



2016/2017

ANNUAL
REPORT

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AND DIRECTORS**

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TUOMAS HILTUNEN
GENERAL DIRECTOR

JOE ILLICK
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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.

PRINTING GENEROUSLY DONATED BY



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“...the Fort Worth Opera presented “*Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*” on Saturday night in Bass Hall, and it was a real education. Far from being mere background music with a Spanish accent, this was the telling, with often highly appealing music, of a deeply sad yet ultimately uplifting story.

It seemed to carry a special punch for some in the audience. At least three people near me were in tears as the story progressed. The message of the opera couldn't have been more pertinent to our time.”

Fort Worth Star-Telegram





Dear Friends,

If you are reading this then most likely you know the past year has been full of ups and downs. It would be fair to characterize it as one of the most turbulent rides in our 71-year history. Whenever an organization hits bottom, it has one of two choices – either pull itself up by the boot straps or fold. Well, true to our Fort Worth heritage, we used those old leather straps and with the help of y'all, our friends and family, we are ready to write the next chapter of our storied history.

For reference, about 12 months ago we had to drain our endowment of \$1 million and raise another million dollars to overcome a significantly underfunded world premiere and other shortcomings. As a result, mid-way through the year, we felt it best to part ways with our general director. The months that followed were difficult as our financial crisis worsened and staff morale waned.

However, in the midst of the turmoil, we heard the rally cries from our long time community partners and supporters such as the Sid Richardson, Burnett, and Amon Carter Foundations, among many others. As a result, we embraced our responsibility to put on an incredible festival for our patrons, as we had in years past, and deliver another season of thrilling stories and world-class artistry. To the credit of our staff, we put on an amazing season highlighted by our efforts to reach new audiences through our four-year, *Noches de Ópera* initiative. In addition to presenting the world's first mariachi opera, *Cruzar la Cara de La Luna*, we are proud to have staged the first live simulcast from Bass Hall onto a giant LED screen in Sundance Square, made possible through a new partnership with the television network Telemundo. Finally, we gave life to another new opera, *Voir Dire*, which was greeted with critical acclaim in the U.S. and a glowing review in UK magazine, *Opera Now*.

During the 2017 Festival, we were conducting interviews, seeking a fresh start with a new leader. By mid-summer we had found Mr. Tuomas Hiltunen, whose primary focus will be the business management and development aspects of our organization. However, our decision only worked when our longtime Music Director, Maestro Joe Illick, accepted the offer to elevate his role with the company and become our Artistic Director.

Another newsworthy moment arrived this summer when we announced our newly created National Artistic Council to be chaired by the great Plácido Domingo. Tuomas and Joe, along with advice from the Council members, have the ability to take our company to another level and we are excited to see what they can do over the next several years.

I wish to thank all our current donors, patrons and ticketholders for your continued financial support. The road ahead is still bumpy and the next 12 months are critical to our long term success; therefore, I humbly ask you to give a little extra, if possible. Additionally, I ask our lapsed donors to join us again, in ensuring our success so that our children and grandchildren can experience what we have all been able to do over the past 71 years. Finally, if you are new to Fort Worth Opera, please contact our staff so that we can figure out the best way for you to get involved whether it is financially or as a volunteer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mike Martinez', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mike Martinez
Chairman
Fort Worth Opera Board of Trustees

Fellow Opera Lovers,

As I look back on the previous year, I feel confident about the future of Fort Worth Opera, more so than I have at any time since I joined the Board of Trustees four years ago. At this moment in 2016, the company was—there is no other way to put it—in crisis, as a result of forces acting over many years. That crisis was brought to a head by the very ambitious world premiere of *JFK*, which was an extraordinary artistic success and brought FWOpera worldwide acclaim but did not attract the level of funding necessary to properly support its development and premiere.

In the late summer of 2016, FWOpera's Board created a Task Force to study every aspect of the organization and recommend changes that would allow the company to be financially sustainable. The eight members of that Task Force, of which I was honored to be a part of, met weekly throughout the fall, typically for four or more hours a session. We received presentations from all senior staff, spent considerable time meeting in person and on the phone with representatives from Opera America and other opera companies, conducted a Board retreat led by Marc Scorca of Opera America, and ultimately delivered our suggestions to the Board in December 2016.

Those recommendations centered on the Board itself, finances and cash flow, and staffing. I am pleased to report that though we have not fully completed the execution of these recommendations, we are well on our way. In particular, the implementation of careful cash flow management allowed us to put on 2017's very successful Festival, pay all of our bills, and attract sufficient funding to allow our new General Director the ability to start his term with cash in the bank and begin the long process of rebuilding our finances.

The Board has been restructured and is infinitely more active than in the past. Our Board now gathers monthly rather than quarterly, and meetings feature far more engaged discussion than they have during my tenure.

Finally, we have been fortunate enough to find and hire Tuomas Hiltunen as our General Director and deepen our long relationship with Joe Illick, now FWOpera's Artistic Director. You all know Joe through his conducting, and I hope you have been fortunate enough to hear one of his remarkable musical presentations about our productions. I am excited for you to get to know Tuomas—I believe his careful, thoughtful approach, financial discipline, and respect for the company's role in the community, as well as for the roles of all those with a part in making FWOpera successful, will serve us very well over the coming years.

