

opera europa NEWS

Summer 2014

The professional association of opera houses and festivals in Europe | L'organisation professionnelle pour les compagnies et festivals d'opéra en Europe

AUSTRIA – Bregenzer Festspiele ■ Ernst Krenek Institut ■ Landestheater Linz ■ Theater an der Wien ■ Volksoper Wien ■ Wiener Staatsoper ■ Wiener Taschenoper ■ **BELGIUM** – La Monnaie / De Munt ■ Opera Vlaanderen ■ Opéra Royal de Wallonie ■ **BULGARIA** – Sofia National Opera ■ **CHILE** – Teatro Municipal de Santiago ■ **CHINA** – Beijing Music Festival ■ **CROATIA** – Hrvatsko narodno kazaliste u Zagrebu ■ **CZECH REPUBLIC** – Pízeň Josef Kajetán Tyl Theatre ■ National Moravian–Silesian Theatre Ostrava ■ National Theatre Brno ■ Prague National Theatre Opera ■ **DENMARK** – Den Jyske Opera ■ Royal Danish Opera ■ **ESTONIA** – Estonian National Opera ■ **FINLAND** – Finnish National Opera ■ New Generation Opera ■ Savonlinna Opera Festival ■ **FRANCE** – Chorégies d'Orange ■ Festival d'Art Lyrique d'Aix-en-Provence ■ Opera Comique Paris ■ Opéra de Dijon ■ Opéra de Lille ■ Opéra de Massy ■ Opéra de Nice ■ Opéra de Rouen Haute-Normandie ■ Opéra de Toulon ■ Opéra et Orchestre national Montpellier ■ Opéra national de Bordeaux ■ Opéra national de Lorraine ■ Opéra national de Lyon ■ Opéra national de Paris ■ Opéra national du Rhin ■ Théâtre de Caen ■ Théâtre du Capitole Toulouse ■ Théâtre du Châtelet ■ **GERMANY** – Aalto Musiktheater Essen ■ Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe ■ Bayerische Staatsoper München ■ Deutsche Oper Berlin ■ Deutsche Oper am Rhein Düsseldorf–Duisburg ■ Komische Oper Berlin ■ Nationaltheater Mannheim ■ Oper Köln ■ Saarländisches Staatstheater Saarbrücken ■ Staatsoper Stuttgart ■ Staatstheater Braunschweig ■ Stadttheater Augsburg ■ Stadttheater Giessen ■ Theater der Stadt Heidelberg ■ Theater Dortmund ■ Theater Magdeburg ■ **GREECE** – Greek National Opera Athens ■ **HUNGARY** – Armel Opera Competition and Festival Szeged ■ Hungarian State Opera ■ **ICELAND** – Icelandic Opera ■ **IRELAND** – Opera Theatre Company ■ Wexford Festival Opera ■ **ISRAEL** – Israëli Opera ■ **ITALY** – Accademia La Scala Milano ■ Associazione Teatrale Emilia Romagna ■ Centro di Ricerca ASK – Università Bocconi ■ Fondazione Pergolesi Spontini Jesi ■ Fondazione Teatro Comunale e Auditorium Bolzano ■ Fondazione Teatro La Fenice Venezia ■ Macerata Opera Festival ■ Rossini Opera Festival Pesaro ■ Teatro Comunale di Bologna ■ Teatro di San Carlo Napoli ■ Teatro dell'Opera di Roma ■ Teatro Regio Torino ■ Teatro Sociale di Como AsLiCo ■ Teatro Verdi Trieste ■ **JAPAN** – New National Theatre Tokyo ■ **KAZAKHSTAN** – Astana Opera ■ **KOREA** – Korean National Opera ■ **LATVIA** – Latvian National Opera ■ **LITHUANIA** – Lithuanian National Opera ■ **LUXEMBOURG** – Grand Théâtre de la Ville de Luxembourg ■ **NETHERLANDS** – Dutch National Opera & Ballet ■ Nationale Reisopera ■ Opera Zuid ■ Operadagen Rotterdam ■ **NORWAY** – Bergen National Opera ■ Norske Opera og Ballett Oslo ■ OperaNorge ■ **OMAN** – Royal Opera House Muscat ■ **POLAND** – Capella Cracoviensis ■ Krakow Opera ■ Małopolskie Centrum Kultury SOKÓŁ ■ Opera Narodowa /Teatr Wielki ■ Opera Poznan ■ **PORTUGAL** – Teatro Nacional de São Carlos ■ **ROMANIA** – Bucharest National Opera ■ Cluj–Napoca Romanian National Opera ■ **RUSSIA** – Bolshoi Theatre Moscow ■ Galina Vishnevskaya Opera Centre Moscow ■ Helikon Opera Moscow ■ Mariinsky Theatre ■ Mariinsky Theatre St Petersburg ■ Mikhailovsky Theatre St Petersburg ■ Moscow State Opera and Ballet Theatre for Young People Named After N.Sats ■ Novaya Opera Moscow ■ Perm State Opera and Ballet Theatre ■ Stanislavsky Music Theatre Moscow ■ **SERBIA** – Madlenianum Opera and Theatre ■ National Theatre Belgrade ■ **SLOVENIA** – Slovene National Theatre Ljubljana ■ **SPAIN** – ABAO Bilbao ■ Auditorio de Tenerife Santa Cruz ■ Festival Internacional de Peralada ■ Fundacio del Gran Teatre del Liceu Barcelona ■ Fundación Opera de Oviedo ■ Palau de les Arts Valencia ■ Teatro de la Maestranza Sevilla ■ Teatro de la Zarzuela Madrid ■ Teatro Real de Madrid ■ **SWEDEN** – GöteborgsOperan ■ Malmö Opera ■ NorrlandsOperan Umeå ■ Royal Swedish Opera Kungliga Operan ■ Värmlandsoperan Karlstad ■ **SWITZERLAND** – Grand Théâtre de Genève ■ Opernhaus Zürich ■ Theater Basel ■ Genossenschaft Konzert und Theater St.Gallen ■ Theater und Orchester Biel Solothurn ■ **TURKEY** – Turkish State Opera ■ **UKRAINE** – L'viv National Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre ■ **UK** – Arts Council England ■ Birmingham Opera Company ■ Edinburgh International Festival ■ English National Opera ■ Garsington Festival ■ Glyndebourne Festival ■ Music Theatre Wales ■ Northern Ireland Opera ■ Opera North ■ Philharmonia Orchestra ■ Royal National Theatre ■ Royal Opera House ■ Scottish Opera ■ Welsh National Opera ■

