

F O R T W O R T H
O P E R A



ANNUAL REPORT | **2017-2018**

The mission of Fort Worth Opera is to
educate, entertain, and expand the
horizons of current and future audiences
and artists through variety
and artistic integrity.

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ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

As of August 31, 2018

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Isaiah Maldonado
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Fort Worth

A LETTER FROM CHAIRMAN MIKE MARTINEZ



Dear Friends,

Thank you! I must begin this letter by offering my sincerest gratitude to you, our patrons and supporters, for your belief in Fort Worth Opera. Our motivation is accelerated by

your attendance at our performances, and of course, your financial support has provided us with the means to continue to thrive. It is because of you that we were able to employ almost 300 individuals during our last Festival, including members of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra and Texas Ballet Theater amongst many local singers and tradespeople.

More so than what is often said, we must realize that collectively our arts community is reliant upon the success of others within the community. If one part fails, then the other parts suffer. Conversely, if one part succeeds, then others are strengthened. At Fort Worth Opera we realize this and have committed ourselves to collaborate, to the mutual benefit of our partners, with other arts organizations. Whether we are having a symposium at the Modern, a concert at the Kimbell, rehearsals at Rose Marine Theater or performances at Ed Landreth Hall at Texas Christian University, we strive to enhance the greater arts community in Fort Worth and our surrounding cities. To that end, we will continue efforts to expand our geographical reach with performances in Southlake and Arlington this fall.

As you peruse this annual report, you will see firsthand that we endeavor to create amazing art while still maintaining a business-like approach. On one hand, our staff, led by General Director Tuomas Hiltunen, has embraced fiscal discipline and prudence as they believe it is one of the utmost responsibilities we have as stewards of your investment. On the other hand, you will see our commitment to presenting productions of the highest caliber and providing memorable and moving experiences to as many people as possible.

Ultimately, your support has enabled us to lead and do our part in making our community the best place to live and raise families. You have our word that we will do what we can to uplift others along the way. When corporations and individuals look at this region to relocate they will see that Fort Worth Opera is strong, that it is relevant, and that it is enriching the lives of everyone that comes across its path. So I reiterate, THANK YOU for making a difference and allowing us to do the same.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mike Martinez', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

MIKE MARTINEZ
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

P.S. If you are contemplating becoming a financial supporter we hope this annual report opens your heart and mind to the differences we are making, and encourages you to contact our staff soon so you can become a part of our family.

A LETTER FROM PRESIDENT NELSON CLAYTOR



Fellow arts lovers,

You hold in your hands the second annual report produced in the 72-year history of the Fort Worth Opera. It is a tangible representation of our renewed commitment to you,

our supporters and our broader community, of honesty and transparency in our operations while we produce outstanding artistic work.

You will see from the report that, after two very difficult years, Fort Worth Opera finished our 2018 Festival season and fiscal year in the black, with some cash in the bank, and with our commitments to all our partners in the community such as the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra and Performing Arts Fort Worth fully satisfied in a timely manner.

I could not be prouder of our staff, led by General Director Tuomas Hiltunen, for their production of three fantastic operas (two of them regional premieres) during the 2018 Festival along with year-round work in our schools and expanded programming in the community, while maintaining the fiscal discipline necessary to achieve these results. A major emphasis during the past year has been on strengthening Fort Worth Opera's ties with our local artistic community, which is so vital to our city's life and vibrancy. As part of that effort, over 90% of the nearly 300 people hired during our Festival—from singers to stagehands to stage managers to costume and makeup artists—were local. We look forward to expanding this percentage in the future as our artistic community continues to strengthen.

Another result of our efforts to strengthen ties with the local artistic community is the expansion of the FWO-TCU Lesley Artists program from four to eight young singers. This expansion of our wonderful partnership with TCU has already borne fruit in allowing

us to reach even more schools in 2018–19 with Children's Opera Theater while also bringing a family-friendly production of Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* to Southlake, Arlington, and the Fort Worth Botanic Garden this fall.

I am very much looking forward to our 2019 season, featuring a magnificent production of the great American opera *Porgy and Bess*, the regional premiere of the second mariachi opera *El Pasado Nunca Se Termina*, and the world premiere of the first opera by a female composer in Fort Worth Opera's history, Rachel J. Peters' *Companionship*. I hope to see you at Bass Hall or at the Botanic Garden, or at one of the many events planned between now and then, to thank you in person for your support.

We have much to be proud of and much to be thankful for, and there is much work still to be done. We could not do any of it without our supporters and patrons, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for placing your trust in Fort Worth Opera. This is your opera company, and it needs your support. The Board and staff of FWO are committed to working every day to earn your trust that your support will be used responsibly. Please give generously—of your time, of your enthusiasm for FWO, and financially—to ensure the future of this extraordinary art form in our beloved city.

A blue ink signature of Nelson E. Claytor, written in a cursive style.

NELSON E. CLAYTOR, Ph. D.
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

GENERAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT



OPERA FOR EVERYONE

Here's a true story. Earlier this fall I met a gentleman who, upon hearing that I work for Fort Worth Opera, told me that he hates opera. He nevertheless attended a

performance of Don Pasquale at the Bass Performance Hall in early May. He said, "I loved it. It was so funny." So much for the claim that men don't like opera. We had another one of those myth buster moments this past spring when we presented Brief Encounters, a selection of three 15-minute pocket operas, at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden. Much to our surprise, over 50% of our audience members were male. This is a pretty impressive percentage, given that 66% of Broadway audiences were female during that same season.

Far too frequently, I meet people out there who don't know they love opera or who feel out of place attending one. We want people to come to our performances and feel comfortable – you won't be turned away for wearing cowboy boots and jeans. Sometimes people are afraid that they won't understand a performance in a foreign language. However, overcoming foreign language anxiety may be easier than you think with the help of supertitles we project above the stage.

One local business leader thought that opera's ticket prices were out of her reach. She was surprised to find out that not only could she afford our tickets, but she could also bring her whole family. After all, one of the best parts of the opera experience is to talk about it afterwards with your friends and family.

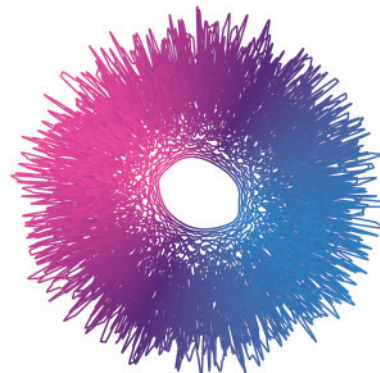
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Over the past fiscal year, we at Fort Worth Opera had two priorities and major challenges: to pay off debt and to ensure we maintained a balanced financial position. We have streamlined our efficiency, cut overhead without reducing effectiveness, boosted our digital marketing performance, launched our new website, unveiled our new locally-designed logo and brand identity. We have also expanded our educational activity to serve more than 35,000 students, explored alternative venues and increased collaboration with other local organizations. We have made great strides to turn the

ship around and I would like to thank our Board of Trustees and staff for their commitment and dedication to our mission.

Our revenue for 2017-2018 was \$2.68 million, 87% of which was self-generated from sponsorships, Board member giving and our fundraising activities. Three of the areas we identified for improvement were Box Office ticket sales, audience attendance and an underinvestment in human capital. Appropriately, we added three full-time positions: Digital Marketing Officer, Production Director, and Institutional Giving and Corporate Sponsorship Officer. We at Fort Worth Opera have also launched our two-year Thanks a Million! campaign. All lapsed, new or increased donations are being matched one-to-one by our Trustee Mr. Ed Schollmaier up to \$250,000 per year.

A year ago Joe Illick was appointed Fort Worth Opera's new Artistic Director. Joe is a truly great artist and this company is destined to thrive under his artistic leadership. Our 2018 Festival featured hilarious comedy Don Pasquale, tango opera María de Buenos Aires, a collection of short operas called Brief Encounters and a new works series called Frontiers. We at Fort Worth Opera worked hard to create fun and memorable experiences for our audiences. In September we were honored to be named FW Weekly's Best Performing Arts Organization. María de Buenos Aires was named the Best Classical Music Performance.



FORT WORTH
OPERA

FORT WORTH OPERA'S NEW BRANDING CREATED BY
ISIAH & LIZZIE MALDONADO OF CHUM CREATIVE

A CREATIVE ECONOMY FOR FORT WORTH

Some business leaders may assume that there is no value, or demand, for engaging the next generation of urban audiences here in Fort Worth. I would disagree. It is worth reflecting that 18 of the 20 Amazon HQ2 finalists had a thriving opera company. The two winners were noted for their ability to attract and retain a wide and deep talent pool. A bustling, diverse, creative economy gives businesses major competitive advantages. Opera makes Fort Worth an even greater place to live, work and visit.

In an effort to develop the next generation of opera lovers, this past fiscal year we focused on giving young people an inspirational first experience of opera through our Student Nights program. In the future we would be grateful for more involvement from those local companies and corporations, who want to capture the attention of high school students. The fact is that this demographic has larger spending power and more discretionary income than their college-age peers. In spite of a lackluster response to our overtures to the business community, a miracle happened. Last summer a single graduating 18-year-old high school student started fundraising and ended up underwriting as many as 4,000 Student Night at the Opera tickets for our upcoming season. I hope many others will be inspired by her example.

