

NOA Conference  
Cleveland, Ohio  
January 9-11, 2020

## Wednesday, January 8, 2020

Board of Directors Meeting

6:00-9:00 PM

**Reunion Gathering**

*Bar 32 on the Hilton Rooftop*

## Thursday, January 9, 2020

9:00-9:50 AM

**Conductors and Pianists Collaborative Initiative Gathering**

9:00-9:50 AM

**Breakout Sessions**

**Politics and Opera: “Poperatics” – Reimagining Offenbach’s *La Périchole* in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**  
(Christopher Goeke)

Politics and Opera: “Poperatics” – Reimagining Offenbach’s *La Périchole* in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Can an 1868 opera tell the story of 2018 American politics and culture? There is an uncanny similarity in Offenbach’s satire and the political milieu of the last two decades. This presentation will investigate how a modern production of *La Périchole* can honor Offenbach’s charming music and wry humor, maintaining rhyme-scheme and story line, while simultaneously engaging in relevant contemporary political and social discussion. Audio and visual examples included.

**Reuse/Recycle/Repurpose: Creative Op Shop on a Shoestring Budget and Hacks for a one-person production team**

(Jen Stephenson, Anne Foradori)

Small academic opera programs are often challenged by limited resources to produce theatrically credible, artistically satisfying performances of scenes, one-act, or full-length operas. This session serves as a resource guide for those working within a tight set of constraints, be they related to budget, personnel, areas of expertise, or community engagement and are wishing to generate a certain ambiance, suggest a period and location, define characters, and transform a recital hall into a theatrical space. Topics included in the session will be ideas and resources for basic costume design, including inexpensive hacks for fabric and material purchases; basic set design and construction, including easy and inexpensive set painting and resources for creating ambient staging effects with borrowed materials; and

ideas for audience building and community engagement and education, including collaborative ideas for campus and community groups.

**The Douglas Moore Songbook**  
(Michael Ching, Gordon Ostrowski)

Session will feature a live performance of excerpts from works by BALLAD OF BABY DOE composer Douglas Moore and his mid 20<sup>th</sup> century colleagues and students. Works will include selections from WINGS OF THE DOVE (1961), CARRY NATION (1966), and GALLANTRY (1958), and Beeson's SWEET BYE AND BYE (1956). Works will be presented and introduced by Michael Ching and Gordon Ostrowski, who both have been involved with Moore's legacy through the Douglas Moore Fund for American Opera. Performers will include undergraduate, graduate, and faculty colleagues from the region. Session is coinciding with the release of THE DOUGLAS MOORE SONGBOOK by EC Schirmer Music Publishers.

**10:10-11:00 AM**

**Breakout Sessions**

**More than Piano: Chamber Ensemble Options for Workshop Production**  
(Kirk Severtson)

Many opera programs don't have access to a full opera orchestra for every production, so smaller-scale performances of standard works often default to accompaniment by piano only.

However, more interesting results can often be achieved with the addition of just a few instruments to an otherwise piano-only production. This session will explore a range of ideas for productions to employ "piano-plus" instrumentation, from modest additions of one or two instruments, up to fully arranged versions for chamber ensembles, including numerous sources for finding and renting them. Be inspired to draw on the instrumental talent available at your institution to enhance your next workshop production!

**Michael Chekhov & Opera: A Practical Approach to Acting for the Singer-Actor**  
(James Haffner)

Training opera singers to be singer-actors requires an acting technique that addresses the needs unique to the demands placed on the performance of opera theatre. The tenets of the Chekhov technique can be expressed fully in musical terms, which facilitate a more integrated and full-bodied performance approach. This presentation would be conducted in a workshop format that afford singers and—perhaps more importantly—teachers the opportunity to experience the work. In a short time, each participant will be given a set of tools that can be immediately transferred to work in the classroom and the rehearsal hall.

## **Incorporating Music by Women into Your Opera Scenes Program**

(Linda Lister)

Most opera workshop scenes program consist entirely of works by male composers. Even those interested in changing the canon may not know where to start in adding music by women. So this session will provide recommendations and specific resources regarding operas by female composers to excerpt in scenes programs. The session will present repertoire from the Baroque era to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including works by Francesca Caccini (*La liberazione di Ruggiero dall'isola d'Alcina*), Pauline Viardot (*Cendrillon*), Libby Larsen (*Picnic, A Wrinkle in Time*), Lori Laitman (*The Scarlet Letter, The Three Feathers*), as well as less familiar up-and-coming female composers.

**11:20 AM -1:00 PM**

**Opening Ceremonies**  
**Keynote Address and Luncheon**

**1:20-3:20 PM**

**Master Class/Plenary Session**  
**Howard Watkins**

**3:20-4:40 PM**

**Break**

**4:40- 5:40 PM**

**Plenary Session**  
**Opera Rocks—Past, Present and Future**  
**Rock and Roll Hall of Fame**  
(Scott Skiba)

Presented in collaboration with the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, in the Rock Hall's Foster Theater.

