

THE OPERA VOLUNTEER VOICE

Spring 2019
Vol. 43, Number 2

The official newsletter of
*Opera Volunteers
International*

Next issue:
June

2019 Online Auction May 1—May 30

Bidding starts May 1 go to:

ovi.afrogs.org



Westminster



Costa Rica



Sydney



Prague

OVI has a wonderful selection of opera tickets and a variety of fantastic trips, including a day at the races at Churchill Downs, going to the dogs at Westminster Dog Show, and “lets go out to the ball game” with a classic dinner and rooftop experience at Wrigley Field.

We are adding new items throughout the month. Please check out the Luxury Hotel stays for getaway weekends at tremendous hotels. Each day, opera tickets are coming in, so log onto our site often so you don't miss anything.

Opera Volunteers International is a nonprofit, volunteer-led organization and the premier resource and advocate for the development and advancement of volunteerism in support of opera. One of the most important ways that OVI accomplishes this is through our Matching Grants Program.

We invite you to browse through the OVI On-Line Auction Website, bid high and bid often.

What's Inside This Issue

President's Message	2
San Francisco Opera Conference	3
Fall Focus Meeting Boston Recap	4-5
Conference Photo Workshop	6

Donations of tickets and opera-themed items are still being accepted for our on-line auction contact Sheila McNeill sheilamcneill@cox.net

From the President: *Susan Malott*



As we move into Spring, I am still on a high from our wonderful focus meeting in Boston last month. Our group was small but mighty as we enjoyed a few days of art, opera and local culture in one of our country's oldest and most historic cities. Big thanks to our **VP of Marketing, Julie Todaro**, for putting together an interesting and enriching experience for all of us.

We began the weekend with a tour of the Boston Museum of Fine Art. Our evening at **Boston Lyric Opera** was a memorable experience, not only because of the incredible voices, but also the amazingly creative staging in a non-traditional theater space. And no trip to Boston would be complete without enjoying the local seafood and the **Summer Shack** did not disappoint. It was a wonderful weekend of culture and comradery and I thoroughly enjoyed spending time with everyone.

We now look ahead to our upcoming conference in June. It will be my pleasure to welcome you all to my City by the Bay, San Francisco, for **Opera Conference 2019**, hosted by **San Francisco Opera**. This is our 13th collaboration with OPERA America and we are grateful to **Marc Scorca** for this opportunity once again. This will be my 8th annual conference and I have found each of these experiences to be incredibly enriching and rewarding. There is always much to learn and I enjoy meeting colleagues from across North America.

We will kick off the conference weekend with our Grantor's reception at a private home in Marin County. On Friday we will have a learning session with international photographer, **Tanya Malott** (yes, we're related), who will share with us her tips on taking better photographs, followed by our board meeting. On Saturday we will hear from our **Partners in Excellence** and **Grant awardees** and we'll end the weekend with a brunch on Sunday to honor our awardees. We are also planning a silent auction and raffle and, of course, there will be plenty of great opera to enjoy with performances of **Rusalka, Carmen** and **Orlando**.

Whether you have been to conference before or not, I hope you will join me in San Francisco this year. I look forward to welcoming you!

Susan Malott

New Conference Details

Grantors Reception Thursday Evening, June 13

Cocktail reception in the elegant private home of San Francisco Opera Guild President, **Mary Poland**. The reception is open to all OVI members at the **Grantor Level**. OVI members who are not currently at that level are welcome to raise their contribution amount to receive invitation to this private event. Contact **membership chair, Vikie Hariton**, if you are interested.

Awards Champagne Brunch

10:00 a.m. Sunday, June 16

11:00 a.m. Awards Ceremony

Westin St Francis on Union Square

Honoring our volunteers who have received **Partners in Excellence** awards.

The St. Francis Suite was originally a residence in the early 1900's, and has been completely restored to reflect the iconic nature of the room. The East Room, once the residence's grand parlor, overlooks Union Square.

Register on the OPERA America conference website for this \$65 event.



Find us on the internet at www.OperaVolunteers.org



OPERA CONFERENCE

JOIN US IN SAN FRANCISCO!

OPERA America's annual conference is the pre-eminent convening of opera company leaders, artists, trustees and volunteers, and other industry stakeholders. We will explore major issues that are shaping the art form.