Each year the Charities Aid Foundation World Giving Index looks at how people around the world give to charity. In 2017 Americans were among the world's most generous people, ranking No. 5 out of 139 countries. We in Texas like to think of ourselves as reaching generously

into our wallets to help others and giving freely of our time. However, when WalletHub compared the 50 states across 14 key indicators of charitable behavior, they came up with the shocking statistic that Texas ranked No. 48. For three decades corporate giving has declined steadily in Texas and Fort Worth Opera has keenly felt this decrease along with the loss of corporate headquarters in the city.

For our city to thrive and prosper, we at Fort Worth Opera wish to encourage our community and corporations to continue investing in all the arts and the creative economy. We are a business too. During our 2018 Festival we hired a team of 283 creative professionals (over 90% local) and we will continue to keep your donated dollars in Texas. Let's work together to build a strong and vibrant environment for success. Fort Worth can produce great American culture.



TUOMAS HILTUNEN
GENERAL DIRECTOR



A LETTER FROM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR JOE ILLICK



Dear Friends of Fort Worth Opera,

I'm very excited about our 2019 Festival! We'll be performing three fabulous operas with truly sensational casts.

If you have never seen an opera or never set foot in Bass Hall, this is the time to do it! You will be rocked with emotion and swept away with the power and passion of these incredible stories and singers. And if you are a long-time operagoer and opera lover, you will revel in three completely different pieces sung by world-class voices. The Gershwins' *Porgy and Bess* includes some of the most familiar songs ever written, but the story is as powerful today as ever before. This production was a huge success in Washington D. C. and Seattle, and I'm proud to bring it to Fort Worth.

El Pasado Nunca Se Termina explores whether you ever let go of your roots and whether you would ever want to. Audiences will be thrilled to hear the beautiful and stirring music of *Mariachi Nuevo Tecalitlán* from Guadalajara, founded by José "Pepe" Martínez and now directed by his son. Our world premiere of *Companionship*, with words and music by Rachel J. Peters, is far-out and hysterical, and at the same time, painfully real. Leslie, a gifted young baker, is about to cut into a piece of dough when it begs her to spare its life – and this is only the first minute of the show. If you have ever obsessed about anything, been in a relationship, have siblings, or have parents, then this opera is a must-see for you. Rachel J. Peters is a creative genius and an important new voice in the opera world, and we are thrilled to present her work at the Festival. We will continue to keep audiences up to date on

works-in-progress with two nights of *Frontiers* and an orchestral showcase with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra of excerpts from our 2021 world premiere of *The Last Dream of Frida and Diego* by Gabriela Lena Frank and Nilo Cruz.

Fort Worth audiences have known for over seventy years that opera helps to bring our community together and makes the city an even greater place to live. We are deeply grateful for all of your enthusiasm and support. See you at the Opera!

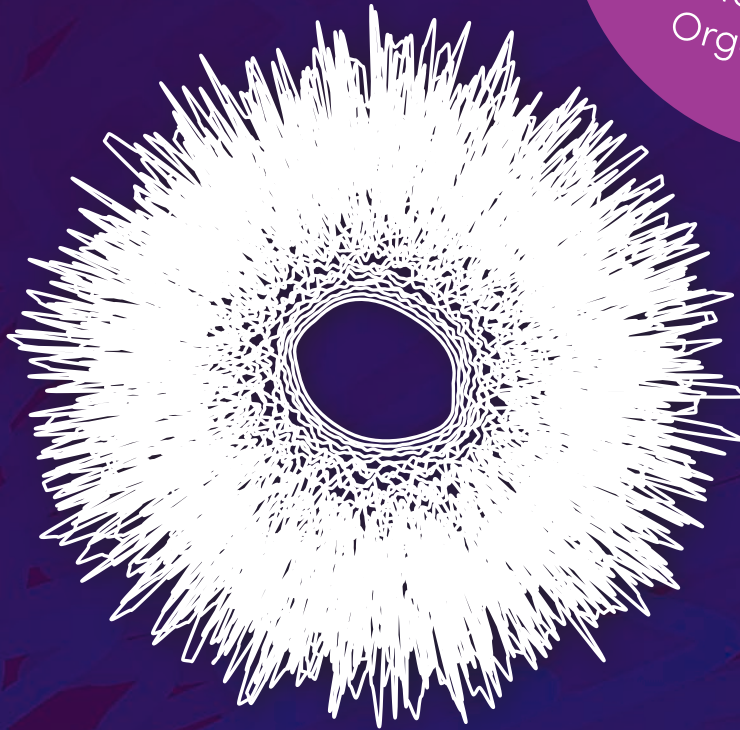
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Illick". The signature is fluid and cursive.

JOE ILLICK
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Fort Worth Weekly
BEST OF 2018

CRITIC'S CHOICE
Performing Arts
Organization



FORT WORTH
OPERA

2018
FESTIVAL
PRODUCTIONS

DON PASQUALE

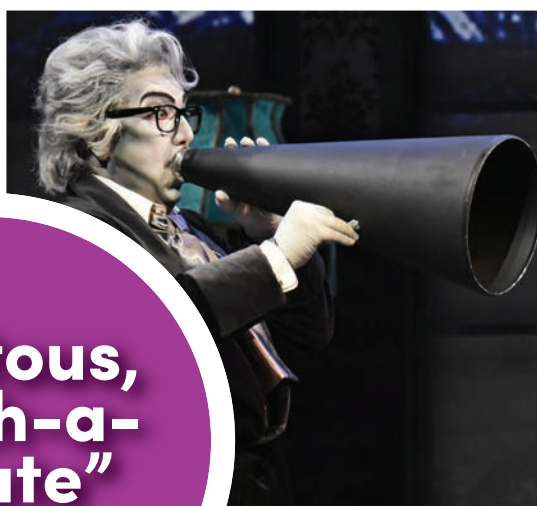
Composer **GAETANO DONIZETTI**

Librettist **GIOVANNI RUFFINI**



"A delightful surprise."

— Opera News



"Riotous,
laugh-a-
minute"

— TheaterJones



"Fabulous singing and full
of laughs... entertained
marvelously!"

— OperaChaser (Australia)

DON PASQUALE

CAST

PASQUALE	BURAK BILGILI
DR. MALATESTA	ANDREW WILKOWSKE
ERNESTO	JI-MIN PARK
NORINA	AUDREY LUNA
CARLINO	JOHN SAUVEY
MAX, THE BUTLER	DUSTIN CURRY

DATES

APRIL 28, 7:30PM
MAY 4, 7:30PM
MAY 6, 2:00PM

Weekly
BEST OF 2018

CRITIC'S CHOICE
Classical Music
Performance

MARÍA DE BUENOS AIRES

Composer **ASTOR PIAZZOLLA**
Librettist **HORACIO FERRER**



"Glorious!"

— Fort Worth Weekly



**"Beautifully
seductive."**

— Dallas Morning News



**"Imaginative staging and choreography
of director John de los Santos."**

— Opera News



MARÍA DE BUENOS AIRES

CAST

MARÍA	SOLANGE MERDINIAN
EL DUENDE	GABY NATALE
EL PAYADOR	LUIS ALEJANDRO OROZCO
YOUNG MARÍA	ARIANA ZOMBAR
BANDONEÓN	JUAN PABLO (JP) JOFRE
PIANIST	CHARLENE LOTZ

DATES

APRIL 27, 7:30PM
MAY 5, 7:30PM

BRIEF ENCOUNTERS

MARK ADAMO *AVOW* | JAKE HEGGIE *AGAIN* | JOE ILLICK *FEEL THE TANGO*



"Brief Encounters is an auditory amuse-bouche..."

— FWWeekly



"Miniature masterpieces"

— TheaterJones

"This project reflects the company's stated goal of reaching out to new audiences in new performance spaces and is to be commended."

"A delightful surprise."

— Opera News

BRIEF ENCOUNTERS

CAST

JAVIER ABREU
ZACHARY JAMES
SAMUEL SCHULTZ
KATHERINE TOMBAUGH
MAREN WEINBERGER

DATES

APRIL 29, 5:00PM
APRIL 30, 7:30PM
MAY 1, 7:30PM



"Wonderfully adventurous..."

— Texas Classical Revue



FRONTIERS

Fort Worth Opera's Frontiers showcase offers metroplex audiences a first look at the developmental processes for opera of all styles. Now in its sixth year, Frontiers remains one of the most unique experiences in the country. Part of the Opera of the Americas initiative, Frontiers seeks to find emerging composers and librettists from North, South and Central America, and gives these artists a special platform to showcase their talents.

GENEROUSLY UNDERWRITTEN BY

THE
ANDREW W.

MELLON
FOUNDATION

DATE: MAY 2, 3 - 2018



Fort Worth Opera's Frontiers showcase has yielded numerous regional and world premieres since its inception. Commissioned by the American Lyric Theater, Patrick Soluri and Deborah Brevoort's macabre, Edgar Allan Poe-inspired opera *Embedded* (Frontiers 2013) appeared during the company's 2016 Festival. This past year, Matthew Peterson and Jason Zencka's critically-acclaimed, true crime opera *Voir Dire* (Frontiers 2014) proved to be a highlight of the Fort Worth Opera 2017 Festival.

