

Expanding the future of Opera
through development, mentoring and advancement of volunteer service

Opera Volunteers INTERNATIONAL

www.OperaVolunteers.org



The Opera Volunteer Voice

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International

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July 1

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Visit our
on-line auction
May 1-31
ovi.afrogs.org

The Idea Issue

Looking for that next great idea? Look no further

In anticipation of the OPERA America conference we are announcing nine *matching grants* awardees and six *Projects of Special Merit*. We hope that one of these ideas might inspire you to come up with your own next project to raise money, build membership or reach out to your community in the service of opera.



For even more ideas Meet us in St. Louis

ST. LOUIS | JUNE 20-23



OPERA CONFERENCE 2018

LIFTING MANY VOICES

OPERA America invites you to join hundreds of opera industry leaders in St. Louis this June for **Opera Conference 2018**. Our hosts at **Opera Theatre of Saint Louis** are eager to welcome you to their city and share their perspectives on fostering new works, building community connections and committing to equity, diversity and inclusion. Keynote Speaker **John Adams** will launch the conference by sharing the inspirations that have influenced his work. The *New Works Forum* will feature new American repertoire.

Round out your conference experience by attending an Opera Theatre of Saint Louis performance. Performances include the *Center Stage Concert* with rising opera stars; Verdi's *La Traviata* featuring the directing debut of **Patricia Racette**; **Marc Blitzstein**'s rarely performed *Regina*; Gluck's sublime *Orfeo and Euridice*; and **Huang Ruo** and **David Henry Hwang**'s world-premiere opera, *An American Soldier*.

OVI members can take advantage of an **OVI two day option** available until June 14. Whichever registration option you choose, there are other events that need to be purchased separately: opera tickets, OVI board lunch, and the Awards Brunch. The conference hotel is **The Hyatt Regency St. Louis at the Arch**, which is offering special rates for attendees.



May 1 - 31 OVI Auction

ovi.afrogs.org

Happy Spring to Everyone!**Susan Malott**

I look forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming **Opera Conference in St. Louis on June 21-23**. This year's theme, *Lifting Many Voices*, resonates with me because the volunteer's voice contributes so much to making our opera communities more vibrant. If you

haven't yet registered, I hope you will consider joining us for this exciting

and educational gathering of colleagues in the beautiful city of St. Louis.

The **St. Louis Opera Guild** will be welcoming us Wednesday evening with a special gathering to honor our Grantor level members, whose generous support helps to fund our Matching Grants programs. This year we were pleased to award Matching Grants to nine organizations. Since this program's inception in 1986, OVI has awarded over \$127,000 to more than 60 organizations!

Our board meeting is on Thursday. Our Projects of Special Merit and Grant recipients will share information about their projects at our Thursday Roundtable. Then on Saturday we will honor these awardees as well as our Partners in Excellence at our Awards Brunch at the **St. Louis Art Museum**. At our education session on Friday we will learn how volunteer organizations help lift their opera companies and strengthen those volunteer/company relationships. With performances at **Opera Theatre of St. Louis** every night, it is sure to be a fabulous conference.

On the fundraising front, we are launching our second annual Online Auction, which will run the entire month of May. Don't miss out on these great travel packages and special auction items. We are also planning an OVI cruise to France, England and Ireland in September of 2019, so there are a lot of exciting things in store!

Thank you to all our OVI volunteers who are doing so much to advance opera in your communities! I hope to see many of you in St. Louis in June!

Susan Malott

Reminder:

National Opera Week is Oct 26 - Nov 4, 2018

Come Sail with us

Announcing our OVI musical excursion for Fall of 2019 - Sept 11 to Sept 21.

Enjoy an eight night cruise of England, Ireland and France aboard the new deluxe five star *Le Dumont-d'Urville*. Included are excursions, Lectures, nightly concerts by a host of extraordinary soloists and virtuoso musicians, plus much, much more.

Visit the OVI website for more information and watch for the brochure in your mail.



MUSICAL ODYSSEY on the CELTIC SEA

Aboard the Deluxe *Le Dumont-d'Urville*
September 11 - 21, 2019



Gulf Region

Young Patronesses of the Opera (YPO)



Girl Scouts Earn Their Opera Patch with YPO

Saturday, February 24, 2018 -- The **Young Patronesses of the Opera** brought together over 60 Girl Scouts at the Riviera Presbyterian Church to teach them about opera.

