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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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ON THE COVER:

Opéra de Montréal's 2011-2012 production of Verdi's *Il trovatore*. The production was directed by Oriol Tomas with set and costume designs by Michel Beaulac, and lighting by Anne-Catherine Simard-Deraspe. Photo by Yves Renaud.

CORRECTIONS:

Page 11 of the Fall 2012 issue neglected to mention that Diedre Murray and Cornelius Eady's *Running Man* was commissioned, developed and produced by Music-Theatre Group (MTG). The world premiere was presented by MTG in association with HERE in 1998. In addition, the listing for the *Opera America Songbook*, on page 17 of the same issue, inadvertently omitted Erling Henry Wold's *Home*, with *Illustrations*.

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO



American opera took several major steps forward this fall that reflect the impact of sustained strategic philanthropy and strong collaboration among generous foundations, government agencies and individual donors. This public/private partnership is a defining characteristic of our nonprofit landscape that has propelled American opera into the forefront of contemporary performing arts.

Nearly 30 years ago, leaders of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and OPERA America recognized that the almost complete absence of American operas from company repertoires threatened the future of opera in this country. How, after all, can contemporary, diverse American audiences relate to an art form that is devoted exclusively to European works from the last century? The alarm that arose over the situation led to the establishment of the New American Works grant category within the Opera-Music Theater program of the NEA, as well as to the establishment of OPERA America's granting programs, with support from the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations.

Last month, the NEA announced a round of grants to arts organizations, and the roster of opera company projects is absolutely thrilling. Of the 38 grants that were awarded in this round, 19 of them — exactly half — were to support productions of American operas. OPERA America, too, made a round of grants from *The Opera Fund*, our permanent endowment (established with the support of the Helen F. Whitaker Fund and Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, as well as a number of visionary individual donors) that supports the creation and production of new American works. Applications were received for 33 projects, although limited funding enabled the distinguished panel to award only 11 grants. The roster of companies supported by the NEA and OPERA America's *Opera Fund* includes several that specialize in the creation and production of new works, joined by many festivals and traditional opera companies that have made a commitment to building the American opera repertoire and an informed, appreciative audience for these works. The roster of composers and librettists represents an invigorating mix of established creative teams and artists who are writing their first works. As a result of sustained investment through our unique funding system, an American opera canon has emerged from a quarter-century of experimentation. European opera companies now remark at the frequency and variety of American operas that premiere every season.

The vitality of American opera was further demonstrated in this year's adjudication for the Robert L. B. Tobin *Director-Designer Showcase*. Twenty-five teams of emerging artists submitted production concepts for American operas selected from a list of our members' future season plans. Four of the most outstanding teams — and many more displayed tremendous talent — received grants to assist them in realizing their design concepts more fully and will be flown to the 2013 annual conference in Vancouver to make presentations to the artistic and production leaders of our member companies. (Most of the winners from the previous two rounds of this program have received significant engagements as a result of the exposure gained through the showcase.)

The opening of the National Opera Center on September 28 represented another breakthrough for the art form and the industry. For the first time, artists and administrators have a custom-designed facility that provides an array of essential services, all under one roof. The photographs from the opening celebration included in this issue of *Opera America Magazine* document a single weekend. Since then, the new facility has been abuzz with auditions, recitals, recording sessions, rehearsals and readings of new works. Many of these activities have been streamed live to a broad audience. The spirit of collegiality and cooperation that is characteristic of our field has been on display. Just last week, one general director hearing an exciting young singer in the Audition Recital Hall persuaded the artistic director of another opera company working in the Rehearsal Hall to make an opening in his audition schedule to hear this promising young talent!

The construction of the National Opera Center would not have been possible without the generosity of leadership donors who appreciate the dynamics of this complex field on a national level. Whether for the Opera Center itself, or for the creation and production of an American opera repertoire, philanthropy can make a profound impact on the art form and the industry. This fall, American opera demonstrated its potential to thrive as a result of the sustained investment of donors across the country.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Marc A. Scorca". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Marc A. Scorca
President/CEO

WHAT'S NEW



Sylvia Szadovszki, mezzo-soprano; Michael Onwood, pianist/coach; Aaron Durand, baritone; Dr. Kinza Tyrrell, principal young artist coach; Rachel Fenlon, soprano; Yolanda M. Faris; Leslie Dala, young artist program director and Martin Sadd, tenor. Photo courtesy of Vancouver Opera.

VANCOUVER OPERA LAUNCHES YOUNG ARTIST PROGRAM

In September 2012, **Vancouver Opera** launched the Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program, a 26-week course of study that provides specialized training with industry leaders through master classes, one-on-one coachings and performance opportunities.

Although the company has long provided opportunities for young singers through its schools touring program (which remains intact), the Young Artists Program represents a step forward in developing emerging Canadian talent. "Vancouver is geographically isolated in Canada, so sometimes it is difficult to get national attention for what we do," says Director of Artistic Planning Tom Wright. "This program is national in scale and offers opportunities for young Canadian singers to work with some of the best music staff in the business. I also felt this program would appeal to our music staff, as it gives them a chance to more fully demonstrate and continue to develop their skills as coaches and teachers. Finally, with young artists programs in all the major U.S. cities on the west coast, I felt it was time for Vancouver Opera to show our commitment to developing the next generation of artists."

Five young artists were selected for the inaugural year of the program; each will receive coaching in vocal and audition techniques, along with training in movement, acting and stage combat. In addition, they will benefit from career counseling, stress management, health and wellness support, and insight into industry business practices and public relations. A series of master classes will be held with visiting artists throughout the residency, allowing participants to work directly with established vocalists such as Judith Forst. This season, the singers will perform and understudy mainstage roles in the company's productions of *La bohème*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Magic Flute* and *Tea: A Mirror of Soul*.

"A TRAIL OF BREAD CRUMBS."

"When I moved to this city, I met a lot of people who seemed like they should love opera — they love music and theater, they go to museums," says **Opera Memphis** General Director Ned Canty. "What was it about opera, I wondered, that was keeping them away? We all have our assumptions and theories; I wanted to be able to point to real data."

To that end, Canty engaged research firm Decision Support Partners to help design and document its New Audience Initiative (NAI), launched with the help of a grant from the Assisi Foundation.

Participants were first solicited through local groups with diverse membership, including The Leadership Academy and Give 365; the company then worked with the media to spread the word about the program to lovers of sister art forms. Seventy-nine people signed up to be in the program, which provided each participant with two complementary tickets to every performance in the 2011-2012 season, as well as a variety of social and educational activities. Participant demographics were broad: ages ranged from under 25 to 74, with the majority being age 25-34, and professions included architect, barista, librarian, caregiver, banker, educator, tattoo artist and accountant, to mention a few. Participants were asked to complete surveys and other activities to gauge their views of opera over the course of the year.

The findings: "All the things we worry about are true," says Canty, noting that people initially associated opera with words like grand, boring, long, loud, expensive. He was surprised, however, to learn that some clichés had a positive effect. Participants experienced opera in two venues: the Orpheum, an ornate former vaudeville house, and a newer hall, with more comfortable seating, convenient parking, better acoustics and a clean, modern aesthetic. "When we asked people to assign a price, people consistently said they would pay more to go to the Orpheum. What was on stage was not necessarily grander, and the quality of the singing was steady. But the Orpheum had a stronger correlation to what they thought a night at the opera should be like."

"The question we're wrestling with now," continues Canty, "is how much do we try to change the preconceptions, and how much do we embrace them? We've been working to encourage the jeans and polo shirt crowd to attend, but we're hearing that people want to get dressed up." All NAI participants were offered a 50 percent discount on subscriptions for the 2012-2013 season, and will be offered 25 percent off for the season after that; the company will continue to engage them in a dialogue about their operating experience.

One clear message has already emerged: once people experienced opera for the first time, they were eager for more. As a result, Opera Memphis launched a new initiative this fall, "30 Days of Opera Presented by Evolve Bank & Trust," which created a series of small, positive encounters with opera throughout Memphis. "Making the decision to see your first opera can be a big step," says Canty. "Very few people wake up and say, 'I think I'll go to an opera today.' With 30 Days of Opera, I hope to create a trail of bread crumbs, a series of small, positive encounters, that might help people overcome their reservations."



Joel Herold, Maria Lindsey, Ben Makino, Caitlin McKechney, Jesse Koza and Logan Rucker were the team of six who presented over 50 performances in 40 locations throughout Memphis during 30 Days of Opera Presented by Evolve Bank and Trust. Photo by Ned Canty.

WHAT'S NEW

“THE ARTS ARE NOT ONLY A WAY TO COMMUNICATE A PART OF YOURSELF TO THE WORLD, BUT ALSO A REALISTIC WAY TO MAKE A LIVING.”

When **Boston Lyric Opera** (BLO) first approached Artists For Humanity (AFH), the company was scouting space for its Opera Annex series, through which it presents fully staged works in non-traditional venues. AFH's large, flexible EpiCenter proved to be an ideal setting for BLO's upcoming production of James MacMillan's *Clemency*. In addition, the two organizations discovered a mutual interest in creating opportunities for young theater artists.

AFH's programs seek to “bridge economic, racial and social divisions by providing underserved youth with the keys to self-sufficiency through the arts.” AFH partners youth in small groups with professional artists and designers to design, create, market and sell art products.

“As we learned about how involved the teen artists are in everything AFH produces,” says BLO Manager of Community Engagement Megan Cooper, “we realized there was a huge opportunity to engage them.” Working together, the two organizations devised a scenic design workshop led by Julia Noulín-Mérat, scenic designer for *Clemency*, and supported by M Quinn, an artist-in-residence from AFH's 3-D department.

In early August, teen artists spent a day learning general principles of scenic design and studying the libretto for *Clemency*. They also discussed practical considerations: the EpiCenter is a completely flexible space, and the scenic designer's charge includes determining seating configuration, placement for box office, coat check, etc. After two weeks in the studio, the young artists presented 1/8 scale models to Noulín-Mérat and Andrew Eggert, who will direct *Clemency*. The BLO artists asked questions and offered feedback before presenting their own model. Several young AFH photographers and video artists participated by documenting the project.

“We learned what it was like to be a set designer and go through a detailed process of constructing a scale model for Boston Lyric Opera — a very important client,” writes AFH Youth Artist Emely Cedano. “Being in this process gave me a realization that the art world has so many different paths to choose from. I told my family I wanted to change my life plan of being an architect to being a stage designer. This experience at Artists For Humanity was a big wake up call to show me that I can be what I strive and work hard for in life.”

“What really excites me is showing young people that the arts are not only a way to communicate a part of yourself to the world, but also a realistic way to make a living,” says Cooper. “Julia talked with them about the process of moving from concept to model, and she also discussed how to enter the career path, how creative professionals interact.”



Boston Lyric Opera's *Clemency* Set Designer Julia Noulín-Mérat (addressing students) and AFH 3D Design Studio Mentor M Quinn (bottom left) discuss elements of scenic design in a workshop with Youth Designers from Artists for Humanity. *Clemency* will be presented at the Artists for Humanity Epicenter in February 2013. Photo by Artists for Humanity Photography Studio.



Four Saints in Three Acts: An Opera Installation, an Ensemble Parallèle production presented by San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in association with Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. Photo by Steve DiBartolomeo, Westside Studio Images.

“A LITTLE BIT OUT OF THE ORDINARY.”

Ensemble Parallèle has formally changed its name to **Opera Parallèle** and expanded its offerings, which in 2012-2013 will include the Bay Area premiere of Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar* at San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center for the Arts; the San Francisco premiere of Garth Sunderland's re-orchestration of Leonard Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* in a double-bill with Samuel Barber's *A Hand of Bridge* at ZSpace; and a public workshop reading of the company's first commission, Dante De Silva's *Gesualdo, Prince of Madness*, at the San Francisco Conservatory.

“As Opera Parallèle, we are enlarging our presence in the world of contemporary opera,” said Artistic Director Nicole Paiement. “We realize that there is a pressing interest for both high quality performances of contemporary opera and for community activities that expand knowledge and appreciation of this art form. Changing our name to Opera Parallèle better reflects who we are now and gives us a broader platform in which to serve the passionate opera audiences here in the Bay Area.”

The name change coincides with other exciting developments for the company. “We had been an organization that geared up for one production at a time and then receded,” says trustee Robert Ripps. “This is the first time we’ve been able to announce an entire season.” That season includes not only two staged productions and a reading, but a program of significantly expanded community engagement activities, including Hands-on Opera, a pilot program designed to expose students to the world of opera, both as a performance art and as an entrée to global culture. Under the direction of Paiement and stage director Brian Staufenbiel, Opera Parallèle recently led a group of young performers to prepare and perform Ronald Perera's children's opera *The Araboolies of Liberty Street* as part of National Opera Week.

