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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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In the Winter 2010 issue of *Opera America*, the article on *Porgy and Bess* incorrectly identified Gershwin's source as *Catfish Row*, rather than *Porgy*, DuBose Heyward's 1925 novel. *Catfish Row* was the working title of Dorothy and DuBose Heyward's dramatization of the novel for the stage.

ON THE COVER: Boston Lyric Opera's 2011 production of Ullmann's *The Emperor of Atlantis, or Death Quits*. The production was directed by David Schweizer with set designs by Caleb Wertenbaker, costumes by Nancy Leary, lighting by Christopher Akerlind and sound by David Remedios. Photo by Jeffrey Dunn for Boston Lyric Opera.



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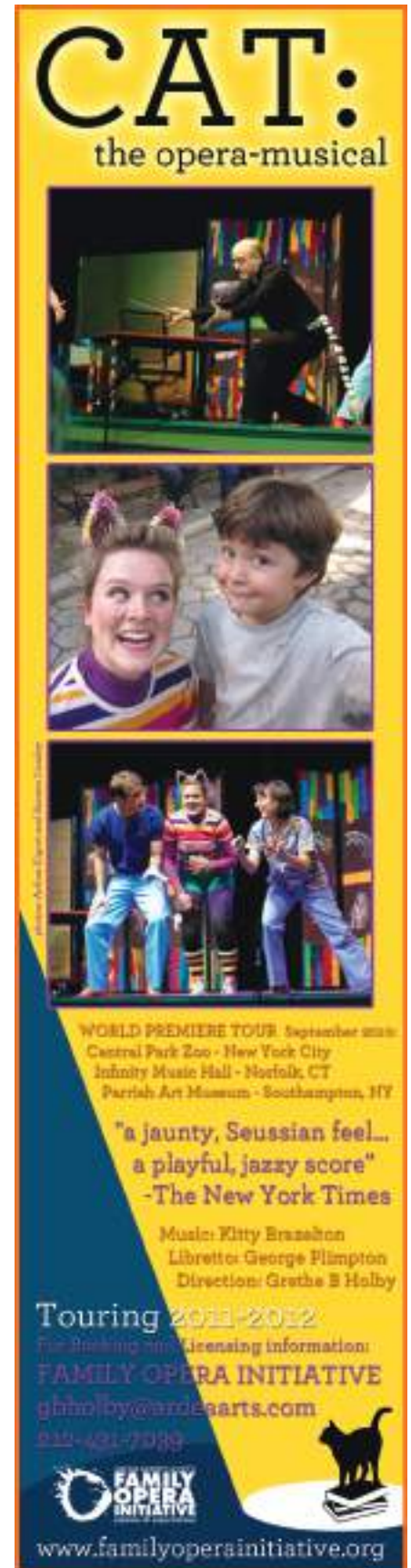
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Even as the economy shows signs of recovery, it is clear that many established business practices must be re-examined. More than ever before, opera companies are being asked to leverage resources through increased collaborations that contain costs, augment revenue and achieve operating synergies with other organizations that can benefit all participants.

OPERA America's new National Opera Center, that we are delighted to unveil on page 35, will translate the need for increased collaboration into a portfolio of new services made possible in a purpose-built facility in the heart of New York. It is remarkable that the individual artists, opera companies and businesses visiting and working in New York have advanced artistic and managerial projects without suitable facilities and amenities. For decades, they have conducted auditions in church basements and held meetings in found space on an *ad hoc* basis.

OPERA America's relocation to New York in 2005 proved that a "center of gravity" for the field was needed, as the small conference room and lounge area became filled with member meetings, seminars, readings of new works and networking events.

When the new Opera Center opens in 2012, singers will be heard to advantage in an acoustically excellent audition and recital hall, composers and librettists will have facilities in which they can rehearse, record and stream workshops, and all members will have access to meeting rooms and support services. OPERA America will finally deliver a level of artistic and administrative support that defines a new and more dynamic role for a national service organization. At a time when the economics of producing opera are increasingly challenging, it is especially appropriate to invest in a facility and related services that will increase the number and effectiveness of partnerships with individuals and organizations around the world.

Opera Europa's 2011 European Opera Forum, held earlier this month in London, demonstrated the degree to which leveraging resources has become an international priority. When European companies first came together two decades ago, they felt a level of competition that inhibited the sharing of even basic repertoire plans. However, as levels of government support began to shrink, companies begin to recognize the benefits of co-production and other forms of collaboration.

Audience development was a central theme in this year's robust discussion, with emphasis on the use of social media and alternative venues to build and sustain the engagement of seasoned opera lovers, as well as newcomers to the art form. These discussions resonate strongly with those planned for the upcoming OPERA America conference. We are excited that board members of Opera Europa and Opera.ca will join the board of OPERA America in Boston for a facilitated discussion about how we can work better to address shared issues. Leveraging resources through collaboration is as important to national service organizations as it is to our individual members.

The excitement of the Opera Center will not diminish the importance of the immediate opportunity to establish productive new partnerships and to learn from colleagues. Hundreds of members have already registered for *Opera Conference 2011*, which, this year, draws on the unparalleled resources of Boston's universities, conservatories and opera ensembles. Co-host companies Boston Lyric Opera and Opera Boston are demonstrating a level of partnership that promises to make *Opera Conference 2011* a memorable experience. More details about *Opera Conference 2011* can be found on page 22.

Leveraging resources is essential. OPERA America's fundamental commitment to harnessing the collective expertise of members to increase the level of creativity, excellence, effectiveness and relevance of opera and opera companies across the country will be on full display in May in Boston and in the new National Opera Center. I look forward to working with all members to make sure these two projects — and others — achieve their full potential.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marc A. Scorca". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light grey rectangular background.

Marc A. Scorca
President/CEO

“A VERY DIFFERENT DEMOGRAPHIC FOR US.”

Until now, **Sarasota Opera**’s major contribution to the field has been the staging of important, underperformed works of the past. The company’s Verdi Cycle, running from 1989-2016, has taken on the composer’s entire catalog, and the Masterworks Revival Series has given American premieres of works by Smetana, Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky and Bizet.

Works by native-born composers, however, have been absent. This season, Sarasota Opera kicked off a new initiative: American Classics. “We’ve given this audience a steady diet of romantic and traditional works,” says Executive Director Susan Danis. “We felt it was time to pay more attention to American work.” To launch the series and in celebration of the work’s 50th anniversary, the company will present Robert Ward’s Pulitzer Prize-winning opera *The Crucible*.

The company has worked with local organizations to create a number of free events, including screenings of the 1996 film starring Daniel Day-Lewis and Winona Ryder, a conversation with the composer and a panel discussion on playwright Arthur Miller and McCarthyism.

“This has become the center of conversation in town,” says Danis. “Ticket sales for *The Crucible* have the highest percentage of new-to-the-opera buyers. The audiences we’re seeing at the preview events are a very different demographic for us. They’re not the people who buy tickets for *Bohème*, but they read *The Crucible* in school and they’re curious about the opera.” 🍷



Sean Anderson as John Proctor in Sarasota Opera's 2011 production of Ward's *The Crucible*. Photo by Patricia G. Horwell.



Ava Pine as the sorceress Melissa and Leah Wool as the knight Amadigi in Boston Baroque's 2009 production of Handel's *Amadigi di Gaula*. Photo by Julian Bullitt.

— **“THE INTEGRITY AND COHESIVENESS OF THE ENSEMBLE IS PRETTY REMARKABLE.”**

“Opera was invented in the baroque period, so it was a natural for us,” says David Gaylin, executive director of **Boston Baroque**. The company, founded in 1973 and recently welcomed as a Professional Company Member of OPERA America, produced its first opera, Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, just eight years into its existence. Since then, in addition to Monteverdi's two other surviving operas and an impressive list of works by Handel and Mozart, Boston Baroque has introduced modern audiences to such rarities as Handel's *Amadigi di Gaula* and Rameau's *Zoroastre*.

“I think Handel opera is almost mainstream at this point,” says Gaylin, “although few companies perform it with period instruments, as we do. We will keep going back to Handel and Monteverdi, for sure, but exploring the French baroque is an important part of our mission.” During *Opera Conference 2011*, Boston Baroque will present Rameau's *Les Indes Galantes* in a concert staging, marking its first known American performance on period instruments. “Our approach is to make these concerts come alive in a way that a contemporary audience can relate to, with full characterization and staging.”

Boston Baroque is also the resident professional ensemble for Boston University's Historical Performance Program, where key players serve on the faculty and students have the opportunity to rehearse and perform with them. “Our involvement was a way of jump-starting the program,” says Gaylin, who notes that the first crop of graduates are already performing with professional ensembles in Boston and beyond. “About half of the students who work with our players are not historical performance majors. Our philosophy is that these days, any professional musician needs to know something about period performance.”

Boston is often described as the American capital of early music. “There is such a community of players and audiences here,” says Gaylin. Boston Baroque performs an annual subscription concert series, with most performances in New England Conservatory's intimate Jordan Hall.

Under the baton of Martin Pearlman for nearly four decades, the ensemble has produced 20 critically-acclaimed recordings on Telarc, three of which were nominated for GRAMMY awards. “A lot of our players have been here since the early days, and the integrity and cohesiveness of the ensemble is pretty remarkable,” says Gaylin.

Gaylin also hopes to continue to raise the profile of the ensemble outside of its hometown. “We went to Carnegie Hall in the 80s and had a sold-out concert at New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine last year. We've also performed in Europe, Disney Hall, Tanglewood, Ravinia and the Casals Festival. I would like to see us tour even more, to be ambassadors for Boston on the international music scene.” 🍷

“IT’S A BOLD MOVE, LETTING A 17-YEAR-OLD INTO BOARD MEETINGS.”

“I think back to those early meetings and I can still feel the knot in my stomach,” remembers V. Taylor Foster, who at 17 was invited to become an apprentice board member of **Piedmont Opera** (Winston Salem, NC). “The company was looking to bring on a young person and teach them how a nonprofit should work. I had been going to the opera for many years, so I was on the radar. But it’s a bold move, letting a 17-year-old into board meetings. It could have backfired.”

Over time, Foster’s confidence grew, and he was able to share his thoughts on how the company might better appeal to a younger audience. After two years, he was invited to become a full board member. “It was very interesting to see all that goes on behind the scenes, to learn how far in advance things have to be figured out. Piedmont is lucky in that the board is very functional.” In particular, says Foster, it’s important to understand the line between the role of the board and the role of the staff. “You have to let people do their jobs.”

Foster is leaving the Piedmont Opera board to attend college, and General Director Frank Dickerson says that while the company has no immediate plans to replace Foster, he believes “the board would welcome the opportunity to add another younger person as a board ‘apprentice’ in the future.” Dickerson was especially appreciative of Foster’s guidance when it came to shaping the company’s online presence through social media.

As for Foster, he intends to continue to work nonprofits after graduation. “The skills I learned are universal. If I had questions, I could go to anyone and ask. It has been a really amazing experience, one of the standouts of my young adult life.” 🍷

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John Packard as Rigoletto and Valerian Ruminski as Monterone in Nickel City Opera's 2010 production of Verdi's *Rigoletto*. Photo courtesy of Nickel City Opera.

"I'M ALWAYS READY TO GET ON THE PHONE AND START SHAKING THE TREES."

"I first sang in *Tosca* when I was 10," says bass Valerian Ruminski, who grew up in Buffalo in a time when there were numerous opportunities to hear and participate in opera. However, by 1997, the city of just under 300,000 found itself without an opera company. In 2003, Ruminski began to take steps to revive opera in his hometown, and in 2009 **Nickel City Opera** mounted its first production in the Riviera Theater, a 1,100-seat former vaudeville house.

"Five or six years ago, the theater was slated for demolition, but they received a preservation grant to renovate it," says Executive Director Eileen Breen. "There were challenges with dressing rooms, rigging — it was the first time there had been an orchestra in the pit in 50 years. Now, the theater is absolutely beautiful. There is a huge, imposing crystal chandelier in the lobby and a wonderful Wurlitzer organ."

Local response to the company has been tremendous. "The community has really rallied around us," says Breen. "It is the friendliest place I've ever worked in. There is a large group of aficionados, OperaBuffs of Western New York, who have really kept opera alive in Buffalo." During the years when the city was without an opera company, the OperaBuffs organized local "informances," as well as bus trips to Chautauqua Opera and Canadian Opera Company.

Nickel City Opera, a new Professional Company Member of OPERA America, is gearing up for its third season, and its first season with two productions — *Il trovatore* in the Riviera Theater will be followed by a production of *Il tabarro* on USS The Sullivans, a naval warship. Ruminski explains that next year he hopes to follow one "money opera" with something a little bit different. In the works for a fourth season is a new opera based on the assassination of President McKinley.

As the company grows, both Breen and Ruminski find themselves juggling a number of roles, which is just fine. In addition to working on the libretto for the new opera, Ruminski is on the phone selling tickets and seeking pledges. "I'm a telemarketer from way back," he says. "I'm always ready to get on the phone and start shaking the trees." 📞



Katherine Kaplan as the Queen of the Night; Kim Moyer, Marietta Formanek and Lindsay Dyett as the Three Ladies; and Matthew Knickman as Monostatos in Opera Theatre of Weston's production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. Photo by Lisa Messier.

