

WHERE WILL YOU JOIN US IN 2023 ?



Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for 2023!

OPERA EUROPA CONFERENCES 2003 -2022

2003	Madrid	<i>New beginnings</i>
2004	Copenhagen Genova Riga	<i>Vollendet das ewige Werk</i> <i>Joint event with IAMA</i> <i>East meets West</i>
2005	Valencia Monte-Carlo	<i>New Artists, New Audiences, New Buildings</i> <i>Business and Culture</i>
2006	Cardiff Dresden	<i>Opera and its Community</i> <i>The Art of Patronage</i>
2007	Paris Prague	1st European Opera Forum & <i>European Opera Days</i> <i>Working within the new Europe</i>
2008	Bregenz Oslo	<i>Opera and Technology</i> <i>Opera and Society</i>
2009	Barcelona Budapest	2nd European Opera Forum – <i>Creativity & Innovation</i> <i>Opera Central European Time</i>
2010	Rotterdam Munich	<i>Opéra sans frontières</i> <i>Exploring the future</i>
2011	London Warsaw	3rd European Opera Forum – <i>The Opera Experience</i> <i>Added Value</i>
2012	Lyon Moscow	<i>Sustainability at what price?</i> <i>Through the Iron Curtain</i>
2013	Vienna Wexford	4th European Opera Forum – <i>Citizenship</i> <i>Discovery</i>
2014	Venice Brno/Ostrava	<i>Italian Journey</i> <i>Year of Czech Music</i>
2015	Madrid Bucharest	<i>Opera Live and Online</i> – launch of The Opera Platform <i>Professional Development</i>
2016	Amsterdam Berlin	<i>Theatre of the World</i> <i>Dialog(ue)</i>
2017	Kyiv Parma	<i>Cultural Diplomacy or Art which unites</i> <i>Opera Pilgrimage</i> – launch of OperaVision
2018	Madrid Zürich Paris	1st World Opera Forum <i>Measuring the arts</i> <i>Imagination</i>
2019	Antwerp Strasbourg/Karlsruhe	<i>Creation</i> <i>Building bridges</i>
2020	Online Online	<i>Opera Beyond</i> <i>Survival of the fittest</i>
2021	Bergamo	<i>Elixir of Life</i>
2022	Prague/Litomyšl Budapest	<i>Regenerating Audiences</i> <i>Integration and Inclusion</i>

HOW OPERA COMPANIES HELP EACH OTHER

Opera Europa's live events during the past six months in Prague, Barcelona, Budapest and Amsterdam have involved more than 600 active members. Each conference has introduced new participants to our work, while at the same time renewing professional friendships. Such gatherings engender fresh ideas, lively debate and fruitful networking. Most importantly, they build trust. Every company values its own special identity and relationship with its own audience, but shared projects add up to more than the sum of their parts. Working together makes opera stronger.

OperaVision is the most extensive cooperative partnership in the European cultural portfolio. In no way is it designed to supplant live opera, but it certainly helps expand opera's reach. Other initiatives this autumn have been targeted towards fostering the next generation of artists and managers. The European Opera-directing Prize will break new ground with its 13th edition. The second Eva Kleinitz Scholarships will offer support to the most talented young singers at the start of their professional careers. The 9th Opera Management Course will identify and train aspiring managers dedicated to the profession. Our fundraising aims to encourage colleagues in Ukraine at this time of maximum need.

This newsletter publishes my 79th and last editorial. During almost 20 years, Audrey and I have curated 40 major conferences, which have been hosted in 37 different cities in 22 European countries. You may read the list of places and themes on the opposite page. We have firm dates and locations for a further three conferences from 2023 to spring 2024. Not all have been equally successful, but each has had its special moments and will be remembered for its unexpected encounters and insights. My own memorable experiences include snow impeding departures from wintry Riga; the magical creation of Santiago Calatrava's Palau de les Arts in Valencia; the first European Opera Forum presided over by Gerard Mortier in Paris; the revelation of Snøhetta's new Opera House in Oslo; the generous banquets in Warsaw and Budapest and Venice; Colm Tóibín's address in Wexford and Neil MacGregor's in Berlin; our pioneering visit to Kyiv and Verdi pilgrimage to Parma; the launch of the Opera Platform and the first World Opera Forum in resplendent Madrid; the return to life in Bergamo after the pandemic; Prague proving the perfect conference city on two occasions; and my personal favourite evening when Brno presented a unique concert of *The Folk Roots of Leoš Janáček's Works* followed by a Moravian wine tasting and later supplemented by visiting the composer's home in Hukvaldy.

