

THE OPERA VOLUNTEER VOICE

November 2022
Vol. 46, Number 4

The official newsletter of
*Opera Volunteers
International*



Registration is now open for **OPERA CONFERENCE 2023**

details on page 8

Join our free OVI focus session on Nov. 14

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR OPERA SUPPORT



"It's just for kids

"I don't know how"

"My audience isn't very tech savvy..."

If you've been reluctant to explore and frustrated by what you've read about the uses - and abuses - of social media but you'd really like to find new avenues to expand your group's reach, you won't want to miss this informative session.

**Where: Zoom When: November 14, 2022,
12:00 PM Pacific Standard Time, (*adjust accordingly*)**

There will be plenty of time for your questions at the end of the session. There is no cost but participants need to register to receive the link to the Zoom session. A recording will be available

Register ►

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIkC-GsrTgrE9e1Gvk_LSscmSv4V0nJzJnz



Media Consultant **Vanessa Dillingham** will give us a virtual class on putting social media to work for opera volunteers; which platforms will suit your needs, how to fit your messaging to the medium. Vanessa has helped volunteer groups and companies reach their audiences by tailoring their use of social media to best fit their specific needs and goals.

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**OPERA
America
Conference**



**Pittsburgh, PA
May 17– 20, 2023**

From the President: Mary Svela



Dear Opera volunteers,

As your local opera season moves into full swing, our OVI board moves forward into its next half-century of growth and development. We give thanks to you for helping us spread our message inspiring the use of volunteers in opera.

Our matching grants are funded through our contributions and grantor level and above memberships. Matching Grants provide ideas for innovative volunteer efforts which in turn enhance the opera experience for young and old alike. I recently reviewed the list of our matching grants stretching from 2022 all the way back to 1986. Five single spaced pages of great volunteer projects and ideas helped by OVI's fundraising efforts.

We are actively seeking ways to increase your effectiveness as volunteers through resources such as our Fall Focus meeting, featuring a professional in the field of Social Media to suggest ideas and strategies for increasing the reach of your volunteer group. [Sign up!](#)

Opera Conference 2023 in Pittsburgh May 17-20, 2023 will provide us with opportunities to network and share like never before. We hope you will have a chance to join us in Pittsburgh, with the discounted special 2-day pass offered starting November 1, 2022. www.operaamerica.org/conference

Thank you to all our group members, returning and new, and thank you to all of our individual members. You are all vital to our very unique, all-volunteer organization. We are an organization originally created and operated by members for members, and your membership counts like never before. Let's keep the spirit of volunteerism alive and well through OVI memberships.

Mary Svela

Are you ready to advance to the next level of leadership?

OVI's Board of Directors is looking to fill four positions for a 1 year term commencing from Oct 1, 2022.

North Central Region Director

South Central Region Director

Partners in Excellence

Newsletter Co-editor

This is an opportunity to join a National organization, develop new skills, work alongside opera volunteer leaders from across the country and expand your resumé.

To learn more about these positions contact Rhonda Sweeney:

rjsrochow@aol.com

Contact Rick Greenman if you are interested in developing your knowledge of newsletter design and working with Microsoft Publisher:

rickygreen@comcast.net

Calendar

October 1

marks the beginning of the year for OVI. If you have not yet renewed your membership, you can do that directly from our website with a secure credit card payment, or you can print out the membership form and renew by mail. If you are able, please consider joining at the grantor level which helps fund our matching grants to opera volunteer groups. <https://www.operavolunteers.org/joinovi/>

November 14

Online Zoom session on effectively using Social Media to achieve your group's goals and enhance your online presence. **Registration required:**

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlkc-GsrTgrE9e1Gvk_LSscmSv4V0nJzJnz

February 1

Deadline for submitting applications for Grants, Partners in Excellence, Projects of Special Merit.