148 MEMBERS

DE MUNT/ LA MONNAIE

DAPHNE
Richard Strauss
Lothar Koenigs / Guy Joosten
9 - 30.9.2014

JAKOB LENZ
Wolfgang Rihm
Franck Ollu / Andrea Breth
27.2 - 7.3.2015

**DIE ENTFÜHRUNG AUS
DEM SERAIL** (in concert)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
René Jacobs
22.9.2014

IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA
(in concert)
Giovanni Paisiello
René Jacobs
6.3.2015

SHELL SHOCK
(world premiere)
Nicholas Lens & Nick Cave
Koen Kessels /
Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui
24.10 - 2.11.2014

LE VIN HERBÉ (in concert)
Frank Martin
Hans-Christoph Rademann
10.3.2015

DON GIOVANNI
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Ludovic Morlot /
Krzysztof Warlikowski
2 - 30.12.2014

PENTHESILEA
(world premiere)
Pascal Dusapin
Ludovic Morlot / Katie Mitchell
31.3 - 18.4.2015

FIERRABRAS (in concert)
Franz Schubert
Ádám Fischer
21 & 24.1.2015

UN BALLO IN MASCHERA
Giuseppe Verdi
Carlo Rizzi /
Alex Ollé - La Fura dels Baus
12 - 27.5.2015

TAMERLANO
George Frideric Handel
Christophe Rousset / Pierre Audi
27.1 - 8.2.2015

**RACHMANINOV TROIKA
ALEKO / SKUPOJ RYTSAR'
FRANCESCA DA RIMINI**
Sergei Rachmaninov
Mikhail Tatarnikov /
Kirsten Dehlholm - Hotel Pro Forma
16 - 30.6.2015

ALCINA
George Frideric Handel
Christophe Rousset / Pierre Audi
28.1 - 7.2.2015

MEDÚLLA
Björk
Bassem Akiki / Sjaron Minailo
4 - 8.2.2015

**OPERA, CONCERT,
RECITAL & DANCE**
Discover the new season on
www.lamonnaie.be

Info & Tickets +32 229 12 11
Tickets on sale as from 28.6.2014

14
/ 15



Opera Europa at your service

by Nicholas Payne



The team, ready to welcome the delegates

Our recent conference in Venice brought together 288 people from 126 companies in 29 countries throughout the world to share experiences in the incomparable and historic setting of Teatro La Fenice.

With its seductive *ambiente* of narrow streets and the lapping waters of the canals, the hidden churches and *palazzi*, Venice offered an ideal background for a conference. Relationships formed or nurtured over those three intensive days will surely influence plans and initiatives to be enacted by our 148 member companies over future years. You may capture a glimpse of them in this newsletter.