YPO members and the **Junior Opera Guild** worked with the Scouts to earn their opera patch by sharing the opera story *Lucia di Lammermoor*, teaching them about staging, theater, costumes, creating props and even stage make-up. Scouts got a chance to act and were given an *Opera Funtime* booklet based on this opera.

The Scouts also met the founder of the Girl Scouts, Juliette “Daisy” Gordon Low (YPO Past President, **Julie Todaro**, dressed up in character to perform this role of the late Ms. Low). “Ms. Low” taught the Scouts the “Cookie Song” from the opera about her life called *Daisy*, and had them all singing along.

One of the highlights of the day was a performance by **FGO’s Young Artists** followed by a question and answer session with the singers. After juice and cookies scouts were not only given their opera patch but were treated to tickets for a dress rehearsal by the **Florida Grand Opera**, thanks to FGO.

For over 50 years, YPO has had a close relationship with the **Girl Scout Council of Tropical Florida** and we estimate that over 10,000 Girl Scouts have attended our workshops since the program began in 1966. YPO is very grateful to Girl Scout Workshop sponsor, **The List Family Foundation**.



Little Red Riding Hood Opera Performed for Almost 20,000 School Children



Friday, April 27, 2018 -- The **Young Patronesses of the Opera (YPO)** embarked on the 42nd season of their **In-School Opera** tour with the 30 minute children’s opera, *Little Red Riding Hood*, by **Seymour Barab**. Almost 20,000 children in Miami-Dade and Broward Counties at 35 schools participated. The story had fun and catchy music plus great humor, all implemented by a fantastic cast and crew. The children were truly engaged as they roared with laughter and yelled out to warn grandma about the wolf at her door. Lesson learned - “don’t talk to strangers.”

YPO also provided their signature *Opera Funtime booklets*. This learning guide tells the story of the opera, and includes music, features, games and puzzles. They use this booklet in the classroom to prepare for the show and is a tool to help with reading comprehension and more.

Since its inception in 1975, it is estimated that over 500,000 children in public and private schools around south Florida have seen these wonderful professional performances, free of charge. A good number of the children might not have a chance to experience opera if it wasn’t for this program, and these children who fall in love with opera are the opera supporters of tomorrow.

YPO offers opera education to children because, now more than ever, music programs are needed in today’s world. Many school systems have eliminated or reduced arts programs which are vital to developing minds. By fostering an appreciation of and exposure to future generations, opera can survive.

The members of YPO are able to offer the In-School Opera program thanks to their fundraising efforts as well as their donors and supporters such as the **Shepard Broad Foundation**, the **Abraham R Abraham Foundation** and the **Opera Society**. For more information about Young Patronesses visit their website at www.ypo-miami.org

Projects of Special Merit 2018

Houston Grand Opera

Convention Center Guides

After Hurricane Harvey shut down the **Wortham Theater** for extensive repairs, guild members leapt forward to make **Houston Opera** ticket holders' introduction to a totally new temporary performance location as seamless and painless as possible. The volunteers were positioned at strategic stations throughout the venue to instruct people how to navigate the totally automated parking payment kiosk, meet people coming from the parking garage, instruct them on how to find the box office and their seats in the performance hall. Twenty volunteers in total worked on this project designed to communicate with and to assist ticket holders for the seven productions with a total of 56 performances during this season.

Opera NOVA

Development of the Senior Audience

The goal is to expand the senior audience (55 and over) and thereby enhance their quality of life. Seniors are offered tickets to performing arts opportunities at affordable prices. In 2015 a narrated, slightly condensed version of *Così fan tutte* was performed to a packed house. Among the attendees were nursing home residents and able bodied seniors from ages 55 to 95. Many of them had never seen an opera. Several Senior Special Concerts were performed throughout 2016-2017. June of 2018 will see *La Cenerentola* with narration for the senior population. Many considerations like handicap accessibility ensure that this initiative is a success.