A special OVI Two-Day Pass is available for abbreviated activity on **June 14 and 15, 2019**. Included on this schedule are general sessions on **Exploring Business Innovations** and **Deepening Civic Practice**, three concurrent sessions, two volunteer-focused sessions and the OVI board meeting. Members of OVI may register for the full conference at member rates or the special two-day OVI Pass by selecting the "Opera Volunteers International" registration type.

For more information click on the OVI tab at <https://conference/operaamerica.org>

- **More than 500 attendees** will gather in San Francisco this June to gain inspiration, new ideas and connections to colleagues that will fuel their work throughout the year.
- **Meaningful Connections.** Conference attendees come from every area of the opera business, at all levels of experience. You will meet colleagues who share your challenges and motivations and build relationships that last long after you return home.
- **San Francisco.** The conference hotel rate is far less than typical San Francisco room rates, so this is a great opportunity to see all this amazing city has to offer.



OVI Two-Day Pass Key Events

June 13

- Grantor's Reception (by invitation only) see page 2

June 14

- Sponsor Thank You Breakfast
- **OVI session - Connect with your Audience: Tips and Tricks for Better Photography**
- Concurrent Sessions - Examining Traditions
- **OVI Board Meeting (box lunch requires separate purchase)**
- General Session: Exploring Business Innovations
- Concurrent Sessions - Business Innovations
- Host Company Reception
- San Francisco Opera performance *Carmen* (requires separate ticket)

June 15

- Women's Opera Network Breakfast
- General Session - Deepening Civic Practice
- Concurrent Sessions - Civic Practice
- **OVI Roundtable**
- Anniversary Announcements and Ribbon Cutting
- San Francisco Opera performance *Orlando* (requires separate ticket)

June 16

- Awards Brunch - Westin St Francis see p. 2 (meal requires separate ticket)

Like us on Facebook to join the conversation!

OPERA VOLUNTEERS INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATES ST. PATRICK'S DAY WEEKEND IN BOSTON!



By Rhonda Sweeney

OVI typically holds a “Focus” meeting each Fall in a different city around North America to see opera, hold a Board meeting, learn new techniques about volunteering to support opera back home in our local communities, and have a lot of fun! Our planned meeting for October 2018 in Boston was rescheduled to a Spring Focus March 15-17, and though we only had 6 Board members along with 4 spouses attending, a lot of fun, learning and opera was packed into the Focus weekend!

L to r: Susan Malott, Rhonda Sweeney, Jim Malott, Sandra Pelfrey, Michael Pelfrey



After arriving Friday morning from San Francisco, Chicago, Amarillo, Houston, Cincinnati, and Knoxville, our attendees met at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, for three hours of exploring the well-organized museum. Due to Boston’s role in the formation of the United States, I chose to explore the American Wing, with its portraits of many of the Founding Fathers by John Singleton Copley and Gilbert Charles Stuart. Other highlights included beautiful early American furniture made in the Boston area, stained glass, and American artists including Mary Cassatt, John Singer Sargent, and Dale Chihuly.



Returning from the museum, we met in the lobby bar for libations and heavy hors d’oeuvres that would serve as dinner prior to the opera. Sharing taxis, our group arrived at the Artists for Humanity EpiCenter, the venue for **Boston Lyric Opera’s** production of **Benjamin Britten’s *The Rape of Lucretia***. BLO does not have a permanent home, so each opera is performed in a different space, and this one is typically used as a contemporary art gallery, with high, open ceilings. The space afforded very close seating for the 600 attendees, nearly in the round, such that the performers were in the center of the audience. Without an orchestra pit, the chamber ensemble from the BLO orchestra was seated above and behind the stage, hidden behind a curtain, with conductor David Angus, BLO’s Music Director, at

the piano, visible on the several video screens in the theater for the singers and audience to see him clearly. The “up close and personal”, 110 minute opera was terrific, and was followed by a talk-back session with two of the performers and BLO’s community partner for this opera -- Boston Area Rape Crisis Center.