Beyond North Texas, Robert Paterson and David Cote's trio of comic, one-act operas, *Three Way*, premiered at

Nashville Opera and BAM Fisher in 2017. Opera Colorado presented the world premiere of Gerald Cohen and Deborah Brevoort's true-life WWII romance, *Steal a Pencil for Me* (Frontiers 2016) during their 2018 season. In May of 2018, Clint Borzoni and John de los Santos' erotic opera, *When Adonis Calls* (Frontiers 2015), received its world premiere with Asheville Lyric Opera. The opera thriller, *A Capacity for Evil* (Frontiers 2017), received its world premiere with Opera MODO in September of 2018, and a full-length workshop production of Nell Shaw Cohen's *Mabel's Call* (Frontiers 2018) was presented by the University of New Mexico Opera Theatre in November 2018.



WEDNESDAY, MAY 2, 2018 7:30PM

THURSDAY, MAY 3, 2018 7:30PM

SAVITRI AND SAM

by John Mills Cockell and Ken Gass

Inspired by the true story of Savitri, a 17-year-old high school student living in a remote Punjabi community of northern British Columbia. After her secret relationship with Sam, an 18-year-old aboriginal boy of Haisla heritage, is exposed, she is tragically stabbed to death by her father. The story is all the more poignant because of the intense idyllic love of the young couple, who seemed so ideally suited for one another, despite their different cultural heritages.

SAVITRI..... Bridget Cappel, Mezzo
MANJINDER..... Zachary James, Bass-Baritone
SAM..... Joshua Friend, Tenor
CHORUS..... Tracy Fairless, Shannon Moy,
Bryan Fairless, Malcolm Payne

PIANO..... Stephen Carey

HAGAR AND ISHMAEL

by William David Cooper and Will Dunlap

Egyptian handmaid Hagar encounters an angel after she flees Abraham's camp, who tells her an incredible prophecy about her son Ishmael. Sixteen years later, Ishmael learns that newborn Isaac will be Abraham's successor, and tries to kill him. Exiled and desperate in the desert, Hagar and Ishmael find faith, freedom and a marvelous destiny.

SAVITRI..... Meredith Browning, Soprano
ANGEL..... Blas Canedo, Bariton

PIANO..... Emily Jarrell Urbanek

DOMESTIC

by Ben Stevenson

Two one-act operas exploring the ways that people interact when no one is watching. Act One - *An Enigma* - is about how people end a relationship, while Act Two - *percs.* - is about the hope that others can offer when things seem hopeless.

CHRISSY..... Bronwyn White, Soprano
TINA..... Bridget Cappel, Mezzo

PIANO..... Stephen Carey

MABEL'S CALL

by Nell Shaw Cohen

After Mabel abandons her life in 1910's New York as an international icon of the avant-garde, she reinvents herself in the remote desert village of Taos, New Mexico. Inspired by the life of Mabel Dodge Luhan, Mabel's Call follows a fiercely unconventional woman chasing utopia and romance in the Southwest.

MABEL..... Megan Koch, Soprano
TONY..... Sam Parkinson, Baritone
LOTUS LOW..... Heather Weirich, Mezzo
PIANO..... Emily Jarrell Urbanek

FORDLANDIA

by William Susman and Stuart Rojstaczer

A family drama about the struggle between Henry Ford and his son, Edsel, over the leadership and future of Ford Motor Company. Henry's inability to relinquish the control of his company to a son he loves dearly destroys Edsel emotionally and physically. The tragedy between father and son is only mitigated by the strength and actions of their wives.

ELEANOR..... Bronwyn White, Soprano
EDSEL..... Joshua Friend, Tenor
CLARA..... Kate Tombaugh, Mezzo
HENRY..... Sam Parkinson, Baritone
EVANGELINE..... Francesca Mehrotra, Soprano

PIANO..... Stephen Carey

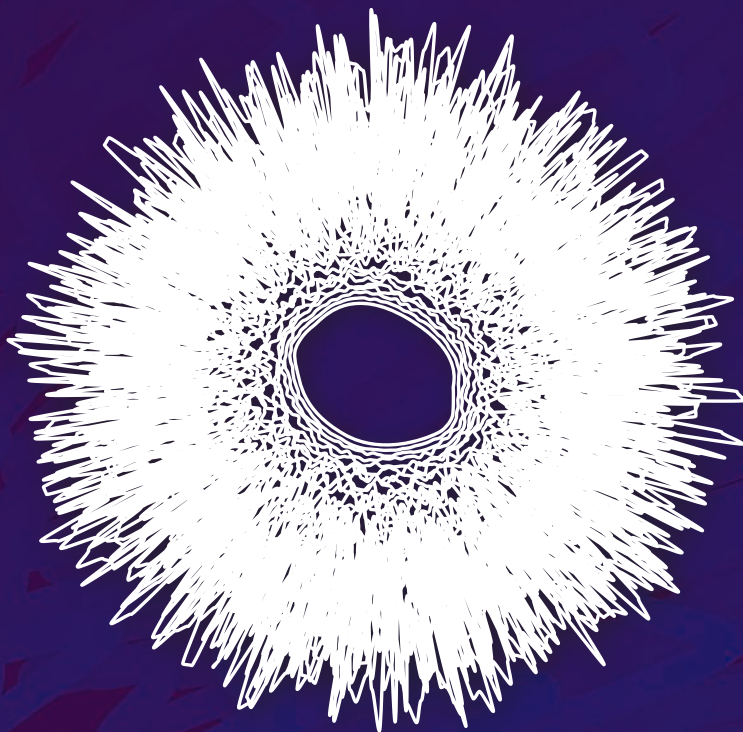
COMPANIONSHIP

by Rachel J. Peters

Recovering from a nervous breakdown, aspiring baker Leslie Sinclair finally reaches the end of her obsessive quest to bake the perfect baguette when the 207,345th one suddenly comes to life. Companionship mirrors our contemporary world, where what we consume becomes all-consuming. Adapted from the short story by Arthur Phillips.

LESLIE..... Maren Weinberger, Soprano
DOUGH..... Kate Tombaugh, Mezzo
JUDY..... Heather Weirich, Mezzo
VIV..... Jayden Goldberg, Soprano
GENE..... Blas Canedo, Baritone
DOUGH'S MATE..... Zachary James, Bass-Baritone

PIANO..... Emily Jarrell Urbanek



FORT WORTH
OPERA

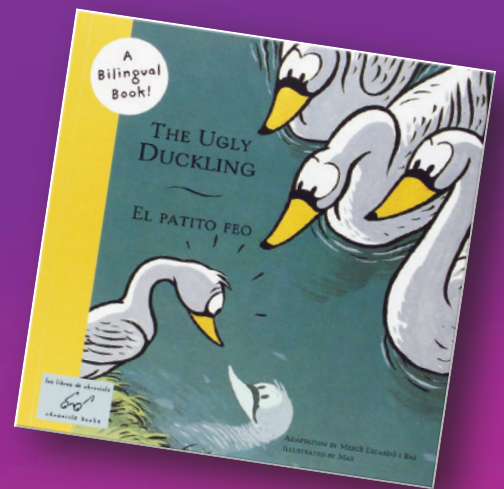
E D U C A T I O N



Since 1966, Fort Worth Opera has opened millions of young minds to the colorful and exciting world of opera. From dancing and singing, to great drama and compelling stories, opera is the ultimate art form and a theatrical experience that lasts a lifetime. Our Children's Opera Theatre produces two different, educational children's opera per year, featuring singers from the FWO-TCU Lesley Artists. This is an Artist Diploma residency program for extraordinarily talented opera singers who have completed bachelors and master's level training, and are in the early stages of their careers. This season, our artists served 35,000 students in elementary schools across Texas, with more than 75 live performances.



The State Board of Education recognized Fort Worth Opera Trustee Mary Pencis (seated center) as a "Hero for Children." We are proud to stand hand in hand with this extraordinary woman and her volunteers.



Through Fort Worth Opera's partnership with the Red Oak Foundation, children in Title I schools receive bilingual books that accompany the Children's Opera Theatre performances, promoting literacy and education through opera. During the 2017-2018 season, more than 1,500 books were read and distributed to kindergarteners.



In addition to promoting literacy and a love for music, Fort Worth Opera presents our Student Night at the Opera performances for students and teachers to attend dress rehearsals of our exciting Bass Performance Hall shows. Teachers receive comprehensive study materials to prepare their class for the experience of a live opera, and educational guides are given to each and every student who attends.

For millennial audiences and adults of all ages, we hold numerous events throughout the year, including our popular “pop-up” style concert event, Opera Shots, and Opera Unfiltered, which gives audiences a sneak peek of one of our seasonal operas. We also present symposia, film and music events, pre-show talks, opera previews, and exciting performances for adults to enjoy in the community. This spring, Fort Worth Opera also kicked off a new event called OMpera that fuses opera and yoga together.

“We really enjoyed seeing something different. The costumes were great and the students loved the wolf!”

