AUTUMN CONFERENCE - ELIXIR OF LIFE
JOIN US IN BERGAMO, ITALY
FROM 18-21 NOVEMBER 2021
Modern Theatres 1950 – 2020

David Staples

Drawings by David Hamer

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Modern Theatres 1950 – 2020 is an investigation of theatres, concert halls, and opera houses in Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North and South America. It explores in detail thirty of the most significant theatres that opened between 1950 and 2010. A further twenty theatres that opened between 2011 and 2020 are concisely reviewed and illustrated.

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ELIXIR OF LIFE

It is a happy coincidence that Festival Donizetti’s 2021 programme includes two of his most enduring comedies: L’elisir d’amore, early fruit of his Italian heyday written for Milan; and La fille du régiment composed for Paris at the start of his final decade. Together they provide the perfect tonic to revive the spirits after 20 months of lockdown and restrictions on performance. Bergamo this 18-21 November offers a true Elixir of Life.

Two years after Opera Europa’s last major conference, delegates may be understandably apprehensive about gathering again for a public event. People have become cautious about travel and wary of close contacts. They have also, of necessity, grown adept at communicating by other means, as shown by the success of Opera Europa’s online meetings at bringing together members from over 40 countries. Yet, despite the convenience of the internet, many have expressed the desire to resume live contacts as the most effective way to network and build relationships. A conference is so much more than a series of presentations and debates. Casual encounters during coffee breaks; longer conversations over meals; shared experiences: these are the ingredients which yield professional friendships. Especially in Italy!

Bergamo, which endured among the worst ravages of the pandemic in spring 2020, is now super-committed to ensuring a safe environment for delegates in its two beautiful theatres and their airy reception rooms. Protection through vaccinations and testing and judicious use of masks indoors enables us to minimise the risks involved in sharing ideas and experiences, as we search for solutions which will bring about renewal of the opera world.

No conference will solve all the problems that confront opera. This one seeks to identify some of them. What kind of leadership is needed? Which models may better suit the next generation of leaders? How do we diversify the workforce so that it better represents the society it serves? Should we listen more to the voices of artists, many of whom have lost their livelihoods during the pandemic? How may we combine to create a more ecologically sustainable climate on, behind and beyond the stage?

This autumn’s conference over three or four days in Bergamo does not promise all the answers, but it does undertake to wrestle with the questions and to provide opportunities for members and artists to ask their own questions. It also guarantees a warm welcome to delegates and the incomparable magic elixir of Italian life.

Nicholas Payne
For the first time after long months of exclusively online meetings, Opera Europa members could finally meet again in person on 20 and 21 July during the rehearsal period of the Macerata Opera Festival.

Macerata Opera Festival celebrated its 100th birthday this year and the group of technical/workshop managers and artistic administrators were invited to both general rehearsals of this year’s productions. On 20 July they saw the new Aida directed by Valentina Carrasco and conducted by Francesco Lanzillotta and on 21 July, the famous La traviata ‘degli specchi’ created in 1992 directed by Henning Brockhaus and conducted by Paolo Bortolameolli.

On 21 July in the morning, the participants assisted to the set change between both productions and followed a guided tour through the impressive and unusual building of the Sferisterio.

During the working sessions, the mixed group discussed various transversal topics. The sustainability concerns in opera houses were raised by a presentation of the eco-responsible strategy of Opéra National de Paris. The group then explored the use of new technologies in production management thanks to a presentation of the Digital innovation programme at Teatro Regio di Parma and the Finnish National Opera & Ballet virtual reality project. Finally, the participants received some diversified input about performing in a different habitat from Teatro La Fenice, Royal Danish Opera and Israeli Opera, who had to re-invent their performance location due to sanitarian rules (Venice, Tel Aviv) or have a big experience of performing outdoor (Copenhagen).

The participants of both forums perceived the gathering and exchange between the technical and the artistic administration departments as positive and fruitful, especially to discuss the sustainability issue, which needs to be faced together and at all levels of the opera house.

All presentations of the forum are available to members on our website and if you are interested in the sustainability topic, keep an eye on our autumn programme!

Celia Grau
Opera Europa’s first live conference in over two years will take place during the opening days of Festival Donizetti 2021. Our hosts have curated an enticing programme of four different productions shared between their two beautiful theatres and encompassing both the upper and lower parts of their thriving city.