But far more important than my nostalgia is what you, the members, derive from these meetings. Opera Europa belongs to its members, and it is your input which is and will continue to be the key to its success. It concerns me when I notice that a company has not been using our services or is absent from our events, live or online. I rejoice when a new member joins or, still better, contributes to a conference. Remember that you are our most persuasive advocates. A personal recommendation may lead to us enrolling a new member, who will in turn enrich the association. Our dedicated Opera Europa team are ever ready to respond to such introductions and ensure a warm welcome. I know that they, fortified by the arrival of Karen, will not rest in their ambition to make Opera Europa the most comprehensive, responsive and practically helpful association possible for the benefit of opera in Europe and beyond.

Nicholas Payne
Director

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OPERA EUROPA APPOINTS KAREN STONE AS NEW DIRECTOR



Karen Stone © Andreas Lander

Following a thorough search process, the Board has appointed Karen Stone as Director of Opera Europa from 1 January 2023. She will take over from current Director Nicholas Payne, who is passing on the baton after leading the membership organisation since 2003.

On the opening afternoon of the autumn conference Integration & Inclusion hosted by Hungarian State Opera, Anna Maria Meo, president of Opera Europa, announced to the members present that Karen Stone was to be the new Director of Opera Europa. The search process had led to rich discussion within the Board to determine the needs and priorities for Opera Europa in the next few years.

President Anna Maria Meo reported: *'The selection committee was convinced by Karen's true devotion to opera and the performing arts. She has been a faithful and active member of Opera Europa for many years and has demonstrated her support and belief in our association. Her international experience and her understanding of the diversity of our membership are of great value. Her commitment to the next generation – of managers, of artists, of audiences – will benefit Opera Europa thanks to her fabulous energy. Karen is the ideal candidate to lead Opera Europa into a new stage.'*

Karen has recently retired from Theater Magdeburg where she held the position of Intendantin for 13 years. Before that, she had been General Director at The Dallas Opera, Generalintendantin at Oper Graz and Opera Director at Oper Köln, as well as having held various positions in theatres in Germany and the United Kingdom, and enjoying an international career as a stage director.

Karen said: *'It is always a surprise what will turn up next in life, but what a thrill it is to be chosen to take over the reins of Opera Europa, certainly the most exciting new direction for me! Nicholas Payne has done such a marvellous job setting up Opera Europa and developing it into the strong international organisation it has become, that I know he will be a hard act to follow, but he is handing over a thriving network of European companies and a marvellous group of professionals in the organisation. I cannot wait to sit down with them and the Board to grow Opera Europa and plan future initiatives and directions. I am looking forward enormously to putting all my efforts into supporting and developing this great institution and to meeting with all my colleagues and friends and getting the input from such a creative group.'*

Nicholas Payne has led Opera Europa since he was appointed in April 2003, following his positions as General Director at English National Opera, Director of Opera at the Royal Opera House, General Director at Opera North and Financial Controller at Welsh National Opera.

President Anna Maria Meo: *'We are eternally grateful to Nicholas Payne for being such a strong leader for Opera Europa over the past 19 years. He grew Opera Europa from a small gathering of 40 Intendants to a true membership association of over 220 organisations with roots deep into each opera company, servicing the industry in a discreet but ever so efficient way. Initiatives such as World Opera Day, OperaVision, the European Opera-directing Prize and the Opera Management Course complemented the professional network's activities to build a stronger sector.'*

Nicholas Payne commented: *'It has been a privilege and an education to work with such a stimulating group of members over almost two decades. Karen is a consummate professional, who will bring experience, fluent languages, integrity and a sense of humour to the task. I wish her and the Opera Europa team every success in the years ahead.'*

Karen Stone will work alongside Audrey Jungers, General Manager of Opera Europa, and their Brussels-based team.

Aline Chif, Communications Manager
Susanna Werger, Membership Coordinator
Célia Grau, Advocacy Coordinator

Luke O'Shaughnessy, OperaVision Manager
Matthieu Fons, Platform Coordinator
Joan Ramirez Soley, Digital & Social Media Coordinator

OPERA EUROPA SPRING CONFERENCE WIESBADEN 30 MARCH-1 APRIL 2023

General Manager Audrey Jungers interviews incoming Director Karen Stone ahead of her first conference in Wiesbaden in the spring.

Dear Karen, welcome to the Opera Europa team. What is your first reaction?

It's great to be a part of OE. I've been a member organisation for many years and appreciate what the association has done for me, my theatre, our staff and audience. It's a great privilege to follow in Nicholas Payne's footsteps after his leadership of 20 years, and take Opera Europa onto the next stage.

