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# On Digital development, Dialogue and Diplomacy

The headline news in this newsletter is that Opera Europa has lodged a submission with the European Commission's Creative Europe Programme for funding towards the second stage of our European Digital Project, **The Opera Platform**. It has been made by an impressive partnership of 30 theatres from across Europe, but the platform is intended to provide an open service for all members to promote opera and its allied arts worldwide. Although we have been encouraged to make the application, we do not know if it will be successful. The result should be announced towards the end of May.

Lest you believe that all the energies of our small team have been devoted to the digital project, let me assure you that we have been active on other fronts. Our autumn conference in Berlin welcomed 350 delegates, from whom feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, though we have also received a few critical notes which we shall act upon. Among many strong contributions, that of Neil MacGregor, former Director of the British Museum and now Gründungsintendant of the Humboldt Forum in Berlin, was judged the most inspiring. We cannot publish it, because it was unscripted, but some short extracts are reproduced on page 5 to offer a flavour.

After occupying the operatic heartland of the German capital, our conference moves east next year to the uncharted territory of the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv. It is a conscious exercise in cultural diplomacy, intended to build an artistic bridge which may help unite our fractured continent. The programme will include sessions on international cooperation through co-productions and touring, the evolution of the ensemble, digital platforms, education and training for opera, auditions and performances in two theatres. We hope that you will join us in making the journey to reach out to our neighbours in Ukraine and to share both your experiences and their fabled hospitality.

In addition, our spring programme offers a rich selection of specialist forum meetings: Green in London; Technical & Production in Brussels; Human Resources in Amsterdam; Marketing & Communications and Audio-Visual & Digital Media both hosted by Helsinki; Costumes, Make-up & Wigs in Malmö; with Fundraising & Friends still to be arranged for the early summer. You will find the dates listed on the forum pages 12 to 14, and again on the back page diary. If you have not experienced these intensive group meetings before, make sure to do so in 2017, because they lie at the heart of the companionship which Opera Europa inspires.

Nicholas Payne

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# An American in Berlin

By Brittany Duncan

I arrived at the Deutsche Oper for the first day of the fall conference not quite sure what to expect. An American who had spent the last three seasons working at Houston Grand Opera, I had just moved to Berlin to embark on a year-long research project funded by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, studying the opera house/community relationship in Germany.

Actually, Opera Europa is part of the reason I'm here in Germany at all. In 2013 I was privileged to be part of the first Opera Management Course, which introduced me to the idea that an opera house can (and should) be unique to its community, reflecting its history, geography, politics, and social issues. I took this concept with me to Houston Grand Opera's radical HGOco department, where I commissioned and produced new works inspired by the people, cultures, and stories of Houston. And now I was back in Europe to learn more about the way 'they' do things, and hopefully to gain new insights that could prove helpful to colleagues back home.

I expected that the conference would be different than U.S. opera industry gatherings, and in many ways it was. The sheer variety of national backgrounds and languages among those present made every conversation a unique learning experience. I had the impression that many of the attendees were meeting for the first time, which created a lovely sense of openness and inclusion. And it was exciting to have such a range of experience and national contexts represented in the discussion, including a small but mighty handful of my compatriots. I was particularly interested to learn that two pieces of accepted wisdom in the world of American opera – that new works are important and that co-productions are smart – don't seem to have the same buy-in in the European context. And I noticed a new vocabulary being used; the words 'relevant' and 'authentic,' definitely buzzwords of the U.S. industry right now, were scarce.

But surprisingly, despite these differences, many of the discussions and topics raised were exactly the sort of thing you would hear in the U.S. Regardless of geography, all opera houses are struggling to carve out a place in the digital world amid a tangle of rights issues. We are all concerned with reaching new audiences and eager to share and learn from success stories like Opéra de Lille's Happy Days initiative. Despite the broad international spectrum, there was a noteworthy lack of demographic diversity, which is also a challenge in the U.S. industry. And of course, on both sides of the Atlantic, everyone is talking about money – no matter how large the budget or how great the proportion of contributed revenue, it's never quite enough.

I have pages and pages of valuable notes from those three days, most of them specific and operational in nature. But the thing I found most admirable and memorable about the conference was the willingness of those present to address the big scary questions about opera, questions that can be so easy to forget – or willfully ignore – when you're caught up in the day-to-day doing of it. Questions like: why do we make opera? Who do we make it for? And what is our responsibility as opera makers?

Scary questions indeed, but essential. If there's anything that recent world events have taught me, it's that now more than ever it's vital to really listen to other people and to avoid making assumptions. From the opening session's image of opera existing behind a glass wall to the closing discussion about the intentions of Regietheater, conference speakers and attendees didn't shy away from confronting these fundamental issues and acknowledging the many people on the other side of that glass wall.

For me, the big takeaway was that these questions about purpose, intention, and audience must be addressed; and that our international community, united despite surface differences by a belief in the power of this complex art form, is equal to the task. We are up to the challenge of engaging with the big questions on a daily basis, and of remaining outwardly-focused when the easiest thing to do would be to retreat to our industry echo chamber. I left the conference inspired, reinvigorated, and ready to stare some of those questions down for myself as I begin my work – knowing that I have the support of a strong, thoughtful, and courageous community as I do it.



Opening session at Deutsche Oper

# Making the case for culture at the heart of Europe

From the presentation of Neil MacGregor, Gründungsintendant of Humboldt Forum Berlin and former Director of the British Museum

'Berlin is making the case for culture in Europe more than any other city, by a long way.'



No other nation uses the word *forum* for a concentration of collections. The aim is to assemble the material culture of the whole world in one space.

Europe is about an idea, the idea of the citizen. It is not a political thing, emerging from Brussels. It is an attempt to focus the citizen on two things: citizen of Europe; and citizen of the world.

'Citizen of the world' began as an idea in London in the early 1700s. It was part of the Enlightenment. It is an idea adopted by Lessing and Goethe, that of the *Weltbürger*.