"A PLACE FOR EVERYONE."

"There is so much talent here," says Nan Nall, who teaches voice with her colleague Lise Messier to adults and children in southwestern Vermont. Inspired by the possibilities, together they decided to form an opera company that would offer "a place for everyone." **Opera Theatre of Weston**, incorporated in 2000, brings in professionals for principal roles and masterclasses — local singers have had the chance to work with established artists including William Burden, Sanford Sylvan and Karen Keltner. At the same time, Nall and Messier strive to create as many opportunities as possible for local talent, sometimes double- and triple-casting smaller roles.

Opera Theatre of Weston is the second Vermont organization, after Green Mountain Opera, that OPERA America has welcomed as a Professional Company Member. The company currently produces one mainstage show each winter. This January, *The Magic Flute* played at the Paramount Theatre in Rutland, a historic theater that seats 800. The company also performs in the 300-seat Weston Playhouse and has an active outreach program that reached over 2,400 students last season. Day-long youth workshops have included crafts projects and movement activities led by teaching artists.

"The Opera Theatre of Weston has one of the most exceptional music programs for students in the country," says author John Irving. "They introduce thousands of youngsters who live in rural Vermont to opera, and for some of these kids it is a life-changing experience. My son, Everett, who has performed in three of OTW's productions, plans to continue with classical singing and hopes to pursue a career in theater. It all began with the OTW." 🎭

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“YOU CAN PRACTICE IN FRONT OF A MIRROR UNTIL YOUR ARM FALLS OFF.”

“Before I even moved into my office, I arranged a lunch date with Douglas,” says Brian DeMaris, who joined the conducting faculty of **Ithaca College** about the same time that Douglas Kinney Frost was named **Syracuse Opera’s** director of music. “One of my big goals was to bring in more guests from the field and establish a relationship with the local opera company.”

Last fall, three graduate-level students from Ithaca’s School of Music were selected as Syracuse Opera’s first cohort of conducting fellows. They will study the operatic repertoire, languages and the singing voice, as well as learn about the responsibilities associated with leading an orchestra in opera performance. During the annual program, which spans the entire Syracuse Opera season, the fellows will observe professional orchestra, chorus and staging rehearsals, as well as work with Syracuse Opera staff, performing artists and conductors.

“You can practice in front of a mirror until your arm falls off,” says Frost, “but you have to have actual experience with singers, in front of an orchestra.” In the college’s weekly conducting seminar, says DeMaris, facing a singer for the first time can turn “a very gifted conductor” into “a deer in the headlights.”

Syracuse Opera and Ithaca College will also collaborate on an annual conductors’ master class focusing on the standard opera repertoire. Participants from across the country, selected through a competitive application process, will have the opportunity to work with Syracuse Opera’s resident artists and Ithaca College graduate voice students and chamber orchestra. For the inaugural session, master conducting teacher Kenneth Kiesler will lead the class.

“I have a big personal interest in providing this kind of opportunity,” says Frost. “Both Brian and I know from working our way through the ranks that it is hard to find training and experience. When OPERA America held its conference in Miami, there was a discussion about opportunities for young conductors, and at one point the conversation just stopped, because there were so few to discuss. Even if this program only reaches a handful of people every year, I’m hoping that some other institutions with the time and resources will take notice and consider doing something similar.” ☺

Operas In Performance

John Musto
Librettist: Mark Campbell
Later the Same Evening
 Glimmerglass Festival
 5 performances, April/May 2011

The Inspector
 World Premiere:
 Wolf Trap Opera Company
 April 27, 29, May 1, 2011

Boston Lyric Opera
 April/May 2011

Mieczyslaw Weinberg
Libretto by Aleksandr Medvedev, after the novel by Zofia Posmysz
The Passenger
 Staged Premiere:
 Bregenz Festspiele
 July/August 2010

English National Opera
 8 performances, Sept/Oct 2011

All performances directed by
 David Pountney






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Resident Artists from the Peabody Institute in Annapolis Opera's 2010 production of *Papageno*, a children's opera based on Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. Photo by Webb Wright.

“IF YOU DON'T TRY NEW THINGS, YOU'LL NEVER ACHIEVE YOUR POTENTIAL.”

While **Annapolis Opera** has a long history of staging professional productions, until recently, the work of the company was carried out entirely by dedicated volunteers. Last year, Jennifer Fletcher was hired as the company's first general manager.

Each season, Annapolis Opera presents one opera, a children's opera and three concerts. Within this general model, Fletcher has been able to implement some changes that she hopes will make the company more visible in the community. “Since we're a one-production company, I want to think about how we can have everything build up to that production.” Next season, when the company performs *Romeo and Juliet*, Fletcher is planning a number of Shakespeare-themed events in collaboration with other local organizations. She also plans to bring back the winner of the annual vocal competition for a recital that opens the festivities around the following year's competition. “That way, it's like a passing of the torch.”

Annapolis Opera long operated in the shadow of Baltimore Opera, just 30 miles away. “I've discovered that a lot of people didn't know Annapolis had an opera company, and those who did thought it was sort of a glorified dinner theater. They had no idea that we had professional performances. As opera resurfaces in Baltimore, there is a great opportunity for us to join forces, to create a more united front.” She cites the example of The Dallas Opera and Fort Worth Opera, which now cooperate on various fronts to provide and promote opera in the region year-round.

One of Fletcher's first acts as general manager was to seek Professional Company Membership in OPERA America. “The organization has shaped my career for as long as I can remember. Darren Keith Woods was my mentor — he brought me to my very first opera conference, and I have been going every year since then. The Leadership Advance in Seattle was really helpful.”

“This is the perfect company for me to grow with,” says Fletcher, who is working closely with dedicated board members to raise the profile of the 39-year-old company. “If you do something really innovative you're taking a risk — it might not work. But there's risk on both sides. If you don't try new things, you'll never achieve your potential.” 📌



Marc A. Scorca and Jan Stunkard.

JAN STUNKARD RETIRES FROM THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

"It is hard to imagine that Jan began her tenure with the Arts Endowment just 10 years after its creation," says NEA Music & Opera Director Wayne Brown. "Through all the years, she has been a bright light of support and one who has engendered respect and admiration from colleagues throughout the nation in the fields of orchestras, chamber music, choral music, early music, jazz and opera — and within the last year, the areas of dance, theater and musical theater can be added to the list."

On December 31, 2010, Jan Stunkard concluded 36 years with the Federal Government, including 35 years with the National Endowment for the Arts, where she served in a variety of roles culminating with the position of Coordinator for the Performing Arts Division (Music, Opera, Dance, Theater, Musical Theater and Dance).

"For as long as I have known the Agency, Jan has been one of the most important representatives of the NEA's commitment to serving applicants and grant recipients," says OPERA America President and CEO Marc A. Scorca. "She has functioned as counselor, ally and cheerleader around thousands of projects that have benefited from her advice. As NEA Chairman and other staff have come and gone, Jan Stunkard provided a sense of continuity rooted in the core values of the Agency. Without fail, Jan fulfilled her responsibilities with grace and good humor. Yes, as the pundit says, 'cemeteries are filled with irreplaceable people,' but in Jan's case, I think the word is completely appropriate. She will be missed very much." 🍷

Greg Phillips has joined **Arts Consulting Group** as a vice president based in its San Francisco, CA and Portland, OR offices. Phillips will work throughout North America with a particular focus on organizational change, transition management, capital campaign planning, board development and revenue maximization. Phillips brings 35 years of experience in performing arts management, planning, fundraising, marketing, finance, human resources, board development and program planning. During his varied career, he has started-up, turned-around and grown producing and presenting arts organizations and run his own artist management company. Most recently, he was executive director of Portland Center Stage, one of the 15 largest American theater companies, which produces 455 performances and 300 additional events annually in the country's only building on the National Register of Historic Places with a Platinum LEED rating from the U.S. Green Building Council. Phillips holds a B.A. in music from Marlboro College.

The Dallas Opera has appointed **John Toia** as director of production. Toia came to the company in August of 2009 to assume the newly created post of associate director of production. He worked closely with former Director of Production John Gage (now retired) and Technical Director Drew Field to facilitate the move into the Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House and the new company offices. Toia also made significant contributions to the world premiere production of Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer's *Moby-Dick* last April and assisted in the logistical arrangements for company's first-ever simulcast. Toia has served on the

stage management teams of dozens of notable productions at companies including the New York Shakespeare Festival, Opera Carolina, Tennessee Williams Theatre, Pasadena Playhouse, Philadelphia Drama Guild, Stages Repertory Theatre, North Carolina Theatre and Asolo State Theatre. Toia did his undergraduate studies in theater and directing at Eastern Michigan University and Wayne State University, where he also pursued graduate studies in theatrical management and was ultimately honored a Hilberry Graduate Fellowship. He earned an M.F.A. from the University of Florida.

Joy Partain is the new director of marketing and communications at **Fort Worth Opera**. Before relocating to Fort Worth, she worked in corporate philanthropy as director of community relations and corporate contributions for Houston-based Amegy Bank, where she oversaw the bank's donations program and volunteer efforts, as well as the publicity for those activities. Before joining the bank, Partain served in the first satellite office of San Antonio's largest public relations firm, KGB Texas. Her opera career began at Houston Grand Opera (HGO), where she spent two years in development and subsequently ran the P.R. department for five years. At HGO, she media-trained artists and staff and oversaw the press initiatives for the 50th anniversary season, four world premieres, four CD releases and the publicity for debuts of artists including Renée Fleming, Bryn Terfel, Susan Graham and Dmitri Hvorostovsky.

Katherine Baltrush has joined **OPERA America** as finance and operations coordinator. Baltrush holds a

bachelor of arts in voice performance from Boston University. During her undergraduate studies, she began her career as an arts administrator for the Marsh Chapel Choir at Boston University. Baltrush went on to earn an M.M. in musicology from the same institution, where she focused her studies on contemporary vocal music. Baltrush continues her endeavors as a performer and is a student of Neil Semer. **Brandon Gryde** is the new director of government affairs for both Dance/USA and OPERA America. Gryde replaces **Amy Fitterer**, who was recently named executive director of Dance/USA. For the past two years he served as director of communications for Youth Service America. Prior to moving to D.C., Gryde spent more than seven years at Jump Street, an innovative community arts organization in Harrisburg, PA. He managed a state re-granting initiative in partnership with the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and launched *AND Magazine*, a quarterly arts and healthy lifestyles publication written by teens, for teens. Gryde has a B.A. in ethnomusicology and American literature and culture from UCLA, and an M.A. in American studies from Penn State.

Lesley Koenig joined **Opera Boston** as general director in January 2011. Koenig brings many years of experience at the Metropolitan Opera as a stage director and producer, and later as the assistant manager and director of production. She also served as the general manager of the San Francisco Ballet from 2002-2008, where she implemented the company's five-year strategic plan and managed the opening of over 60 new productions. Most recently, she was a Fellow with the Stanford University Center for Philanthropy and

Civil Society and a Consultant with the Stanford Institute for Creativity and the Arts. She holds degrees from Harvard and Stanford. **Gil Rose**, the company's music director since 2003, has assumed the new role of artistic director. Together with former General Director Carole Charnow, Rose is responsible for the extraordinary growth of the company over the last seven years. Rose has conducted almost every Opera Boston production during this period. His greatest achievements with the company include *Nixon in China* by John Adams, *Ainadamar* by Osvaldo Golijov and the world premiere of *Madame White Snake* by Zhou Long in 2009. Rose's adventurous spirit is embodied in Opera Boston and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, which he founded. With the latter, he has been nominated for multiple GRAMMY Awards, most recently for Steven Mackey's *Dreamhouse*.

In an appointment that completes a five-year leadership transition strategy, **Opera Company of Philadelphia** (OCP) announced the appointment of **David B. Devan** as general director. The new leadership structure, common within the opera industry, allows for the unified management of OCP's programming and business functions and creates an ideal environment for long-term planning and stability. Devan's new contract will run for five years. Devan joined OCP in January 2006 as managing director, and was then appointed executive director in 2009. In addition to his work with OCP, Devan holds board positions with OPERA America, Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance and the Academy of Vocal Arts, and is a member of the Mayor's Advisory Council on the Arts. Devan also often provides strategic

planning assistance to other arts and nonprofit organizations. A frequent guest speaker at universities and associations around the region, Devan is also a Big Brother with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Pennsylvania.

Consolidating artistic gains in recent years, **Opera Southwest** has taken steps to ensure continued artistic excellence by signing its directors to new four-year contracts. **Anthony Barrese**, formerly music director and principal conductor, will assume the title of artistic director and principal conductor. The change of title reflects a growing responsibility for the non-musical artistic direction of the company. **David Bartholomew**, previously artistic director, will become director of artistic operations and principal stage director. Both will continue working as a team to realize the company's artistic vision and uphold the highest standards of excellence.