A interactive exploration of the past, present, and future of Rock Opera. Recorded and live performance examples including: Concept Album, Rock Opera, Symphonic Metal, Opera Metal, Rock Musicals, Rap Opera, and Hip Hopera provide historical context, a sampling of current repertoire, and set the stage for discussion about groundbreaking future collaborations, education and outreach opportunities, and genre-expanding projects. Enjoy the music, share perspectives and help to ensure that Opera continues to rock, now, and for future generations!

**5:40-7:30 PM**

**Tour and Dinner**

**Rock and Roll Hall of Fame**

**7:30-9:30 PM**

**Collegiate Opera Scenes Competition** **Rock and Roll Hall of Fame**  
(Paul Houghtaling, Master of Ceremonies,  
and Dawn Neely, Chair, Collegiate Opera Scenes Competition Committee)

*This annual celebration of opera scenes is an entertaining energetic evening featuring young artists from all across the United States in undergraduate and graduate opera divisions and a musical theatre division. National finalists are selected from a competitive preliminary round.*

**9:30-10:30**

**Reception**

**Rock and Roll Hall of Fame**

**Friday, January 10, 2020**

**9:00-11:00 AM**

**Poster Sessions**

**10:10-11:00 AM**

**Breakout Sessions**

**Scholarly Paper**

(Presenter To Be Announced at a Later Date)

**Cultural Sensitivities in Opera: Enlisting Support and Navigating Controversy.**

(I.D.E.A. Initiative: Justin John Moniz, Kumiko Shumizu)

The buzz around Seattle Opera's 2017 production of Giacomo Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* initiated a culture-shifting conversation in which Seattle's Asian-American community decried the racist stereotypes and cultural appropriation at the core of the opera. Rather than shying away from the controversy, how must we (the producers, directors, and performers of the art form), address the presentation of such works, if they are to be presented at all? In an effort to preserve the integrity of the operatic canon, one must carefully navigate any controversy associated with the material. In this session, we'll discuss the dos and don'ts, the shoulds and shouldn'ts, and address a user-friendly systematic plan that can be tailored to any artistic process.

**Massage for Musicians**

(Christopher Meerdink)

Massage helps us perform tasks with greater longevity and comfort. Muscles can become short and tight with use. Adhesions develop in soft tissue throughout our bodies, including in the throat, neck, shoulders, arms and hips. Massage can improve and alleviate tight muscles, adhesions, increasing blood flow, reducing recovery time. It helps expel waste material from the blood and interstitial fluid and tissue, improving efficiency of bodily functions. Pre-event massage can increase flexibility, lower blood pressure and reduce anxiety. My goal with this session is to draw musicians' attention to the value of massage as ongoing maintenance for the musical athlete to the rising rate of poverty in America.

**11:10 AM-12:10 PM**

**NOA Annual Business Meeting**

**12:30-1:50 PM**

**Regional Networking Lunch**

**2:00-2:50 PM**

**Breakout Sessions**

### ***Fifty-Third Street: Addressing the Marginalization of the Homeless through Opera***

(Sacred in Opera Initiative: Jess Muñoz, Tammie Huntington, Jody Nagel)

*Fifty-Third Street* examines the lives of two homeless men in New York City, and the reactions toward them from various facets of society, including the church. Nagel, a self-professed Atheist who utilizes Biblical references throughout the score, welcomed Tammie Huntington, an evangelical Christian, to produce and direct the opera's premiere in 2007. Together, they walk us through the opera's score, and share on the history of their collaborative relationship, that through this opera, models interdisciplinary partnerships with social justice programs, providing the cast, as well as audiences, a chance to respond to the rising rate of poverty in America.

### ***Too Many Sopranos: Breaking Rules and Creative Solutions for Small Opera Programs***

(Dawn Wells Neely, Andrea Chenoweth Wells, Ryu-Kyung Kim)

Most traditional operas are written for professional singers with male dominant casts. However, the make-up of most small college or university opera workshops is predominately undergraduate female singers. What can a director do to give students experience in some type of quality production during their time in school with both contemporary and traditional operas and operettas? There are many strategies to explore beyond the standard scenes program. A little "rule-breaking" may be in order, but it does not have to be a taboo! This session will present ideas for good "rule-breaking" based on research and frank discussions with opera director colleagues experiencing their own struggles to bring opera to young students and examine pedagogically appropriate solutions to not only accommodate, but celebrate the female voice.

