

# THE OPERA VOLUNTEER VOICE

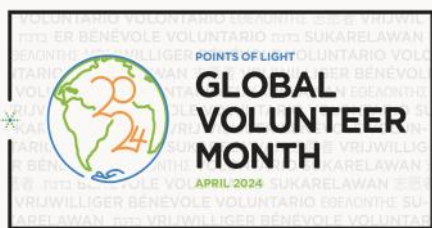
April 2024  
Vol. 48, Number 2

The official newsletter of  
*Opera Volunteers  
International*

**Recognizing  
Partners in Excellence  
Grant Awardees  
Projects of Special  
Merit**

## April is Global Volunteer Month

"As we celebrate Global Volunteer Month, we recognize the power of people who work tirelessly in communities around the world to create social change," said **Jennifer Sirangelo**, president and CEO at **Points of Light**. "Volunteering and service is a pathway to strengthening communities, combating loneliness and building bridges for stronger civic society. Points of Light believes every person has the opportunity to make a meaningful difference."



Learn how to join the movement  
at [pointsoflight.org/gvm](https://pointsoflight.org/gvm)

OVI, in its role of representing and fostering opera volunteerism throughout North America is proud to recognize, in this issue, our groups and the individual members who make them effective.

We hope that Opera companies and volunteer groups will take this month to acknowledge their own volunteers, because it is their commitment, energy and skill that will help opera to flourish in this unpredictable time.

This June, OVI members will meet with Opera Company leaders, staff, and creative artists, in Los Angeles to convene, commune and commemorate the successes, opportunities and challenges that abound.

In the following pages, we share and applaud your ideas and initiative. We thank our guilds and opera support groups. But most of all we thank you, the individuals who devote your time and talent to opera.

Kick off #GlobalVolunteerMonth by sharing about your volunteer experience or commitment, thanking volunteers worldwide or thanking a significant volunteer who made an impact in your life.

*We hope this issue will further your attitude of gratitude*

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**Inside:**  
**Registration  
information for  
Opera Conference  
2024, June 5 - 8  
in Los Angeles**



### **A**pril is National Volunteer Month

and it's a great opportunity to recognize those who give their time and energy to opera as volunteers.

OVI recently chose our 2024 recipients for our matching grants and awards. Read more about our dedicated Partners in Excellence award winners and be inspired by the impact their dedicated service has made to their opera organizations. Likewise, our Partners in Excellence awardees have shown us some great ways to spread the word about opera to their communities.

This year, OVI provided Matching Grants for seven member organizations. The grants we have provided since 1986 now total close to \$180,000.00. We will follow these projects with excitement as they bring opera experiences to so many people, young and old, who may not yet have experienced opera.

What are your plans to honor your opera volunteers during this National Volunteer month and beyond?

We look forward to sharing more good news about opera volunteerism at Opera Conference 2024 in June. We hope you can be with us then as we gather in Los Angeles.

*Mary Sveta*

### Welcome from LA Opera



### What are we Talking About?

OA Opera Conference Sessions Can be found [Here](#):  
[Register Now](#)

Save with the 2-day OVI registration package!

General (plenary) Sessions, opera performances, and OVI activities can be found on the next 2 page sign-up sheet.

### Opera Conference June 5 - 8, 2024 in Los Angeles



### Benefits of Volunteering

- Reduces stress
- Combats depression
- Feel more connected
- Increases confidence
- Gives a sense of purpose
- Ignites passion
- Makes you happy

# Opera Conference sign-up

(Page 1 of 2)

Attend with our special OVI member 2-day pass!

Name	Phone/Text
OVI/OLLA Info Table Meet up with OVI attendees and make new friends with Opera League of Los Angeles attendees at the joint information table during the conference.	Stop by to meet up! Learn about

## Wednesday, June 5

World Opera Forum Closing Session/Opera America (OA) Opening Session: Making a Case for Opera  
Hear global opera leaders discuss creative strategies to bring new energy to a 400-year old art form in a rapidly changing environment.