Greg Weber joined **San Francisco Opera** as director of production in February 2011. Weber was recently managing director of the Geva Theatre Center in Rochester, NY and previously served as technical director for Houston Grand Opera. He succeeds Production Director Drew Landmesser, who has rejoined the staff of the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Weber brings over 26 years of experience as an arts manager and technical director managing operations and producing theatrical events in senior leadership positions. He joined the Geva Theatre Center in 2006 as production manager and was appointed managing director in 2007. Prior to his tenure with Geva Theatre Center, Weber served as technical director for Houston Grand Opera from 1993 to 2006, overseeing the production of eight

to nine operas each season and all technical budgets, as well as leading the company's labor negotiations. Working closely with the company's then general director David Gockley, Weber was instrumental in the development and execution of Houston Grand Opera's community outreach initiatives of PlazaCast presentations, OperaVision and its multi-media modular staging system for large outdoor venues. Weber received his B.S. in theater design and technology from Ball State University and his M.F.A. in theater technology from the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Skylight Opera Theatre welcomes **Jim Farrell** as the company's new development director. Farrell previously served as the director of corporate and foundation relations at the Milwaukee Repertory Theater. Prior to The Rep, Farrell earned an M.F.A. in performing arts management from the North Carolina School of the Arts and, soon after, became development director at The Pearl Theatre in New York City. Farrell has also had a career as a theater artist and a playwright. He attended the University of West Florida on an acting scholarship and performed in approximately 30 Off-Broadway productions. His autobiographical play, *Summer Games*, won the Festival of Emerging American Theater in 1998 and was produced on Equity contract at The Phoenix Theatre in Indianapolis. His play *Monster Island* won the Siena College International playwrights competition and his one-acts have been produced in New York and Chicago. Additionally, **Bill Theisen** will serve as Skylight's artistic director through the 2012-2013 season. Theisen has had a long history of performing and directing

at Skylight and has been the artistic director since 2004.

Hilarie Ashton joined **Utah Symphony | Utah Opera** (US|UO) as the company's public relations manager on December 27, 2010. She has been an arts and entertainment reporter at *The Daily Universe* and was awarded "best overall reporter" in 2009. Previously, she has completed internships with the US|UO marketing department and the Brigham Young University Fine Arts Museum in their communications department. She was a team agent for the 2010 Census focusing on communications.

Vancouver Opera Music Director **Jonathan Darlington's** appointment has been extended to 2015. Darlington has held this position since May 2005, having been appointed principal conductor in 2002. His current contract was to have expired in 2012. Born in England but now a resident of France, Maestro Darlington is music director of the Duisburg (Germany) Philharmonic Orchestra, which was founded in 1877. With that orchestra, recent appearances have taken him to Amsterdam, the Montreux Festival and

China. Recent European engagements include the world premiere of *La Grande Magia*, a new opera by Manfred Trojahn, with Dresden Staatskapelle. In past seasons, he conducted at English National Opera, Bordeaux Opera and Deutsche Oper am Rhein and made his debut with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. Darlington's recent engagements include Stravinsky's *The Nightingale & Other Short Fables*, directed by Robert Lepage with Canadian Opera Company, and Vancouver Opera's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. 🎭

IN MEMORIAM

Helen Boatwright, an American soprano who championed the performance of American song and was renowned for her interpretations of Charles Ives, died on Wednesday, December 1, 2010 in Jamesville, N.Y., outside Syracuse. She was 94. Her operatic debut was at Tanglewood in Massachusetts. During her career, she worked with conductors Leopold Stokowski, Erich Leinsdorf, Seiji Ozawa and Zubin Mehta. She also performed with Leonard Bernstein at Tanglewood in the early 1940s, sang opposite tenor Mario Lanza in his operatic stage debut and performed for President John F. Kennedy in the East Room of the White House in 1963. Boatwright met her husband, violinist Howard Boatwright, in Los Angeles in 1941 when they were to perform in a National Federation of Music Clubs competition. They married and performed together in the U.S., Mexico, Europe and India. Many of her husband's compositions for voice were written specifically for her. Born Helena Johanna Strassburger in 1916, she was the youngest of six musically-inclined children in Sheboygan, WI. She earned bachelor's and master's degrees in music from Oberlin College Conservatory. She also taught at Syracuse University, the Eastman School of Music, the Peabody Conservatory of Music and elsewhere.



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OPERA America Talks with Nicholas Negroponte

By Melanie Feilotter

OPERA America welcomes Nicholas Negroponte as this year's keynote speaker at Opera Conference 2011 in Boston. Negroponte is the Jerome B. Wiesner Professor of Media Technology at MIT. He co-founded the MIT Media Laboratory, which has produced some of the most widely used products and platforms, including Amazon's Kindle, Guitar Hero, LEGO Mindstorms and MPEG-4 Structured Audio. The Lab also developed the XO Laptop, which has been widely distributed to underdeveloped countries by the One Laptop per Child nonprofit venture founded by Negroponte.

The technology guru authored the 1995 bestseller Being Digital, in which he prophesied about the "personalization of information," many years before the notion became commonplace. Negroponte is also a partner in a venture capital firm that invests in technology and information spaces. OPERA America recently probed his thinking on nonprofits, technology and risk.

Melanie Feilotter: You brought the composer Tod Machover back to the U.S. from France in 1984 to be a professor at the MIT Media Lab.

Nicholas Negroponte: I know Tod well. I adore his work in terms of the technological innovation that accompanies it. I do not understand his music.

MF: In getting the One Laptop Per Child project underway, did the nonprofit experience surprise you at all?

NN: One Laptop Per Child is my second nonprofit venture. The first, circa 1995, was called the 2B1 Foundation, whose goals were similar, but limited to connecting children around the world. The biggest upside of being a nonprofit was the clarity of purpose. Children are a mission, not a market. The biggest downside is that people wonder how long you will be around.

MF: Are there untested assumptions in the nonprofit world that could benefit from the behavior or models of the for-profit world?

NN: Nonprofits need to be business-like, but not businesses. For-profits have beneficiaries — shareholders — whose benefit is by definition outside the line of business. There is a built-in conflict. The customer comes first only because it will eventually benefit the shareholder.

MF: You've spoken extensively about the idea that learning comes from exploration and reinventing the wheel, not from passive listening. Are there any useful parallels to be drawn between active learning in an educational setting, versus in the performance space?

NN: Constructionism, as it is called, is about learning by doing (in the simplest sense). While typing is hardly full body involvement, it is not hard to imagine how performance would engage mind and memory in deeper ways. When we put a book on a high shelf out of our reach, even standing on tiptoe helps us remember where it is. The driver remembers better than the passenger.

MF: You have argued against moving in increments when it comes to fostering

creativity. How would you suggest that arts organizations might foster a more creative environment without taking on too much risk?

NN: I do not know enough to reply and I am almost suicidal in my attraction to risk. My recommendation, in general, is to take as much risk as possible, not for risk's sake (obviously), but to push the envelope as far as possible without going too far. Go to the hairy edge.

MF: Of course your prediction of the personalized news feed has come to fruition; how do you think the quality and delivery of content will change over time? Might new opportunities exist for the arts, in terms of media visibility?

NN: Personalization has changed the navigational aspects of news. When I wake up in the morning, I want personalized news that will help me, the Daily Me. On Sunday afternoon, I am far more interested in serendipity and want "mass media" in the sense of "mass" being a story I did not know I would be interested in, and that it was made for a demographic (perhaps) but not me (as such). This applies to

listening to NPR while driving. My guess is that NPR coverage of the arts has gone up and not down.

MF: Do you think that your core ideas about technology can be applied in the performing arts arena, without alienating audiences and traditional art forms? Or do you see limitations to what technology can achieve when it comes to culture?

NN: The question is revealing, as some would argue that technology is culture. Insofar as some culture engages a more elite audience, that audience may be richer and older, per force more distant from technology. I would flip the question and use Tod Machover as an example. His art affects technology, breaks engineering deadlocks, and attracts a very different point of view (than the hardcore

engineers offer). I am sure the reverse can happen. Namely, that technology can offer totally new means, certainly in terms of distribution, to very traditional art forms.

MF: As the performing arts turn more to technology, is live performance at risk of becoming out of touch, anachronistic? Or are there compensating advantages to being live?

NN: Live performance may be an anachronism in the sense of audience. Maybe quaint is the right word. I am reminded of "live" TV which, more often than not, need not be live. While there must be many reasons to enjoy the nuance of real-time and presence, the limitation of audience is probably overwhelming.

MF: What happens when technology forces a collision of information and entertainment?

NN: Information is often like banking, banking for the mind. Boring. It gets more efficient and in some way better, but so what? Entertainment is far more emotion(al), but often does not matter, whatever matter means. The collision may not be a collision at all, but a new space that matters. In some ways, social media hints at this, but it's a mere hint indeed. One of the untold stories about bits and atoms is that while most things are turned into bits, we, as humans, cannot experience them directly (at least, not yet). They have to be converted back into our sensory domain, sound, picture, haptics, etc., for us to experience them. 🎧

In his keynote address at *Opera Conference 2011*, Negroponte will speak to opera's lasting ability to inspire creative thinking across many disciplines in a highly digitized and disorganized media world. For more information and to register, visit www.operaamerica.org/conference.

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opera entrepreneurship: building on tradition

Opera Conference 2011 | May 7 - 11 | Hosted by Boston Lyric Opera and Opera Boston

Opera Conference 2011 | Opera Entrepreneurship: Building on Tradition

This year's conference will address some of the field's biggest business and artistic challenges and enable attendees to take home concrete ideas and strategies for implementation. The theme of **entrepreneurship** is intended to provide both large and small companies the opportunity to talk about how the field is changing — through technology, changing demographics and audience behavior, and shifts in business practices — and how to be poised to ride the wave of change.

General Sessions will feature pathbreaking thinkers from within and outside the opera industry on such topics as **Think Like a Startup, The Audience Knows Best: Answers to Engagement** and **Here to Stay: Capitalizing on Digital Transmission Technology**. In addition, we'll travel to the **MIT Media Lab** to hear from **Tod Machover** about how technology is changing opera. At OBERON, American Repertory Theater's theatrical club space, **Diane Paulus** will host a **New Works Sampler** like no other. **Nicholas Negroponte**, interviewed on pages 20-21, will be the keynote speaker.

All attendees are welcome at **Open Sessions**, which have a network-specific focus, although in many cases, topics are interdisciplinary in nature and can benefit representatives from different branches of the opera company. Here's an abbreviated look at what's on offer this year:

For Trustees:

- Brave New World: Sustainability, Where We Have Been and Where We Go From Here
- The Balanced Scorecard
- Changing the Culture of Decision-Making
- Beyond Renewal: Creating a Community of Donors

For Artistic Professionals:

- Do You Hear What I Hear? Listening to Auditions
- New Roads to New Opera
- Supporting First-Time Opera Directors

For Tech/Prod Professionals:

- Effective Negotiation
- Human Resources for Production Managers
- Alternative Venues: Logistical Headache or Creative Opportunity?

For Finance and Administrative Professionals:

- Effectively Managing Flex-Time Employees
- Avoiding the Ire of the IRS

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For Education Professionals:

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For details and to create your own conference schedule, see www.operaamerica.org/conference.

The Co-Production Marketplace

This year's event has been broadened in scope to allow participants to present designs and shop for potential co-producers. Companies of all sizes with productions at all stages of development are encouraged to come and network with colleagues. Educational institutions with producing arms, orchestras and theater representatives are also welcome to attend and find potential partners.

THE BEST WAY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE of the co-production marketplace is to plan ahead! This year, OPERA America has launched a **conference community website** that allows registrants to share ideas prior to the conference. Visit www.operaamerica.org/conference to start a conversation, providing as much detail as you can about your production vision and the kind of partnership you seek. Conversations will flower on the community website as more companies register for the conference, and opportunities to set up one-on-one or group meetings will increase.

Whether you have designs and artists already in place, or whether you have a mere kernel of an idea, this is the place to launch lasting partnerships in the co-production realm.

Take the hassle out of registering à la carte and sign up as a team for *Opera Conference 2011*! The larger the team, the greater the value. Receive free seminars, network dinners, and dinner and transportation during Cambridge Campus on Monday night. Signing up as a team of five entitles your company to unlimited additional registrations. Take advantage of this opportunity to bring five staff members, and your company's entire board could attend the conference for free!

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The image is a promotional graphic for Boston. It features a night-time cityscape of Boston with illuminated buildings. The text 'the PLACE to Stay.', 'the PLACE to Dine.', 'the PLACE to Meet.', 'the PLACE to Shop.', 'the PLACE to Learn.', and 'the PLACE to Play.' is arranged vertically in a white, sans-serif font. Below this, a smaller text block describes Boston as a city full of historical museums, world-renowned arts and culture, and championship sport franchises, concluding with 'Boston is the PLACE to Play.' The word 'Boston' is written in a large, elegant, cursive script at the bottom right. At the bottom left, there is a small inset image of a theater interior. At the bottom, contact information for the Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau is provided, including the phone number 617.867.8256 and the website BostonUSA.com/PLAN. A small 'Boston' logo is also visible in the bottom right corner.



OBERON, the second stage of the American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) and a destination for theater and nightlife on the fringe of Harvard Square. Photo courtesy of OBERON.