Today the state cannot use the church to create the citizen. Instead, it uses the public institutions of culture. There are two principal models. The French model has collections which belong to the prince and are opened to the public as expressions of the nation's glory. The British model is parliamentary, and the collections are bought on behalf of the citizen.

European citizens can disagree with their rulers. That is European civilisation. Debate takes place in the world. A forum is a place where you can disagree in open debate.

The case for *public* support and funding for culture has to involve discussing questions which are central to us all as citizens today. 'All' means making a reality of access in our current society, and acknowledging that vital elements of modern European culture are works in an African or Middle Eastern tradition.

Otherwise, art is entertainment and distraction, and not deserving of a place at the heart of Europe.

How do you make this culture the preserve of everyone? A major threat today is xenophobia. There is a reluctance to engage in equal terms. How do cultural institutions address migration and otherness? Religion has become a divider. How are cultural institutions addressing that? What are cultural institutions doing to make us better citizens, not just of Europe but of the world?



## Italian team wins 9th European Opera-directing Prize

Andrea Bernard from Bolzano won the European Opera-directing Prize in Berlin. The 29-year-old director convinced the jury chaired by Graham Vick with his original concept and practical workshop for Verdi's *La traviata*.

Bernard, with his designers Alberto Beltrame and Elena Beccaro will stage their concept during the Festival Verdi Parma at the Teatro Giuseppe Verdi in Busseto in October 2017.



# Seen and heard in Berlin

There were many memorable moments from our conference in Berlin. As is tradition, here are a few quotes and photos that capture the atmosphere during the three days.

## Encouraging Innovation

- *You can't start a new idea without stopping something first.*  
*Innovation is about input, not output. If you are focused on achieving something or the outcome then you will probably end up doing something similar.*  
*You're not an opera but a media choice. Think of yourself strategically as a media alternative.* **David Devan**
- *Environmental awareness is a necessity for innovation. What do we have to use, and how can we use it creatively?*  
*It's important for larger companies to help smaller ones by donating not money but resources (spaces, ...).*  
*You can't make a change for the sake of a new idea; it needs to resonate for the audience it is for.*  
*Opera is not inaccessible, people just don't know about it. We need to bring it to them in a way they consume, (as in people are consuming their art differently).* **Daisy Evans**
- *When you want to start something new you HAVE to be prepared to give up something even without knowing what is coming next.*  
*Innovation takes time, it often looks simple but it's often based on a long process. You have to be ready for it, digest things.* **Jochen Sandig**
- *You have to look at how you consider opera. It's the new language of today where you can connect music, electronic art, dance. Connecting the opera house with other venues, festivals...* **Nicola Sani**
- *Resistance to new ideas often comes from within the institution itself.*  
*Innovation without time is impossible.* **Marc Scorca**

## Who will make the case for culture at the heart of Europe?

- *You cannot teach a man anything, you can only help him find it within himself. Galileo Galilei in the early 17th century, cited by Kate Bailey*
- *A European citizen is a citizen that can disagree with his ruler. Do we adequately take into account the culture of new citizens with different traditions?* **Neil MacGregor**
- *We are drastically unrepresentative of our society. We need to stop playing the current repertoire. If you don't change, if you cannot show diversity in your audience or content, then you are finished.* **David Pountney**

## Singspiel: Die Zauberflöte for today's diverse audiences

- *The genius of The Simpsons is the level it is put at. You can put a child in front of it and they will laugh without being patronised, but adults will also enjoy it. That is what I wanted to achieve with Flute.* **Barrie Kosky**

## Regietheater

- *How do you get to the essence of the works? How do I translate what I think is the essence to ignite the audience?* **Albrecht Thiemann**
- *The how is new every single time. You can't prescribe the how. We need to speak in a way that people will understand.* **Graham Vick**



# Opera Europa to visit Ukraine

by Nicholas Payne

On the initiative of Kyiv National Academic Theatre of Operetta, and in conjunction with National Opera of Ukraine, the capital city of Kyiv will host the spring conference of Opera Europa between 18 and 20 May 2017.



Kyiv Opera was founded 150 years ago next summer. The current building dates from 1901 and, after renovations in 1935 and 1988, now accommodates 1,300 spectators. It became **National Opera of Ukraine** in 1992, and the company is led by Petro Chupryna.

**Kyiv Operetta Theatre** is in its 82nd season at its present building, which has recently been renovated and houses around 800 spectators. Its programme includes operetta and musicals, opera, ballet and concerts, and its director is Bogdan Strutinsky.

Both companies have large resident ensembles performing in a traditional repertoire system.

The conference invitation is supported by **Kyiv City State Administration** and by the **Ministry of Culture of Ukraine**. It offers an opportunity for Opera Europa to present an event in a previously unvisited land and to reach out beyond the capital to other theatres across a large country currently in need of European friends: Lviv in the west, also a member of Opera Europa; Odesa in the south; Kharkiv in the north-east; and Dnipropetrovsk to the south-east.

Kyiv has 4 million inhabitants and two airports, including Boryspil International Airport which has direct flight connexions with Amsterdam, Athens, Barcelona, Belgrade, Brussels, Bucharest, Frankfurt, Geneva, Istanbul, London, Milan, Minsk, Munich, New York, Paris, Riga, Rome, Stockholm, Tbilisi, Tel Aviv, Vienna, Vilnius, Warsaw and Zürich. There is a choice of decent hotels within easy reach of the theatres.

The conference theme will be **Cultural diplomacy** or **Art which unites**. Over three days, it offers members a unique chance to build a professional dialogue on common topics between Ukrainian and international representatives. A full programme will be published in the next newsletter, together with a choice of hotel accommodation, but please **save the dates now**.



Kyiv by night

# TOP tops 2 million views

by Nicholas Payne

After 18 months online, The Opera Platform has reached a total of 2,139,764 views for its rich and diverse European Opera Season rolled out between the launch in May 2015 and the end of October 2016.

October alone delivered 149,214 video views, a significant increase on the previous month, when the live stream of *Le nozze di Figaro* from Dutch National Opera in Amsterdam only joined the platform on 27 September. By the end of October, that production had reached 43,679 views.