Our next major event will take us on a different journey to the land of Czech music, exploring its rich heritage and contemporary challenges while addressing some of the most urgent issues confronting members who wish to develop both their audiences and their workforces for the 21st century. The detailed programme will be published in the next newsletter, but turn to page 9 for an introduction and save the dates: 20 to 23 November 2014.

Such big gatherings are only part of what Opera Europa offers its members. Equally valuable are the more intimate forums at which specialist topics may be researched and examined in greater depth.

Read of our President Eva Kleinitz’s experience and views from active member participants on pages 10 to 16.

Then there is consultancy offered on an individual basis in response to need. It may help identify a co-production partner or solve a casting issue or provide a business analysis. A recent example was the request from Prague National Theatre for an objective international appraisal of its new development plan. I assembled an expert team from London, Oslo and Vienna, and together we spent two days in Prague evaluating issues and holding workshops with the management, meeting the Board of Guarantors and representatives of the Czech Ministry of Culture, as well as participating in a press conference and a sponsors’ reception after an important première.

From this year, our website is available in five languages: English, French, German, Italian and Spanish. Members have access by password to databases with confidential information about future productions and finances and to professional tools such as Operabase.

This edition of the newsletter takes a look at services now available to members from the point of view of their participants. Its aim is to increase awareness of what we offer so that those services may be experienced by a growing number of those members who now bring strength to our association.

CONFERENCES

Opera and Media Day 4

EUROPEAN OPERA DAYS

European Opera Days 2014: A successful journey for all 5

CONFERENCES

Looking back on Venice 6-8

Year of Czech Music 9

OPERA EUROPA NEWS

Eva Kleinitz – Opera Europa’s President 10

FORUMS

Opera Europa’s specialist forums 11

Costume, Make-up and Wig Forum 12

Marketing and Communication Forum 13

Human Resources Forum 14

Technical and Production Forum – The Way Ahead ! 15

Business and Finance Forum 16

MEMBER RESOURCES

Opera Research 17

Operabase 17

OPERA EUROPA NEWS

Opera Europa welcomes new members in 2014 19

Dates for your diary 20

Opera and Media Day

Opera Europa partnered the International Artist Managers' Association in organising a preliminary day to IAMA's annual conference in London during April. This Opera and Media Day, which was curated by Kasper Holten and Nicholas Payne, focused on two principal topics: The Next Generation of Artists; and Media and Opera – damnation or blessing? Panellists included Eva Kleinitz, John Berry, Ann Braathen, Brian Dickie and Annilese Miskimmon for the former session; and Kasper Holten, James Conway, Peter Maniura, Matthew Shilvock and Christopher Widauer for the latter.

David Pountney gave the introductory keynote address, from which a short excerpt is printed below.



David Pountney

WNO's current slogan is 'Keep culture live and local' but could 'new media' save the situation – something else you are focussing on at this conference? Rather as with the tragic disappearance of the Malasian airline, it is embarrassing in this day of massive data collection on every topic to have to say 'we don't really know' – but that is the truth.

The most prominent, but least interesting feature of new media are the opera broadcasts in cinemas, and the one thing we do probably know is that no-one apart from the Met is really making money with these, so it seems very unlikely that this will be an avenue of financial rescue for anyone else. Is it, however, actually doing active harm?

Aesthetically, in my view undoubtedly yes. The whole world is being given an entirely outdated, retrograde view of the nature and significance of opera: a lot of fatuous star posturing with love back-up interviews to go with it. I cannot imagine anything less appealing, but I realise not all of you will agree with this view.

Financially, I am much more guarded. We have all been here before: LPs were going to destroy live music, CDs were going to do the same. On the contrary: easy distribution of music made the appetite for live performance greater, not smaller. We don't know that it won't be the same with the cinema broadcasts. The big difference with previous technological advances is the element of geography. The cinema visit offers at least the illusion of a night out, without requiring the logistical effort of, say, hiring a minibus from Malvern to Cardiff. Which makes it all the more regrettable that when Opera America found the money to do an exit survey on attendees at opera relays in American cinemas, the Met apparently blocked their research. What were they afraid we would all find out? I remain quite open to the idea that when we are allowed to see some proper research it will turn out that audiences don't necessarily see the celluloid experience as a substitute rather than as an add-on, and they may even see it as a stimulus towards the live performance.