Included with OA Conference

### Host Company Reception

LA Opera invites you to an evening reception at the iconic Dorothy Chandler Pavilion to celebrate the launch of Opera Conference 2024. Enjoy drinks and hors d'oeuvres while you mix and mingle with colleagues from around

Included with OA Conference

### LA Opera presents Puccini's Turandot at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

David Hockney's fantastical production energizes the tale of a renegade prince who becomes so captivated by a beauty who scorns love that he enters an all but impossible contest where the price of failure is death.

OA Conference Website

## Thursday, June 6

### OVI Board meeting

All OVI members are welcome to attend our General Meeting at the conference to discuss bylaw updates and Strategic Planning.

No Charge for OVI Members

# attendees \_\_\_\_\_

### OA Plenary Session: Managing Accelerating Change

Leading administrators and artists will discuss the skills and strategies needed to manage the accelerating tempo of change.

Included with OA Conference

### OVI Grantor/Awards Presentation

OVI will honor the 2024 recipients of Grants, Partners in Excellence awards and Projects of Special Merit awards. OVI will also recognize members at the Grantor level and above.

No Charge for OVI Members/Guests

# attendees \_\_\_\_\_

### OVI Box Lunch on the Plaza

Immediately following the Grantor/Awards Presentation, we will gather informally enjoy pre-ordered catered box lunches on the Music Center Plaza and each other's company.

# Beef	# Chicken	# Vegan	# lunches	n/c	No Charge
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Awardees and OVI members Grantor level or above					
All other OVI members and guests			# lunches _____	@ \$25 _____	Item Total _____

### OA Plenary Session: What Does It Mean to Be Local?

Opera company leaders and community partners will discuss the importance of building a company culture that prioritizes its relationship with its place.

Included with OA Conference

### OVI -- It Takes Two to Tango

Our panel of experienced opera volunteer organization leaders will explore resources and strategies for developing and strengthening the relationship between opera company administrators and volunteers.

No Charge for OVI Members/Guests

# attendees \_\_\_\_\_

### OA Sponsor Reception

Gather at the OVI Information Table and network with your conference colleagues as you view the Exhibit Hall.

Included with OA Conference

### LA Opera presents Fire and Blue Sky at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion (attendee option)

Tenor Russell Thomas, LA Opera's Artist in Residence, premieres a major new commission: a deeply personal, evening-length concert work created expressly for him by the Emmy Award-winning composer Joel Thompson with an original libretto by the celebrated poet Imani Tolliver.

OA Conference Website

# Opera Conference sign-up

(Page 2 of 2)

## Friday, June 7

### OVI Walking Tour

David Steiner, Vancouver BC tour guide and raconteur, will lead the exploration of the architecture, history, and culture in the neighborhood of the LA conference.

No Charge for OVI Members/Guests

# attendees \_\_\_\_\_

### OA Plenary Session: Is There a New Business Model?

A panel of experts will provoke discussion about ideas to reimagine opera's business model to operate efficiently and effectively while pursuing artistic and creative goals.

Included with OA Conference

### OVI Awardee Insights

Learn more about the pathway to success for the exciting Projects of Special Merit recognized at the conference, including new initiatives for marketing presented by Richard Horswell.

No Charge for OVI Members/Guests

# attendees \_\_\_\_\_

### OVI Luncheon - OLLA Volunteer Showcase

Enjoy a buffet lunch with your OVI colleagues as volunteers from the Opera League of Los Angeles present some of their successful initiatives supporting LA Opera.

# lunches \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$25 Item Total \_\_\_\_\_

### OVI Guided Tour of Broad Museum

Open to the public in 2015, the museum houses nearly 2,000 works of postwar and contemporary art acquired over 50 years by Eli and Edythe Broad.

No Charge for OVI Members/Guests

# attendees \_\_\_\_\_

### OVI Happy Hour

Within a 5-minute walk from the Omni Hotel, Vespaio offers a diverse selection of both seasonal dishes and family staples that infuse classic Italian tastes with notes of Mediterranean influence. Over small bites and a glass of wine, we will have a chance to share our opera volunteering experiences and compare notes from the Conference. Attendees with tickets to the Madama Butterfly performance will be able to walk back to the Omni Hotel to catch the Opera America bus to the venue. Others may want to stay for a leisurely dinner at

# attendees \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$50 Item Total \_\_\_\_\_

### Pacific Opera Project presents Madama Butterfly at the Aratani Theatre

With a new libretto by Josh Shaw (Pacific Opera Project) and Eiki Isomura (Opera in the Heights), Pacific Opera Project presents one of the world's most popular operas as you've never heard it before – in Japanese and

OA Conference Website

## Friday, June 7

### OA Closing Session

Conclude the annual conference with colleagues and special guests who will reflect on the impact of the meeting and offer strategies to advance the case for opera.