During the same month, Schreker's *Die Gezeichneten* from Opéra de Lyon accounted for 11,655 views, supplemented by a further 11,555 for the same company's equally rarely performed short operas, Hindemith's *Sancta Susanna* and Schoenberg's *Von heute au morgen*. These figures are evidence of TOP's ability to find new audiences for unusual repertory.

At the same time, TOP rejoices in popularising the more familiar titles. A bonus production from Opéra de Lille of Rossini's *La Cenerentola* in the staging of Jean Bellorini reached 15,860 views, and Teatro Regio Torino's new *La bohème*, conducted by Music Director Gianandrea Noseda and staged by Alex Ollé of La Fura dels Baus, added only on 21 October, already hit 20,667 views by the end of that month.

There was a continuing audience for titles already introduced during the summer, not only steady support for showcase operas from TOP partners such as *Pelléas et Mélisande* from the Aix Festival, *Macbeth* from Latvian National Opera in Riga, *Reigen* from Stuttgart, *Queen of Spades* from Amsterdam and *In Parenthesis* from Welsh National Opera; but also for Garsington Opera's beautiful *Eugene Onegin* and for the late bonus offering of *Otello* from Teatro Real Madrid. The variety on offer is evidence that TOP can offer a shop window for performances by a wide range of Opera Europa members.

New titles in November have included Polish National Opera's rare exhumation of Żeleński's *Goplana* and Barrie Kosky's explosive staging of Shostakovich's *Nose* at Covent Garden, both still thrilling audiences.

## Coming Soon

### 3 December

***Die Perlen der Cleopatra* by Oscar Straus from Komische Oper Berlin**

New production of 1930s operetta by Barrie Kosky with Dagmar Manzel in the title role, streamed live at its opening night in Berlin

### 23 December

***Coq d'Or (Golden Cockerel)* by Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov from Palais de la Monnaie**

New production by Laurent Pelly conducted by Alain Altinoglu with Verena Gimadieva, Alexander Kravets and Pavlo Hunka

### 1 January

***Orpheus* by Claudio Monteverdi / Elena Kats-Chernin from Komische Oper Berlin**

Barrie Kosky's opening production as KOB Intendant with Dominik Köninger in the title role

### 13 January

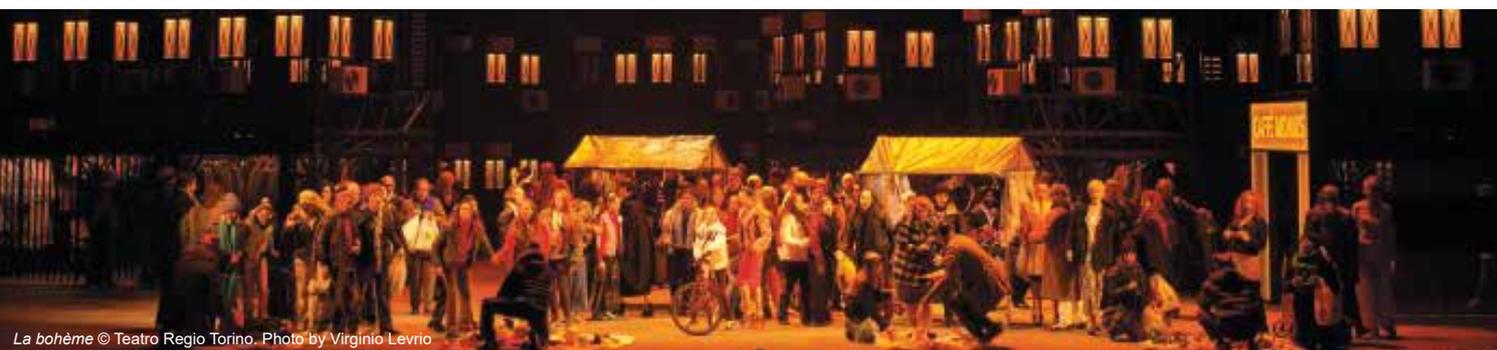
***Der fliegende Holländer* by Richard Wagner from Finnish National Opera**

New production by Kasper Holten conducted by John Fiore with Camilla Nylund and Johan Reuter

### 3 February

***Space Opera* by Aleksander Nowak from Teatr Wielki Poznań**

New opera created in 2015



*La bohème* © Teatro Regio Torino. Photo by Virginio Levrio

Co-funded by the  
Creative Europe Programme  
of the European Union



### Some of the current content from our main partners

#### Royal Opera House

- Opera *The Nose*, Dimitry Shostakovich  
Video *Becoming Zerlina*  
Members of the cast and creative team introduce  
*Krol Roger*

#### Welsh National Opera

- Opera *In Parenthesis*, Iain Bell  
Video *In Parenthesis: Around the premiere*  
WNO on tour – what it takes to get a set on stage?

#### Teatro Real

- Opera *Otello*, Giuseppe Verdi  
Video *Shakespeare's and Verdi's Desdemona*  
The anatomy of a prelude

#### Polish National Opera

- Opera *Goplana*, Wladyslaw Zelenski  
Video *Setting Straszny Dwór in the 1930s*

#### Den Norske Opera

- Video *Elysium* – Preview  
Special content *La Bohème: A new, old La bohème*

#### Latvian National Opera

- Video Asmik Grigorian on singing *Manon Lescaut* and  
*Onegin's Tatyana*.  
Extract *Turandot* Finale

#### Teatro Regio di Torino

- Opera *La Bohème*, by Giacomo Puccini  
Video *La Bohème: Ollé: Suburban bohemians*.

#### Oper Stuttgart

- Video Meet Jossi Wieler, the General Manager of an opera  
*The Fairy Queen* – The orchestra on stage

#### Wiener Staatsoper

- Video The stage machinery of the Wiener Staatoper.  
The opera choir of Vienna.