This first conference won't be the easiest – we're scheduling the Opera Management Course in the run-up to the conference opening!

This spring conference will be an opportunity to meet our wider membership. What do you have planned for us?

These are challenging times – politically, socially, economically. Opera Europa is about meeting our colleagues, discussing these issues, but also enjoying performances, and Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden is a beautiful theatre to welcome us. Working together is one of the most effective ways of dealing with these issues, and we will have an opportunity to discuss various operational models – repertoire and stagione, festivals and fringe productions – and their challenges. To that end, I'm pleased to start a new series of meeting partner organisations of Opera Europa and presenting the work that they do to the wider membership.

Why should members attend the spring conference in Wiesbaden?

As it will be my first conference leading Opera Europa, I would really appreciate the opportunity to meet with all our members and better understand their modus operandi, their strengths and their challenges. With the Opera Europa team, we are trying out different formats to encourage interaction and new connections. There are also some great highlights: a performance of *Il Trittico* directed by our host, Uwe Laufenberg, and the world creation *Oryx and Crake* staged by former European Opera-directing Prize finalist Daniela Kerck. We will also be holding auditions following the conference in parallel to the semi-finals of the European Opera-directing Prize, so stick around !

SCHEDULE

26 March to 1 April – Opera Management Course

30 March afternoon to Saturday 1 April morning – Opera Europa spring conference

1 April afternoon – Audition recital

1-2 April – European Opera-directing Prize semi-final



Suor Angelica © Angelica Forster

HOTELS

For more information and booking codes visit our website.

Adina Hotel Wiesbaden (4min walk)

Tanusstraße 1a
wiesbaden@adina.eu - book before 14/2 with code Fidelio
Studio Apartment: €119, including breakfast

Select Hotel Wiesbaden (7min walk)

Georg-August-Zinn-Straße 2
reservation@novum-hospitality.com - book before 28/2 with code Fidelio
Single room: €105, including breakfast
Double room: €125, including breakfast

Achat Hotel Wiesbaden (12min walk)

Mauritiusstraße 7
wiesbaden@achat-hotels.com - book before 28/2 with code 198064
room: €95, including breakfast

Dorint Pallas Wiesbaden (17min walk)

August-Viktoria-Straße 15
info.wiesbaden@dorint.com - book before 25/2 with code Fidelio
Single room: €134,50
Double room: €158,50
Breakfast: 9€

PROGRAMME & REGISTRATION

A full programme will be available in our next newsletter and on our website in January.



**Smetana's Two Widows,
re-imagined**

Participants are invited to submit a flexible concept for realisation with a piano quintet and four professional singers (Karolina - Anežka - Ladislav - Mumlal) and volunteer performers. The opera will be sung in English.

The opera is to be performed at various venues, including non-opera houses. Candidates base their concept in a venue minimum 700m²-900m² non theatre space with flat floor but which may have some raised areas.

There is no 'auditorium'. The audience may move through the space following the action. There could however be some seating. Clearer guidance will be given at the semi final and final stages. The winning team chosen to deliver *The Two Widows* re-imagined will be required to adapt the concept for realisation in serial venues with serial volunteer casts efficiently and economically (each of which may have individual requirements).

The production will premiere in a non theatre spaces at Smetana's Litomyšl Festival 2024 and subsequently in Lviv with our partners Lviv National Opera Ukraine, each with locally recruited volunteer casts, and in Birmingham UK.

A 3-page rough concept is required for the first phase of the competition. If you have access needs please contact Anja. wiemann@camerata-nuova.com.

The first phase ends with the semi final April 1 and 2 in Wiesbaden (DE). The finalists identified in the semi final will be informed about the next steps. The final will be in Spring/Summer 2023.

The award consists of two prizes:

- 1st Prize: Realisation of the winning concept
€25.000 will be contributed to Two Widows re-imagined for the creative team's honorarium
- 2nd Prize: Stage director's assignment at an opera house
€10.000 will be contributed to an honorarium for an Assistant Director on a large scale site specific Birmingham Opera Company production in 2024

Application for the contest: anja.wiemann@camerata-nuova.com

Closing date for application: 1 January 2023

Closing date for submission of concepts: 16 January 2023

Further information about the EOP: <https://eop-opera.com>

Competition for young directors up to the age of 35.

The jury consists of renowned directors and experts of the European opera scene.

OPERAVISION 8 MONTHS INTO THE NEXT GENERATION

Opera Europa’s flagship streaming platform is 8 months into a new phase of its activity, branded ‘Next Generation’. What has OperaVision been up to over the last eight months?