May 17-20

OPERA America / OVI Opera Conference 2023 in Pittsburgh. Register early for best rates. Advance Registration is now open. Watch your email or go to OA conference page for detailed information.

www.operaamerica.org/conference

OVI Greet New Membership Year 2022-2023

Welcome, Liam Bonner

OVI is pleased and proud to welcome **Liam Bonner** to our Board of Directors as **Vice President of Conference Planning**. Liam's first job, for which he is ideally suited, will be to coordinate planning with **OPERA America** on the OVI portion of **Opera Conference 2023** in Pittsburgh May 17 - 20. His enthusiasm is irresistible!



As a former “*Yinzer*” (slang for a Pittsburgh resident) Liam looks forward to welcoming us to his city and organizing our receptions and excursions as only a native could. From a Three Rivers boat tour, to the Andy Warhol museum, or a visit to “The Strip” (it’s not what it sounds), Liam has promised to help us figure the optimum use of time while keeping a firm rein on bottom line costs. Liam’s passion for Pittsburgh will coax you to Pack your bag and hop on a plane.

As board member, Liam will be a significant addition to our organization because of his realm of experience in all four facets of opera as performer, administrator, fundraiser and volunteer. Following a successful ten year singing career and many music awards, Liam became Manager of Annual Giving Groups with the **Houston Symphony**. Since 2019 Liam has served as Executive Director of the **Indianapolis Symphonic Choir**. Bonner is a former member of the **Houston Grand Opera Studio**, **San Francisco Opera’s Merola Program**, and a Studio and Apprentice Artist at **Central City Opera**. Visit Liam’s [Wikipedia](#) page to view his vast music performance credentials.

Opera Conference 2023 May 17-20 Pittsburgh Westin Hotel

Theme: *The Human Dimension of Opera* featuring keynotes, workshops and panel discussions. There will be two optional opera performances. OVI will host an Awards Dinner recognizing 2023 honorees. We are looking into a trip to Frank Lloyd Wright’s Falling Water. Meet opera artists and administration and fellow volunteers from around the country. Stay tuned for further details.

2023 grant application and recognition deadlines are February 1, 2023.

Grants

<https://www.operavolunteers.org/matching-grants-and-awards/guidelines-for-ovi-grant-applications/>

Now is the time to think about the kinds of projects that can benefit your opera volunteer group or support your Opera Company and reach out to your community. Details and applications are available on OVI’s website.

Partner in Excellence:

<https://www.operavolunteers.org/matching-grants-and-awards/partners-in-excellence/>

Is there an individual your group would like to honor or a special anniversary to celebrate.

Nominate an individual or a group for an OVI award.

Project of Special Merit:

<https://www.operavolunteers.org/matching-grants-and-awards/projects-special-merit/>

Did your group create a unique project either before or during the current quarantine shut-down?

Let us know about it so we can recognize you and share your great idea with our other opera volunteer groups.

OVI Welcomes New Member Groups

Opera Theater Oregon

The mission of **Opera Theater Oregon** is to create, develop, and produce new operatic work, with an emphasis on projects that engage the community on issues of environment and social justice. With an emphasis on contemporary music and English language opera, they inspire new and younger audiences to experience opera in diverse ways, respecting tradition and innovation, and creating enjoyable performances of high artistic integrity.

Founded in 2005, OTO's latest major project is [Nu Nah-Hup: Sacajawea's Story](#) represents a collaboration with Rose Ann Abrahamson a descendant of Sacajawea, the Agai-Dika/Lemhi-Shoshone woman who was a crucial member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Shown in the Sacajawea Interpretive, Cultural and Educational Center are **Rose Ann Abramson** and artistic director and composer, **Justin Ralls, PHD**. OTO enjoys support from **National Endowment for the Arts** and the **Native Voices Endowment of the Endangered Language Fund**.