Cambridge Campus

Opera at MIT Media Lab

Entrepreneurship implies an act of innovation that might emphasize new products or a new market. What better example exists, both for art and business, than the MIT Media Lab, the very embodiment of new and experimental thought? *Opera Conference 2011* offers a rare and wonderful opportunity to see the magic of the MIT Media Lab in action with composer Tod Machover, head of the Media Lab's Hyperinstruments/Opera of the Future group. In this unusual and provocative general session, attendees will be inspired by the Lab's advanced technology and learn how it can transform the creative process.

Putting the Alternative Venue on Center Stage

No less adventurous is this year's *New Works Sampler*, which will take place at OBERON, the second space of the American Repertory Theater. Artistic Director Diane Paulus, who opened the door to a new way of thinking about audience engagement in her closing keynote remarks in Los Angeles last year, will be on hand to talk about pushing creativity to its limits through the use of unconventional spaces.

New Works Sampler

In the same evening, Paulus's words will be put into action with the *New Works Sampler*, which will unfold in the cabaret space of the Oberon in two separate seatings. Co-organized and produced by Guerilla Opera, local Boston companies will perform excerpts from new works in this theatrical space. 🎭



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by Nino Rota

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Entrepreneurship and the Performing Artist: Preparing Musicians for 21st-Century Careers

By Sasha Margolis

“Anyone who’s been paying attention to the classical music world knows that the industry has been undergoing some serious changes over the last 10 years,” says the **University of Colorado’s** (CU) Jeffrey Nytech. “Government funding has gotten harder to come by. Corporate funding has gotten harder to come by. Foundations are changing their priorities.” Some organizations have responded to recent economic stresses by cutting the number of productions or performances, reducing the number of employment opportunities for artists.

As the next generation of performers prepares to enter this challenging environment, programs in entrepreneurship and leadership have begun to appear at music schools nationwide. Nytech, director of CU’s Entrepreneurship Center for Music, explains the rationale: “The old model was, we’ll teach you how to be the best musician possible, you’ll network with your teacher’s help, take some auditions and make your way. That model doesn’t work anymore. As a system for training students, it’s irresponsible.”

Ramon Ricker, director of the **Eastman School of Music’s** Institute for Music Leadership, agrees: “I would feel really, really bad if we were just turning out great musicians without also making them aware of the real world. We can’t just teach someone how to play the clarinet, and say, ‘Good luck to you, maybe send us a hundred bucks in 10 years.’ We want them to be proactive, to be influencers in music.”

Entrepreneurial Musicians

One such influencer is Rachel Roberts, the newly-appointed director of Entrepreneurial Musicianship at the **New England Conservatory** and an alumna of Eastman’s program. She shares Ricker’s goals: “We’re trying to put students in the position of leading, not responding and trying to catch up.”

“A lot of people want to follow their hearts,” notes David Cutler, author of *The Savvy Musician: Building a Career, Earning a Living, & Making a Difference* and coordinator of **Duquesne University’s** Music Entrepreneurship Studies program. “And if their passion is music, they want to be involved with it — but they also want to make sure they won’t have to live in a dumpster.” Cutler is also an alumnus of the Eastman program.



Anne Ricci sings at an Opera on Tap performance at Freddy's Bar and Backroom in Brooklyn. Photo courtesy of Opera on Tap.

“I was in my late 20s,” confesses soprano Anne Ricci, “I still loved to sing, but I was auditioning badly and beginning to feel pretty dark about my prospects. Then I was offered this opportunity to sing in a really casual environment. I jumped on it, and from the first time, I thought, this is what I’m supposed to be doing with my life — singing in dive bars!”

Today Ricci is one of the directors, or “divas,” of **Opera On Tap**, an organization which, presenting performances in bars and other informal venues, has hit upon an unusual business model: franchising. Currently in five cities, Opera on Tap is providing opportunities in entrepreneurship to a growing number of singers (each franchise has its own personnel) at the same time that it brings opera to a new audience. Says Ricci, “Fifty percent of our crowd are people who already love opera, but who also love the whole concept we’re bringing to it, and the other half are definitely people who have not been. I’ve had people come up to me and say they went to an opera because of first seeing Opera on Tap. I also have people who say they’ll never go to an opera house, but they love this show.”

“People often ask me, why entrepreneurship?” says Edward Klorman, director of the **Manhattan School of Music’s** Center for Musical Entrepreneurship. “Is that something to fall back on if you’re not a successful performer? I would say *in order* to be a truly successful performer, you want to be the kind of performer who can dream up a project, a concert, a recording, an organization. Having the tools to put that in place is very empowering.”

“The idea that musicians have to be entrepreneurs is not new,” Klorman contends, pointing out that even Beethoven complained that the need to “be half a businessman” ate into the time he had to practice his art. “Two hundred years later our conservatories are finally starting to embrace entrepreneurship as a key part of what a musician needs to be successful.”

What Schools Are Doing

While every school’s program is slightly different, there tend to be several common features: encouragement and funding from one or more enterprise-oriented foundations — the Kauffman, the Coleman, the Morgan, the Price; dynamic executives leading the way — Manhattan’s Robert Sirota, the Oberlin Conservatory’s David Stull, Colorado’s Daniel Sher, New England’s Tony Woodcock. As for content, most schools begin by offering a general course before proceeding to some combination of internships, grant opportunities, workshops

with successful entrepreneurs (Oberlin brought in Jerry Greenfield, co-founder of Ben & Jerry's) and one-on-one mentoring.

At most schools, participation is voluntary. But at New England Conservatory, the introductory Entrepreneurial Musician course is required for all juniors. Eastman, while allowing students to “vote with their feet,” offers a staggering array of courses in topics as diverse as digital portfolio creation, arts media and promotion and intellectual property rights. Meanwhile, at Oberlin, music students can take advantage of courses offered at the adjoining liberal arts college — accounting in the economics department, grant-writing in the English composition department.

Student response has been enthusiastic. At Eastman, one-third of all juniors, seniors and graduate students have taken at least one entrepreneurship course. At Manhattan School of Music this year, 23 students signed up on an elective basis for the inaugural Practical Foundations for Music Careers course — most of them seniors and second-year graduate students nearing completion of their studies. This semester, more than 80 students chose to enroll in the class, which is being phased in as a degree requirement for most students.

Some programs, like **Oberlin Conservatory's** Center for Leadership and Creativity, stress an experiential approach. “Instead of starting with a series of courses and building minors and majors and concentrations, we wanted students to be compelled by the opportunity to actually *do* something, to imagine what they were going to do and then practice it,” says Andrea Kalyn, co-director of the program and yet another Eastman alumna. Thus, Oberlin has put in place an escalating series of grant and fellowship opportunities to facilitate projects between semesters and even after graduation. Meanwhile, at Colorado, where the university as a whole boasts six separate entrepreneurship centers, music students are able to enter business plans in a campus-wide Venture Challenge. Similarly, at Eastman, musicians vie among themselves in a New Venture Challenge.

With all this new activity, do students have any time left to practice? “This is not meant to take you out of the practice room,” says Kalyn. “You absolutely *have* to do that. But then what do you do? How does your music live in the world? How as a musician do *you* live in the world?” In fact, she adds, “once you’ve had one of these experiences, your next year in the practice room is very different. Suddenly things that you took for granted, or things that you didn’t think were very important, or things that you thought you were interested in but really aren’t, get highlighted, and you can channel your education.”

The idea of entrepreneurship can inform not only the practice room, but also the classroom. “What I’m a big advocate of,” explains Duquesne University’s Cutler, “is looking for ways to restructure the curriculum that’s already in place to emphasize an entrepreneurial mindset. The idea so often in school is that you show up on time, you learn your part, you go to the performance, you get a standing ovation and then you’re successful. You get an A.”

“What that teaches students is that if they just learn to play really well and show up on time, then they’ll have successful careers. And of course that’s *not* the way it usually works. It’s harder than that. So in the ensemble class that I teach, we have a treasurer, we have a project manager. They’re in charge of all of the elements of setting up a tour for themselves.”

Despite the expanding skill set of today’s conservatory graduate, the statistics remain daunting. In addition to the challenges faced by arts organizations, there is this figure, reported by Eastman’s Ricker in his new book, *Lessons from a Streetwise Professor*: In 2009 alone, there were over 115,000 music majors at the 625 U.S. music schools that are accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). And the College Music Society, a more

inclusive organization, indicates that there were 326,975 students enrolled in music programs in 2007-2008.

But the directors of the new programs are optimistic. Klorman proposes that “we can either say, anyone in their right mind would quit music and do something else because this field has no future. Or we can say, some traditional models are less sustainable now than they used to be. How can I be on the forefront of the next curve?”

A look at the work of some young musical entrepreneurs already out of school, along with the ideas of the new educators, suggests a few “next curves” that are already emerging.

How Are You Good?

“As young artists approach the opening years of their careers, they tend to think this one thing they’re seeking is some preconceived notion of ‘success,’” says Edward Klorman. “And therefore anything else is not success. For many singers, ‘success’ may be singing on the opera stage, and the reality is there are many more qualified performers than there are existing opportunities.”

“There are a zillion people who are taking the auditions, doing the competitions,” says soprano Deborah Lifton, an alumna of Manhattan School of Music. “Rather than just waiting around, I said, okay, what am I interested in doing? *Voix Humaine*. I really like that piece.”



J.J. Penna, Erika Switzer, Tami Petty, Hai-Ting Chinn, Scott Murphree and David McFerrin performs Brahms's *Liebeslieder Waltzes* at the Bryant Park Fall Festival. Photo courtesy of Five Boroughs Music Festival.

When he's not busy singing lieder, opera and symphonic solos across the country, baritone Jesse Blumberg stays hard at work cultivating a uniquely local musical culture. Blumberg is artistic director of the **Five Boroughs Music Festival** (5BMF), an organization which, at a time when many young New Yorkers have been priced out of Manhattan, makes concert attendance more accessible by performing in traditional and nontraditional venues, not only in Manhattan but also in Brooklyn, the Bronx, Staten Island and Queens.

5BMF's “buy local” mindset directly reflects one of the main new trends endorsed by the leaders of entrepreneurship programs. Meanwhile, Blumberg's specific role as artistic director reflects another: the use of do-it-yourself skills to expand the artist's range of possibilities. While 5BMF does provide Blumberg with the occasional performance opportunity, more significantly, putting together a diverse series that includes early music, tango, jazz and original string band music offers one more kind of creative outlet for him — not to mention a rich experience for his audience.

With partial financial backing from the Opera Singers Initiative — a group privately devoted to many of the same goals as the academic entrepreneurship programs — Lifton is now putting on a series of concerts built around Poulenc’s one-woman show.

Looking inward, as Lifton has done, is one solution. “Maybe,” says Klorman, “there’s something about your personality that might make you an outstanding singer to sing in community centers, rural settings, to start a series that brings performances to prisons. If we can envision a broader range of possibilities that feel like success to us — whether it might be starting an educational program that tours to libraries and schools using art-song and folk-song to teach about the Civil War, a program that presents opera in a community where it’s never been presented before, a program where opera singers work with composers in a community residency where the community helps to create an opera — I think there’s a lot of exciting work out there.”

Or, as he more briefly puts it: “The question isn’t so much *how good are you*, but *how are you good?*”

Give the People What They Want (But What Do They Want?)

While some advise young performers to create an audience for the music they believe in, others reverse the equation. “Sing what the audience wants to hear,” says baritone Andrew Ryker, a mentor for New England’s Entrepreneurial Musicianship program, who encourages students to improve their employability by increasing their versatility. Similarly, Rachel Roberts, who heads the program, emphasizes “discovering a community’s needs and responding to them.”

But those needs are becoming harder to pinpoint. David Cutler believes that “audiences are more open-minded than ever before. We now live in the iPod Shuffle generation.” Therefore, rather than focusing specifically on repertoire, he believes that “there will be new opportunities for arts organizations that can tap into local cultures. Something that’s special is something I can get in my neighborhood that no one else can get.” These ideas are borne out by the success of artist-run organizations such as Opera On Tap and the Five Boroughs Music Festival (see insets, pages 29 and 31.)

Musical Entrepreneurs

Opera on Tap’s Anne Ricci and Five Boroughs Music Festival’s Jesse Blumberg illustrate another rising trend, too: performers who direct part of their energy into organizational entrepreneurship. Ricci points out that “musicians tend to be more extroverted, more passionate about their ideas, and that’s great for board members to see.” And according to countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo, “being entrepreneurial on a business side of things is very much like a performance. You have to gauge the energy that people are giving you and figure out where to fit yourself into that.”

For these reasons, despite the number of music majors in school today, and the diminution of traditional opportunities, Colorado’s Jeffrey Nytych has come to a perhaps surprising conclusion: “The way I look at it,” he says, “is that we need *more* musicians. I think our culture needs as much art and beauty and expressiveness as it can get, now more than ever. We just have to reinvent the way we interact with society. We have to create ways to be active in society as artists and as citizens. A music student who ends up not pursuing a professional performing career, but takes the sensibilities of the artist, the ability to collaborate, to communicate, to translate abstract thoughts into something concrete and physical — these are all things that musicians take for granted, but if you see these as universal skills, then you can bring them into other disciplines, and still have a positive impact on the world you may not otherwise have had.”