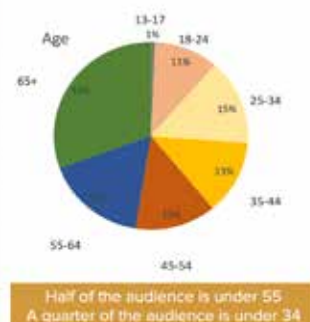
Launched in March 2022, OperaVision Next Generation heralds a new partnership with 30 regular contributing opera houses, a new website and an important new focus on giving a platform to emerging artists, while maintaining its core activity of streaming performances every week from opera houses in Europe and beyond.

CONTENT ON OPERAVISION
30 Streams
→ 28 Operas
→ 1 Singing competition
→ 1 Masterclass
3 Episodes Next Generation OperaVision Podcast
VIDEO VIEWS
10 Million video views
→ 1 Million Full-length performance views
→ 9 Million short-form content views
→ 1,5 Million views on YouTube
→ 7,5 Million views on Social Media

AUDIENCES

Connecting audiences all over the world with live and recent opera productions is OperaVision’s core business. Of the 30 productions streamed already since March, 22 have come from the partner opera houses and 8 have been offered by members of the wider Opera Europa membership. We have counted just under 10 million views for this content across all our channels, which, as you can see from the tables below, are enjoyed by viewers in a wide variety of countries; from the USA to Australia, from Argentina to Japan. While the over 65s are the largest single category, over half the audiences for full length performances are under 55.

Top 20 countries	
	United States 15.5%
	Germany 8.5%
	United Kingdom 7.0%
	Italy 5.4%
	France 4.7%
	Spain 4.5%
	Japan 4.2%
	Poland 2.9%
	Russia 2.6%
	Canada 2.3%
	Netherlands 1.9%
	Brazil 1.8%
	South Korea 1.5%
	Australia 1.5%
	Mexico 1.2%
	Hungary 1.1%
	Belgium 1.1%
	Austria 1.0%
	Switzerland 1.0%
	Argentina 0.9%



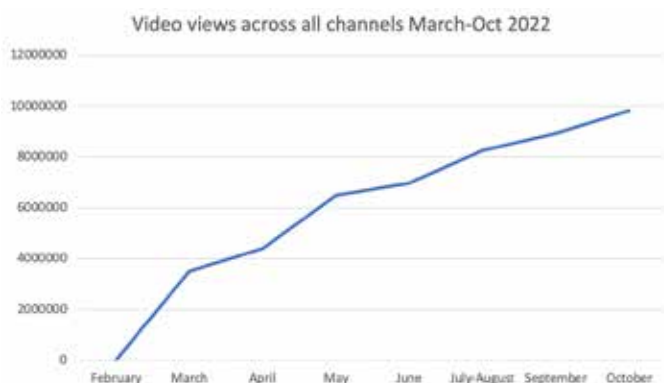
CAPACITY BUILDING

OperaVision is the catalyst for the sector to address issues of common interest and advance digital practice. Over 100 Opera Europa members gathered at the Dutch National Opera in Amsterdam on 17-18 November to share best digital practice. As you can read on page 15, this forum included lively exchanges with publishers about the challenges of clearing rights and with labels about navigating rights clearance for artists under exclusive contract. The OperaVision partners discussions in Amsterdam focused on how to evaluate the success of our streaming platform. OperaVision has enlisted the help of Dr Francesco Chiaravalloti of University of Amsterdam as an external evaluator of the project.

FORTHCOMING HIGHLIGHTS ON OPERAVISION

- Christmas Eve* Rimsky-Korsakov – Oper Frankfurt
- Ariadne auf Naxos* Strauss – Royal Swedish Opera
- Jawnuta* Moniuszko – Poznań Opera
- Giselle* Adam – Polish National Ballet
- Rigoletto* Verdi – Opéra Orchestre National Montpellier Occitanie
- William Tell* Rossini – Irish National Opera
- Rusalka* Dvořák – Théâtre du Capitole
- Agrippina* Handel – Drottningholm

Luke O’Shaughnessy
OperaVision Manager



THE GROWTH OF OPERA EUROPA SERVICES

Since its foundation 20 years ago, Opera Europa has benefited from the dedication and expertise of seven Presidents, who have actively contributed to its growth. Our first female President, Eva Kleinitz, bequeathed a legacy enabling scholarships to be awarded to talented young artists. The other six, plus Kasper Holten who served as Vice-President throughout Eva's time, recall what the association and its director have meant to them.

ANTHONY FREUD, PRESIDENT 2002-2006 General Director, President & CEO of Lyric Opera of Chicago

Trying to do justice to Nicholas's immense contribution to Opera Europa in 150 words is likely to result in incoherent and inane hyperbole that would make Nicholas splutter with rage. But here goes...!



