

New Grants for Innovative Thinking

The 27 projects recognized in the first-ever group of OPERA America Innovation Grants embody the initiative's aim of enhancing artistic vitality, audience experience, organizational effectiveness and community connections. They range from The Glimmerglass Festival's new discussion series on contemporary social issues, to Austin Opera's recently created "director of audience experience," responsible for the complete opera-going process, from ticket purchase to post-show departures. The grants support the production of new or novel repertoire, accompanied by audience-engagement activities; the presentation of works in unusual venues or in innovative season formats; and partnerships with other arts organizations or with social service providers.

The Innovation Grants program, launched last fall, is funded by the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation and provides up to \$1.5 million annually to OA's Professional Company Members. Through information-sharing, the initiative will benefit not only recipients, but also the whole field. OA has developed an infrastructure, with Getty Foundation support, to capture and assess outcomes of funded projects — successes, challenges and even failures. Lessons gleaned from the grantees will be shared with the entire field at future meetings and conferences, as well as through publications.

Twenty-seven companies — representing nearly 20 percent of all Professional Company Members — were selected by an independent panel to receive a total of \$1.411 million:

- American Lyric Theater (New York, NY)
- American Opera Projects (New York, NY)
- Anchorage Opera
- Arizona Opera (Phoenix, AZ)
- The Atlanta Opera
- Austin Opera
- Beth Morrison Projects (New York, NY)
- Central City Opera (Central City, CO)
- The Dallas Opera
- Fargo-Moorhead Opera (Fargo, ND)
- Florentine Opera Company (Milwaukee, WI)
- The Glimmerglass Festival (Cooperstown, NY)
- HERE (New York, NY)
- Houston Grand Opera
- Michigan Opera Theatre (Detroit, MI)
- Minnesota Opera (Minneapolis, MN)
- Opera Maine (Portland, ME)
- Opera Memphis
- Opera Omaha
- Opera Philadelphia
- Opera Saratoga
- Pacific Opera Victoria (Victoria, BC)
- San Diego Opera
- San Francisco Opera
- The Santa Fe Opera
- Seattle Opera
- Tulsa Opera

Visit operaamerica.org/PressRoom for details of the funded initiatives. Applications for the next cycle of Innovation Grants will open this fall, and can be found at operaamerica.org/Grants.

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