Minnesota Opera

Founded in 1963, **Minnesota Opera** is admired as an innovative creator of compelling opera productions, programs, and new works. The company was a sponsor of Opera Conference 2022 in Minneapolis. Conference goers enjoyed a new production of *Carmen* representing the directorial debut of **Denyce Graves** at the Ordway Performing Arts Center in St. Paul. In 1985, Minnesota Opera became a founding tenant of St. Paul's Ordway Center, still home to its mainstage season, and in 1990, opened the Minnesota Opera Center in Minneapolis, combining scenic and costume shops, rehearsal facilities and administrative offices into three renovated warehouses on the Mississippi riverfront.



chicagooperatheater

Since its founding in 1973, in a city where storefront theaters and global icons thrive side by side, **Chicago Opera Theater (COT)** has grown from a grassroots, community-based company to a national leader in an increasingly vibrant, diverse, and forward-looking art form. COT has staged over 150 operas, including 78 Chicago premieres and 45 operas by American composers.

In addition to its mainstage season, COT is devoted to the development and production of new opera in the United States through its Vanguard Initiative, launched in 2018. The Vanguard Initiative trains emerging opera composers, invests time and talent in new opera at various stages of the creative process, and opens up opportunities for Chicago audiences to become part of the development of new work, in dialogue with the creators themselves. Learn more about their programs such as the Vanguard Initiative on the COT Facebook page.



Since 1962 **Toledo Opera Guild** has played an active role in supporting Toledo Opera's performances, education and community outreach programs. In the past 10 years the Guild has directly contributed over \$350,000. This does not include additional support such as a Monday cast rehearsal dinner before each performance (approximately \$1,000.00) along with countless hours of volunteer expertise and help with various tasks. One of their primary objectives is to bring together new and old friends with like-minded interests through our social activities and support each other through their Guild network.

New OVI Member Groups *continued*

Friends of Pittsburgh Opera

Friends of Pittsburgh Opera is both a friend-raising and fund-raising body in support of Pittsburgh Opera. FPO membership benefits include: Invitations to community events throughout the season, invitations to social events, free admission to *Opera Up Close* and *Art Song Recitals* and opportunities to volunteer and meet new friends. Opera Pittsburgh is currently planning activities for Opera Conference 2023, which will take place in Pittsburgh in May of next year. OVI looks forward to learning more about Friends of Pittsburgh Opera during our time at the conference.



Nickel City Opera Company of Buffalo, New York is a member of **Opera America**, and was formed and founded in 2004. Since its inception, NCO has produced full-scale opera productions including *Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore*, *La Bohème*, *Don Pasquale*, *Il Tabarro*, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, *Tosca*, *The Marriage of Figaro* and the World Premiere of *SHOT!* by Persis Vehir about the assassination of President McKinley produced at Shea's Buffalo Theatre.

With the continued goal of producing high quality opera and quest to bring opera to audiences of all ages and backgrounds, NCO looks forward to building on its success through acclaimed performances, innovative fundraising and community outreach.

Opera Fort Collins Guild Located in Fort Collins, Colorado

The mission of **Opera Fort Collins Guild** (OFCG) is to support and to raise awareness of Opera Fort Collins (OFC) through fundraising, community outreach, and volunteerism.

We are an active support organization of around 30 dedicated volunteers who meet monthly to plan upcoming projects. We host our own fundraising events, like "Arias 4 All" and "Songs in Summer". We assist with events put on by the Opera Fort Collins Board of Directors. In between the major events, we're always finding ways to help and promote OFC, whether providing housing during opera rehearsals, helping schlep stage sets to the theaters, assisting the costumer, or serving as lobby greeters before the large opera performance.

Songs in Summer is our annual late summer musical event. It's the Guild's largest outreach program and is open to the general public.

This summer evening soiree is filled with tasty hors d'oeuvres, select wines, and live entertainment presented by professional artists. Set in the artful gardens of **Gary and Carol Ann Hixon**, this year Baritone **Brandon Tyler Padgett**, soprano **Dawna Rae Warren**, and pianist **Kathy Hansen** performed pieces ranging from the light-hearted to the sublime as they draw from show tunes, favorite opera arias, solos and duets. *Bettina Larrarte*



Regional News OVI Guilds Across America 2022

Northwest Region

Seattle Opera Guild
Opera Theater Oregon

North Central Region

Des Moines Opera
Opera Omaha Inc.
Opera Omaha Guild
Twin Cities Opera Guild, Inc.
Minnesota Opera Company