While we face a long road back to complete health, this is your opera company, and it needs your support. The Board and staff are committed to working every day to earn your trust so that your support will be used responsibly. Please give generously—of your time, of your enthusiasm for FWOpera, and financially—to ensure the future of this extraordinary art form in our beloved city.

Best regards,



Nelson Claytor
President
Fort Worth Opera Board of Trustees





Here is our annual report for 2016 - 2017.

We are proud to be part of the Fort Worth community and we are here to bring exciting performances to our community. As an opera company, we need to be upfront with what kind of undertaking it is and what goes into making this beautiful music. Also, it is important that we ask for the support that we need.

Here are our facts and figures.

We would like to bring in the most diverse audiences – people new to opera and people who have loved it for many years. As an organization we endeavor to become musically adventurous, but at the same time fiscally responsible. We need to pay attention to the fundamentals of good management so that we can build a sustainable future and grow.

I look forward to working with the Board and our staff and supporters to make this vision a reality.

Tuomas Hiltunen
General Director



DON PASQUALE



MARÍA DE BUENOS AIRES



BRIEF ENCOUNTERS

Dear Friends of Fort Worth Opera,

If you have ever been moved by the beauty of the human voice, felt your spirit lifted by an evening of live theater, or witnessed the childlike wonder that opera inspires in audiences both young and old, you know that music and storytelling play an essential role in the health and strength of every thriving city. As Fort Worth audiences have known for over seventy years, opera brings our community together and makes the city a great place to live.

My vision for Fort Worth Opera is that we celebrate both the old ways and discover new ways of telling great stories through glorious singing. We will continue producing masterpieces by Mozart, Verdi, and Puccini, and we will also produce wonderful new pieces. We will present Baroque operas, Romantic operas, mariachi operas, contemporary operas, musicals, and repertoire that fosters collaboration and community engagement.

We will let go of the lines between what is considered opera and what is not, and thrill our audiences in the theater. An opera is as fresh as the team that performs it, and young singers today are fearless and fabulous. We are living in a Golden Age of talent, and many of these performers will be coming to Fort Worth!

We recently announced the exciting news of the 2020 world premiere of *The Last Dream of Frida and Diego*, and in the months ahead, we will be sharing with you further details about the Fort Worth Opera National Artistic Council that includes Plácido Domingo, David Gockley, Timothy O'Leary, Mark Adamo, Jake Heggie, and other luminaries of the opera world. If you enjoyed last season's stirring mariachi opera *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*, and family events like *Fiesta Fort Worth*, we have many more extraordinary performances on the horizon for you and your loved ones.

See you at the opera!


Joe Illick
Artistic Director



Fort Worth Opera is proud to announce the creation of the FWOpera National Artistic Council. Led by legendary tenor and opera director **Plácido Domingo**, this prestigious advisory board will support the organization from a national level to preserve and uphold its artistic vision and integrity through the 2018 Festival Season and beyond. Maestro Domingo made his FWOpera debut as Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* in 1962 and performed with the company an additional 8 times in his career. We will continue to announce exciting new developments in the coming months, as we write the next great chapter of FWOpera's future.

Council members include:

David Gockley - *Opera Company Administrator*

Timothy O'Leary - *General Director of Opera Theatre St. Louis*

Mark Adamo - *Composer, Librettist, & Professor of Music Composition*

Jake Heggie - *Composer*

"I am honored to be named Chairman of the Fort Worth Opera National Artistic Council. Together, with your support, we can continue the company's proud tradition of innovation and artistic excellence for generations to come."