— Ms. Wiggins / 3rd grade Science & Social Studies teacher at FWAFAW

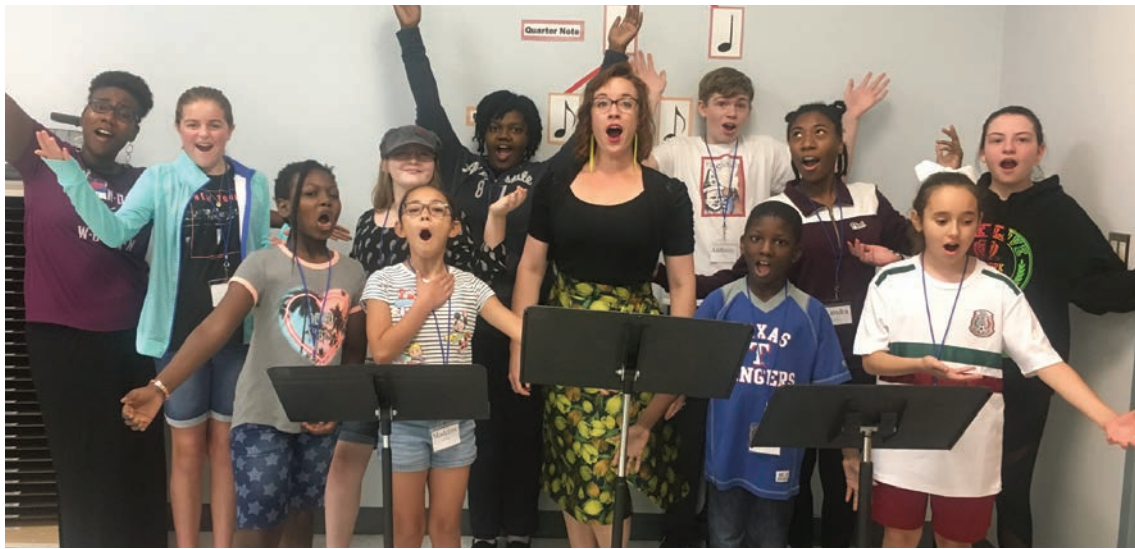


**42 schools visited across the DFW Metroplex
22 located in Fort Worth**

7,133 students served at Title I schools in Fort Worth



In January of 2018, Fort Worth Opera partnered with Mesquite Independent School District to bring the company's educational outreach initiative, Children's Opera Theatre, to 2,700 elementary children at the **Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center** in Dallas. The FWO-TCU Lesley Artists presented two performances of *The Ugly Duckling*, a heartwarming, 45-minute opera based on the classic fairytale by Hans Christian Andersen, that promoted reading, working together, accepting differences in other people, and fostering an appreciation for opera among young Texans.



OPERA FUNatics!

TEXAS CENTER FOR
ARTS+
ACADEMICS

Fort Worth Opera, in partnership with the Texas Center for Arts + Academics, presented the company's first interactive summer camp this past June at the Fort Worth Academy of Fine Arts. Opera **FUNatics** featured exciting masterclasses, voice lessons, music theory, history classes, and appearances by Fort Worth Opera staff members. Through The H & G Project, five younger students (3-6 grade) learned the chorus parts to Engelbert Humperdinck's enchanting fairy tale opera, *Hansel and Gretel*.

Through Opera 2.0, five older students (7-12 grade) received one-on-one coaching sessions with Fort Worth Opera's Principal Pianist and Vocal Coach, learning an operatic aria or musical theater selection.



"I loved actually being able to talk with my child about her day and to see how excited she was when she shared her experience. I also loved seeing her confidence grow over two weeks!"

—Traci Ratliff,
Autumn's mom

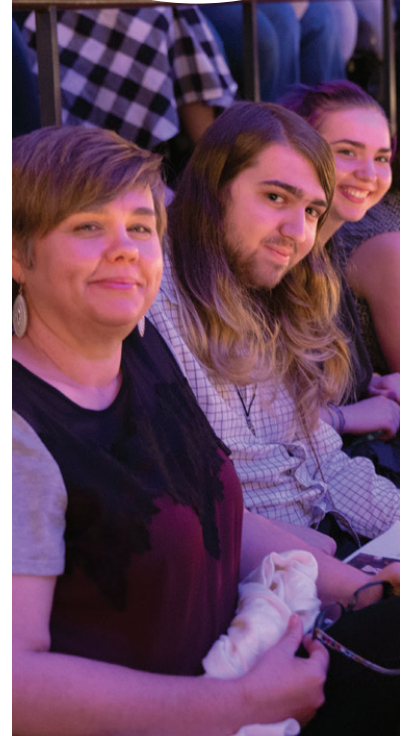
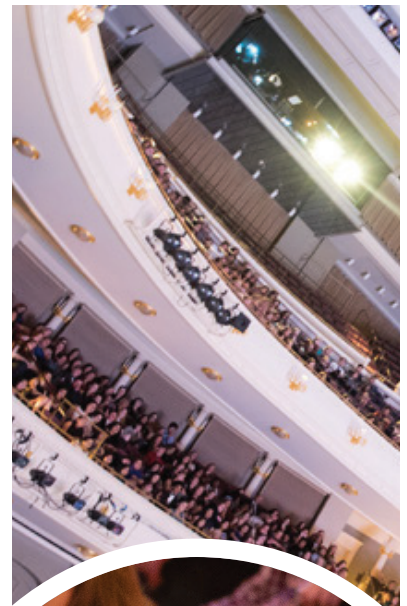




Each Festival season, Fort Worth Opera offers middle school and high school students across North Texas unparalleled access to the final dress rehearsals of our Bass Performance Hall productions. Not only can students and teachers witness fully-costumed performances with world renowned opera singers and the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, but they can also observe exclusive, behind-the-scenes technical adjustments and a director in action.

During the 2018 Festival, 10 new youth-based organizations were introduced to Fort Worth Opera through this inspiring program. 256 students attended our production of Piazzolla's tango opera, *María de Buenos Aires*, and 736 students attended our 1950s Hollywood-inspired comedy *Don Pasquale*.

Before each performance, educators receive informative teacher guides to give their students the resources to enrich their theater-going experience. A highlight of each Festival, Student Night at the Opera is part of Fort Worth Opera's ongoing desire to make opera both accessible and affordable to new audiences.





SHARE THE PASSION

BENEFIT CONCERT FOR OPERA OUTREACH



BENEFIT CONCERT

For OPERA OUTREACH

On Sunday May 20, 2018, soprano Jayden Goldberg, high school senior at the Fort Worth Academy of Fine Arts, organized a benefit concert, Share the Passion, to provide underserved children a chance to participate in Fort Worth Opera's Student Night at the Opera. For her Senior Capstone Project, Miss Goldberg wanted to share her love for classical music with the community, and to inspire young minds to dream big through this benefit concert at her high school.

Around 300 patrons attended this inspiring event, with 100% of all ticket sales and donations directed towards the Student Night at the Opera outreach program. These generous gifts will purchase tickets for students without the resources, so they may attend a final dress rehearsal of a full orchestral production during Fort Worth Opera's upcoming seasons. With funding of fine arts programs being cut in schools across the country, it was more important than ever to Jayden that she help to bring the classical music experience to children so that it might enrich their lives, and spark their own creativity and artistic expression.

TRUSTEE SPOTLIGHT



LOUISE B. CARVEY

A LONG WORTHY HISTORY THAT IS
GETTING MORE WORTHY

How did you become associated with Fort Worth Opera?

My husband and I married in 1944 in New York City at the Little Church Around the Corner and moved here where he could make a living and manage the T&P Station.

We joined First United Methodist Church and our alto soloist was Betty Berry Spain, one of the founders of Fort Worth Opera, along with Eloise Snyder and Jeanne Walker. Eloise wanted to sing desperately and her husband was a very successful doctor. He said, "Alright, I'll see what I can do about having an opera company here and you can be the main singer." That happened the year before I moved to Fort Worth.

Fort Worth Opera had put on one performance (La Traviata) before we arrived. We all knew that Betty Berry Spain was part of the opera and through her I inquired about the chorus. There was no auditioning I don't think. If you were able to sing, well, they probably thought, she can sing anything. So anyway, I was in the chorus after about three years of the opera being in existence. I was a member for a few years and then we had children, so I quit the chorus, but that's my history.

How did you become interested in opera?

I became interested in music - all of us in my family did - because one of my mother's requirements of her home in the Panhandle with her rancher husband, was to have a piano. Almost every evening after we ate, mother would go to the piano and play and children would gather around and we would sing. That was part of our entertainment, so that's how music came into my life. Growing up, I was a cowgirl. I loved to herd cattle and drive them to market. We'd have horses and drive this group of cattle and calves twelve miles across the ranch to a train station in Allison, Texas.

When I went to college at Southwestern University, I minored in voice. I majored in speech and drama. Somebody heard me sing one time, knowing I was in the Fort Worth Opera chorus and studying with a teacher at TCU, Mr. Arthur Faguy-Cote, and they must have evidently asked him if she could take a tiny role in this still fledgeling opera company. When I tried out, I failed. [Laughter]. They did not ask me to take that little role, which I knew I couldn't do. I had no desire to be an opera singer.

I took my children to the opera when they were growing up. It just began to be a part of my life going forward.

What was your favorite opera singing in the chorus?