Included with OA Conference

### OVI Excursion to Academy Museum of Motion Pictures

Open to the public in 2021, the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures is the largest museum in the United States devoted to the arts, sciences, and artists of moviemaking.

(\$60 includes admission and round trip ride share. Optional lunch at Fanny's Café on your own.)

# attendees \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$60 Item Total \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Total \_\_\_\_\_

## Payment Information

\_\_\_\_\_ Check enclosed, payable to Opera Volunteers International

\_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card: \_\_\_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_\_\_ Mastercard \_\_\_\_\_ American Express

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry \_\_\_\_\_ CVC \_\_\_\_\_

Copy/clip and mail payment to:

Opera Volunteers International, Diane Schemm, Treasurer, 14410 S. Alden Ct., Olathe, KS 66072

Questions or to upgrade member level, email Diane at [dmschemm@gmail.com](mailto:dmschemm@gmail.com).

(Please do not email credit card information to Diane for security reasons.)

## 2024 Partners in Excellence

The prestigious Opera Volunteers International **Partners in Excellence Award** program recognizes individuals who have given extraordinary volunteer service to opera in their communities or groups observing special anniversaries. The awardees of this once-in-a-lifetime honor will be acknowledged at the OVI Awards Luncheon held this June at Opera Conference 2024 in Los Angeles.

### Sandi Bruns

### Opera Omaha



Sandi Bruns's dedication to the opera community is truly commendable, spanning over three decades of passionate volunteerism. Her journey began in 1985 when she took on the role of Vice President of Education for the Opera Omaha Guild, where her primary focus was on educating newcomers to the world of opera.

One of her notable contributions during this time was helping to establish "Opera and Entrees," a social event featuring a speaker from the current opera, to make opera more accessible and enjoyable for all. Bruns's leadership skills and commitment to opera education didn't go unnoticed, as she was elected President of the Opera Omaha Guild in 1987. Her tenure was marked by solid leadership and a strong emphasis on education.

Such was her impact that Bruns was re-elected to serve a second term as President in 1994, further solidifying her legacy within the guild. In addition to her local contributions, Bruns also made significant contributions at the national level. She served on the OVI Board for more than two decades in various capacities, and as President from 2003-2006. Her dedication was further evidenced by her involvement with the OPERA America Board during her time as OVI President.

Bruns remained committed to her roots in the Opera Omaha Guild. Even after her tenure with OVI, she continued to play an active role within the guild, demonstrating her enduring dedication to the local opera community. Her contributions extended beyond the Guild as well, as she served on the Opera Omaha Board of Directors and chaired the Opera Omaha Council, further solidifying her reputation as a pillar of service and leadership within the organization. Bruns currently serves as an Opera Omaha Advisor. Sandi Bruns's remarkable journey as an opera volunteer serves as an inspiration to all who value the arts and community engagement. Her legacy of dedication, leadership, and service will undoubtedly continue to enrich the opera community for years to come.

***Sandi Bruns' remarkable journey as an opera volunteer serves as an inspiration to all who value the arts and community engagement.***

## 2024 Partners in Excellence

### Kirk Hickey

### Houston Grand Opera



Kirk Hickey has volunteered for fifteen years in multiple roles at **Houston Grand Opera** where he has truly shown his expertise and dedication helping the Guild and HGO become a major part of the opera world in Houston. He is always ready to step in and help with guild activities from setting up fundraising auctions to handling publishing and advertising for the HGO guild and HGO.

Kirk truly stands out as a volunteer who went to work and made a difference from his first day in the guild. He joined the guild in 2009 just as we were planning our **Spring Event** which was a major fundraiser for the Guild. With his background in advertising and publishing, he quickly offered to coordinate our silent auction. As the event chair, he immediately began soliciting donations and more volunteers. He has truly made a difference in so many areas of the guild and other opera groups.