Great Lakes Region

Against the Grain Theatre
Cincinnati Opera Guild
Opera Illinois League
Lyric Opera of Chicago
Chapters Executive Board
The Opera Guild of Dayton
Chicago Opera Theater
Toledo Opera Guild

Northeast Region

Erwin H. Johnson
Memorial Fund, Inc.
Opera Maine
Glimmerglass Opera Guild
Viva Brooklyn Festival
Friends of Pittsburgh Opera
Niagra Arts & Culture Center
Nickel City Opera
Playground Opera

Mid-Atlantic Region

Knoxville Opera Guild
Chattanooga Symphony &
Opera Association
Nashville Opera Guild
Opera in Williamsburg

Southwest Region

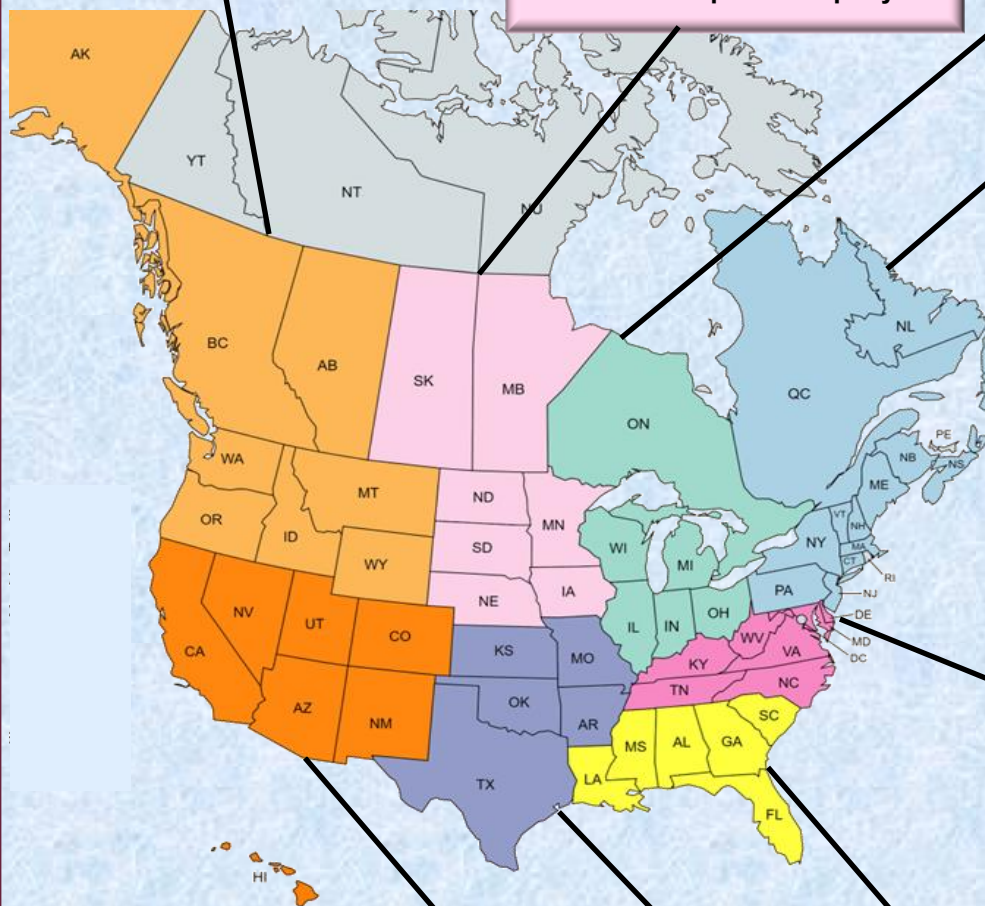
Valley Friends of Arizona Opera
Central City Opera Guild
The Guilds of the Santa Fe
Opera Inc.
Arizona Opera League of Tucson
San Francisco Opera Guild
Stockton Opera Guild
Opera League of Los Angeles
Opera Fort Collins

