

opera europa NEWS

Winter 2018
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The professional association of opera houses and festivals in Europe | L'organisation professionnelle pour les compagnies et festivals d'opéra en Europe



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Opera sings to the World

The year 2018 has been notable for its focus on opera as a global phenomenon. While Europe may still claim to be its birthplace, it is no longer the sole owner.

Last spring's **World Opera Forum**, so generously hosted by Teatro Real in Madrid, was a joyful event enlivened by invigorating arguments about heritage, new work, diversity and advocacy. It strengthened the bond with our fellow associations Opera America and Ópera Latinoamérica, and reached out to colleagues working in Asia, Africa and Australasia. The challenge was: where do we go from here?

In September, I visited three cities in Siberia and was struck by the friendship and hunger for closer links from theatres in Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk and Yakutsk. Two members of Opera Europa's Board, Mathieu Jouvin and Lauri Pokkinen, were invited to Moscow this November to participate and share our Benchmarking initiative with the Association of Russian Music Theatres.

Our autumn conference, spread across four theatres in Paris, used the theme of **Imagination** to explore ideas which might contribute towards a more vital role for opera in society today. You may read some of them in the Paris retrospective on pages 8-9 and 12-13 of this newsletter.

During the Paris conference, I sought, not entirely successfully, to build a consensus for an Opera Advocacy campaign. It will not be easy but it will be necessary if opera is to survive. So, I make no apology for outlining a kind of manifesto and action plan on the central pages 10-11 of this newsletter.

Our aim is for the campaign to resonate throughout the world, and we want every member to contribute, so that the year 2019 truly marks a difference when our voice will become a **Song for the World**.

Nicholas Payne

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The inner workings of the Artistic Administration forum

Report on the AA forum meeting in London 27-28 September 2018, by Audrey Jungers, General Manager

Opera Europa's recent Artistic Administration forum seems to answer particular needs for our members. Their listserv has been extremely active in the past few months, on varied topics.

During their last meeting in London at the end of September, participants found they didn't have enough time to delve into the thrilling topics of their main sessions.

Host artistic director Daniel Kramer gave a provocative welcome address to spark discussion and debate among the 60 participants.

Efficiency management in the production process brought views from repertoire and stagione houses, with examples from Jan Henric Bogen (Opera Vlaanderen), Jessica Fjelkegård (GöteborgsOperan), Terri-Jayne Griffin (English National Opera) and Ivo Graca (Prague).

Susanna Schmidt (Bregenz Festival), Cormac Simms (Royal Opera House Covent Garden) and Malte Puls (Volksoper Wien) shared their expertise on guest contracts, from special clauses on media rights to the challenging GDPR.

Bob Brandsen, chair of Opera Europa's Technical & Production forum, led an interactive session to update the Co-production guidelines produced by Opera Europa in 2005. They are now available online.

The presentation by Sune Hjerrild and Mike Gibb on the joint venture finalised over the summer between Truelinked and Operabase gave food to much discussion, too.

Participants were invited to attend auditions organised by London-based agencies prior to the conference, and auditions of the Royal Opera House's Jette Parker Young Artists Programme and the English National Opera's Harewood Artists Programme. They also attended the premiere of *Salome* staged by Adena Jacobs, and got to sit in on the *Porgy and Bess* Sitzprobe.

The steering group, composed of Aurore Aubouin (La Monnaie), Jessica Fjelkegård and Moritz Reissenberger (Aalto-Musiktheater Essen) thanked Terri-Jayne for her contributions over the years, as she was ending her work at English National Opera; and are welcoming Laura Canning (Garsington), Katja Tammela (Finnish National Opera) and Stephanie Wippel (Wiener Staatsoper), bringing varied expertise to their working team to plan their next meeting, to be held between 24 and 27 April in Antwerp, adjoining Opera Europa's spring conference on the theme of Creation.



Truelinked and Operabase

by Nicholas Payne, Director

As announced in the autumn newsletter, Operabase, the casting tool created over 20 years ago by Mike Gibb, was acquired through merger last summer by Truelinked, a company founded as an artists' agency in Denmark in 2013 by Sune Hjerrild and Jan Pilgaard Carlsen. Their declared ambition is to expand and develop the services in new directions while maintaining the service to opera professionals.

Members of our Artistic Administration forum presented with Truelinked's proposal in London in September, and others during our Paris conference in October, have expressed concern that the impartial database might become compromised by conflicting commercial interests. We have sought assurances that the fundamental Operabase service will be maintained if it is to remain part of Opera Europa's offer to its members.

In Paris, the Board agreed, and I told Sune Hjerrild of Truelinked, that we would:

1. Recruit a small consultative group to test changes in the offer of services during the next two months
2. Allocate a session during the Antwerp conference for Truelinked to describe its future offer before consideration at the General Assembly
3. Draft amendments and additions to its initial Agreement covering the continuation of services in 2019

Subsequently on 25 October, and with inadequate warning or testing, a new version of the site was launched, which rendered several features unobtainable to our members. Muriel Denzler has been working to eliminate the errors and bugs, and we have been in regular contact with users to monitor progress and opinions. Both Mike and Muriel, separately, have assured us that they are committed to maintaining the main features of the database, including its impartiality in presenting information. Truelinked's offer to us was to maintain the service and price for 2019, and our aim remains to hold it to that undertaking.