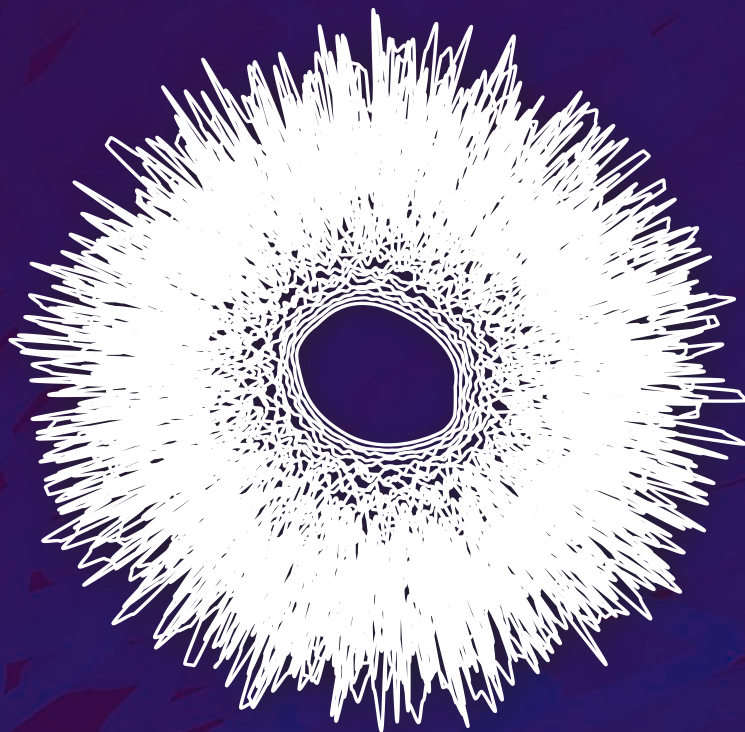
Carmen. I can still remember the alto chorus part. The rest is just finding a way as I was older. Through the Armstrongs, who were in the choir and an early factor in the success of the opera, I believe I became a part of the board. Music has been a part of my life always. A pleasure always. Working with the people in the opera.

Do you remember seeing a young Plácido Domingo?

I remember when he came here at the earliest part of his career. We just loved him and thought he was great. I will always have a warm spot in my heart for him. We all knew he was making his professional start here in Fort Worth with Lily Pons, and that was so exciting.

What do you want the most for this company going forward?

Simply to be a good company that fulfills its potential and goes on in the way we are headed now. Fort Worth Opera, United Community Centers Foundation, and children are things that I've cared about deeply all my life here in Fort Worth.



FORT WORTH
OPERA

2017 / 2018

**FINANCIAL
REPORT**

END OF FISCAL YEAR 2018

REVENUE	2017-2018 BUDGETED	2017-2018 ACTUAL AUDITED	2018-2019 BUDGETED
Admissions Performance Fees	\$ 575,625	\$ 346,624	\$ 876,348
Production Rental Income	\$ 37,500	\$ 58,602	\$ 25,000
Special Events	\$ 217,000	\$ 179,400	\$ 145,000
Miscellaneous Income	\$ -0-	\$ 375	\$ -0-
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE & SUPPORT	\$ 830,125	\$ 585,001	\$ 1,046,348
Contributions Sponsorships	\$ 2,364,000	\$ 1,959,869	\$ 2,280,000
Government Grants	\$ 58,500	\$ 26,500	\$ 50,000
Art Council of Fort Worth	\$ 64,000	\$ 78,086	\$ 24,000
Investment Income	\$ -0-	\$ 4,144	\$ -0-
TOTAL NON-OPERATING INCOME	\$ 2,486,500	\$ 2,068,599	\$ 2,280,000
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 3,316,625	\$ 2,653,600	\$ 3,376,458

THANKS A MILLION! Two-Year Matching Challenge Campaign Big Success!

This Board of Trustees-driven Campaign offers donors with new, lapsed or increased donations an opportunity to double their investment with a 1:1 match from Trustee **Ed Schollmaier** up to \$250,000 each year. The first year goal was reached in only three months and then, we collected an additional \$191,438 to support the Fort Worth Opera's activities.

ENDOWMENT

The Fort Worth Opera did not access their Endowment Funds to offset general operating expenses of 2018. The Endowment Value as of August 31, 2018 was \$367,226. Operating cash on-hand as of February 28, 2019 was \$304,534. It will be a primary goal of Fort Worth Opera to rebuild and expand the endowment in the ensuing years.

EXPENSES	2017-2018 BUDGETED	2017-2018 ACTUAL AUDITED	2018-2019 BUDGETED
Productions	\$ 1,314,237	\$ 1,691,406	\$ 1,844,341
General Administrative			
Staff Salaries Benefits	\$ 1,030,500	\$ 579,775	\$ 807,362
Other General Expenses	\$ 551,430	\$ 287,858	\$ 377,180
Marketing Box Office	\$ 257,730	\$ 148,179	\$ 180,000
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$ 3,153,897	\$ 2,707,218	\$ 3,208,883
Development Expenses	\$ 181,735	\$ 97,291	\$ 106,500
TOTAL NON-OPERATING EXPENSES	\$ 181,735	\$ 97,291	\$ 106,500
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 3,335,632	\$ 2,804,509	\$ 3,315,383
NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$ (19,007)	\$ (150,909)*	\$ 60,965

*A 3-year grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation was graciously received and booked in its entirety in the prior fiscal year (FY2017). For the second year of this grant (FY2018), \$117,550 was released from restricted net assets to cover the expenses related to this grant and included in this operating deficit.

FORT WORTH OPERA
ANNUAL REPORT | 2017-2018





2018 FORT WORTH OPERA GALA AT THE VAN CLIBURN RECITAL HALL

Fort Worth Opera's star-studded spring Gala featured a headline performance by Grammy Award-winning coloratura soprano Audrey Luna, who made international headlines for singing the highest note ever recorded in the Metropolitan Opera's 137-year history. The evening kicked off with an elegant cocktail hour at the Van Cliburn Recital Hall, where soprano Flora Wall and rising young baritone Thomas Cannon delivered a stunning selection of operatic classics. Following the reception, harpist Naoko Stromberg dazzled guests while they enjoyed a delectable, four-course seated dinner prepared by star chef, Lanny Lancarte II.

The evening's festivities continued across the street on the grand stage of Bass Performance Hall, with 11-year-old singing sensation Luke Chacko, and talented young baritone Anthony Anderson, who received national attention when he was featured on NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt. The crown jewel of the Gala was Luna's glittering performance of arias, accompanied by Fort Worth Opera Artistic Director Joe Illick at the piano, while guests enjoyed decadent desserts and glasses of champagne.



DINNER WITH THE STARS AT THE FORT WORTH CLUB

An elegant evening of incredible music, delicious food, and unforgettable memories at the Fort Worth Club. Acclaimed tenor Jonathan Blalock performed selections from Fort Worth Opera's dazzling, 1950s Hollywood production of Don Pasquale with the FWO-TCU Lesley Artists.





HOLIDAY SING-A-LONGS

AT THE FORT WORTH BOTANIC GARDEN

Fort Worth Opera celebrated the Holiday season with a family-friendly sing-a-long concert at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden. The FWO-TCU Lesley Artists performed a festive blend of holiday songs, classic carols and opera favorites.

FREE COMMUNITY CONCERT

AT THE STAYTON

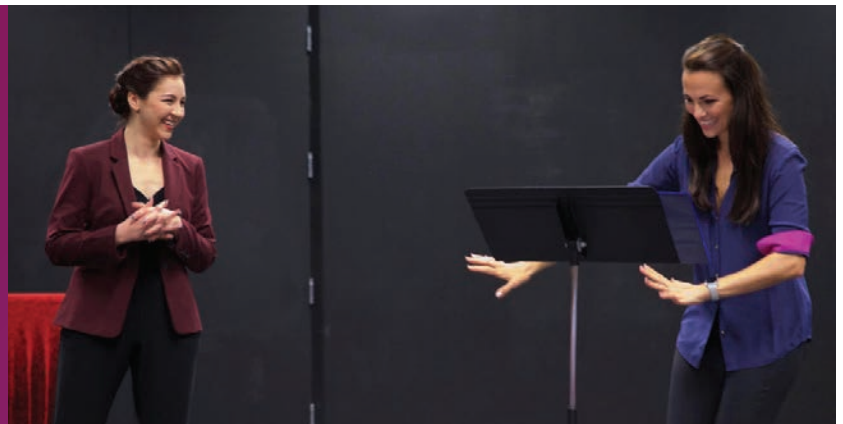
The FWO-TCU Lesley Artists brought some holiday cheer to residents of The Stayton at Museum Way Senior Living Community, singing a festive concert of carols, standards, and opera arias.



ISABEL LEONARD MASTERCLASS

AT THE TCU OPERA STUDIO

The FWO-TCU Lesley Artists participated in a masterclass with Grammy Award-winning mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard at Texas Christian University.





STATUESQUE AT THE COURTYARD AT THE KIMBELL ART MUSEUM

Argentinian mezzo-soprano Solange Merdinian, star of Fort Worth Opera's tango opera *María de Buenos Aires*, performed one of composer Jake Heggie's song cycles with Fort Worth Opera Artistic Director Joe Illick in the courtyard of the Kimbell Art Museum.



Southlake Mayor Laura Hill with Emily Fons

DELIGHTFUL! EMILY FONS AND JOE ILICK IN CONCERT AT THE MARQ

Fort Worth Opera, the Apex Arts League, and the City of Southlake presented an afternoon of opera arias, Broadway favorites, and celebrated classics from the Great American Songbook, featuring internationally renowned mezzo-soprano Emily Fons at The Marq in Southlake.