Sasha Margolis is a freelance writer and violinist. He has enjoyed opera from the pit in houses from Genoa to Honolulu, and many cities in between.

Countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo appears to lead a double life. This year, following the career path of the traditional opera singer, he will sing on major stages in New York, Boston and Philadelphia. At the same time, he is a devoted musical entrepreneur, creating projects that advance both his own ends and those of the medium itself. “It’s really important,” Costanzo believes, “that we find ways to demystify opera while staying faithful to the score, and without offending any of the diehard opera fans. We can’t underestimate the benefits of showing people who know nothing about opera the things that it may have to offer them.”

“Today,” he continues, “it’s also important to find avenues to explore your artistry outside of conventional contexts, and then bring that ‘extracurricular’ experience back inside the traditional institutional settings. I’ve been entrepreneurial about creating opportunities for opera to traverse traditional boundaries, and similarly for things such as film, dance and visual arts to enter the classical music mainstream.” While still a student at Princeton, Costanzo undertook a project that began with research into castrati, evolved into a pasticcio of castrato arias with spoken dialogue and dance, and ended as a documentary film shown at Cannes, which subsequently qualified for an Academy Award. Along the way, the countertenor was joined by eminent collaborators such as director James Ivory, choreographer Karole Armitage and designer Andrea Branzi. Costanzo accomplished all this partly by means of previous personal connections — “the first and most important thing about being entrepreneurial as a singer,” he stresses, “is relationships: nurturing relationships with people in a way that’s genuine” — and partly through creative fundraising.

“Part of being entrepreneurial,” Costanzo further explains, “is understanding how a system works, whatever that institution or system is, and figuring out how you can adapt your project to fit into that system.” Thus, at Princeton, he was able to convince the chairs of nine separate academic departments that his pasticcio project was relevant to their concerns, and therefore deserving of funds; once a film trailer was produced, he was able to secure further funding from the university’s administration. With each step — and in other, more recent mixed-media projects — Costanzo employed one of the skills (networking, grant defense, business planning) being taught at music schools today.



A “making of” shot from the documentary, *Zefirino: The Voice of a Castrato*, that Anthony Roth Costanzo made about his senior thesis at Princeton. The short-length documentary subsequently was shown at Cannes and qualified for an Academy Award. Photo courtesy of Anthony Roth Costanzo.



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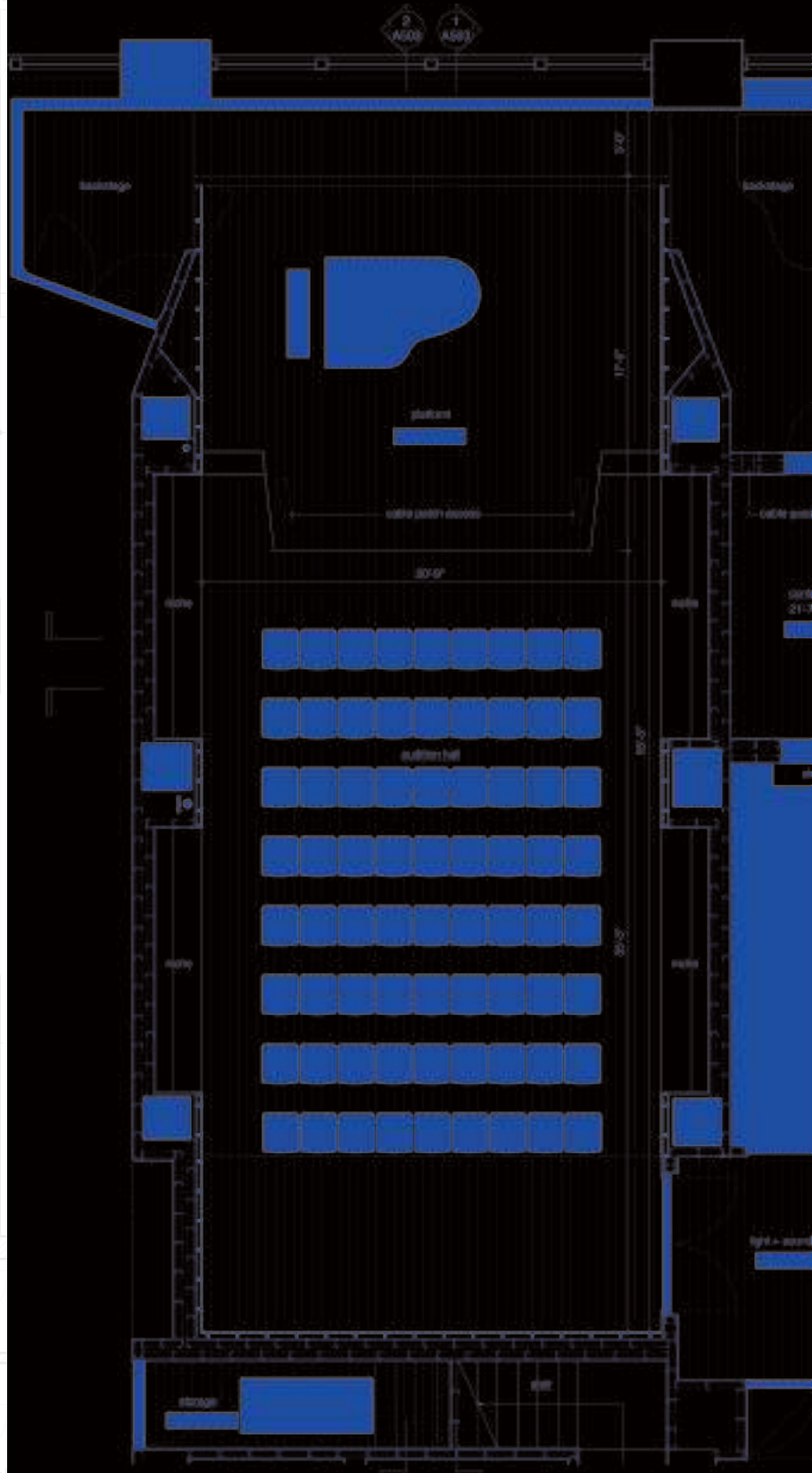


FROM DREAM TO REALITY

OPERA America's 2005 move to New York City was the just first step in a bold new plan to create a "center of gravity" for the field. New York is home to the country's largest concentration of opera artists, companies and music businesses — including major companies and new works laboratories, publishers, artist managers and costume shops, and thousands of singers, voice teachers and coaches. Despite this abundance of talent, no appropriate facility exists in which to conduct essential industry business. To increase the level of creativity, excellence and effectiveness in opera, OPERA America's National Opera Center will provide unique and necessary services never before available in a single purpose-built facility.

On Friday, February 4, 2011, OPERA America signed a lease for the space that will become the Opera Center, which will greatly expand capacity for service to member companies and artists. The Opera Center will occupy 25,000 square feet on two floors in the same building that houses OPERA America's current offices. In order to create a double-height, acoustically excellent recital/audition hall, concrete and steel will be removed between floors in part of the space. The location, within a few blocks of more than a dozen subway lines, three suburban railroads, Amtrak and the AirTrain to JFK and Newark Airports, will be convenient for visitors and New Yorkers alike. The downturn in New York's real estate market has resulted in a unique opportunity for OPERA America to secure a long-term commitment for this space.

As OPERA America's relationship with members becomes more engaged, and as learning and networking services are more easily distributed using electronic media, the Opera Center will become the physical heart of an industry that is disbursed, but inherently collaborative.



FEATURES OF THE OPERA CENTER

The Opera Center will make possible more frequent and direct contact between members and OPERA America staff, encourage greater involvement of members in the work of OPERA America, create the potential for broader and deeper collaboration among members and facilitate work with traditional partners and a host of new allies. Most importantly, the Opera Center will enable OPERA America to provide a range and level of services never before possible. The facility will include:

- An acoustically excellent Audition/Recital Hall, which can also be used for master classes, readings of new works, workshops, rehearsals, seminars, press conferences and performances.
- Support studios that can be used for co-production meetings and design presentations, as well as practice and coaching rooms for visiting artists.
- A recording studio with the capacity to create CDs and DVDs of auditions and performances in both the audition hall and the larger support studios.
- A green room that will provide artist hospitality before and after events and a space for managing auditions by visiting opera companies.
- A library featuring a reference and research collection; the Central Opera Service, National Opera Institute and OPERA America archives; listening stations and a score library with an emphasis on American works; and a reading room with an extensive collection of industry periodicals.
- An exhibit gallery that will display scenic and costume designs by leading artists as well as by the winners of OPERA America's Robert L.B. Tobin Director-Designer Showcase.
- An Honors Hall, with monitors showing the video tributes for individuals recognized through the NEA Opera Honors, as well as historic videos and other materials featuring important contributors to the field.
- Space for board meetings, committee meetings, grant panels and OPERA America Forum convenings, with technology that permits recording, streaming and teleconferencing.
- An administrative suite with staff offices and a business center for visiting members.
- Hospitality space that can accommodate donor receptions and special events, with adequate kitchen facilities as well as a canteen for visitors to the Opera Center.

"American Lyric Theater has been very fortunate to be the first company in residence at OPERA America. We don't own studio space, and while there are many options for renting space in New York City, none really cater to the unique needs of opera in a cost-effective manner. Having a reasonably priced facility dedicated to opera means we don't have to compete for space with theater and dance companies; and we don't have worry about questionable pianos, or the sound of tap dancing drifting in from adjacent studios! For our artists, OPERA America provides high caliber, centrally located facilities, along with the opportunity for them to be directly connected to the national opera community. As an organization, we've become more connected to OPERA America, and are able to better serve our constituents. We can't wait for the Opera Center to be complete. Right now, ALT is the only company in residence at OPERA America — but when companies around the country are able to take advantage of a central hub truly dedicated to opera, the opportunities for all of us are going to be even more exciting."

— Lawrence Edelson,
Producing Artistic Director,
American Lyric Theater

EXTENSIVE SERVICES TO ARTISTS TO BE FURTHER EXPANDED IN THE OPERA CENTER

Since relocating to New York City in 2005, OPERA America has conducted a series of career development workshops for artists. Featuring presentations and panels of experts who address issues central to building a career, *Making Connections* complements the artist workshops OPERA America conducts across the country. Many *Making Connections* sessions — all of which are followed by informal receptions to allow attendees to make personal contact with leaders in the field — are streamed live from the OPERA America website and are archived on the website for 24/7 access. The Opera Center will provide specially-equipped rooms for these and other professional development programs. In addition:

- Aspiring singers who live in and visit New York will be heard to advantage in auditions in a space that is designed specifically for the opera voice.
- These same singers will be able to practice, take lessons, coach and attend master classes in soundproof rooms equipped with high-quality and well-maintained pianos.
- Singers who need to make CDs or DVDs for applications to competitions and young artist programs will have access to the state-of-the art media center.
- The score and recording library will facilitate role preparation and related research.

THE OPERA CENTER'S EXPANDED ROLE IN FOSTERING NEW AMERICAN WORKS

Over the last 25 years, OPERA America has awarded grants totalling nearly \$11 million to professional opera companies and their producing partners to stimulate the creation and production of new works and the re-mounting of works that have already premiered. More than two decades of investment has resulted in a growing American repertoire developed and advanced by almost every opera company in the United States. The Opera Center will complement and amplify OPERA America's already strong commitment to the creation, production and enjoyment of American operas, especially new works:

- The Opera Center will provide essential workspace in which new operas can be conceived, developed, rehearsed, showcased, recorded and promoted.
- The Audition/Recital Hall and other large ensemble rooms will be ideally suited to one-time or extended workshops and rehearsals of new works.
- Building on OPERA America's successful *Salon Series*, excerpts of new works will be performed on a regular basis, followed by receptions at which producers, publishers, other artists and opera patrons mingle with composers, librettists and performers.
- *Salon Series* events will be streamed live to an international audience and archived on the OPERA America website, consistent with current practice.
- Composers, librettists and producers will be able to make high-quality CD or DVD recordings of new works for use in rehearsals, education and audience development activities, and grant proposals.
- Symposia for audience members will explore the range of creativity in American opera and build appreciation for the diverse and growing canon of new work. Symposium sessions will be streamed live and archived on www.operaamerica.org.
- Meeting rooms will provide space for co-production meetings, design presentations and other working sessions that will help artists and opera companies plan new works alone or in collaboration with other opera companies.
- The Audition/Recital Hall will be used for informal performances of smaller works. A number of New York City opera companies have expressed interest in using the Opera Center for such performances as well as for training programs. Already, American Lyric Theater, a company dedicated to the development of composers and librettists, is in residence at OPERA America.

THE FUTURE IS NOW

This spring, OPERA America architects and consultants will work with board and staff to finalize the design while the landlord removes the ceiling cement and steel between the 7th and 8th floors. The Opera Center is expected to open in the spring of 2012 and to be fully operational for the busy audition season in the fall of 2012. Operating policies and procedures will be introduced at *Opera Conference 2011* in Boston.