An Agreement for Professional Services covering the year 2019 was prepared and subsequently amended during November, so that it reflects the expectations of both parties. Truelinked 'plans to launch a renewed version of the Services during 2019, and the implementation of the Features can be expected to change significantly. It is in the interest of both parties to make this transition as smooth as possible and Truelinked will therefore offer information to your Members before and during this transition.'

We have also undertaken to activate the test process with six regular users representative of the membership. Truelinked has agreed that this consultative process be completed before the end of January.

The first aim, as agreed by the Board in Paris, was to secure a continuation of the basic Operabase Professional service at the same cost through 2019.

The second aim is to have a clear proposition for the future from Truelinked before end-March, so that options may be presented to our members before and at the spring conference in Antwerp towards the end of April.

Leadership in Lille

Report on the HR forum meeting in Lille 4-6 October 2018, by Célia Grau, Event Coordinator

On 4, 5 and 6 October this year, the Human Resources Forum gathered at Opéra de Lille to discuss the topic of leadership.

To introduce the group to that theme, Isabelle Jonckheer (La Monnaie / De Munt), Maurizio Boschini (Teatro Comunale di Bologna) and Petra Kron Forsling (Royal Swedish Opera) presented very different leadership training initiatives in their respective houses that were used to increase the wellbeing of the staff.

On the night of 4 October, the participants were invited by the Opéra de Lille to the poetic première of Händel's *Rodelinda* conducted by Emmanuelle Haïm and directed by Jean Bellorini.

On Friday morning the group received some input from Gabriel Morin, Doctor in Management Sciences, to activate a reflection on the difference between leadership and management. He argued that management is about education and coordination but not about change; whereas a leader changes the world with innovation, risks and creating value. Leadership is a living and connecting process, which creates

followers. 'If everyone is thinking the same thing, then no one is thinking'! Dr. Morin wanted to demystify the relationship between artist and audience. He demonstrated how a leader exhibits potency rather than power or domination.

A few common problems appeared during the sessions of Friday and Saturday. The group agreed on the crucial role of the HR department in times of internal crisis, as shown by two case studies: one presented by Inna Fedorova (Mikhailovsky Opera St. Petersburg) and the other by Hanna Fontana (Finnish National Opera and Ballet). Another growing topic presented by Steve Foulston (Royal Opera House) was the increasing Sound issues and hearing problems in orchestras that have consequences on the musicians' working rights. It was agreed that this was a topic which ought to be shared with the Artistic Administration group at a future joint meeting.

Considering the evolution of the issues inside the theatres but also taking into account the external conditions (Brexit, moving work force), the HR Forum is planning to discuss the future of work in Opera Houses at its next meeting which will take place during the Spring Conference at the end of May.



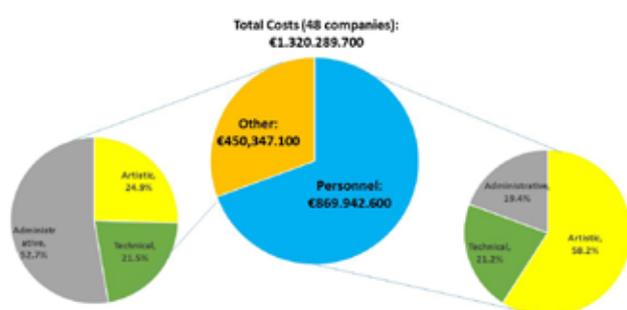
How to recognise you are the best

Launch of Opera Europa's online benchmarking tool, by Susanna Werger, Membership Coordinator

Last summer in Zurich, all OE members were invited to participate in a broad benchmarking exercise exceeding the previous mapping exercise. Nearly 60 members returned their questionnaires showing their brilliant yet extremely confidential figures. Of course you cannot translate the artistic quality your company stands for into a questionnaire, as detailed as it may be. It shows, however, with what means – funding, manpower and material – you are getting there.

We are now providing to everyone who participated an online tool on our website that allows you to compare yourself to

Expenditure: 2/3 of total costs were people, and just under half 'Artistic'



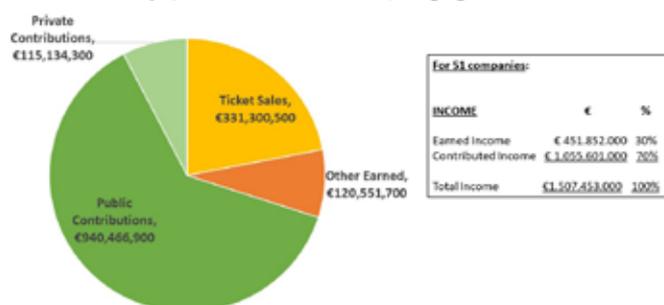
have some hard proof for the donors and the policy makers. You could ask for more seeing others do less productions than you do with more staff, or argue your expenses are much more reasonable than many others in order to negotiate an increase of your funding.

Yet the figures – as unequal and individual they might be – could stimulate you to rethinking your own organisation. On stage, anachronistic structures are revealed in a second by any critic, but behind the scenes, they are most likely to become apparent by your own initiative. Benchmarking could be the necessary impulse for overcoming them and getting inspired to try out something new that might suit you better.

