadell/The Glimmerglass Festival.

Cover design by Audrey Saccone.

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# This Duet Deserves A Standing Ovation

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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO



Approaching the theater for a performance at The Glimmerglass Festival a few weeks ago, I did something for the first time in my career: I left my ticket in my hotel room. Without giving it a second thought, I asked the helpful box office agent to reprint my ticket. In an instant, she found my record, pressed “print” and handed me a replacement. The performance was splendid.

We often think of the past as being a simpler time, but that effortless transaction took me back to a more complicated time: my first job out of college, as ticket manager for Opera Company of Philadelphia (now Opera Philadelphia). Thirty-five years ago, I faced the same situation night after night, but the service was not so swift. I would ask subscribers — single ticket buyers were another challenge! — for their patience as I flipped through the heavy loose-leaf binders I carried to the theater from the office, each binder filled with pages from the multicolored carbonless forms I had typed for every subscriber. Reading them was made all the more difficult by my lame attempts to correct typos. (I had Liquid Paper correction goo in each color.) When I finally had the form I needed, I hand-wrote a pass and apologized to everyone on the long line that had formed at the window.

In those good old(e) days, we protected our mailing lists with our lives. Our audience was “ours” and we would not sell, trade or share the keys to our customer castles. Our audience was local. They learned about performances from us through direct mail, newspaper advertising and radio announcements. They dutifully attended whatever performances we offered, ours being the only means by which they could enjoy live opera, aside from the Metropolitan Opera’s Saturday afternoon radio broadcasts. Local opera companies were the intermediaries between the art form and the communities they served.

The tables have turned. The audience that used to await the announcement of our season is now in charge. Our patrons can shop for opera performances to their liking across the country and around the world, wherever they are and wherever they want to go. They can watch rising singers or favorite artists from yesteryear on YouTube, or via live streams or HD transmissions in the comfort of their homes or local movie theaters. They can learn about opera on the Internet, print out libretti and biographies, and find restaurants near the theater. Our customers have replaced their opera companies as the intermediaries of their operatic lives.

This “disintermediation,” to borrow an expression from the management consulting world, places practitioners in the opera field between old-school attitudes that put the local opera company at the center of the opera universe and a new reality where customers are in charge. Today’s opera audiences value choice and flexibility over geography or loyalty. They seek deeper knowledge, not just in program notes or pre-performance lectures, but via MOOCs and other learning platforms. Opera companies are adjusting to these new operating dynamics, but perhaps not as quickly as necessary to remain competitive in an ever-more crowded marketplace.

OPERA America also must adjust. While we will continue to provide services that support company efforts in the areas of marketing and education, we also have to forge new partnerships with our members to inform, engage and expand overall audience for opera, regardless of location, point of access or level of expertise. Promoting opera as an exciting component of the contemporary cultural landscape requires a broader definition of “audience” and a coordinated effort that reaches beyond the purview of any single company.

This issue of *Opera America* is part of that initiative. Not only are we featuring articles that explore the various means by which our members leverage technology to reach audiences, we too are crossing the digital divide by launching *Opera America* in a downloadable edition for the iPad and Android tablets. When combined with the Web edition and the print edition — to which we remain fully committed — we aim to reach each of our members at their preferred point of access.

Back to Glimmerglass. Along the drive to Cooperstown, extended sections of the journey were out of cellular range. Were my first trips there in the ancient 1990s really so isolated from calls, e-mails and texts? Did I really make the trip without pulling off the road at regular intervals to check my Blackberry. (A Blackberry? Soon I will look back in time, presumably through Google Glass, and laugh at the inefficiency of my thumbs.) The non-digital past is hard to remember, even as the promise of the digital future remains only partially realized.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Marc A. Scorca". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light-colored background.

Marc A. Scorca  
President/CEO

# INNOVATIONS

## GOOGLE GLASS: NEW VISIONS FOR OPERA

An enterprising explorer is now boldly going where no opera lover has gone before: Thomas Ryan Rhodes, development associate at **Fort Worth Opera** (FWO), was recently selected from a global competition as one of 10,000 testers of Google Glass. In his competition entry, Rhodes offered to take the glasses behind the scenes of the opera world to learn “whether in rehearsal, onstage or offstage, experimenting with this technology would reveal unique perspectives to our audience and online followers.”

Google Glass features a tiny computer built into a lightweight eyeglass frame made of titanium. The device, which rests neatly above one eye, has no actual lenses, but rather a crystal display that emits a floating screen in front of the wearer. The result is a peripheral field that can present visual data, from e-mails to videos, as well as take pictures or record sound. Google Glass can be linked to an Android mobile phone, digitally tethering the user to a multi-dimensional world of multiple realities.

Approximately 200,000 people applied to be “Glass Explorers” by submitting a 50-word message via Google+ or Twitter. Software developers, celebrities and ordinary citizens were among those chosen. As a tester, Rhodes participates in a closed Google social network where developers and fellow explorers gather to discuss their findings and experiences. Google also offers “Glass Guides” to assist explorers with technical questions. Software and functionalities are enhanced every two weeks.

Rhodes, who previously created the Twitter forum #operatalk, has also begun reaching out to the opera community to expand the discussion of how Google Glass might play a role in the opera house. “I’m really trying to spark discussions and get ahead of the curve,” he says. With an introduction courtesy of Leah D. Wilson, OPERA America’s director of learning and engagement, Rhodes recently began a dialogue with Sean Waugh, assistant to the artistic administrator at **San Francisco Opera**, and a kindred spirit in exploring applications of technology to the performing arts.

“It’s really hard to find people in our industry who are enthusiastic about these opportunities to connect technology with the way we experience performances,” says Waugh. “Some might be outraged at the idea of using Google Glass at a performance. But we can also look at ways technology can enhance the experience without being interruptive.”

The myriad possibilities the two men posit range from near-term practical implementations (supertitles in non-traditional venues, enhanced multi-media program notes) to far-out “augmented reality” operas in which audience members could link Google Glass with Hollywood-style “blue screen” technology and customize a production to their preferred style or period. On the other side of the proscenium, Google Glass might enable a last-minute replacement to step into a role, following the score and stage directions in real time, or serve as a learning tool and rehearsal device for emerging singers and voice students.

There are, of course, significant concerns with Google Glass, notably “Big Brother” privacy invasion, bootleg recording and copyright infringement. Rhodes emphasizes that he exercises discretion in wearing his Google Glass at the FWO office and professional events. “Some think it’s cool, some think it’s strange, some don’t see the application of it,” he says. For now, Rhodes is focusing documenting his experience for scholastic papers, articles in music industry publications and conference presentations.

Rhodes, an inveterate adventurer, has studied music and arts management at Austin College, Carnegie Mellon and Università di Bologna in Italy, and has also worked with **The Santa Fe Opera**, **Pittsburgh Opera**, Wiener Staatsoper and Opera Mauritius on the island nation in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Africa.

Wherever Google Glass takes him in the real or virtual world, there is already one present-day venue that Google Glass has conquered: “I use them in the kitchen,” says Rhodes. “They’re great for following recipes while I cook.”



Thomas Ryan Rhodes. Photo by Samuel Allen.

— Matthew Sigman



## NEA EXPANDS DIGITAL OUTREACH



Since launching its webinar series in February 2011, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has webcast more than 30 such presentations, many with specific information that guide opera companies to granting programs, and include them in national conversations on arts and culture. Topics have ranged from technology (“Web Sites, Videos, Mobile Apps, and Video Games: Accessibility for All”) to the Department of State’s visa petition process (“Bringing Foreign Artists to Your Stage”).

In an opera-specific webinar, archived on the NEA website, NEA Director of Music and Opera Wayne Brown and Opera Specialist Georgianna Paul reviewed the process for applying for Art Works grants. Questions submitted by participants ranged from timing of applications for commissions, how festivals are considered as projects, whether an application can be considered if a venue or artist has not been confirmed, and whether innovative works or productions receive priority. Brown encouraged webinar participants to follow up with NEA staff with particular questions, emphasizing that communication is “both valuable for the applicant and for the NEA in terms of getting a very clear indication of the scale and scope of the activity taking place in respective communities.”

The effect of this digital outreach has been measurable. “This year, we have seen a significant increase in not only the number of applications but also in the quality of those applications,” says Brown. Paul attributes the enhanced response to the webinars, which, she says, “provided an excellent tool for NEA directors and specialists to reach our fields, convey our message clearly and hear back from participants in real time.”

According to Victoria Hutter, the NEA’s assistant director of public affairs and media relations, the webinars have had as many as 60 individuals participating (and staying connected for the majority of the presentation), with many more accessing the archived webinars on the NEA’s website. Due to budget decreases of more than \$20 million in recent years, NEA travel budgets have been significantly reduced, resulting in fewer opportunities for discipline directors to provide in-person technical assistance to potential applicants. The webinars are a cost-effective way to fill this void.

Webinars are just one of several social media outlets the NEA engages to share information and initiatives. The NEA’s YouTube channel features past events such as Poetry Out Loud competitions, speeches and interviews, and NEA Honors celebrations. Its Facebook profile, as of July, has almost 26,000 “likes” and the Twitter handle has just over 35,000 followers. Social media platforms often repost other NEA information (upcoming events press releases, blog entries) and articles that would be of interest to the arts community. Additionally, the agency creates content for three blogs: Art Works Blog, The Big Read Blog and Blue Star Museums Blog, which offer interviews with artists and highlight grant recipients.

— Brandon Gryde



# INNOVATIONS

## OPERA AND DANCE: A PAS DE DEUX



American Opera Projects' production of Spears' *Wolf-in-Skins*. Left photo by Brian Mengini, right photo by Andrew Jordan.

Opera may be the most interdisciplinary of arts, with its fusion of music, words, drama and design, but dance has often been treated as a poor relation, an occasional visitor who doesn't quite fit in. A number of today's opera artists are bringing choreography a step closer to the opera family through collaborations that advance contemporary works and re-imagine traditional repertoire.

Composer Gregory Spears, who is collaborating with librettist Christopher Williams on the opera *Wolf-in-Skins*, says that when it comes to propelling narrative opera and dance each have their own particular strengths. "Opera excels at portraying a character's inner monologue and builds tension through anticipation and reflection," he says, whereas dance is "action expressed through movement."

Williams, a trained dancer, is also the work's director and choreographer. "As a director, I have a tool belt from which I can pull out whatever tools are necessary to tell the story," he says. "I don't see boundaries between the art forms and each has an ideal way to convey the narrative at that moment." In *Wolf-in-Skins* the singers also dance.

Williams felt that the epic nature of *Wolf-in-Skins* required equal contributions from opera, dance and the visual arts, and takes his cues from Wagner's *gesamtkunstwerk* and Diaghilev's *Ballet Russe*, where collaborations were forged among Stravinsky, Debussy, Picasso, Matisse, Balanchine and Massine. Portions of *Wolf-in-Skins* were performed earlier this year with Philadelphia Dance Projects and co-presented by **American Opera Projects**, which has also helped developed the work.

Innovative dance/opera collaborations aren't just born of new compositions. This summer, **The Glimmerglass Festival** offered Pergolisi's *Stabat Mater*, choreographed and directed by Jessica Lang. Featuring countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo, soprano Nadine Sierra and eight dancers in a meditation on the suffering of Mary as she endures the crucifixion of Jesus, *Stabat Mater* was Lang's opera debut.

Like *Wolf-in-Skins*, the singers in *Stabat Mater* also participate as dancers, blurring boundaries to create a unified story of suffering, loss and grief. Says Lang, "This profound music, which I find emotionally engaging, has always captivated me and I am thrilled to get this opportunity to create a work that incorporates the singers directly into a dance." One might expect that the eight dancers in *Stabat Mater* would be drawn from Lang's own dance company, but the performers were all members of Glimmerglass's 2013 Young Artists program, skilled dancers and singers alike.





Nadine Sierra with ensemble members Andrea Beasom and Anne O'Donnell in The Glimmerglass Festival's production of Pergolisi's *Stabat Mater*. Photo by Karli Cadell/The Glimmerglass Festival.



Anthony Roth Costanzo with ensemble member Jason Fowler (below). Photo by Jamie Kraus/The Glimmerglass Festival.

The celebrated choreographer and director Mark Morris has, for more than 20 years, been directing and choreographing productions for the **Metropolitan Opera**, **New York City Opera**, **Seattle Opera**, the English National Opera and the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, often incorporating dancers from his own Mark Morris Dance Group. His opera directorial debut was Gluck's *Orfeo et Euridice* with Seattle Opera in 1988, a work he has revisited twice more, most recently with the Metropolitan Opera in 2007.

