OPERA AMERICA ANNOUNCES RECIPIENTS OF ITS 2019 NATIONAL OPERA TRUSTEE RECOGNITION AWARDS

Elizabeth Hernandez, Opera Cultura
Charlie Schaffler, Opera Memphis
Stacey Hunt Spier, El Paso Opera
Maryanne Tagney, Seattle Opera
Robert Tancer, Arizona Opera

Opera.ca Presents Its 2019 National Opera Directors Recognition Award to Dr. Lydia Wingate, Pacific Opera Victoria

Bank of America proudly sponsors the National Opera Trustee Recognition Program for the 12th consecutive year

February 6, 2019 (New York) — OPERA America, the national service organization for opera and the nation's leading champion for American opera, is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2019 National Opera Trustee Recognition Awards. Now in their 12th year, these awards honor outstanding trustees of U.S. opera companies for their exemplary leadership, generosity and audience-building efforts on behalf of their respective organizations.

The recipients of the 2019 National Opera Trustee Recognition Awards are Elizabeth Hernandez, Opera Cultura; Charlie Schaffler, Opera Memphis; Stacey Hunt Spier, El Paso Opera; Maryanne Tagney, Seattle Opera; and Robert Tancer, Arizona Opera.

OPERA America will pay tribute to the 2019 honorees and celebrate their remarkable achievements at a dinner and reception on Friday, February 22 in New York City. The evening will feature excerpts of operas by composer Hector Armienta, artistic director of Opera Cultura, as well as performances by singers from the Metropolitan Opera’s Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.

“We are delighted to be joined by Bank of America in celebrating the significant and enduring contributions of these devoted trustees,” stated Marc A. Scorca, president/CEO of OPERA America. “Successful opera companies depend on effective boards. The National Opera Trustee Recognition Awards afford the entire opera community an opportunity to salute and learn from those who have been so generous in their passion for the art form, vision and support of their opera companies.”
Each year, OPERA America’s Professional Company Members are invited to nominate one of their trustees for this award. Through a competitive adjudication process, honorees are chosen by a selection committee, chaired this year by OPERA America Board Member Carol Lazier (chair of the board, San Diego Opera). Other committee members were Holly Mayer (immediate past chair, The Dallas Opera), Susan F. Morris (chair, The Santa Fe Opera), John F. Nesholm (chair, Seattle Opera), Ruth Orth (officer, Pensacola Opera) and R. Jamison Williams (chair, Michigan Opera Theatre). Each member of the selection committee is a previous honoree of the National Opera Trustee Recognition Program.

“As the chair of San Diego Opera’s board, I know the dedication and effort required to effectively oversee an opera company in today’s exciting and challenging times,” stated Ms. Lazier. “Now, as a past National Opera Trustee Recognition Award recipient and current OPERA America trustee, it is my pleasure to honor the exceptional leadership and accomplishments of the 2019 honorees.”

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 Dr. Lydia Wingate of Pacific Opera Victoria as the 2019 recipient of its National Opera Directors Recognition Award.

Since its inception 12 years ago, OPERA America’s National Opera Trustee Recognition Program has been made possible by the generosity of Bank of America. “The Bank’s long-term sponsorship of this program illustrates its commitment to supporting effective leadership across the opera community, for which we are profoundly grateful,” stated Scorca.

Recognizing that devoted trustees are integral to opera companies both large and small, the selection committee chooses honorees from across OPERA America’s five budget groups. These groupings classify OPERA America’s Professional Company Members according to their annual operating budgets.

The honorees display a significant range of accomplishments, profound generosity and a deep devotion to promoting opera in their communities. The following profiles illustrate just a few examples of their dedication.

### 2019 National Opera Trustee Recognition Awardees

#### BUDGET 1 (ANNUAL BUDGET OVER $15M)

**Maryanne Tagney, Seattle Opera**

Originally from England, Maryanne Tagney has made the Pacific Northwest her home for over 40 years and has been an opera lover since she was a young girl. She and her husband, David Jones, moved to the far reaches of the United States in 1981 for Mr. Jones’ position at a start-up called Microsoft. Ms. Tagney has applied her passion for community and her business acumen to make a meaningful difference for every cause close to her heart. Her B.A. in psychology from the University of Manchester has come in handy along the way. While raising her family, she worked for a local newspaper as a reporter and photographer. Through her work and her interests, Ms. Tagney connected with many communities in the Puget Sound, which in turn ignited the next 20 years of her support of politics and nonprofits, focused on preserving Washington’s natural resources and growing the arts community.