Actually there is a really interesting avenue for new media and opera, but it is going to cost us all money rather than making it. But right from Monteverdi to Sondheim artists have always been inspired to adapt their message to the medium. The whole range of technical possibilities opened up by mobile devices of all kinds, the internet, social media, and loads of things we haven't even heard of yet are all opportunities to tell fascinating stories through music – which is fundamentally all that opera has ever done. This is the real opportunity and excitement of opera and new media, not looking at a close-up of Renee Fleming's corsage. But unlike the latter, this new art form cannot be marketed for zillions of dollars.

This is the new frontier of art and creativity, but as with many aspects of the net it is not always easy to identify an income stream, and hence it is liable to be a lousy financial prospect. Or is it?

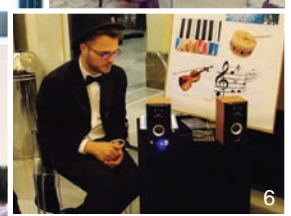
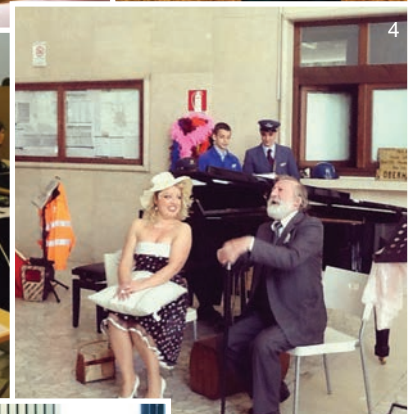
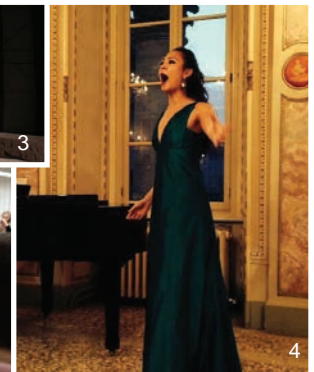


European Opera Days 2014: A successful journey for all

Over 230,000 citizens joined 100 participating houses in 25 countries for the 8th edition of the European Opera Days on 10 and 11 May 2014. Opera, its diversity, rich heritage and contemporary message were celebrated through free activities, out-of-house events, online happenings, rehearsals and performances.

First estimates show that the event's objectives were realised successfully on a European level, reaching out to new audiences and inviting them to join a 'Journey to Opera': over 50% of the participants throughout Europe were opera newcomers. Moreover, almost 40% of these participants were estimated to be under 30 years of age, thanks to the innovative activities proposed by the opera organisations' organising teams.

We hope to ensure that this journey will continue for all and look forward to the next edition of the European Opera Days from 8 to 10 May 2015.



1. La Monnaie-De Munt Brussels | 2. Teatro Real Madrid © Javier del Real | 3. Latvian National Opera | 4. Teatro Sociale di Como - AsLiCo | 5. GöteborgsOperan | 6. Polish National Opera / Teatr Wielki-Opera Narodowa | 7. AGAO, Pamplona | 8. Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe

Looking back on Venice

by Luke O'Shaughnessy

Before the tourists, tradesmen once came from across the world to Venice to deal in things of great beauty. In many ways, this was an ordinary weekend in the history of this illustrious trading post. But for the 288 opera professionals from 29 countries attending, Opera Europa's May conference will remain, we suspect, a rather special moment; the chance to reflect on new working models for opera in the world's ever-evolving economic and technological climates.

True to form, trading was certainly done in Venice, in the sumptuous surroundings of La Fenice, and at the opening night party at the Casinò di Venezia, generously sponsored by trading partners from afar: Emaar Properties of Dubai. The co-productions resulting from deals done in the Doge's city will no doubt shape opera seasons to come, but the group also addressed some common concerns about the global business of opera, in generous, informed and forthright exchanges that characterise the best conferences. And judging by the profile of some of the speakers in the opening sessions – including an engineer, an economist – the approach to new working models for opera was to be anything but ordinary.

The opening panel agreed that May 2014 was a special time to be in Italy. On the eve of European Elections, our hosts Fenice Sovrintendente, Cristiano Chiarot, and Artistic Director, Fortunato Ortombina, urged, respectively, for engagement with the European project and for vigilance at our own ballot boxes, aka, the box office. Neither was shy in talking about the crisis of opera in Italy. Stage director David Pountney, citing recent difficult experiences producing opera in Italy, urged financial probity and transparency as means to rebuilding trust. Speaking also as Artistic Director of Welsh National Opera, Pountney gave a poignant illustration of how, in an environment of trust, WNO has managed to persuade its soloists to take a 5% cut in their fees. He set the conference thinking: is the fee system for top singers in any way justifiable to voting taxpayers? Kasper Holten from Covent Garden expressed delight at being in Italy, a country where opera is integral to the fabric of society. Undiminished by his own politicians in the UK (a breed largely averse to setting foot into the Garden for fear of elitist blemishes to their image), he encouraged the conference to keep faith

and not to lose confidence. The challenges faced by the opera sector – from rethinking fee structures to remodelling media rights – are global and therefore shared. And what is a crisis anyway? Surely, just an opportunity to grasp an issue, and grasp it quickly.