Bergamo, which suffered so much during the pandemic, is a potent symbol of renewal, both for its own community and for the wider world of international opera. The theme of the conference likewise encompasses reappraisal of the way our profession should be managed and the responsibilities of leadership, as well as the contribution of artists and how to nurture the next generation of both artists and managers in a sustainable context.

We encourage you to explore details of the day-by-day programme on this and the next three pages; to participate actively in the sessions; to attend the performances at the end of each day; and to take advantage of this opportunity to renew old relationships with colleagues and to make new friends.

**THURSDAY 18 NOVEMBER Città alta - Auditorio Sant’Agostino**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13.00</td>
<td>Opera Management Course participants lunch and briefing</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.00</td>
<td><strong>Opening welcome</strong> by Giorgio Gori, Mayor of Bergamo</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.15</td>
<td><strong>Elixir of Life: keynote address</strong> by Francesco Micheli, Artistic Director Fondazione Teatro Donizetti</td>
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| 15.45 | **Renewal and Responsibility: conference themes**  
  Led by Anna Maria Meo (President), Aviel Cahn (Vice-President) and Nicholas Payne (Director) |
| 16.15 | **Working with the Next Generation**  
  Dominique Meyer (Milano La Scala) and Barbara Minghetti (Como/Macerata) |
| 17.00 | **Introducing the Next Generation of opera leaders**  
  Presentation of the Opera Management Course participants, led by Lauri Pokkinen (OMC alumnus Helsinki) |
| 17.30 | End of afternoon session                                            |
| 20.00 | **Teatro Sociale C’erano una volta due bergamaschi...**  
  Operashow by Bottega Donizetti and Alex Esposito, text by Alberto Mattioli & Francesco Micheli with music by Donizetti, Offenbach, Rossini, Mozart, Boito and Berlioz |
| 21.30 | Post-performance dinner                                             |
**FRIDAY 19 NOVEMBER  Città alta - Teatro Sociale**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.00</td>
<td><strong>The Artist’s Voice: keynote address</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>by Raehann Bryce-Davis (mezzo-soprano and co-founder of Black Opera Alliance)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.25</td>
<td><strong>Challenging leaders and creating opportunities</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Contrasting views from Renata Borowska (Poznań), Aviel Cahn (Geneva), Valérie Chevalier (Montpellier), Mark Dakin (London ROH) and Fortunato Ortonbina (Venice)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.15</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.45</td>
<td><strong>Break-out sessions on aspects of contemporary Leadership</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Led by David Collins (Leeds), Sophie de Lint (Amsterdam), Alexandra Stampler-Brown (Düsseldorf) and Dubravka Vrgoč (Zagreb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.45</td>
<td>Summaries of break-out sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.30</td>
<td><strong>Cultivating the Next Generation of leaders: what should we be seeking?</strong></td>
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<td>Julien Chavaz (Fribourg), Monica Errico (Accademia la Scala), Ilaria Lanzino (EOP winner), Anastasia Razumovskaya (OMC alumna Moscow Novaya), Annette Weber (OMC alumna Zürich), Kit Withnail (OMC alumnus London ROH), moderated by Valérie Chevalier (Montpellier)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.45</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.15</td>
<td><strong>The Life of the Artist</strong></td>
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<td>Including Alex Esposito (bass-baritone/curator Bottega Donizetti), Francesco Greco (Hannover), Lisenka Heijboer Castañón (theatre maker Netherlands), Anush Hovhannisyan (soprano Armenia/Fondazione Mascarade Firenze), Julien Van Mellaerts (baritone New Zealand), Ernesto Palacio (Pesaro), David Stern (Opera Fuoco Paris) moderated by Karen Stone (Magdeburg)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.30</td>
<td>End of afternoon session in città alta and return to città bassa</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.00</td>
<td><strong>Teatro Donizetti L’elisir d’amore</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>by Gaetano Donizetti with libretto by Felice Romani performed in the critical edition of Alberto Zedda</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Conducted by Riccardo Frizza and directed by Frederic Wake-Walker with Caterina Sala, Javier Camarena, Florian Sempey and Roberto Frontali</td>
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<tr>
<td>22.30</td>
<td>Post-performance reception</td>
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### SATURDAY 20 NOVEMBER  Città bassa: Teatro Donizetti