Noted for his musicality (he occasionally conducts performances of his own company), Morris says it was a particular attraction to vocal music that led him to opera. As he told *Opera News* in 2007, "For me, it's not a different thing. It's not like taking a crazy leap into opera. I don't feel that way at all. It's a continuation of what I do all the time as a choreographer. Since I only choreograph because of music, and very often to vocal music, then what's more interesting and fun than working in the opera department?"

Morris recently choreographed and directed new productions of Britten's *Curlew River* at the Tanglewood Music Center and will choreograph Handel's *Acis and Galatea* in April 2014 in collaboration with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and **Cal Performances**.

Opera/dance partnerships are also stepping outside of the opera house and into site-specific productions. This October, The Industry, a new opera company, will collaborate with L.A. Dance Project and audio equipment manufacturer Sennheiser on Christopher Cerrone's opera *Invisible Cities*. Based on an Italo Calvino novel that centers on a conversation between Marco Polo and Kublai Khan, the opera is to be performed in Los Angeles' Union Station. Audience members will be able to move freely throughout the performance, following individual characters and interacting with the performers, melding with Union Station's everyday transit operations. To make this potentially chaotic event a more intimate, personal auditory experience, audience members will listen to the opera through Sennheiser's wireless headphones as the vocalists perform live.

"The opera will function as an invisible layer of everyday life, and every audience member will have a different, radically subjective experience of the opera," said Yuval Sharon, director of *Invisible Cities* and artistic director of The Industry. "It's an ideal way to bring Calvino's masterpiece to life and to hear Chris' quiet, haunting original score — all while celebrating a landmark of L.A.'s architecture."

— Patricia Kiernan Johnson

# INNOVATIONS

## WELCOME, IN ANY LANGUAGE

Music is the international language, with opera its ardent ambassador, but when English is not the only language in a community, American opera companies must exercise a certain cultural diplomacy.

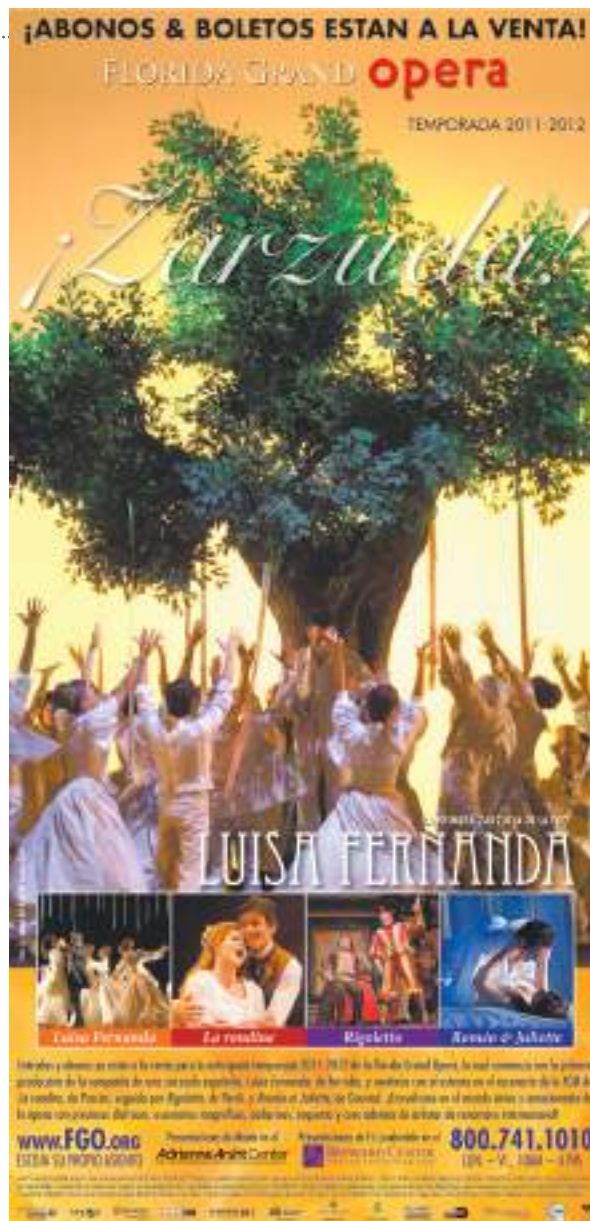
In Québec, French is the official language, but English is equally essential in culture and commerce. “Linguistic bilingualism is a social reality in Montreal,” says Pierre Vachon, **Opéra de Montréal’s** director of communications, outreach and education. Navigating that bilingualism requires, for example, that external promotions be in French, from mailings to posters. But internal dialogue must match the bilingual expectations of audiences and donors: Francophones comprise 75 percent of the company’s ticket buyers, but Anglophones are responsible for 50 percent of contributions.

Even with the substantial bilingual capabilities of the staff, the company is extremely cautious that nuance does not get lost in translation. “The way we think in French and English is not the same,” Vachon says. “We adapt or people will complain about the quality of the language. And when you pay \$150 a ticket you expect quality in all things.” Such adaptations go for Vachon himself, who has negotiated a bilingual détente for his pre-opera lectures. He knows he has succeeded, he says, “when the Anglophones are appreciative and the Francophones don’t complain.”

For **Florida Grand Opera** (FGO) the challenge is not just a matter of language, but of appealing to multiple national identities, as well. Though 55 percent of Miami-Dade County’s 2.5 million citizens self-identify as Hispanic, such a label is limiting. “We have Cubans, Columbians, Venezuelans and Peruvians,” says FGO Director of Marketing Brendan Glynn. And the demographics within those identities are equally diverse. “Many of the Spanish-speaking folks came here because they had the financial or educational wherewithal to leave their country,” he says. “Conversely, we have people who walked across the border. If you think of the Spanish-speaking community of the United States, it’s the same snapshot.”

Glynn emphasizes that language is not necessarily a barrier — it’s more than likely that potential Latino audiences are sufficiently fluent to respond to FGO promotions. “It’s about establishing a relationship with the patron,” he says. “It’s not to say that people we are talking to don’t speak English — it’s more than likely they do — but we need to connect.” Connections range from the box office to the development team, from the website to the program book, from guest artists to FGO Music Director Ramón Tebar, a native of Spain.

Glynn believes if he can get the message out he can bring audiences in. “Puccini sells in any language,” he says, and *Carmen* is always standing room only, with its storylines involving love, sex, adultery and suicide comparing favorably with popular *telenovelas*.



Spanish advertisement for Florida Grand Opera production of Torroba’s *Luisa Fernanda*.



Press clipping from Chinese-language newspaper for Vancouver Opera.

To expand its profile among Spanish speakers, **Arizona Opera**, which performs in Phoenix and Tucson, applied for and received a Building Opera Audiences Grant through a program administered by OPERA America and funded by the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation. ¡Viva Opera! will build on the company’s foundation of outreach and education in the Hispanic community, including in-school programming and Spanish-language marketing. Among the specific activities funded by the grant are Spanish-language TV and radio spots for the Phoenix and Tucson markets, events for young Hispanic professionals and Hispanic-owned businesses, free family events for Hispanic audiences and tourism incentives for northern Mexico communities.

Arizona Opera maintains relationships with Consulate General of Mexico and the Tucson Convention & Visitor Bureau to communicate about the substantial Mexican tourist business, and advertises and promotes to both Spanish-language and

English-language newspapers and magazines targeted at Latino communities. A growing partnership with media professionals and community relations specialists at Univisión, the American-Spanish television network, presents significant additional promotional opportunities.

For Doug Tuck, director of marketing at **Vancouver Opera**, the challenge is welcoming the Asian community. For their production of Tan Dun’s *Tea: A Mirror of Soul*, the company hired an outside firm to develop a press conference in Mandarin, place advertising in Mandarin in local media and identify the websites most visited by the Chinese community. The response was not what he had hoped. Despite Tan Dun’s visibility — he is perhaps the best known composer in China — Tuck believes that those who might be aware of his music are not necessarily those inclined to come to Western opera.

“Someone who has not grown up with a tradition of Western opera is not likely to be converted no matter what you tell them,” Tuck says, “but it doesn’t take long for their children to become mainstream. They are reading the same newspapers and watching the same channels as our other young audiences.” And, he notes, young Asians of recent generations are also subject to the limitations of the Canadian educational system: if they don’t grow up with a strong music education they are no more prepared than any of their Western peers.

Like Arizona Opera, Vancouver applied for and received a Building Opera Audiences grant to expand its reach, in this case to outlying communities where Mandarin and Punjabi are the predominant languages. “Transporting Opera Audiences,” a fusion of education, marketing and logistics, will include affordable sampler concerts to introduce opera to audiences, followed by a public transit promotion to transport audiences downtown to a mainstage performance. Participants will travel for free and will receive a discount on their mainstage ticket. Designated “Opera Trains” will take passengers to the opera house, entertaining them along the way with programming about the performance they are about to experience. An added benefit to the opera and the community: fellow train travelers will share in the campaign, as well.

**UNE INVITATION AU VOYAGE** Notre nouvelle saison propose un véritable tour du monde : du Ceylan à l'Angleterre, de l'Amérique à la Chine, jusqu'au pays des contes de fées allemands. Notre première escale est focalisée sur un retour attendu du classique français. L'opéra de Debussy avec la soprano Eglise Gutiérrez qui nous avait livré une inoubliable Lucia. Nous célébrerons ensuite le 500<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de Verdi, à Windsor où un ancien seigneur du sort de Falstaff nous offre que préférable l'acte de revivre les cendres de son ancienne grandeur auprès de joyeux et commères. En janvier, direction Caithness Ross en Caroline du Sud avec Porgy and Bess de George Gershwin présenté pour la première fois à l'Opéra de Montréal. Puis un séjour à Pékin pour revivre le conte millénaire du prince incensé et de la glaciale et impitoyable Turandot. Gala à une collaboration exceptionnelle entre l'École nationale de théâtre du Canada, l'École nationale de cirque et l'Opéra de Montréal, nous visiteront le monde merveilleux du conte allemand avec Hänsel et Gräbel de Humperdick. **MISE EN SCÈNE** Les talents Alan Gauthier, David Gately, Tazewell Thompson, Graeme Murphy et Hugo Blänger. Sur le podium : Emmanuel Plasson, Daniele Callegari, Wayne Marshall, Paul Nadler et Alain Trudel. Un grand événement : notre Gala annuel sera consacré à Giuseppe Verdi. Vous y entendrez de grands airs connus mais aussi des découvertes qui illustrent le génie du grand compositeur en plus de l'hommage à un artiste ayant contribué de manière exceptionnelle au développement de l'art lyrique au pays. **BON VOYAGE!**

An excerpt from Artistic Director Michel Beaulac's welcome message in Opéra de Montréal's 2013-2014 season program.

—Matthew Sigman



# INNOVATIONS

## CORPSES, CANONS AND COMMUNITY

“Where can we acquire a female body that can sustain a 12-foot fall?”

No, there’s nothing sinister going on. From a corpse for *Rio de Sangre* to a period truck from *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* to artillery for a staging of *Fidelio*, opera companies continue to look to their colleagues to source and repurpose production resources. And though renting sets, props and equipment is a long tradition in opera, collegial networks can go beyond the saving of dollars to create national and local forums for community-building that advances innovation.

A corpse may be the catalyst for reaching out to a colleague, but networking is the long-term benefit. For Noele Stollmack, director of design and production at Milwaukee’s **Florentine Opera**, and the seeker of the female body via OPERA America’s technical/production listserv, the response exceeded her expectations. “People took the time to help,” she says.

Christopher McBeth, artistic director of **Utah Symphony | Utah Opera**, felt similarly after he posted a listserv request for a set of Papageno pipes for *The Magic Flute*. “Within a few hours I had responses from several different entities, all with willingness to help,” he says. He didn’t get the pipes, but opera’s property master used guidance from several listserv responses to build new pipes that they could later share. “People are interested in exploring co-production partnerships,” says McBeth, “and it can start with the listserv.” At **The Santa Fe Opera**, Production Director Paul Horpedahl (the current chair of OPERA America’s Technical/Production Committee) took advantage of multiple resource-sharing communities — one an OPERA America listserv, the other a forum for production designers across the arts — to source products and ideas for projections. Both communities returned advice he has incorporated into his designs. A longstanding leader in the opera production and design community, Horpedahl says the response also reaffirmed for him the crucial role of networks in sharing both materials and information.

“The technical community is by nature super curious,” says Horpedahl, “so we’re always reaching out.” But to get the most from the opportunity, the key roadblock is something not necessarily associated with the arts: shyness. “It’s really about encouraging members to want to share, to want to ask for help. It’s a hard first step to take,” he says. In addition to finding short-term assistance, networking has other benefits according to management consultant Emma E. Dunch. “By casting the net a little more widely,” she says, “you can move more quickly and expeditiously.” But she cautions that networks are only as strong as their participation: resource-sharing platforms should be flexible, as well as modern. Visibility is essential within networks, but such networks should also facilitate off-the-record collaboration. Beyond whatever immediate needs stimulate collaboration, the long-term networking among organizations makes it easier for an individual company to take artistic risks. “You can move faster if you share where the pitfalls are,” she says.