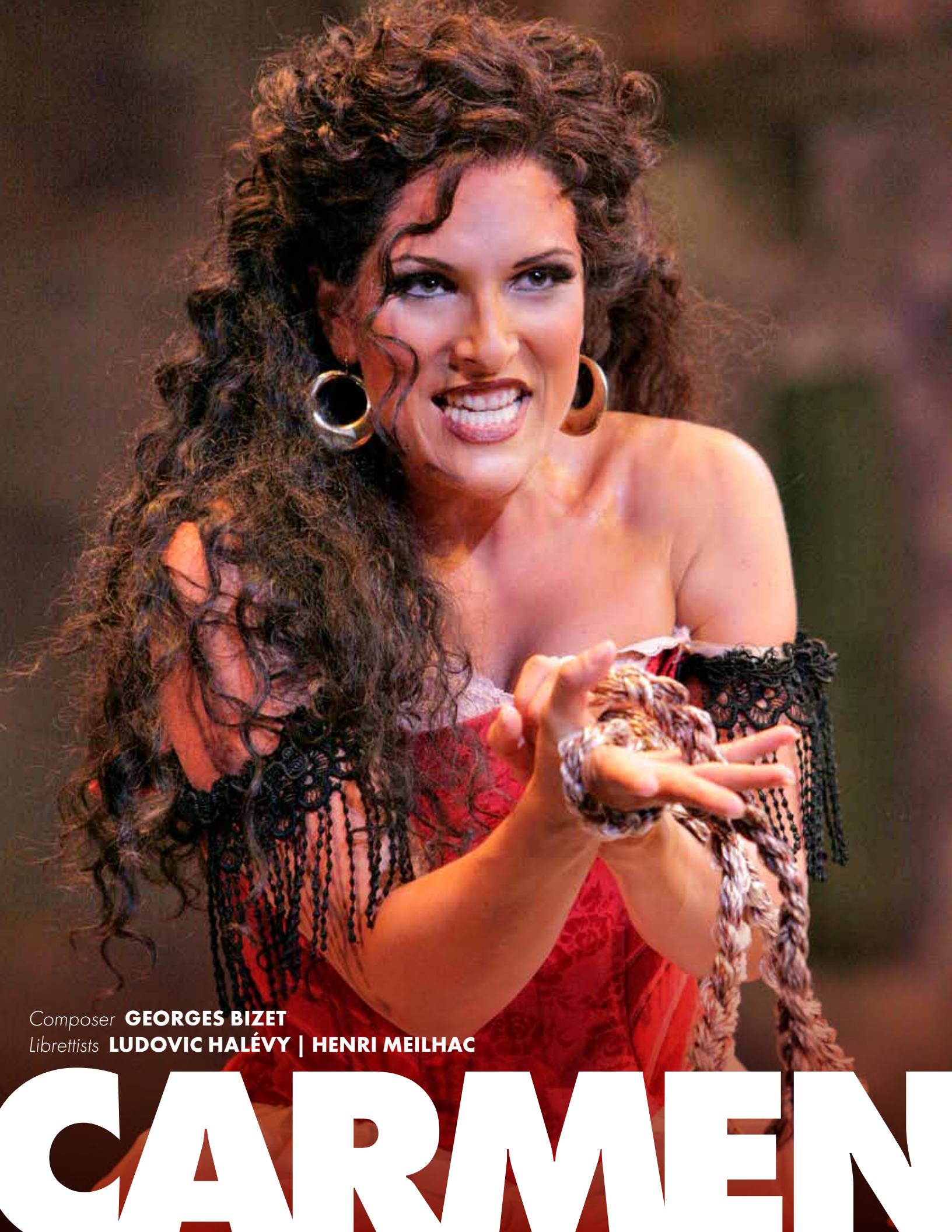
Plácido Domingo
*Fort Worth Opera
National Artistic Council*





2016/2017

PRODUCTIONS/PROGRAMS



Composer **GEORGES BIZET**
Librettists **LUDOVIC HALÉVY | HENRI MEILHAC**

CARMEN

“Splendidly sung”

- *The Dallas Morning News*



“FWOpera’s Carmen has an astonishing ending.” - *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*



“Babcock’s seductive performance
heats up Fort Worth Opera’s
Carmen” - *Texas Classical Review*

CAST

Moralès
Micaëla
Zuniga
Don José
Carmen
Frasquita
Mercédès
Lillas Pastia
Escamillo
Le Dancaire
Le Remendado

Trevor Martin
Kerriann Otaño
Wm. Clay Thompson
Robert Watson
Audrey Babcock
Christina Pecce
Anna Laurenzo
Andrew Surrena
Craig Irvin
Alex DeSocio
Brian Wallin

DATES

April 22, 7:30pm
April 30, 2:00pm
May 5, 7:30pm

CRUZAR LA CARA DE LA LUNA



Composer **JOSÉ "PEPE" MARTINEZ**
Librettists **LEONARD FOGILA**





“Gloriously tuneful and emotionally gripping.”

- *The Dallas Morning News*

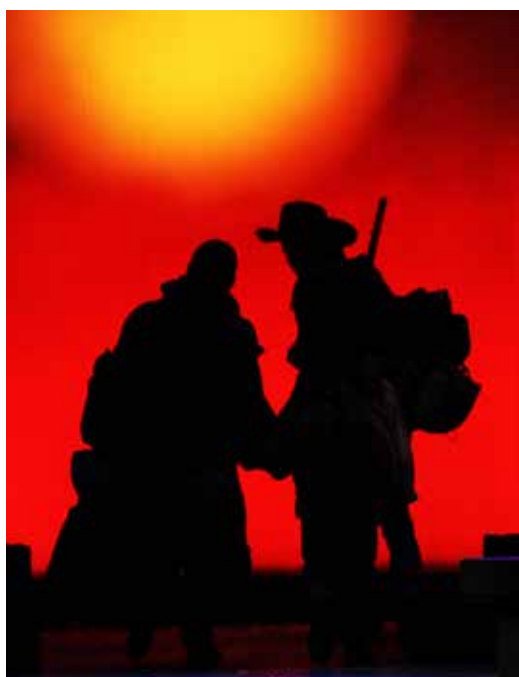
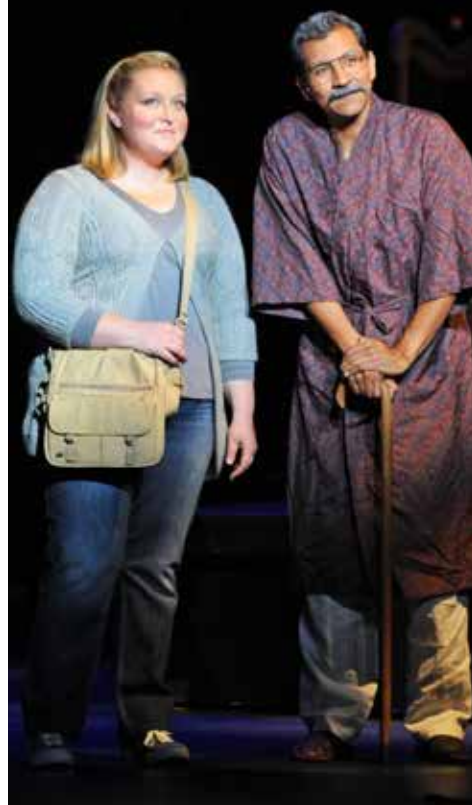


“The big surprise of the festival. The music is highly appealing, and story is so gripping that it had some in the audience in tears on opening night.”