After the success of his first **HGO Guild** auction, Kirk took the position of VP-Marketing to oversee the marketing and publishing piece of the guild to build more outreach in the community. In 2015, the HGO Guild really reaped the rewards of Kirk's advertising and publishing experience under his leadership.

In addition to his knowledge and help in the advertising area, Kirk has volunteered in many other areas, including recruiting new members at the **Volunteer Gathering**. His work soliciting donations for fundraising events has the added benefit of friend-raising for HGO among local businesses. He is active in providing support for the **YAVA** program bringing in young singers to HGO for a week of classes and training.

When the Boutique encountered some major changes this year, he stepped up to welcome customers and assist as a cashier. Once again, he decided to volunteer in an area where he can use his community outreach skills. Kirk lives in the Heights area of Houston, and they have a small opera company called Opera in the Heights. They focus on providing young singers the opportunity to perform well-known Verdi and Puccini operas. They were looking for additional volunteers to assist, so again looking to help the company, Kirk joined the **Opera in the Heights Guild** and began to coordinate the concessions service selling coffee and cookies to generate much needed additional revenue for the company.

At one point, he worked in the box office to arrange ticket purchases, and the director of the company asked Kirk if he would oversee the volunteer nurses who volunteer in exchange for free tickets for providing an in-house resource for medical emergencies. There is one additional area where Kirk has brought tremendous help to the opera world. He volunteers with the **Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition** in the Houston area. He works checking in singers and guests, getting them to their practice areas, helping them on stage at the appropriate time, and celebrating with the winners. Before the day of the competition, Kirk has created marketing materials for the event, so Houston is aware of the competition as well as creating a program guide for the day. His skills have no end, and he is tirelessly willing to give his time and talent to opera everywhere.

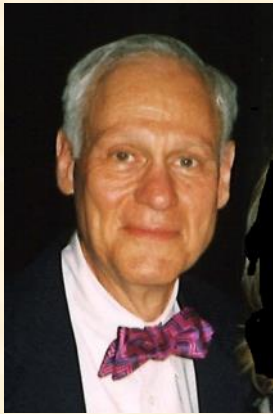
*“As I think back on all the ways that Kirk serves his community to spread the joy of opera, I know how deserving he is of this award. He truly uses his expertise and talents to help shine a bright light on opera in Houston.”*

Janet Sims

## 2024 Partners in Excellence

**Dr. Robert Feibel**

**Opera Theatre of St. Louis**



Dr. Robert Feibel has been active with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis in many capacities since its founding in 1976. While maintaining an active practice as an ophthalmologist in St. Louis, he did more than buy a ticket and attend the operas from the beginning. He joined the group of volunteers for Opera Theater of St. Louis and served as the second President of the “Opera Buffs” which is now known as the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis Guild, participates in several committees throughout the year, and is an active member of OTSL’s Board of Directors. His service has inspired others to participate.

Perhaps his most influential work has been his work as “The Opera Doc.” As a retired ophthalmologist, he has written articles and columns for the Guild’s newsletter under the name “The Opera Doc” since 1991. Through his writings, he has interviewed dozens of directors, artists, composers, librettists, and more. He has provided unique insight into topics from lighting and projections to sound design and vocal artistry, and even what it was like to hold a Festival Season in the parking lot during a pandemic.

He also creates the always fun Opera Doc columns that contain a quiz on OTSL and general opera history that people discuss for weeks on end. Dr. Feibel has been a cornerstone of Opera Theatre of Saint Louis for nearly 50 years, and he continues to find new ways to be involved. You’re likely to see Bob anytime you have a reason to visit the theater building or the administration and rehearsal hall building.

***Dr. Feibel continues to be one of the friendliest faces of Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.***

Below is one of Dr. Feibel’s recent *Opera Doc* articles: **What is a Répétiteur?**



The *Opera Doc* thought our readers might like to learn about what répétiteurs do for Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. We meet them when they present the popular pre-performance lectures at which we enjoy their informative and music-filled discussions. But the majority of their work is done backstage.

I interviewed veteran répétiteur **Damien Krzyzek**, who has worked in that role for OTSL for 14 seasons. Here are his answers.