### ***Opera in Children's Literature: A Comprehensive Bibliography***

(John DeLooper)

This lecture will discuss the findings resulting from the creation of a comprehensive bibliography of English Language children's opera books published from 1895 to present. Historically opera was often assumed to be an elitist art in the United States and was thus seldom discussed in library collection development literature, and equally rarely highlighted in children's literature periodicals. Recently, two librarians, supported by a Carnegie Whitney grant from the American Library Association, investigated the impact of opera themed children's books by compiling a bibliography which documented instances of opera in published English Language children's literature over the last 125 years. By analyzing what was published, this presentation will provide new insights about the cultural appreciation of opera in the United States.

**2:50-3:20**

**Break**

**3:20-4:10**

**Breakout Sessions**

**Ghosts of Gatsby: commissioning a new opera at your university**

(Kristin Kenning, Evan Mack, Joshua McGuire, Brian Viliunas)

Universities are where new opera of the highest caliber should be created – in programs that can take the necessary risk that new art demands. We will detail Samford University’s four-year process of commissioning, creating, funding, producing, and touring the new American opera *The Ghosts of Gatsby* by Evan Mack and Joshua McGuire. When challenged with the question, “What is the biggest dream you have for your opera program,” an obvious answer is creating the space for new opera to be written, and to inspire the students in your program with roles that are tailored to them.

**Collaborative Experience: Training Coaches and Singers Together**

(Amanda Johnston, Kevin Chance)

Despite the importance of this vocation, there are few opportunities to train emerging coaches and collaborative pianists specializing in opera. While reputable programs such as Aspen Music Festival and Music Academy of the West have established collaborative piano streams, they do not offer dedicated instruction in vocal coaching. This session will offer a detailed outline of how to add a collaborative piano track to an existing summer program or workshop, outlining necessary resources, possible session topics, and various methods of mentorship. Further, training programs that cater to collaborative pianists interested in specializing in vocal repertoire will be compared and contrasted.

**Back to Before: The Immortal Music of Ivor Novello and the Unlikelihood of a Return of the “Novello Show”**

(JR Fralick)

The shows of Ivor Novello were the mainstay of the British stage from the 1920s through the 1950s, yet most of them have now “disappeared without a trace.” The music of Ivor Novello is as varied and successful as his own career as film star, popular songwriter, director, stage actor and operetta composer. While Ivor Novello’s music could be successfully refashioned for contemporary opera theater, why is it we cannot go “Back to Before” to produce the “Novello Shows”?

**5:30-7:00 PM**

**Pre-performance Dinner**

**Music Box Supper Club**

**7:30-9:30 PM**

**Ghosts of Gatsby**

**Music Box Supper Club**

## Saturday, January 11, 2020

9:00-9:50 AM

### Breakout Sessions

#### **Opera Improvisation: It's just full of surprises**

(Ann Baltz)

Opera improvisation is not traditionally part of an opera curriculum, however, if well-taught and presented it can be a powerful skill that dramatically affects a singer's craft and mindset. In improvisation singers are liberated from the boundaries of "Right and

Wrong" and must rely on their own creativity. This interactive session features collaborative exercises designed to increase listening sensitivity, harmonic awareness, vocal expression, and emotional connection to music and text. Attendees are invited to invent arias, ensembles and whole scenes, with and without accompaniment. Here, there are no wrong notes, no "correct" ways, no judgements. Just the thrill and joy of spontaneous creativity.

#### **From Dreams to Reality: Challenges and Solutions for the Developing Collegiate Opera Program**

(Ellen Denham, Mitra Sadeghpour and Jon Truitt)

Congratulations—you're a collegiate opera director! Do you ever feel like you don't know if you are a bird or a fish? You're a music director one day, a stage director the next, and the day after that, you are crawling across the floor leading movement improvisation, or building a three-person, seven-foot tall whale puppet. Many programs and institutions deal with limited budgets, small groups of students, student demographics that include few male singers, and limited orchestral and facility options. How do we address these challenges and convince stakeholders that we can still present a program of value and quality for the students? This session will ask the question: What is the core experience needed for training? We will also explore solutions for the developing collegiate opera program, propose some groundwork for institutionalizing the solutions that work best, and involve participants in an open forum discussion, utilizing the experience and expertise of everyone in the room.

#### **American Futures: Breaking the Stigma with Student Composers and Young Singers**

(Ann Moss, Griffin Candey, Cheryl Cellon Lindquist)

A session to discuss not only how to ( a ) teach young composers to write effective vocal/operatic music, but also how to ( b ) demonstrate how healthy collaborations between composers and performers can help populate the field of opera with more vocally-satisfying music. How can performers help a piece serve its creators, its interpreters, and its audiences?

How can composers help collaborators explore new material while respecting their practicalities of their instrument(s)? The American Futures team aims to help **break the stigma** :

to help young musicians see the responsibilities, the joys, and the benefits of leaping into new music collaborations together.