At a time when the performing arts industry is being challenged as never before to leverage resources, it is especially appropriate for the national service organization for opera to invest in a facility and related services that will deliver exceptional value to its members. The Opera Center will underscore the organization's commitment to the field by delivering essential workspace and incomparable utility. ☺

THE OPERA CENTER CAMPAIGN

The total cost of the Opera Center will be \$12 million, including \$6 million to cover the costs of design and construction and \$6 million to fund an operating endowment. Income from this endowment will enable OPERA America to provide members with access to the purpose-built facilities of the Opera Center at favorable rates. Together with user fees, income from the endowment will defray leasing and operating costs.

To date, OPERA America has confirmed a total of \$6.2 million. Of this, \$4.2 million is available to help with the design and construction component of the project. A most generous and deeply appreciated challenge grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in the amount of \$2 million is dedicated to the operating endowment.

Naming opportunities throughout the Opera Center offer a wonderful opportunity to honor family, friends, artists and administrators who have made a significant contribution to the art form and the field.

- Celebrate the work of outstanding artists.
- Honor a long-serving trustee or cherished volunteer.
- Recognize an important personal mentor.
- Acknowledge the anniversary of a general or artistic director, or the exceptional effort of a staff member.
- Affirm your company's place in the national opera community.

For more information about how you can participate in the Opera Center Campaign, please contact OPERA America's President and CEO, Marc A. Scorca, at MScorca@operaamerica.org or by telephone at 212-796-8620, ext. 211.

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With its move to New York City, OPERA America positioned itself at the crossroads of the opera industry. An unbelievably diverse group of opera organizations and artists call the city home. Those not in residence usually find themselves passing through with some frequency — whether for auditions, production meetings, study or simply to see a show.

While opera companies located in the five boroughs of New York City may get the lion's share of press coverage, each of the opera organizations scattered across the

Empire State plays an important role in American opera. Young singers can find a variety of training and performing opportunities. Audiences in underserved areas benefit from the creative outreach efforts of established opera companies and entrepreneurial individuals. Performances range from theatricalized concerts to great American musicals, from long-forgotten baroque works to brand-new operas. And for the urban opera lover looking to escape the city, the state's summer festivals are a chance to enjoy great art in a cooler, calmer setting.

Chautauqua Opera, founded in 1929, is the fourth-oldest opera company in America. Located within the Chautauqua Institution, it is also the oldest continuously operating summer opera in the country. "This is a community that is committed to learning, curiosity and the arts," says Jay Lesenger, who has been general director since 1995. "Our budget is one of the smaller of the OPERA America



Christopher Temporelli as Zuniga in Opera Saratoga's 2010 production of Bizet's *Carmen*. Photo by Gary Gold.



Yamina Maamar as Grete in The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts's 2010 production of Franz Schreker's *The Distant Sound, (Der ferne Klang)*. Photo by Cory Weaver.

Professional Company Members, but I'm really proud of the quality of work we've been able to do for that. Artists like to come here because the environment is special — when you walk home, you cross paths with 10 people who saw your performance the night before.”

Until last summer, all performances took place in Norton Memorial Hall, an art deco theater seating 1,300. In 2010, *Norma* played Chautauqua's historic Amphitheater to an audience of 3,000. It was also the first time the company performed an opera in the original language with supertitles. Based on the success of the experiment, the 2011 season will include an Amphitheater performance of *Luisa Miller* in Italian. However, Lesenger plans to uphold Chautauqua's tradition of English for performances in the more intimate Norton Hall. “People forget that Verdi expected his operas would be sung in the vernacular of the audience. We did a *Figaro* two or three years ago, and initially there was some grumbling about learning it in English. But on opening night, the curtain came in, and the principals said they had never experienced an audience reaction like that.”

Chautauqua has a two-tier young artist program, with opportunities for more experienced young singers to perform comprimario roles and cover principals. However, Lesenger is cautious about bringing very recent alumni back in leading roles: “I try to bring in artists who are very experienced because I think it is great for our young artists to work with them. Last year Barbara Quintiliani did her first *Norma* here — it's a great place for an established artist to try out a role.”

Most producing companies in the state integrate some kind of opportunity for young singers into their operating plan. **Seagle Music Colony**, located in the Adirondack region of New York, turns that model on its head. “Performance is just the tip of the iceberg,” says Artistic Director Darren Keith Woods, himself an alumnus of the program. “The productions are our gift to the community to show them what the singers are working on. We have trained our audience to understand that they are invited on a journey to watch these singers grow.”

In operation since 1915, Seagle is the oldest singer training organization in the country. Seagle admits 32 young artists each season; most return for a second summer, and repertory is often chosen with the returning singers in mind. When not performing, the singers have a busy schedule of coachings, voice lessons, mock auditions and master classes with industry professionals.

Opera Saratoga, which began its life as Lake George Opera 50 years ago, recently changed its name to reflect a 1998 move to the Spa Little Theater, on the grounds of the Saratoga Spa State Park. Over the years, the 472-seat house has shaped the company's artistic priorities: “Any intelligent producer will tailor a production to highlight the strengths of the venue,” says Artistic Director Curt Tucker. “I love opera in small settings. Grand opera is great, I go to it all the time, but I would much rather have an intimate opera theater experience. We don't have room for a large orchestra, so that limits the rep. We will not be doing Wagner anytime soon. But even with a small house and relatively small budget, we can still feature rising young



New Rochelle Opera's 2010 production of Puccini's *Turandot*. Photo by Marilyn Monsanto.



Heather Buck as Gilda and John Packard in the title role of Nickel City Opera's 2010 production of Verdi's *Rigoletto*. Photo courtesy of Nickel City Opera.



Anthony Roth Costanzo as Tolomeo and Julie Boulianne as Elisa in Glimmerglass Opera's 2010 U.S. professionally staged premiere of Handel's *Tolomeo*. Photo by Karli Cadel/Glimmerglass Opera.

artists." In addition to showcasing talented members of the company's apprentice program and recent alumni, Tucker anchors casts with seasoned professionals — this season's *Fledermaus* will feature Emily Pulley and John Easterlin.

Tucker admits that the technical limitations of the theater can sometimes be frustrating, but he feels it is a good fit for the company, for reasons both aesthetic and practical. "If we were in Rensselaer, at the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center, we wouldn't necessarily have the financial resources to take advantages of the technical capabilities. Right now, the size of the hall and the level of the singer fit together really nicely. I would say that our board and staff are pragmatists, and we feel we are well positioned for who we are."

A new handle for the company that began its life as Glimmerglass Opera (Cooperstown, NY) in 1975 reflects an expanded vision for the company, which has performed in the 900-seat Alice Busch Opera Theater on the shores of Lake Otsego since 1987. While four mainstage shows will remain at the heart of **The Glimmerglass Festival**, a new series called "Meet Me at the Pavilion" will offer an informal, low-cost opportunity for aficionados and first-timers alike to enjoy solo shows built around selected guest artists, as well as programs featuring members of the Young Artists Program. In addition, noted scholars and artists will discuss subjects related to the season's operas at various Cooperstown venues.

For the 2011 season, incoming Artistic & General Director Francesca Zambello has brought in soprano Deborah Voigt to serve as the company's first artist-in-residence. Like Chautauqua's Lesenger, Zambello feels that working alongside top professionals can have a transformational effect on young singers, and Voigt looks forward to

being available to members of the Young Artist Program. Zambello envisions the residencies as an opportunity for seasoned professionals to not only facilitate the growth of young singers, but to take on some artistic challenges of their own. Voigt will step outside her regular repertory to take the lead role in *Annie Get Your Gun*; in addition, she will give several performances of "Voigt Lessons," a one-woman show she developed in collaboration with Zambello and playwright Terrence McNally.

About 100 miles to the south, **Delaware Valley Opera** (DVO) will celebrate its silver anniversary this season with summer productions of *The Elixir of Love* and *Eugene Onegin*. The company has been in residence at the 160-seat Tusten Theatre since 1991, drawing audiences from New York City, Philadelphia, Scranton, Binghamton and New Jersey. Located in scenic Narrowsburg, NY, DVO has a leading role in the cultural and economic life of the Sullivan County region. Surrounded by rolling hills, forests and many lakes, Sullivan County is a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts, with a range of activities including canoeing and kayaking, swimming, hiking, cycling, birdwatching, fishing and hunting. In addition to the two summer operas, the company will offer two spring concerts and winter holiday performances of *Hansel and Gretel*.

The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts takes advantage of its position on the campus of Bard College to present a summer festival that emphasizes both scholarship and performance. "Summerscape 2011: Sibelius and His World" will explore the full range of Sibelius's work, his Scandinavian predecessors and contemporaries, and his colleagues in Europe and North America. At the center of this year's festival will be a production of *Die Liebe der Danae*, directed by Kevin



Dominic Johnson as Mercutio, Christopher Trapani as Romeo, Amanda Robie as Stephano and Michael Porter as Benvolio in Seagle Music Colony's 2010 production of Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette*. Photo by Steven Bryant.

Newbury and designed by renowned architect Rafael Viñoly. Going beyond concerts and performances, the festival links music to the worlds of literature, painting, theater, philosophy and politics. The Fisher Center, completed in 2003, was designed by Frank Gehry. In addition to the seven-week multidisciplinary summer festival, it is home to the college's theater and dance programs.

As summer comes to an end, **Tri-Cities Opera** prepares to welcome new members of its Resident Artist Training Program. Created in collaboration with SUNY-Binghamton, the Resident Artist program allows singers to obtain professional performing credits while completing their master's degrees. Because of the close association between the school and the company, Tri-Cities leadership sits in on University auditions. According to General Director Reed Smith, himself an alumnus of the program, this unique opportunity has allowed the school to attract a high caliber of singer. "I have no compunction about putting a master's student up there as Violetta if she's ready." In addition to the masters' students, the Resident Artists Training Program also includes another group, engaged on a monthly stipend, who have completed degrees elsewhere. Alumni of the program include Jake Gardner, Richard Leech and Aaron St. Clair Nicholson.

In 1949, when Peyton Hibbett and Carmen Savoca founded Tri-Cities Opera, young American singers still had relatively few opportunities on their native soil. Given the subsequent proliferation of opportunities for young singers, the company recently stepped back to consider how they could best serve today's artists and audience members. "Now, we're basically doing everything we've always done, but we've reorganized to do it more efficiently," says Smith. "We've cut down on

the number of singers — we used to double-cast — so that they have better financial support. And we're now bringing in professional stage directors from around the country so that the resident artists can be exposed to professionals working in the field." In addition to being an important training ground for singers, Tri-Cities Opera maintains scenic and costume shops that serve many other companies.

On New York's western edge, Valerian Ruminski is working to revive opera in his hometown. While there were several organizations presenting opera when he was young, the last of them closed just before the new millennium. Despite a busy performing career, the bass launched **Nickel City Opera** (Buffalo, NY) in 2009 with a production of *The Barber of Seville*, featuring John Packard in the title role. (For more information on one OPERA America's newest Professional Company Members, see page 9.)

Manhattan Lyric Opera's name may imply a limited geographic reach, but the company, based in New City, NY, performs not only across New York State, but as far south as Florida and as far west as Wisconsin and Iowa. The company tours operas cut down to 90 minutes, with projected scenery. "My target audience is people who have never been to the opera, and when I tell them it will be 90 minutes, I can see their eyes unglaze. It's shorter than a movie!" General Director Anne Tormela takes her shows to a variety of venues — libraries, clubs, universities, theaters. The minimalist approach means that Tormela is very careful about whom she hires: "Some singers may have a fabulous resume and sing great, but they're just not entertainers. I need someone who can get up in front of an audience and really communicate." Tormela, who is responsible for casting, directing, creating projections and performing, keeps the economics of the company simple. "I

never wanted to have to beg for donations. If they want me in Florida, I charge a flat rate and make my budget for the show work with that.”

New Rochelle Opera had its beginnings when a local music teacher asked soprano Camille Coppola if she would prepare students for a field trip to the Metropolitan Opera. The introduction was a hit with the kids, as was the opera. The next year, Coppola boosted her production values, making rudimentary costumes and props and bringing along a voice student from SUNY-Purchase. Before she knew it, she was performing in other schools and libraries. “By 1985, I had to get a board, and our first fully-staged show with orchestra was 1987,” she says. “Last year was our 25th anniversary, and we did *Turandot*, our biggest production yet.” New Rochelle Opera now stages one full production each year in the 350-seat Ursuline Arts Center, as well as several concerts. “Our goals are to present opera at minimal cost to the community and to enhance the careers of young singers,” says Coppola.

Like Coppola, Barbara Giancola saw a need and stepped in to fill it. “When we first started to apply for grants, believe it or not, the East End of Long Island was underserved in terms of classical music. There were art galleries, but nothing else,” says Giancola who, along with Artistic Director Santa Aronica, Music Director Atarah Hazzan and Administrative Director Martha Scriven-Campanella founded **Opera of the Hamptons** in cooperation with the Southampton School District in 1990. In its early days, the company focused on concerts and educational programs

in schools and libraries, gradually moving into theaters that seat between 200 and 250 patrons. The company has also hosted musical evenings at local vineyards. “People were hungry for opera,” says Giancola. “When I started coming here I found it interesting that there was no music of any kind. I thought, ‘I’m a professional singer with great interest in propagating opera and I know many musicians, singers and stage directors who feel as I do. Why not bring opera here?’ Opera of the Hamptons is now celebrating our 20-year anniversary.”