**Opera Doc: What is the meaning of the word Répétiteur?**

**Damien:** The noun répétiteur is derived from the French verb répéter which means “to repeat, learn, or rehearse.” The female form of this word is répétitrice. In terms of spelling this word, it is widely accepted in the English language not to include the diacritical marks. But either is correct, and I prefer to include

*Article continues on page 10*

Find us on the internet at [www.OperaVolunteers.org](http://www.OperaVolunteers.org)

## Opera Doc - What is a répétiteur? *(Continued from page 5)*

these marks. Since it's a French word and the diacritics affect the pronunciation in French, I would keep them.



**Damien Krzyzek**

### **Opera Doc: Please tell us what a répétiteur does.**

**Damien:** A répétiteur is a musician on the staff of an opera company or opera house whose job is to guide singers through both the learning of and the interpretation of their roles. We serve a variety of functions during the process of putting together an opera. We often work one on one with singers to coach them on their individual roles before they come into the rehearsal room. This involves not only making sure that they're singing their musical material correctly, but also discussing the drama of the role and helping them find ways of communicating their characters' intentions through the singing and the text. In addition to supplying the orchestral material at the piano, we also sing the other roles so they can experience interaction with other characters prior to meeting their actual castmates.

Once we arrive in the rehearsal room, we serve as a kind of surrogate orchestra at the piano, since the expense of hiring a full orchestra for staging rehearsals would be cost-prohibitive. While we cannot replicate the exact sound of sixty string, woodwind, and brass players, we want to imagine the texture and color of the orchestra and render these as faithfully as possible with 10 fingers and 88 keys, so that the singers are not too surprised when they finally hear the orchestra. During rehearsals, we work closely with the conductors and other music staff, and we will frequently give notes to singers throughout the process.

### **Opera Doc: How do répétiteurs train?**

**Damien:** The training needed to become a répétiteur may vary from one individual to another, but we are all trained as pianists, usually from a very early age. Since diction coaching is an essential part of the process, we need to have studied lyric diction of at least four languages, and ideally will have at least a working knowledge of the languages themselves. The more, the better! It is also helpful to have a background in singing; some of us are classically trained singers, while others tend to be very shy about singing but are encouraged to have studied enough to understand the basic mechanics of the singing voice (i.e., breathing, support and tone production) so that we can be as helpful as possible in our collaborations with singers.

### **Opera Doc: What is your background and how did you become a répétiteur? Where besides OTSL have you worked?**

**Damien:** I started studying piano when I was five. I learned only solo piano repertoire until high school and took a long hiatus from the piano until I got to college. During my undergraduate years I majored in French with a minor in Spanish and wanted to be a college-level language teacher. I also started singing in choruses and often got to sing solos. My choral directors encouraged my musical pursuits, and I heard that there was such a thing as voice lessons. I had no idea what this actually meant, so I decided, mainly out of curiosity, to pursue a Master of Music in voice performance. I went to the University of Denver (my hometown), and this is where I was first exposed to operatic repertoire. I got to sing in scenes and full productions and thought I might try to be a professional opera singer. Around this time, I started playing the piano again because my colleagues in the voice program needed someone to play



for their lessons and recitals. I also started using my language skills to help them improve their pronunciation and found myself doing what I later learned was called “coaching.” I also studied with the renowned pianist and coach Martin Katz at the University of Michigan.

I auditioned for the Merola apprentice program at the San Francisco Opera and was accepted there in the summer of 2004. At that time, I met Stephen Lord, who was music director of both the Boston Lyric Opera and OTSL, and he gave me my first jobs at both companies after I graduated from Michigan. I lived in Boston from 2006 to 2022, where I worked at Boston Lyric Opera and later had a full-time job as a faculty member for opera, voice, and collaborative piano at New England Conservatory, in addition to my summer gigs at OTSL. I am now back in Denver, where I have been doing freelance coaching and pursuing my passion for playing chamber music.

**Opera Doc: Do all opera companies have répétiteurs to help the singers master their roles?**

**Damien:** Yes, although depending on the size of the company these may be full-time staff positions, seasonal positions or freelancers who are hired for one show at a time. Larger companies may also have separate coaches just for diction (who may or may not be pianists or play rehearsals), and depending on individual singers’ needs, there may be coaching sessions outside of rehearsal time.