When a fledgling Opera Europa was recruiting its first director we needed an international icon who commanded respect for their knowledge, passion, experience, vision, foresight, judgment and commitment. Those of us involved in the recruitment couldn't believe our good fortune when Nicholas expressed his interest. He encompassed all these qualities.

Throughout his twenty years at the helm of Opera Europa, the organization has grown and strengthened to an extraordinary degree. The range and diversity of its members is more complex than ever. The last twenty years have seen immense and sometimes bewildering cultural, social, economic, political and technological change. Nicholas has worked tirelessly to ensure that both Opera Europa and opera as a whole embrace these evolving opportunities and rise to our escalating challenges.

The world of opera owes Nicholas an immense debt of gratitude.

BERNARD FOCCROULLE, PRESIDENT 2006 -2008 Composer

I remember the first time I spoke to Nicholas Payne about the need to make Opera Europa a professionally managed organisation: it was twenty years ago at Covent Garden, a reception after a première. A few months later, Nicholas started as the first director of Opera Europa.

At the beginning, we were about 30 members: Nicholas has developed it into a large professional network with more than 220 members! Opera Europa has been encouraging a common awareness about the needs of enlarging the audience, of working for and with young people, of diversifying the educational offer, of investing in new pieces, of finding new ways to communicate and advocate about this fabulous art form.

I remember the European Opera Forum organised by OE in Paris, the very first of the European Opera Days that have now reached so many people from South to North, East to West in Europe.

The essential quality of a network is that it encourages cooperation without forcing anyone. Nicholas has been an incredibly open man, searching for the best in all contacts with individuals and organisations.

I want to thank him personally for his friendship, vision, inspiration, and accomplishments over these two decades.



JOAN MATABOSCH, PRESIDENT 2008-2011 Artistic Director of Teatro Real Madrid

What a pleasure to be asked to write a few words on my association with Opera Europa and Nicholas Payne over the years, both being true cornerstone relationships of my professional life.

I have long profited from the devotion and efficiency that Nicholas has brought to our collaboration. Both in my period as a board member and then as president of Opera Europa it has been my great privilege to work closely with him, and to see how significantly the organisation has developed under his direction. One of the great marks of his vision for how this organisation could work and profit its members was the huge transition that he implemented during the years in which we worked closely together.

Thanks to him, what had begun as a small meeting place for intendants and artistic directors to meet, gradually developed into a series of dedicated forums in which technical departments, marketing, human resources, production and education departments et cetera were also enfranchised. This built a

relevance to our field that allowed it to become the great meeting point for the pursuit of best practices that it is today.

The melting pot of people from across our sector interchanging experience and culture that Opera Europa now is, owes everything to Nicholas's passion, dedication and vision, and for that I thank him.



PETER DE CALUWE, PRESIDENT 2011-2013
General Director of La Monnaie/De Munt

During the almost 20 years of your tenure as Director, you have been building an organisation so solid and so well organised that it can be labelled 'exemplary'. Opera Europa has become not only much larger (growing from 115 members in 2011 to 229 now) but it also managed to penetrate deep into the different member organisations, involving all ingredients of our work and bringing every specialisation within our houses together, in order to exchange good practice and to learn from each other. That is an immense achievement for which we will remain eternally grateful.



This strong basis allows us to focus on what is needed today more than ever: advocacy for our sector, lobbying on the highest European and local political levels in order for us all to remain creative and relevant. Isn't culture the only cement left to keep Europe alive? Thanks for the great foundations you have laid to build further towards continued respect for and financing of our sector.

Soave sia il vento, dear Nicholas!

KASPER HOLTEN, VICE-PRESIDENT 2012-2017
CEO of Royal Danish Theatre



If there are two things that have mattered in my professional life, it is to fight for the artform of opera – and to promote European collaboration. Both are things that we need more of. It was thus an intense pleasure to serve on the Board of – and for a while as VP of Opera Europa. Under Nicholas Payne's leadership, the organization has seen an impressive growth, and we launched new groundbreaking initiatives, such as The Opera Platform, which grew into OperaVision.

The biggest risk of the operatic world seems to me to be that – under pressure – we sometimes revert to becoming defensive, or we hope for status quo. I am sure opera has an important role to play in tomorrow's societies. When we work together, we learn from each other. When we stand together, we are braver in embracing change.

This is what Opera Europa is all about –not least thanks to Nicholas's amazing work for the organisation and for all of us.