“As a board member, I always found that I spent the first 15 seconds of my 30-second elevator speech explaining our name,” says Ripps. “People think an ensemble is something you wear. With the change, I no longer have to explain that we’re an opera company. A name change can be scary, especially when you’ve worked hard to brand yourself, but for us, the word “parallèle” has been what has defined us. The idea of artistic disciplines — visual arts, dance, music — working in parallel with one another has always been important to our artistic team. And in French, the word suggests something a little bit out of the ordinary, as in ‘monde parallèle.’”

PEOPLE

Boston Baroque announces the appointment of **Miguel A. Rodriguez** as the company's new executive director. Rodriguez brings to Boston Baroque an extensive background in arts management, including positions at Opera Boston, Boston Landmarks Orchestra, Boston Musica Viva and Scullers Jazz club. From 2010 to early 2012, he was director of development for Mass Equality, the largest LGBT grassroots advocacy organization in Massachusetts; he is currently finance director for Mainers United for Marriage, the campaign to win the freedom to marry for same-sex couples in Maine. Prior to his career in arts management, Rodriguez had a career as a lyric tenor in both the U.S. and Europe.

Canadian Opera Company (COC) Music Director **Johannes Debus** has signed a new contract that extends his tenure through the 2016-2017 season. Last season, Debus curated a mini-festival of four concerts featuring members of the COC orchestra, in various combinations, as part of the COC's Free Concert Series. Debus made his debut with the COC in fall 2008 conducting *War and Peace*. Since then, he has conducted the COC's Diamond Anniversary Celebration in 2009 and the company's productions of *The Flying Dutchman*, *Aida*, *The Magic Flute*, *Rigoletto*, *Love from Afar* and *The Tales of Hoffmann*, as well as *The Nightingale* and *Other Short Fables* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

Florida Grand Opera (FGO) welcomed its fourth general director and CEO, **Susan T. Danis**, on October 9, 2012, just in time for the start of the 2012-2013 season. This is an important time in FGO's 72-year history and, as the company continues on its mission to produce grand opera in South Florida, the company welcomes a new leader to join this effort. A self-proclaimed "opera geek," Danis, a past board member of OPERA America, comes to FGO after dedicating nearly 14 years to Sarasota Opera. There, she championed artistic endeavors and capital campaigns, earning the respect of her staff and community alike. Having paid regular visits to Miami, Danis looks forward to transitioning to South Florida and continuing to work on her Spanish.

Jane M. Gullong joined the **OPERA America** staff as the new director of development in August 2012, succeeding Bill Higgins, who has retired. Gullong is a veteran fundraiser and arts manager with 15 years of experience as the development director and then executive director of New York City Opera. She has also held leadership positions with the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn Philharmonic, Arts International, the Municipal Arts Society, the New York Shakespeare Festival and Lincoln Center.

Kirsten Teasdale joined the development staff in August 2012 in the new position of grants manager. Teasdale previously served as a program associate at Jaffe Management, a nonprofit management company, where she directed the day-to-day operations of several small nonprofit organizations, including the New York Professional Advisors for Community Entrepreneurs (NYPACE), the New York Hedge Fund Roundtable, Choral

Chameleon and the National Association of Travel Healthcare Organizations (NATHO). **Leah D. Wilson** joined OPERA America as the director of learning and engagement in November 2012. Wilson previously worked at The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, where she was program associate for the performing arts program. She holds an M.B.A. and an M.A. in arts administration from the University of Cincinnati. Her graduate work focused on entrepreneurship and comparative cultural policy. She studied music composition and German at the University of Redlands, where she composed and produced a German opera. Her previous professional experience includes stage management, production and development at such companies as The Santa Fe Opera, Cincinnati Opera and Sarasota Opera.

Patrick Corrigan, executive director of Pacific Opera Victoria in B.C., is the new chair of **Opera.ca**, the national association for opera companies and professionals in Canada. The organization works with members to advance the interests of Canada's opera community and create greater opportunity for opera audiences and professionals. Corrigan was elected at Opera.ca's annual general meeting in Montreal on September 15, 2012, and looks forward to strengthening collaboration among Canada's professional opera companies to ensure the sector's vitality. Corrigan has been with Pacific Opera Victoria since 2000, serving as director of marketing and development and becoming executive director in 2010. He has an M.B.A. in executive management from Royal Roads University and he completed his music studies in voice at McGill University, the Victoria Conservatory of Music and The Banff Centre for the Arts. During his tenure at Pacific Opera Victoria, the company has more than doubled its annual operating resources and established healthy endowments, while achieving commensurate artistic growth, including the commission and world premiere production of *Mary's Wedding* in November 2011.

Annie Burridge has been appointed to the newly-created position of senior vice president, institutional advancement for **Opera Company of Philadelphia (OCP)**. The expanded role will oversee all income management departments. Burridge joined OCP in 2007 and has served as director of development since 2009. This year, she was one of 10 nationally-selected opera administrators chosen for OPERA America's Leadership Intensive Program, focused on fostering future industry leaders. She is also an alumna of the National Arts Strategies Future Leadership program, a frequent peer reviewer for the Philadelphia Cultural Fund and serves as a guest speaker for OPERA America and other cultural groups regularly. Additionally, baritone **Nathan Gunn** has been appointed as the director of OCP's newly-formed American Repertoire Council. Gunn will work with General Director David B. Devan to lead and populate a steering council focused on advancing the American Repertoire Program, a commitment to produce a new American work in each of 10 consecutive seasons.

Palm Beach Opera approaches the 2012-2013 season with a new organizational structure; the summer months saw a reorganization and reinvigoration of the board of directors and key staff additions. **Dennis Williams** succeeds Marc Solomon as board chairman after the successful completion of Solomon's two two-year terms. The board of directors is now guided by a new executive committee with increased philanthropic giving levels, and includes two new members of the Palm Beach community as vice chairs, **Sandy Fisher** and **John Raymond**. Additionally, over the past several months, the company hired key staff positions, including Managing Director **Greg Hirsch**, Director of Artistic Operations **Scott Guzielek** and Director of Development **Lisa Huertas**, as well as support positions in Company Manager **Katy Reeves** and Marketing & PR Associate **Amanda Kahan**.

Portland Opera has announced the appointment of **George Manahan** as its music director. A frequent and popular guest artist at Portland Opera, the Atlanta-born conductor spent 14 years as the music director for New York City Opera and currently holds that title for the American Composer's Orchestra. Manahan has conducted for many of the world's leading opera companies including New York City Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, National Opera of Paris, The Santa Fe Opera, Seattle Opera and San Francisco Opera, where he will conduct the world premiere of Tobias Picker's *Dolores Claiborne* in fall 2013. His other world premieres include Charles Wuorinen's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, David Lang's *modern painters* and Hans Werner Henze's *The English Cat*, as well as the New York premiere of Richard Danielpour's *Margaret Garner*. He is also a widely recorded conductor, with credits including a 2004 GRAMMY nomination for his recording of Edward Thomas's *Desire under the Elms*, as well as the premiere recordings of Steve Reich's *Tehillim* and Tobias Picker's *Emmeline*.

Richard Russell has been appointed as the new executive director of **Sarasota Opera**. Russell, who was Sarasota Opera's director of marketing from 2005-2010, returns to Sarasota having served the past three seasons as general director of Opera New Jersey in Princeton, NJ. Russell holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Indiana University in voice performance and choral conducting. After pursuing a successful performing career, he worked for several technology and financial companies, ultimately achieving the position of vice president and global webmaster for Citigroup's emerging markets sales and trading division. During his five seasons with Sarasota Opera, he oversaw the marketing and communications strategy for the capital campaign to fund the \$20 million renovation of the historic Sarasota Opera House. In addition, he oversaw approximately \$3 million in earned revenue, managed public relations and marketing, and participated in every aspect of the company, including artistic planning and donor cultivation.

Virginia Opera has established *The Joan B. Miller Fund* to honor the life and work of **Joan Barbara Miller**, who served as president of Virginia Opera from 2009 through 2011, and for many years on the company's statewide board of directors. Miller passed away on August 13. Among her many contributions to Virginia Opera,

Miller was a tireless proponent of bringing preeminent conductors from around the nation and the world to lead the company's productions. The Fund will be managed as a permanently restricted fund within the larger Virginia Opera Foundation and will underwrite the costs of engaging established conductors, as well as rising stars, to conduct Virginia Opera productions. Miller joined the Virginia Opera board of directors in 1995, and was unanimously appointed director emeritus by the board in July of this year in recognition of her decades of service to Virginia Opera.

Washington National Opera (WNO) has named **Francesca Zambello** as its artistic director, effective January 1, 2013. She has served as the company's artistic advisor since June 2011. As artistic director, Zambello will have responsibility for the company's artistic vision and direction, including repertoire and casting. She will work in close collaboration with Kennedy Center President Michael M. Kaiser, WNO Executive Director Michael L. Mael and WNO Music Director Philippe Auguin to further the company's long history of artistic excellence. She will also oversee the artistic growth of the company's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program and will guide the American Opera Initiative, WNO's new American opera commissioning program. Zambello has enjoyed a career as both an opera director and an arts administrator, and has an extensive history with WNO. As previously announced, she will bring her much-admired *Ring Cycle* back to Washington in spring 2016. She also serves as the artistic & general director of The Glimmerglass Festival in Cooperstown,

Julia Cooke assumed the role of executive director for **Baltimore Concert Opera** (BCO) on September 1, 2012. As a co-founder of BCO, Cooke has been intricately involved in BCO's operations since its founding. Cooke transitions to the role of executive director subsequent to the departure of former General Director Brendan Cooke, who has accepted a position as the general director of Opera Delaware. Cooke holds an M.M. in voice from Indiana University and a B.A. in music and psychology from the University of Rochester. In addition to her position at BCO, she is adjunct voice faculty at Towson University and Morgan State University.

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Chairman **Rocco Landesman** plans to step down at the end of the calendar year. Landesman, a Tony Award-winning Broadway producer and former president of Jujamcyn Theaters, had always intended to serve during only one presidential term. His 2009 appointment, during a time of governmental discord, was considered an unusual choice: Landesman represents both the arts advocacy and business halves of the equation regarding which projects are appropriate for federal funding. He coined the play on words "Art Works"—he considered the term the focus for the federal agency and it became a branded image. Rather than funding projects to further artistic achievement in a vacuum, the agency focused on linking projects that connected to the world we all love in through the economy, jobs and the quality of life in communities. Landesman's final statement concerning his retirement focused on the humorous: "The time has come for me to become a cliché: I turned 65, am going to retire and cannot wait to spend more time in Miami Beach."

IN MEMORIAM

Composer **ELLIOTT CARTER**, recognized as one of the most distinguished American voices in classical music, passed away at the age of 103 in New York on November 5, 2012. In a career that spanned over 75 years, Carter composed 158 works ranging from early masterpieces to *Dialogues II* (2012) which premiered on October 25 at La Scala, Milan. Born in New York City on December 11, 1908, Carter was first encouraged toward a career in classical music by his friend and mentor Charles Ives. He studied under composer Walter Piston while attending Harvard University, and later traveled to Paris, studying with Nadia Boulanger. Over the course of his prolific career, Carter received numerous prestigious honors, including the Pulitzer Prize on two occasions: for his String Quartet No. 2, 1960 and String Quartet No. 3, 1973. Other awards include Germany's Ernst Von Siemens Music Prize and the Prince Pierre Foundation Music Award. He was the first composer to receive the United States National Medal of Arts, and was one of a handful of composers elected to the American Classical Music Hall of Fame. He was recognized twice by the Government of France, as Commander of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and Commander of the Legion of Honor. Carter celebrated his 100th birthday on December 11, 2008, at New York's Carnegie Hall with a new work performed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, one of the many salutes from performing organizations around the globe. He is survived by son David, and his grandson Alexander.

Over the course of composer **HANS WERNER HENZE's** career, he devoted himself to composing operas, as well as to exploring many instrumental genres. Born in Gütersloh in 1926, his experiences as a child in Fascist Germany and as a prisoner of war left their mark, and made him determined to reflect the political ferment of these times in a new musical language. In the late 1940s, he came across serialism and began to attend the Darmstadt Summer Courses for New Music. Henze left Germany in 1953 and settled in Italy; the geographical distance from the German contemporary music scene helped him achieve new varied forms of expression in his own music. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, he turned to more traditional forms. From 1962 to 1967, he taught a master class in composition at the Salzburg Mozarteum while other teaching assignments led him to the U.S. and Cuba. In 1976, Henze founded the Cantiere Internazionale d'Arte in Montepulciano and in 1988 brought the Munich Biennial: International Festival of New Music Theatre, which he headed until 1996, into being. He served as composer-in-residence at the Berkshire Music Center in Tanglewood/USA in 1983 and 1988-1996, as well as of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in 1991. Henze, one of the most frequently performed contemporary composers of our time, passed away on October 27, 2012, in Dresden, Germany, on the eve of the premiere of a ballet set to one of his scores.



Welcome back, Sam.

