

National Opera Association
2024 Tempe, AZ, Conference, January 3–6
“Our Sounds and Stories”
(As of 9/18/23)

PROGRAM IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Wednesday, January 3

10:00 AM –5:00 PM **Pre-Conference Workshop: Intimacy Direction** ASU
Exploring a Consent-Based Approach to Creating Safety & Community in Rehearsal

Add-on pre-conference workshop (must enroll in advance). Participants will be asked to fully participate in staging demonstrations and work collaboratively to practice and build a safe and consent-based space. Participants will receive a Certificate of Completion from NOA at the conclusion of the two-session period.

2:00–5:30 PM **Board of Directors Meeting** Joshua Tree

6:00–8:00 PM **Pre-Conference Mixer (ticketed event)** Old Main, ASU

Enjoy a meal of generous hors d'oeuvres with an Arizona flair, with a cash bar. This event add-on is **\$45 per person** and can be purchased as part of your conference registration. Plan ahead, as space is limited!

8:00–9:00 PM **Performance: *Sanctuary and Storm*** Evelyn Smith Theater, ASU

The winning work of the 2021-23 Dominick Argento Chamber Opera Competition, *Sanctuary and Storm*, by Tawnie Olson, composer, and Roberta Barker, librettist, is performed by students and faculty of the School of Music, Dance & Theatre at Arizona State University's Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts. Note: Parking advisory on campus due to 7:30pm event nearby. Attendees are advised to walk from the hotel or to take the free Mill Avenue streetcar.

Thursday, January 4

8:00 AM–5:00 PM **Registration** Lobby

8:00 AM **Exhibitor Area Open** Lobby

8:00–9:30 AM

**An Introduction to Intimacy Direction and
Consent-Based Approach in the Collegiate Opera Rehearsal**
Katherine Carter, Carleen Graham Co-Presenters

Ballroom

Intimacy is a vital and joyful part of storytelling, and all artists should be able to work consensually, bringing their whole selves to the work and honoring one another's individual humanity. This session will cover the basic pillars of a consent-based approach in the rehearsal process, review how this practice has developed in Manhattan School of Music's Opera Theatre

program, and provide resources for further education and development.

8:40–9:30 AM

Breakout Sessions

The Argento Composition Fellowship

Joshua Tree

Argento Composition Fellows Mark Migó and Mikeila McQueston will tell us about their work in opera and vocal music. Composer and Argento Fellowship adjudicator Julianna Hall has been invited to tell us about her studies with Maestro Argento. The next round of fellows will be announced at this 2024 NOA Phoenix conference.

A Young Artist User's Guide to Living the Dream
Johnathon Pape, Kirstin Chávez Co-Presenters

Dolores

How do we better prepare our students for the realities of a performing career? How do we give them what they need to navigate self-employment in a difficult industry? We believe it is possible for young artists to have fulfilling, sustainable careers with the right information, a commitment to proactive engagement with the business of their careers, and a willingness to be honest about who they are, what they want, and how they are going to get there. Join us as we identify the practical skills that are necessary and offer suggestions for how your students can acquire them.

Scholarly Paper Winner
Presenter TBD, selected from annual competition

Xavier

9:50–10:40 AM

Breakout Sessions

Exploring Micro-Opera: An Emerging Operatic Genre
Hayley Shoemaker, Krista Lawrence, Sebastian Sorensen, presenters

Joshua Tree

Come explore the world of micro-opera, a 21st century operatic genre! Learn about the history, definition, and purposes of this exciting new performance option. We will discuss the genre's roots in Zeitoper and chamber opera and explore its salient, defining features. The presentation will focus on the possibilities available with micro-opera as an economical performance option and a successful vehicle for accessibility, diversity, and outreach. The session will conclude with

the performance of two micro-operas: Lisa Neher's Now Available and Tony Solitro's She's Fabulous.

**Structuring Emotional Velocity
Through Movement and Improvisation**

Dolores

Brandon McShaffrey, presenter

A performers physical workshop using breath and improvisation technique to work with inner and external movement to merge vocal and physical expression which will bring together the skill sets of the singing actor, composer, and director. Exercising pure emotional impulse on our feet, working with breath to analyze and interpret text and music, and finding depth in emotional possibilities in new and exciting ways that can easily be applied to all your performance needs. Whether it is organizing the emotional journey of an Aria or motivating a lengthy musical introduction.