**10:10 AM-11:30**

**Plenary Session**

**Libby Larsen and the Dominick Argento Connection**

(David Tayloe, Host)

As a student of Domnick Argento, Libby Larsen's work within the operatic landscape has become a driving force for young composers, singers, and directors. This session will serve as an exploration of Libby and Dominick's contributions to our artform through a question and answer format. This session will be aided by short performances, by student young artists and faculty members, of the works of both Libby Larsen and Domnick Argento.

**11:30 -2:00 PM**

**Lunch on Your Own**

**12:30-5:00 PM**

**Vocal Competition**

*The Carolyn Bailey and Dominick Argento Vocal Competition is conducted annually in two divisions: The Artist Division and the Scholarship Division. Preliminary screening and Semi-final rounds are heard by recording. Eight to ten finalists are selected in each division to compete in a live final audition.*

**2:00-2:50 PM**

**Breakout Sessions**

**Creation of a Hip Hop Opera for Youth**

(William McCrary, Jourdan Laine Howell)

William Shakespeare – just mentioning his name can be intimidating. How then do we make his works and the language of his time palatable and interesting to elementary school students?

This session will focus on the creation of a new hip hop opera based on Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. This 35-minute opera for youth will be presented the 17<sup>th</sup> year of The University of Texas at San Antonio's outreach program, *Opera on the Run*, in a collaborative effort with the San Antonio Symphony and the Opera Guild of San Antonio.

**My Sister's Keeper: Operas by African American Women**

**(A Performance Panel featuring the History of Operas by African American Women Composers)**

(Alexis Davis-Hazell, Minnita Daniel-Cox, Marcia Porter, Rosalyn Wright- Floyd)

**My Sister's Keeper: Operas by African- American Women** offers a brief overview of the history and scope of opera composition by women including Shirley Graham Du Bois, Zenobia Powell Perry, and Julia Perry. The session incorporates live performance, media, and short narrative to



illuminate the effect of race, gender, and class on their lives, works and compositional styles. These trailblazers contributed to contemporary opera in the face of financial and cultural barriers, and synthesized Western art music techniques with those of the African-American tradition. Despite some having gained national and international recognition during their lifetimes, these women's achievements are forgotten today.

**“WHAT’S MY NEXT MOVE????”:  
A Focused Strategy for Selecting and Auditioning for Graduate Schools**  
(Christopher Michel, Rebecca L. Renfro)

Choosing a graduate school is one of the first pivotal decisions that defines a singer's career path as a working vocal artist. The value system that guides these choices ultimately defines a singer's success. This session will offer strategies to help guide the decision making process for selecting the right graduate school along with a focused approach for navigating the application and audition path. Variables that are integral to the process such as assembling a trusted team of mentors, tactics for selecting the right program, repertoire choices, and the audition preparation timeline will be discussed in this presentation.

**3:10-4:00 PM**

**Breakout Sessions**

**Putting Your Best Foot Forward: Career Path and Professional Documents Workshop**  
(James Harrington, Lisa Sylvester, Peggy Kriha-Dye)

Your resume is often the first interaction a potential employer has with you, and the internet is full of tutorials on landing jobs in traditional career paths. But singers don't have traditional career paths or traditional skill sets – so how do we present ourselves well in the comparatively unknown worlds of performance, academia, and arts administration? This session will look at standard resumes/CVs in these sectors and give participants valuable tips for formatting as well as framing non-traditional skill sets.

**Introduction and Application of projection design for opera**  
(Joshua May, Ariana Wyatt, Richard Masters, Scott Skiba)

Projections have been used in opera for over forty years, but their use on college campuses and by smaller companies has been limited by the lack of available resources both in equipment and knowledge. This session seeks to expand the affordability, boundaries, and availability of projections for the stage. The goal of this session is toward innovation in performance and instruction to provide information and application for collegiate opera workshop and small company stage directors. The innovation lies in taking a technological medium usually restricted to higher budgets and making it accessible to all. As part of this session, we will demonstrate our experiences working with various designs with video examples from scenes programs and select a live student performance with a design walkthrough by the presenters from the basic level of use to the more advanced in developing new works.

**Opera for All: Theater—Approaches to Outreach**  
**Cleveland Opera Theater**  
(Megan Thompson)

Join Cleveland Opera Theater’s Director of Education and Outreach to learn how Cleveland’s premiere opera company remains true to its Opera Per Tutti roots. Through family-friendly “opera tailgating” to intellectual opera lectures, Cleveland Opera Theater really does offer “Opera for All”!

**6:30-7:30 PM**

**Pre-Banquet Reception**

**7:30 PM**

**Gala Banquet**

**Sunday, January 12, 2020**

**Board Meeting**