#### Opera de Lyon

- Opera *Von heute auf Morgen*  
Video The Maîtrise Singing School

#### Finnish National Opera

- Video *Kullervo* in animation  
Drum battle

#### La Monnaie / De Munt

- Video *Sindbad* – A Journey Through Living Flames – Making of  
*Powder her face* – Making of

#### Komische Oper

- Videos Barrie Kosky: the many layers of *Yevgeny Onegin*  
Günter Papendell on *Onegin*

#### Dutch National Opera

- Opera *Le nozze de Figaro*, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
Videos *Queen of Spades* – A visit to the wig workshop

#### Festival d'Aix-en-Provence

- Opera *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Claude Debussy  
Videos Rehearsals of *The Magic Flute*



*The Nose* © ROH. Photo by Bill Cooper

# Opera Vision for The Opera Platform

by Nicholas Payne, Audrey Jungers and Luke O'Shaughnessy

Opera Europa has submitted a new project to the EC's Creative Europe Programme for the next stage of The Opera Platform (TOP) for the period 2018-2020. It offers an enriched, free-view, online, curated season of European Opera in partnership with 30 theatres from 19 countries. Opera Vision will have a specific new emphasis on attracting and cultivating young, emerging audiences, celebrating Europe's cultural heritage and developing opera for the future.

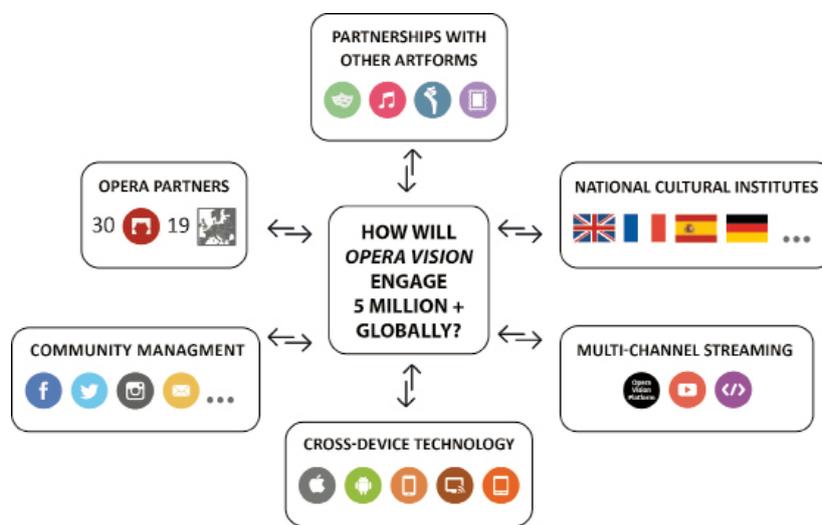
This Opera Vision will build on the successes of TOP, initiated in autumn 2014 and co-funded by the European Union's Creative Europe Programme as the European Opera Digital Project. Opera Europa developed its first phase in partnership with the cultural broadcaster ARTE and 15 contributing theatres selected from 12 European countries. TOP has built a reputation for the quality of its programming and gained a large international audience. The range of partners has ensured that audiences broadly reflect population distribution across Europe, which makes up 80% of viewers. 10% of audiences are from North America and 10% rest of the world. During its 18 months online, video viewing figures have exceeded 2 million. Its success in reaching audiences with a quality product was recognised by winning the Accessibility Prize at the International Opera Awards in May 2016. The project plays an important role in building capacity and sharing expertise in digital technology and cost-effective solutions to deploying it with the purpose of widening access to the European art of opera. TOP in its current form and partnership goes offline in October 2017, and it is the ambition of Opera Vision to go live from then until 31 December 2020.

Opera Vision will offer a platform with enriched content drawn from a more diverse partnership of 30 theatres, and 60% of them are new to the project. The content will be more varied (full-length and short-form), inclusive (music theatre in many forms) and regular (an average of two live streams per month). The platform will focus on reaching younger audiences, celebrating European cultural heritage, reinventing opera for today, and making an opera streaming platform self-sustainable long-term. Harnessing ever-evolving technology, Opera Vision will reach deeper into the lives of our citizens and promote European cultural values to the world.

To achieve these aims, Opera Vision will:

- Gather a wider and more inclusive partnership of European theatres
- Make full-length and short-form content richer and more accessible
- Engage younger audiences in partnership with educational organisations
- Devise a season to celebrate the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage
- Develop the medium by innovative use of cutting-edge technology
- Broaden the platform's reach through partnerships with other initiatives
- Build towards a sustainable model for the future beyond 2020

The submission will be assessed by EC experts during the coming months, and the outcome is expected to be known by the end of May 2017.



ENGAGEMENT BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER STREAMING

# Opera Vision's wider and more inclusive partnership

by Nicholas Payne, Audrey Jungers and Luke O'Shaughnessy

The list of 30 Opera Vision partners from 19 countries includes 60% which are new to the project.

Belgium	La Monnaie/De Munt Brussels Opera Vlaanderen Antwerpen/Gent
Croatia	Croatian National Opera Zagreb
Czech Republic	Brno National Theatre Festival Janáček Prague National Theatre
Finland	Finnish National Opera Helsinki
France	Festival d'Aix-en-Provence Opéra de Lille Opéra-Comique Paris
Germany	Komische Oper Berlin
Greece	Greek National Opera Athens
Hungary	Hungarian State Opera Budapest
Ireland	Wexford Festival Opera/National Opera House of Ireland
Italy	Teatro Regio Torino Teatro dell'Opera di Roma Teatro di San Carlo Napoli Teatro La Fenice Venezia
Latvia	Latvian National Opera Riga
Netherlands	Dutch National Opera Amsterdam
Norway	Norwegian National Opera Oslo
Poland	Polish National Opera/Teatr Wielki Warsaw Teatr Wielki Poznań
Spain	Teatro Real Madrid Palau de les Arts Valencia
Sweden	Royal Swedish Opera Stockholm
United Kingdom	Royal Opera House Covent Garden London Welsh National Opera Cardiff Opera North Leeds

Plus associated theatres from beyond EC Creative Europe territories:

Russia	Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Music-Theatre
Switzerland	Theater Basel

# Specialist forum update

by Aline Chif, Audrey Jungers and Gérald Philippe

Over the years, several forums have grown from the members' staff interest. They are led by a small group referred to as the steering committee, assisted by a member of Opera Europa's staff.