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FROM EMERGING PICTURES

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2013 SEASON

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Lohengrin

La Scala **JAN 20 & 22**

La Bohème

Royal Opera House **JAN 27 & 29**

Don Carlo

La Scala **FEB 10 & 12**

Les Troyens

Royal Opera House **FEB 24 & 26**

Prince Igor

Bolshoi Opera **MAR 10 & 12**

**Cavalleria Rusticana
& Pagliacci**

La Scala **MAR 24 & 26**

Eugene Onegin

Royal Opera House **APR 14 & 16**

Il Trovatore

Gran Teatre del Liceu **APR 28 & 30**

Nabucco

Royal Opera House **MAY 12 & 14**

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Anna Caterina Antonacci
& Jonas Kaufmann
in *Carmen* from the
Royal Opera House



OA NEWS

SAVE THE DATE: OPERA CONFERENCE 2013

Opera Conference 2013: Opera Out of Bounds extends the reach and definition of opera and opera companies outside the walls of opera houses and beyond the traditional definitions of the art form. Join us in Vancouver — one of the most dynamic and diverse cities in North America — to explore strategies for connecting with new communities. Come share your ideas for richer audience engagement and discover advances in technology that will increase our impact. Help shape the innovation and experimentation that will advance opera across the United States and Canada.

Presented in collaboration with Opera.ca and Opera Volunteers International. May 7-11, 2013.



Vancouver at night. Photo courtesy of Tourism Vancouver.

MARKETING/PR AND EDUCATION FORUMS CONVENE

OPERA America hosted the Education Forum and new Marketing/PR Forum on October 15-16 at the National Opera Center. Over the two days, attendees participated in separate Marketing/PR Forum and Education Forum meetings, as well as joint sessions that addressed the topic of audience development. Thirty-one staff members from 24 different Professional Company Members attended the two-day Forums.



OPERA America's Marketing/PR and Education Forums. Photo by Katie Greene.

The Atlanta Opera
Boston Lyric Opera
Central City Opera
Chautauqua Opera
Florentine Opera
Fort Worth Opera
Houston Grand Opera
Indianapolis Opera
Kentucky Opera
Lyric Opera of Chicago
Metropolitan Opera Guild
Minnesota Opera
New York City Opera
Opera Carolina
Opéra de Montréal
Opera Memphis
Opera Theater of Pittsburgh
Opera Theatre of Saint Louis
Palm Beach Opera
San Diego Opera
San Francisco Opera
The Santa Fe Opera
Seattle Opera
Vancouver Opera

OPERA AMERICA TO LAUNCH GETTY AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

A major topic of discussion for the combined Marketing/PR and Education Forums was OPERA America's new audience development project, generously funded by the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation. As the first stage of the Getty Audience Development Project, Forum participants considered the challenges facing audience development and engagement. Among those identified were perceptions that opera is difficult to understand and that it appeals mainly to wealthy, older individuals. With many demands on people's free time, they are less likely to explore an art form that appears difficult. Another obstacle is the sporadic performance schedule of many companies; with only three or four productions each year, maintaining the audience's attention can be challenging. Finally, while opera companies are skilled at using diverse media to broadcast messages out to the public, they are not as adept at managing two-way conversations and really listening to what their communities are saying. True audience engagement requires conversations that are balanced and reciprocal. Working in mixed groups of marketing and education staff, Forum attendees brainstormed about activities that could be implemented on local or national levels. Suggested programs included open houses to show the action behind the scenes; an opera camp for adults, in which participants could create, rehearse and perform their own opera; and an ambassador program to encourage enthusiasts to bring their friends to the opera.

Grant guidelines are being prepared by OPERA America and will be distributed to Professional Company Members (PCM) in December. In mid-January, PCMs may apply for funds from the Getty Audience Development Project for activities beginning in spring 2013. Projects will fall into one of two categories: new projects (eligible for up to \$40,000 in funding) and existing projects (eligible for up to \$20,000). One application per company will be accepted. Projects in both categories will be documented so that they may be replicated in other cities. OPERA America will convene an outside granting panel to review applications and make recommendations for awards. Awards will be announced in early May and funded project concepts will be presented at *Opera Conference 2013* in Vancouver.

OA NEWS

TRUSTEE WEEKEND IN NEW YORK

Opera trustees and OPERA America Ambassadors from throughout the country will gather in New York City from February 21-23, 2013 to participate in OPERA America's Opera Trustee Weekend. Many activities will take place in the new National Opera Center, including a song recital and celebration dinner.

The National Opera Trustee Recognition Dinner, sponsored by Bank of America, will honor the commitment and guidance of exemplary trustee leaders from each of OPERA America's company membership levels. This year's awardees were selected by a committee chaired by Carol F. Henry, former board president of Los Angeles Opera and current chairman of that company's executive committee. Awardees will be profiled in the spring issue of *Opera America Magazine*.

The National Trustee Forum will convene trustees from member companies at the National Opera Center to discuss issues central to improving the effectiveness of boards and individual trustees. OPERA America President/CEO Marc A. Scorca will be joined by national experts in strategic planning and nonprofit best practices in a stimulating series of discussions and presentations.

The meetings of OPERA America's board of directors will be held at the National Opera Center for the first time.

Ambassador Circle members will be invited to participate in a full schedule of receptions and performances at the National Opera Center, backstage tours, museum visits and *Rigoletto* at the Metropolitan Opera.

AMBASSADORS IN BERLIN AND DRESDEN



Dresden's Zwinger Palace. Photo by DMG/Dittrich.

OPERA America Ambassador Circle Members will travel to Berlin and Dresden June 4-11, 2013, for opera performances, private tours of the city's historic past and vibrant present, and fine dining at some of the most acclaimed restaurants in Europe.

Travelers will enjoy an active itinerary including visits to the ancient Pergamon Altar, the Old Masters in the Gemäldegalerie and a day in Dresden. The trip will also feature exclusive talks with Barrie Kosky, who will discuss opera production practices in Germany; Jonathan Meese, the controversial visual artist slated to direct in Bayreuth in 2016; and Pamela Rosenberg at the American Academy in Berlin.

Highlights of the trip will be performances at the Staatsoper and Komischer Oper in Berlin and the Semperoper in Dresden. Travelers will see Verdi's *La traviata* with Christine Schäfer as Violetta; Barrie Kosky's startling interpretations of *The Magic Flute* and *The Marriage of Figaro*; Handel's *Orlando* conducted by Jonathan Darlington; and *Le Vin Herbé, a Profane Oratorio* by Swiss composer Frank Martin that retells the Tristan and Isolde myth.

The deadline for reservations at the Adlon Kempinski, Berlin's grandest and most historic hotel, is January 12, 2013. Space on the trip is limited to 20 participants. Ambassador Circle members have priority and are urged to register now. For further information, please contact Amanda Parker at 646-699-5266 or AParker@operaamerica.org.

Dialogue Among Civilizations



The Glimmerglass Festival company with the staff of the Royal Opera House Muscat. Photo by Abby Rodd.

"I am extremely interested in the arts as a means for cultural exchange," says Francesca Zambello, artistic & general director of **The Glimmerglass Festival**. Following a summer season that brought two international co-productions (*Lost in the Stars* with Cape Town Opera and *Armide* with Toronto's Opera Atelier) to Cooperstown, NY, the company sent its 2012 production of a quintessential American musical halfway around the world, to the brand-new Royal Opera House Muscat.

The commitment to cultural exchange is echoed by Jim Schaeffer, general director of New York-based **Center for Contemporary Opera** (CCO). "It is very important to us to bring American opera to European audiences," says Schaeffer. "Everything else from the U.S. is exported. You can't go two blocks in Europe without seeing a Starbucks or McDonalds. American pop music is the norm. American literature and art are easily found, but not American opera — and that is something we are trying to change." The company crossed borders with a production of Morton Feldman's *Neither* in Vienna in 2009, followed by 13 performances of Eric Salzman's *Accord/Discord* in Latvia in 2010. Just this fall, CCO's production of William Mayer's *A Death in the Family* was named Best

Production of the 2012 Arnel Opera Festival and Competition (Szeged, Hungary).

International co-productions can offer new insights not only for audiences, but also for artists. When Zambello traveled to South Africa in 2010 to begin discussing a co-production of *Lost in the Stars*, she had the opportunity to visit the Cape Town Opera School, where she was moved by the dichotomy between the skill and sophistication of the singers and the poverty that surrounded them. "Advancement in theater and opera is not just about talent," she says. "It is also about opportunity, and I wanted to provide an exceptional opportunity for these students."

To that end, with the support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Glimmerglass invited six singers from the Cape Town Opera School to participate in its Young Artists Program. In addition to being cast in *Lost in the Stars* and other mainstage shows and festival events, the singers were featured in a special showcase performance of music from South Africa. "Coming from South Africa to Glimmerglass, I never expected to be thrown into a melting pot of such stellar artists — including Dolora Zajick and Noah Stewart only to name a few — let alone to share the stage alongside



The company for Center for Contemporary Opera's production of Dellaira's *The Secret Agent* performed in Avignon. Photo by Richard Marshall.

the stupendous Eric Owens as his son," says Makudupanyane Senaoana, who played Absalom Kumalo in *Lost in the Stars*. "My Glimmerglass experience will always stay with me because it revealed to me many of the pitfalls of the opera business; at the same time, I got nurturing guidance from the wealth of worthy artists who were brought in for our growth."

The *Lost in the Stars* production originated in Cape Town, where director Tazewell Thompson worked with an entirely South African cast, as well as a South African designer. "Imagine directing *Lost in the Stars* in the place and setting that inspired it," says Thompson. "It was truly transporting to hear the glorious voices of South Africans singing Weill's eclectic score and to guide and witness their intimate knowingness of the book scenes. There was a special sensibility of working with Cape Town citizens and being immediately immersed in their culture. What an extraordinary opportunity, as an American black man, to direct *Lost in the Stars* in the country of my ancestors with these phenomenal performers. While I had much to share

with them in directing both book and song scenes, they had so much more to teach me." Thompson took those lessons with him when the production was remounted in Cooperstown with a cast that included artists from the United States, South Africa, Canada and Taiwan.

The operas presented at the Armel Festival and Competition each year also feature international casts; the five Festival productions are part of a competition in which singers are judged on their performance of an entire role. Thus, each company that brings a performance to Armel agrees to feature two singers chosen by the Festival.

When CCO was first contacted by the Festival, in 2010, Schaeffer was eager to participate, but the casting requirements presented a practical challenge. "We had already selected Michael Dellaira's *The Secret Agent* for a spring 2011 production, and there was no way we could produce another fully staged opera that next fall just to satisfy the terms of the Armel Festival. Plus, we had already chosen our two leads," says Schaeffer. The solution: CCO reprised *The Secret Agent* in

New York in August 2011, bringing in the two leads chosen through the Armel competition. That cast — along with set, props and costumes — then travelled to Szeged, Hungary for the Festival, where CCO received the Best Production award. This successful showing resulted in an invitation to bring *The Secret Agent* to the Opera Theatre d'Avignon in May 2011, as well as to bring another production to the 2012 Festival.

With more time to prepare, CCO was able to plan for a 2012 production that would originate in Hungary. Sets and costumes for William Mayer's *A Death in the Family* were built on location; the international cast, including singers chosen by the Festival, assembled in New York for three weeks of rehearsal, then traveled overseas for a week of technical rehearsals. The production will ship directly to Opera Theatre D'Avignon for a revival in June 2013.

Schaeffer notes that the American operas that played at the last two Armel Festivals were seen not only by enthusiastic audiences in the theaters, but also by thousands of opera lovers around the world who had the opportunity to view either a webcast (by Arte Live Web) or a television broadcast on the Duna and Mezzo networks. This year, *A Death in the Family* was voted Audience Favorite by the broadcast audiences.

While there is a long tradition of opera performance (even if not American opera) in Europe, that is not the case in the Middle East. Oman's Sultan Qaboos bin Said, as part of

an effort to expand the country's cultural offerings, opened a magnificent new opera house on October 12, 2011. "We have reached a moment in the long history of our nation when it is time to embrace the concept of world culture and take part in its development on a wider scale," said His Majesty in a royal address. "In all our international endeavors, we enact Oman's wider mission in playing a constructive role in dialogue among civilizations... we have no doubt that the Royal Opera House Muscat (ROHM) will contribute to the expansion of world heritage and its noble ideals of peace, harmony and understanding among all people, as they share meaningful and deeply felt cultural legacies through the performing arts."

While ROHM eventually hopes to produce some shows on its own, the country currently lacks an adequate supply of experienced professionals to do so. This season, ROHM will showcase the work of opera companies from around the world: Warsaw National Opera, The Castleton Festival, Opéra de Nice, Mariinsky Festival and The Glimmerglass Festival. Explains Zambello: "Michael Kaiser, who was the consultant for the Royal Opera House, let me know they were interested in presenting an American musical in Oman. Because of our policy of no amplification, full orchestra, etc., it seemed our production of *The Music Man* could fit the bill."