Ms. Tagney served as the chair of Seattle Opera’s capital campaign to build the new Opera Center next to Seattle Opera’s performance home, Marion Oliver McCaw Hall. In addition to her leadership at Seattle Opera, she has served as the chair of Washington Conservation Voters, through which she partnered with elected officials and volunteer organizations to achieve conservation goals on the state and local levels. She and Mr.
Jones purchased a building in Seattle’s Belltown neighborhood to provide reduced-rate rental space for environmental nonprofits, including the League of Conservation Voters, Washington Education Voters, the Northwest Jewish Environment Project and the campaign office of Jay Inslee for Congress. Ms. Tagney served as the Chair of the Forterra board and remains deeply involved with Seattle Opera, Town Hall Seattle and many arts organizations throughout the city.

BUDGET 2 (ANNUAL BUDGET $3M–$14.9M)
Robert Tancer, Arizona Opera

Robert Tancer is a professor emeritus of international studies at Thunderbird School of Global Management in Glendale. Mr. Tancer taught courses on legal problems of international business and world trade.

He and his wife moved to Phoenix 50 years ago and became active in the community, serving on several boards, including those of Arizona Opera, the Desert Botanical Garden, Arizona State University’s Friends of Jewish Studies, Phoenix Chamber Music Society, the Harvard Club of Phoenix and the Phoenix Symphony Association. He received a B.A. and J.D. from the University of Michigan and an LL.M. from Harvard, and has worked for the Department of State, as well as practiced law in Washington, D.C., Buenos Aires and Phoenix.

BUDGET 3 (ANNUAL BUDGET $1M–$2.9M)
Charlie Schaffler, Opera Memphis

After graduating with a mechanical engineering degree from Notre Dame, Charlie Schaffler returned to his hometown of Memphis and worked for the Trane Company for several years. In 1971, he teamed up with Cliff Gorham to start an HVAC supply company, which he operated as president for the next 40 years. Now as a second-generation, family-owned company, Gorham/Schaffler Inc. operates throughout Memphis and the mid-south region in the sale, application and service of large-tonnage HVAC equipment and building automation systems.

Aside from his service on the board of Opera Memphis, Mr. Schaffler has served on the boards of the Assisi Foundation, FADICA and Concerts International. For his role as a 35-year supporter, central board member and officer of the Boys and Girls Club, he received the organization’s Ira Samelson Jr. Distinguished Service Award.

BUDGET 4 (ANNUAL BUDGET $250K—$1M)
Stacey Hunt Spier, El Paso Opera

Stacey Hunt Spier is a community advocate and volunteer, and she serves the Hunt Family Foundation as a representative to community funders. Mrs. Hunt Spier graduated from Southern Methodist University with a Bachelor of Science in biology and also earned a Master of Occupational Therapy from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis. She practiced as an occupational therapist for 10 years, working in both San Francisco and El Paso, and specializing in patient care for adults with brain injuries.

In addition to her duties at the Hunt Family Foundation, Mrs. Hunt Spier gives countless hours of her time to causes close to her heart. For over 15 years, she has played an active role in several civic, charitable and educational organizations, such as Amor Por Juarez, the Junior League of El Paso, the Lydia Patterson Institute and the St. Clements
School Parent Council. She has also served as a board member and gala chairman for Kids Excel. Mrs. Hunt Spier currently serves as the president of the board of directors for El Paso Opera and is a member of the board of directors of the El Paso Art Museum Foundation, the Paso Del Norte Charitable Foundation and El Paso Children's Development Center, where she served for two terms as chairman of the board.