Kansas City Lyric Opera Guild

Opera Guild Trips

This fundraising and recruitment activity of this guild includes four trips per year for guild members and others to experience opera in other cities. A committee of five selects from 20-25 possible destinations. Each member of the trip committee becomes a trip leader for one of the four trips. The fifth member of the committee serves as treasurer. Each trip leader plans an exact itinerary and maps out the timeline and the expenses that include the cost of the leader's trip. The final cost always includes a donation amount to the guild, typically \$300 per traveler for a domestic trip and \$500 for international. The trip leader publishes and distributes a brochure five to six months prior to the trip and oversees all planning, contact and follow-up. Trips typically need 12 or 13 participants to be viable. This is the primary fundraiser for the guild and usually garners between \$25,000 and \$30,000 annually for the guild.

Regional News - Southeast

Nashville Opera Guild Sponsors

Nashville Opera has announced a new masterclass series entitled, *The Helen Brown Masterclass Series*. This special series is an annual, guild-sponsored event in which directors, conductors from other nationally acclaimed opera companies, and high-caliber artists will offer insight and connections vital to helping Nashville Opera's **Mary Ragland Emerging Artists** succeed in the field.

This program honors the life and memory of **Dr. Grace Helen Brown**, beloved friend of Nashville Opera and longtime **Nashville Opera Guild** leader. The masterclass series reflects the passion for education Helen exemplified throughout her life. Always a teacher herself, she believed in the power of education to change the trajectory of young lives. As a dedicated opera volunteer she encouraged the guild to invest funds in educational programming.

Projects of Special Merit 2018

Lyric Opera of Chicago Chapters Executive Board

Getting to Know You

One of the biggest challenges of every opera company is attracting new attendees. The first hurdle is to get these newcomers into the theater. The second hurdle is having them feel that they belong. "The First Five Minutes" is what the patrons experience from the moment they enter the front doors. Performing postseason musicals brings in patrons who have never been in the six story 3500 seat opera house before. Volunteers show patrons where they could have photo-ops, where their seats were located and where the restrooms were located. It may seem a little thing, but there is no underestimating the value of a smile to make a stranger welcome and have them feel that they belong. The only cost for this program is the red greeter tags and one and a half hours of the volunteers' time.

Erwin H Johnson Memorial Fund

The Art of Opera

The Art of Opera is an art exhibit, concert and lecture. Inspired as part of **National Opera Week** it was intended as outreach for school and senior resident homes. It features 16 enlarged posters of historically accurate characters from beloved operas, whimsically drawn in manga (Japanese comic) style. Factual essays about each opera accompany the pieces. Middle school students who were shown an opera presentation, colored printed pages of the Manga & Mozart characters. The pages were later bound and featured in the exhibit at the local cultural center. The exhibit included a brief opera lecture, Q&A session, and sung opera pieces. A coloring book, *Manga and Mozart*, was published and made available.

"The Art of Opera" took four volunteers one year to plan and execute. The cost of creating the exhibit was \$200 and the display was booked at the cultural center for two weeks but was extended to two months.

Muskoka Opera Festival Committee

Pucini's La Boheme

The goal of this project was to develop an opening night opera for the annual arts festival in 2017. A young man working on his master's degree in opera performance produced *La Boheme*. He arranged a pianist, rehearsal space and rehearsal times, organized surtitles, and looked after production details. A committee of 20 volunteers arranged for the location for the opera and organized advertising and funding for the opera presentation. The committee paid for a light and sound technician, organized volunteer theatre assistants, singers, musicians, and did the advertising. The cost of producing this opera was \$15,631.39 and the funds raised for this opera were \$17,443.15. The opera was an excellent production which was well attended.

New Masterclass Series

Helen Brown Masterclass Participants

Andrew Morstein, tenor
Rhett Lei, pianist
Sara Crigger, mezzo
Emily Tweedy, soprano
Brian Skoog, tenor
Conor McDonald, baritone
Allison Deady, mezzo

William Florescu, masterclass technician
and General Director of Florentine Opera



Like us on Facebook and join the conversation

Grant Recipients 2018

ERWIN H JOHNSON MEMORIAL FUND (NY) *Taking Public Relations to the Next Step*

Goal is to unify message of organization to public regarding mission, program offerings, outreach, and donor and volunteer opportunities. Grant will be used for professional marketing to create and implement a comprehensive plan for the next stage of the organization's growth and development..