— Genevieve Valentine





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# PEOPLE

**Ryan Taylor**, formerly interim general director of **Arizona Opera**, has been named general director. He joined the company in 2012 as director of artistic administration, having previously served as manager of community development for Wolf Trap Opera Company. During his tenure at Wolf Trap, he created the *Vocal Colors* recital series in partnership with The Phillips Collection, as well as founded *Behind the Curtain: Family Day at the Opera*. A trained baritone with more than 30 roles to his credit, Taylor previously worked as general director for Berkshire Opera Company and co-founder of the Southeastern Festival of Song.

**Boston Lyric Opera** announces two appointments: **Ryan A. Jimenez** has been named managing director of operations & marketing communications and **Bradley Vernatter** has been named director of production. Jimenez has previously served in senior marketing and planning roles for organizations in the performing arts, nonprofit, education and political sectors, including the Geffen Playhouse, the MIT Museum and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Vernatter has produced and managed opera throughout the U.S. and Europe, including the Wexford Festival, Lorin Maazel's Castleton Festival and Chicago Opera Theater.

**Angie Gélinas** has been appointed managing director of **Calgary Opera**. Gélinas joined the company in 2011 as director of special projects, including the development and launch of *Opera in the Village*, Canada's first outdoor summer opera festival. Gélinas has an extensive background in managing and producing professional not-for-profit theater across Canada, including managing Regina's Globe Theatre and Nova Scotia's Atlantic Theatre Festival. Prior to relocating to Calgary in 2005, she was deputy minister of Saskatchewan Culture, Youth and Recreation.

**Des Moines Metro Opera** announced the appointment of **Michael Egel** to serve as the general and artistic director. Egel assumes responsibility for artistic direction, as well as overall management, with specific responsibilities in the areas of strategic planning, opera production, fiscal stewardship and community, and donor and board relations. He will work closely with the staff in the day-to-day operation of the organization, and with the production and artistic teams on the creation of the summer opera festival. Egel began his association with the company in 1994 as a festival employee.

**Florentine Opera** (Milwaukee, WI) has extended the contract for the company's general director, **William Florescu**, for an additional six years. Under Florescu's leadership, the company has presented the Midwest premiere of Robert Aldridge's *Elmer Gantry*; the world premiere of Don Davis's *Río de Sangre*; and has expanded the company's repertory to include its first Baroque work (Handel's *Semele*), as well as works by Bellini and by Blow. From 1999 until early 2005, Florescu was the general director of Lake George Opera (now Opera Saratoga). He previously served as general director of Columbus Light Opera.

**Florida Grand Opera** (FGO) welcomes the return of **Mark B. Rosenblum**. Having previously served as FGO's chief operating officer, Rosenblum returns as chief financial officer. For the past 23 years, Rosenblum has built a career managing nonprofit arts organizations in South Florida. Previously at FGO, he worked closely with then General Director Robert M. Heuer on daily operations and managed the location, purchase and renovation of the company's current headquarters.

**Joseph Colaneri** has been appointed music director of **The Glimmerglass Festival**. Colaneri, who has been on the conducting roster of the Metropolitan Opera for 15 seasons and has conducted across the U.S. and internationally, first worked with Glimmerglass in 2009 as conductor for *La Cenerentola*. This past season, he conducted the company's new production of Verdi's *King for a Day*. He has served as artistic director of the opera program at Mannes College The New School for Music in New York City since 1998, and currently serves as artistic director for West Australian Opera.

**Susan Mathieson Mayer**, director of **Lyric Opera of Chicago's** marketing and communications department for the past 25 years, will leave her current position at the end of 2013. Mathieson Mayer has spearheaded a wide variety of audience-building initiatives for the company, as well as numerous high-profile branding projects, including the 2011 advertising campaign "Long Live Passion," the naming of the Lyric Opera Bridge and a series of Lyric Operathon posters that featured celebrities from Michael Jordan to Bono. She will work as an independent marketing and communications consultant and will retain an association with the company, consulting on media-related and marketing projects.

## KUDOS



President Barack Obama awarded a 2012 National Medal of Arts to soprano **RENÉE FLEMING** for her contributions to American music. Born in Indiana, PA, Fleming studied with Patricia Misslin at the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam and at Eastman

with John Maloy, with further studies at the Juilliard School. She won the Metropolitan Opera Auditions in 1988 and that same year debuted with Houston Grand Opera as the Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro*, a role she reprised for her Metropolitan Opera and San Francisco Opera debuts in 1991. Fleming continues to perform, as well as host television and radio broadcasts, and serves as creative consultant for Lyric Opera of Chicago.



The NAACP has awarded **JESSYE NORMAN** the 98<sup>th</sup> Spingarn Medal, its highest honor. Born in Augusta, GA, Norman studied at Howard University, the Peabody Conservatory and the University of Michigan. After winning the 1968 Munich International

Competition, Norman debuted the following year in Berlin as Elisabeth in *Tannhauser*. She appeared at La Scala in 1972 and made her Metropolitan Opera debut in *Les Troyens* in 1983. The French government named her Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 1984 and awarded her the Legion d'Honneur in 1989. Norman was made an honorary ambassador to the United Nations in 1990 and in 1997 she became the youngest recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors.

Renée Fleming. Photo by Andrew Eccles. | Jessye Norman. Photo by Carol Friedman.

**Liz Benditt** has joined **Lyric Opera of Kansas City** as the new director of marketing and communications. Benditt brings over 15 years marketing experience to the company, having led integrated marketing initiatives at Disney, Hallmark, Bluetooth and most recently Westlake Ace Hardware. Prior to joining Westlake Ace, she served as vice president, marketing at Multi Service, where she led the revitalization of the legacy Multi Service brand. Additionally, **Ken McClain** has been promoted to director of ticketing and patron services. He has been with the Lyric Opera since 2010.

Conductor **Ari Pelto** has been appointed artistic advisor at **Opera Colorado** commencing with the company's 2014 season. He made his Opera Colorado debut earlier this year, conducting *Don Giovanni*. Pelto's work has taken him to opera houses, ballets, symphonies and conservatories throughout the U.S. and around the globe. In the U.S., he has conducted productions at New York City Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Boston Lyric Opera, Chautauqua Opera, Minnesota Opera, Portland Opera, Utah Symphony | Utah Opera and Opera Memphis.

**Richard Haney-Jardine** has been named as **Portland Opera's** (OR) director of marketing and communications. Haney-Jardine, a native of Caracas, Venezuela, moved to Portland from Asheville, NC, where he had been consulting for the North Carolina Stage Company as special advisor

for institutional advancement. He has previously served as director of marketing and creative services at Carnegie Hall.

**Stacy Ridenour** has been appointed director of development at **Sarasota Opera**. A trained concert pianist, Ridenour most recently served as the vice president of development of the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra. Prior to working in Jacksonville, she was the executive director of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra. During her time in Jacksonville, Ridenour launched new patron engagement programs, expanded education programs to include pre-school and afterschool programs, and expanded the regional patron base.

**Aidan Lang** has been named **Seattle Opera's** general director effective September 1, 2014. Lang succeeds Speight Jenkins, who has led the company for more than three decades. Prior to assuming his leadership role, Lang will work closely with Jenkins and Executive Director Kelly Tweeddale during the transition period. Lang has served as general director of New Zealand Opera since 2006, establishing New Zealand's first-ever opera production workshop, which has resulted in numerous international co-productions. Prior to leading New Zealand Opera, Lang held artistic leadership positions at Buxton Festival, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Glyndebourne Touring Opera and Opera Zuid in the Netherlands. A noted freelance director as well, he directed the first Brazilian production of Wagner's *Ring* at the historic Teatro Amazonas in Manaus.



# IN MEMORIAM

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## LOTFI MANSOURI (1924-2013)

Lotfi Mansouri, who served as general director of the Canadian Opera Company and San Francisco Opera, died at his San Francisco home on August 30 of pancreatic cancer. He was 84.

A passionate advocate of opera and a distinguished stage director, Mansouri's greatest legacy was his pioneering implementation of synchronous translations projected above the stage. First used at the Canadian Opera Company for a 1983 production of *Elektra*, the technology initially faced skepticism and critical disdain, but was soon adopted by companies around the world. "Lotfi's creative genius broke down one of the most significant barriers to the enjoyment of opera — the language barrier,"

said Marc A. Scorca, president/CEO of OPERA America. "Not since the introduction of the Met's weekly radio broadcasts has an innovation helped build the opera audience more dramatically than projected translations."

Born in Tehran, Lotfollah Mansouri left Iran to study medicine at UCLA, but soon turned to music. After a brief career as a singer, Mansouri soon established himself as a director of opera. From 1960 to 1966, he served as resident stage director of the Zürich Opera, and for the next decade was head stage director at the Geneva Opera, while also directing productions at leading opera houses around the world. Mansouri worked with the greatest stars of his generation and forged lasting relationships with many of them.

Mansouri led the Canadian Opera Company (COC) from 1976 to 1988. During his tenure, he lengthened the performance season, introduced adventurous repertoire and productions, and advanced financial and artistic planning. In 1980, he established the COC Ensemble Studio, Canada's premier training program for young opera professionals, including singers, opera coaches, stage directors and conductors. He also established permanent administrative offices at the Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Opera Centre and led the creation of the COC's own production shop. He also directed 30 new productions, 12 of them Canadian premieres, including Berg's *Lulu* and Britten's *Death in Venice*.

"Lotfi Mansouri was a legend," said COC General Director Alexander Neef. "There is no question he was one of opera's most influential general directors; whether it be his passion for promoting young performers, his zeal for attracting new audiences to the art form or his undeniable love of opera and all its idiosyncrasies."

Mansouri joined San Francisco Opera (SFO) in 1988 as the company's fourth general director, a position he held until 2001. Under his leadership, SFO established the Pacific Visions program to commission new works and to perform little-known ones. The project led to Conrad Susa's *The Dangerous Liaisons*, André Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire*, John Adams' *The Death of Klinghoffer*, Stewart Wallace's *Harvey Milk* and Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*. Mansouri led SFO through the aftereffects of the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake by staging performances at the Masonic Auditorium before the War Memorial Opera House reopened some 10 days later. Additionally Mansouri, with then-SFO Board President William Godward, managed the difficult transition through the closure and seismic renovation of the War Memorial Opera House in 1996-1997, presenting innovative productions at nearby venues.

Said SFO General Director David Gockley: "His larger-than-life personality, broad sense of humor and boundless enthusiasm for his work endeared him to everyone. His knowledge of the repertoire and stagecraft were daunting, and it benefitted every organization he was associated with."

# IN MEMORIAM

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His many honors include the title of *Chevalier* of France's *Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* and the 2009 National Endowment for the Arts Opera Honors for lifetime achievement. A video tribute to Mansouri, produced for the NEA Opera Honors by OPERA America, can be found online at [nea.gov/honors](http://nea.gov/honors). Mansouri was also featured in OPERA America's inaugural season of *Conversations* interviews at the National Opera Center in September 2013. That interview, conducted by OPERA America President/CEO Marc A. Scorca, can also be found on YouTube at [bit.ly/14gmYYR](http://bit.ly/14gmYYR).

Mansouri is survived by his wife Marjorie (Midge), their daughter Dr. Shireen Mansouri and son-in-law Shawn Delaney. In lieu of flowers, the Mansouri family requests that donations be made to San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program at [merola.org](http://merola.org) and/or to the Canadian Opera Company's COC Ensemble Studio at [coc.ca](http://coc.ca). Plans for a memorial celebration will be announced at a later date.



**BRUNO BARTOLETTI**, the Italian conductor who served as Lyric Opera of Chicago's artistic director from 1975 to 1999, died in Florence, Italy, on June 9. Bartoletti made his American debut at Lyric Opera of Chicago in 1956 conducting Verdi's *Il trovatore*. Prior to being named artistic director, Bartoletti served as co-artistic director with Pino Donati from 1964 to 1974. Bartoletti conducted nearly 600 performances of 55 operas in Chicago between 1956 and 2007. Since 1999, he served the company in an advisory capacity as artistic director emeritus. Bartoletti held the rank of Cavaliere di Gran Croce della Repubblica Italiana, the highest honor the Italian government can bestow. A member of Rome's Accademia di Santa Cecilia, he was also the recipient of the Italian music critics' highly prestigious Abbiati Prize. He was born in Sesto Fiorentino, and was a lifelong resident of Florence.