**BUDGET 5 (ANNUAL BUDGET UNDER $250K)**

**Elizabeth Hernandez, Opera Cultura**

Elizabeth Hernandez is a native Northern Californian who, in addition to her role as director of finance and accounting role at The Primary School, serves as the board treasurer for Opera Cultura and another small literacy-focused nonprofit, JustREAD. She received her bachelor of science in accounting from Santa Clara University and her law degree from Santa Clara University School of Law. She worked at Avid Technology for 13 years as vice-president of finance. She then decided to make a career shift to the nonprofit sector, where she has held senior finance positions at the Hispanic Scholarship Fund, Hispanics in Philanthropy, Code for America Labs Inc. and The Primary School in East Palo Alto, all of which serve the needs of underserved communities.

**Previous National Opera Trustee Recognition Awardees**

**2018**

Carol F. Henry, Los Angeles Opera  
R. Jamison Williams, Michigan Opera Theatre  
Henry Fogel, Chicago Opera Theater  
John Serrage, Opera Maine

**2017**

Jerry Clack, Pittsburgh Festival Opera  
R. Marsh Gibson, Opera Memphis  
Carol Lazier, San Diego Opera  
Holly Mayer, The Dallas Opera

**2016**

Michele S. Fabrizi, Pittsburgh Opera  
Martha Rivers Ingram, Nashville Opera  
Jeanette Lerman-Neubauer, The Metropolitan Opera  
Jacqueline Badger Mars, Washington National Opera  
Cynthia du Pont Tobias, Opera Delaware

**2015**

Sue Bienkowski, Long Beach Opera  
Frank “Woody” Kuehn, Opera Southwest  
James H. McCoy, Hawaii Opera Theatre  
John Nesholm, Seattle Opera

**2014**

Michael and Noémi Neidorff, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis  
Ruth W. Orth, M.D., Pensacola Opera  
Kenneth G. Pigott, Lyric Opera of Chicago  
Robert L. Roschel, M.D., Opera Lancaster
2013
Lisa Erdberg, San Francisco Opera
Patricia A. Richards, Utah Symphony | Utah Opera
Cherie Shreck, Des Moines Metro Opera
Timothy J. Wagg, Opera North

2012
Elizabeth Eveillard, The Glimmerglass Festival
Joseph Barker and Judy Liff-Barker, Nashville Opera
Susan F. Morris, The Santa Fe Opera
William C. Morris, The Metropolitan Opera
Dr. George R. White, Opera Theater of Pittsburgh

2011
Eleanor “Ellie” Caulkins, Opera Colorado
Jackie Lockwood, Dayton Opera
John I. (Jack) Riddle, PORTopera
Lynn Wyatt, Houston Grand Opera

2010
Jeffrey A. Evershed, Portland Opera
Benjamin Keaton, Long Leaf Opera Company
Fred and Eve Simon, Opera Omaha
Marc I. Stern, Los Angeles Opera

2009
John T. Cody Jr., The Dallas Opera
Richard Holland, Opera Omaha
Beth Ingram, Lyric Opera of Kansas City
C. Guy Rudisill III, Piedmont Opera

2008
Betty W. Healey, Opera Birmingham
Sally S. Levy, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis
Jane A. Robinson, Florida Grand Opera
G. Whitney Smith, Fort Worth Opera

For more information about OPERA America, its many programs and the National Opera Center, visit operaamerica.org.

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

- Delivering professional development to artists, administrators and trustees.
- Increasing appreciation of opera through educational and audience development resources.
- Offering technical support and informational services that foster the creation and presentation of new works.
- Fostering equity, diversity and inclusion across all aspects of the opera industry.
- Undertaking national research and representing the field to policymakers and the media.
- Managing the National Opera Center, a custom-built facility that provides a centralized space for collaboration, rehearsal and performance.
Founded in 1970, OPERA America fulfills its mission through public programs, an annual conference, regional workshops, consultations, granting programs, publications and online resources. It is the only organization serving all constituents of opera: artists, administrators, trustees, educators and audience members. Membership includes 150 professional opera companies; 350 associate, business and education members; and 1,600 individuals. OPERA America extends its reach to 80,000 annual visitors to its National Opera Center and over 40,000 subscribers and followers on e-communications and social media. Representing over 90 percent of eligible professional companies, OPERA America is empowered to lead field-wide change.