**All Together Now: Opera as a Vehicle
for Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Community Engagement**

Xavier

Cherry Duke, presenter

Opera and the stories we tell can facilitate rewarding and unexpected partnerships both on and off campus. Partnerships with disparate university programs and community groups support greater visibility for your program, meaningful audience development, and greater respect for our art form. Such events can also serve as meaningful DEI initiatives, promoting under-represented works/creators, and developing new audiences. This session will explore methods and best practices for collaborations, interdisciplinary events, community engagement, unexpected sources of support, and more.

11:00 AM–12:40 PM

Plenary Session

Ballroom

Opening Ceremonies and Keynote Address Luncheon

Welcomes – Lisa Moore, President; Christopher Pfund, VP for Conferences; and Kirk Severtson, Executive Director. **Jake Heggie**, American composer of opera, vocal, orchestral, and chamber music will give the conference Keynote Address.

1:00–2:30 PM

Plenary Session

Ballroom

Operatic Landscape and New Works

Moderator and Panelists TBA

2:50–3:40 PM

Breakout Sessions

**Cupboard Love:
A True Crime Comedy by Madeleine Dring**

Joshua Tree

Johnnie Bankins, Andre Chiang, presenters

Cupboard Love, a chamber opera composed by Madeleine Dring, is accessible for both undergraduate and graduate opera programs. Published in 2017, Cupboard Love is arranged for soprano, baritone, and bass voices with piano accompaniment. Because of its small cast and instrumentation requirements, it is desirable for college and university music programs with conservative budgets as these programs require repertoire that serves a broad array of student capabilities, budgeting limitations and audience interests. This session aims to serve performers, directors, pianists, and educators.

Mid-Century Operas for Today's Audiences

Dolores

Michael Ching, Gordon Ostrowski, presenters

A unique look at five decades of American Opera composition from composers such as Beeson, Blitzstein, Hoiby, Menotti, Thomson and Ward. Each decade spotlights two or three operas with photos, musical selections, and videos of performances. Each decade highlights the cultural, economic and political conditions of the time and how these conditions still exist in society today which make them relevant for contemporary audiences. Particular attention is paid to neglected female and African American composers.

**Start Your Own Opera Company
Student Programming Committee, presenter**

What does it take to start your own company? Come learn more about this process from a panel that will include four artistic and executive directors of companies discussing what goes into it!

4:00–5:30 PM **Plenary Session** Ballroom
Masterclass with Jake Heggie

5:30–7:30 PM **Dinner on Your Own**

7:30–9:30 PM **Plenary Session** Ballroom
Robert Hansen Collegiate Opera Scenes Competition

This annual celebration of opera scenes is an entertaining, energetic evening featuring young artists from across the United States in undergraduate and graduate opera divisions and a musical theater division. National finalists are selected from a competitive preliminary round. This event is hosted by Jen Stephenson (Competition Chair) and Paul Houghtaling (NOA Immediate Past-President).

9:30–10:30 PM **Opening Night Reception** Lobby

Meet up with old friends and welcome our newcomers!

Friday, January 5

8:00–11:00 AM **Poster Sessions & New Works Expo** Courtyard

8:30–9:30 AM **Plenary Session** Ballroom

**The Development of Soft Skills:
How Opera Theatre can help advocate for the Arts in today's academic climate**
Dawn Neely, Presenter

Soft skills like communication, adaptability, and emotional intelligence are more important than ever. The pandemic and technology developments have left our students lacking in many soft skills that cannot be easily taught or tested in regular classroom settings. Opera can make the case for the relevance and importance of our industry. This session will discuss the specific soft skills we develop as opera directors, and how we help our students develop many of these same skills through the process of our productions. We must create advocacy resources for today's academic climate.

9:30–9:50 AM **Coffee Break** Lobby

9:50–10:40 AM **Breakout Sessions**

Killing Carmen Over and Over Again: Joshua Tree
Hands-on Tools to Engage Our Student Audiences
Lynette Pfund, Marshall Haning, presenters

This session's attendees will be the classroom of students, participating in a series of activities that include a pre-opera questionnaire, an opera outreach show, a "CSI Chart" activity, a "Word Wall" activity, and an "Exit Ticket." We will share ideas for getting our elementary and secondary student audiences actively involved to advance deeper understandings that are sincere, insightful, and observable. Then we will look at ways to invigorate our educational packets with activities that move beyond "historical facts" and "audience expectations," ultimately assisting our classroom teachers.

Supporting Singers and Pianists in 21st Century Repertoire Dolores
Kathleen Kelly, Kristen Ditlow, Blair Salter, presenters

Our industry is in a dynamic period of extreme reinvention. How do we help our developing singers AND pianists keep up, and in what ways do we as educators need to

widen our own skill sets to best support them? As coaches, conductors, and educators, we have some ideas to share, and welcome a wider discussion with you.