EVA KLEINITZ PRESIDENT 2013-2017
Former Director Oper Stuttgart/General Director Opéra du Rhin

Applications for the second edition of Eva Kleinitz Scholarships are invited from young artists currently in higher education before the deadline of 20 December.

Details available at <https://www.opera-europa.org/news/opera-europa-eva-kleinitz-scholarship>



BIRGITTA SVENDÉN, PRESIDENT 2017-2021
Former CEO & Artistic Director of Royal Swedish Opera

Over the years Nicholas Payne has inspired the members to take new steps and to see the need of making a development within the art of opera that is connected to rest of the society.

By introducing a digital platform, OperaVision, he made a statement that the art of opera needed to be available to anyone in a global context. This was the way of reaching out to a new audience and strengthen the relevance of the art.

During the years of the pandemic OperaVision became a most important channel to keep the contact with the audience around the world.

For us members of Opera Europa, Nicholas's dedication, strength and channelling into the future, especially during the pandemic and its aftermath, was vital and important to keep us united.

His work with the FEDORA Prizes should also be mentioned, as it is of great importance for young emerging artists to make possible that a new repertory will find its way into the history.

I have not met that many people who have Nicholas Payne's strong faith in the art of opera and because of that he has been able to lead the development successfully within a field that is built upon old tradition and historical values.

I am proud and grateful for his work and dedication!

ANNA MARIA MEO, PRESIDENT 2021-

Since I have the honour of presiding over Opera Europa, and thanks to the extraordinary contribution made by Nicholas at the head of the Association, we have constantly asked ourselves how best to deal with the challenges arising from the situation we are facing today, when it seems that the pandemic wants finally to loosen the grip that has held us for three years almost to the point of suffocating us.

The approach we have adopted has always been based on the desire to look beyond and it is with this spirit that we have designed the Next Stage initiative, dedicated to sustainability, inclusion and digital transformation. OperaVision, one of the key projects carried out by the Association in recent years, has obtained the confirmation of the funding that guarantees its implementation in the next three years. All this was possible thanks to the tenacity and foresight of Nicholas Payne, supported by an extraordinary staff. To them and to Nicholas in particular goes my gratitude, and I am sure, that of all the members of Opera Europa.



**THE INTERNATIONAL
OPERA AWARDS**

Congratulations to our members for the recognition received at the International Opera Awards

NEW PRODUCTION

Glyndebourne for *La Voix humaine/Les Mamelles de Tirésias* (c. Robin Ticciati, d. Laurent Pelly)

WORLD PREMIERE

La Monnaie De Munt for *The Time of our Singing* by Kris Defoort

REDISCOVERED WORK

Oper Frankfurt for *Ulisse* by Dallapiccola

RECORDING (COMPLETE OPERA)

Bru Zane for *Le Voyage dans la lune* by Offenbach

DIGITAL OPERA

Dutch National Opera for *Upload*

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPACT

Cape Town Opera's Foundation Studio

SUSTAINABILITY

GöteborgsOperan

OPERA COMPANY

Lviv National Opera and Ballet Theatre jointly with Odesa Opera and Ballet Theatre

LEADERSHIP

Nicholas Payne



INTEGRATION AND INCLUSION IN BUDAPEST OCTOBER 2022

Standing ovations can't always be guaranteed at the opera, still less at conferences, but there was one at Opera Europa's autumn conference in Budapest. It marked the formal announcement of Nicholas Payne's retirement at the end of this year as the organization's director, a post he has filled with matchless diplomacy and aplomb since 2003. Bringing already considerable experience of leadership roles in several British opera companies, never the easiest jobs, he applied it to build Opera Europa into a thriving organization that has fostered cooperation across all levels and departments at opera houses across Europe and beyond. He'll be a hard act to follow, but the successor facing that challenge has been chosen and she was announced in Budapest as Karen Stone.

Presented under the banner of 'Integration and Inclusion', the conference made full use of the Hungarian State Opera's splendid facilities. As the company's general director Szilveszter Ókovács reminded us during his welcoming speech, Hungary has a population of just 15 million yet its capital is home to one of the world's biggest opera companies. But as an example of the challenges many European theatres face this winter, the HSO has already closed its Erkel Theatre for a few months in order to save on exponentially rising energy bills. As Evica Taseska Karanfilova — representing one of Opera Europa's newest members, the National Opera and Ballet of North Macedonia in Skopje — pointed out in the opening session, 'You don't dance with cold feet'.