So to the detail of the critical situation in Italy; the Italian speakers shared the same sense of urgency. Eminent hydraulic engineer and businessman, Pier Francesco Pinelli has been plunged into the world of Italian opera with responsibility for running the government's stabilisation programme put in place to address the crisis. Since legislation (Legge 112), eight of Italy's largest houses are now being supported in a process, run by Pinelli until 2017, to help them find long-term economic stability. Walter Vergnano, President of ANFOLS (Associazione Nazionale delle Fondazioni Liriche e Sinfoniche), underlined that, yes, it is about money but opera houses cannot just be judged on their potential to give return on investment (or how many of them would have been replaced with Italian fashion outlets by now). Vergnano stressed that the current critical situation for theatres of all sizes in Italy also requires new management approaches and collaboration.

Bring on the economists. Paola Dubini and a team from Bocconi University in Milan have been mapping the interconnections between Italian opera and opera houses both within Italy and in the rest of the world. Their research highlights a rather centralised picture (like the dense petal structure of a peony), as exemplified by a core group of conductors and stage directors who are in high demand in cities across Italy and the world. The same pattern applies to composers. Nobody will be surprised to learn the central position of certain Italian composers of the past in the repertoire but is it right that a composer of the stature of Sciarrino is principally performed outside Italy? The Bocconi team concluded that the changing availability of resources is likely to reshape this geography (or botany) of opera. With carefully designed policies, there will be opportunities to orient new production strategies.



The Bocconi findings resonated with a panel of General Directors. Carlo Fontana, Chief Executive of Teatro Regio di Parma and President of AGIS (Associazione Generale Italiano dello Spettacolo), echoed the call for a proper legislative and policy framework to enable opera house directors to fulfil their public service duty, or 'civic passion'. Nicola Sani, Artistic Advisor in Bologna, reiterated concerns about the dominance of the few and encouraged colleagues to think about opening up the circle to new non-opera house co-producers. All agreed that, while the circulation of work and the economies of coproduction were vital, it is important to enlarge the tight inner circle for opera to blossom. After all, who would not prefer to see our towns and cities flourish with operas with a distinct locally-fashioned identity rather than have them replaced by identical (and metaphorical) flagship Gucci stores?

A session about opera beyond Europe reminded us just how new horizons are opening up with splendid new opera centres in Japan, Kazakhstan, and, before too long, a beautiful new house in Dubai. Christina Scheppelmann, Director of the Royal Opera House in Muscat, gave a fascinating insight into the challenges of taking new audiences in Oman on a journey of discovery of opera. Yes, there is much that has a home-grown flavour: from programming (Arabic music) to local customs (like dress codes or a royal ramp – royalty only, you understand). Despite her house's title, she is working hard to make this ROH a place that is open and accessible to all Omanis.

Messages were becoming clear. Be exemplary. Build trust. Have vision. Think differently. Think globally. Take your audiences on a journey. The box office, social media and fundraising speakers echoed these sentiments and said, above all, 'be open'.

First, tickets. Not plane tickets but almost. Tim Baker of Baker Richards offered convincing arguments for dynamic pricing or the setting of flexible prices based on market demand. It works for airlines, he said, because everyone knows the deal. With the customary generosity of OE

conferences, Andrew Gambrell, Finance Director of English National Opera, shared his (in fact not so) 'Secret Seats' initiative. 'Buy a £20 unallocated seat in advance and be guaranteed a seat worth £25 or more on the night'. The message is simple and transparent.

The social media people said: 'Be open to exchange'. Mandy Romme, New Media Specialist at the Dutch National Opera, presented the work she is doing with all her colleagues to make each of them advocates for the company in the digital world. Marcus Romer, Artistic Director of Pilot Theatre York, encouraged us to use social media as a means of opening up opera houses and engaging in conversations – as if invited to a sort of modern-day digital dinner party. Social and not anti-social media. Porous opera houses but not controlling ones. The new control involves letting go.

Finally, the fundraisers reminded us of the value of being open to starting a conversation. Frayda Lindemann, interviewed by Marc Scorca, President and CEO of Opera America, gave a fascinating overview of a lifetime of giving which has culminated in Mrs Lindemann's role as Vice President of the Met's Executive Board and major sponsor of its Lindemann Young Artists Programme in New York. And how did it start? A conversation between Mrs Lindemann and a Met volunteer.