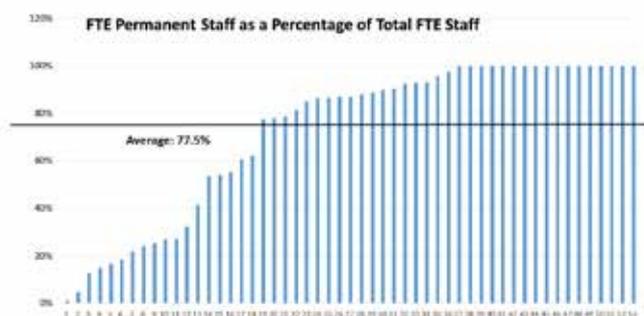
other companies. It is for you to identify how you can use the numbers to relate to different companies. Knowing that every country, every company and every single production reveals their very individual structure, culture, and financial challenges, your benefit is that this diversity somehow neutralises the competitive aspect and the need to justify your figures among your peers.

Next time you are claiming that your company is offering outstanding quality for relatively little money, you will

Income: Nearly 1/3 of income was earned, ranging from 6% to 63%



Organisation: Permanent staff averaged 78 % of total (19300 – 53 cos.)



Please check out the new tool in the private member's area on our website.



Mathieu Jouvin, alongside Lauri Pokkinen, explaining the uses of Benchmarking to the Association of Russian Music Theatres in Moscow on 14 November.

Provoking imagination

The quotations below were noted verbatim at the Provocation and other sessions during Opera Europa's Autumn Conference, 17-20 October 2018, Paris

The stage is a place where unseen things appear before us. We understand that the greater part of life escapes our senses!
Peter Brook, theatre maker

Many children, teenagers and also adults are unable to distinguish between the digital and the real world. One fatal consequence is a loss of empathy. Without empathy, human beings cannot coexist peacefully.

Opera offers an opportunity to conquer an additional piece of the world for oneself. The process of imagination gives the audience the possibility to have enriching experiences beyond their daily lives.

The question of our times is how people from different cultures and religions can live together well. One of the key ingredients is empathy.

Birgit Meyer, Intendantin Oper Köln

The real power of theatre is to help young people to become free minded men and women.

An innovator has to walk in the future with a foot in the past. We need to build a bridge to connect the world inside theatre with the world outside.

Corinne Baroni, Director Teatro Coccia di Novara

Around us the artistic, economic, political and educational landscape is changing. We need to rethink the relationship with the people who live and work in those cities we serve. Equally, digital as a tool to make, share and experience culture is radically altering the habits and expectations of our audiences...If the arts in education are isolated to only those who can afford a private education, how do we possibly claim to be relevant to all?

David Collins, Director of External Affairs Opera North

I want to share this privilege as much as possible, and not to keep to myself what I was given...The exuberance, the depth, the visionary depth of baroque music grabs you so strongly that you can't resist!...It is actually very modern and easy to share with incredibly varied audiences. It allows dreaming, developing all kinds of fantasies; it lets your imagination talk.

Emmanuelle Haïm, conductor and founder director of Le Concert d'Astrée

Opera works from local premises towards the global stage. It is a naturally multicultural and multilingual system rooted in its own community...The ultimate immersive experience is still the Opera performed in the opera house by 200-odd individuals...but it is not the only option anymore. We need to keep the whole ecosystem healthy.

Lauri Pokkinen, Social Responsibility Manager Finnish National Opera



Europe is a political project based on culture. It needs to demonstrate added value. There is an increasing focus on values and identity.

Opera is a mirror of society. The digital revolution will extend cultural participation. OperaVision shows that it is relevant, modern and has a future.

Michel Magnier, Director for Culture and Creativity, European Commission

We need to become better at being honest with the customer. Nine out of ten people who say they don't like opera have never attended one. We need to fit around audiences and consumers, and present a choice of how to tell stories. Stay true to what we do, but communicate with audiences on equal terms.

Kasper Holten, CEO Royal Danish Theatre



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Make relationships with people. Make a show with participation of the audience. Create partnerships with those who live in the suburbs. Show them the people behind the show. The objective is social integration.

Mathieu Jouvin, Deputy Director Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

We must believe in our art form, and strive for the best quality performances we can; but the change is that now people in the house really focus on what the audience want. We focus on segmented marketing, social media, live streaming, insourced ticketing, and bridges with other cultural forms. 2022 will be a focal point of a new opera using immersive technology.

Gita Kadambi, CEO Finnish National Opera & Ballet



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Objective research shows that opera is seriously out of fashion. Yet stakeholders are paying 50% or more of its costs. The internet will change artistic communication. We shall change the work we put on stage. In Europe theatre is a public service, so expect the people to express their will. Expect Revolution Châtelet; Revolution Opera!

Ruth Mackenzie, Artistic Director Théâtre du Châtelet

Performance does not happen on stage; it is in the head of the beholder...Opera is not only a ritual. It is also community building. An experience to reach catharsis...Is it our responsibility to educate? Should culture and education not be in the hands of one Ministry? Our links should be with the education organisations in our community.

Peter de Caluwe, General Director La Monnaie/De Munt

Participation projects should be seen as art, not just as an audience development tool.

