

# Thoughts from Parma

Many among the 330 or so delegates would vote for Parma as one of the most successful conferences in Opera Europa's history. Sunny autumn weather, delicious local food, and a choice of four Verdi operas combined with the warm hospitality of Teatro Regio to provide the perfect setting for lively debate about topical issues and the guiding theme of Opera Pilgrimage. An opening day planned in conjunction with our friends at Fedora brought together an especially strong representation from marketing and fundraising delegates. The conference also marked the launch of our new digital platform OperaVision.

**Bernard Foccroulle** – *Opera must be a living art form. It is about participation in the transformation of the world we live in. That means access to a wide population. There is a diversity deficit in our global world. We need to adapt our methodology to the needs of creative artists. I propose:*

1. A discussion between European Network of Opera Academies (ENOA) and Opera Europa about diversity; how opera may become more central in our world.
2. What to do about increasing the presence of creative artists in our work: what if every theatre were to appoint a composer or visual artist in residence?
3. More participation by artists in Opera Europa conferences.

**Emily Gottlieb** – *A singer should be trained to acquire a portfolio of different skills.*

**Kathleen Tynan** – *Why are we training young singers; and what are we training them for?*

*(...) Singers are story-tellers. Opera is text and music; but it is also physical story-telling.*

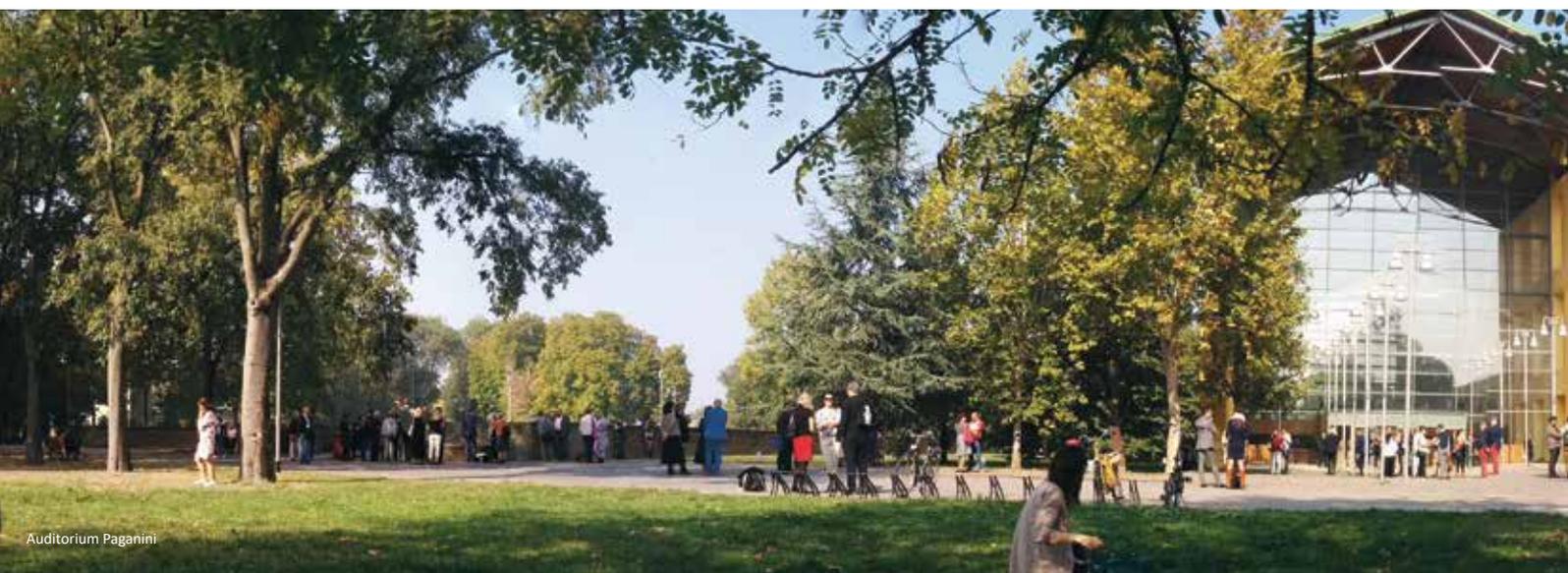
*(...) We must find a pathway for singers.*

*(...) Singers learn best through performance. So, engage them in opera performances as undergraduates.*

*(...) They must connect with the theatre world.*

**Christina Scheppelmann** – *It is important that our training involves composers as well as singers, and that they should be incorporated into young artist programmes.*

**Nicole Newman** – *A brand is an emotional journey that your customer has to take with you.*



# Coming back from Parma

by Emilie Tack, Membership Coordinator at Opera Europa

As you all know, a few days after Parma, Gérald Philippe left us for a new journey with Capella Mediterranea. As a huge fan of Baroque music, Festival Verdi was perhaps slightly too 'contemporary' for Gérald, but he acknowledged that Graham Vick's staging of *Stiffelio* was one of the most intense experiences he ever had at the opera. We hope that you, dear colleagues, did not suffer too much back pain after standing for a few hours during the performance.

As the new Membership Coordinator at Opera Europa, I am very grateful for having met most of you in Parma. It is so vibrant and inspiring to meet people who are so dedicated to music and opera.

We have also welcomed new Opera Europa members in Parma: **Slezské divadlo Opava** from Czech Republic, **Les Arts Florissants**, **Théâtre & Musique** and **Opéra in Situ** from France, **Saarländische Staatstheater** from Germany and **Novosibirsk State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre** from Russia. *Benvenuti a tutti!*

Whether you are new to Opera Europa or not, we hope you truly enjoyed the experience in Parma and that you came back with a suitcase full of *Parmigiano* and *Prosciutto*.

Opera Europa is so thankful to Teatro Regio di Parma for having so kindly welcomed us all during the busy period of the Festival. *Grazie mille.*