The Royal Opera House Muscat brought 107 members of the Glimmerglass company — cast, orchestra and crew — to Oman for four performances. Those making the trip included



Brandy Lynn Hawkins as Irina, Eric Owens as Stephen Kumalo and Makudupanyane Senaoana as Absalom in The Glimmerglass Festival's production of Weill's *Lost in the Stars*. Photo by Karli Cadel/The Glimmerglass Festival.



Center for Contemporary Opera's production of Mayer's *A Death in the Family* performed at the Armel Festival in Budapest Hungary. Photo by Zsolt Lafferton.

10 children from Cooperstown and their parents. "So many people never have the chance to travel, certainly not to the Middle East," says Zambello. "Seeing other parts of the world up close can foster curiosity and tolerance, and I'm especially thrilled we were able to give this experience to our children's chorus." The Glimmerglass crew worked closely with resident stagehands — a mix of seasoned expatriates and Omanis learning the trade.

While opera has been an international art form almost from the start, with repertory and artists moving easily across borders — first within Europe, then further afield — we are still witnessing the crossing of new frontiers in international collaboration. American works are gaining greater currency around the world, and not just through CCO's efforts: Jake Heggie's *Moby-Dick* was recently awarded Best Opera at Australia's 2012 Helpmann Awards. For emerging artists, performing experience abroad is no longer limited to the Juilliard grad with a Fest contract — from the South African joining an American young artist program to the kid from Cooperstown performing in Oman, artists and audiences are reaping the rewards of cultural exchange.

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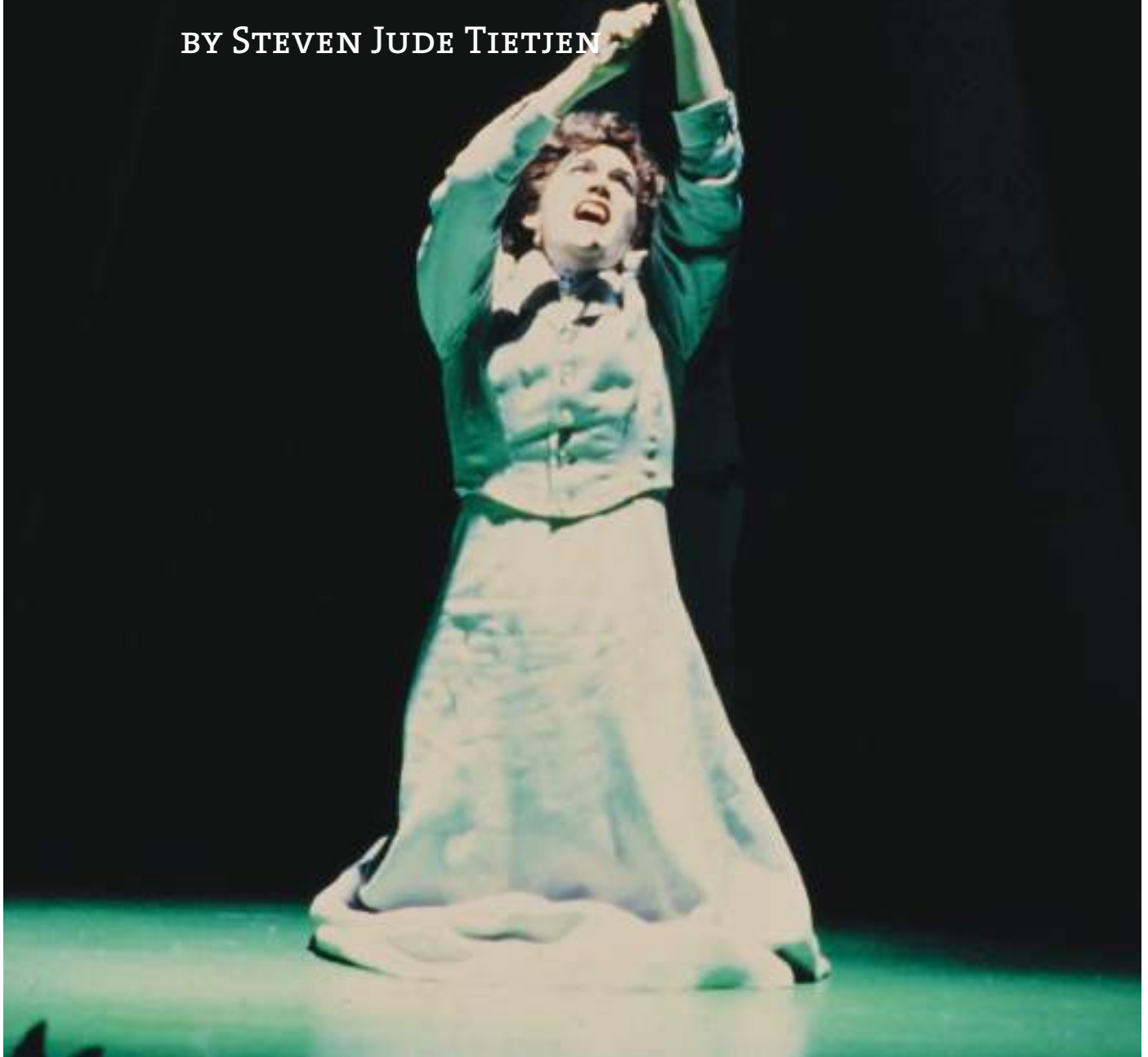
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FOR THE RECORD

BY STEVEN JUDE TIETJEN



Theodora Fried in the title role of Manhattan School of Music Opera Theater's production of the revised version of Rorem's *Miss Julie* in December 1994. Photo by Carol Rosegg.

"HOW DO YOU LEAD AN AUDIENCE ON A JOURNEY OF ACCEPTANCE?
WE COULDN'T START PROGRAMMING CONTEMPORARY WORKS EVERY YEAR.
MAKING A RECORDING WAS A GREAT STEP TOWARD INTRODUCING
DIFFERENT REPERTOIRE TO OUR LOCAL AUDIENCE."

GREG CARPENTER, OPERA COLORADO

As the commercial classical music recording industry struggles to adapt to the decline of classical music sales, explore digital media and combat the evils of music piracy, American opera companies have accepted the mission of recording rare and contemporary works. From Manhattan School of Music's world premiere recording of Ned Rorem's *Miss Julie* in 1994 to **Portland Opera's** much-anticipated recording of Philip Glass's chamber opera *Galileo Galilei*, opera companies are filling the holes in the classical music catalogue. Part audience development, part marketing strategy and part legacy, the journey to recording an opera is a serpentine one with budgets to balance, funds to raise and post-production work to complete.

The decision for an opera company to venture into recording is not one to be made casually. It's a significant financial investment that sees few, if any, direct monetary returns. So what motivates companies to make such a risky investment?

"We record everything we do. We feel it is our duty," says Perryn Lynch, managing director of **Houston Grand Opera** (HGO). Boasting an extensive discography that dates back to its 1976 landmark recording of Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, HGO counts Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* and *Three Decembers*,

as well as José "Pepe" Martinez's *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*, among its most recent recordings. "Capturing a recording takes some time to get used to, but once you do it, the process becomes easier."

At **Opera Lafayette** (Washington, D.C.), the decision to record is driven by a desire to preserve the company's legacy. Founded by conductor and executive director Ryan Brown, Opera Lafayette specializes in 18th-century French repertoire. Many of the operas the company has staged and subsequently recorded have not been performed in recent memory, let alone recorded, such as Grétry's *Le Magnifique*, the company's eighth recording, which was released in November. "We record out of an obligation we feel we have to the preservation of this repertoire and the work that the company does. Recording is not something we do on the side, but something that is integral to our work. Consequently, the money that is required to make a recording is included in our yearly budget." To date, Opera Lafayette, founded in 1995, has produced eight recordings, beginning with the 2005 recording of Gluck's 1774 version of *Orphée et Eurydice*.

The celebrated recording of Robert Aldridge's *Elmer Gantry*, by **Florentine Opera** (Milwaukee, WI), was motivated



Keith Jameson as Grandpa Joe, Jamie Barton as Grandma Joesephine, Jason Hardy as Grandpa George and Kristin Clayton as Grandma Georgina in The Atlanta Opera's 2011 production of Ash's *The Golden Ticket*. Photo by Jeff Roffman.



Vale Rideout as Frank Shallard and Keith Phares in the title role of Florentine Opera's 2010 production of Aldridge's *Elmer Gantry*. Photo by Richard Brodzeller.

by the desire to give both the work and the company a higher profile. "When I took over as general and artistic director," says William Florescu, "one of my priorities was the inclusion of contemporary works, something the company had theretofore not explored. Scheduling *Elmer Gantry* and then recording it was a great way to elevate the company to the national opera scene and to show our dedication to new works." The gamble paid off — Florentine Opera's recording of *Elmer Gantry* thrust the company into the limelight with three GRAMMY nominations, winning Best Classical Contemporary Composition and Best Engineered Classical Album.

The opportunity for **Opera Colorado** to record John Adams's 20th-century masterpiece *Nixon in China* presented itself at an

ideal time, when such a recording would allow the company to brand itself on the national level. In 2008, Opera Colorado was celebrating its 25th anniversary, the National Performing Arts Convention was being held in Denver and the company was presenting James Robinson's brand-new production of the work. "There was suddenly this sense of 'all eyes are on Denver and Opera Colorado.'" The buzz generated by this confluence of events brought the company "a whole new level of national credibility," says General Director Greg Carpenter.

Recordings of new works can serve as an important take-away for audience members unfamiliar with contemporary opera and music. A commercially available recording may help to condition an audience's ear to sounds and structures not



Phillip Cutlip as Orphée and Lisa Saffer as La Princesse in Portland Opera's production of Glass's *Orphée*. Photo by Cory Weaver.

found in the well-roasted chestnuts that form the backbone of most companies' repertory. "How do you lead an audience on a journey of acceptance?" queries Carpenter. "We couldn't start programming contemporary works every year. Making a recording was a great step toward introducing different repertoire to our local audience."

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

"Once you decide to record something, it's really a question of finances and resources," advises HGO's Lynch.

A significant portion of the funds raised for recordings comes from institutional and government grants. The National Endowment for the Arts, the Aaron Copland Fund for Music and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation are three institutional donors that take a particular interest in American works. Recordings by Florentine Opera, Opera Colorado and the 2012 recording of Peter Ash's *The Golden Ticket*, a collaborative endeavor between **The Atlanta Opera** and **American Lyric Theater** (ALT) were funded through the significant financial assistance of one or more of these three important supporters of new American works.

Funding can also be found through individual patrons, as with Portland Opera's recordings of Glass's *Orphée* and *Galileo Galilei*. "We were lucky to have a patron who covered the cost of *Orphée* outright," says General Director Christopher Mattaliano. "Having this high-profile recording instilled a sense of pride for the company and for our audiences, so when we were looking for the funds to produce the recording of *Galileo Galilei*, we had five generous patrons who were interested in helping to fund the project."

Another way to manage costs is to collaborate with another company and share the expenses. The world premiere recording of Peter Ash's *The Golden Ticket* was made possible through a partnership between ALT, which commissioned the opera, and The Atlanta Opera, which mounted the work earlier this year. "We felt we could raise the money to record the live performances independently, but we never could have done it if The Atlanta Opera weren't doing the production," says ALT Founder and Producing Artistic Director Lawrence Edelson. "The Atlanta Opera did not feel they could raise the funds for a recording, because their resources needed to be dedicated to the live performances. This is understandable, of course. The recording was only possible through both companies' desire to join forces." The artistic and financial collaboration between The Atlanta Opera and ALT enabled the production of the recording, allowing ALT to fulfill its mission to promote new works and attracting national recognition for The Atlanta Opera.

However, opera companies that specialize in non-American works, such as Opera Lafayette, are not necessarily at a disadvantage when it comes to funding. As the company has proven with its extensive catalogue of scarcely performed and under-recorded works, recording labels such as Naxos and Albany are interested in building the diversity and the

demographic reach of their catalogues. If a label takes an interest in a project, this can result in a key infusion of funds.

LIVE OR STUDIO?

The first step in the planning process is to decide whether to capture live performances or to produce a studio recording. There is more control over a studio recording, allowing the conductor, singers, instrumentalists and sound engineer to make as close to a perfect reading of the score as possible. This is the method preferred by Opera Lafayette, which has recorded each of eight recordings in a space they have rented for years, the intricacies of which are familiar to both Maestro Brown and the sound engineers they use.

The major disadvantage to a studio recording is the cost; space rental and additional time with the artists can add \$25,000 to \$50,000 to a recording budget. While price is a factor in the decision, the many companies that prefer to record live performance do not always do so out of financial prudence alone. A live recording captures the electrifying immediacy of a performance, a charge that can be thrilling and contagious. "Even if there is more control in the studio, you cannot duplicate the urgency, energy and excitement of a live performance," says Florescu. The result is a recording that is more than a document of an historical work — it is a record of an historical event.