## Technical & Production

The Technical & Production forum gathered during Opera Europa's autumn conference in Berlin. It was a pleasure for members to discover the joint workshops of the Berlin opera houses at the Bühnenservice, and to enjoy a special tour of the Staatoper Unter den Linden under renovation.

During their meetings, and building on discussions held at the Amsterdam conference, it was decided to give more focus on Production aspects of their work. La Monnaie in Brussels will be hosting Opera Europa's first meeting for 'Production People', a generic term meant to encompass functions with a variety of tags across Europe – Production Managers, Artistic Production Managers, Producers, Project Managers...

**The meeting in Brussels will be held from 17 to 19 March 2017**, and might be an opportunity to take a sneak preview of La Monnaie during its final phase of renovation.

A detailed programme will be sent out to the forum's listserv, [tech@group.opera-europa.org](mailto:tech@group.opera-europa.org). Make sure you're registered!

## Costume, Make-up & Wig

Last spring 68 participants from 16 different countries travelled to Berlin for an intense three days of discussions, workshop visits and practical workshops.

The forum's steering group met in London in November to prepare the programme for the upcoming annual meeting which will take place in **Malmö from 11-20 May**. Stay tuned for more information coming soon by signing up to the group on [costume@group.opera-europa.org](mailto:costume@group.opera-europa.org).

## Fundraising & Friends

While the Berlin conference was coming to an end, the Fundraising & Friends forum started its meeting. During the last conference in Amsterdam, it was decided to organise a stand-alone forum meeting once again. The programme was set up by the steering committee, in close collaboration with FEDORA, which was associated in the organisation of the event.

70 representatives from the most various companies attended the two day meeting.

An overview of today's fundraising challenges was presented, together with the skills a fundraiser needs nowadays. Tools were given on how to involve the whole company in the fundraising activities.

Useful hints on how to deal with private donors were shared, new generation programmes, legacy programmes and young patrons programmes presented.

On the next day, a few successful fundraising campaigns were presented and analysed, the issue of how to deal with unexpected circumstances was raised and the keys to corporate giving were shared.

We also had invited some external speakers in order to obtain an insight into fundraising both in the USA and in Canada, as well as a presentation of FEDORA.

Lastly, an example of a successful rebranding campaign was presented by Luc Speisser, President of Landor France and Switzerland.

The Fundraising & Friends forum is planning to meet again soon. **The next meeting should take place in the course of the spring 2017**. Details will follow soon.



The Fundraising & Friends forum in Berlin

## Human Resources

The Human Resources forum held a joint meeting with the Technical & Production forum during Opera Europa's autumn conference in Berlin. The sessions were open to all the participants to the conference and colleagues from the Deutsche Opernkonzert also joined some of the discussions. Hanna Fontana from Helsinki, Jane Crowther from the Royal Opera House and Jürgen Koenig from Düsseldorf, all members of the steering committee, stressed the importance of HR and an HR policy for every opera house and presented the work of the HR forum.

Both forums discussed together the pros and cons of workshop resources versus outsourcing. The long on-going discussion on staff exchange was deepened and a first try-out between companies is soon going to be launched. For more information on this scheme, please contact us.

A session was devoted to work-life balance tackling the issues of part-time, burn-out and bore-out. An interesting measuring experiment of stress carried out in Helsinki with a number of staff members was presented and discussed.

The next meeting of the HR forum will be from **6 to 8 April in Amsterdam** under the theme of **Change Management**. All the details will be available shortly.



Members of the Human Resources forum in Berlin

## Audio Visual & Digital Media

The Audio Visual & Digital Media forum has met several times in the past two years to discuss issues relating to capturing performances and broadcasting them to screens – whether in cinemas, on public squares, on computers or phones!

Participation is not limited to the partners of TOP, and the past meetings in Prague, Strasbourg and London welcomed colleagues from across Europe, some with vast experience to share, some just embarking on the digital journey.

The forum will next be meeting at Finnish National Opera in **Helsinki, from 27 to 29 April**. Make sure you are registered to [av@group.opera-europa.org](mailto:av@group.opera-europa.org) to receive details about upcoming activities. Contact [luke@opera-europa.org](mailto:luke@opera-europa.org) for more information!

## Green

In collaboration with La Monnaie, we felt that it was the right time to relaunch sustainable thinking within Opera Europa. So in early September we invited a colleagues who deal with environment issues from various companies to come to Brussels to brainstorm on where opera companies stand today in the environmental field and what issues the group might discuss in the future.

In order to help the discussion, Serge De Backer & Marie d'Huart from CAP conseil was invited to present the encompassing concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). A discussion followed on the impacts to opera, and what actions might be led through our network. The CSR is a fascinating concept, which actually embraces many of our activities, not only in the field of the environment.

The discussions continued in small groups, many initiatives were shared and new ideas came up. The group then brainstormed on future topics and came up with an impressive list of topics which will be discussed together:

- Waste Management: catering, water, paper, sorting, chemicals
- Environmental commitment of the artistic teams
- Eco-reporting
- How to manage one's internal green team
- Solar panels
- How technology can help us go greener
- Recycling rules across Europe
- How to eco-lobby towards the suppliers
- Eco-design of production: recycling, re-using, copyrights, responsibility/liability, inventory
- Mobility of the audience
- Measuring the eco-impact of the productions

The group decided to organise a full forum meeting in order to start tackling these issues in detail. **The meeting is scheduled for 23 and 24 January in London**. More details will be available soon.



The Green forum visiting the La Monnaie worksite in Brussels

## Save the dates

Green Team	23-24.01	London
Technical & Production	17-19.03	Brussels
Human Resources	06-08.04	Amsterdam
Marketing & Communications	20-22.04	Helsinki
Audio Visual & Digital Media	27-29.04	Helsinki
Costumes, Make up & Wigs	18-20.05	Malmö

## Marketing &amp; Communications

This autumn the Marketing & Communications forum met at Opéra national de Paris to discuss the Future of Communicating Opera. Over 60 participants shared their thoughts on how their departments were evolving with the times and what they might look like in the future.