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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| 10.00   | **Co-production Marketplace (members only)**  
          Coordinated by Susanna Werger and moderated by Henning Ruhe (Göteborg),  
          including distribution of 2021 edition of Future New Productions bible |
|         | **Teatri di tradizione**  
          Overview and exchange moderated by Alberto Mattioli (Bergamo)               |
| 11.15   | Coffee break                                                                             |
| 11.45   | **Reimagining hierarchies**  
          Uta-Christine Deppermann (Karlsruhe), Bernard Foccroulle (composer), Alessandra  
          Gariboldi (ADESTE+ Torino), Hannah Griffiths (Birmingham), Frederic Wake-Walker  
          (Mahogany), moderated by Christina Scheppelmann (Seattle)                      |
| 13.15   | Lunch                                                                                     |
| 14.15   | **Eco-responsibility**  
          Vassiliki Chatzipetrou (Research Education and Development Lab Greece),  
          Patrick Dillon (Theatre Green Book), Claire Hébert (Lyon) and Thierry Leonardi  
          (OSCaR project) moderated by Bernard Foccroulle (musician and author)          |
| 15.45   | Coffee break                                                                             |
| 16.15   | **Conference conclusions**  
          Opera reboot: the challenges for the sector  
          Conference conclusions by Opera Management Course participants  
          **Future plans** by Nicholas Payne                                               |
| 18.00   | Pre-performance reception at Teatro Sociale                                                |
| 20.00   | **Teatro Sociale Medea in Corinto**                                                       
          by Giovanni Simone Mayr with libretto by Felice Romani performed in the  
          critical edition of the 1821 Bergamo version by Paolo Rossini  
          Conducted by Jonathan Brandani and directed by Francesco Micheli with  
          Carmela Remigio, Marta Torbidoni, Antonio Siragusa, Michele Angelini and  
          Roberto Lorenzi                                                              |
| 22.30   | Post-performance reception                                                                |

### SUNDAY 21 NOVEMBER  Città bassa: Teatro Donizetti

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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| 10.00   | **ENOA pitch session**  
          Coordinated by Lucille Arnould                                                        |
| 11.15   | Break                                                                                     |
| 11.45   | **OSCaR (Opera Sceneries Circularity and Resource) workshop**  
          Led by Laurine Schott/Laurent Vacheresse (Cité du design Saint-Etienne)              |
| 15.30   | **Teatro Donizetti La fille du régiment**  
          by Gaetano Donizetti with livret by Jean-François-Alfred Bayard & Jules-Henry  
          Vernoy de Saint-Georges performed in the critical edition by Claudio Toscani  
          Conducted by Michele Spotti and directed by Ernest Doñas with Sara Blanch,  
          John Osborn and Paolo Bordogna                                                  |
PRACTICAL INFORMATION

For full practical information including the online registration form, up to date information on hotels and a list of participants please visit the event page on our new website: https://opera-europa.org/event/conference-elixir-life

GETTING THERE
Bergamo’s Orio al Serio airport is a 20 minute bus ride (line T1) away from the lower town. Plan at least 90 minutes by bus or train from Milano Malpensa or Milano Linate airports.
Bergamo is 1 hour by train from Milano Centrale, 2:30 hours from Bologna Centrale.

VENUES
Città Alta – Upper town
- Auditorio Sant’Agostino – Ex-Church St. Agostino, Piazza St. Agostino, Bergamo
- Teatro Sociale – Vicolo Ghiacciaia, Città Alta, Bergamo

Città Bassa – Lower town:
- Teatro Donizetti – Largo Gianandrea Gavazzeni, Finazzi, Borgo Palazzo, Bergamo

The lower and upper town are connected with the bus line T1 or the funicular at Viale Vittorio Emmanuele. Walking distance is 25-30 minutes.

REGISTRATION
The participation fee includes all meals in the programme and 3 performance tickets. Additional tickets are €50 each.