On June 20, TRG Arts CEO and Founder **RICK LESTER**, 61, died after a medical crisis during the Children's Hospital Colorado Courage Classic cycling fundraiser. Since founding TRG in 1995 as Lester & Associates, he and his partners built TRG into America's largest consulting company dedicated to arts and culture. Lester led TRG's advisory services on patron behavior trends and revenue generation for organizations and communities. His pioneering work in demand management, pricing and cost-of-sale focus in marketing have become industry best practices. In his frequent appearances as presenter, workshop leader and panelist at arts and culture conferences nationwide, he influenced the industry's ideas about ticket pricing, patron loyalty and metrics for institutional health.



**REGINA RESNIK**, who performed more than 300 times at the Metropolitan Opera and who made the shift from soprano to mezzo-soprano mid-career, died on August 8 at the age of 90. Born in 1922 in The Bronx, Resnik studied with Rosalie Miller and earned a degree in music education at Hunter College in 1942. In 1943, she won the Metropolitan Opera auditions; in 1944, she debuted at the Met as Leonora in Verdi's *Il trovatore*. She also performed leading roles at San Francisco Opera, New York City Opera and opera houses throughout Europe. As her voice began to shift in the 1950s, she converted to mezzo-soprano repertoire with continued success in leading international opera houses. In the 1970s and 80s, she directed many opera productions in the U.S. and in Europe with her second husband, Arbit Blatas, as production designer. Beginning in the late 80s, she appeared on Broadway, earning a Tony Award nomination for her performance in *Cabaret* (1987) and a Drama Desk nomination for *A Little Night Music* (1991).

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Lotfi Mansouri. Photo by Prasad and Valerie/San Francisco Opera. | Bruno Bartoletti. Photo by Skrebneski. | Rick Lester. Photo courtesy of TRG Arts. | Regina Resnik. Photo courtesy of The Metropolitan Opera Archives.

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# Print v. Digital: A Music Critic Crosses the Divide



Joshua Kosman. Photo by Nan Wiener.

*Digital media has diminished the role of newspapers as a primary vehicle for communicating information and opinion on the arts, yet at the same time technology has opened a refreshing dialogue between critics and their readers.*

**OPERA America President/CEO Marc A. Scorca spoke with JOSHUA KOSMAN, classical music critic of The San Francisco Chronicle, about how he bridges his print and blog audiences.**

**MAS:** As a writer for traditional print media, as well as your own blog, how do you relate to your readers on either side of the digital divide? Are they one audience or two?

**JK:** My choice would be one and a half. There are still audiences for whom the media relationship is very much print-bound, and I'm old enough to feel that's still my primary allegiance. I still read a newspaper in print, and I think of that as being in a sense my primary pulpit. But I'm aware that's no longer really true, that much of what I have to say gets disseminated electronically, and more importantly, that much of what comes back to me is electronic. And from the perspective of people in my line of work, this is one of the most exhilarating developments: that the relationship with readers has become immeasurably more bilateral, more give and take, more conversational than it used to be. That, to me, is a wonderful thing. If you're acclimated to the idea of pronouncing from on high or ex cathedra, the idea of a dialogue can be a little unnerving, but I think in general it cannot be anything but beneficial and invigorating for everyone involved.

Another interesting development is the extent to which music criticism of the old style has become much more global. When I started at the *Chronicle*, only people in San Francisco had a clue as to what I was writing, and then the *Chronicle* had a website and suddenly people in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, if they were interested in what is happening in San Francisco, they were coming to the site and I was reading other people in a way that I hadn't before. The dialogue is now really national and international in scope.

**MAS:** What do you see as the benefit of this two-way communication?

**JK:** When the world of blogging began, and this is true not only in the arts, but even more so in politics, you saw these discussions carried out on a greater scale. But there was this notion of well, who are these bloggers and what kind of credentials did they have? What authority do they speak with? And the answer is, "The same as anybody else!" The notion that the person who has a job writing for a big media outlet got it because they had some kind of authority or credential is pretty bogus if you actually read what goes on in blogs. What actually happens, in my view, is the authority and the credibility comes as a function of what you write, not from perceived authority. Your word only has weight if it carries with it its own internal credibility.

**MAS:** I grew up in New York believing that reviewers had some supernatural powers of observation and analysis. What you're suggesting is that audience members are now empowered to have opinions of their own.

**JK:** Exactly. In the early years of Opera-L, the listserv for opera fans, I got my mother to take a look at it, because she was going to opera performances in Philadelphia where she lives, and she would see this or that and ask me what I thought. I would say, "I don't know; I wasn't there," and I pointed her to Opera-L because people there were discussing Philadelphia opera productions. And she read them and said, "Well this is very interesting but I can't tell who these people are. Are they actual critics or just assholes with an opinion?" And I said, "I don't think that's a meaningful distinction."



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**“IF YOU’RE ACCLIMATED TO THE IDEA OF PRONOUNCING  
FROM ON HIGH OR EX CATHEDRA,  
THE IDEA OF A DIALOGUE CAN BE A LITTLE UNNERVING.”**

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**MAS:** When you’re writing in the *Chronicle*, are you writing in an old-fashioned “this is my opinion” style or have you changed your style to invite people to have their own reactions?

**JK:** I wish I could say that my writing style has changed as a result of this. I’m not sure it has. But when I write for the blog I do take a looser and more personal view, though I do think a formal writing style still has a place in our discourse.

**MAS:** How do you generally receive reader reactions, either for the paper or on the blog? Has the volume of reader response increased as a result of the ease of electronic response?

**JK:** My e-mail address is printed with everything I write. Even in the print edition, my e-mail address is right there. Honestly, I don’t think I could remember the last time I got a letter at the *Chronicle* office on stationery. The actual physical mail drop has dwindled to almost nothing. Pretty much all that is in my mailbox now are physical CDs sent for review.

As for the volume of replies, the answer is, “Not as much as I would wish.” I’ve been at the paper for 25 years and it’s always been true that one gets less feedback on my beat than the political writers do, even less than the movie critics or the pop music critics, because first of all there are fewer classical music aficionados than there are moviegoers. But also I think because there is this sense that every moviegoer understands the art and believes his or her opinion is perfectly comparable to that of the critic. That view is not always held by classical music audiences. I think there is there is both a sense of deference where you say, “Well I thought this was good, but what the hell do I know, he’s the expert.” Meaning me. And at the same time there are those who go to concerts and feel themselves to be the expert and think that I’m the idiot, which may also be accurate, and disdain to get into dialogue with me.

**MAS:** I’ve had conversations with singers who feel embattled by Facebook and Twitter. They feel, “Okay, so I didn’t sing that high C very well last night, and suddenly everyone’s posting that I’m over the hill. I had a little bit of phlegm, but I am being lambasted in the social media.”

**JK:** This is the downside to openness in dialogue. Back in the pre-Internet days, my preference was always to have as little interaction with artists as I could. I felt like it was a danger to my criticism if I felt their human presence too much. Harold Schonberg was famously adamant about that kind of thing. I feel for them. I guess I have to say I think they ought to suck it up and not pay too much attention to it. The truth is, those conversations were always there — it’s just that they weren’t

out in public. They were mouth to mouth and hand to hand. It’s the same thing with newspaper reviews. You have to be relatively thick-skinned about it.

**MAS:** Digital media has changed not only how opera lovers participate in the discourse about opera but in their engagement, as well. For some, HD transmissions are not only a viable alternative, they’re a preferred way of participating in opera. How do you feel about the viability of these alternatives?

**JK:** I was afraid you were going to ask me this! The truth is I’m really a great failure as a futurist. I have no chops in this regard. I honestly am going to say I don’t have a very good sense of where it’s going. The first thing that happens, presumably, is it makes it very difficult for the profusion of smaller opera companies that have sprung up in the last 40 years or so. Those companies are going to have a difficult time. Like ecospheres, there’s a profusion and then the population outstrips the available foraging grounds.

**MAS:** Do you worry as you see music critics being eased out of newspapers and features no longer having the column inches that they used to? Do you worry about the future of newspaper-based arts journalism?

**JK:** Yes and no. I worry about the future of newspapers, and with that the future of newspaper-based music journalism. And there have been some discussions about whether classical music blogging was sort of a fad that came and went, and there is something to that. I mean, it seems to have kind of ballooned a few years ago and then died down a little bit, but I think there are still plenty of people who are keeping it strong. I have a great confidence, which may be foolish, that there is this big convulsion happening right now and at some point further along the dust is going to settle and we will have a new journalistic model — and that that model will still have a place for music criticism. ■

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*Joshua Kosman has covered classical music for The San Francisco Chronicle since 1988. He holds degrees in music from Yale and UC Berkeley, and is a contributor to the New Grove Dictionary of Opera. He is the vice president of the Music Critics Association of North America and a past winner of the ASCAP-Deems Taylor Award for music criticism. He blogs about music at [pacificaisle.blogspot.com](http://pacificaisle.blogspot.com).*



# New Operas from SCHOTT/EAM



Tobias Picker

## **Dolores Claiborne**

*San Francisco Opera, September 18, 2013*

Tobias Picker's thrilling setting of Stephen King's best-selling novel "Dolores Claiborne", with a libretto by J.D. McClatchy, was commissioned by San Francisco Opera and featured Dolores Zajick in the title role.

Gavin Bryars

## **Marilyn Forever**

*Aventa Ensemble, September 13, 2013*

Commissioned by Aventa Ensemble and with a libretto by author and poet Marilyn Bowering, Gavin Bryars' *Marilyn Forever* examines the inner life of Marilyn Monroe, and her intellectual and emotional relationships with love and death.



Douglas J. Cuomo

## **Doubt**

*Minnesota Opera, January 26, 2013*

Commissioned by the Minnesota Opera for its 50th anniversary season, Douglas J. Cuomo's latest opera features a libretto by John Patrick Shanley and is based on Shanley's Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning play.



Kamran Ince

## **Judgment of Midas**

*Present Music, April 12, 2013*

Loosely based on Ovid's mythical drama *Metamorphoses* with a libretto by Miriam Seidel, *Judgment of Midas* details the epic musical battle that occurs between the gods Pan and Apollo. The opera celebrates the 50th anniversary of the archaeological exploration of Sardis.



George Benjamin

## **Written on Skin**

*Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, July 7, 2012*

George Benjamin's acclaimed new opera has been called "impeccable," "complexly beautiful," and "the work of a genius unleashed." *Written on Skin* features an original libretto by Martin Crimp and was premiered at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence.



Also recently premiered:

### **Jörg Widmann, *Babylon***

Bayerischen Staatsoper, October 27, 2012

### **Gerald Barry, *The Importance of Being Earnest***

Los Angeles Philharmonic, April 7, 2011 (concert)

Opéra National de Lorraine, March 17, 2013 (staged)

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# The Digital Classroom

*Texting, tweeting, gaming, checking social media—today's youth live in a digital world, and opera educators are leveraging digital technology to reach them.*

“Standing in front and lecturing is a dead model,” says Carleen Graham, professor of opera and director of the **Crane Opera Ensemble** at SUNY Potsdam. Today’s students, she says, “expect the show.” Forget about PowerPoint, that 20<sup>th</sup>-century relic. Try Prezi, which Graham calls “PowerPoint on steroids.” It’s interactive and fluid, with zooming movement and wacky colors. But with Graham’s endorsement comes a warning label: “You have to make sure people don’t get seasick,” she says.

SMART Board technology, which saves and uploads class notes for later access by students, has gone from a luxury to an essential classroom device in vocal and opera instruction, as have learning management systems such as Blackboard, Moodle and Canvas, which allow instructors and students to share information. At **Westminster Choir College**, voice professor Laura Brooks Rice says Canvas is used for a wide range of applications, from uploading course syllabi to uploading videos showing how the lungs and ribcage look as singers breathe.

“Our administration strongly recognizes that technology access is important — to students and to faculty,” says Johnathon Pape, director of opera studies at the **Boston Conservatory**. In budget discussions, Pape says investment in technology is one area where everyone is in agreement.

Access is the key benefit of instructional technology, as far as Pape is concerned: “access to information and also to other industry professionals who can speak to my students. Sharing of ideas in real time across miles and time zones really is extremely useful.” In the Boston Conservatory “Business of the Opera Business” class, students have connected via Skype with tax specialists to learn about finance and with **Metropolitan Opera** choristers to explore alternate paths toward singing careers. Robin Guarino, who chairs the opera department at the **University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM)**, has used Skype to facilitate discussions with composers and librettists. She calls it “a way to blast into a place halfway around the world in the middle of the day.”

Skype may expand the capacity for classroom instruction in non-performance course work, but its marginal sound quality and frequent technological hiccups limit its capacity for judging vocal production. Still, there are useful applications for vocal instruction. Rice finds Skype effective for singers with whom she has long-term relationships, especially when they are on the road. “I can see them and I can hear them, even though it’s not necessarily great quality, and get a sense of what they’re doing,” she says. “The benefit is being able to check in.”