It was widely recognised that Client centricity is essential today. It is paramount to place the client at the centre of our activities and this is now possible due to Data. It is becoming increasingly necessary to become an expert in all fields pertaining to Marketing & Communications in view of providing the best experience possible to the audience. We questioned whether we will in fact become Brand Managers of our institutions in the future as it would be our audience who will communicate more and more on our behalf.

Our audiences, and people as a whole, have become consumers of information and a brand must no longer consider itself a destination but insert itself in people's lives. We need to look at how to adapt our content and its distribution. Axel Dauchez, ex CEO of Publicis, explained that Messaging services are the new operating system that brands will need to use as tools to reach their audience.

The three days were divided between expert speakers from outside the world of Opera, presentations from members and workshops in smaller groups to learn more on very specific subjects.

Our hosts generously shared their experience on Social Media policies, AB testing to improve website design and purchase flows and in depth information on their exchange agreements with media groups.

The participants later divided into three groups for a work session to brainstorm on what Marketing & Communication departments could look like in the future. Interestingly, all three groups agreed that the physical proximity of teams was even more essential in the future even though our digital world allows us to work at a distance.

Currently, effective collaboration between various departments is proving difficult and in some cases is a real source of frustration. From this the groups truly felt that Project or Production based teams might be a better way of working. The teams would then work more closely together, gaining insight into each aspect of the project and share the responsibilities.

It was an inspiring few days with many new faces which is always welcome. We will be meeting again in the Spring in **Helsinki from 20 to 22 April 2017.**

## Education

The recently launched Education forum joined part of the Berlin conference. The forum's steering group believes it is paramount for Education to be integrated within the larger Opera Europa conferences to show how the topic is at the core of opera management and to foster relationships between departments.

In Berlin, the Education forum took part in general sessions, and in specific sessions in conjunction with General Directors, Artistic Directors & Administrators and with Human Resources Managers. Those present thoroughly enjoyed the set-up and the steering group confirmed the need to be present at these events.

The forum will next be meeting during Opera Europa's spring conference in Kyiv, **Ukraine, from 18 to 20 May 2017.** The conference theme is Cultural Diplomacy or Art which unites (see page 7). One of the topics suggested is the use of digital technology and the creation of common online tools for teachers.

If you'd like to be kept up to date of the activities of the forum and stay in touch with your colleagues around Europe, ask [audrey@opera-europa.org](mailto:audrey@opera-europa.org) to register you on the [education@group.opera-europa.org](mailto:education@group.opera-europa.org) listserv!



Marketing & Communications forum in Paris

# Recommend your promising young professionals for Opera Europa's fifth Opera Management Course in Lille!

This summer, from 20 to 25 August, Opéra de Lille will welcome Opera Europa's fifth Opera Management Course.

The course is aimed at young(ish) professionals with potential and ambition to grow their careers in opera by understanding 'the bigger picture' of opera production. Participants will benefit from expert lectures on aspects such as Artistic programming and planning, Financial structures and management, HR and administrative issues, Production management, Marketing & Communications, Education and Fundraising.

Following each lecture, they will break out into small groups under the leadership of opera managers to delve into practical issues and considerations and understand the decision processes which influence the management of an opera company.

This experience will increase their understanding of the various positions and responsibilities within an opera company, give them more confidence in their work and allow them to start building an international network of professional contacts.

Past contributors include:

Marc Adam (Nice),  
Philippe Agid (Paris),  
Bob Brandsen (Amsterdam/London),  
Gillian Brierley (Glyndebourne/New York Met),  
Jérôme Brunetière (Aix),  
Aviel Cahn (Antwerp/Gent),  
Peter de Caluwe (Brussels),  
Michael Diem (Bregenz),  
Serge Dorny (Lyon),  
Hanna Fontana (Helsinki),  
Hannah Griffiths (Göteborg),  
Kasper Holten (London),  
Andrew Higgins (Glyndebourne),  
Mathieu Jouvin (Lyon),  
Daniel Knapp (Bregenz/ San Francisco),  
Thomas Koch (Stuttgart),  
Thomas Lauriot dit Prévost (Brussels),  
Perryn Leech (Houston),  
Annilese Miskimmon (Aarhus/Oslo),  
Nicholas Payne,  
Frédéric Roels (Rouen),  
Christina Scheppelmann (Barcelona),  
Cormac Simms (London ROH),  
Peter Spuhler (Karlsruhe),  
Karen Stone (Magdeburg),  
Klemens Thaler (Bregenz),  
Marisa Vázquez-Shelly (Madrid),  
Wolfgang Urstadt (Bregenz) and  
Giovanni Vegeto (Como).

## Ideal profile of candidates

- Aged between 25 and 45 years old
- From any department and any position of the opera company
- Minimum of three years working experience, of which six months in the field of opera
- Fluent in English

**To apply, candidates must send the following documents before 15 February 2017 to [audrey@opera-europa.org](mailto:audrey@opera-europa.org):**

- CV in English and photo
- 200 word personal presentation text
- Letter of recommendation from a professional colleague

## Practical information

- The course will take place from 20 to 25 August at Opéra de Lille
- Accommodation and meals are included in the participation fee
- The working language is English
- All participants will be put up in a hotel, in shared twin rooms or in single rooms
- Participation fee: 750€ in a shared twin room; 900€ in a single room.



Opéra de Lille © Rémi Vimont

# European Opera Days 2017: Opera Panorama

by Audrey Jungers

Opera Europa's mission, since the association was created, has been to bring people together to advocate Opera. We believe that actions speak louder than words. Almost 10 years ago, we launched and coordinated the first European Opera Days. This initiative was created to hustle up attention in the media for opera. This was Opera Europa's first advocacy tool, and from its first edition, it was a great success.