OPERA UNFILTERED WITH GABY NATALE

AT AT KENT & CO.

Three-time Emmy winner, best-selling author, and SuperLatina TV host Gaby Natale shared the unexpected journey that led her to being cast in our Festival production of *María de Buenos Aires*, and her debut role as El Duende in Astor Piazzolla's surrealistic tango opera.

OPERA SHOTS

AT SHIPPING & RECEIVING BAR

Fort Worth Opera kicked off the first Opera Shots of the season at one of the city's hot spots. This popular "pop-up" event brings the opera and musical theater action front and center in a relaxed, intimate setting, with cocktails, draft beer, crowd pleasing arias, duets, and hit Broadway songs.



WOMEN OF OPERA CONCERT

AT THE TCC

To honor Women's History Month, the FWO-TCU Lesley Artists performed an inspiring set of arias and songs by female composers and librettists at the Tarrant County College's Trinity River Campus for International Women's Day.

ICE CREAM SUNDAY

AT THE KIMBELL ART MUSEUM

In celebration of National Ice Cream Day in the Renzo Piano Pavilion, a trio of talented singers from the Fort Worth Opera will perform selections of famous operas, as well as "The Ice Cream Song."





TANGO LECTURES:

AT THE LATINO CULTURAL CENTER IN DALLAS,
THE MODERN ART MUSEUM OF FORT WORTH

Part musical journey, part academic lecture, this fascinating night of movement and sound explored the birth of tango during the 19th century, as it developed in the brothels and cafes of Buenos Aires. Ethnomusicology PhD student José R. Torres-Ramos of the University of North Texas delved into the history and the evolution of tango, while George and Jairelghi Furlong, acclaimed dance partners and instructors at Studio 22 Dallas, performed a sizzling set of red hot tango.

SUNSET BOULEVARD

AT THE MODERN ART MUSEUM WITH THE LONE
STAR FILM SOCIETY

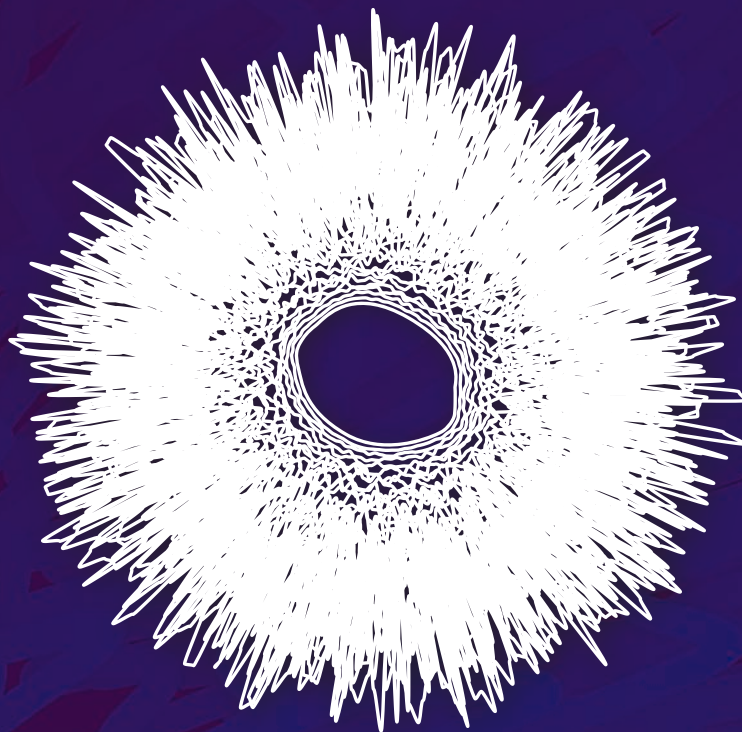
Cinema and opera collided with a screening of the classic film *Sunset Boulevard*, a multimedia talk by *Don Pasquale* director Chuck Hudson, and a performance of an aria from the opera by soprano Francesca Mehrotra.



BEST OF MEXICO CELEBRATION

AT WILL ROGERS COLISEUM

Tango meets mariachi. FWO-TCU Lesley Artist Bridget Cappel joined forces with acclaimed tango instructors George and Jairelghi Furlong, with charros Jerry and Stacy Díaz to sing Astor Piazzolla's aria "Yo soy María" from the tango opera *María de Buenos Aires* at the annual Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo.



FORT WORTH
OPERA

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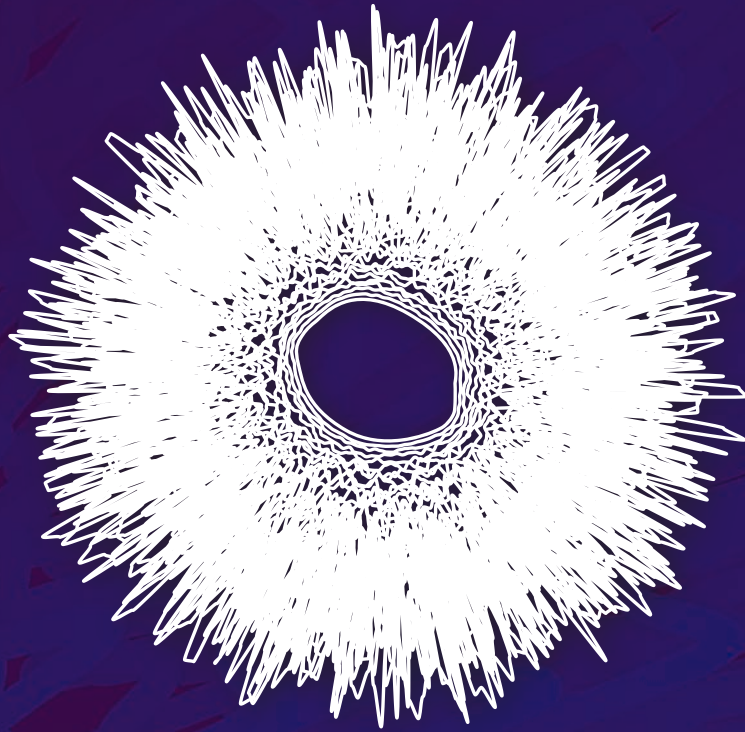
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As of April 1, 2019



FORT WORTH
OPERA

OUR HISTORY

HISTORICAL TIMELINE

May 29, 1946

Three visionary women, Eloise MacDonald Snyder, Betty Berry Spain, and Jeanne Axtell Walker filed for a state corporation charter under the name Fort Worth Civic Opera Association.

November 25, 1946

La Traviata was performed to a sold-out house at Will Rogers Memorial Auditorium.

1946-1949

Dr. Walther R. Volbach became the company's artistic director.

1949

Karl Kritz, an Austrian conductor well connected with the San Francisco Opera, became the company's new music director.

1953

Geoffrey T. Hobday named director and conductor of Fort Worth Opera.

1955

Rudolf Kruger was appointed music director and conductor. During his tenure, the company became a nationally recognized regional opera.

1955

The season was expanded from three to four productions a year with the assistance of the Ford Foundation. Artists from the Metropolitan Opera began to appear on our stage.

1962

Lily Pons stepped out of retirement to make her final operatic appearance in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with a young Plácido Domingo.

1963

Beverly Sills made her debut appearance with the Fort Worth Opera as Violetta in *La Traviata*. She made multiple appearances with the company to launch several roles to her repertoire.

1965

Plácido Domingo returned to Fort Worth eight more times following critically acclaimed debuts at La Scala, the Met, and the New York City Opera.

1966

The company inaugurated an educational outreach program through a series of student productions, beginning with an English version of *Ravel's L'enfant et les sortilèges (The Bewitched Child)*.

1969

The Fort Worth Opera board established the biennial Marguerite McCammon Voice Competition.

1970

Fort Worth Opera staged the first local production of a full-length American opera, *The Ballad of Baby Doe*.

1976

Due to the generosity of the National Endowment for the Arts, the company produced Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah* during the national bicentennial celebration with Floyd directing.

1977

First production by the Southwestern Opera Theater, the educational arm of the Fort Worth Opera, with 17 performances for 9,000 children.

1977

Inauguration of the "Opera Preview" series.

1981

Southwestern Opera Theater, the touring company of the Fort Worth Opera, presented the world premiere of Thomas Pasatieri's children's opera *The Goose Girl*.

1983

Dwight Bowes named Fort Worth Opera's new General Director.

1984-1985

The Fort Worth Symphony became the company's permanent orchestra and Fort Worth Opera charted an ambitious five-production season, including Stephen Paulus' *The Postman Always Rings Twice*.

1985

Aida became Fort Worth Opera's first production to utilize supertitles.

1986

João Mario Ramos was named General Director following the critically-acclaimed staging of *I Pagliacci* and *Cavalleria Rusticana* starring international opera star Martina Arroyo.

1990

Fort Worth Opera staged Police-drummer Stewart Copeland's new opera *Holy Blood* and *Crescent Moon*.

1991

Metropolitan Opera baritone William Walker appointed Fort Worth Opera's new General Director.

1996

Fort Worth Opera celebrated its 50th anniversary.

1998

Fort Worth Opera moves its productions to Bass Performance Hall.

2001

Darren K. Woods was appointed as General Director of the company.