Rainer Simon, Assistant to Intendant Komische Oper Berlin

Are we crusaders, trying to convince the world to become opera lovers? Let's not sell out what we stand for to attract audiences at any cost.

Astra Irmeja-Šēfere, Head of Artistic Planning & Production Latvian National Opera



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Advocacy Campaign

A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus, but a moulder of consensus

Martin Luther King, 1968

Opera Europa is a democratic association which operates according to the will of the majority of its members. At the same time, it has a responsibility as a supranational body to coordinate diverse views and to promote opera in the wider world.

More than a decade ago in Paris, we launched the European Opera Days, designed to open up theatres to new audiences. Today, many opera houses offer their own Open Days to welcome the public within and outside their buildings. On our return to Paris this autumn, it was resolved to refresh the formula with a new campaign to advocate opera in our communities.

Its purpose is to reach beyond committed operagoers to people for whom the arts are not a central experience in life but who nonetheless help to pay for them through their taxes. Its aim is to build a broad consensus of social and political support for culture.

Opera is important to us but it is only one part of a culture which embraces art, music, dance, theatre, film and all creative activities. It may have derived from Europe, but it is no longer confined to Europe. We belong to a movement which seeks to enrich people's lives throughout the world.

Education lies at the heart of the process. To quote Kelly Pollock, from the Center for Creative Arts in St Louis:

The true purpose of arts education is not necessarily to create more dancers or artists. [It's] to create more complete human beings who are critical thinkers, who have curious minds, who can lead productive lives.

Everybody has a voice. Making it sing is a basic human function reaching back to the dawn of humanity. We look to share the joy of singing and music and theatre, whether as participant or spectator.

Our motto is: **Opera sings for society.**

Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'

Martin Luther King (again)

How best may opera contribute? Our proposal is for a **World Opera Day** or **World Song Day**, after the example of World Theatre Day or Sport Relief Day. Its purpose would be outward-looking rather than inward-looking. What practical actions may opera companies and operagoers take to raise awareness and financial and social support for others in need?

The foremost need is education in the broadest sense: youth music-making; craft apprenticeships; worthwhile job opportunities for young people. Over the next months, we will investigate how most effectively to channel such support to those who most need it.

To that end, we are exploring partnerships and seeking expert professional advice on how best to plan, promote and secure the independence of such a campaign.

The campaign aims to build on the success of last April's World Opera Forum in Madrid, when joint Advocacy of Opera emerged as one of the most urgent global issues. We are therefore building on our existing alliance with our colleagues in Opera America and Ópera Latinoamérica (OLA), and aspire to embrace Asia, Africa and Oceania too.

Initial exchanges with the North and South American associations have identified the fall as their prime choice of campaigning time. Opera America's National Opera Week will launch on 25 October in 2019, which by happy coincidence will be the mid-point of Opera Europa's autumn conference when many members will gather together.

That date 25 October is already celebrated as International Artists Day and is the birthday of Pablo Picasso, perhaps the last century's most iconic artist. It is also the anniversary of two composers who have created the most enduringly popular operas and operettas: Georges Bizet's *Carmen* and Johann Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*. Further to enhance the international appeal of 25 October, it is also the birthday of two universally loved singers: Russian Galina Vishnevskaya and American Barbara Cook.

Such a confluence of the stars must be an omen!

Action plan	
November 2018	Selection of Opera Europa Board advisory group Initial Contacts with Opera America and OLA
December 2018	Consultation with expert advisors Contact with ITI and UNESCO
January 2019	Work on finessing World Opera Day plan
7 February 2019	Opera Europa Board reviews plan in Barcelona
22/23 February 2019	Opera America Board meeting in New York
March 2019	Outline of plan to members in spring newsletter
18-20 March 2019	Fundraising forum in Milan
27 April 2019	Revised plan to General Assembly in Antwerp
Summer 2019	Detailed work preparing campaign
25 October 2019	Launch of campaign at autumn conference
December 2019	Conclusion of campaign for 2019



© Ken Howard



© Mike Martin



Sculpture by Picasso



© Barbara Palfy | Volksoper Wien

Thoughts from our young Opera professionals



Opera is a mental asylum, schizophrenic and apologetic. What sustains it is the magic of the voice... Imagination fuels us and drives us forward... Opera houses are socially beneficial because they create employment, even if they also waste money.

Karolina Sofulak, Warsaw



Why should the uncommitted like opera is the wrong question. Tell stories for today, not yesterday, not tomorrow... We aren't talking to crows, but to individuals who will perceive the experience differently from the person sitting next to them. We have to create familiarity with opera, not the opera house.

Maria Inés Olmedo, Mexico/London



Opera is rooted in ancient Greek tragedy, explaining who we are... We struggle to find a modern voice. A stage director must hear the music and combine image and sound, because music plumbs the deepest feelings.

Niki Ellinidou, Athens



Is it about us or them? I am frustrated by the injustices of our world, with its homeless refugees. We should learn as well as teach; not just sit and talk but go out and do something.

Sofia Surgutschowa, Paris/Berlin



Opera is not symbolic; it is entertainment. We are not giving our audience space... Opera is a European art. Should opera-makers exercise their place within society?

Esteban Muñoz, Chile/Berlin



Are some Intendanten, being convinced they know the answers, afraid of measuring the arts and taking new initiatives?