“For what is the smallest of the four major cities along the Thruway, Syracuse has an abundance of arts and culture, a lot of diversity in the visual and performing arts,” says **Syracuse Opera** General and Artistic Director Catherine Wolff. In 1974, with the founding of the company, opera became a part of the local cultural scene. “We are either blessed or cursed, depending on how you look at it, with a large stage and a large theater, and we have a very fine regional symphony. It is a great place for established singers to try out new roles. We’ve really worked to raise the bar in terms of the quality of artists we bring to the mainstage productions.”

Wolff and her staff are in the process of challenging audience members to broaden their definition of opera. “What our audience expects is grand opera presented in a traditional fashion with lavish sets and costumes, but they’re not paying for that,” she says. Last year, the company experimented with a concert version of *The Flying Dutchman* that included projected visuals. “Some



Julia Rowling and Ta’u Pupu’a in Opera of the Hamptons’s production of Puccini’s *Tosca*. Photo by Shira Devra Flam.



Lori Phillips and Greer Grimsley in Syracuse Opera’s production of Wagner’s *The Flying Dutchman*. Photo by Doug Wonders.

people loved it and some people really hated it.” Next year, Syracuse Opera will present *Carmina Burana* in what Wolff describes as another theatrical hybrid — the orchestra will be onstage, on a simple multi-level set, and singers will be staged.

A three-show season spread over nine months makes it easy for people to forget about opera, notes Wolff, so the company works hard to have a presence beyond the mainstage. “Recently we’ve taken our resident artists to a regional market, dressed up as vendors in the vegetable

stalls, and all of a sudden everyone starts singing.” The resident artists also have the opportunity to sing small roles on the mainstage. “There are tons of really good singers who don’t necessarily need another training program, but they do need the performing experience. I’ve always thought that was a really good niche for us to fill. The purpose is not training so much as performance experience.” In addition, the company recently launched an Opera Conducting Fellowship (see page 11) in collaboration with Ithaca College. 🍷

In summer 2011, members of OPERA America’s Ambassador Circle will visit The Glimmerglass Festival, along with other Cooperstown cultural attractions. For more information about the Ambassador Circle, contact Bill Higgins at BHiggins@operaamerica.org. While making your travel plans, consider adding a few days to explore the offerings at the other New York organizations that produce opera in the summer — Opera Saratoga, Seagle Music Colony, Chautauqua Opera, Delaware Valley Opera and Bard College’s Summerscape.



Victoria Cannizzo as Violetta and Guido LeBrón as Germont in Tri-Cities Opera’s 2011 production of Verdi’s *La traviata*. Photo by Randy Cummings.



Anne Tormela as Adele and Hayden DeWitt as Prince Orlofsky in Manhattan Lyric Opera’s 2008 Iowa Tour production of J. Strauss’s *Die Fledermaus*. Photo courtesy of Manhattan Lyric Opera.

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Celebrating Company Leaders

During the last weekend in February, members of the OPERA America board of directors, as well as opera leaders from across the country, traveled to New York City for a special weekend that included a celebration of the recipients of the **2011 National Opera Trustee Recognition Award**. This award, generously supported by Bank of America, honors trustees of U.S. opera companies for exemplary leadership, generosity and audience-building efforts on behalf of their respective opera companies.



2011 National Opera Trustee Recognition Awardees John I. Riddle, Jackie Lockwood, Eleanor Caulkins and Lynn Wyatt. Photo by Jon Simon.



OPERA America Vice Chairman Frayda B. Lindemann, National Opera Trustee Recognition Awardee Lynn Wyatt and OPERA America Chairman Anthony Freud. Photo by Jon Simon.

Members of OPERA America's **National Trustee Forum** also converged in New York in what has become an annual opportunity for learning and networking. **Fred Miller**, president of the Chatham Group, led a dynamic workshop on changing the culture of decision-making. **Robert Marx**, vice president of the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, addressed a group that included the OPERA America board of directors, members of the Ambassador Circle and the National Trustee Forum.

At the center of the weekend was a special dinner to recognize the four trustees. Held at a private club in New York City, the event also featured excerpts from *Dark Sisters*, a new opera by Nico Muhly, co-commissioned by **Gotham Chamber Opera**, **Opera Company of Philadelphia** and **Music-Theatre Group**.

The National Opera Trustee Recognition Program is chaired by OPERA America Vice Chairman **Frayda B. Lindemann** (New York, NY); committee members include: **Elizabeth Eveillard** (New York, NY), **Fred Good** (Cincinnati, OH), **Ruth Orth** (Pensacola, FL) and **Fillmore Wood** (Corona del Mar, CA). More about recipients of the 2011 National Opera Trustee Recognition Award follows.

Eleanor Caulkins, Opera Colorado

Eleanor “Ellie” Caulkins has spent more than half of her life as an advocate for opera performance and education, and for the past 28 years her greatest cause has been helping to establish and nurture Opera Colorado. Through Caulkins’s tireless efforts as a leader, advocate and contributor, Opera Colorado has grown in stature regionally and nationally. Caulkins’s interest in opera began after attending an adult opera education class, but soon blossomed into a lifelong passion. Her devotion to the art form inspired her to become a key figure in the founding of Opera Colorado in 1983 and to serve on numerous committees and as chairman of the board. Through her strong leadership and position in the company and community, she has been named a lifetime honorary chairman of the Opera Colorado board of directors. In addition to her tireless volunteerism, Caulkins’ stalwart commitment to the financial and artistic health of Opera Colorado has been key to the high level of artistic excellence and recognition achieved by the company today. For most Colorado citizens, Caulkins is best known for the Ellie Caulkins Opera House, a permanent home for Opera Colorado in Denver. The naming of the opera house was a gift from her husband and five children, and is a fitting tribute to a woman who has devoted so much of her time and resources to ensuring that opera is an integral part of the Denver artistic community. In addition, Caulkins has had a leadership role for many years with the Metropolitan Opera’s National Council and as a member of the company’s board of directors.

Jackie Lockwood, Dayton Opera

Jackie Lockwood has played a significant role in shaping Dayton Opera since the early 1970s. In addition to being a dedicated subscriber, she has served as a member of the Opera Guild of Dayton and its board, the company’s marketing director and a member of the opera’s board of trustees. In June, the board voted unanimously to confer upon Lockwood the title of Honorary Trustee. Today, Lockwood continues to be a vital, enthusiastic participant in all things related to opera, providing her keen insights on marketing and audience development. Lockwood has contributed significantly of her time throughout her leadership as a trustee, her guidance as a past staff member and her patronage as a sponsor of numerous opera productions. Beyond this, she and her husband have invested in the success of Dayton Opera through significant personal and foundation gifts. She has been able to use her example of generous giving, as well as her passion and love for opera and specifically Dayton Opera, as a means to leverage and encourage giving by others. She has also provided in-kind support through home hospitality for Dayton Opera artists, underwritten the production of archival recordings of Dayton Opera productions which otherwise would have been cut from the budget, and advanced Dayton Opera into the technological age by underwriting new electronic marketing efforts.

John I. Riddle, PORTopera (Portland, ME)

In 1994, John I. “Jack” Riddle founded PORTopera (formerly Portland Opera Repertory Theatre) to provide high-quality opera productions in Maine. A former president of Portland Symphony Orchestra, Riddle had the contacts necessary to identify the right people to involve when creating an opera company. He knew what, where and when the new opera company would perform, and he knew how to market the arts in New England. He is a strong advocate for high production values, yet maintains a sharp eye on budget and unexpected expenses. Riddle has been at the forefront of the company’s efforts in audience development. He supported a special ticket price for children a 2007 production of *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and for a 2010 production of *Hansel and Gretel* on the theory that these family-friendly operas would convert children into future opera aficionados. Riddle has also worked intensively on PORTopera’s Young Artists Program, which tours Maine and New Hampshire to bring opera to rural areas. Always a major financial supporter, Riddle was the first to contribute money when the company was founded. He has been the principal fundraiser over the last 10 years and he has worked on the corporate support campaigns, securing funding from foundations and wooing major contributors.

Lynn Wyatt, Houston Grand Opera

An international leader in raising support and awareness for worthy causes, and one of Houston’s most active philanthropists, Lynn Wyatt has made it her mission to bring Houston Grand Opera (HGO) to its maximum artistic potential, and to ensure that HGO will continue to innovate for future generations. A devoted wife, mother and grandmother, Wyatt has been the vice chairman of the HGO board since 1984 and is a longtime member of HGO’s marketing committee, where she has provided valuable guidance on ways to attract new audiences and expand the demographic of the company’s reach. She is a strong proponent of HGO’s community collaborations, such as *The Refuge* (2007), an original work highlighting the stories of seven immigrant communities in Houston; and the fall 2010 production, *To Cross the Face of the Moon / Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*, the world’s first mariachi opera. Wyatt’s prowess in the area of special events is legendary and has resulted in some of the most successful fundraising events in the city’s history. In 2005, she chaired the organization’s 50th anniversary Golden Jubilee Gala, which raised a record-breaking \$2.5 million dollars for HGO. Recently, Wyatt’s husband, Oscar, announced a \$1 million donation to create the Lynn Wyatt Great Artist Fund, an endowed fund dedicated to bringing the very best talent to HGO. 🍷

OPERA America’s commitment to recognizing excellence in governance is shared by its sister organization Opera.ca, the Canadian national association for opera. Opera.ca honors **Monica Sloan**, past-chair of the **Calgary Opera Association** board of directors as the 2011 recipient of its National Opera Directors Recognition Program. Sloan is the managing director of JKS Holdings, past managing director of Intervera Data and is also the vice-chair of Opera.ca.

THE OPERA FUND 2011

BY MEGAN YOUNG

“OPERA America is allowing me to do something I’ve never been able to do before: to work with the performers and the director before all the music is completed. I’ve wanted to do this for a long time, to work with the text and to experiment with timing and pacing before all that is fixed by the score, but I’ve never had the luxury.”

— Erling Wold, composer/librettist

OPERA America’s *Opera Fund* grants exist for just this purpose: to assist Professional Company Members and their partners in defraying the costs unique to developing new work. Composers and librettists benefit immensely from sessions dedicated to fine-tuning their work before the added pressures of fixed production elements and rehearsal schedules come into play.

The Opera Fund is a growing endowment that was launched with support from The National Endowment for the Arts in 2001. Previous recipients of *The Opera Fund* grants include such highly acclaimed works as *A Flowering Tree*, *Ainadamar*, *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Margaret Garner*. With the 2011 Repertoire Development grants, OPERA America has now awarded nearly \$11 million to support the creation, presentation and enjoyment of North American opera and music-theater since the mid-1980s.

“Supporting the creation of new North American work is a core tenet of OPERA America’s mission,” says Marc A. Scorca, OPERA America president & CEO. “By providing financial assistance to our member organizations and their partners, we are delighted to play a substantial role in supporting the growth of contemporary opera and music-theater in the United States.”

This season, seven grants were awarded in the Repertoire Development category, allowing creators and producers to assess and refine works-in-progress. The grants may be used to offset creative fees, archival/evaluative recording expenditures or other costs associated with development, such as lab productions, workshops, readings or revisions. The final selection process for 2011 grants was determined by a panel that included Susan Shiplett Ashbaker, artistic consultant/coach; Robin Guarino, stage director; Lowell Liebermann, composer; and Robert Orth, baritone. This year’s *Opera Fund* Repertoire Development grant recipients are:

Houston Grand Opera

Siddhartha

by Christopher Theofanidis and Patrick Summers

\$25,000

Houston Grand Opera will present the world premiere of a new opera, *Siddhartha*, adapted from Herman Hesse’s classic novel from 1922. According to Houston Grand Opera, the company has taken on this project “in order to translate one of the seminal works of modern spiritual philosophy into a theatrical event, to celebrate and fully use the unique qualities of live performance and to musicalize the novel’s most profound observations. Our goal with *Siddhartha* is to provoke spiritual conversations, not through confrontation, but through rumination on the piece’s tender beauty.”

Kentucky Opera

Enemies, a Love Story by Ben Moore and Nahma Sandrow
\$15,000

Enemies, a Love Story will be a full-length opera based on the novel by Isaac Bashevis Singer. According to the composer, “It tells the story of Herman Broder, a Polish Jew and survivor of Nazi persecution, living in New York in 1949. It is both a farcical, romantic comedy of a man juggling three women and a dark story chronicling the legacy of the Holocaust.” Recounts General Director David Roth: “In our first discussions with Ben Moore, it was absolutely apparent that he was connected to this emotionally complex story and its operatic potential.” Kentucky Opera’s *Opera Fund* grant will support a three-week residency with the composer

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and librettist to workshop the full opera with artists from the Studio Artist Program of Kentucky Opera, University of Louisville School of Music and Academy of Music at St. Francis in the Fields. Roth notes, "In our first workshop, we merely explored sketches of scenes and music. This grant will allow the creative team to workshop the completed score with singers and orchestra, hearing for the first time the compositional arc of the work as we see for the first time the overriding emotional arc."