Eva Kleinitz, Opera Europa's President, in her summing up reminded us of the central humanist mission of opera houses, implicitly present throughout the conference. She quoted the title of the book by a man whose spirit hovered over Venice this weekend: *Dramaturgy of a Passion*. For *Theatre as Religion of the Human* by Gerard Mortier.

Those tradesmen at the time of the Renaissance would surely have approved. How would they have navigated the uncharted waters of media rights in the digital age?



Parole veneziane

Views from Italy...

We need to bring society into the opera house; we need to bring opera outside the walls.

Pier Francesco Pinelli, Commissario del Governo per le Fondazioni Lirici-Sinfoniche

Cuts in productivity and quality in Italy have led to the questions: Is there a role for opera companies; Are they still necessary?.. Cultural managers should be guided by civic passion. Opera houses should provide a public service, not be a 'box for events'.. Culture is a network, a system, a new economy.

Carlo Fontana, President of AGIS

Turin decided that culture was a strategic objective of the city: to improve the life of the city by means of culture. With culture, you create cohesion, an identity. Opera is an integral part of the city... I don't think laws are a way forward. They are a proof of our weakness. The main problem is not resources or money but lack of governing skills.

Walter Vergnano, President of ANFOLS and Sovrintendente of Teatro Regio Torino

Collaboration should not only be with opera houses, but with independent producers and with new technologies which offer creative energy.

Nicola Sani, Artistic Advisor Teatro Comunale Bologna



Sebastian F. Schwarz and Nicola Sani

The important thing is to share ideas. For the audience, coproduction brings variety. For the theatre, it can offer a different way of work. Other aesthetic approaches are useful. I have come to the conclusion that the right way for us is a combination of stagione and repertoire.

Fortunato Ortombina, Artistic Director La Fenice

...and from abroad

The financial crisis is an opportunity for us... Our task is not just to programme works. It is to give meaning... Our role as directors of institutions is a political one. Politics is about serving society... What has no identity is difficult to communicate, difficult to market... We need urgency in what we do... I am dreaming of a day when our art is asked for by the whole community.

Serge Dorny, General Director Opéra de Lyon



Serge Dorny and Francesca Colombo

We cannot change the world; we are only doing opera! What is it for? What's our goal? Rather than defend institutions, let us focus on key words: creation; originality; identity.

Viktor Schoner, Artistic Administrator Bayerische Staatsoper

The most important aspect in a collaboration is the artistic aim. My most important aim is our identity. Never coproduce for financial reasons!

Roland Geyer, Intendant Theater an der Wien

At the beginning of a collaboration, it is important that you learn each other's capabilities. Engaging with other houses can irritate you, but it also strengthens you.

Bob Brandsen, Production Manager Dutch National Opera

Co-productions are an enriching experience for an opera company, though not always seen as such by production teams.

Ric Green, Technical & Operations Director Opera North

Embrace independents, new ideas from dance field or visual arts.

Jochen Sandig, Company Manager Sasha Waltz & Guests

Everyone in an opera company works in development.

Frayda Lindemann, Chairman OPERA America

Most times, the first production is not the best... It is important that the best new pieces or productions are experienced more widely. The best must be shared. It is not a question of money, but a question of art. It is not a problem of identity.

Bernard Focroulle, General Director Festival d'Aix-en-Provence

Co-productions mean less opportunities and jobs for stage directors: fewer people getting more visibility. When does it become too much?

Kasper Holten, Director of Opera Covent Garden

Marketing & Communications

We have gone from guessing to knowing.

Thomas Wickel, Marketing Director Malmö Opera

Revenue Management will ensure that companies will sell the right product to the right customer at the right time at the right price... Subscription remains so important, we cannot allow it to fade away.

Tim Baker, Director Baker Richards Consulting

One thing is certain: Shift Happens... Social media is not about technology, it is about people. What we have now is digital sealing wax, a personally delivered bespoke message to someone's palm... Choose your platform carefully; work with more pirates; decide what is your message, your purpose; play – doing is how we learn.

Marcus Romer, Artistic Director Pilot Theatre York

Opera needs to change its tone of voice on social media. The main focus is brand awareness... Common sense is the only rule.

Mandy Romme, New Media specialist Dutch National Opera



Mandy Romme and Lore Van de Meutter

Year of Czech Music

by Nicholas Payne

It will be seven years since Opera Europa's highly successful Prague conference in 2007 and time to revisit the Czech Republic.