**Opera Doc: Did you ever work as a conductor?**

**Damien:** I have not worked as an orchestral conductor but have become more familiar and comfortable with conducting singers. During OTSL’s 2021 “parking lot” season I conducted the GYA (Gerdine Young Artist) chorus in excerpts from *Die Fledermaus*, which was great fun. Some répétiteurs are avid conductors and many of them transition into conducting full time. I prefer the piano keys and the more intimate collaborations with individual singers and small chamber groups, so conducting is unlikely to become a major job for me.

**Opera Doc: What is the difference between a répétiteur and a concert accompanist?**

**Damien:** There is indeed a lot of overlap between playing opera rehearsals and performing with singers and instrumentalists in concert. While the training for opera coaching deals with languages and orchestral reductions, any collaborative piano curriculum at a university or conservatory will include live performance as well. Most répétiteurs (if not all) will frequently perform in concert with singers they’ve worked with.

**Opera Doc: What are some of your favorite operas?**

**Damien:** I’ve always had a passion for early 20th century repertoire. The scores are so rich, thrilling and almost superhuman. My favorites from this era are *Salome*, *Turandot*, and *Jenůfa*. But I also love the pure elegant beauty of Mozart. *Così fan tutte*, which OTSL is presenting this season, has my favorite ensembles.

**Opera Doc:** Thank you, Damien, for your interview.

## 2024 Partners in Excellence



### Tulsa Opera Guild

### Tulsa Opera 75th Anniversary



Tulsa Opera performances are held in the Chapman Music Hall at the Tulsa Performing Arts Center

Tulsa Opera is celebrating its 75th year of consecutive seasons in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It is the 12th oldest opera company in North America, and one of America's Top 10 favorite regional opera companies according to Opera News magazine. However, the story of opera and the foundations of Tulsa Opera begin with the city's earliest settlers. As Tulsa grew from cowtown to Oil Capital of the World seemingly overnight, the city attracted a sophisticated citizenry with a developed taste for the arts and culture. In 1904, just six years after Tulsa was incorporated as a city, Gounod's Faust was performed at the Epperson Opera House on Main Street – this is the city's first documented opera performance.

**As L. J. Martin, president of the Commercial Club and City of Tulsa founding father, famously commented in 1905, “Of course, we did not have any sewers or street paving, but these were luxuries that could wait, whereas an opera house loomed as an immediate necessity.”**

In 1914, Convention Hall opened at the corner of Brady and Boulder, and for the next fifteen years, this venue, now known as Tulsa Theater, hosted many opera greats of that time. This includes the great tenor Enrico Caruso, who died shortly after his appearance at the Brady Theater, and who some say still haunts the building today.



Enrico Caruso

Tulsa Opera, in its legendary history, has featured countless international opera stars, debuted several up-and-coming singers, and produced numerous extravagant performances.

Tulsa Opera works diligently to invest in the future of opera and has invested in Tulsa Youth Opera and collaborating with Tulsa Public Schools to create vocal music education programs.

The City of Tulsa highly regards the Tulsa Opera and The Guild of Tulsa Opera as the cornerstone to the Tulsa arts community and the ever-evolving cultural landscape of the city. Tulsa Opera is an integral part of Tulsa's past, present, and future.

Find us on the internet at [www.OperaVolunteers.org](http://www.OperaVolunteers.org)

## 2024 Projects of Special Merit

This prestigious honor is presented to groups who submit outstanding new and long-standing projects in support of opera. Eligible projects feature volunteers, and are designed to educate, build audience, and support the many facets of a company's work.

### The Coloratura! Newsletter Portland Opera Guild



The Portland Opera Guild newsletter has undergone a major redesign and editorial overhaul recently, as the Guild resumed its activities post-pandemic. The goal of The Coloratura is not just as a newsletter, but a way to augment positive public/opera influencer opinion about the artform in the state. As an organization that is older than the opera company its supports (founded in 1960), the Guild's mission is broad "To stimulate interest and participation in opera for the benefit of cultural, educational, and musical life in all of Oregon." It also provides a curated platform to provide information about opera

resources beyond those in the region. The Coloratura is produced in conjunction with each luncheon that occur one week before the first performance of each Portland Opera production.