Xavier

**Writing in (and for) the Profession:
Practical Tools for Efficient and Effective Writing, Editing, and Revising**

Christy Thomas Adams, Joshua Neumann, presenters

In this interactive workshop, we introduce a collection of practical tools designed to equip anyone who engages in professional writing (either themselves or mentoring others). The goal is producing better writing with less frustration, for the benefit of opera as a distinctive field of professional activity. We will start with a group discussion of how writing factors into our careers, misconceptions about writing, and questions or concerns about writing well. Then we will move into three interactive activities designed to offer hands-on practice and stimulate thinking about three central aspects of professional writing: concise description, logical flow, and copyediting. Session will involve both individual practice and discussion about applying these principles in their own work.

11:00–12:00 PM

Plenary Session

Ballroom

From Score to Floor in the Golden Age of American Opera

Jake Heggie and Leigh Holman, Presenters

Composer Jake Heggie and Founder of New Opera Workshop, Leigh Holman share their collaboration on three Heggie/Scheer operas. They discuss how CU NOW identifies and secures the right creator/workshop/student fit, workshop goals, composer/librettist goals, using your mission to guide the process, artist experience, money in/money out, planning, end of workshop presentation, after workshop follow-up, collaboration and best practices after 14 workshop seasons.

12:00–1:00 PM

Lunch on Your Own

1:15 PM–2:15 PM

NOA Annual Business Meeting

Ballroom

All registrants are highly encouraged to attend. We will hear reports from officers, vote in new board members, acknowledge those who have served faithfully, and vote on essential items brought before the board.

2:30–3:20 PM

Breakout Sessions

Devising Your Space:

Joshua Tree

A sequential strategy for the study, rehearsal, and performance of recitatives.

Kristin Roach, Cynthia Stokes, presenters

The most complex part of an opera role can be the recitatives. Specific practices from devised theater and improvisation, designed to supercharge the initial physical embodiment of the scene, followed by application of these techniques in rehearsal.

Ballroom Dancing 101:

Dolores

A Beginner's Guide for the College/University Opera Director

Laura Pritchard, Bonita Bunt, presenters

Are you an opera director or singer who trembles at the thought of dance or teaching dance choreography? Are you working with limited resources and can't hire a choreographer? We are here to convince you that you can do-it-yourself! We'll introduce you to some basic ballroom patterns and how to apply these steps to spice up your arias or scenes. We will also share information on resources for DIY choreography and foundational elements of choreography. Wear something comfortable and be ready to move!

Commissioning A New Work

Xavier

Student Programming Committee

Joshua May, presenter

A panel of diverse composers, arrangers, librettists, and/or dramaturges will present their experiences working within the field on creating/developing a new opera.

3:30–4:30 PM

Affinity Groups

5:00–6:00 PM

New Member Meetup

5:00–6:00 PM

Student Meetup

8:00–10:00 PM

Chamber Opera Competition

Evelyn Smith Theater, ASU

Saturday, January 6

8:00–8:45 AM

Somatic movement with Cristina Castaldi

9:00–9:50 AM

Breakout Sessions

**How to Fix Your Baroque(n) Aria:
An Ornamentation Toolbox**

Joshua Tree

Tony Boutté, presenter

Baroque arias are a staple of vocal literature, and useful tools in teaching vocal technique. They offer singers (and teachers) the opportunity to explore issues of clarity, legato, agility and breath, all within a traditional harmonic framework. However, in performance they often lack the freedom and creativity they originally embodied. This session will demystify the “da capo” aria, outlining ways to help make ornamentation more accessible and fun. All of this will be put into practice with performance examples from the lecturer, as well as a student singer.

Presenting "Alice"

Dolores

A Collegiate Premiere and its Many Rabbit Holes.

Robert Breault, Amy Scurria, Kelly Balmaceda, presenters

Join the University of Utah’s Director of Opera, Robert Breault, Amy Scurria, and Kelly Balmaceda (Co-Creators of ALICE) as they share practical applications of an extremely rich and interdisciplinary approach to the collegiate premiere of ALICE, An Operatic Wonderland. Discussions include the collaborative process between composer, librettist, artist, and producer, entrepreneurship, theory, and composition all while broadening the lens through which we view/create authentic art while opening lines of communication through the perspective of Lewis Carroll and the Autistic Experience.

Orson Rehearsed:

Xavier

Creating Operafilm, from Conception to Reception

Daron Hagen, Presenter

Join us for a whirlwind introduction to the process of creating, staging, filming, and releasing the opera film “Orson Rehearsed.”