- *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*



“Cecilia Duarte, no obstante, fue quien a nivel individual le arrancó más aplausos al público al final de la conmovedora historia, que sin contar con un nivel operístico de rigor o clásico, es cautivadora.” - *Hoy Dallas*.



CAST

Mark
Diana
Laurentino
Chucho
Lupita
Renata
Rafael
Victor

Brian Shircliffe
Brittany Wheeler
Octavio Moreno
Saúl Ávalos
Vanessa Alonzo
Cecilia Duarte
Daniel Montenegro
Juan Mejía

DATES

April 29, 7:30pm
May 7, 2:00pm

VOIR DIRE

W O R L D P R E M I E R E

ATTENDANCE
**SOLD
OUT**

Composer **MATTHEW PETERSON**
Librettists **JASON ZENCKA | MATTHEW PETERSON**

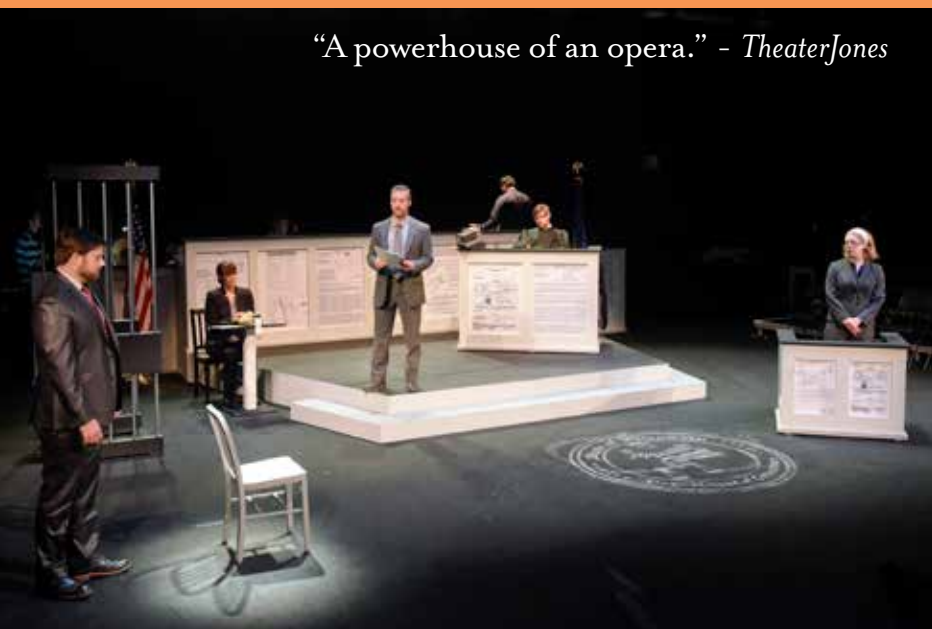
"This new 90-minute work is startlingly immediate and journalistic in feel, as gripping as a great feature story, and made memorable by the depth and texture of the music." – *The Wall Street Journal*

"Darkly brilliant." – *Texas Classical Review*



Opera Now, UK

"A powerhouse of an opera." – *TheaterJones*



CAST

Soprano	Christina Pecce
Mezzo	Anna Laurenzo
Tenor	Andrew Surrena
Baritone	Trevor Martin
Bass-Baritone	Nate Mattingly

DATES

April 23, 2:00pm
April 25, 7:30pm
April 29, 2:00pm
April 30, 7:30pm
May 6, 7:30pm

A RED-HOT OPERA SPECTACULAR

CONCERT



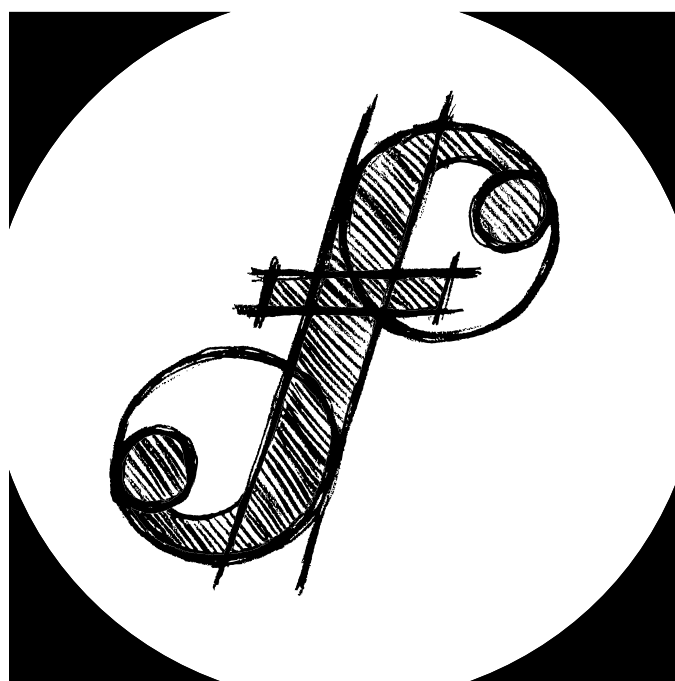
DATE April 15, 7:30pm



“What made the evening so special was the *joie de vivre* that permeated both the audience and the stage. For once, such an evening really earned its designation: gala.”