Rates
Members and ATIT-members  |  Non-members
- first participant €300  |  first participant €600
- additional participants €250  |  €650

HOTELS
Here is a selection of hotels near the Teatro Donizetti in città bassa. There are many hotels and b&bs in the area, the rates include breakfast but not the city tax. Please reserve before the mentioned dates via this email address: event@discoverbergamo.it

Hotel San Marco,
Piazza della Repubblica, 6
(reserve before 20 September)
Single room €135
Double room €155

Hotel Cappello D’Oro
Viale Papa Giovanni XXIII, 12
(reserve before 18 September)
Single room €140
Double room €150

Hotel NH Centro
Via Pietro Paleocapa, 1/G
(reserve before 20 October)
Single room €99
Double room €119

Hotel Mercure palazzo Dolci
Viale Papa Giovanni XXIII, 100
(reserve before 20 September)
Single room €99
Double room €109

CORONA POLICY
The Festival and Opera Europa closely monitor current developments. You may be assured that all necessary precautions for a safe event will be taken. We will update you in due course about sanitary requirements and testing options at the conference. We advise you to choose refundable booking options for your travel and accommodation.

Conference participation will only be invoiced in November to avoid reimbursements should there be travel complications.
CO-PRODUCTION MARKETPLACE – UPDATE YOUR FUTURE NEW PRODUCTIONS ON OPERABOOK!

This year’s autumn conference features a co-production marketplace where we intend to distribute our famous co-production bible for the members who contributed to completing the database. The members who cannot be present at the conference will receive a pdf version via e-mail.

In order to be eligible to pitch a project and/or to receive the printed books of future plans, you need to update your own plans on www.operabook.org. You may enter projects from the next season up to 2024/25. Your plans may be at a provisional, early stage, or already with confirmed cast, depending on the kind of artistic collaboration you are seeking. This information is held in a special dedicated database and is totally confidential. Access is reserved to the top management of our member companies and is not shared with third parties. We look forward to learning about your plans!

UPDATE YOUR FUTURE NEW PRODUCTIONS – STEP BY STEP

- Log in to your account on www.operabook.org – if you are missing your credentials, write to susanna@opera-europa.org
- Find the tab ‘my productions’ in the top menu, then, next to ‘current and past productions’, click on ‘future new productions’ – if you cannot visualise this menu, write to susanna@opera-europa.org
- Please delete ALL past projects. You can select a production by clicking on it once, and then click on ‘delete a production’. If you wish to rent or sell certain projects, please update your production rentals in the tab ‘current and past productions’
- Click on ‘add a production’ and provide at least the following information: title, season, co-producers status, production status, artistic team confirmed, scale of production, and your contact information.

NB: the label New Work only applies to creations and world premieres, not to new productions or modern premieres.

Susanna Werger

NEW COLLABORATION

Operabook is now the official performance data supplier of www.bachtrack.com. Through this partnership, Bachtrack will be using the current season data published on Operabook to reference your productions – with titles and casts.

It is therefore more important than ever that you keep your performance data up-to-date on Operabook. You may always correct published data through your own personal access to Operabook, or contact casting@opera-europa.org to submit changes.
SUSTAINABILITY, EQUALITY AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN OPERA

Before breaking for the summer, 100 Opera Europa members filled in the online questionnaire about their company’s approach to Sustainability, Equality and Digital Transformation issues. These areas were identified as high potential and in need of development in the wake of the pandemic, as opera companies look for ways better to respond to society’s main priorities and take on their role as an active player within their communities, and beyond.

Within the pro-bono collaboration with FEDORA, management consultancy firm Kearney will present their analysis from the survey data on 25 October, highlighting the Opera reboot message for World Opera Day. This represents the launch of Next Stage, an initiative led by FEDORA and Opera Europa, with the aim to support projects contributing to better organisations in terms of Sustainability, Equality or Digital Transformation, on, behind and beyond the stage.

Following the online survey, Kearney engaged in one-to-one discussions with the Next Stage partners to delve into the challenges and opportunities each of them faces in these areas. Join us during our 3 first Next Stage events to find out the detailed results.

29 November 11.00 -13.00 CET – Sustainability – register with celia@opera-europa.org
6 December 11.00-13.00 CET – Equality – register with susanna@opera-europa.org
13 December 11.00-13.00 CET – Digital Transformation – register with audrey@opera-europa.org

FIRST FINDINGS

Sustainability

Sustainability issues include eco-responsible behaviour on the part of the opera company, stakeholders and audiences.

From using recyclable materials in sets and costumes to offering locally-grown produce in the canteen, to encouraging audiences to travel to the performance with public transport, opera companies have many ways to take on their eco-responsibility.