ENGINEERING SUCCESS

"I cannot overstate how important the recording engineer is the success of a recording," says Florescu. It is a sentiment echoed by every general director, artistic director and conductor interviewed for this article.

"When a recording is finished, I want listeners to feel they have the best seat in the house, one that allows them to hear that natural blend of the orchestra and the singer," says sound engineer Michael Schweppe, who, in the course of recording more than 50 operas for NPR's World of Opera, has worked in a variety of venues across the country. Recently, Schweppe was the sound engineer for a recording of Ricky Ian Gordon's *Rappahanock County*.

The responsibility of the recording or sound engineer goes beyond merely capturing the performance. For a live recording, he or she oversees the placement of microphones in the orchestra, at the foot of the stage and backstage (if there is off-stage chorus or *banda*), being mindful of the movement of the singers, the configuration of the orchestra and the paths of moving sets. The company dress rehearsal is also the engineer's dress rehearsal, as he or she makes sure the microphones are optimally placed to capture an authentic sound. Typically, an engineer records two or three performances, which may be supplemented by a brief patch session to correct any mistakes.

After the performances and patch sessions are captured, the creative team, including the composer if he or she is living, listens to the recordings and carves out a rough draft, consisting of what is agreed upon as the best performance, fine-tuned

with insertions from other performances and the patch session. “Once you’ve got all your edits laid out,” says Schweppe, “then you go back and mix the original tracks, so that the orchestra and the singers sound natural and balanced.”

The post-production process can take anywhere from a few weeks to over a year, depending on the schedules of all those involved. Once the sound engineer has made the master copy, it is sent to all the stakeholders — general director, conductor, composer — for further edits and fine tuning until everyone is satisfied that the final product is an accurate representation of the work. The master copy is then sent to the recording label.

KEY PARTNERSHIPS

A key step when making a recording is finding a recording label to partner with, without which it would be nearly impossible to properly market and distribute the recording. Whether the project is pitched cold to a label or the label approaches the company, once a relationship is established, it can open the doors to future projects.

Naxos partnered with Florentine Opera on the recording of *Elmer Gantry* because the composer, Robert Aldridge, had a relationship with the label. Marin Alsop, who conducted Opera

Colorado’s recording of *Nixon in China*, already had a recording agreement with Naxos, paving the way for that recording.

When Opera Lafayette decided to create a commercial recording of Gluck’s 1774 *Orphée et Eurydice*, the company approached Naxos. Because of the opera’s rarity — and the fact that the label did not have the work in its catalog — Naxos accepted, and a relationship was built from which all the company’s recordings have benefited.

The extensive discography of the Manhattan School of Music began in a similar way with the world premiere recording of Ned Rorem’s *Miss Julie*. “We were doing [the opera] in 1994 and John Ostendorf, a producer and friend of Ned Rorem’s, came to the first performance. He loved what he heard, and for the next performance we set up a few microphones. We pitched the project to Albany, and they accepted it. Since no one had ever recorded *Miss Julie*, it was relatively easy to get the label interested,” says Gordon Ostrowski, assistant dean of opera studies and producer of the conservatory’s Opera Studio.

Portland Opera was approached by Orange Mountain Music, Philip Glass’s recording company, with a proposal to record the company’s 2009 production of *Orphée*. Because Orange Mountain was willing to foot all the post-production



Thomas Hammons as Henry Kissinger, Robert Orth as Richard Nixon, Chen-Ye Yuan as Chou En-lai, Marc Heller as Mao Tse-tung, Jennifer DeDominici as Third Secretary and Julie Simson as Second Secretary in Opera Colorado’s 2008 production of Adams’s *Nixon in China*. Photo by Matthew Staver.



Karim Sulayman and Elizabeth Calleo in Opera Lafayette's 2010 production of Philidor's *Sancho Pança*. Photo by Louis Forget.

costs for *Orphée* (and later for *Galileo Galilei*), Portland only had to pay the fees due to singers, instrumentalists and production staff outlined in the American Federation of Musicians' Integrated Media Agreement.

Often recording labels are willing to handle costs associated with distribution, marketing and artwork. At times, the recording label may also pay for the inclusion of liner notes and libretti to accompany the physical discs. In any case, the liner notes, libretti and even the artwork are yet another expense that must be taken into account when a company creates the budget for a recording project. Even if the recording label has agreed to cover certain costs, the compilation and editing of materials will likely demand commitment of significant staff time.

The journey from budget line to physical disc (or digital download) is unique for every company, and while there are likely to be bumps on the road for any organization's first foray into the world of recording, the process is always easier to navigate the second time around. The rewards of producing a recording are many, but perhaps the most valuable is the sense of pride and community that a company experiences when its hard work is preserved is captured for posterity, a sonic slice of operatic history.

Steven Jude Tietjen works in the opera department at Manhattan School of Music and is a freelance writer and dramaturg. Twitter: @Operaturgy.

Tea: A Mirror of Soul

Tan Dun's *Tea: A Mirror of Soul* promises to be one of the highlights of *Opera Conference 2013*. Based on historical fact, *Tea*, with a libretto by Xu Ying, sketches the tale of Seikyo, a prince-cum-monk. By suffering "bitter love," Seikyo transcended a cruel destiny to achieve an austere peace, the meaning of which he teaches through tea rituals. But that is only half the story. For Seikyo's bitter love also involves a princess, an erotic passion so tainted by jealousy that it ends in death, shamanistic rituals and fierce struggles over an ancient book of wisdom. Combining the lyricism of Italianate opera, lush Western orchestration, a male "Greek chorus," gamelan-like percussion and the organic sounds of nature — water, paper and stones — *Tea* brings an ancient tale to the 21st century.

"From a theatrical point of view, the show is just mesmerizing," says **Vancouver Opera** Director of Artistic Planning Tom Wright. "What struck me right off was the blending of seemingly simple elements and technology. There are not only three amplified water bowls that are part of the score, but large paper banners that are both part of the soundscape and part of the design. It is a visually stunning piece directed and conceived by Amon Miyamoto, one of Japan's leading artists. It was quite the coup to get him and his design team involved in this opera."



The Santa Fe Opera's 2007 production of Tan Dun's *Tea: A Mirror of Soul*. Photo by Paul Horpedahl.



Opera Company of Philadelphia's 2010 production of Tan Dun's *Tea: A Mirror of Soul*. Photos by Kelly & Massa Photography.



Opera Company of Philadelphia's 2010 production of Tan Dun's *Tea: A Mirror of Soul*. Photo by Kelly & Massa Photography.

The Opening of THE NATIONAL OPERA

On Friday, September 28, the National Opera Center was inaugurated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and performances of eight selections from the *OPERA America Songbook*. More than 350 opera stakeholders from New York City and across the country participated in the Opening Weekend festivities, which included tours, performances, celebratory events and a preview of daily activities in the Opera Center.



ERA CENTER AMERICA

A Photo Gallery





Saturday, September 29, 2012 was **A Day in the Life of the National Opera Center**, a full day of activities showcasing a number of the possible uses of the Opera Center in support of the opera industry and its artists.

Master teachers in many disciplines offered demonstrations throughout the day: Students from Mannes College The New School for Music performed their audition repertoire for **Sherrill Milnes**, **Maria Zouves** and **Ken Benson** and received expert feedback. Visitors were able to observe vocal coaching sessions with **Timothy Long**, voice lessons with **Ruth Golden**, and a dramatic style and acting master class with **Ed Berkeley**. **Lewis Shaw** led a demonstration of stage-safe falls, stabs, punches and chokes, along with sword handling. Yoga instructor **Megan Young** and Alexander Technique teacher **Lauren Schiff** worked with artists on healthy use of their bodies. Designer **John Conklin** explored the many faces of Carmen, while **Leon Major** discussed his directing career and *The Empty Voice*, his recently published guide to acting for singers.

Many of OPERA America's public resources were available for perusal: Reference and Research Librarian **Alexa B. Antopol** guided guests in exploring archives and materials documenting the history of the opera field. Set models, costume renderings and PowerPoint from past years' **Robert L. B. Tobin Director-Designer Showcase** were also on display.

In the Rehearsal Hall, **Gotham Chamber Opera** held an open rehearsal of *Oriente*, a pastiche of music at the intersection of East and West produced in collaboration with Company XIV and MAYA. To conclude the day's events, three songs from the *OPERA America Songbook*, by composers **Tarik O'Regan**, **Jorge Sosa** and **Mary Ellen Childs**, were premiered in the Audition Recital Hall.





John Conklin Artistic
Services Office







The Opera Center's HD video projection system, suitable for HD transmissions and live streaming of events taking place in remote locations, was utilized for a viewing of Francesca Zambello's Opera Australia production of *La traviata*, an activity made possible through OPERA America's new partnership with Emerging Pictures. Opera Center visitors were also able to view video of Act II of Royal Opera House, Covent Garden's 2009 production of *La bohème*.



OPERA CENTER LEADERSHIP GIFTS

\$2 million and above

Pamela J. Hoiles
The Andrew W. Mellon
Foundation

\$1 million to \$2 million

Horace H. Irvine, II
Anonymous

\$250,000 to \$1 million

Booth Ferris Foundation
City of New York
Baisley Powell Elebash Fund
Barbara and Ronald Leirvik
William C. and Susan F. Morris
Anonymous

\$100,000 to \$249,000

Bloomberg Philanthropies
Elizabeth and Jean-Marie Eveillard
Jane A. Gross
Cynthia Fry Gunn and John A. Gunn
Marc and Cathy Solomon
Jill and William Steinberg
Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation
Anonymous

\$25,000 to \$99,999

The Filstrup Foundation
· Alvin W. and Dale S. Filstrup
· Scott H. and Margaret M.
Filstrup
Allen R. and Judy Brick Freedman
Lloyd and Mary Ann Gerlach
Sherrill Milnes and Maria Zouves Milnes

James and Deborah Reda
James R. Seitz, Jr.
Anonymous

\$10,000 to \$24,999

Gus and Mary Blanchard
Luigi Caiola
The Robert and Mercedes Eichholz
Foundation
Anthony Freud and Colin Ure
Jane Hartley
Lyric Opera of Chicago
Charles MacKay
Minnesota Opera
Opera Theatre of Saint Louis
San Diego Opera Board of Directors
Marc A. Scorca
Marilyn Shapiro
Gregory C. Swinehart
Thomas E. Terry

Current as of December 5, 2012

OPERA CENTER NAMED SPACES

Baisley Powell Elebash Score and Recording Library
John Conklin Artistic Services Office
Elizabeth and Jean-Marie Eveillard Vocal Studio
Freedman Artists Canteen
The Filstrup Foundation Information Technology Center
Richard Gaddes Artists Lounge
Lloyd and Mary Ann Gerlach Service Desk
Lee Day Gillespie Administrative Suite
Colin Graham Green Room
Jane A. Gross Vocal Studio
Pamela J. Hoiles Reception Lobby

Plato and Dorothy Karayanis Foyer
Ardis Krainik Research and Reference Library
Barbara and Ronald Leirvik Board Room
Charles MacKay Learning Center
Sherrill Milnes Honors Gallery
James and Deborah Reda Foyer
Julius Rudel Archive
Beverly Sills Vocal Studio
Marc and Cathy Solomon Vocal Studio
Jill and William Steinberg Vocal Studio
Virginia B. Toulmin Vocal Studio

PHOTO CREDITS: Page 30 - National Opera Center Ribbon Cutting Ceremony/photos by Ken Howard: The official Ribbon Cutting of the National Opera Center | Andrea Herberstein, Thomas Hampson, Marilyn Horne, Sherrill Milnes and OPERA America President/CEO Marc A. Scorca | Barbara and Ronald Leirvik beside the board room bearing their names. **Page 31** - National Opera Center Ribbon Cutting Ceremony/photos by Ken Howard: Charles MacKay in the Charles MacKay Learning Center | The Sherrill Milnes Honors Gallery with Shawn Milnes, Elizabeth Frayer, Sherrill Milnes and Maria Zouves | Susan Morris and Richard Gaddes in the Richard Gaddes Artist Lounge | Audience members celebrate the official opening of the National Opera Center. **Page 32** - National Opera Center Celebration Dinner/photos by Ken Howard: Jill Steinberg with Frayda and George Lindemann | Marc A. Scorca and Rena De Sisto | Lowell Liebermann, Sara Jakubiak and Lori Laitman | Jane A. Robinson and Charles MacKay | Cathy Solomon and Marilyn Mims | John Musto, Amy Burton, Lowell Liebermann and Laura Lee Everett. **Page 33** - A Day in the Life of the National Opera Center/photos by Patricia Kiernan Johnson: John Conklin leading a discussion on *Carmen* in the Charles MacKay Learning Center | A yoga class led by Megan Young in the Rehearsal Hall. **Page 34** - A Day in the Life of the National Opera Center/photos by Patricia Kiernan Johnson: A scene from a master class with Ed Berkeley in the Audition Recital Hall | John Conklin beside the Artistic Services Office named after him | A stage combat class led by Lewis Shaw with Mitchell McCoy in the Rehearsal Hall | Behind the scenes with the film crew from SoundQue during a livestream | Sherrill Milnes, Maria Zouves and Ken Benson on a panel for Feedback Auditions. **Page 35** - A Day in the Life of the National Opera Center/photos by Patricia Kiernan Johnson: Mariane Lemieux, soprano, in a coaching session with Timothy Long in the Beverly Sills Vocal Studio | Lunch in the Richard Gaddes Artist Lounge. **Page 36** - Cocktail Party hosted by Jill and William Steinberg at the Time Warner Center, photos by Ken Howard: Warren and Melody Schubert | Susan Morris, William Morris, Marc A. Scorca, Deborah Reda and James Reda | Allen Freedman, Frayda Lindemann and Judy Brick Freedman **Bottom of page 36** - National Opera Center Press Conference/photo by Audrey Saccone: Top row, L to R: Composer Kevin Puts, Pianist Djordje Nesic, Librettist Mark Campbell and Baritone Jesse Blumberg; Bottom Row: Composer Ben Moore, Pianist Timothy Long, Soprano Jennifer Aylmer and Composer Mark Adamo: these artists performed selections from the *OPERA America Songbook* during the Press Conference.