— *TheaterJones*





FRONTIERS

Fort Worth Opera's *Frontiers* showcase offers metroplex audiences a first look at the developmental processes for operas of all styles. Now in its fourth 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 3, 4 - 2017

Frontiers showcase has yielded numerous regional and world premieres since its inception. 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, and Opera Colorado will present 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. Griffin Candey and Thom Miller's delectable dark comedy, *Sweets by Kate* (*Frontiers* 2017), will receive its NYC premiere at the legendary Stonewall Inn in July of 2017 with OperaRox Productions. In January of this year, Clint Borzoni and John de los Santos' erotic opera, *When Adonis Calls* (*Frontiers* 2015), was staged as part of Opera America's 2017 New Works Forum.



PHOTO COURTESY STAR-TELEGRAM



PHOTO COURTESY STAR-TELEGRAM



The 2017 Frontiers Showcase attracted more patrons than any previous showcase

“You don’t have to overwork your imagination to see these outdoor broadcasts being a great success in the future.”

— Fort Worth Weekly



FIESTA FORT WORTH



7 partnerships developed through Fiesta Fort Worth

Telemundo 39

Sundance Square

Tarrant County College

Opera America

Tequila Avion

Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

GE Transportation



On August 24, 2017, Fort Worth Opera officially announced the 2020 world premiere of Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Nilo Cruz and Latin Grammy-winning composer, Gabriela Lena Frank's *The Last Dream of Frida and Diego* at the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City. Generously supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and OPERA America's Opera Grants for Female Composers, this significant new Spanish language opera will be unveiled during the fourth year of the company's bold initiative, Noches de Ópera.

Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price and Francisco de la Torre, Consul General of Mexico in Dallas, joined FWOpera for the press conference to promote economic, cultural, and diplomatic ties between Fort Worth and Mexico City. This co-commissioned work with San Diego Opera, the College of Fine Arts at The University of Texas at Austin, and DePauw University in Indiana, will receive further libretto, compositional, and orchestral workshops, as the opera evolves in the years preceding the 2020 world premiere in Fort Worth.