Anne Sophie Beyrer, Karlsruhe



Opera houses should open their doors to companies that will find a new way. Be more open to small companies... Everyone is afraid, but we have to be positive.

Maxine Devaud, Switzerland/Berlin



Contemporary opera is the problem. We need a new Verdi or Wagner to renovate the repertory... We do a lot of things badly, so create the wrong image of waste. We must look more to the public.

Daniele Milazzo, Firenze



Opera does not reflect society's diversity. It needs to be more concerned in a social way... Our generation has to change the way to tell the stories, be more creative.

Margot Lallier, Paris



We talk about how to market rather than how to communicate. The opera house should be seen as a facility, a tool. Monteverdi created opera far from the opera house. The building was made to serve the art, but should not be a constraint... It's about genetics rather than another face-lift... Opera is part of humanity's heritage. The first step to break through is to be curious. Leaders have a responsibility to invent new trends... A more holistic approach to the ecosystem is required, but attitude change is difficult to create.

Krystian Lada, Poland/Brussels

Social infrastructure

Notes taken from architect David Zahle's [Bjarke Ingels Group] contribution to Opera Europa's Imagination Conference

Architecture is about social infrastructure. It is a dialogue with stakeholders. A building looks the way it does because it performs the way it does.

Social infrastructure involves thinking about people. You build on existing infrastructure to create an urban space filled with graphic art and storytelling.

We are not exclusive taste judges – architecture is the art of inclusion of multiple inputs from all aspects of society. We say yes to the program requirements, to the budget constraints, to the legal limitations and the structural boundaries, the complaints of the neighbours and the concerns for the climate. Essentially by increasing the demand on the performance of the architecture we force our designs into back bending forms that twist and turn to keep everybody happy and avoid stepping on anybody's toes.

New infrastructure asks the question: how do you experience the landscape? In a cultural institution, flow is everything. You create a landscape of nature, buildings, sculptures.

VIA West 57th Street is an example of combining the density of a tower with a courtyard community. We call it a 'courtscraper'! The building looks different because it performs differently!

By proactively cross-breeding the public infrastructure with social programs we can inject new urban life forms in to the heart of our cities.

MECA in Bordeaux brings together three cultural institutions into one building - a building integrated with the waterfront promenade of Bordeaux to allow public life to flow through the MÉCA.

The three institutions and their shared facilities are gathered around a public space framing a fifth program – and outdoor urban room that will frame the everyday life of Bordeaux flowing through the expansive space along the promenade or to and from the river. On special occasions, it will turn in to an urban stage, or an outdoor gallery to extend the art into the city, as well as the city into the architecture. The urban room is at once a frame for the artwork, a stage for the performances, a screening room for the media collections and perhaps most importantly an open room for the urban life of Bordeaux to flow through and engage with the arts.





OPERA VISION

A year of OperaVision

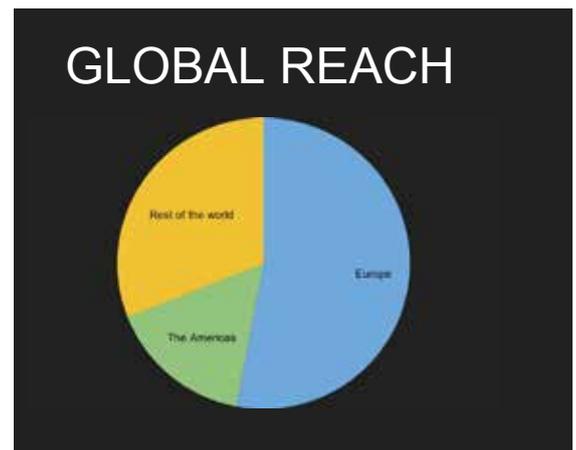
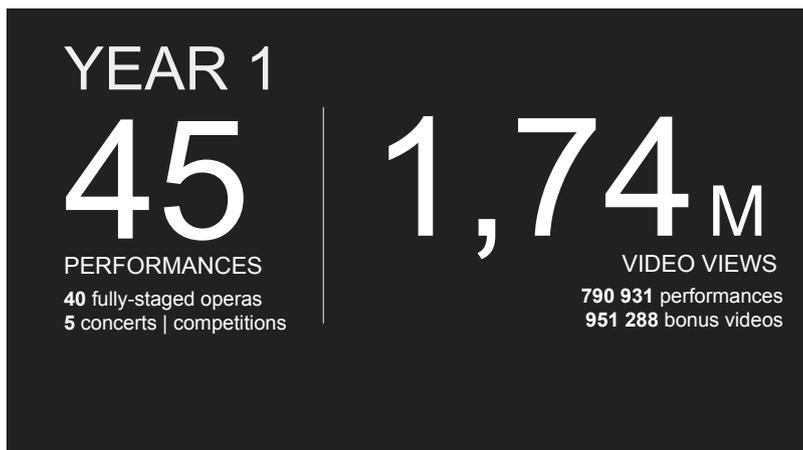
by Luke O'Shaughnessy, OperaVision Platform Manager and Roger Flores, Communications Coordinator

OperaVision has been streaming operas for over 12 months since the site was launched on 12 October 2017. In this time, the platform has streamed 45 shows, that's an average of three to four new full-length mostly live performances per month. There have been 40 operas and 5 concerts, galas and competitions. Up until the end of October 2018, we have already counted 1 742 259 video views: 790 931 views for the full-length performances and 951 288 views for bonus videos.