Minnesota Opera
The Garden of the Finzi-Continis
by Ricky Ian Gordon and Michael Korie
\$12,562

Minnesota Opera has commissioned the world premiere of *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*, an opera based on Giorgio Bassani's 1962 novel of the same name. "In 1970, when the movie *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* came out, I was 14 years old, a boy living in Island Park, NY," says composer Ricky Ian Gordon. "Some instinct told me I needed to get myself on a train to East Rockaway where it was playing in the 'artsy' movie house, and see it. It changed my life, staying with me in such a deep way. When Minnesota Opera wanted me to do a second opera for them, it was almost the first thing I thought of... I am grateful to OPERA America for helping us to realize this dream." Minnesota Opera Artistic Director Dale Johnson adds: "Our recent workshop of *Finzi* was a great success even though we decided to postpone the premiere. The timeline for the creation of the work was very fast and we found out through the workshop that the piece was just not ready. The *Opera Fund* grant will help us to bake this work just a little more and make it ready for its premiere." *Opera Fund* resources will go toward a workshop of acts one and two of the piece. The world premiere is slated to be part of the Minnesota Opera's 2012-2013 season.

Minnesota Opera
***Silent Night* by Kevin Puts and Mark Campbell**
\$29,912

In November 2011, Minnesota Opera will premiere *Silent Night*, an opera based on *Joyeux Noël*, the award-winning film and screenplay by Christian Carion. *Silent Night* tells the true story of a cease-fire between the regiments of England, France and Germany on Christmas Eve, 1914. "I was struck by the power of this story immediately," recalls Johnson. "What for me was the most powerful idea was that in the midst of this horrible war there was humanity and brotherhood. Here were a group of young men who found common ground in the midst of war and were punished for it. I was devastated by it." This *Opera Fund* grant will support an orchestral workshop in spring 2011, the purpose of which is to hear a new draft of the score and libretto so the creative team can make adjustments prior to the opera's rehearsal and premiere. "I'm now on my seventh or eighth opera," says librettist Mark Campbell, "and have learned how

crucial the workshop process is to creating new work. The [first] workshops for *Silent Night* were a high point of my professional life... Yes, our basic work should be done before we see it in a workshop — but the workshop lets us improve it. It helps prevent a moment I hope I never see in rehearsal: when a director turns to a writer and says, 'What were you thinking?'"

Gotham Chamber Opera, Music-Theatre Group,
Opera Company of Philadelphia
***Dark Sisters* by Nico Muhly and Stephen Karam**
\$50,000

Dark Sisters is a two-act chamber opera inspired by the 2008 raid on a fundamentalist Mormon sect that resulted in the removal of hundreds of children from their compound on the basis of claims of abuse. Writes the *Washington Post's* Anne Midgette on the commission: "It's a coup for the Gotham Chamber Opera, which has been making waves in New York for years with quirky productions of little-known works that seem to attract a kind of excitement and buzz many other companies could only dream of... It's validation for the once-conservative [Opera Company of Philadelphia], which has over the last few years launched a series presenting offbeat works in a theater smaller than their home-base Academy of Music... And it's an example of the core mandate of the Music-Theatre Group, which is devoted to developing and presenting new work." All three partners of the consortium were initially drawn to the project by belief in the work of the composer, Nico Muhly, and the librettist, Stephen Karam. This Repertoire Development grant will support a workshop and reading in March 2011 and a workshop in September 2011. The production will premiere in New York in November 2011 and move to Philadelphia in June 2012.

Opera Theatre of Saint Louis
Untitled by Terence Blanchard and Michael Cristofer
\$25,000

Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, in partnership with Jazz St. Louis, has commissioned a new opera by renowned American jazz artist Terence Blanchard, whose compositions include the scores to most of Spike Lee's films. His recent GRAMMY Award-winning work, *A Tale of God's Will (A Requiem for Katrina)*, was the score for the documentary *When the Levees Broke*. Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Michael Cristofer will write the libretto. Artistic Director James Robinson notes: "Both the jazz and opera genres make deep, emotional connections to their audiences. The new opera will provide Opera Theatre with a powerful opportunity to reach across traditional notions of genre to attract jazz fans and diverse audiences to our theater." *The Opera Fund* will support a two-week workshop and development of musical materials. "It is a privilege to be working with Terence Blanchard and Michael Cristofer, two artists of astonishing talent, originality and expressive power," adds General Director Timothy O'Leary.



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Paul Dresher Ensemble
Chosen by Erling Wold
\$15,000

Based on a sacrificial murder that took place in San Francisco in 2005, *Chosen* explores the terrifying consequences of religious certainty and unquestioning belief. Wold writes: "I had read the story in the paper, but had forgotten about it until my wife and I were riding our bicycles a few days later and came across the profusion of flowers and stuffed animals left as a memorial for the woman's children at the base of Pier 7. I looked up and saw the lamplights receding into the distance and remembered how she had sent her children through that corridor to another world." Paul Dresher recounts: "I was drawn to the work first because I think Erling Wold is one of the few composers I know who has a natural inclination towards what is required to compose effectively for the operatic stage: a love and knowledge of singing, a musical style that is flexible and broad in its emotional range, a serious interest in complex human narratives and the ability to collaborate." *Chosen* will be performed by four singers, two dancers and a small instrumental ensemble. This grant will support two weeklong workshops for *Chosen*, and the world premiere performance is expected to take place in the spring or summer of 2012. 🌱

Guidelines for future OPERA America grant programs will be available in summer 2011. For more information, visit www.operamerica.org/grants.




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Beyond Talent: Creating a Successful Career in Music (2nd Edition)

Angela Myles Beeching
Oxford University Press
ISBN13: 9780195382594

The first edition of *Beyond Talent* became a favorite among classical and jazz musicians, and has been used in courses at scores of conservatories and universities. This expanded second edition provides updated advice, inspiring examples and practical tools to advance a career in music. Packed with new tips and resources, *Beyond Talent* now covers everything from social networking tools to commissioning, branding and online fundraising, as well as tips on staying motivated, assessing one's strengths and weaknesses, and managing time, money and stress. Filled with new sidebar profiles from entrepreneurial musicians, artist managers and concert presenters, the new edition balances warmth and candor with straightforward advice on developing and sustaining a meaningful life in music.

**Mattia Battistini:
King of Baritones and Baritone of Kings**
Jacques Chuilon
Scarecrow Press
ISBN13: 9780810861442

Mattia Battistini (1856-1928) is considered by some to be among the finest examples of the bel canto singing style. His vocal abilities and strong stage personality made him the most famous singer of his time, with a career spanning nearly 50 years in the most revered opera venues in Europe. Jacques Chuilon analyzes Battistini's principal roles, recordings

and vocal technique, accessing a rich collection of reviews from the time to show Battistini's relationship with and influence on the day's top composers, such as Wagner, Verdi and Massenet. Through this research, Chuilon offers a fresh portrayal of this unique and inspiring, yet often misrepresented, individual. This volume also contains a postscript by Battistini's granddaughter, as well as a 90-minute CD, re-mastered to reveal the full splendor of Battistini's voice as nearly as possible.

**20UNDER40:
Re-Inventing the Arts and Arts Education for the 21st Century**
Edward P. Clapp, Ed.
AuthorHouse
ISBN13: 9781452067391

This volume kicks off a new dialogue concerning the future of the arts and arts education. Featuring 20 essays written by arts leaders under the age of 40, *20UNDER40* sparks a unique conversation that highlights the most innovative visions for the evolution and survival of the arts in the 21st century. With online discussion forums attached to each chapter and a robust social media following, *20UNDER40* is more than simply a book, it's a cultural movement fueling ideas, conversation and progress.

**Franco Alfano:
Transcending Turandot**
Konrad Dryden
Scarecrow Press
ISBN13: 9780810869707

Italy's last verismo composer, Franco Alfano (1875-1954), was the composer chosen to complete Giacomo Puccini's

swansong, *Turandot*, in 1924. Alfano remains one of the most undervalued composers, despite arguably representing the best of Puccini's contemporaries. His ability and prowess, and his intimate friendship with Puccini, led to his selection for *Turandot's* completion: a daunting, enervating and ultimately thankless task. This biography finally sheds light on Alfano's view of the events, thereby revealing a largely unknown facet of one of the most important operatic works of the 20th century. Konrad Dryden, a friend of the composer's late daughter, Nina Alfano, sets out to unravel and organize the facts of Alfano's life, offering a chronological presentation of the composer's vita as well as an examination of his major operas and their literary origins, providing the most complete portrait of the composer to date.

Tin Pan Opera: Operatic Novelty Songs in the Ragtime Era
Larry Hamberlin
Oxford University Press
ISBN13: 9780195338928

Though the distance between opera and popular music seems immense today, a century ago opera was an integral part of American popular music culture and familiarity with opera was still a part of American "cultural literacy." During the Ragtime era, hundreds of humorous Tin Pan Alley songs centered on operatic subjects — either directly quoting operas or alluding to operatic characters and vocal stars of the time. These songs captured the moment when popular music in America transitioned away from its European operatic heritage, and when the distinction

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between low- and high-brow “popular” musical forms was free to develop, with all its attendant cultural snobbery and rebellion. Larry Hamberlin guides readers through this repertoire of operatic novelties and brings to life the rich humor and keen social criticism of the era. In the early 20th century, when new social forces were undermining the view that our European heritage was intrinsically superior to our native vernacular culture, opera functioned in popular discourse as a signifier for elite culture. Hamberlin shows that these operatic novelty songs availed this connection to a humorous and critical end. Combining traditional, European operatic melodies with the new and American rhythmic verve of ragtime, these songs painted vivid images of immigrant Americans, liberated women and upwardly striving African Americans, striking emblems of the profound transformations in the U.S.

**Situating Opera:
Period, Genre, Reception**
Herbert Lindenberger
Cambridge University Press
ISBN13: 9780521199896

Setting opera within a variety of contexts — social, aesthetic, historical — this volume illuminates a form that has persisted in recognizable shape for over four centuries. The study examines the social entanglements of opera, for example the relation of Mozart’s *Abduction from the Seraglio* and Verdi’s *Il trovatore* to its initial and later audiences. It shows how modernist opera rethought the nature of theatricality and often challenged its viewers by means of both musical and theatrical shock effects. Using recent experiments in neuroscience, the book demonstrates how different operatic forms developed at different periods to create new ways of exciting a public. The author considers selected

moments of operatic history to study how the form has communicated with its diverse audiences. Of interest to scholars and operagoers alike, this book advocates and exemplifies opera studies as an active, emerging area of interdisciplinary study.

**The People’s Artist:
Prokofiev’s Soviet Years**
Simon Morrison
Oxford University Press
ISBN13: 9780199753482

Sergey Prokofiev was one of the 20th century’s greatest composers — and one of its greatest mysteries. In *The People’s Artist*, Simon Morrison draws on research to illuminate the life of the composer, analyzing Prokofiev’s music in light of new archival discoveries. Morrison was the first scholar to gain access to the composer’s sealed files in the Russian State Archives, where he uncovered previously unknown scores, writings, correspondence and unopened journals and diaries. The story he found in these documents is one of lofty hopes and disillusionment, of personal and creative upheavals. Prokofiev seemed to thrive on uncertainty during his Paris years, stashing scores in suitcases, and ultimately stunning his fellow émigrés by returning to Stalin’s Russia. At first, Stalin’s regime treated him as a celebrity, but the bureaucratic machine ground him down with corrections and censorship (forcing rewrites of such major works as *Romeo and Juliet*), until it finally censured him in 1948, ending his career and breaking his health.

Plato on Music, Soul and Body
Francesco Pelosi
Cambridge University Press
ISBN13: 9780521760454

Plato’s reflection on the relationship between soul and body has attracted

scholars’ attention since antiquity. Less noted, but worthy of consideration, is Plato’s thought on music and its effects on human beings. This volume adopts an innovative approach toward analyzing the soul-body problem by uncovering and emphasizing the philosophical value of Plato’s treatment of the phenomenon of music. By investigating in detail how Plato conceives of the musical experience and its influence on intelligence, passions and perceptions, it illuminates the intersection of cognitive and emotional functions in Plato’s philosophy of mind.

**The Gershwins’ *Porgy and Bess*:
A 75th Anniversary Celebration**
Robin Thompson
Amadeus Press
ISBN13: 9781574671919

Collaborating with his brother Ira and DuBose Heyward, George Gershwin created what was deemed at the time a “folk opera” — a work that over the years has passed through cycles of praise and criticism, finally achieving recognition as a great American theatrical achievement and inclusion in the repertoire of opera companies around the world. In this 75th anniversary volume, created with the participation of the Gershwin estate, opera producer Robin Thompson recounts the history of *Porgy and Bess* as he looks at the various interpretations of the work and the many layers of meaning to be found in the story the residents of Catfish Row. Filled with unique, rarely seen archival photographs and documents associated with the production, this volume commemorates the uniquely American blending of musical, ethnic and creative styles and the people, the performers and the times that produced *Porgy and Bess*. 📖

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