PRODUCTION DESIGN GALLERY AT THE NATIONAL OPERA CENTER

One of the features in the National Opera Center is a Production Design Gallery, located in the Pamela J. Hoiles Lobby. As visitors enter the Opera Center, they can observe a sampling of work from the distinguished artists who design productions at opera companies around the country. As the Opera Center is heavily weighted toward the auditory dimension of opera, this gallery represents the very important visual/theatrical dimension of opera. The display, which includes models, dress forms, production photos and designs, will rotate three times each year to feature a different artist or theme. OPERA America is pleased to feature scenic designer Erhard Rom as its first Production Gallery Artist. His work will be on display through December, followed in January by a retrospective of the late costume designer Martin Pakledinaz.



Erhard Rom's set and costume designs as displayed in the Opera Center's Production Design Gallery. Photo by Patricia Kiernan Johnson.



Visitors at the National Opera Center enjoy the Production Design Gallery.
Photo by Patricia Kiernan Johnson.

ERHARD ROM is an American scenic designer who has designed settings for nearly 200 productions across North America in a wide variety of venues. Twenty-four of the works he has designed have been operas composed after 1950. Of these, 19 were written by American composers and nine were world premieres, including John Musto and Mark Campbell's *Volpone* and *The Inspector*, both for Wolf Trap Opera; Musto and Campbell's *Later the Same Evening* for Maryland Opera Studio; The Glimmerglass Festival production of *A Blizzard on Marblehead Neck* with music by Jeanine Tesori and libretto by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Tony Kushner; and the premiere of *Pontalba* by Thea Musgrave for New Orleans Opera. His designs for the world premiere of the opera *The Scarlet Letter* by Lori Laitman will be seen at Opera Colorado in April 2013. Rom's work has also been seen at San Francisco Opera, Vancouver Opera, Seattle Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Minnesota Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Opéra de Montréal, The Atlanta Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Opera Boston and Lyric Opera of Kansas City, among many others.

From a very early age Rom showed strong interests in both theatrical design and in music, which ultimately lead him to pursue first a degree in music at the University of Washington and then an M.F.A. in design at New York University. Following his graduation in 1992, he began working regularly for regional companies throughout the country. While the bulk of his work has been for opera, he has designed extensively for theater companies as well, and brings a theatrical sensibility to his operatic work that is combined with a deep understanding of the music. Several of his designs have been featured in the Prague Quadrennial International Scenographic and Architectural Exhibition. Originally from Seattle, WA, he now lives with his family just outside of New York City in Maplewood, NJ, and teaches design at Montclair State University in the department of theater and dance.



SPACE TO CREATE

Many members of the OPERA America family have chosen to honor leaders in the field by naming spaces within the Opera Center for them. This new series in the magazine, which will be archived on operaamerica.org, tells the stories behind the nameplates. In this issue of the magazine, we turn our attention to an important director and designer, both beloved not only for their artistry but also for their role in nurturing the next generation of artists.



Christine Brewer as Queen Elizabeth I with (left) Brandon Jovanovich as the Earl of Essex and (far right) James Westman as Mountjoy with members of the company in Opera Theatre of Saint Louis's 2005 production of Britten's *Gloriana*, directed by Colin Graham. Photo by Ken Howard.

THE COLIN GRAHAM GREEN ROOM

Colin Graham was born in England in 1931. Richard Gaddes brought him to Opera Theatre of Saint Louis (OTSL) as director of productions in 1978; he was named artistic director in 1985. 2007 would have been his 30th season with the company, for which he staged 48 new productions. He also directed acclaimed productions for major companies including the Metropolitan Opera, English National Opera, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, San Francisco Opera, The Santa Fe Opera and many more. A distinguished stage director and librettist, he was a close associate of Benjamin Britten and staged all but one of the composer's stage works. He was awarded an O.B.E. by Queen Elizabeth at Buckingham Palace in December 2001 for services to opera and music in Britain and the U.S. Over the course of his career, he staged 57 world premiere productions, which at that time was a record unsurpassed by any stage director.

"Colin brought countless new works to the stage, both here and in the U.K., and worked closely with many composers, Benjamin Britten above all. He was a major force at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis for 30 years, and staged 48 new productions there," said Charles MacKay, OTSL's general director from 1985 to 2004. "He became artistic director in 1985, when I took over the company from Richard Gaddes, and we worked together from then on. He gave the company so much: His vast experience in the theater, the quality of his mind, his reputation and his knowledge of the field were all priceless resources. His memorable work in Santa Fe included American premieres of *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *Die Liebe der Danae* and the three-act version of *Lulu*; he made his American debut directing Britten's *Owen Wingrave* for Santa Fe in 1973, and I remember it vividly. He was a tireless mentor and champion for young artists both front- and backstage; he believed passionately in teaching singers to sing persuasively in their own language and inhabit their characters onstage. The rosters of companies all over the world include artists who were inspired by him. He really was irreplaceable."

The Green Room, located just offstage of the Audition Recital Hall, is an important part of the backstage capacity of the intimate performance space. Not only does it serve as a support space for staged productions and workshops, it provides performers with a quiet space to prepare before facing the audience — or audition panel. The Green Room was named in honor of Colin Graham by an anonymous donor.



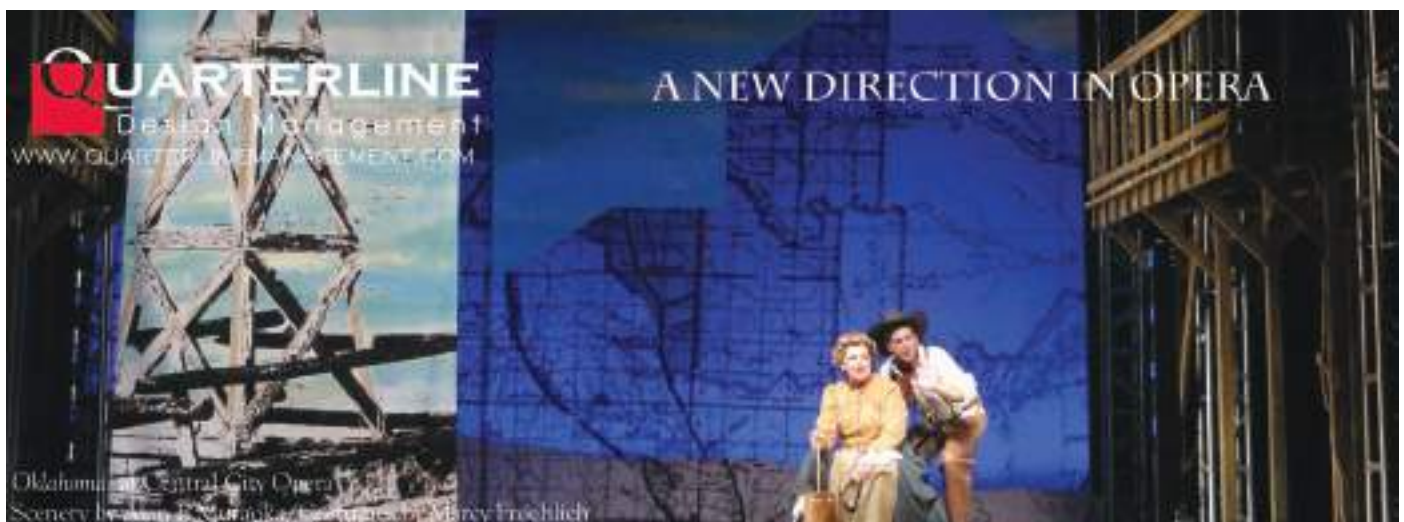
Glimmerglass Opera's 1991 production of Mozart's *Il re pastore*, designed by John Conklin. Photo by Martha Leigh.

THE JOHN CONKLIN ARTISTIC SERVICES OFFICE

As a designer and teacher, John Conklin has had enormous influence on how we see opera in the 20th and 21st centuries. His work has appeared on the stage of nearly every major opera house in the U.S., as well as many in Europe. As associate artistic director at Glimmerglass Opera, his influence extended far beyond the Cooperstown company, as he challenged the company's many interns and young staff members to be more rigorous, curious and flexible as they embarked on their own theater careers. Conklin is on the faculty of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University where he teaches courses in design for stage and film. He is currently the artistic advisor for Boston Lyric Opera, where he also works to develop new supplemental performances, lecture series and community events. In 2011, Conklin was a recipient of the National Endowment for the Art's Opera Honors, a lifetime achievement award.

"Most designers create scenery, but John creates space," says longtime colleague Robert Wierzel. "He is able to manipulate and control emotional space as opposed to merely physical space. He's not just a set designer; he's a conceptual thinker, a design dramaturg. He has an amazing scope — he reads so much, he's aware of so much that's going on in the world, and it all feeds back into his work. John starts at 10 and keeps going from there, and he demands the same kind of rigor from his colleagues, from his students. I remember one class he spent an hour discussing the first three chords of *Tosca*. John expects you to join him in thinking deeply about the music, the libretto, the historical context. He expects you to be serious."

A group of colleagues and friends joined together to honor John Conklin through this permanent naming opportunity in the Opera Center. A full listing can be found on operaamerica.org.



NATIONAL OPERA WEEK 2012

Friday, October 26 – Sunday, November 4

To celebrate the art form and engage new audiences, more than 100 opera organizations across the country produced fun, free activities for National Opera Week 2012. Participating organizations and events are listed at operaamerica.org/operaweek. Conversation about the program took place on Twitter with the hashtag #OperaWeek and on Facebook at facebook.com/nationaloperaweek.

This year, legendary artist Aretha Franklin served as Honorary Chairwoman for National Opera Week. Franklin recorded a personal statement expressing her own dedication to the art form, encouraging people to try opera and to bring their friends to an opera performance. The video may be viewed on the OPERA America YouTube page at YouTube.com/operaamerica; photos from the shoot are posted to OPERA America's Facebook page at facebook.com/operaamerica.





PHOTO CREDITS: **Page 42** - Fort Worth Opera's performance of *Opera Shots: Figaro's Last Hangover*. Photo courtesy of Fort Worth Opera. | Opera in the Schools Programming presented by Arizona Opera's Ensemble Teaching Artist Troupe, OperaTunity. Photo courtesy of Arizona Opera. | Opera for the Young's adaptation of Massenet's *Cinderella* for children. Photo courtesy of Opera for the Young. **Page 43** - V.O.I.C.Experience's *An American Songbook* Concert. Photo courtesy of V.O.I.C.Experience. | Virginia Opera's family performance of Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art. Photo by Marci Falvey. | Opera Parallèle's production of Perera's children's opera *The Araboolies of Liberty Street* at the Drew School. Photo by Elaine Bregman/Drew School. | Opera San José's production of the one-act family opera, *The Billy Goats Gruff*, performed in the public library. Photo by Heather Noelle Robinson. | Opera Omaha's *Opera After Dark*. Photo by Dillon Gitano Photography.



2013 Robert L.B. Tobin Director-Designer Showcase Finalists

OPERA America is proud to highlight the 2012-2013 finalists of the Robert L.B. Tobin *Director-Designer Showcase*, a bi-annual program offered as part of OPERA America's continuing effort to foster emerging opera artists. The showcase, made possible through support from the Tobin Theatre Arts Fund, has been established to bring promising talent to the attention of the field and connect promising directors and designers with those who are in a position to advance their careers.