Find us on the internet at www.OperaVolunteers.org

Saturday morning's learning session was led by BLO's volunteer extraordinaire **Jane Pisciotoli Papa** who is also on the BLO Board of Overseers. Jane shared with us her written history of BLO's 40 year history, a labor of love and much research. Though BLO does not have an organized opera support group, they have a dedicated group of 50+ volunteers who support all areas of BLO operations. Following Jane's presentation, our Board discussed some details regarding the upcoming Opera Conference in San Francisco June 13-16, and we are all excited about returning to the home company of OVI President **Susan Malott!**



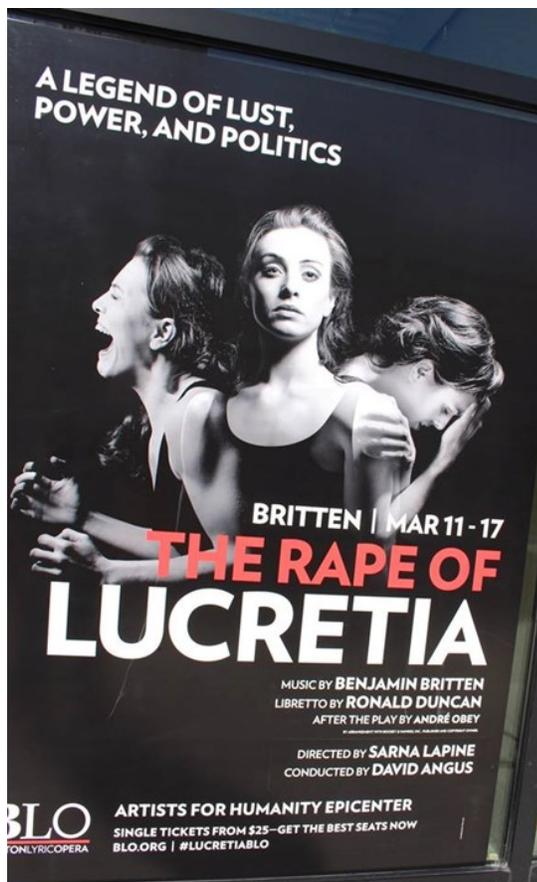
Jane Pisciotoli Papa

Next up was a backstage tour of the EpiCenter, which provided additional insight for how BLO works with "found spaces" around Boston for each production. The tour was led by **Lacey Upton**, Director of Community Engagement, and Julia Noulin-Mérat Associate Producer, and we were able to go into the orchestra space, and walk all around the theater to better understand what was necessary to transform the space from an art gallery to an opera theater!

There was time to check out local historic sites, including Copley Square, Faneuil Hall, Old State House, and Freedom Trail, prior to dinner at Summer Shack, where Boston's bountiful seafood was heartily eaten! Lobsters, oysters, crabs, and clam chowder were the overwhelming favorites and no one left hungry!

Sunday morning was departure day for some of the attendees, others attended the St. Patrick's Day parade in South Boston, or visited family and friends in the area. These Focus weekends are one of my favorite things about being a member of OVI – an opportunity to have fun with other opera lovers in a different city, where we can combine our love of opera, with sightseeing, terrific meals, and insightful discussions relevant to being an opera volunteer!

So, from the East Coast to the West Coast, we'll meet next in San Francisco for Opera Conference 2019, and I know we'll have another wonderful time – join us!



Right:

Transforming an art gallery into a theater at the Artists for Humanity EpiCenter for the BLO production of *The Rape of Lucretia*.



Lobstah and Opera in beantown with Rhonda Sweeney and Jim Mallott.

Like us on Facebook to join the conversation!

If you are attending the Opera Conference in San Francisco, do not oversleep on Friday, June 14. OVI will be hosting a workshop presentation to help you take the kind of photos that will attract attention and advance your cause.

Tips & Tricks for photos that connect with your Audience

Join **Tanya Malott**, an international portrait, event and fine art photographer, to learn how to take better photos, be a better subject, and communicate more effectively through imagery.



Former fashion photographer, Tanya Malott, has been shooting events and portraits for leaders in the arts, business and society for over three decades. Her work has been widely published in periodicals including the New York Times, Town & Country, Vogue and People Magazine, although most of her clients are private individuals. She traveled with Malala Yousafzai for a year, creating much of the imagery for the original *Malala Fund* website, film poster, book cover and social media, and Malala receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo. Tanya lives in Sag Harbor, NY, and travels worldwide for her work.

Learn how at the 9:00 a.m. session and practice the techniques throughout the conference and city!

OVI celebrates the hard work of volunteers and offers ways to help make more volunteer involvement possible by recognizing achievement and creativity, supporting volunteer projects, and advocating for continuing involvement of volunteers in opera. Volunteering enriches the lives of volunteers, builds bridges to the community and makes it possible for opera companies to do more.

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