South Central Region

Amarillo Opera BRAVO
Houston Grand Opera Guild, Inc.
Kansas City Lyric Opera Guild
The Guild of Tulsa Opera
Austin Opera Guild
Inspiration Point Fine Arts Colony
Opera Theatre of Saint Louis Guild

Gulf Southeast Region

Capitol City Opera Co., Inc.
The Opera Guild at the
University of Alabama
Peach State Opera Company
Young Patronesses of the Opera
Shreveport Opera
Palm Beach Opera



----- Like us on Facebook to join the conversation! -----

Opera Maine—Grant Report

by Wanda Strukus, Opera Maine Grants Manager
(this article has been abridged for space)

On July 27 and 29, Opera Maine presented Richard Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman* to over 1,300 audience members. OVI's 2022 support of Opera Maine was instrumental to the success of our 2022 Mainstage Production. Each year, Opera Maine partners closely with members of our community in volunteer roles, and each year we are astounded by the diversity, versatility, adaptability, and talent that our volunteers possess.

Rescheduled from 2020 due to the emergence and rise of Covid-19, this long-awaited production was also named an official Bicentennial Event for the state of Maine. As such, Opera Maine Artistic Director **Dona D. Vaughn** was inspired to set the opera on the Maine coast in the year 1820. Opera Maine's partnership with the **Maine Maritime Museum**, the **Maine Historical Society**, and the **Freeport Historical Society** enabled the production team to create and present historically accurate sets, costumes, and projections that authentically reflected the time period and setting.

While many of our volunteers have long-standing relationships with Opera Maine as Ambassadors, Board Members, and Ushers, we recognized a need for additional support for *The Flying Dutchman* and sought out volunteers to serve in new roles. In 2022, Opera Maine benefitted from the contributions of six new volunteers who contributed 10-60 hours each in support of our Costume department and our Costume Designer, Millie Hibel. We believe the need for volunteers for production support will likely be repeated in the future; the six costume volunteers were vital to the success of *The Flying Dutchman* and responded very enthusiastically to the experience.

We value the relationships we have built with our volunteers, and the impact that relationship has had on our opera productions and throughout our community. We are committed to continuing our investment in the development of our volunteer base, and we are excited to expand further into the area of production support volunteers and to grow our team of youth Ambassadors. Opera Maine will continue to share and shine a light on this vibrant and historical artform, and to empower members of the community to engage with our audiences and artists.

Opera Ambassador Program *The Flying Dutchman*



Above: Mark Delavan (center), Opera Maine's Dutchman

OVI has resumed offering advertising space in our newsletter.

Contact Mary Sveta for information about circulation, deadlines and rates.

Danielle DiStefano

Lirica Publications

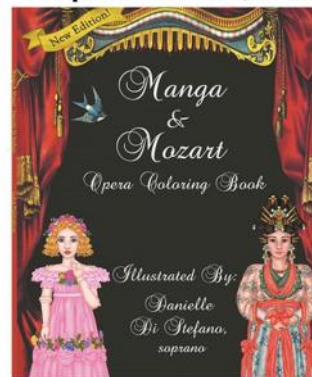
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Newsletter Editor and Publisher:

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Find us on the internet at
www.OperaVolunteers.org

Opera Conference 2023 in Pittsburgh May 17-20

Registration is now open!

Special OVI 2-day pass is substantially less than full conference registration. & save an additional \$50 with advance registration through December 4.

Register ►

www.operaamerica.org/conference



Pittsburgh: City of Bridges

Hotel: The Westin Pittsburgh -conference rate \$209 per night

[Book your group rate for OPERA America – Opera Conference 2023](#)

Optional Pittsburgh Opera presentations: *We Shall Not be moved, Denis & Katya*

Attend OA educational sessions, panel discussions, workshops, and the host reception.

OVI: board meeting and sessions Optional: Awards Dinner / possible excursions

we are considering a road trip to visit Frank Lloyd Wright's *Falling Water*.

There will be a grantor's reception for OVI members at the grantor level.

Register Now for best rates. *registration is 80% refundable through 4/1, 65% through May 1*