Twenty-four director-designer teams submitted proposals for consideration in this third showcase round. Four finalist teams were selected by panelists David B. Devan, general director, Opera Company of Philadelphia; Jane Greenwood, designer; Sam Helfrich, stage director; and Kurt Howard, producing director, Fort Worth Opera. As opera is an intrinsically collaborative art form, the projects chosen were selected not only because they demonstrate the requisite creativity and skill, but because they display true collaboration, creative vibrancy and collective passion.

Each team will be given \$2,000 to be used toward further research and the production of more comprehensive renderings and models. Each team will also be mentored by one of the panelists as team members prepare their final presentation. Up to two representatives from each finalist team will receive travel, lodging and registration to attend *Opera Conference 2013* in Vancouver, B.C., to present their proposals to opera producers at a special session and to network with conference attendees.

Robert L.B. Tobin was heir to one of the largest family fortunes in Texas. Tobin admitted to being a frustrated theater designer with a need to be creative. All through his academic years and early adulthood, he collected rare theatrical volumes, etchings, engravings and drawings. At the time of his 50th birthday in 1984, The Tobin Wing of the McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, TX, was constructed specifically to provide a museum setting for the theater arts. As such, the wing houses Robert Tobin's extensive collection of over 20,000 original models, scenic and costume designs, as well as some 8,000 rare and illustrated books. **The Tobin Theatre Arts Fund** exists to stimulate public interest in the art of the theater designer through a far-reaching program of exhibitions, lectures, expansion of the collection at the McNay and to provide broad-based access to this collection. In its continuing effort to promote the art of the designer, the Fund also sponsors programs that offer students an opportunity to exhibit their work. In addition, it funds visiting artists' programs to area colleges and universities, and assists in the publication of monographs on individual designers.



Silent Night

Kevin Puts/Mark Campbell

(winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Music)

Director: **George Cederquist**

Set & Costume Designer: **Marianna Csaszar**

Lighting Designer: **Sarah Hughey**

With only one professional production of *Silent Night* having been performed to date, Marianna, Sarah and I approached our process as if we were designing the world premiere. It was not limiting to collaborate on such a new work; rather, it encouraged us to think in direct contrast to the recent production. We believe that an expressionistic aesthetic not only serves the emotional heart of *Silent Night*, but also that an abstract visual landscape supports Kevin Puts's chromatic and contemporary music.

Furthermore, in talking about war, Marianna, Sarah and I imagined the experience of being a soldier to be totally surreal. Yes, war means that actual people are killing each other: This is all too real. But at the same time, surely this experience — killing another person for a political cause in which you may or may not believe — is actually quite surreal, almost abstract. In the moment before battle, in the heat of the fight, in the burial of the dead, we tried to imagine something more than real: a nightmare that was hallucinatory and absurd.

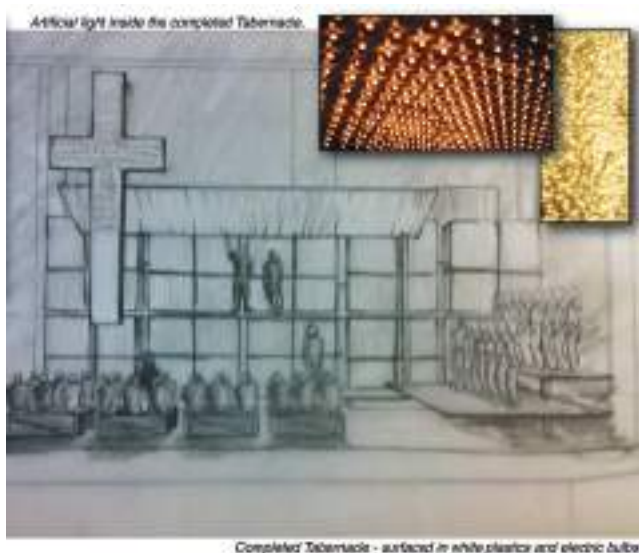
Almost as absurd as putting down your gun on Christmas Day to play soccer with the enemy, then share chocolate and schnapps at halftime.

Marianna, Sarah and I aim to capture the feeling of just how strange it must have been to stop fighting for a day. To this end, we believe that a slavish adherence to realism is a less effective way to tell the story of *Silent Night*. Big battle scenes with blank-firing guns and fake blood not only fail to communicate the emotional experience of war, but their mimicry almost does a disservice to anyone who has lost his or her life in battle. Our abstract set design features a solitary tower of distressed military uniforms piled in an open space to represent the dead. Direction and intensity in the lighting design is used to identify the trenches. This scenic gesture is contrasted with the period-accurate, color-coded uniforms worn by the living soldiers.

Eschewing a staged replication of war, this symbolic and expressionistic landscape represents the emotional center of military conflict: loss. Few of us have fought in a war; all of us have endured loss. In *Silent Night*, the feeling of loss is where the characters' emotional experience meets the audience's: in the loss of life, of innocence, of sanity (Jonathan), of faith (Palmer), of fatherhood (Audebert), of dreams (Nikolaus), of companionship (Anna).

And, on a global scale, the greatest loss of all is that of the chance for peace. The fragility of peace is as fragile as the human condition itself. *Silent Night* shows us that peace is always possible, but also that such opportunities are often missed. These soldiers experience peace briefly, but fail to sustain it. The Christmas Truce is not the end of the opera; it is only the halfway point. The war goes on.

Our failure to seize peace continues. For the audience, it is a small step from World War I to today. Afghanistan lurks in the trenches of the Somme. *Silent Night* challenges us to prevent further loss and achieve lasting peace in our many conflicts.



Elmer Gantry

Robert Aldridge/Herschel Garfein

Director: **Stephanie Havey**

Set Designer: **Patrick Rizzotti**

Costume Designer: **Megan Spatz**

Lighting Designer: **Brandon Mitchell**

"If sin is here, let's bring it to light." Jesus is calling and his voice sounds a lot like a salesman from Missouri. Elmer Gantry is filled with electricity. His smile and handshake offer the promise of success and life in the Promised Land. Crowds gather: Whether to hear of everlasting joy in the arms of God or stories of conquests and football games, they long to be near him and to somehow be changed. They long for revival. "He whispers to the straying soul at last, 'Come now to me.'"

Elmer Gantry lived in a world of small town communities built on trust, friendship and faith. Identity was found in the church, a social club, a university or the local football team. Though revered and praised in every circle of the community, Elmer finds himself desperately unsatisfied. His first encounter with Sharon Falconer brings him to his knees. His insecurities consume him, "You're not the only one with holy thoughts." Elmer's conversion stems from this insecurity and lack of identity. He is transformed into a ravenous minister who envisions Sharon's congregation at his feet, spellbound by a holiness that he is determined to produce. He is driven by a vision of "flaming tongues in the nighttime air, saying 'Never the same again, Elmer Gantry, never the same again.'"

Our production traces the blazing conversions of those close to Elmer as revival envelops them like a tornado lifting a community up to the heavens and then mercilessly dashing them to the earth. Creating a rustic world of natural elements and icons of

Americana, we examine people in history who could have been our great-grandparents or the founders of our hometowns. These farmers and working community members become enamored of a vibrant revival. As Elmer seduces Sharon, and the congregation, we recognize the seduction of the modern-day church and its conversion to commercial capitalism. The visual trajectory of our production leads to a heightened reality of puritanical, angular and monochromatic perfection sustained by bright white electricity. The tabernacle wall acts as a barricade of secular humanism that encases the artificial light and blocks out the natural world. The visual themes are carried out in the progression of costumes as well. The rustic look is transformed into a clean, rigid, more severe style that maintains the silhouette of the period, but introduces a new quality of textures, color palette and movement.

From the beginning, Elmer is drawn to the light and uses it to lure others in. The image of the exposed light bulb is used throughout the production to represent the power of conversion, revelation and transformation. In each conversion — Elmer, Lulu, Eddie, Frank, Sharon — there is a battle between artificial light and natural light. Each group that Elmer converts — the seminary, the Elks club, the church — are, too, drawn by the artificial. Visually, this conversion culminates in a temple with walls of light and a congregation in which members each hold an exposed light bulb as they worship. Finally, the cross of light bulbs explodes and crashes through their man-made perfection, exposing the beauty of the outside world as represented by the “sky drop,” or illuminated cyc, and beams of natural light that begin to pour through the openings in the tabernacle wall.

In the Epilogue, Elmer is seen standing downstage of the burning bodies with a briefcase and a wet rag. He slowly wipes his brow and combs his hair as he prepares for an interview with a leader of the New Age movement. As he rehearses his lines, he imagines success on his new path. Satisfied with the reinvention of himself, the lights slowly fade as he smiles widely and holds up a single light bulb.



The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny **Kurt Weill/Bertolt Brecht**

Director: **Walker Lewis**

Set Designer: **David Meyer**

Costume Designer: **Grace Trimble**

The story of *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* describes the doomed nature of capitalist society as Brecht saw it: birth, boom and self-destruction. The eternal cyclical nature of Mahagonny, and by extension capitalism, is shown through its rises and falls through time, as the title suggests. Mahagonny was created for one reason, and one reason only: to make money. To illustrate this idea, we made its central image the cold and industrial form of a factory. This is the beating heart of the town, the one thing that keeps it alive.

As the curtain rises, we see the factory as a jungle-covered ruin, a shadow of its former self. It once was a booming business, another Mahagonny, long ago; but like all businesses that seek only more wealth, it eventually died out. Begbick, Moses and Fatty renovate and resuscitate it, and we then follow its life through three stages: Act I: Birth, Act II: Boomtown and Act III: Self-destruction through unbridled greed.

The three stages are clarified and heightened by being portrayed in three different time periods of a remote and forgotten corner of Florida. Something about Brecht's odd conception of American geography and his larger-than-life images and characters is reminiscent of the surreal diversity of Florida. Florida seems to contain all the contradictions of the United States itself within its borders: unspoiled nature and sprawling cities; billionaires and abject poverty; serene retirement communities and raging hurricanes; white power groups and legions of illegal immigrants; mini-golf and Cape Canaveral. It's also a tropical paradise that in many ways has been raped and pillaged by mankind for material gain. But despite civilization's deep footprint on it, Florida retains its myth of paradise, a perfect beach escape where you could spend some hard-earned money on pleasure, or on your retirement. That's the kind of place Mahagonny would be today. Our concept for *Mahagonny* is peppered with references to Florida culture, to ground it in the audience's imagination.

The factory's bosses (the trio of Begbick, Fatty and Moses) seek to draw money and labor out of the many (the four lumberjacks, the chorus of men and the prostitutes) for the enrichment of the few (the trio and, by Act III, Jenny and Bill as well). The greed of the

bosses is sated by the vices of the people and vice versa. Neither side contributes anything of lasting value to the city or to each other.

As demands change, so does the factory's product. In Act I (set in 1964) it distills whiskey in an unspoiled, idyllic beach setting. In Act II (1984 Miami) food, sex and gambling products are added, with the factory's conveyer belts assisting with the decadence. In Act III (a present day/near future endless cityscape), the factory has become the center of the world's stock and bond trade, with digital stock tickers and screens that relay instant news flashes on the stage action (another layer of Brechtian alienation). The final two scenes see the stock market pushed to an inevitable crash, and chaos and Occupy-style demonstrations break out on a global scale. The trio escapes scot free, heading for fresh worlds to exploit. Planet Earth collapses in protest and destruction, falling victim to its own greed.



Susannah **Carlisle Floyd**

Director: **Mo Zhou**

Set Designer: **Tim Brown**

Costume Designer: **Lisa Loen**

Lighting Designer: **Yi Zhao**

Despite its popular production history, *Susannah* still strikes us as fresh and relevant as it was 58 years ago. Loosely adapted from the biblical story of Susannah and the Elders, Floyd tries to retell a more fatalistic moral about disturbing conflict between diametrically opposed forces — individual and society, love and ostracism, youth and age, innocence and experience. When we approach a production, we tend to analyze the work from the vantage point of its immediate audience reaction when it first came out and why this work stood through the testament of time. In so doing, we believe such parallel comparison offers us permission to adjust the piece to help the audience nowadays grasp the essential message of the piece. A close examination of the opera suggests that terrors of McCarthyism in the 50s bear some striking similarities to events taking place today.

In this context, our decision is to update *Susannah* to immediate present and place the setting in a modern religious community that is similar to the original. We look into modern conservative evangelical Christian organizations of the South, and it has occurred to us that many of those organizations reside in newly constructed church buildings. They are characterized by building or converting large “warehouse” type multipurpose halls used for social events, meetings, dances, revivals and church services. They have set up community centers that cater to their mission and conservative community values.

In this view, we want to set the entire opera in the concrete forest of a modern church hall. A large rectangular room would dominate the stage. This room will be portrayed as realistic in order to pair with the *verismo* style of music. With a collection of movable folding or stacking chairs, the stage is versatile, as it can convert to various configurations throughout the production. Close research of the church mentioned above indicates that those large warehouse churches structurally are made with exposed painted cinderblock walls. They also have very commercial looking doors and windows that are often placed high on the walls. The ceilings are usually drop panel ceilings with fluorescent lighting. In so doing, we use the sense of concrete jungle to replace the claustrophobic forest in East Tennessee in the original production.