9:50–10:00 AM

Coffee Break

Lobby

10:00–11:30 AM

Plenary Session

Ballroom

Voice and Opera Curricula: Training for Sustainable Careers — Part 2

Part Two of a series co-sponsored by OPERA America and The National Opera Association, this panel discussion will continue the national discourse, begun in the September 2023 webinar, among opera educators and artists on the most current standards for pursuing a career in operatic vocal performance. Panelists will share strategies and resources for engaging with colleagues and stakeholders about undergraduate and graduate school voice and opera curricula, and answer attendees’ questions.

11:45–2:00 PM

Regional Networking Luncheon

Box Lunch

Hosted by Dawn Neely, Vice President for Regions. Take time to meet and network with members in your region over lunch.

12:30–5:00 PM

Carolyn Bailey Argento Vocal Competition Katzin Concert Hall, ASU

Watch as the finalists in the Scholarship and Artist Divisions compete for \$8,500 in prizes, plus the Carolyn Bailey Argento Fellowship for Vocal Performance, providing up to \$50,000 per year for graduate study. Hosted by Christopher Michel and Lisa Sylvester, competition chairs.

2:00–2:50 PM

Breakout Sessions

New Arias/New Topics for Women/By Women

Joshua Tree

**Linda Lister, Amanda Johnston, Emily Clements,
Olivia Yokers, Claudia Affan, presenters**

This session spotlights selected arias from three new operas by living American composers Emily Clements and Linda Lister; namely, Letters to Lily, State of Grace, and Body of Art. In the spirit of the Bechdel test, these operatic excerpts reveal women not singing about their relationships with men, but rather, singing about contemporary topics rarely depicted on stage, including LGBTQIA+ relationships, eating disorders, and breast cancer. The composers, singers, and pianist will discuss and present these arias with an aim to add new subjects, new perspectives, and new repertoire to the canon.

PORTRAITS:

Dolores

Character Development and Performance Outside an Opera's Frame

Daniel Hunter-Holly, presenter

The PORTRAITS curriculum is a template for organizing skill-building while collaboratively creating a workshop production with the performers. This presentation will provide a comprehensive description of how to empower singers to prioritize the process of meaningful character development by imagining their character's lives outside of an opera's timeframe. By creating new scenes and relationships based on this character development work, singers are given the responsibility of developing new stories.

3:10–4:00 PM

Breakout Sessions

**The Sounds and Stories of Opera in Sacred Spaces:
Audience Expansion through Sacred Music Drama (SIO)**

Joshua Tree

**Casey Robards, Tammie Huntington, Amy Pfrimmer,
Philip Seward, Jeffrey Springer, Jon Truitt, presenters**

Audience building is critical for opera companies and university programs that are constantly striving to establish a deeper connection with their communities. As opera producers emerge from the pandemic, the issue of getting audiences to return to the immediacy of live performance is paramount. Beyond bringing audiences back to traditional venues, an additional method of outreach is to bring opera to faith communities.

Gender Neutral Voice and Opera Pedagogy

Dolores

Loraine Sims, presenter

Language, like gender, is fluid. Our ideas about voice as it relates to gender have changed. Yet most of the current vocal pedagogy texts that are used today still refer to male voices and female voices. Are we simply perpetuating this idea for the next generations of voice teachers and opera directors? Are we limiting all our students by having gender labels and gender expectations in our pedagogy? How can we move forward to consider all voices as individuals, whether they belong to cisgender or transgender folk of any age.

4:10–5:00

**Plenary Session
Legacy Conversation**

Ballroom

A conversation with “Lift Every Voice” Legacy Award winner, composer Adolphus Hailstork on his storied career and accomplishments.

5:00–6:30 PM

Break

6:30–7:30 PM

Pre-Banquet Gathering

Lobby

Meet up with old friends and welcome our newcomers. Winners of the 2022–2023 Opera Production Competition will also be celebrated at this time with receipt of their certificates.
Cash bar.

7:30–9:30 PM

Awards Ceremony and Closing Banquet

Ballroom

We invite you to join us as we announce and hear from the winners of the Vocal Competition, recognize the inaugural winners of the Carolyn Bailey Argento Fellowship for Vocal Performance and the Dominick Argento Fellowship for Opera Composition, and present the “Lift Every Voice” Legacy Award and NOA Lifetime Achievement Award.

Sunday, January 7

8:00–8:30 AM	Officer and Board of Directors Breakfast	Joshua Tree
8:30–11:30 AM	Board of Directors Meeting (including Retiring and New Directors)	Joshua Tree