2002

The Fort Worth Opera Studio was established.

2007

Fort Worth Opera made the transition to a festival format. The inaugural Festival featured the world premiere of Thomas Pasatieri's *Frau Margot*.

2009

The Red Oak Foundation and Fort Worth Opera established a partnership to spread the joys and benefits of books and music to kindergarten students in underperforming schools. 8,000 bilingual books have been given to children to promote cross-cultural educational experiences across Texas.

2013

Fort Worth Opera launched the Frontiers new works initiative, giving voice to unpublished 21st century operatic compositions, and the branding of the *Opera Unbound* series of operatic chamber works.

2014

Fort Worth Opera inaugurated Opera of the Americas, a ten-year artistic commitment to the production of works from contemporary composers of the Americas, with Daniel Crozier and Peter M. Krask's *With Blood, With Ink*.

2015

A generous multi-year grant was established by the Hattie Mae Lesley Foundation and the Fort Worth Opera Studio was renamed the Hattie Mae Lesley Apprentice Program.

2016

The world premiere of *JFK* by David T. Little and Royce Vavrek.

2017

Fort Worth Opera launches *Noches de Ópera*, a celebration of Spanish-language operas and Latino/a cultural and heritage.

Tuomas Hiltunen is appointed Fort Worth Opera's new General Director and Joe Illick as the company's Artistic Director.

Fort Worth Opera establishes the prestigious National Artistic Council, led by the legendary Plácido Domingo.

2018

The FWO-TCU Lesley Artist Program, a collaboration with the TCU Opera Studio expanded from four to eight singers.

The world premiere of *Companionship* is announced. This will be the first opera by a female composer in company history when it opens in May 2019.



REPERTORY

1946-1947

La Traviata *Madame Butterfly*

1947-1948

Pagliacci

The Old Maid and the Thief

Rigoletto

1948-1949

Carmen

La Bohème

The Bartered Bride

The Texas Mikado

1949-1950

Faust

1950-1951

Rosalinda

The Marriage of Figaro

The Girl of the Golden West

1951-1952

Lucia di Lammermoor

The Merry Widow

Il Trovatore

1952-1953

The Desert Song

Tosca

Cavalleria Rusticana

Gianni Schicchi

1953-1954

Hansel and Gretel

Madame Butterfly

1954-1955

Capriccio (last scene)

Salome

Carmen

Martha

1955-1956

Faust

The Marriage of Figaro

Rosalinda

La Bohème

1956-1957

Madame Butterfly

The Barber of Seville

La Traviata

1957-1958

Don Pasquale

Tosca

Aida

1958-1959

Rigoletto

The Magic Flute

Carmen

1959-1960

Martha

Manon

Il Trovatore

1960-1961

La Bohème

A Masked Ball

Samson and Delilah

1961-1962

Boris Godunov

Madame Butterfly *The*

Bartered Bride

1962-1963

Lucia di Lammermoor

Cavalleria Rusticana *Turandot*

1963-1964

La Traviata

Tosca

The Tales of Hoffmann

Faust

1964-1965

Rigoletto

Pagliacci

The Beautiful Galatea

Lakmé

Lohengrin

1965-1966

Carmen

The Abduction from the

Seraglio

The Gypsy Baron

La Bohème

1966-1967

Madame Butterfly

Samson and Delilah

The Barber of Seville *Otello*

1967-1968

Aida

The Marriage of Figaro

Manon Lescaut

Lucia di Lammermoor

1968-1969

La Traviata

Don Pasquale

Turandot

Romeo and Juliet

1969-1970

Tosca

Die Fledermaus

A Masked Ball

Andrea Chenier

1971-1971

The Ballad of Baby Doe

La Bohème

Don Giovanni

Carmen

1971-1972

Faust

La Rondine

The Barber of Seville

Rigoletto

1972-1973

The Tales of Hoffmann

The Elixir of Love

Madame Butterfly

Il Trovatore

1973-1974

Lucia di Lammermoor

The Marriage of Figaro

Salome

Cavalleria Rusticana *Pagliacci*

1974-1975

Hansel and Gretel *La Traviata*

The Daughter of the Regiment

Il Tabarro

Gianni Schicchi

Samson and Delilah

1975-1976

La Bohème

Susannah

La Perichole

Aida

1976-1977

Carmen

The Mikado

Tosca

Der Rosenkavalier

1977-1978

The Old Maid and the Thief

Madame Butterfly

The Magic Flute

Boris Godunov

Die Fledermaus

1978-1979

Signor Deluso

Rigoletto

H.M.S. Pinafore

The Barber of Seville

Manon

1979-1980

Sweet Betsy from Pike

La Bohème

The Merry Widow

Fidelio

Il Trovatore

1980-1981

Chanticleer

La Traviata

The Pirates of Penzance

The Goose Girl

Elektra *Faust*

1981-1982

Lucia di Lammermoor

The Seagull

The Telephone

The Flying Dutchman

Carmen

1982-1983

Tosca
The Gondoliers
Don Giovanni
Eugene Onegin

1983-1984

The Pearl Fishers
Madame Butterfly
The Barber of Seville
Verdi Requiem

1984-1985

Die Fledermaus
Manon
Lescaut
The Postman Always Rings Twice
Agrippina
Aida

1985-1986

Cavalleria Rusticana
Pagliacci
Hansel and Gretel
La Traviata

1986-1987

The Marriage of Figaro
La Gioconda
La Bohème

1987-1988

Rigoletto
The Mikado
The Magic Flute

1988-1989

Faust
The Barber of Seville
Madame Butterfly

1989-1990

Hansel and Gretel
The Elixir of Love
Tosca

1990-1991

Holy Blood and Crescent Moon
The Daughter of the Regiment
Carmen

1991-1992

The Abduction from the Seraglio
H.M.S. Pinafore
Lucia di Lammermoor

1992-1993

La Traviata
Don Pasquale
The Telephone
The Old Maid and the Thief

1993-1994

La Bohème
Don Giovanni
Madame Butterfly

1994-1995

Samson and Delilah
Così fan tutte
Tosca

1995-1996

Il Trovatore
The Barber of Seville
Carmen

1996-1997

Faust
The Elixir of Love
Rigoletto

1997-1998

La Traviata
The Flying Dutchman
La Bohème

1998-1999

Turandot
Don Giovanni
Tosca

1999-2000

Aida
Lucia di Lammermoor
Madame Butterfly

2000-2001

The Marriage of Figaro
Susannah
The Tales of Hoffmann

2001-2002

Candide
Carmen
Norma
Porgy and Bess

2002-2003

The Barber of Seville
Romeo and Juliet
Don Pasquale

2003-2004

Rigoletto
The Turn of the Screw
The Pirates of Penzance
The Italian Girl in Algiers

2004-2005

Salome
Little Women
Tosca

2005-2006

La Traviata
Dialogues of the Carmelites
La Bohème

2007 Festival

Madame Butterfly
Falstaff
Frau Margot (world premiere)

2008 Festival

Turandot
Lucia di Lammermoor
Of Mice and Men
Angels in America

2009 Festival

Carmen
Cinderella (La Cenerentola)
Dead Man Walking

2010 Festival

Don Giovanni
The Elixir of Love
Before Night Falls (world premiere)

2011 Festival

The Mikado
Il Trovatore
Julius Caesar
Hydrogen Jukebox

2012 Festival

Tosca
The Marriage of Figaro
Lysistrata
Three Decembers

2013 Festival

La Bohème
The Daughter of the Regiment
Ariadne auf Naxos
Glory Denied

2014 Festival

The Pearl Fishers
Così fan tutte
Silent Night
With Blood, With Ink
(professional world premiere)

2015 Festival

La Traviata
Hamlet
Dog Days

2016 Festival

JFK (world premiere)
The Barber of Seville
Buried Alive | Embedded

2017 Festival

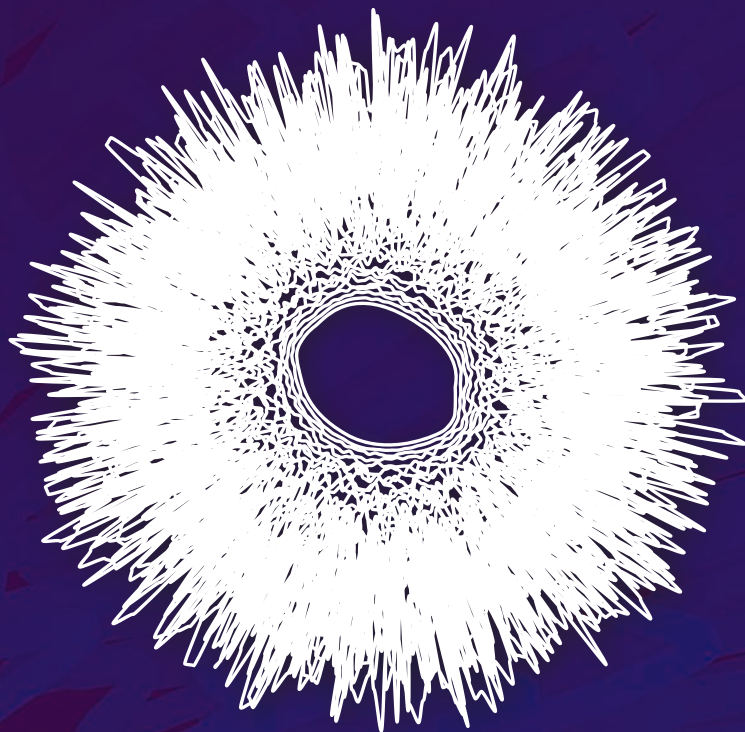
Carmen
Cruzar la Cara de la Luna Voir
Dire (world premiere)