# ne ital room

ing Facebook or simply surfing,  
l. DON LEE explores how voice and  
ital technology for the classroom.



Advancements in technology that can enhance synchronization and fidelity in distance learning are on the way. This fall, New York's **American Lyric Theater** (ALT), which produces a full-time program for composers and librettists, will debut a new generation of videoconferencing capability at OPERA America's National Opera Center. According to ALT Founder and Producing Artistic Director Lawrence Edelson, the "multi-point bridging capability will enable multiple parties to connect and maintain the highest video and audio quality." Funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the technology will enable both room-based and one-on-one instruction to share multiple media (scores, libretti, recordings) simultaneous with HD video and audio. Guarino and her fellow education leaders in the field have been brainstorming additional ways the National Opera Center can be used for teaching and training, including master classes, opening panels and discussions with visiting artists, and even the possibility of live streaming auditions.

## **THE CAMERA AS TEACHING ASSISTANT**

Although video recording is hardly a new teaching tool, Graham says students were once reluctant to use it. Now it's expected. "Twenty years ago when I started teaching at this

level, you could give a student notes and there was an innate trust," she says. "Now I can tell them till I'm blue in the face, but until they see it themselves on video it won't change."

Graham and Guarino record voice students to prepare them for auditions. Are they making eye contact when they introduce themselves? Are they standing too close to the piano? Does that outfit look right? Is their vocal focus too low? By recording lessons on her laptop, Rice says she can point out her young singers' postural issues, the positioning of the jaw and the neck, the shape of the mouth. The immediacy of the feedback is the greatest advantage, she says, as well as the ability to organize video files and easily monitor students' progress over time.

Rice says the camera has also helped her grow as a teacher. She watches herself gesture and listens to the language she uses to make sure she's connecting. "I'm a very demonstrative teacher, and I've noticed that I sometimes talk too much. It's just as good for a teacher as it is for a student to watch what they're doing."

To supplement demonstrations and metaphors teachers use to help their students understand their own voices, Westminster and other music schools have borrowed technology from the medical world. The tools can determine



Laura Brooks Rice teaching in her studio. Photo by Don Hamerman.

the accuracy of pitch, measure nasality, and test lung functioning and air flow. Using a spectrograph, which transforms acoustic sound waves into visual electronic displays, students can see scientific measurements of their resonance, their legato, their projection, their onsets, their vowel definition and more.

“This is by no means a ‘good-o-meter’ and ‘bad-o-meter,’” emphasizes Lorraine Manz, director of the Otto B. Schoepfle Vocal Arts Center at **Oberlin College-Conservatory of Music**. By looking at a spectrogram, students get visual affirmation of what they’re feeling as they sing. Visual learners value it most. “It takes a lot of wondering and uncertainty out of it for students,” she says. “It provides affirmation of what we already know and hear. Is it essential? No, but it certainly can help.” Manz and her Oberlin colleagues do not require their students to visit the laboratory, nor do they bring the technology into the voice studio.

Manz also feels technology has made her teaching more efficient; she less often finds herself searching for language to describe the sound she’s after. When her predecessor, Richard Miller, founded the laboratory in 1989, Manz says he was looking for an approach “based on acoustic and physiologic truth as we understand it today.” Miller, who died in 2009, wrote *The Structure of Singing* and several other standard texts on voice teaching. However, Manz is quick to point out

that Miller did not believe scientific measurement ought to supplant traditional voice pedagogy: “In the late 80s and early 90s, there was a perception that Oberlin students had to be hooked up to machines in order to sing. He laughed at that.”

#### **YOUTUBE AND THE CLASSROOM**

YouTube, often derided as classic online time-waster, has been embraced by the voice teaching community. “Recently I was coaching someone on Olympia’s aria from *The Tales of Hoffman*,” recalls Guarino. “I found 16 people doing it on YouTube.” Why was she spending time there? “Half of my students have a problem getting to class at 9:00 a.m. because they’ve been looking at performances on YouTube,” she says. If she wants to guide them, she has to see where they like to go on their own.

The passion of today’s students to explore and learn via digital media can only be expected to grow, according to a just-published Wallace Foundation study, which calls it “interest-driven arts learning” and argues that for young people it could become a path toward deeper engagement in the arts. The study, which focuses on K-12 students and their activity outside of the classroom, has implications for college and conservatory students, particularly in the way the learning applies to what the report terms “critical practices, such as carefully observing and studying an artwork to understand it.” (See excerpt on page 30.)

When Guarino teaches singing actors at CCM, she focuses on language and text. She asks her students to look for subtext and metaphor in the work they’re learning, to find the “human being” in the text. On YouTube, she shows them Scotto, Callas, Tebaldi — all performing the same aria — and encourages the students to consider how the singers use the text and how the interpretation changes. “Being an artist is about making interesting, motivated choices. YouTube is a quick way for them to realize how different all those people are.”

Graham embraces online video especially because of its potential to expose her opera literature students to new work. It’s not easy to find contemporary opera video, she admits, and when she succeeds, as she did recently with *L’amour de loin* (*Love from Afar*) by Kaija Saariaho, her captive classroom

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“KEEPING UP WITH THE PACE OF TECHNOLOGY IS A CONTINUING CHALLENGE FOR EDUCATORS; STUDENTS OFTEN DISCOVER AND ADOPT DIGITAL INNOVATIONS FASTER THAN THEIR PROFESSORS DO.”

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**“SKYPE MAY EXPAND THE CAPACITY FOR CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION IN NON-PERFORMANCE COURSE WORK, BUT ITS MARGINAL SOUND QUALITY AND FREQUENT TECHNOLOGICAL HICCUPS LIMIT ITS CAPACITY FOR JUDGING VOCAL PRODUCTION.”**

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audience is not always thrilled. “When I tell them we’re going to look at a new piece, I can tell they’re thinking, ‘This is going to be excruciating.’ But within five minutes they’re engrossed in it.” This school year, students at Westminster have a new source of opera video at their disposal. Under a beta testing agreement, Rice says the Metropolitan Opera has granted the school on-demand access to *The Met: Live in HD*.

Most of the opera video that students choose to view online does not carry the Met’s imprimatur, or anything close to it. Teachers can’t stop them from watching YouTube, but “you do have to educate them to be good critical thinkers and guide them to look at what you like and get them to talk about what they like,” says Guarino. “You have to bring that conversation into the room.”

**WHO’S TEACHING WHOM?**

Keeping up with the pace of technology is a continuing challenge for educators; students often discover and adopt digital innovations faster than their professors do. The fact that Rice embraces new technology — for the most part — comes as a pleasant surprise to some of her students, she says. Graham,

who describes herself as average when it comes to technical skills, stays current with the help of her students; when a new device or unfamiliar app surfaces, she asks people in her courses to share their knowledge, not just with her but with their classmates.

But the abundance of content and the ease of access does not negate the value of classroom pedagogy: “Helping students navigate the huge wealth of information that’s out there and helping them use it wisely is part of the education process now,” says Pape. They need discernment filters, he says — ways to distinguish what’s reliable from what’s not. And no less than in the era of chalkboards and textbooks, holding the attention of students requires a human interface. Graham sometimes has trouble getting students to watch a YouTube video for more than a minute or two, but she’s found that presenting them with a set of guiding questions can make classroom discussion more thoughtful.

Most of all, students need standards set for the opera house, not the iPad. Technology may enhance classroom instruction, but when it comes to preparation for live performance, digital media will always be a poor substitute for the human interface

of the conservatory studio. Says Manz: “You can’t replace the voice teacher. Ever.”

The qualities truly essential to the stage — technique, nuance, immediacy, passion — are not available for download. ■



Robin Guarino with the CCM student cast of the workshop of Douglas Cuomo’s *Doubt*. Photo by Phillip Groshong.

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*Don Lee is a media producer, editor, writer and narrator based in St. Paul, MN. He previously served at NPR as executive producer of Performance Today.*



# On Screen and Onstage: Interest-Driven Arts for Teens

***A new report commissioned by The Wallace Foundation advocates the need to capitalize on the interest of youths in digital media and connect these experiences to more formal arts learning opportunities.***

***Written by KYLIE PEPPLER, assistant professor in the learning sciences program at Indiana University, this report seeks to inspire new pedagogical practices, the design and study of new and existing learning environments, and new tools to support the documentation of interest-driven arts learning.***

**I**t goes almost without saying that kids today are absorbed in computers, cellphones, video games, television and other media — spending an average of seven hours and 38 minutes a day with the gadgetry, according to a report by the Kaiser Family Foundation. Additionally, because youths multitask, using more than one medium at a time, they are actually packing 10 hours and 45 minutes worth of media consumption into those 7.5 hours.

At the same time, many young people are creating original work and sharing it with others. This is happening in physical spaces through popular events such as comics and costume (“cosplay”) conventions, as well as in displays of homemade projects at “Maker Faires” sponsored by Make magazine. It is also happening online. Findings from the Pew Internet & American Life Project suggest that nearly two-thirds of online teens create content at some point — from blogs to webpages to original stories, photos, videos or other artwork they post electronically.

In what other creative activities are young people engaging during their “spare” time? A wide variety of traditional endeavors, to be sure — dancing (often assisted by video games or websites) or poetry (given new life by poetry slams), for example. But they are also busy at work in many wholly new art forms or hybrids of older forms. Among these are designing video games; using animations or cartoons or video game components to produce “machinima” films; and generating “fanfic,” stories and creations that feed off popular books, movies, cartoons and other features.

All this, we believe, points to a broader cultural trend that values creative production and the communities that form around it. This trend is driven in part by the proliferation of technologies that put production of arts — music composition, dance, design and visual arts, among them — within reach of anyone interested. A very short sampling of these technologies gives an idea of the breadth of what’s available. Scratch, a visual programming environment, allows people to create

and share interactive animations, video games, music and art, while the popular GarageBand software enables novices to compose original music without traditional instruments or access to recording studios. The Brushes app for iPads enables painters to mix paint without paying for new materials or having taken an art class; the Arduino microcontroller helps artists and designers create their own robotic sculptures or interactive environments.

### **DIGITAL COMMUNITIES FOR ARTS LEARNING**

The web, YouTube, social media outlets like Twitter, Facebook and many online communities specifically for artists are giving young people places where they can post digital portfolios, as well as view and comment on one another's work. At the same time, arts mentoring communities are emerging, in some cases taking the role of instructor, especially for arts not usually taught in K-12 schools, such as manga and video game design.

Some communities that form around creative production are virtual: deviantART, for example, is a large online site where artists can share, discuss and market their work, while MacJams serves as an online studio for musicians.

But a number of promising communities focused on young people and artistic production have emerged in physical spaces, too. The YOUmedia network, a program for young people to learn new media skills, is based in libraries, museums and community organizations, for example. The Computer Clubhouse Network, which provides media arts experiences to teens, operates through a network of freely available after-school, open studio spaces.

What we call "grassroots movements" also have the potential to be potent means of arts learning through involvement in communities. Take "krumping," an urban dance form that originated in South Central Los Angeles. Membership in krump communities is dependent on one's inclusion in "families," which are organized around mentorship from a more experienced krump dancer. The form evolves when large groups of dancers engage in "battles" or other exhibitions, after which dancers and their families incorporate or respond to the newest moves from the event. This ensures the perpetual development of the dance form.

In some cases, arts learning communities are both virtual and physical. In addition to concrete meeting spots, YOUmedia offers teens access to Remix Learning, an online space to support mentor-student and student-student collaborations beyond the school day and after-school classes. Remix Learning allows users to post text, graphic designs, games and videos; exchange ideas; critique work; share expertise; and debate.

Online mentors (artists hired as staff by YOUmedia) encourage youths to post their work while also demonstrating model behavior by posting their own creations and moderating online discussions and competitions.

Remix Learning amounts to what we call a "social learning network" (as opposed to a "social network" like Facebook), but because such communities have not been heavily studied, we still have much to learn about how they could boost arts learning. For example, we don't know if youths who have already had experience working with a mentor at a community center do better in social learning networks than the uninitiated. Similarly, grassroots communities have engendered little formal research, although what research there is suggests that most of the eight Studio Thinking habits of mind are taking place within them, from developing craft to reflecting on the process.

### **ADJUSTING INSTRUCTION TO LEVEL OF INTEREST**

To increase youth participation and interest in the arts, adults need to recognize that not all teens are alike — some already have a great interest in the arts, some none at all — and design programming accordingly.

That's what Musical Futures, a British arts education project, has done. The organization has come up with a classification that divides young people into four categories: refusers, those with little or no interest in music; waverers, who have an interest in music but are unsure what they want to do or how to participate; explorers, who have some skills and confidence but have not yet found a good match for their interests; and directors, who are already performing. The project develops fitting activities for the various groups — "taster" workshops for waverers, for example, or professional recording sessions for the directors.