**Estimated
publicity
value
throughout
Mexico: \$1.5
million**

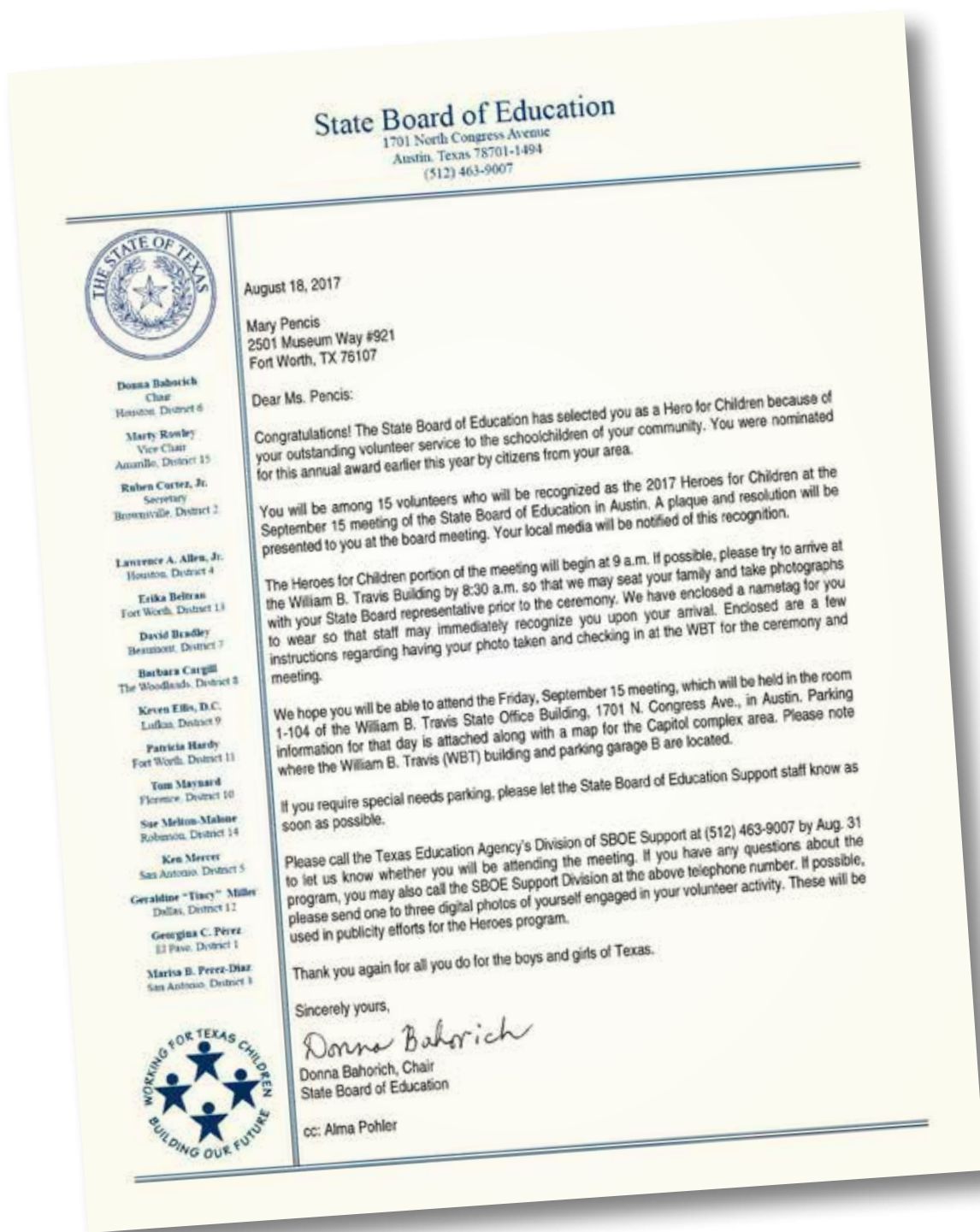




The State Board of Education recognized Fort Worth Opera Board Member Mary Pencis as a “Hero for Children”.

Mary has worked tirelessly as a volunteer leader for the Fort Worth Opera and the Red Oak Foundation, to bring opera and bilingual literature to elementary school children within our great community!

We are proud to stand hand in hand with this extraordinary woman and her volunteers.





**FORT
WORTH
CHILDRENS
OPERA**



During Fort Worth Opera's 2016-2017 fiscal year, the Apprentice Artists gave a total of 96 performances to 61 schools/venues, serving a total of 30,271 students.



STUDENT NIGHTS

**1, 127 students
from 24
participating
schools
attended
CARMEN**

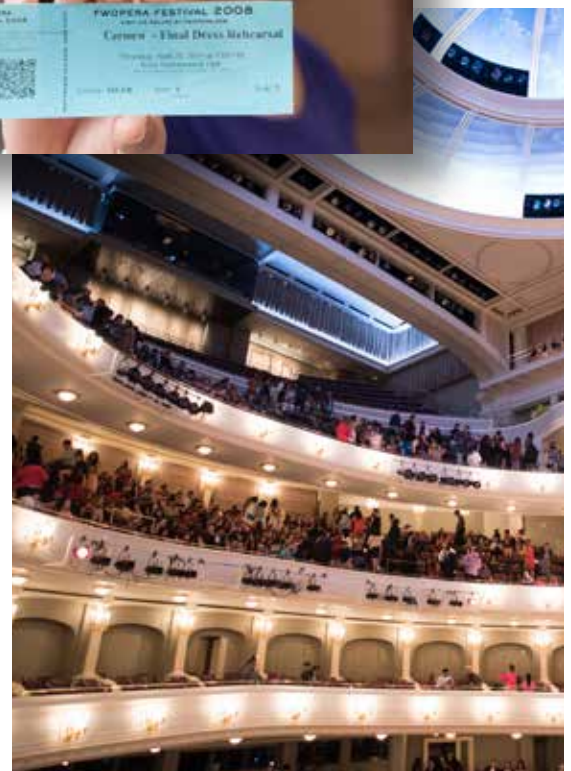
**307 students
from 5
participating
schools
attended
CRUZAR LA
CARA DE LA
LUNA**



Complimentary student guides sponsored by Oncor were distributed during the Student Night of Cruzar La Cara Da La Luna.



"We are proud to include Student Night as a part of Oncor's ongoing support of the arts and sciences," said Richard Casarez, Vice President of Customer Operations at Oncor. "We always look for ways to work with and invest in our young students in our surrounding school districts, and when the Fort Worth Opera reached out to us about this opportunity, we were instantly interested in what we could do to make it happen. Oncor prides itself on the richness of our diverse workforce, and this is one of the many ways we hope to inspire students' development and education for their future careers."





2016/2017
FINANCIAL REPORT

REVENUE	2016-2017 BUDGETED	2016-2017 ACTUAL UNAUDITED	2017-2018 BUDGETED
Admissions Performance Fees	\$ 690,000	\$ 659,853	\$ 575,625
Production Rental Income	\$ 75,000	\$ 103,776	\$ 37,500
Special Events	\$ 265,000	\$ 178,487	\$ 217,000
Miscellaneous Income	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,720	\$ 44,000
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE & SUPPORT	\$ 1,035,000	\$ 947,836	\$ 874,125
Contributions Sponsorships	\$ 3,113,454	\$ 2,067,436	\$ 2,411,550
Government Grants	\$ 48,000	\$ 80,500	\$ 43,500
Art Council of Fort Worth	\$ 75,000	\$ 42,816	\$ 64,000
Investment Income	\$ 0	\$ 357	\$ 350
TOTAL NON-OPERATING INCOME	\$ 3,236,454	\$ 2,191,109	\$ 2,519,400
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 4,271,154	\$ 3,138,945	\$ 3,393,525

ENDOWMENT

It was with regret that \$1,000,000 of Endowment Funds were used to offset higher than expected production costs due to the world premiere of *JFK* and higher general operating expenses of 2016.