MUSKOKA OPERA FESTIVAL COMMITTEE (ON) *Marketing Workshop*

Goal is to train volunteers in best methods to market the organization and its upcoming 10th anniversary presentation of *Così fan Tutte*. Funds will be used to present five expert speakers in a one day marketing workshop for volunteers.

OPERA MAINE (MN)

Opera Maine Teens - Events and Activities

Purpose is to support the teen program which fosters involvement, provides vocal training, and showcases young talent in the community. It supports teens with fun activities to expand their knowledge and enjoyment of opera. Grant will help fund teen performance expenses and donated performance tickets.

OPERA MEMPHIS (TN)

30 Days of Opera

Purpose is to extend opera's reach beyond the opera house walls. *30 Days of Opera* will introduce opera into everyday routines of Memphians, at restaurants libraries, galleries, street corners, public parks, and community centers. Volunteers will be at the heart of its success. Grant will go towards artists fees, travel, marketing, venues, equipment and materials.

OPERA NOVA (VA)

Cinderella

Purpose is to bring a treasured piece of classical repertoire to children in vulnerable communities. A 70 minute fully immersive musical experience will be presented to at risk communities in Northern Virginia. The grant will fund study guides, programs, mailings, costumes and publicity.

OPERA OMAHA (NE)

Cotillion 2018

Purpose is to teach students the fine art of dining, communicating, being a proper guest, and ballroom dancing. The 58 year annual Cotillion is a six week program for sixth graders which culminates with a graduation dinner dance. Participants also attend an opera. The grant will provide scholarships for underserved students to participate.

PALM BEACH OPERA GUILD (FL)

Palm Beach Opera Gets Technical

Goal is to increase guild's capacity to recruit volunteers and donors through new technology formats with a new safe web presence. Current records will be transitioned to a new donor management software called Bloomerang. The grant will help fund migration of records, software training and webmaster.

Grant Recipients 2018

PEACH STATE OPERA COMPANY (GA) *Volunteer Recruitment & Training Program*

The purpose is to develop a formal Volunteer/Intern Recruitment and Training Program that will align with the strategic plan. It will focus on many areas including human resources and experiential training. Grant will fund trainers, training materials and marketing.

YOUNG PATRONESSES OF THE OPERA (FL) *YPO Teachers' Workshop*

Purpose is to engage, guide and train over 200 music teachers from public, private and parochial schools in the presentation of opera in the classroom to include stories, music appreciation, background, history and critical thinking for their students. Teachers bring this to their classrooms where students will create a scene from an opera. Funds support piano tuning, custodial help and the printing of *Opera Funtime* booklets.

Announcing OVI's

2018 Partners in Excellence

We will tell you more about these outstanding individuals in our July Newsletter:

Julie Alamin	Cincinnati Opera Guild, Ohio
Agneta D. Borgstedt M.D.	Guild of Rochester, New York
Abbey Kreh Gibson	Glimmerglass Opera Guild, New York
Beverly Fitch Mc Carthy	Stockton Opera Guild, California
Muskoka Opera Festival Committee	Bracebridge, Ontario
David Ryan	Opera NOVA, Virginia

The deadline for applications for 2019 *Matching Grants, Partners in Excellence, and Projects of Special Merit* is February 1.

Details and application materials can be found on the OVI website.

Editor's note:

We are continually inspired by the determination, creativity, resourcefulness and dedication of our many volunteers.

We would love to know about your group activities so that we can share them as well. Please keep in mind that we like to feature activities dealing with volunteers rather than the performances of your opera company. Lots of photos and the names of people are encouraged. Timing and space limitations are a factor in what we can include, however, we do two electronic only newsletters in summer and fall which have unlimited space. When submitting, be sure to put "OVI Newsletter Submission" in the subject line. PDF, JPG, Doc files are all fine, but it is easier for me to extract text from a doc file than a PDF.

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Online Auction

MAY 1, 2018 - MAY 31, 2018

Going ... Going Gone!

Experience OVI's Second Annual on-line auction from the comfort of your own home. This year OVI provided \$10,000 in matching grants for our member groups. *(see P 3)*, The auction helps fund our matching grants program. Auction is open to members and non-members, so help get the word out.

Check out our auction website and share it with friends.



Bidding opens May 1 - ends May 31

ovi.afrogs.org

This is your chance to get great things you want and help fund next year's deserving OVI member groups.

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