On average, opera companies found they are 57% engaged with sustainability issues. 11 companies stated that sustainability was not a priority for their organisation, but 8 of them expected that to change within 5 years. 62 companies were in the analysis and preparation phases of launching sustainability projects, while 27 were already implementing, improving and scaling up their initiatives.

Equality

Equality issues include creating opportunities for diversity within the organisation, its stakeholders and its audience.

From audience outreach programmes to a diverse workforce throughout the company, to learning and participation opportunities, opera companies must fight the prejudice of elitism and lead the way for an inclusive society.

On average, opera companies found they are 68% engaged with equality issues. 7 companies stated that equality was not a priority for their organisation, and 4 of them expected that to change within 5 years. 48 companies were in the analysis and preparation phases of launching equality projects, while 45 were already implementing, improving and scaling up their initiatives.

Digital Transformation

Digital Transformation issues include using new technologies to improve the opera company’s activities.

From live streaming to wide audiences to 3D virtual model showings, from venue, personnel and CRM software to digital ticketing, opera companies have creative resources to develop and become industry leaders.

On average, opera companies found they are 71% engaged with digital issues. Only 1 company stated that digital transformation was not a priority for their organisation. 45 companies were in the analysis and preparation phases of launching digital transformation projects, while 54 were already implementing, improving and scaling up their initiatives.

Audrey Jungers
ABOUT NEXT STAGE

Next Stage is a joint initiative led by FEDORA and Opera Europa, and is part of FEDORA’s application to Creative Europe for public funds to support the operational, capacity-building and advocacy activities of Next Stage. Thanks to private funding being raised by FEDORA, all Opera Europa and FEDORA members are welcome to present joint transformative projects in the areas of Sustainability, Equality and Digital Transformation as of 2022 for assessment by a jury before allotting grants. More information will follow.

Pro-bono Partner:
KEARNEY

SAVE THESE DATES

Monday 20 - Friday 24 September
30th IAMA International Conference 2021 in Copenhagen

Monday 27 September
Orchestra managers forum video call
register with celia@opera-europa.org

Wednesday 29 - Thursday 30 September
62nd Pearle* conference in Lucerne

Friday 1 October
Chorus managers forum video call
register with susanna@opera-europa.org

Friday 1 October
Technical & Production forum video call
register with audrey@opera-europa.org

Wednesday 13 October
Human Resources forum video call
register with susanna@opera-europa.org

Tuesday 19 October
Fundraising forum video call
Reflecting the Donor position with Advisory Board of the Arts
register with susanna@opera-europa.org

Monday 25 October
World Opera Day
Opera Reboot
tell celia@opera-europa.org about your plans

Thursday 18- Sunday 21 November
Opera Europa Autumn Conference
Elixir of Life – Bergamo
register with susanna@opera-europa.org

Monday 29 November 11.00 -13.00 CET
Next Stage video call – Sustainability
register with celia@opera-europa.org

Monday 6 December 11.00 -13.00 CET
Next Stage video call – Equality
register with susanna@opera-europa.org

13 December 11.00 -13.00 CET
Next Stage video call – Digital transformation
register with audrey@opera-europa.org

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Opera Europa – rue Léopold, 23 - B-1000 Brussels - www.opera-europa.org
The third edition of World Opera Day will take place in a still uncertain context. Following 18 months of theatre closures, cancellations, revised programmes, protocols and a newly found flexibility, the opera sector has taken the opportunity to reboot. Former production models have been challenged, and many have invested thought and time in re-inventing themselves to embody their roles as responsible actors in society. Those opera companies which have embraced risk and innovation and transformation have a strong story to tell, as they align with priorities of the wider society.

On 25 October, Opera Europa takes action for #GreenOpera #InclusiveOpera #NewOperaTalents
Share your story @WorldOperaDay

An original programme with young artists from around the world on OPERAVISION

Featuring Young Artist Programmes of
• Dutch National Opera
• Staatsoper Hannover
• Royal Opera House
• Opéra Comique
• Polish National Opera
• New National Theatre Tokyo

Launch of NEXT STAGE, a joint initiative of FEDORA and Opera Europa

Where does the sector stand in matters of
• Sustainability
• Equality
• Digital Transformation

And how can it do better?

Meet the Next Generation of Leaders from the Opera Management Course

A re-designed course aimed to foster talent from all backgrounds and inspire rewarding professional careers in opera.

Learn more on www.worldoperaday.com