Musical Futures' approach, which seeks to understand young people and meet them where they are, offers insight into how to invite young people into the arts and sustain their participation over time. ■

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*An artist by training, Kylie Peppler engages in research that focuses on the intersection of arts, media, new technologies and informal learning. Her current work on creativity, computation, and media arts in youth communities is supported by the National Science Foundation and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. To view this report in full, visit [wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/arts-education](http://wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/arts-education).*

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# Opera Marketing: The New Digital Repertoire

*Print brochures were once the foundation of the successful opera ticket sales campaign, but as SUSAN ELLIOTT discovers, leading marketers are increasingly shifting the balance to digital channels.*

When the **Florentine Opera** (Milwaukee) marketing team saw that sales were slow for its upcoming production of *Albert Herring* last season, it came up with a master plan that included a cocktail party, a post-performance reception and several e-mail blasts targeted specifically at young professionals. Events aside, every promotional dollar was directed toward digital channels. Not a drop of print. Not only did the initiative boost sales significantly, says Richard Clark, director of marketing and communications, but 35 percent of the *Albert Herring* audience was new to the opera.

Digital marketing, properly applied, can be cheaper, easier and more effective than traditional print marketing campaigns, but don't throw out the presses just yet. **Michigan Opera Theatre** (MOT) Marketing Manager Michael Hauser says that "print is way down from what it was" in his budget and calls direct mail "obsolete," but, he adds, print "is still part of the mix, along with radio, network TV, cable TV, transit ads and billboards." Print expense may be down, but it's not out: in some cases it still represents 50 percent — or more — of an opera company's marketing budget, be it for advertising, direct mail or brochures.

Older opera audiences in particular respond well to print, says Ceci Dadisman, director of marketing and public relations at **Palm Beach Opera** (PBO), many of whose patrons are retirees. "If they get a postcard or a brochure, they're going to hold onto it for a while," she says. MOT prints only a single-ticket brochure, which, in September, will be inserted into regional editions of *The New York Times*. "It's very affordable," says Hauser, who explains that, with the insert, he also gets a 50 percent discount for digital ads on the *Times* website. Jon Miles, vice president of marketing and public relations for **Utah Symphony | Utah Opera**, reports that the bulk of his company's subscription sales are sold through mail order or over the

phone, though most of its single ticket sales are generated from the company's website.

Miles' previous job was in online marketing, so one would think print might not be high on his list. On the contrary: he says direct mail remains an effective tool. "You need everything," he says. In 2009, for a Labor Day weekend web promotion, the Utah team decided to drop all print elements. Bad move, says Miles: sales dropped by half. "The next year we went back to the multi-channel approach and the sales picked right back up," he says, "so it's hard to say what's the most effective, because you need it all together."

## MEASURING RESULTS

Aside from being less expensive, because so much more data can be collected online, measurement can be easier and more meaningful than print response. Marketers can track customer buying habits, draw potential audiences to its website, and measure the effectiveness of their websites as well as ad placements with tools such as Google Analytics. E-mail marketing, long a staple in opera marketing, continues to offer a good return on investment. Florentine sends out about 50 e-mails annually to a list of 7,000 (which can be segmented into 42 lists, from high-end donors to choristers to subscribers) at a cost of about \$1,400 — less than one percent of its marketing budget. Clark says the response rate is as high as 20 percent.

Sophisticated analytics are not the only tool for assessing consumer behavior in response to expenditure. "We're all realizing that the concept of return on investment is getting very difficult to pinpoint," says Dadisman, a frequent speaker on digital integration and the use of technology for arts organizations. "Somebody might make a purchase after receiving an e-mail or seeing something on social media," she says, "but chances are that's only the last message they saw



from you. Maybe they also saw an e-blast, or a print brochure or postcard. So it's important to integrate the whole."

Web advertising, once a matter of banners and clicks, has evolved to various forms of behavioral targeting supplemented by metrics. Behavioral retargeting, in which an advertising network uploads a unique, anonymous tag to an individual's web browser, enables marketers to identify websites where a user has been and then target ads to those users based on their web browsing history. Clark, of Florentine Opera, was recently reading *The New York Times* online and an ad for his own company popped up; he hadn't purchased a Times ad, but, having recently checked the Florentine Opera website, his own ad was retargeted to him. Dadisman says PBO uses retargeting for prospecting. Visiting Palm Beach? Reading the *Food and Wine* website? Geo-targeting software will prompt a PBO ad to pop-up on your screen.

"Just as in print advertising," says Dadisman, "you have to be really careful in choosing where you advertise online, based on who you're trying to reach." *The New York Times*, she says, works well for PBO because many locals are retired New Yorkers. Similarly, the demographic interested in opera is also more likely to get the news from the *Times*. "Plus, it's fabulously cheap," she says. "A multi-week campaign on the *Times* website to market an opera costs about the same as one print ad in one of our local papers. You get a lot of bang for your buck."

#### APPLAUSE FOR THE APP

According to a May 2013 Pew Charitable Trust Smartphone Ownership Survey, 91 percent of American adults owned a cell phone, 56 percent a smart phone and 34 percent a tablet computer. Since opera audiences skew older than the general population, one might assume that they're not as hooked on mobile, but that too is changing: a 2012 study by the arts marketing firm GroupofMinds found that 80 percent of arts consumers owned smartphones and 70 percent of them used their phones to look up and purchase tickets to arts events. Though the GroupofMinds survey covers an expansive array of the arts, including classical music, dance and theater, given the rate at which mobile devices continue to expand their reach the numbers can only continue to grow for opera companies.

New web design methods known as responsive web design enable a website to detect whatever device may be accessing it, be it a smartphone or tablet or desktop computer, and optimize the content for display on that device. In the past, a company that wanted its site to be readable on mobile platforms usually built an app — which can be expensive, not just for the technology but for the staff time of maintaining two separate sites. Five years ago — which in technology time is the Paleolithic Era — PBO became the first arts organization in Florida to have such an app. "But that was before mobile websites were so easy to do," says Dadisman. "Now, technology has come so far, we have a responsive site that's mobile-friendly on any device."

The challenge with digital technology isn't just identifying the right medium, it's clarifying the right message. With print, says Clark, the marketer's narrative is straightforward: "Buy this, come here." But with digital connections, such as web and social media, he says the narrative is more like "This is of interest to you. If you want to buy, click here; if you want to read more, click here; if you

### PHONE FEATURES: WHAT ARE ARTS PATRONS DOING NOW? (2009 vs. 2012)



Source: GroupofMinds Arts Marketing Consultants.



want learn about the history and everybody involved in the project, click [here](#); if you want to see a video, click [here](#); if you want to 'like' our Facebook page and get more information on a regular basis, click [here](#); if you want to read our blog, click [here](#); if you want nothing from us anymore, we'll take you off the list."

Despite the advances of technology for marketing, getting the message out is still as much an artful mix as a quantitative

science. "Everybody gets everything," says Dadisman, "and from a marketing standpoint, that's how you have to do it these days." ■

.....  
*Susan Elliott is a freelance arts writer and the news and special reports editor of MusicalAmerica.com.*

## PERMISSION TO TWEET

For the last two seasons, Palm Beach Opera (PBO) has provided "Tweet Seats" for dress rehearsals, with attendees encouraged to Tweet stage activity and comments. Artists are alerted in advance — and some have even joined in the fun by tweeting from backstage. Patrons are reminded to turn flashes off when they take photos, "but other than that, we leave the Tweeters on their own and interfere as little as possible" says PBO Director of Marketing and Public Relations Ceci Dadisman. A moderator monitors the Twitter stream via the hashtag so as to answer any questions.

*Salome, March 2013*

"Impressive part about opera — no mics, just belting voice. One dude's voice shakes room it's so low."

"Salome is sung exceptionally well tonight, those coming for the real show will be very happy."

"Can safely say this is the first time I am watching someone sing an aria to a decapitated head. That's opera for ya!"

"I hope Salome's maids have a good laundry soap to get that blood out!"

*La Cenerentola, February 2013*

"Learning some hilarious new flirtation techniques from Cinderella's step sisters."

"There's a time and a place to laugh at the Opera. This is the time...and it's definitely the place. The Baron is hilarious."

"Loved being in the Tweet Seats for *La Cenerentola* tonight. Perfect opera for Valentine's Day. Thank you."

*La traviata, January 2013*

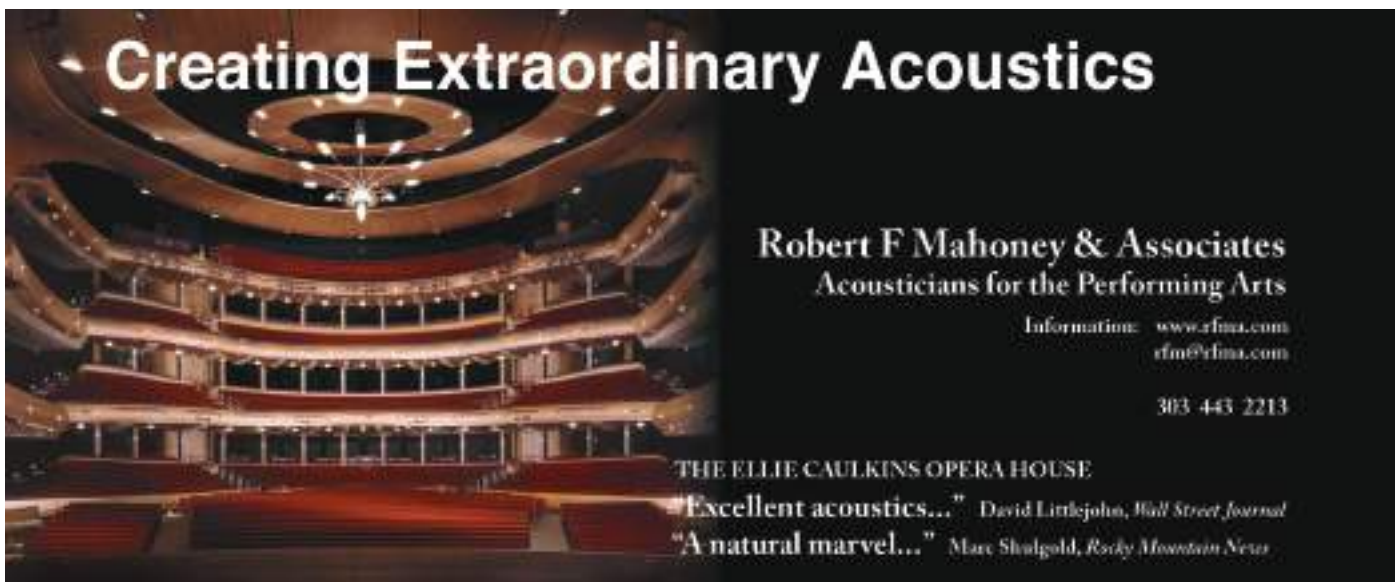
"General director asks for a round of applause for the techies, love it!"

"I don't see how Violetta gets anything good out of this deal. Boo Alfredo's dad."

"Remind me to bring tissues next time. :)"

"Well that was devastating. And lovely. And makes me want cake for some reason."

Source: This article originally appeared in *Musical America Special Report Mobile Marketing: The Arts in Motion*, copyright 2013 Musical America. Used by permission. To view the full report, visit [musicalamerica.com/specialreports/mobile](http://musicalamerica.com/specialreports/mobile).



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"A natural marvel..." Marc Shulgold, *Rocky Mountain News*

## TIPS FOR GOING MOBILE

In 2009, Arts Council Silicon Valley commissioned GroupofMinds Arts Marketing + Technology Consultants to research the mobile preferences of arts patrons. The sample of arts patrons came from users of regional online arts calendars in six U.S. cities. In September 2012, GroupofMinds independently commissioned an update of the research, with a goal of measuring changes in mobile preferences over the previous three years. Among the conclusions of the *Arts Patrons: Mobile Preferences* report:

1) Mobile versions of websites should be a top priority of arts marketing plans, and they should make all logistical information about the event easy to access (directions, length of show, restaurant options, etc.). The existence of this new informational channel should be frequently communicated to patrons.

2) Be clear and detailed when asking patrons to spread information on social channels. Patrons should be told when social media is OK and when it is not; content can be shared with the audience before, after and even during performances.

3) Provide different types of experiences to encompass the variety of patron technology preferences. As an example, try creating an e-mail interview of a former "tweet seats" participant in your audience, and send it out to your list to build understanding. Those on the fence should be exposed to both opinions and invited to experiment with separate programming opportunities provided by your organization.