The live element is highly valued by our online audiences. On 19 October 2018, more than 5 000 people tuned in for Verdi's *Rigoletto* live from Teatro Massimo di Palermo – that is four times the capacity of the theatre. Viewers from around the

world joined via our live chat, sending 916 messages during this live stream. Our live streams are building a community of passion opera lovers and curious observers.

OperaVision indeed has a big following on social media, which is growing daily on Facebook (18 368 page likes), Twitter (5 426 followers), Instagram (2 262 followers). These channels especially target audiences under the age of 35. The biggest growth has been on YouTube where we have gained 12 879 subscribers since launch; an additional 1 581 subscribers in October this year alone. OperaVision publishes a weekly e-newsletter issued in English, French and German to mailing list that currently number 20 461 recipients.

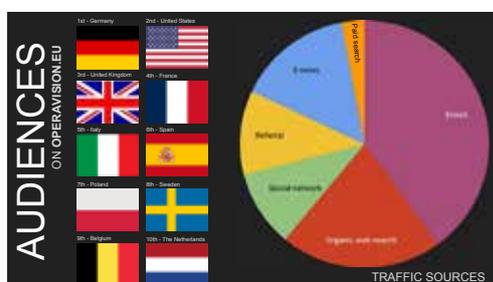


The variety of the productions offered on OperaVision – from Mozart's *The Magic Flute* to Gotovac's *Ero the Joker* and from Bellini's *Norma* to Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* – gives the opportunity for first-timers to get to know the well-known repertoire and for specialists to enjoy rarities.

The OperaVision website also features multimedia programme notes for every performance, including detailed synopses, insights, context of the productions as well as video-interviews with people involved in the production process such as directors, conductors, stage- and costume designers and soloists. Our online quizzes and games, and sections for these new to opera and for young artists remain popular.

Encouraged by its first year, OperaVision aims to double its YouTube subscribers and views during the year ahead. OperaVision plans to expand its audiences across the globe, focusing on collaborations with partners who can relay our content to more viewers in the Americas and the rest of the world.

There follows is a preview of what to look forward to on OperaVision in the coming months.



WINTER



Co-funded by the
Creative Europe Programme
of the European Union

HIGHLIGHTS

DECEMBER

<i>Sleeping Beauty</i>	Tchaikovsky	Finnish National Ballet	06.12.2018
<i>Macbeth</i>	Verdi	Teatro La Fenice	07.12.2018
<i>Tosca</i>	Puccini	Teatro dell'Ópera di Roma	14.12.2018
<i>Káťa Kabanová</i>	Janáček	Teatro San Carlo Napoli	20.12.2018

JANUARY

<i>Le nozze di Figaro</i>	Mozart	Royal College of Music	01.01.2019
<i>Manru</i>	Paderewski	Polish National Opera	18.01.2019
<i>La Bohème</i>	Puccini	Komische Oper Berlin	27.01.2019
<i>Xerxes</i>	Handel	Deutsche Oper am Rhein	29.01.2019

FEBRUARY

<i>Billy Budd</i>	Britten	Den Norske Opera	8.02.2019
<i>La Gioconda</i>	Ponchielli	La Monnaie De Munt	12.02.2019
<i>Brothers</i>	Bjarnason	Icelandic Opera	22.02.2019

MARCH

<i>Ice</i>	Kuusisto	Finnish National Opera	5.03.2019
<i>Werther</i>	Massenet	Bergen National Opera	22.03.2019



Macbeth | Teatro La Fenice | Michele Crosera



Tosca | Teatro dell'Ópera di Roma | Yasuko Kageyama

Communications Mantle

Reflections on Opera Europa marketing & communications forum (Tenerife, October 2018) by Matt Carwardine-Palmer, Director of Marketing & Sales, Welsh National Opera

'All Marketers Are Liars Tell Stories' is the provocative title of a brilliant book by marketing guru Seth Godin: *'Stories make it easier to understand the world. Stories are the only way we know to spread an idea. Marketers didn't invent storytelling. They just perfected it.'*

In late October, marketing & communications staff from opera houses and companies across Europe met at the spectacular Auditorio de Tenerife for an inspirational couple of days talking about storytelling. Between the heavy downpours and bright autumn sunshine, concepts were debated, case studies scrutinised and best practice shared. To give you a flavour of the conversation, here are just a few memories of the forum.

The opening session from Ingo at McCann Spain set the context, that good stories have the same effect on our brains as drug addiction or falling in love. Ingo talked us through techniques and structures of storytelling and showed how a story can be told through advertising in just 3 seconds ('the unskippable advert').

Elodie & Sophie from Opera national de Paris told us about their season campaign 'What's the story?' and inspirational examples of production promotion including the use of drones to capture new angles of the set design, and how to use Instagram to capture the essence of a story in two sentences.

Nitchka from Dutch National Opera & Ballet explained how they are making their opera more 'showable' and 'shareable' through innovative digital content, and also how running events for influencers – and opening up access – has helped them reach potential new audiences.



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Ing-Marie and Lena from GoteborgsOperan shared their 'close-up' video profiles and inspired us all with how they launched their new identity in 2017 by combining their values as a thinking and changing organisation with their relationship with the sea.