The European Opera Days are a major Public Relations exercise for opera. They exist to remind your local communities, but also your authorities, that your opera company exists, and wants to embrace and be embraced by as many people as possible.

So this coordinated European event is your lobbying tool. The European Opera Days are an opportunity for you to reach out and touch more people, in a different way. Although many of our members excel at this during their season, we believe there is a strong message in coordinating our actions once a year, so that governing bodies and the media also understand that we stand united in believing in the value of our work.

## Communication

European Opera Days have several layers of action: local, regional, national, and European. And each company is in the best place to cover the local and regional levels. On a national level, we believe in the value of a national coordination of the communication, especially towards the media. We strongly encourage partnering with other opera companies, possibly with increased financial means from this collaboration, to bring out a strong message about Opera. Opera Europa communicates on the European level, but mostly coordinates this European initiative, and wants to bring it to attention of all. This year again, it will find a strong place on The Opera Platform.

## An expanded period

This year, for the first time, we are expanding the duration of the European Opera Days. Some houses were challenged by a weekend only, as chosen dates could clash with national holidays or unavailability of venues, while the extended dates offer the choice over two weekends, allowing for more flexibility in the planning and management of the events, and also the involvement of schools. So we are talking of **5 to 14 May 2017**.



*The European Opera Days are a joint initiative of Opera Europa, the leading organisation for professional opera companies and festivals throughout Europe, serving over 170 members in 42 countries ([www.opera-europa.org](http://www.opera-europa.org)), and RESEO, the European network for opera and dance education, supporting participation, creative learning and youth productions of 80 members in 21 countries ([www.reseo.org](http://www.reseo.org)), in partnership with la Réunion des Opéras de France ([www.rof.fr](http://www.rof.fr)), ANFOLS (Italy), Opera Norge (Norway), Ópera XXI ([www.operaxxi.com](http://www.operaxxi.com)), the UK National Opera Coordinating Committee.*



### Opera Panorama

European Opera Days have always been about opening your company and reaching out to your community. More generally, they include free activities in and outside of the opera house: thematic guided tours, open rehearsals, free pop-up concerts, access to workshops and backstage areas, meetings with artists... All these are valuable ideas.

Every year, we suggest a theme, to encourage the teams in charge to come up with new activities. **For the 2017 edition, we are branding the initiative Opera Panorama, and it is an invitation to discover the European dimension of Opera.**

Opera Europa is working on providing content available for all to use, to contribute to linking the companies and give visitors a feeling for what opera means around Europe. To do this, we are collecting photos. Photos of the outside of your theatre, of your auditorium, but also of productions of *Carmen* and *Die Zauberflöte*, as most opera companies have programmed those titles in the past, as well as photos of your most emblematic and iconic production.

These photos will all be available for any participating company to access and print out to present to their visitors, for instance during an exhibition. This is an invitation to audiences to compare and understand what the architecture of a theatre says about the time when it was built, and the place of opera in society then. And how is *The Magic Flute* presented in different parts of Europe?

Opera Europa will also produce slide-shows with these photos, available for you to project in a foyer. And of course, videos will also be produced, with explanations in voice-over and possibly a few extracts, available to all, but also streamed on The Opera Platform.

We are now working on gathering all the content, and would be very happy to include as many members as possible in this Opera Panorama. So please do send through your photos soon, to allow us to curate the content in the best way possible. **We look forward to receiving more details about your activities and your contributions to Opera Panorama before 15 January on [audrey@opera-europa.org](mailto:audrey@opera-europa.org)!**



# The Power of Culture and the Arts

by Anita Debaere, Director of Pearle\*, Performing Arts Employers' Associations League Europe

The Power of Culture and the Arts is an appeal from the European Alliance for Culture and the Arts.

It urges policy makers to re-think the European approach and include culture and the arts in the long-term strategic goals of the European project. By doing so, the EU acknowledges their essential role in the development of European societies.

The appeal, in which Pearle\* takes a leading role, was officially launched at the European Cultural Forum in April this year, with the handing over to the European Commissioner of Culture Tibor Navracsics and to the chair of the EP Committee Culture Silvia Costa.

Already some 35 European networks with different backgrounds committed to spread the word of the appeal; and an increasing number of national associations and organisations, as well as individuals, are also signing up.

At the Opera Europa conference in Berlin, Pearle invited Opera Europa members to also join this movement.

The text of the appeal presents three parts:

## 1. Europe as a distinct cultural Union

European culture and the arts refer to 3000 years of shared cultural heritage while bringing contemporary relevance to people's lives today. Culture and the arts are the essential drivers of creation and appropriation of meaning. Through the diversity of intellectual and emotional experiences they can teach individuals about complexity. The European Union finds its basis in a shared culture. This is Europe's abiding strength.

## 2. Culture and the arts, relevant for the quality of our life and the European project

While global challenges intensify and have an impact on European societies, Europe needs to preserve its interlinked economic and social model and enrich it with cultural awareness.

## 3. Culture and the arts to be at the heart of EU policies

Culture and the arts enable the creation of a thriving European society and sustainable economy. It is urgent that Europe put culture and the arts at the heart of European policies and nourish the EU's political project with a cultural one.

In the last part several demands are formulated towards the European Institutions, meaning the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council, and policy makers in all Member States.

Furthermore, evidence is given how culture plays an important role in the different policy areas and priorities of the European Union.:

- European values and human rights
- Economic benefits and growth
- Education
- Social cohesion
- Migration and citizenship
- Innovation
- Health and wellbeing
- Regional and urban development
- External relations and neighbourhood policy
- International cooperation and development

Based on those observations, now the time is ripe for Europe to endorse the role of culture in its overall Strategy and goals. More information can be found on the dedicated website of the alliance, where one can also sign the appeal <https://allianceforculture.com/>

In 2017 several events are planned by European networks putting the 'Power of culture and the arts', and further activities in the campaigning are in the pipeline. More will be announced in the New Year.

# New Members of Opera Europa

by Nicholas Payne

Since we last published a list of members in June, six new members have joined Opera Europa and a further five will do so before the end of the year.

