



# **Campbell Opera Librettist Prize**

*Created and funded by  
Librettist/lyricist Mark Campbell*

**2021 Guidelines**

**OPERA America**  
National Opera Center  
330 Seventh Avenue  
New York, NY 10001  
[operaamerica.org](http://operaamerica.org)

## Purpose

Since 1984, OPERA America has been committed to increasing the quantity and quality of new American operas, granting \$20 million to support the work of opera creators and companies.

The Campbell Opera Librettist Prize is an annual award created and funded by librettist/lyricist Mark Campbell and offered as part of OPERA America's continuing effort to support individual opera creators. The program is intended to highlight an artist who has an exceptional talent for writing opera librettos, who exhibits the potential for making a substantial contribution to the American opera literature, and whose career would benefit from the recognition the Prize offers.

## Award

The prizewinner ~~Prizewinners~~ will receive:

- A one-time \$7,000 direct cash prize in support of their artistry and development as an opera librettist to be used by the awardee at their own discretion;
- Access to OPERA America's professional development programs for artists, including a two-part Opera Entrepreneurship Workshop; and
- Introductions to leading opera producers through *Opera America Magazine* and at future annual conferences and New Works Forum meetings. The annual Opera Conference is the pre-eminent yearly convening of opera company leaders, artists, trustees, volunteers, and other industry stakeholders. The New Works Forum is an annual gathering that brings together producers, publishers, composers, librettists, and artists to discuss the creation and production of new operatic works. The awardee will receive complimentary registration to participate in these events.

## Eligibility

- Applicants must have experience as a librettist in the field of opera and have written at least two complete opera librettos that have been set to music or are in the process of being set to music.
- Applicants must demonstrate a strong commitment to the art form in their career path.
- Applicants must have U.S. citizenship, permanent residence, or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status (proof of residency and citizenship will be requested).
- Applicant participation (past or current) in a librettist-training program is preferable, but not required.
- Applicants may only apply for consideration for three cycles of this program. Applicants who have applied unsuccessfully in two cycles must articulate substantive work progress made since their last application when they submit their intent to apply.
- Recipients of Campbell Opera Librettist Prize may not reapply for the Prize in a subsequent cycle.

## Timeline

The following timeline is in place for the 2020–2021 Campbell Opera Librettist Prize:

- Application available online: December 2020
- Intent to apply deadline: January 21, 2021 (required for full application)
- Application deadline: March 2, 2021
- Adjudication: April 2021
- Awardee notification: April 2021

## How to Apply

- Read these guidelines carefully before completing any application materials.
- All materials must be submitted online via the online grants system at [operaamerica.org/GrantsDashboard](https://operaamerica.org/GrantsDashboard).
- The submission of an intent to apply is required for all applicants and is due by **11:59 p.m. ET on January 21, 2021**. OPERA America will provide individualized support to applicants based on their intents to apply to guide them to the full application. Only applicants who submit an intent to apply may submit a full application.
- Submit a complete, final application by **11:59 p.m. ET on March 2, 2021**.
- Applications submitted without work samples as specified in the application will not be considered. Applications that are incomplete or late will not be accepted.
- Contact Kristal Pacific, director of social equity and grantmaking, at [KPacific@operaamerica.org](mailto:KPacific@operaamerica.org) or 646.699.5236 with any questions.

## Application Review Process

An independent panel will review all final applications for the Campbell Opera Librettist Prize. The panel will consist of experts with an understanding of diverse writing and creation styles, as well as new work producers from OPERA America Professional Company Members.

Individuals who stand to benefit financially from a grant are ineligible to serve on the panel, and no current employee of OPERA America is eligible to serve as a panelist. Decisions of the panel are final.

Panelists evaluate the applications based on the following criteria:

- **Artistic Ability:** The artistic quality of the work samples.
- **Creative Potential:** The potential to enrich the art form and the field.
- **Impetus for Opera:** Applicants' motivations for expressing themselves through opera.
- **Collaborative Expression:** The articulation of successful collaborative work in the applicant's artistic practice.

## Narrative Statements

In addition to a current biography, applicants are required to submit written narrative statements describing their:

- Desire to choose opera as a form for their storytelling;
- Experience in theater and/or music that has prepared them for libretto writing;
- Success working collaboratively with composers and other creators; and
- Vision of how they will use their writing skills to shape the future direction of opera.

## Work Samples

Applicants are required to submit no more than three work samples that best represent their unique voices and creative styles. Samples that demonstrate the creator's aptitude for theatrical storytelling through music are recommended.

- The most competitive applications will include recent examples of works that demonstrate the librettist's ability to write theatrical work for trained voices and instrumental ensemble.
- Two of the samples must be from opera librettos and one must have been set to music or be in the process of being set (though not necessarily premiered in a full production). Shorter and one-act librettos are permitted. Only complete dramatic works for the stage will be considered. Screenplays, poems, text for arias, fragments from librettos, and academic articles are not accepted.
- Written samples are required; any audio or video recordings of the submitted samples are encouraged (whether set to music or readings), but not required.
- All samples must be in English or be accompanied by a complete English translation for consideration by the panel.

## Award Announcement

- All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their requests after the panel adjudication.
- The award letter will contain dates for the additional OPERA America activities included in the award.
- The recipient of Campbell Opera Librettist Prize will serve as the fiscal agent for the award. This is a singular award in the designated year that does not constitute continued financial support for the named awardee.
- The Campbell Opera Librettist Prize is intended for the named awardee only and is not transferable to any other artist or organization.

## Reporting Requirements

The awardee will receive an award letter explaining the prize terms and conditions, including financial documentation and narrative reporting requirements. A final report on how the prize

has benefitted the artist in the development of their career as a librettist will be required for learning purposes for both the awardee and OPERA America.

The awardee is required to acknowledge OPERA America and Mark Campbell/the Campbell Opera Librettist Prize in the manner described by OPERA America in the award letter. If the recipient of the prize has a website, it should feature OPERA America's logo, including a hyperlink to OPERA America's website.

The recipient of the Campbell Opera Librettist Prize may be asked to submit additional documentation or cooperate with OPERA America in sharing the results of their award with the field.

## **Staff Contact**

For more information, contact Kristal Pacific, director of social equity and grantmaking, at [KPacific@operaamerica.org](mailto:KPacific@operaamerica.org) or 646.699.5236.