4) Arts organization staff, who are arguably big consumers of the arts, need to be experimenting themselves with mobile at other arts events. Try to visit the organization's website — does it look good on mobile? Look it up on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, and see if there is content to share. By experimenting themselves, staff members will become more knowledgeable about the user experience their own patrons are having.

Source: *Arts Patrons: Mobile Preferences* was prepared by Ron Evans, a consumer psychologist and researcher with GroupofMinds arts marketing consultants ([groupofminds.com](http://groupofminds.com)). Evans assists arts organizations to change audience behavior through innovative uses of marketing, technology and consumer psychology. The full report can be found at [bit.ly/reportmobile](http://bit.ly/reportmobile).

## WORKING WITH ADVERTISING AGENCIES

The American Association of Advertising Agencies recommends a number of ways that marketers can establish efficient relationship and cost-effective relationships with agencies:

1. Educate all partners about the differing economics between traditional and digital media. This is particularly true for finance directors, budget holders and agency account managers involved in staffing and fee discussions.

2. Manage media, production and agency budgets together rather than in silos. The digital space no longer allows the neat separation of these services. Although digital marketing may reduce overall costs, budgets may not show the same one-to-one reduction where economies of scale are lost.

3. Resist the temptation to involve all advertising disciplines just because they are interested. There is understandably a strong desire for an advertiser's full staff to be involved, but the more this occurs, the less efficient the process (and the agency) will be.

4. Going digital all at once may not be realistic. Given the range of opportunities and the related costs, most advertisers cannot afford the full spectrum of digital opportunities across all of their campaigns and markets.

5. Visit your agency to better understand the digital process first-hand. This will assist in building knowledge around the players, the process and the interplay between creativity and technology. It also helps to answer the question "Who are these people and why am I paying for them?"

6. Avoid the "shiny new toy" syndrome. Resist the temptation to do more simply because it can be done.

Source: *Marketer's Guide to Understanding the Economics of Digital Compared to Traditional Advertising and Media Services* by Joe Burton, ©2009 Joe Burton, McCann Worldgroup, Published by the American Association of Advertising Agencies (4A's). The full report can be viewed at [ams.aaa.org](http://ams.aaa.org).

# OA NEWS

## OPERA AMERICA INDUCTED INTO HALL OF FAME



David Klingshim, founder of the American Classical Music Hall of Fame, presented the award to OPERA America President/CEO Marc A. Scorca. Photo by Philip Groshong.

OPERA America was inducted into the American Classical Music Hall of Fame (ACMHF) in June at an event hosted by **Cincinnati Opera**. “It gives us great pleasure to welcome OPERA America into the American Classical Music Hall of Fame,” said ACMHF Executive Director Nina Perlove. “Through groundbreaking programs of exceptional quality, OPERA America has continued to invigorate opera creators and audiences, creating a lasting impact on our field.”

“On behalf of OPERA America, its board of directors, donors, members and staff, I am truly honored by this recognition. We deeply thank the American Classical Music Hall of Fame for the honor,” said Scorca. “For more than 40 years, OPERA America has been dedicated to advancing this art form about which we feel so passionately. With OPERA America’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on the horizon in 2020, we are eager to continue leading and serving our evolving and exciting industry,” he concluded.

The American Classical Music Hall of Fame honors the artists and institutions that have helped shape the landscape of American music and in doing so, nurture current and future classical music enthusiasts. The ACMHF has honored over 180 inductees in the areas of composition, solo artist, chamber music, conducting and education. Other inductees from the 2012-2013 American Classical Music Hall of Fame class include Steve Reich, David Zinman, Dale Warland, The Beaux Arts Trio, The Philadelphia Orchestra and Emanuel Ax.



## OPERA AMERICA IDENTIFIES, NURTURES FUTURE LEADERS

Fourteen emerging leaders in the opera field participated in OPERA America's 2013 Leadership Intensive, a two-part program conducted at *Opera Conference 2013* in Vancouver in May and at the National Opera Center in New York in July. The program, funded by American Express, is designed to provide current opera administrative and artistic staff members with the skills and contacts needed to advance their careers. OPERA America's sister organizations, Opera.ca and Opera Europa, also selected participants, giving the program an international dimension.

At the Vancouver conference, participants attended seminars and met with industry experts in governance, audience building and development. At the "Summer Intensive" in New York, a week-long workshop further explored the Vancouver topics, with the addition of financial management, labor relations and personal leadership skills. Activities included case studies, self-assessments, attending performances and mock auditions.

Kevin Smith, consultant and former president and CEO of **Minnesota Opera**, served as the lead faculty throughout the entire program. OPERA America President/CEO Marc A. Scorca conducted sessions on work/life balance and facilitating meetings, and Astrid Baumgardner, a professional coach, led a workshop on personal strengths, values, time management, effective communication and conflict management. Peer learning was also a key aspect of the program, with participants encouraged to develop strong connections with their colleagues. The group initiated an online forum to sustain learning through the sharing of articles and ideas. OPERA America will facilitate regular calls.

"I expected to walk away with certain skills," says Peggy Kriha Dye, general manager of **Opera Columbus**, "I didn't expect to be inspired to be a leader." There were, however, some traditional skills that Dye carried home: "Sitting at my desk I have this big white board with a diagram and I am organized by day, week, month and season according to methods I learned that week. It has immediately changed how I function. It has made me more efficient."

"In Vancouver, we had the opportunity to listen and learn," says Jennifer Bradner, executive director of **Opera Memphis**, "but it was in New York where the real alchemy occurred." What emerged for Bradner most distinctly was a renewed confidence in her abilities, as well as a profound understanding of how to apply leadership abilities in a diverse organization, and how to maximize the capacities of talented individuals.

James Hampton, artistic administrator of **Austin Lyric Opera**, was similarly surprised by the inspirational element of the Leadership Intensive. "I was expecting to get a lot of information, and of course that was the case. But I was not expecting such intensive personal development. It really made us focus on what we truly bring to the table and how we maximize that in whatever we are doing: artistic administration, development, education. It was overwhelming — and inspiring — in a good way."

— Leah D. Wilson



Back row from left to right: Jennifer Bradner, executive director, Opera Memphis; Garrett Collins, communications coordinator, Los Angeles Opera; Michael Mori, artistic director designate, Tapestry; James Hampton, artistic administrator, Austin Lyric Opera; Bert Huffman, director of development, The Atlanta Opera; Jamie Andrews, community education director, Minnesota Opera; Christopher Powell, music administrator, Pittsburgh Opera; Krystian Lada, dramaturg, Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie; Peggy Kriha Dye, general manager, Opera Columbus. Front row from left to right: Audrey Jungers, manager, Opera Europa (Brussels, Belgium); Carolyn Hall, assistant to the artistic & general director, The Glimmerglass Festival (Cooperstown, NY); Zackery Hayhurst, artistic administrator, Arizona Opera; David Rubeo, manager of external affairs, Gotham Chamber Opera (New York, NY); Katherine Semcesen, associate director, education and outreach, Canadian Opera Company (Toronto, ON). Photo by Audrey Saccone.

## DIRECTOR-DESIGNER SHOWCASE FINALISTS FEATURED AT NATIONAL OPERA CENTER



The team's concept sketch for *Elmer Gantry*.

Each of the four finalist teams in OPERA America's 2013 Robert L.B. Tobin *Director-Designer Showcase* will be displayed in rotation at the National Opera Center over the next two years. The installations will feature models, renderings and videos developed for presentation at OPERA America's 2013 conference in Vancouver. The *Director-Designer Showcase* is made possible through the generous support of The Tobin Theatre Arts Fund.

Currently on display at the National Opera Center is a prototype for *Elmer Gantry* co-developed by director Stephanie Havey, set designer Patrick Rizzotti, costume designer Megan Spatz and lighting designer Brandon Mitchell. Havey believes virtual collaboration encouraged efficiency. "It meant that when we had a conference call or a video chat our time was focused and we had our materials prepared. It actually helped us to be

more productive." A portion of the funding the team received as finalists was allocated for a day-long team meeting in New York.

For Patrick Rizzotti, who currently designs primarily for theater and television, the opportunity for exposure and learning were the key attributes of the *Director-Designer Showcase*. "Opera can be a tricky field to get into and there are fewer 'fringe' opportunities than in theater or dance," he says. "We got a lot of critiques — we were active in approaching people — and asked that they speak frankly." Rizzotti was delighted that a dozen high-level artistic and general directors engaged the *Elmer Gantry* team with insight and encouragement.

Subsequent production prototypes, each of which will be on display at the National Opera Center for six months, include *Silent Night* (George Cederquist, director; Marianna Cszasz, set and costume designer; Sarah Hughey, lighting designer), *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (Walker Lewis, director; David Meyer, set designer; Grace Trimble, costume designer) and *Susannah* (Mo Zhou, director; Tim Brown, set designer; Lisa Loen, costume designer; Yi Zhao, lighting designer).

This year, 24 director-designer teams created production concepts for an American opera chosen from a curated list developed by OPERA America. As part of the application process, each team submitted an explanation of the staging; initial research for scenery, props and costumes; required personnel and suggestions for adaptations. The four teams selected as finalists received \$2,000 to use toward research and production of more comprehensive renderings and models, plus travel, lodging and registration to attend the annual opera conference where they presented their proposals to opera producers from all over the country. In addition to having the opportunity to present their work to leading artistic directors and general directors, this year's *Director-Designer Showcase* was streamed live over the Internet to an international audience of 18,000 viewers.

The finalists were selected by panelists David B. Devan, general director, **Opera Philadelphia**; Jane Greenwood, designer; Sam Helfrich, stage director; and Kurt Howard, producing director, **Fort Worth Opera**.

— Laura Lee Everett

## SPACE TO CREATE: BARBARA AND RONALD LEIRVIK BOARD ROOM

*In recognition of their contributions to the National Opera Center, OPERA America has named its state-of-the-art board room in honor of Barbara and Ronald Leirvik.*

An OPERA America board member, Barbara H. Leirvik was a trustee of Opera Cleveland, serving on the company's executive committee, and a founding member and trustee board member of N.O.V.A. (New Organization for Visual Arts). Leirvik has chaired and served on fundraising events for these organizations, as well as the **Cleveland Institute of Music**, The Boys and Girls Clubs of Cleveland and the Cleveland Ballet for the past 30 years. In addition, she is an ambassador member of OPERA America and supports the Cleveland Institute of Music, the CIM Opera Department, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Chautauqua Institution and **Chautauqua Opera**. A visual artist who specializes in painting on furniture and canvas, she worked for many years as a commercial interior designer. Her husband, businessman and investor Ronald K. Leirvik, is founder and president of RKL Enterprises. He brings a broad-based set of business skills with stock exchange and private company experience, having been a director, CEO/president and vice president of a number of consumer and industrial product companies.

Says Kevin M. Sobczyk, director of research/CIO, OPERA America, "Barbara Leirvik has been, and continues to be, a valued voice in our industry. Her knowledge and experience has brought the trustee viewpoint into the larger conversation in a way that OPERA America alone could not have done. I can't think of a more ideal match than having a state-of-the-art board room named after her and her husband."

Ideal for meetings, seminars, and presentations, the Barbara and Ronald Leirvik Board Room at the National Opera Center is fully equipped for audio and video conferencing. To learn more about this space or to reserve it, please visit [nycpaspaces.org/spaces/6732](http://nycpaspaces.org/spaces/6732).

— Alexa B. Antopol



Barbara and Ronald Leirvik. Photo by Ken Howard.



# OA NEWS

## OPERA CONFERENCE 2013 SPONSORS

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OPERA America acknowledges the generous contributions of the following businesses and corporations who sponsored events and sessions for *Opera Conference 2013: Opera Out of Bounds*, that was held in Vancouver, May 7-11, 2013.



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The advertisement features a violin and a masquerade mask on the left, and a woman in a black dress holding a white document on the right. The background is a light, textured wall.

# ARTISTIC PROGRAMS AT THE NATIONAL OPERA CENTER FALL 2013



## CONVERSATIONS

*Tuesday, November 19 at 7:00 p.m.*  
In Conversation with Susan Graham



## CREATORS IN CONCERT

*Wednesday, October 30 at 7:00 p.m.*  
OPERA America Songbook Concert

*Tuesday, November 12 at 7:00 p.m.*  
Composer/Librettist Mark Adamo



## EMERGING ARTIST RECITAL SERIES

*Wednesday, September 25 at 8:00 p.m.*  
2012 Music Academy of the West  
Marilyn Horne Song Competition Winners

*Tuesday, October 22 at 8:00 p.m.*  
Chautauqua Opera Young Artist Recital Winners



## MAKING CONNECTIONS

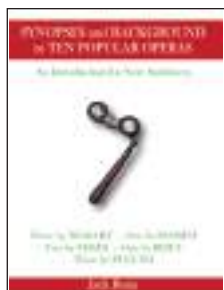
*Tuesday, October 15 at 7:00 p.m.*  
Tech Talk: Building Your Professional Internet Presence

Advanced registration is recommended and can be made online at [operaamerica.org/ForArtists](http://operaamerica.org/ForArtists). Fees may apply for certain events.

