

2021 Grant Recipients

Central City Opera Guild: Volunteers Maintain a Denver Tradition with Virtual Holiday Home Tour

For the past 45 years, Central City Opera Guild's *L'Esprit de Noel* Holiday Home Tour has served as a major fundraiser and Denver holiday tradition. Utilizing scores of volunteers, this walking tour of lavishly decorated historic Denver homes is a major volunteer effort. The 2021 Virtual Walking Tour will feature the home of Peter Court, brother to Baby Doe Tabor. In 1956, the CCO commissioned the Ballad of Baby Doe, and it is traditionally programmed every ten years. This year will again be a virtual tour of three historic homes, and the live feed will include holiday music from CCO's touring artists. The grant will help support volunteer efforts for the virtual tour, including training on the historic significance of the homes featured as well as recognizing an opera company and Guild with roots deep into the 1930's—the fifth oldest company in the nation. The virtual tour is scheduled to go live Friday, November 19 – midnight December 25, 2021.

Opera Maine: Training Opera Maine Volunteer Ambassadors

Opera Maine (OM) plans to use the OVI Matching Grant to help fund training and educational materials for five Opera Maine Volunteer Ambassadors, chosen from the current volunteer cadre and the Opera Maine Teen Program. Ambassadors will be trained to engage in conversation with audiences attending productions of *L'elisir d'amore - The Elixir of Love*—by Gaetano Donizetti and *As One*, by Laura Kaminsky. Opera Maine has not presented a *bel canto* opera in ten years, and the Opera Ambassadors will help introduce the opera -goers to Donizetti, a great master of that style.

OM believes the Opera Ambassadors will play a particularly important role for the production of *As One*, a contemporary chamber opera centered on the coming-of-age of a transgender woman. The *As One* production will present Mainers with a unique opportunity to explore the inclusion and engagement of people of diverse identities and backgrounds. Ambassadors will be prepared to guide audience members to available resources that are specific to both productions, and will be trained to converse about Opera Maine. The use of Teen Ambassadors will help grow future audience members and volunteers.

Nashville Opera Guild: Launching a Diversity and Inclusion Initiative

The Nashville Opera Guild plans to use the OVI Matching Grant to launch its Diversity and Inclusion Initiative. Nashville Opera Association and Nashville Opera Guild will celebrate the company's 45th

anniversary in Season 2025-26. As they move toward that date, they have embarked on an eight-month strategic planning process. A major focus is diversity and inclusion to grow audience and volunteer base as well as provide programming to lift up the stories and experiences of a diverse audience. The Nashville Opera Guild's Diversity and Inclusion Initiative has four key focus areas: growing volunteer members; diversity education for the NOG Board; producing a "series for awareness and learning"; and, partnering with the Opera Board on its Advisory Committee for Artistic and Social Impact. The grant will help support funding for training, speakers for "Lunch and Learn", and overall education and materials to train the full Guild Board in Diversity Education. The Guild's current membership of about 180 members must be expanded and diversified to fulfill the goals set by the Guild Board.