Josep from Molina Visuals talked about how rebrands for the Opheus Chamber Orchestra and Mahler Chamber Orchestra changed the story for the orchestras themselves whilst staying true to their values.

Katja from Finnish National Opera & Ballet demonstrated how a season campaign was able to be re-purposed when the initial campaign was overtaken by political events, and reassured us that it could be possible to empower individual's departments internally to run their own Instagram accounts, attracting followers interested in their craft – again reaching potential new audiences in authentic and organic ways.

This was a richly rewarding and thought-provoking forum with ideas shared, new friendships formed. Our generous hosts made us feel exceptionally welcome and the opening night party for *L' Italiana en Algeria* was truly transformative as the foyers and outdoor spaces burst into life for a celebration that was inclusive not exclusive for the whole audience.

The next meeting of the Marketing & Communications forum will be during Opera Europa's spring conference in Antwerp between 25-28 April. Planning is now underway for a larger Marketing & Communications forum in autumn 2019.



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Technical & Production to Brussels

Opera Europa's Technical & Production forum's next meeting will take place at La Monnaie in Brussels on 7 and 8 March 2019.

This return to the Brussels Opera House so soon after their March 2016 forum meeting sees the opera company in the renovated opera house, in contrast with the tent it inhabited for over two seasons.

The programme will be announced early in the New Year, but save the dates and catch the world premiere of Mark Grey's *Frankenstein* staged by La Fura dels Baus!

During its last meeting at Opera Europa's autumn conference in Paris, the Technical & Production forum welcomed the expertise of Silke Lalvani of Pearle and Lighting consultant Adam Bennette to present their hard lobbying actions in defence of the exemption on the EU Tungsten lighting ban for the performing arts.

The campaign led by Pearle needs support on the national level, and we encourage you to collaborate with the effort. If you are willing to become active in the lobbying process, template documents are available to send to your Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Culture and energy agencies working on behalf of a ministry.

It is foreseen that the expert group of Member States will vote on the revision of EcoDesign in December. Action is urgent!

Please contact silke@pearle.eu to receive the documents to ease your work.

For more information, contact audrey@opera-europa.org

Opera and Philanthropy in the 21st Century

These are tricky times for opera fundraisers all over the world!

With the increasing decline in funding from national governments, corporations and foundations, opera companies more and more are turning to individual philanthropy for the funding of main-stage productions, tours and Festivals. In many ways we have returned to the early days of opera when productions only happened thanks to the largesse and passion of kings, doges, and even mad emperors, who in the 21st century have become the philanthropists we all seek to engage and cultivate.

But how do we opera fundraisers identify, cultivate and ultimately convert these modern day monarchs to becoming devoted supporters of our opera companies from that first major show of support to that large bequest they will leave us in their wills?

Join Opera Europa's Friends & Fundraising forum this spring in Milan when we will return to the country that witnessed the birth of opera to discuss, debate, share knowledge and explore how we can attract and grow this key funding base for opera in the 21st century.

Our Fundraising & Friends forum will be held from 18-20 March 2019 and will be hosted by the Accademia La Scala. The Forum will include sessions where we will bring together arts philanthropists and fundraisers from the United States, the U.K, Europe and Asia to explore how you identify, cultivate, engage with and ultimately convert more individual supporters towards building a new dynamic funding base for opera in these challenging times. It will also contribute ideas towards Opera Europa's new Advocacy campaign to be launched next autumn.

There will be an opportunity to attend a performance on Tuesday 19 March of Teatro alla Scala's new production of Musorgsky's *Khovanshchina* directed by Mario Martone and conducted by Valery Gergiev.

We hope to see you there!

Andrew Higgins
Chair, Opera Europa Fundraising & Friends forum

For more information, contact susanna@opera-europa.org

Opera Europa News

Opera Europa welcomes 13 new members since the summer, and reaches 200 members to close the year!

From the operatic heartland of Germany we are joined by three important theatres with glorious histories. **Oper Leipzig** is the third oldest Opera in Europe, with a story beginning in 1693. Today it occupies an imposing building from 1960 on Augustusplatz, and is led by Intendant & Generalmusikdirektor Ulf Schirmer and Verwaltungsdirektor Ulrich Jagels. **Staatsoper Hannover** dates from mid-19th century, but has been extensively rebuilt since WW2. Current Intendant Dr Michael Klügl will be succeeded by Laura Berman from next season. Georg Heckel started this season as Intendant of **Landestheater Detmold**, the busy Dreispartenhaus in North Rhine-Westphalia.

Our newest Italian member is Fondazione **Teatro Coccia di Novara**, a teatro di tradizione in Piedmont, whose recently appointed Director Corinne Baroni contributed to our conference in Paris.

Returning to Opera Europa after a year or more's absence are **Edinburg International Festival**, the Moscow training theatre **Galina Vishnevskaya Opera Centre** and, from far further afield, the magnificent grand **Teatro Colón Buenos Aires**.