The remaining funds were invested in high-yield accounts. The Endowment Value as of August 31, 2017 was \$319,028. Operating cash on-hand as of November 19, 2017 was \$125,349.

It will be a primary goal of Fort Worth Opera to rebuild and expand the endowment in the ensuing years.

EXPENSES	2016-2017 BUDGETED	2016-2017 ACTUAL UNAUDITED	2017-2018 BUDGETED
Productions	\$ 2,239,823	\$ 1,842,093	\$ 1,456,543
General Administrative			
Staff Salaries Benefits	\$ 1,127,185	\$ 1,073,547	\$ 1,155,000
Rent Utilities Insurance	\$ 140,448	\$ 149,001	\$ 151,730
Fees Services	\$ 135,950	\$ 127,305	\$ 102,000
Other General Expenses	\$ 92,720	\$ 180,538	\$ 67,300
Marketing Box Office	\$ 366,678	\$ 266,120	\$ 254,947
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$ 4,102,804	\$ 3,638,605	\$ 3,187,520
Development Expenses	\$ 168,650	\$ 227,580	\$ 206,005
TOTAL NON-OPERATING EXPENSES	\$ 168,650	\$ 227,580	\$ 206,005
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 4,271,454	\$ 3,866,185	\$ 3,393,525
NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$ 0	\$ (727,240)	\$ Break Even

dinner with the stars

Sponsored by Virginia Hobbs Charitable Trust



Audrey Babcock

DONOR EVENTS



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Consolidated Communications
Enterprise Holdings Foundation
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Fort Worth Promotion and Development Fund
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Kathy Flories Antiques
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Virginia Hobbs Charitable Trust
Kimbell Art Foundation
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The Thomas M., Helen McKee & John P. Ryan
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Francis C. and William P. Smallwood Foundation
Texas Commission on the Arts
Crystelle Waggoner Charitable Trust



• — In Kind — •

American Airlines
Autobahn Motor Group
Avión Tequila
Catherine Estrada and Robert Estrada
Frost Bank
Mike Martinez and Cassie Dunn

Oncor
The Rockley Family Foundation
Telemundo 39
Red Oak Books
Evan Mack



Producer - \$50,000 +

American Airlines
 Arts Council of Fort Worth
 Burnett Foundation
 Amon G. Carter Foundation
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 The Hattie Mae Lesley Foundation,
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 The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
 The Pangburn Foundation
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 Ms. Rosalyn G. Rosenthal
 Mr. Edgar H. Schollmaier
 Crystelle Waggoner Charitable Trust
 WFAA

Director - \$25,000-\$49,999

Anonymous (2)
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 Louise B. Carvey
 Fort Worth Convention & Visitors Bureau
 Virginia Hobbs Charitable Trust
 OPERA America
 Ann L & Carol Greene Rhodes
 Charitable Trust
 Star-Telegram

Maestro - \$10,000-\$24,999

Anonymous (2)
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 F. Robert Ball* & Mona Tull Ball
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 BNSF Railway Company
 Ms. Cassie Dunn & Mr. Michael Martinez
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 Mr. Joseph Lesley
 Denise Merkle, Ph.D. &
 Nelson E. Claytor, Ph.D.
 Oncor
 Francis C. & William P. Smallwood
 Foundation
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 Texas Commission on the Arts
 WRR

Virtuoso - \$5,000-\$9,999

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Benefactor - \$500-\$999

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Anonymous (2)
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Jen & Michael Appleman
Barbara & Kyle Jordan
Dr. Terry L. Barrett & Ms. Krista Tinsley
Ms. Patricia Benoit & Mr. Weldon Cannon
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Brooks
Scott Chase & Debra Witter
Mr. & Mrs. Phillip Easley
John & Barrett Edstrom
Susan & Richard Goodspeed
Mr. Jeff Heald & Mr. Michael Zerbach
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Hunter
Mr. & Mrs. William W. Jagoda
Mr. Jeffrey S. Jones
Kathy Flories Antiques
Kendra Scott
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Ms. Patricia Klint
Mrs. Lois Lacy
Mr. & Mrs. William B. Leeman
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Mr. William Madison
Maxben Homes
Mr. Michael McDermott
Mrs. Peggy Meeker
Ms. Margaret Monastra
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Mrs. Kathleen Minear
Ms. Linda Monk
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Ms. Judith Norman
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Mr. Leif Sandberg
Dr. Mohan Sathyamoorthy &
Mrs. Heather Romine
Ms. Shelly Seymour & Mr. Bud Kennedy
Ms. Barbara Shearer
Joslyn & Greg Shirey
Mr. & Mrs. Conway Snipes
Ms. Azilee Stephenson
Rev. Stephen Stine & Mrs. Laurie Dowell
Janet & Jim Sutton
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph J. Tigie
Tom Thumb Good Neighbor Program
Mr. David Turpin
Ms. Emily Weir
Mr. David E. Wilkins
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Wright
Mr. Grady Young

*deceased



OUR HISTORY



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

With the mariachi opera, *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*, Fort Worth Opera launches *Noches de Ópera*, to explore and produce Spanish language operas.

In partnership with Telemundo 39, Fort Worth Opera hosted *Fiesta Fort Worth*, a celebration of Latino culture and heritage, featuring the first live simulcast from Bass Performance Hall into Sundance Square.