2018 Festival

Don Pasquale
María de Buenos Aires
Brief Encounters

2018-2019

Hansel and Gretel
Porgy and Bess
El Pasado Nunca se Termina
Companionship (world premiere)



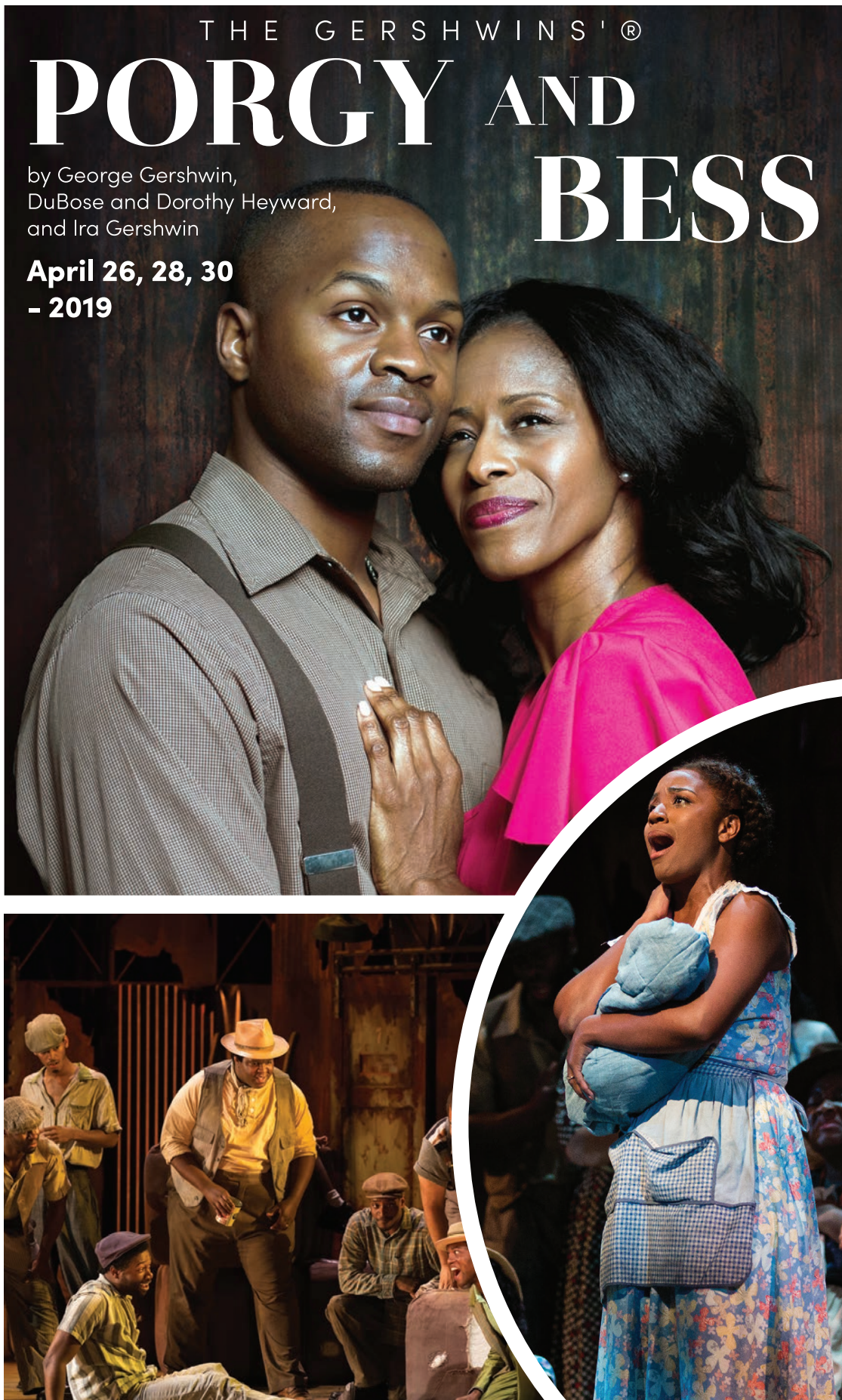
FORT WORTH
OPERA

2019
FESTIVAL
SEASON

THE GERSHWINS'® PORGY AND BESS

by George Gershwin,
DuBose and Dorothy Heyward,
and Ira Gershwin

**April 26, 28, 30
- 2019**



The 2019 Festival opens on April 26 with renowned director Francesca Zambello's celebrated production of Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*. This iconic love story, considered one of the most important American operas with a groundbreaking production that has been praised by audiences and critics alike at Washington National Opera, The Glimmerglass Festival, and Lyric Opera of Chicago.

This beloved American classic explores the relationships between members of a close-knit community in 1920s South Carolina. Making their Fort Worth Opera debuts are soprano Indira Mahajan as Bess, and rising young baritone Thomas Cannon as the disabled beggar named Porgy. The powerhouse cast also includes Jermaine Smith as Sportin' Life, Karen Slack as Serena, Norman Garrett as Crown, John Fulton as Jake, Meroë Khalia Adeeb as Clara, Chaz'men Williams-Ali as Robbins | Crabman, and Martin Bakari as the elderly "honey man," Peter.

EL PASADO NUNCA SE TERMINA

JOSÉ "PEPE" MARTINEZ Composer
LEONARD FOGLIA Librettist

May 10, 11, 12
- 2019

On May 10, the company will present the world's second mariachi opera, *El Pasado Nunca se Termina* (The Past is Never Finished), with music by the late José 'Pepe' Martínez and opera director Leonard Foglia. Part of Fort Worth Opera's unwavering commitment to works that reflect the culturally diverse North Texas community, this stunning bilingual family drama is set on the eve of the Mexican Revolution in 1910, as race, class, and economic conflicts between peasants and the descendants of the Spanish conquistadors boil to the surface.

The opera follows the forbidden romance between a wealthy European landowner's son Luis, played by exciting American tenor Daniel Montenegro, and Amorita, an indigenous Mexican girl played by soprano Abigail Santos Villalobos. Their love affair will alter the destiny of their families for generations to come. The stellar cast includes Paul La Rosa as Enrique, Ricardo Rivera as Acalán, Vanessa Cerda-Alonzo as Juana, Luis Ledesma as Augustino, Cassandra Zoé Velasco as Isabel | Dolores, Miguel Nuñez as Miguel | Hotel Manager, and Mexican baritone Octavio Moreno as the mysterious shaman Xihuitl.

FEATURING
**MARIACHI
NUEVO TECALITLÁN**



COMPANIONSHIP

RACHEL J. PETERS
Composer, Librettist

May 1, 3, 5
- 2019

WORLD PREMIERE

During our 2019 Festival, Fort Worth Opera will present the world premiere of composer-librettist Rachel J. Peters's delightfully wicked opera, *Companionship*. Adapted from the short story by internationally bestselling author Arthur Phillips, this deliciously dark comedy about an obsession with dough, mirrors our modern world, where what we consume becomes all-consuming. Selected as a winner of the 2018 FWOpera Frontiers showcase, the work will receive a fully staged production next spring at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden, as part of FWOpera's alternative venue series, *Opera Unbound*, and is the first opera written by a woman to be produced by the company in its 73-year history.

MARGO JEFFERSON

April 27
- 2019

On Saturday, April 27, as part of the opening weekend of the 2019 Festival, distinguished author, cultural critic, and academic Margo Jefferson will deliver a keynote lecture on *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess* at Bass Performance Hall. Winner of the 1995 Pulitzer Prize in Criticism for her work at *The New York Times*, Jefferson's essays and reviews have appeared in numerous publications such as *The Guardian*, *Harper's*, *The Scholar*, and *New York Magazine*. Currently serving as a professor of writing at Columbia University, she was once an arts criticism contributing editor to *Vogue* and an associate editor for *Newsweek* and is the award-winning author of *Negroland: A Memoir* and *On Michael Jackson*.

ENDORSEMENTS



"I lived in Fort Worth for two years while a young artist at FWO, and the biggest take away was a sense of homey-comfort that the city itself gives off. The sweet people, the delicious food, and great access to all kinds of art—all convey a sense of warmth and 'home' to me. Fort Worth Opera has supported me for a long time, and I hope that over the years I can return with frequency to honor their encouragement of me!"

— Maren Weinberger,
star of FWOpera's
Companionship

"Opera is something you always hear about, but the rest of the world doesn't always go. We thought it would be kind of a neat opportunity for our foundation to purchase tickets and take a bunch of people for the first time. The one they picked, Don Pasquale, was a really good one for us to see, because it was easy to follow and there were supertitles. The kids — I was impressed that so many of them really enjoyed it, and I never knew they didn't have microphones. It's great that Fort Worth is getting some of the big talents to come in. It speaks well of ya'll as I know there's a lot of competition to get the good singers. We are going to do this again this year and are excited to see Porgy and Bess."

— Tim Matheus
Texas Angel Fund