Addressing some big, existential issues, the conference was thus nevertheless full of practical discussions. On the 'Learning to like opera' roundtable, Scottish Opera's Jane Davidson — as befits her education and outreach brief, one of the conference's most entertaining panellists — said that it 'was really hard to make people like opera!'. Speaking for Estonian National Opera, Tuuli Potik found that it helped to work on the teachers first: by getting them to visit the opera house twice a year, they were no longer afraid of opera (nor of teaching it). Summing up at the end of the conference, Nicholas Payne recalled the late Graham Vick's conviction that education is part of the whole opera experience.

But integration is not only about bringing new people in; it's about looking after those already working in opera companies. Covent Garden's HR manager Steven Foulston spoke about professional development and highlighted the competition presented by the commercial sector. Who knew that there are more film studios in Hertfordshire (the county just north of London) than Hollywood? 'If you can't compete on money,' he said, 'be the best employer.' Leyla Ercan talked about breaking down barriers in Hannover and focused on forms of exclusion that are still too often felt. As she said, there's a difference between being international and being diverse.

'Diverse programming' was the last — though certainly not least — of the conference's eight panel discussions. Inclusion is a strand of the Next Stage initiative, led by Opera Europa and FEDORA. The first, almost inevitably given the perilous state of the world, was 'Culture and politics'. Much of this focused on very current challenges, but Karlsruhe's Florian Köfler raised the spectre of right-wingers taking an interest in the arts in the future, warning that if they win power they will install not just their own culture ministers but Intendants too.



Perhaps the most stirring and inspiring contributions came from the strong Ukrainian presence at the conference. Oksana Taranenko, who recently directed the premiere at Odesa Opera of Oleksandr Rodin's *Kateryna*, said that, 'With Russia trying to erase Ukraine's national identity, the fight to preserve, and build upon, Ukraine's artistic heritage has taken on new urgency.' Opera has a significant role to play in this, and the country's deputy culture minister Galina Grygorenko spoke about how cultural life was continuing despite a lack of security, and still making use of the freedom of expression the country gained only 30 years ago.

Chairing the 'Culture and politics' panel, the National Theatre Brno's general director Martin Glaser posed the question, 'Should opera be political?', to which Grygorenko asserted that it is the mission of theatre to reflect what's going on around it. Proving rather dramatically that opera is a political art form, the livestreaming of this discussion reverberated back home for one of the participants, who suffered repercussions the very next day: Matej Drlička, general manager of the Slovak National Theatre in Bratislava, was forced to resign. A petition to have him reinstated was instigated, but the episode is a reminder that free speech cannot be taken for granted even in opera circles. As the conference proved, opera is indeed a political art form, but it is also one that continues to bring people together.

John Allison
Editor Opera Magazine



GREEN PHILANTHROPY IN BARCELONA SEPTEMBER 2022

Opera Europa's Fundraising Forum in Barcelona offered the most advanced discourse about fundraising at European opera houses that I have witnessed to date. Since the Forum in Milan in 2019, the conversation has moved from the perceived need to fundraise to the ins and outs of actually doing it.

Many houses reported that the pandemic was a significant impetus in advancing their work: individual donors turned out to help sustain operations through the shutdowns. This was evident among our Spanish hosts at the Liceu in Barcelona, as well as across Britain, Germany, and the rest of continental Europe. The opportunity on hand now is how to sustain and grow individual giving programs, while continuing to nurture corporate sponsors.

The secondary theme of the Forum on environmental sustainability also helped focus discourse on specific goals of fundraising. Houses were collaborative in sharing strategies and approaches. Coming from the USA, where we are far behind in environmental activism, the initiatives I learned about across Europe were impressive and inspiring.

The keynote presentation from Hanna Berthaut at the international branding firm Landor & Fitch, delivered thanks to Opera Europa's partnership with FEDORA within the Next Stage capacity building framework, was particularly impactful in demonstrating the market power that comes from embracing sustainability as a core value. The importance of organizational values — including but not limited to one's commitment to sustainability — was repeated in presentation after presentation throughout the Forum.

In my own contribution to a panel about brand value and social responsibility, I shared the ways that U.S. opera companies are beginning to embrace values-based fundraising, as codified in a movement called Community-Centric Fundraising (www.operaamerica.org/CCF).

It was a great delight to be able to share some of the latest thinking about fundraising from the United States. Although Europe may be behind us in the trajectory of fundraising, I hope I was able to provide some insights that will guide European houses in further advancing their efforts.

Dan Cooperman
Chief Advancement Officer OPERA America



DIGITAL ADVANCE IN AMSTERDAM NOVEMBER 2022

The Digital Advance meeting at Dutch National Opera & Ballet in Amsterdam welcomed over 100 delegates from over 50 companies in 17 countries.



The forum was opened by our hosts at Dutch National Opera Sophie de Lint and Stijn Schoonderwoerd as well as Barbara Gessler, head of unit at Creative Europe.