All events are presented at the National Opera Center in New York City and will be streamed online at [operaamerica.org](http://operaamerica.org).

# PUBLICATIONS

By Alexa B. Antopol



## SYNOPSIS AND BACKGROUND TO TEN POPULAR OPERAS

Jack Bona  
Booklogix

Jack Bona, a retired professor of literature who has written program notes and newsletters for The Atlanta Opera, offers synopses and meticulous articles on opera perennials. His articles cover biographical, historical and literary background and are intended to stimulate further interest among new operagoers and students at music conservatories.

## KING OF RAGS

Eric Bronson  
Neverland Publishing

Bronson examines the life of Scott Joplin, his fellow ragtime musicians and the transformation of the segregated world of American cities. This volume resurrects many of America's forgotten figures, including piano player Blind Boone, Civil Rights activist Ida Wells and comedian Bert Williams, all of whom who helped move the issue of segregation from Broadway to the White House. Bronson conducted archival research in Sedalia, St. Louis, Kansas City, Chicago, Nashville, Texarkana and New York — cities that were pivotal to the Ragtime scene. He was also given access to rare collections at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York and the Booker T. Washington Papers at Fisk University in Nashville.



## THE MOST BEAUTIFUL OPERA HOUSES IN THE WORLD

Guillaume de Laubier, Antoine Pecqueur  
Abrams Books

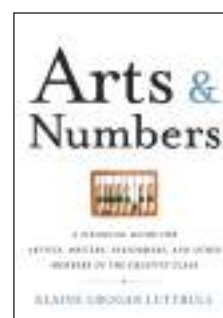
Photographer Guillaume de Laubier and journalist Antoine Pecqueur explore more than 25 of the world's most beautiful opera houses, from Tokyo to Covent Garden, from Oslo to Chicago, from Milan to New York. The buildings are described in their historical contexts, while stunning photography reveals the theaters. In addition to offering sweeping views of ornate auditoriums and facades, the book opens doors normally closed to the public, entering the artists' dressing rooms, rehearsal halls, scenery workshops and more, presenting a wide-ranging and compelling look into a spectacular world.

## SERENADE

Carol Jean Delmar  
Willow Lane Press

*Serenade* is a true love story about the lives of Franz Jung and Franziska Perger as told by their daughter, Carol Jean Delmar. Jung was an opera singer in Vienna and Prague in the late 1930s. The story depicts his early successes, the loss of his voice and how he reinvented himself in the United States as Frank

Delmar. The author has focused on Lieder, and the operas and roles in her father's repertoire. *Serenade* endeavors to draw readers into the opera house, says Delmar. For those who know opera well, the book includes recognizable opera innovators who immigrated to America. *Serenade* is a story of love, loss and the ability of music to heal the human spirit.



## ARTS & NUMBERS: A FINANCIAL GUIDE FOR ARTISTS, WRITERS, PERFORMERS, AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CREATIVE CLASS

Elaine Grogan Luttrull  
Agate Publishing, Inc.

Too often, creative professionals push aside financial matters to the detriment of their artistic pursuits. Wading through tax documents and scouring up money for rent payments are all-too-familiar staples of the "starving artist" lifestyle, where artists want more time to focus on their art but may damage their careers by ignoring financial matters rather than facing them head on. This volume is an engaging, accessible guide that covers a variety of topics, including budgeting, cash management, visual charting, financial media tools, taxes, employment, business etiquette and nonprofit management.





### TRAVELS WITH MY OPERA GLASSES

Anthony Ogus  
Melrose Books

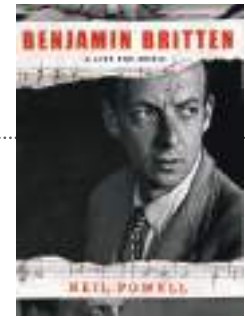
Anthony Ogus, a retired academic with a lifelong passion for opera, offer this memoir drawn from numerous and geographically diverse experiences in operagoing from the 1960s to the present day. It covers music, singers, productions, opera houses and their audiences, operatic excursions and "calamities" which may occur. Anecdotal and personal, discursive and amusing; Ogus will relate what goes right and what goes wrong in the world of opera.



### MOZART: A LIFE

Paul Johnson  
The Viking Press

A historian and author, Paul Johnson challenges the many myths that have followed Mozart, whose operas continue as perennials on the opera stage each season, including those about the composer's health, wealth, religion and relationships. He has contributed to *Forbes*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*, among other publications.



### BENJAMIN BRITTEN: A LIFE FOR MUSIC

Neil Powell  
Henry Holt and Co.

This centenary biography looks at the music, the life and the legacy of 20<sup>th</sup>-century British composer Benjamin Britten. He narrates Britten's partnership with tenor Peter Pears, who became the inspirational center of his musical and emotional life. Together, they composed countless solo-vocal pieces, and established the Britten-Pears Foundation and the Aldeburgh Festival. A biographer and poet, Powell has contributed to numerous journals and newspapers, including *The Guardian* and *The Times Literary Supplement*.

**b**

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# CROSSWORD

By David J. Kahn

## ACROSS

- 1** Swedish import  
**5** "Enough already!"  
**11** Fish-and-chips fish  
**14** City where one can enjoy the views from the roof of its opera house  
**15** "Don't worry about me"  
**16** What turns Ada into a captive princess?  
**17** His *Waiting for the Barbarians* had its premiere at Austin Lyric Opera  
**19** Al Sharpton's title, for short  
**20** Letters after U.S. Senator Shaheen  
**21** Disagreeable task  
**22** Part of 29-Across  
**23** Short bedwear?  
**26** Mrs. Walker/Acid Queen in 1971 production of *Tommy* at Seattle Opera  
**29** See 22-Across  
**30** Diamondbacks, on N.L. scoreboards  
**31** Overhangs  
**32** Marks (out)  
**33** Site of ancient Greek athletic games  
**36** Superior, say  
**37** Composer whose opera *Brief Encounter* had its world premiere at Houston Grand Opera (2009)  
**41** Cannes presentation  
**43** Bring up  
**44** Have a beef?  
**47** Fit to be tied  
**49** Coolers, briefly  
**50** Hydrotherapy venue  
**51** She made Lyric Opera of Chicago debut in *Norma*  
**55** \_\_\_ appeal  
**56** Important stretch  
**57** Van Gogh hangs here  
**58** Darling  
**60** Fan sound  
**61** First music director of The Santa Fe Opera  
**66** \_\_\_ Khan  
**67** Engaging people?  
**68** "Che vita maledetta," e.g.  
**69** School yr. part  
**70** Circle of leaves  
**71** Full-grown

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13
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66				67							68			
69				70							71			

## DOWN

- 1** Pacifier  
**2** Souvenir from an old flame?  
**3** Kentucky's Athlete of the Century  
**4** Not shrinking  
**5** Writer of coded messages  
**6** "Yikes!" online  
**7** *The Crying \_\_\_* 49 (1966 Thomas Pynchon novella)  
**8** Woody vine  
**9** "To conclude ..."  
**10** Tony-winning actress O'Shea  
**11** Lyric soprano who sang Tosca at the Metropolitan Opera in Pavarotti's final operatic performance (2004)  
**12** Vacation period, often  
**13** Varied  
**18** Signaling type, in phone networks  
**23** Fotos  
**24** Hot cupful  
**25** Sister Helen Prejean, in the world premiere of Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* at San Francisco Opera (2000)  
**27** Race official  
**28** "The Persistence of Memory" painter  
**34** Smog-watching grp.  
**35** Sans-serif typeface  
**38** Italian saint Philip \_\_\_  
**39** Much movie-watching, e.g.  
**40** Ferry or ketch  
**41** iPhone features  
**42** Fit to be tied  
**45** Big lug  
**46** Strain  
**48** Big producer of acoustic guitars  
**52** Conductor Sir \_\_\_ Davis  
**53** Lyric soprano Lucine  
**54** Like interstate highways  
**59** Snowboarder's lift  
**62** E.T.S. offering  
**63** "\_\_\_ tu" (68-Across)  
**64** Slash  
**65** \_\_\_ kwon do

Contest rules: Completed puzzles must be received by Midnight EDT on October 15 via mail, fax (212.796.8621) or e-mail attachment (Editor@operaamerica.org). Please include your name, e-mail address and daytime phone number. A winner will be chosen by drawing from among correct answers. The winner will receive an OPERA America gift.

David J. Kahn is a nationally-known crossword puzzle maker and opera aficionado whose puzzles have appeared in The New York Times. He is the author of *The Metropolitan Opera: Crosswords for Opera Lovers*.

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Mariah Wakefield, Customer Service Associate

# MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

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# MY FIRST TIME

By Heidi Waleson



I was the rebel of my classical music family. My father, born and raised in Europe, loved Mahler and played violin concertos along with “Music Minus One” records. My mother, homesick for the East Coast during my father’s Air Force stint in Cheyenne, Wyoming, used to sit in the car on

Saturday afternoons to listen to the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts. (The reception on the car radio was better.) When we returned East I vaguely remember some visits to the Met when I was a teenager in the 1960s, but it wasn’t really my passion. I liked playing the guitar and imagining myself as Joni Mitchell. My parents were mystified.

I did like some opera; the final trio of *Der Rosenkavalier* was ideal when I was depressed in college. Then, during my senior year of college, I went to a Yale School of Music staging of *The Marriage of Figaro*. It was in English, in a small hall, with eager young performers who were not much older than I was, and suddenly, the whole thing made sense. Opera, I realized, was theater, but better. It was funny, it was poignant. It was pure emotion, like Joni Mitchell, but with different tunes, more plot and an orchestra. I got it.

A few years later, fate decreed that my first New York job was as an editor in the education department at the Metropolitan Opera Guild, with the perk of free standing room. The show that really connected for me was John Dexter’s production of *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* with Teresa Stratas, a tiny, furious dynamo burning up the stage as Jenny, and Richard Cassilly, devastating as the luckless Jimmy. It launched me on a lifelong quest for heart-stopping performances and unusual repertoire. It also started a standing room habit that endured, even when I had to pay for it. One night, as I was looking for an empty seat during the intermission of *The Makropulos Affair* at New York City Opera, I met my future husband.

Everyone’s gateway drug is different, of course, and it’s not something you can prescribe. When my daughters were little, they adored the video of Ingmar Bergman’s film of *The Magic Flute*. At four, Hannah, my elder daughter, dressed up as the Queen of the Night for Halloween and accurately warbled the coloratura from the Act I aria. But at live performances Hannah was chiefly interested in the

sets and costumes. Her musical tastes eventually veered towards emo and indie bands.

Lily, three years younger, was a different story. A performer from the cradle, she was smitten by musical theater. For her, opera was just Musical Theater 2.0. Gilbert and Sullivan, *1776*, *The Cunning Little Vixen* — it was all one. Opera really took hold the summer she was eight, when I took her along to Cooperstown for Glimmerglass Opera (now The Glimmerglass Festival). The season included *Salome* and Sousa’s *The Glass Blowers*, but Lily adored Handel’s *Acis and Galatea*. She was amused by the silly production (lots of bathing suits) and completely captivated by Polyphemus, the monster who has the catchy “O ruddier than the cherry.” When we got home, I handed over Bryn Terfel’s recording of Handel arias, which includes “O ruddier,” and Lily fell completely in love with Handel (and Bryn Terfel). For a while, she wanted to be a bass-baritone herself, and taught herself various staples from Terfel’s repertoire.

Now 21, Lily has accepted that her vocal range is mezzo-soprano, though she retains a profound affinity for low male voices and “bari-hunks.” She lines up for discounted Met tickets and she has seen *Dialogues of the Carmelites* more times than *La bohème*. But she and her opera-mad friends are not limited to stage performances or recordings for their opera explorations. They comb YouTube for the spectacularly great and the fabulously terrible. Anna Netrebko and Erwin Shrott massacring “Bess, You Is My Woman Now”? Check. The latest rarity (say, Steffani) unearthed by Cecilia Bartoli? Check. Marilyn Horne punching out “C is for Cookie”? Check. They can find anything.

I like my opera in the theater. The completely immersive experience of live performance is still how I connect; DVDs, HD broadcasts and recordings all feel like second-best approximations. But for Lily and her contemporaries, for whom social media is the everyday currency of personal interaction, opera online is just as real as the real thing. Like my parents, I suppose I’m a bit mystified, and who knows where it will all end up, but when 20-somethings are willing to devote so much energy to exploration, surely the art form has an interesting future.

---

Heidi Waleson is the opera critic for The Wall Street Journal.



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