This country of 10 million inhabitants is home to ten opera companies and birthplace of opera composers Bedřich Smetana (born 1824, died 1884), Antonín Dvořák (died 1904) and Leoš Janáček (born 1854), among others. So, any year ending in 4 provides a convenient anniversary celebration of this rich Czech musical heritage.



Leoš Janáček

Brno, the Moravian capital and the second city of the Czech Republic, was Janáček's home and workplace for most of his life, and its National Theatre celebrates its most famous son with a biennial Festival, whose 4th edition will be launched on 21 November 2014. The gala première is a new production of *The Makropulos Affair* at the Janáček Theatre, and

the programme also includes important guest productions from Graz, Ostrava, Prague and Zagreb as well as choral works and chamber music. The full festival programme may be found at janacek-brno.cz/en/

A preliminary Moravian evening of music and wine is being devised for the historic Mahenovo Theatre at our conference opening on Thursday 20 November. It will follow a round-table of prominent directors with deep experience of Janáček's operas at the restored Reduta Theatre, which will be the main conference venue and which is located at a short walking distance from the conference hotels.

The conference programme will extend to Ostrava, capital of the Moravian-Silesian region and the third largest city of the Czech Republic. Ostrava also boasts a fine opera company, which will be staging a rare production of Smetana's final opera *The Devil's Wall* on Saturday 22 November. Nearby Ostrava is the village of Hukvaldy where Janáček was born and where, in later life, he acquired a country house. A guided visit to Hukvaldy is planned for Sunday 23 November to complete this pilgrimage to the composer's roots.

The national theatres of Brno and Ostrava share many of the preoccupations of our other European members: securing adequate funding from public and private sources; motivating and making productive use of the workforce; reinvigorating the ensemble; securing worthwhile co-production partnerships; planning tools; exploring new

means of reaching the potential opera audience. The conference programme being planned for Friday 21 and Saturday 22 November will examine these issues from an international perspective.

In addition, we plan to use this conference to introduce the European Opera Digital Project and to work towards the launch of an online opera platform. To that end, we intend to engage with music publishers and media partners on the negotiation of rights for online and promotional material.

As ever, an Opera Europa conference offers a safe place where professional colleagues can share problems and solutions, broker deals and take advantage of the unrivalled networking opportunities which our growing association exists to facilitate. We urge you to set aside the time to spend a few days with us in this invigorating land of Czech music.

Full details of the programme will be published in a special 'invitation' edition of the newsletter at the beginning of September, together with good hotel offers in both Brno and Ostrava and flight availabilities in and out of Vienna, Bratislava, Prague and Katowice as well as the two host cities' airports.



Eva Kleinitz – Opera Europa’s President

by Henrietta Bredin

Eva Kleinitz does not come from a family of professional musicians but her parents loved music and shared that love with their small daughter from the age of 8. With the benefit of such an early start, it was perhaps inevitable that she should make opera the focus of her working life. She is now Opera Director and Deputy Intendant of the Stuttgart Opera and, since October 2013, President of Opera Europa.



Eva Kleinitz © Martin Sigmund

‘I am still being rewarded now by what I learned from going to performances when I was young,’ she says. ‘Hannover Opera was an ensemble company, encouraging and developing the careers of many singers who went on to achieve great things. That tradition is still strong in Germany and the quality of performances at medium-sized houses such as Heidelberg, for example, is really high.’

Eva’s career trajectory since studying a potent combination of musicology and vocal studies, developmental psychology and Italian literature at university, has taken her from the Bregenz Festival and the Monnaie to her current post in Stuttgart. She travels extensively to attend performances, listen to singers, discover new talent, assess the work of conductors, directors and designers. This feeds into her work with the opera company and she is enthusiastic about the benefits of being a part of Opera Europa.

‘One thing I like very much is that it’s not just a club for artistic directors. Opera Europa makes it possible for people within different departments of opera companies to meet and exchange ideas and information. Last year, for example, at the Vienna conference, our head of marketing had a really stimulating and useful conversation about flash mobs with colleagues from companies in Munich, Warsaw and Magdeburg, who he’d met during a coffee break. It’s not about competition, about who has the biggest budget or who can hire the starriest singers – it’s about sharing ideas within the profession and renewing and communicating our excitement about opera as an art form. We organise things so that conferences are held in smaller places as well. Last autumn’s conference in Wexford was a wonderful experience. As visitors, we were fascinated to talk about how a festival in such a tiny place has established such a track record of producing unfamiliar and rarely performed operas. And it was rewarding for the team in Wexford to play host to a big international gathering.’