There is a special welcome for **Yerevan Opera Theatre**, or **National Opera and Ballet Theatre named after Alexander Spendiaryan**, to give its full title, because it is our first, and likely to be our only, member in Armenia. Situated in the heart of the capital, this splendid amphitheatre-shaped theatre was opened in 1933 at a time of great national need and seats 1,050 people. It has a commitment to Armenian composers but also to the classic, especially Italian, repertory. Those of us who sit on singing competition juries are also aware of the strong tradition of Armenian singers.

From the south to the north of Europe, where the arrival of **Helsingin Koominen Ooppera**, or **Comic Opera Helsinki**, raises our Finnish contingent to three members. This is a new company, dedicated to developing a new kind of opera and to international collaboration, and operating mainly in the Finlandia Hall. It is led by director Laura Åkelund, who actively participated in the recent conference in Berlin.

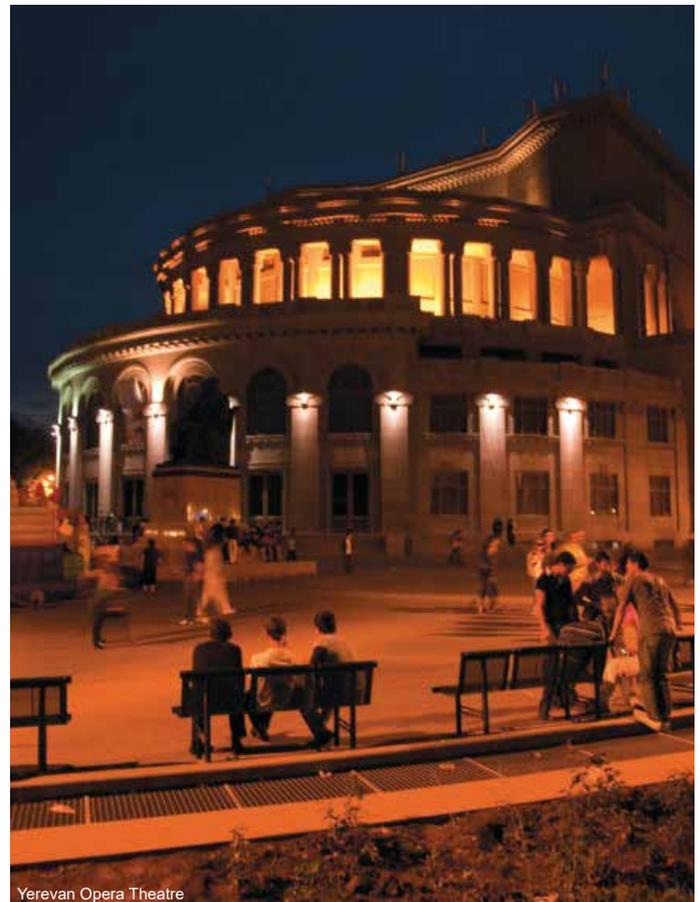
Two new members from Poland bring me particular pleasure. I was in Wrocław last May and aware that changes would be made this season at **Opera Wroclawska**, where Marcin Nałęcz-Niesielowski has now assumed the direction of this beautiful and highly productive theatre. In Berlin, it was good to renew acquaintance with Ewa Filipp, now Head of Marketing and representing the director at our conference, and to meet for the first time Casting Director Pawel Orski. **Opera Bałtycka** in Gdansk was represented in Berlin by deputy director Celina Zhomirska-Bieńczyk. This fine company offers a distinctive repertory and is now led by Wacław Kunc as General Director.

Back to the operatic heartland of Germany, it is heartening to welcome back Berthold Schneider in his first season as Intendant of **Wuppertaler Bühnen und Sinfonieorchester**, where his imaginative programming is already making an impact, adding to the extraordinary richness of choice offered in North Rhine-Westphalia and the nearby Ruhr area.

**Et in Arcadia Ego** is an unusual project which is part Italian and part German, part research and part performance. Based in the Palazzo del Majno in Bereguardo near Pavia, it also has an outpost at Schloss Coswig in Saxony-Anhalt. Its leading team of Artistic Director Giuseppe Sigismondi di Risio and Managing Partner Magnolia Albertazzi-Casei both participated in our Berlin conference.

Theatres in the process of joining Opera Europa this autumn include **Oper Graz** under the dynamic new leadership of Nora Schmid; the **Lismore Festival** in County Waterford in the south of Ireland; **Polska Orkiestra Sinfonia Juventus** as an Affiliate Member; and the two companies from the Ukrainian capital, **National Opera & Ballet of Ukraine** and **Kyiv National Operetta Theatre**, from whom we were happy to have with us Elena Tsyba throughout the conference in Berlin. You may read more about these two Organisations on page 7 of this newsletter.

So, Opera Europa has reached 170 members for the first time and expects to number 175 members by the end of the year.



Yerevan Opera Theatre

# Save the dates 2017

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5 - 8 January

68th AsLiCo concorso for young singers 2017 at Teatro Sociale Como

23 - 24 January

Green forum meeting in London

11 - 15 February

IMZ Avant Premiere Music + Media Market Berlin 2017

17 - 19 March

Technical & Production at La Monnaie/De Munt, Brussels

6 - 8 April

Human Resources at Dutch National Opera, Amsterdam

20 - 22 April

RESEO Spring Conference – Belgrade, Serbia

A three day conference hosted by the Belgrade Dance Institute, and in partnership with Madlenianum Opera & Theatre, and Dance & Creative Wellness Foundation

20 - 22 April

Marketing & Communications at Finnish National Opera, Helsinki

27 - 29 April

Audio-Visual & Digital Media at Finnish National Opera, Helsinki

5 - 14 May

European Opera Days – Opera Panorama

5 - 8 May

OPERA America conference in Dallas

18 - 20 May

Costumes, Make-up & Wigs at Malmö Opera & Musikteater

18 - 20 May

Opera Europa Spring Conference at Kyiv Operetta Theatre and National Opera of Ukraine, including Education forum

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