Richard Horswell is responsible for the re-design of the newsletter, which he originally designed in 2005, in a full-bleed four-color high-paper grade format that can be either a self-mailer or distributed via envelope. The online version can be downloaded on The Guild's website. The Coloratura! has a printing partner that delivers "at cost" production work for approximately 130 newsletters that are printed. Each Coloratura newsletter costs approximately \$2.00 per piece (delivered) 4/year. It is the primary communications vehicle for The Guild and is used for membership recruitment, retention, news, milestones, and opera world news as space permits. Coupled with other vehicles including social media, phone tree, and email communications, members remain informed on Guild projects.

#### These project goals have been achieved:

- Highly-subscribed readership achieved. Extraordinary feedback to new format, ease of use, interest in editorial, and function for administrative matters like luncheon reservations.
- Building awareness with the Portland Opera and their leadership. Cohesive new partnership opportunities being developed between Portland Opera and Guild leadership.
- Thought leadership positioning achieved as a single point-of-contact for quality and reliable information about Guild and opera news in Oregon.



Portland Opera Guild Board contributes to The Coloratura

## 2024 Projects of Special Merit (continued)

### Opera for All film screenings

### Opera Maine



The 2023 Film Series, conceived, researched and planned by the Volunteer Programming Committee, presented a series of filmed operas from some of the world's most acclaimed opera companies, orchestras, directors and soloists. Admission is open to all, and free to selected senior communities and, through Opera Maine's Opera for All initiative, free to audience members aged 25 and under. New volunteers from the University of Maine graduate program will offer pre-show talks and set up and operate audio visual equipment and provide tech support. As always, the volunteers provided friendly greetings and served as ambassadors for Opera Maine. The success of the project led to it continuing in 2024. The 2023 Opera Film series, featuring three opera film screenings presented at Lunt Auditorium in Oceanview at Falmouth, Falmouth, Maine, engaged 14 Opera Maine volunteers, including the volunteer Programming Committee, ushers, technical/production support, and a dramaturg, all of whom made significant contributions to the program's success.

The eight-person volunteer Programming Committee took on the responsibility of researching and selecting opera films that would appeal to both long-time opera fans and newcomers to the art form, and that would offer a diverse range of musical and visual experience for the audience. Collectively, the committee has a vast range of opera-going experience and knowledge, and provided exceptional guidance. The committee met several times during the late fall/early winter 2022 planning period.

The three film screenings took place in January (*Die Fledermaus*, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, 2003, conducted by Vladimir Jurowski), March (*La Fille du Régiment*, Royal Opera, 2007, conducted by Bruno Campanella), and May (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, 1988, directed by Claus Viller for film and conducted by Gabriele Ferro.) Our volunteer ushers were the first members of the Opera Maine community to greet audience members upon their arrival, offering a warm welcome, providing information, and helping audience members to their seats. Our team of four ushers included one or our regular summer-season ushers as well as three new volunteers. The winter/spring film series allowed us to draw new volunteers as well as new audiences, and we anticipate engaging more winter/spring volunteers in the future. Opera Maine's Executive Director, Caroline Koelker, also greeted audience members and shared information about Opera Maine.

Opera Maine also engaged a new technical/production support volunteer to operate the projector and sound system for the screenings. In our summer live-opera season, we typically do not have a need for technical/production support volunteers, so the film series created a new engagement opportunity.

The Opera Film Series also allowed us to expand the ranks of our volunteer dramaturgs. Rebecca Goff, a graduate student at the University of Southern Maine (MM in Vocal Pedagogy) served as the dramaturg for the series, engaging audiences in a pre-screening talk and lively discussion for each film.

The Opera Film Series was attended by 180 audience members, with 42 people also attending the pre-show dramaturgical conversations.

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

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## 2024 OVI Matching Grants

*The purpose of Opera Volunteer International's Matching Grants program is to encourage the expansion and development of programs that recruit, develop, and train volunteers for service in their communities and for participation in all phases of opera company support.*

### Historic Tour

### Central City Opera Guild

Central City Opera Guild's annual Historic Properties preparation and maintenance project includes three core volunteer opportunities – **Planting Day, Housewarming, and Inventory Days/Season Closing**. The match for this grant will be raised through a combination of the Guild's annual Spring Membership Drive and individual solicitations of donors who are interested in CCO's historic preservation mission.