Our other recruits are smaller companies who have joined as Associate Members or under the recently-introduced Junior Associate scheme. That enables us to welcome our first members from Malta, hitherto unrepresented by Opera Europa: **Teatru Manoel** led by Artistic Director Kenneth Zammit Tabona and **Teatru Aurora** under Matthew Sultana. Some members are already dreaming of an event on the Mediterranean island! Newcomers also include **Nevill Holt Opera**, the beautiful new theatre in the English countryside of Leicestershire, under the musical direction of Nicholas Chalmers.

Innovative non-theatre based companies include **The Airport Society** run from Brussels by Krystian Lada; **Operafabriken** from Malmö in Sweden, whose producer Leena Malkki joined us in Paris; and **Nouvel Opera Fribourg** in Switzerland, represented in Paris by Head of Production Emilien Rossier.

Staying in touch with your peers – news about our listservs!

On top of the Members' Address book for individual information, Opera Europa members have a tool to their European colleagues on specific topics. These listservs are an e-mail-based system where, by sending an email to a single address, you reach everyone registered on that listserv. Our specialist forums each have a listserv to communicate not only about upcoming events, but also to share information, ask questions and receive feedback and recommendations.

Opera Europa has switched listserv service provider, but this should not have any impact on the way you stay in touch. Our specialist listservs are:

- Artistic administration, casting, planning: artistic@group.opera-europa.org
- Audio-Visual production : av@group.opera-europa.org
- Costumes, wigs and make-up: costume@group.opera-europa.org
- Education, outreach, new audiences: education@group.opera-europa.org
- Environment, eco-management, sustainability issues: sustainability@group.opera-europa.org
- Executive assistants: assistants@group.opera-europa.org
- Financial & business management: finance@group.opera-europa.org
- Fundraising & Friends: fundraising@group.opera-europa.org
- Human Resources & personnel: hr@group.opera-europa.org
- Marketing, communications, press, box office: marketing@group.opera-europa.org
- OperaVision partners: operavision@group.opera-europa.org
- Technical direction, workshop management: tech@group.opera-europa.org

Please contact susanna@opera-europa.org if you think you are not subscribed to the lists you wish to follow!

Opera Management Course 2019

Planning ahead towards the next Opera Management Course!

Opera Europa has hosted 6 Opera Management Courses so far: in Balaton (Hungary), Como (Italy), Peralada (Spain), Bregenz (Austria), Lille (France), Poznan (Poland)... and the 2019 edition will take place in late August!

The course is aimed at young(ish) professionals with potential and ambition to grow their careers in opera by understanding 'the bigger picture' of opera production. Participants will benefit from expert lectures on aspects such as Artistic programming and planning, Financial structures and management, HR and administrative issues, Production management, Marketing & Communications, Education and Fundraising.

This experience will increase their understanding of the various positions and responsibilities within an opera company, give them more confidence in their work and allow them to start building an international network of professional contacts.

Ideal profile of candidates:

- Aged between 25 and 45 years old
- From any department and any position of the opera company
- Minimum of three years working experience, of which six months in the field of opera
- Fluent in English

The full details will be announced early in the New Year ; please already consider if you'd like to recommend a candidate!

The new Opera Europa team

Those of you who attended our Paris conference will have noticed new faces behind Opera Europa badges. In addition to Elise Lonnet, Roger Flores and Hedd Thomas joining Luke O'Shaughnessy and the OperaVision project, Susanna Werger and Célia Grau reinforce the Opera Europa services.

Susanna Werger (Germany) is our new Membership Coordinator, and comes to us as she finishes her Double Doctorate at the Department of Comparative Literature, Strasbourg University (Europe des Lettres), and the Department of Musicology, Ruprecht-Karls-University, while holding the position of Press officer at the Rossini in Wildbad Bel Canto Opera Festival.

Célia Grau (France) is our new Event Coordinator, and has recently graduated with a Masters Degree in Political Sciences from the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg and as Masters in Euro-Mediterranean Public Policies from IEP Aix-en-Provence.

Aline Chif will be returning from her maternity leave as Communications Manager early in the New Year.



Dates for your diary

14 -15 December 2018

Moniuszko Conference in Poznań

Hosted by Teatr Wielki - Poznań Opera House

14 -19 December 2018

Minsk International Christmas Singing Competition

7-8 March 2019

Technical & Production forum meeting in Brussels

Recently elected chair of the steering group Charmaine Goodchild hosts a meeting at La Monnaie/De Munt which includes a tour of the newly renovated theatre

18-20 March 2019

Fundraising & Friends forum meeting in Milan

Accademia La Scala will host a meeting, convened by Andrew Higgins, recently elected chair of the steering group, to explore global approaches to philanthropy and advocacy for opera

8 April 2019

Opera Day at IAMA conference in Düsseldorf

Further information on www.IAMAWorld.com

25-28 April 2019

CREATION

Opera Vlaanderen will host this year's spring conference during its biennial festival Opera 21 with events at Antwerp Opera House, deSingel and other locations in the Flemish capital

Full programme to be published and registration in March, with specific strands for the Artistic Administration forum, the Marketing & Communication forum and the Education forum

2-4 May 2019

Costumes, Make-up & Wigs forum in Vienna

13-16 June 2019

Opera America annual conference in San Francisco

Registration opens 6 December

24-27 October 2019

RECONSTRUCTION - BUILDING BRIDGES

Opera Europa autumn conference at Opéra du Rhin Strasbourg and Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe Full announcement in Antwerp and details available in the summer



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