We will also set an altar area, which is behind a curtain in a nook at the back of the room. The reason is to protect the area while the room is being used for other purposes. It also shows the theatricality that is inherent in the church's sermons and ceremonies. This curtain should also reveal a baptismal pool. During the church scene the chairs would be set up in rows facing the altar, a podium and small elevated stage would be set up, highlighting the meta-theatrical nature of the religious zeal.

In the final scene of the opera, because Reverend Blitch is shot dead in the creek, his blood will be splattered and saturate the stream, turning the clear water to bright red. When Little Bat and the chorus enter, they will be dressed in white baptismal garments, drenched in water and the blood of Reverend Blitch. This choice puts *Susannah* as the only person in a dry and stainless costume on stage. In so doing, we heighten the final contrast between individual and society, innocence and prejudice, both visually and psychologically.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED

By Alexa B. Antopol

BRITTEN'S GLORIANA: ESSAYS AND SOURCES

Paul Banks, Ed.

Boydell Press

ISBN13: 9781843837978

This volume is based on a selection of papers presented during a study course devoted to *Gloriana* held at the Britten-Pears School for Advanced Musical Studies in 1991. *Gloriana* has been a source of controversy since its premiere as part of the Coronation celebrations in 1953. It was planned as a national opera of broad appeal by its authors, Benjamin Britten and William Plomer, but, despite wide coverage in the media, the opera failed to establish itself in the repertoire until a new production in 1966. In recent years, it has attracted an increasing amount of scholarly attention. This volume offers essays by Robert Hewison, Philip Reed, Antonia Malloy, Donald Mitchell and Peter Evans, which explore the opera's cultural background, the early stages of its creative evolution, the first critical responses and various aspects of the work itself. These are supplemented by a list of source materials for the opera and the works derived from it, and an extensive bibliography.

WAGNER AND VENICE FICTIONALIZED: VARIATIONS ON A THEME

John W. Barker, Ed.

University of Rochester Press

ISBN13: 9781580464109

The vast literature about Richard Wagner and his works includes a surprising number of fictional works, including novels, plays, satires and an opera. Many of these deal with his last years and his death in Venice in 1883 — and even a fabricated eleventh-hour romance. These fictional treatments — many presented here in English for the first time — reveal a striking evolution in the way that Wagner's character and reputation have been

viewed over more than a century. They offer insights into changing contexts in Western intellectual and cultural history, and they explore how much Wagner's associations with Venice have become part of the accumulated mythology of "the floating city."

ELLIOTT CARTER'S WHAT NEXT?: COMMUNICATION, COOPERATION, AND SEPARATION

Guy Capuzzo

University of Rochester Press

ISBN13: 9781580464192

In 1997, American composer Elliott Carter teamed with British music critic/librettist Paul Griffiths to create the one-act opera *What Next?*. The opera explores how six people work together to emerge from the wreckage of an accident. Today, *What Next?* enjoys a prominent position in Carter's celebrated "late late" compositional period. Guy Capuzzo uses the metaphors of communication, cooperation and separation to trace the dramatic arc of *What Next?*. Through an approach that places stage action, words and music on equal footing, Capuzzo's readings of four excerpts from the opera reveal the inner workings of Carter and Griffiths's tragicomedy.

THE REAL TOSCANINI: MUSICIANS REVEAL THE MAESTRO

Cesare Civetta

Amadeus Press

ISBN13: 9781574672411

Lauded by Verdi, Debussy and other music legends, conductor Arturo Toscanini raised the standards of orchestral and operatic performance over an astonishing 69 years on the podium. But as he did so, he acquired a reputation as something of a tyrant who unleashed an explosive temper at musicians if rehearsals did not meet his expectations. In *The Real Toscanini*,

Cesare Civetta presents a collection of interviews with artists who performed with Toscanini. A portrait of the inner workings of the maestro emerges through these extensive conversations, conducted by the author over a period of 20 years, together with other firsthand recollections. These accounts clarify Toscanini's philosophy, musical style and techniques. They depict a man tormented by inner demons of anger and depression, which were easily triggered by his frustration at being unable to produce the musical ideal in his mind's ear. Toscanini is also revealed as a vehement anti-Fascist and an unequivocal opponent of totalitarianism and racism — he defied Mussolini and publicly opposed Hitler. The book includes a comprehensive account of his 1936 inauguration of what is now known as the Israel Philharmonic, in solidarity with Jewish refugee musicians. Toscanini comes through in this book as a tortured but deeply humane individual who strove to constantly improve — a sincere and humble musician who was nevertheless the preeminent maestro of the 20th century.

THE ARTS OF THE PRIMA DONNA IN THE LONG NINETEENTH CENTURY

Rachel Cowgill and Hilary Poriss, Ed.s

Oxford University Press

ISBN13: 9780195365887

Female characters assumed increasing prominence in the narratives of 19th- and early 20th-century opera. And for contemporary audiences, many of these characters — and the women who played them — still define opera, even if storylines leave them swooning and faded by the end of the drama. The presence and representation of women in opera has been addressed in a range of recent studies that offer valuable insights into the operatic stage as cultural space, focusing a critical lens at the text and the position

and signification of female characters. Moving that lens onto the historical, this volume sheds light on the singers who created and inhabited these roles, the flesh-and-blood women who embodied these fabled “doomed women” onstage before an audience. Contributors offer an impressive display of current approaches to the lives, careers and performances of female opera singers. Theoretical perspectives reflect several broad themes woven through the volume: cultures of celebrity surrounding the female singer; the emergence of the quasi-mythical figure of the diva; explorations of the arts associated with the prima donna, and with her representation in other media; and the diversity and complexity of contemporary responses to her. The prima donna influenced compositional practices, determined musical and dramatic interpretation, and affected management decisions about the running of the opera house, content of the season and employment of other artists — a clear demonstration that her position as “first woman” extended well beyond the stage itself.

**TRUE TALES FROM THE MAD, MAD, MAD
WORLD OF OPERA**

Lotfi Mansouri
Dundurn Press
ISBN13: 9781459705159

Everything about opera is larger than life, but the bigger the art form, the bigger the potential for disaster. When things go wrong at the opera house, they really go wrong. Over the course of a career that has spanned five decades, Lotfi Mansouri has directed nearly 500 productions at major opera houses around the globe. Mansouri has

gathered a collection of vignettes that recount unforgettable and revealing moments at the opera as personally experienced or witnessed by him. From unbelievable snafus to unfortunate mishaps to astounding coincidences, these vignettes feature some of the biggest names in opera, as well as prominent figures from politics and more. From the hilarious to the bizarre, this is a reader-friendly look at what is often thought of as an overly serious, even mysterious form of art.

**THE SORCERER OF BAYREUTH:
RICHARD WAGNER, HIS WORK AND HIS WORLD**

Barry Millington
Oxford University Press
ISBN13: 9780199933761

Richard Wagner is one of the most influential — and also one of the most controversial — composers in the history of music. Over the course of his career, he produced a stream of spellbinding works that challenged musical convention through their richness and tonal experimentation, ultimately paving the way for modernism. This book presents an in-depth but easy-to-read overview of Wagner’s life, work and times. It considers a wide range of themes, including the composer’s original sources of inspiration; his fetish for exotic silks; his relationship with his wife, Cosima, and with his mistress, Mathilde Wesendonck; the anti-semitism that is undeniably present in the operas; their proto-cinematic nature; and the turbulent legacy both of the Bayreuth Festival and of Wagnerism itself. Making use of the very latest scholarship — much of it undertaken by the author himself in connection with

his editorship of *The Wagner Journal* — Barry Millington reassesses received notions about Wagner and his work. The volume’s arrangement combines text, images and original documents. Bringing new insights to a fascinating subject, this book will intrigue anyone interested in music and in the wider cultural life of the 19th century and beyond.

**THE BIRTH OF AN OPERA: FIFTEEN
MASTERPIECES FROM POPPEA TO WOZZECK**

Michael Rose
W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.
ISBN13: 9780393060430

Through a compilation of primary sources — letters, memoirs and personal accounts from composers, performers and librettists — Michael Rose re-creates for his readers the circumstances that gave rise to 15 operatic masterpieces. From Monteverdi and Mozart to Puccini and Berg, each chapter makes one opera its focus and tells the story of how it was written. What emerges is a tightly woven narrative that takes the reader to the inception of these works. Rather than retreading familiar ground with historical analysis and musical commentary, Rose produces an engaging script in which the individuals most closely concerned with each opera are seen to comment, debate and compromise. In this way Rose offers his readers a direct link to events that are otherwise beyond their reach, and he captures the often bizarre interactions of chance, genius, practical necessity and dogged determination that heralded the creation of opera’s most enduring and compelling masterpieces.

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VIEWPOINTS: Leon Major

An occasional series of first-person pieces from leaders in the field

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO PRODUCE NEW OPERAS?

In order to grow and evolve, all art needs a steady infusion of new ideas. If we only reproduce the same works, we stagnate. If we stopped at Shakespeare or Beethoven, where would we be? People were shocked when Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* was first heard, but now it's become part of the symphonic repertoire. New works can give us fresh insights into the form and help keep the older works vibrant. I don't want to discard the masterpieces, but at the same time we need to hear the voices of our own time, of our own society. If art is about examining who we are and giving us insights into our world, then we must continue to explore new forms and new possibilities.

Shadowboxer (Frank Proto/John Chenault), an opera commissioned and produced by the Maryland Opera Studio, is a good example. It is set in a very specific time and place, and that is reflected by the production's use of projected images and an onstage jazz band. The story revolves around boxer Joe Louis, who became a champion for the whole country in an era when a black hero was all but unthinkable. The piece examines what happens to a hero when the glory fades and the bills come due. It's an opera based on boxing, but it's not about boxing — it's about a particular man whose job was boxing. By telling Joe Louis's specific story, using contemporary elements, we encompass the larger themes of race, the American dream, poverty, etc., all of which are still relevant topics today.

DURING YOUR 25 YEARS WITH MARYLAND OPERA STUDIO, YOU MADE A POINT OF PROGRAMMING CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN WORKS INCLUDING REVIVALS OF RECENT OPERAS, READINGS OF WORKS IN PROGRESS AND ORIGINAL COMMISSIONS. WHY THIS EMPHASIS ON NEW WORK?

I think universities that have opera schools or opera departments have a responsibility to work with composers and librettists to create new work. It's equal to research. Science departments try new things in their labs all the time, and many fail, but still they keep trying. And not every opera is going to succeed, but that does not mean they shouldn't be done.

WHAT ABOUT THE SINGERS WHO LEARN THESE NEW PIECES BUT MAY NEVER SING THEM AGAIN?

By learning new operas they become better artists. If our singers have the opportunity to meet a composer, they gain an understanding of how that composer made

choices, which in turn may give them insights into the standard rep. By learning new works, singers are allowed the opportunity to discover and realize a character for the very first time. This type of exploration will only add dimension to their character portrayals in the classics.

WHY DO YOU THINK OPERA COMPANIES SHY AWAY FROM DOING NEW WORKS?

Companies that commission world premieres get the money and the publicity, so there's a lot of attention for that first showing. Once the work has been produced, a company that wants to pick it up has a harder time generating excitement among funders — and ticket buyers. Without the cachet of the premiere, it's a bigger risk.

But it doesn't have to be that way. Of course some audience members will resist new work, but I believe audiences can also be very brave. We underestimate them. I've always felt that if you're planning on doing a new piece, you need to start sharing that with your audience at least two years in advance. Allow people to become familiar with the composer, the librettist, the story. Have music samples available on your website. Bring them along on the journey of getting the work to the stage, so by the time the show opens, they're invested in it.

IN CONCLUSION...

I've heard the argument that in order to be worth doing, a new piece has to be a masterpiece. That's just wrong. There were countless operas written in the 19th or early 20th century that were given one or two productions, then faded away because they weren't seen as masterpieces. Some of those works still deserve to be seen — if nothing else, they tell us something about the evolution of our favorite composers, or about the context from which the great masterpieces emerged. You don't stop creating just because of poor reception. Every piece can't be a masterpiece, and that doesn't matter. If it tells us something about ourselves and informs the art form, that's enough.

Stage director Leon Major recently retired as the artistic director of the Maryland Opera Studio for the University of Maryland, College Park. World premieres he has directed include: *Later the Same Evening*, *Volpone* and *The Inspector*, all by John Musto and Mark Campbell; *Louis Riel* (Harry Somers/Mavor Moore and Jacques Languirand); *Clara* (Robert Convery/Kathleen Cahill) and *Shadowboxer*. He is the author of *The Empty Voice: Acting Opera*.

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