The Guild's work in the Historic Properties division of CCO performs a crucial function: the organization's Summer Opera Festival simply could not happen without the volunteers who prepare the environment and artist homes in Central City each year.

### Family Opera - The Magic Flute

### Chattanooga Symphony & Opera

In our 2024-25 season the Chattanooga Symphony & Opera will expand our opera offerings to children by presenting three Family Opera performances of the Magic Flute, including two in Title I schools. These performances are initially planned for either October 2024, January 2025, or May 2025 at Collegedale Commons or the Chattanooga Public Library, but dates and the venue are yet to be finalized and are still subject to change.

### 50th Anniversary Project

### Chicago Opera Theater

To support this project, COT formed a 50th Anniversary Committee, which is made up of long-time Chicago Opera Theater Board members, patrons, and artists (approximately 12) that are primarily seniors. Volunteers will work closely with Chicago Opera Theater staff in order to create the general guidelines for how the display will best function.

Once the guidelines are established, the volunteers will be given a greater sense of autonomy to execute the display to the committee's content. Staff seeks to use this time capsule as a way to provide these volunteers with a greater stake in this Gala as there is an acknowledgment that these volunteers are the lifeblood of COT and have seen the organization through much, if not all, of the history they are helping to represent through this display.

***OVI Group members in good standing are eligible to apply for matching grants which are awarded annually each February.***

***Visit our website for information about grants.***

## 2024 OVI Matching Grants

### World Opera Day Recital

### Erwin H Johnson Fund

The Erwin H. Johnson Memorial Fund Inc., for Opera, proposes a collaborative recital with the Tormenta D'Amore Baroque Ensemble, in celebration of World Opera Day in Buffalo, NY. The event will feature a repertoire of 17-18th century celebratory arias, art songs, and pieces, played on period Baroque instruments—harpsichord, lute, and Baroque violin— as they would have been centuries ago. Performers will briefly introduce each piece: highlighting historical performance practices, composer information, and interesting facts about the music and instruments featured. These will double as mini music appreciation and music history lessons, educating audiences and fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of an often underrepresented genre of operatic and classical vocal music.

### Opera on the Steps

### Niagara Arts Cultural Center

NACC Opera on the Steps will take place July 2024, at the Niagara Arts and Cultural Center in a weeklong celebration of the 100 year old Niagara Falls High School building. It will be a free outdoor concert organized by volunteers from the NACC opera committee. Staff will also provide fundraising for the project. This will be the first free outdoor event for NACC.

### Involving Local Performers in *La Traviata*

### Peach State Opera

Peach State Opera will increase our efforts to include local community choruses and dance groups into as many of our performances as possible for the 2024–25 season of Giuseppe Verdi's "La traviata" (The Fallen Woman). Our goal is to have these local groups of volunteers perform **alongside** our professional cast which not only gives these artists the opportunity to be on stage in an opera, but helps us to attract their community as a whole by encouraging their friends and families to attend. This provides us with a better chance to engage these underserved communities that would usually not be exposed to opera.

### All Access Opera

### Young Patronesses of the Opera - Miami

Implementation of an All Access Opera Materials for Autistic and Neuro-diverse Children that includes development of materials for our In School opera performances of Hansel & Gretel mini opera to 25 elementary schools and producing opera events for neuro diverse audiences. YPO has supplemented our Opera Funtimes Hansel and Gretel children's workbook with a story board and other materials to make them more accessible.

We have joined with Nashville Opera to implement a revolutionary program, All-Access Opera Education, to make opera inclusive for ALL students— providing special evidence-based toolkits designed in collaboration with the Treatment and Research Institute of Autism Spectrum Disorders at Vanderbilt University. The program bolsters accessibility for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other disabilities and creates exciting new learning opportunities and audience experiences for students through opera. It is the first program of its kind to be documented for replication in communities across the United States.

*Your donations or membership at the grantor level help support our matching grants.*

Find us on the internet at [www.OperaVolunteers.org](http://www.OperaVolunteers.org)