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

Fort Worth Opera established the prestigious National Artistic Council, led by the legendary tenor Plácido Domingo. The company travelled to Mexico City for the first workshop reading of the world premiere *The Last Dream of Frida and Diego* by Gabriela Lena Frank and Nilo Cruz. The official announcement at Palacio de Bellas Artes was generously supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and OPERA America's Opera Grant for Female Composers.

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

LEADERSHIP

Tuomas Hiltunen

General Director

Joe Illick

Artistic Director

PRODUCTION

Max Parrilla

Director of Production

Stephen Carey

Principal Pianist and Coach

ADMINISTRATION

Ryan Lathan

Marketing & Communications Manager

Chris Robinson

Advertising Manager

Faye M. Falconnier

Bookkeeper

Collins Osei

Systems Administrator

Paulina Magdaleno

Community Outreach & Special Events

Beth Getchell

Grant Writer

Nancy Tran

Executive Assistant & Customer Service Manager

Sheran Keyton

Coordinator of Educational Outreach & Customer Service

Amanda Robie

Frontiers Coordinator





Opera buffa lovers are in for an uproarious treat in 2018, as visionary director Chuck Hudson joins forces with maestro Joe Illick for a sparkling, bubbly production of Donizetti's bel canto romp, *Don Pasquale*. Audiences will be transported to the golden era of Hollywood in the 1950s, as Pasquale, an aging silent film star — sets off to resurrect his ailing career and find a wife and heir to his fortune. He gets more than he bargained for once he weds, or thinks he weds, the gold-digging starlet Norina.

The laughs come fast and furious in Hudson's ode to cinema, as Dr. Malatesta hatches a plot on behalf of Norina and Pasquale's nephew Ernesto to bring them together and teach the Don a lesson. This classic 19th century comedy gets a glamorous, glitzy update, with sight gags galore and a riotous parade of pop culture icons, like Carmen Miranda, Jackie Gleason, Lucille Ball, Marilyn Monroe, and Elvis Presley, played to perfection by FWOpera's brilliant chorus members.

DON PASQUALE

GAETANO DONIZETTI Composer
GIOVANNI RUFFINI Librettist



April 28, May 4, 6 - 2018





MARÍA DE BUENOS AIRES

ASTOR PIAZZOLLA Composer
HORACIO FERRER Librettist

The 2018 season marks the second year of Fort Worth Opera's bold initiative, *Noches de Ópera* (*Nights of Opera*). This season, FWOpera is dialing up the heat and delivering a sensual operatic experience like no other.

Never before has composer Astor Piazzolla and librettist-poet Horacio Ferrer's sexy, tango opera, *María de Buenos Aires*, been presented by an opera company in North Texas – until now. Festival audiences will be invited to step into the intoxicating city of Buenos Aires, as a young woman named Maria finds herself seduced by the sounds of tango. Set in brutal barrios and a disturbingly beautiful vision of the underworld, this sizzling production features a hypnotic fusion of jazz, opera, and nuevo tango rhythms.

Acclaimed director, choreographer, and librettist John de los Santos (*Frontiers*, *Carmen*, *Salome*) returns to Fort Worth Opera to bring his singular vision of *María* to life.



April 27, May 5 - 2018

BRIEF ENCOUNTERS

MARK ADAMO Composer, Librettist

JOE ILLICK Composer, Librettist

JAKE HEGIE Composer, Librettist

Love blossoms. Love inevitably fades. The perfect union is not always so perfect. This season, Fort Worth Opera invites Festival audiences to step onto the battlefield of love and witness three intimate tales of desire, doubt, fear, and longing with *Brief Encounters*. This riveting trio of 15-minute pocket operas by acclaimed composer-librettist Mark Adamo (*Avow*); Fort Worth Opera Artistic Director Joe Illick (*Feel The Tango*); and award-winning composer Jake Heggie (*Again*), explore the expectations about marriage versus our reality of “til death do us part.”

Four rising stars of the opera world — soprano Maren Weinberger (*The Barber of Seville*, *Buried Alive / Embedded*), mezzo-soprano Kate Tombaugh, tenor Javier Abreu (*Before Night Falls*), baritone Samuel Schultz, are joined by international operatic bass and Broadway actor Zachary James to bring these mini-operas to life.



April 29, 30, May 1 - 2018





“My longtime trumpet instructor invited me to Opera Shots. Watching these singers perform live was a revelation – opera can be rooted in contemporary life and young adults get it too. When I came home, I asked my parents to add me to their subscription for the season and they took me to Bass Hall to see a full-length opera production. I was hooked. The three of us now attend together and have long discussions after the operas about the performances, the music, singers and staging. I cannot wait to see *Don Pasquale* and *Maria de Buenos Aires* next spring.”

– Samuel Bennett

“I support the Fort Worth Opera because it provides our youth with the desperately needed exposure to so many art forms uniquely combined into one fantastic package. Discovering Opera fosters an appreciation of all the arts, inspires our youth and opens them up to the world of possibilities for the creativity inside them.”

– Jennifer Goldberg
FWOpera Board Member



It was an honor to have my debut with Fort Worth Opera, my home company, where so many family members and friends could attend.

– Vanessa Becerra

**"One of the most forward-looking
companies in the U.S."**

– The Wall Street Journal



**FORT
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