The support of both OperaVision and Next Stage by the European Commission is greatly appreciated by Opera Europa members and directly influenced the programme of this event.

OperaVision partners, business and finance directors as well as artistic administrators were united to address a variety of topics, responding to the Next Stage capacity

building strand of digital transformation. Thanks to our partnership with FEDORA, delegates could benefit from presentations by Bird & Bird and Drooms, learning about secured cloud based organisational processes, tracking of activity, and legal digital transactions such as contract signing.

Multi-camera director Jonathan Haswell and producer Gemma Dixon shared their experience of filming main stage productions, offering insights into where financial savings can be made and dangers of cutting certain corners in preparing film capture.

OperaVision partners met over a number of sessions to discuss the evaluation of OperaVision, with the guidance of Dr Francesco Chiaravalloti from the University of Amsterdam.

A series of negotiation issues between different stakeholders of the opera industry were addressed. Opening with an animated debate on exclusivity clauses, a panel under the coordination by André Comptoi (Milan) elaborated on a joint position between theatres, bringing the points of view of labels with Clemens Trautmann, President of Deutsche Grammophon, and producers with Ernst Buchrucker from Unitel.

Another animated discussion chaired by Jaap van Hellenberg Hubar (Amsterdam) on grand rights vs. small rights followed, including positions of three major publishing houses thanks to Wiebke Busch (Wise), Sally Cavender (Faber) and Marco Mazzolini (Universal).

Lastly, members could approach the topic of digital scores both from the publisher's side as well as in organisational terms of digital transformation within an opera company, the reflection being led by music librarians and Alexandra Stampler-Brown (Düsseldorf) with contributions of Marco Mazzolini (Universal), Joscha Schaback (Schott) and Janis Susskind (Boosey).

Delegates had the opportunity to enjoy the European premiere of Jeanine Tesori's opera *Blue*, which was greeted with a standing ovation by the audience.

Susanna Werger
Membership Coordinator



SAVE THE DATES

If you wish to join any one of these events, please visit our events page on opera-europa.org/upcoming-events

Thursday 15 December 11.00 CET

Sustainability forum video meeting: Digitalisation & sustainable impact

Tuesday 20 December

Deadline for applications for Opera Europa Eva Kleinitz scholarship

Tuesday 20 December

Deadline for applications for Opera Management Course

Sunday 1 January 2023

Deadline for European Opera-directing Prize applications

30 March-1 April 2023

Opera Europa spring conference in Wiesbaden, including European Opera-directing Prize semi-finals, and Opera Management Course from 26 March

13-15 April 2023

Costumes, Make-up & Wigs forum meeting in Amsterdam

2-4 May 2023

TechSet forum meeting in Mainz

4-6 May 2023

Marketing & Communications forum meeting in Brussels
Customer in focus – Data driven Marketing

4-6 May 2023

Human Resources forum meeting in Milano

17-20 May 2023

OPERA America conference at Pittsburgh Opera
More information on operaamerica.org/Conference

6-8 October 2023

Opera Europa autumn conference, Copenhagen-Malmö, including European Opera-directing Prize winner's production of *The Turn of the Screw*

2-3 November 2023

Festivals event in Peralada

RECOMMEND YOUR CANDIDATE FOR THE OPERA MANAGEMENT COURSE

WIESBADEN, 26 MARCH-1 APRIL 2023

The ninth Opera Management Course brings together the best aspects of the 7 first intense summer editions and the eighth hybrid version: participants will spend 4 days from 26 to 29 March 2023 learning about the eternal verities of opera management – artistic issues, finance & budgeting, programming & planning, audiences & communications – before taking an active role during Opera Europa's spring conference from 30 March to 1 April 2023.

The successful candidates should form a heterogeneous group of high potential opera managers from various departments of the company, under the age of 35, and be fully supported in their training by their opera company. Seeking to address a wider and more diverse pool of talented professionals, Opera Europa welcomes especially applications or nominations of candidates from groups currently underrepresented in opera management.

PLEASE RECOMMEND YOUR CANDIDATE NOW!

The participation fee is set at €1.000, including the spring conference participation fee and accommodation. Travel costs are excluded.

The ideal candidate:

- is under the age of 35
- has a minimum of 2 years professional experience, including 6 months in the field of opera
- speaks fluent English
- shows ambition for a career in opera management

To apply, candidates should send by 20 December to audrey@opera-europa.org as a single pdf document:

- their CV
- a 200 word personal presentation / biography
- a cover letter stating their motivation to participate in the course
- a recommendation letter from a (former) colleague in the field of opera
- a portrait photo