Another initiative spearheaded by Opera Europa is European Opera Days. Once a year, over the weekend closest to 9 May (Europe Day), opera houses all over Europe open up to the public. There are no stern directives – each theatre does it differently. Some offer backstage tours and visits to the making departments. Others offer workshops and debates, open rehearsals or live screenings. In Stuttgart this year, events revolve around a stage rehearsal of Puccini’s *La bohème*, with opportunities to meet the artists afterwards, to talk to them and discover, as Eva puts it, that they ‘also like going jogging, eating sushi and reading thrillers’.

At this year’s spring conference in Venice, topics up for discussion included revenue management, marketing strategies, co-productions and that currently hottest of hot topics, social media. ‘There are so many layers to that issue. Should opera companies have their own Facebook page? Twitter account? Who is dealing with all that? Who is controlling it? Which lines should not be crossed? Rehearsal is about building a performance, making errors in order to improve, taking risks and experimenting. If there’s a problem, nobody wants to see that aired on Facebook the next morning. Singers shouldn’t sit in the rehearsal room Tweeting criticisms of what the director’s doing or of someone else’s performance. I encourage young singers to hear as many other performers as they can rather than spending too much time online reading reviews and damaging comments.’

The particular concerns of the host country for Opera Europa conferences are put at the top of the agenda. Italy may have its political and financial problems but it is the country where opera was born. For Eva it was an opportunity to address issues faced by Italian opera companies that are more than likely to be shared by companies elsewhere in Europe. ‘We talk about the future of opera and the shared challenge of how to attract new audiences. For instance, there are opera companies addressing this by presenting ‘dress-down’ performances; telling people that they can wear what they like to come to the opera, and that they shouldn’t be put off by the formality and grandeur of 19th-century theatres. Another way is quite the opposite and to say why not dress up for the opera? Wear your most outrageous and flamboyant outfit, make it a big occasion. Either way, the main message is, everyone’s welcome.’

Opera Europa's specialist forums

by Audrey Jungers

When Nicholas Payne took over Opera Europa in spring 2003, he considered it a mission not only to grow the membership, but also to grow the benefit of joining such a network of opera professionals beyond the general director's office, for the various departments of the opera company.

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. This is the list of currently active forums. The following pages include a focus on a few of them.

Artistic

This group, which includes General and Artistic Directors, Artistic Administrators and Production Directors, meets mainly at Opera Europa's spring and autumn conferences. They may discuss various issues regarding planning, programming, young artists' programmes... A recurrent feature at conferences is the 'co-productions marketplace', a session which encourages discussions on upcoming projects based on Opera Europa's 'future new productions' database, held in a restricted access part of the website. For more information, please contact Gerald@opera-europa.org.

Business & Finance

Read more about this on page 16

Costumes, make-up & wigs

Read more about this on page 12

Executive assistants

Executive assistants have a difficult and important role in their opera company. As a right hand to the general director, they have to comprehend a series of realities and deal with delicate situations, yet have very few people to share their experience with. The Executive assistants forum meets every other year at a main Opera Europa conference, giving them a better understanding of the European landscape in which their opera company operates and allowing them to make precious contacts with other professionals in similar positions. They communicate among themselves through assistants@group.opera-europa.org. For more information, please contact Audrey@opera-europa.org.

Fundraising & Friends

Sponsorship – whether through individuals or corporations – is an increasingly important part of the earned income of an opera company. The forum comes together, either at main conferences or at separate meetings, to discuss different strategies to raise funds and share best practice. They communicate through fundraising@group.opera-europa.org. For more information, please contact Audrey@opera-europa.org.

Green team

More and more opera companies take ecological aspects into consideration: whether it's by recycling products used in their workshops, encouraging low-emission transportation means for their employees or trying to reduce waste, good practice is emerging throughout Europe. This group is composed of varied backgrounds, depending on who takes on the ecological responsibility in the opera company – financial, technical, general management... Together, they presented a Green charter at Opera Europa's conference in Moscow, signed by many opera directors present. The group has met during conferences or separate meetings. They communicate through green@group.opera-europa.org. For more information, please contact Gerald@opera-europa.org.

Human Resources

Read more about this on page 14

Marketing & Communications

Read more about this on page 13

Technical & Production

Read more about this on page 15

In the coming pages, you will read more in detail about the various forums' activities told by members of the forums themselves.

Costume, Make-up and Wig Forum

by Fay Fullerton, Head of Costume – Royal Opera House Covent Garden

Faced with an ever more challenging economic environment our cultural organisations have to look for new and innovative ways to reduce costs and increase audience numbers.

The Costume and Wig Forum has been created to bring together the amazing pool of world class resources that our organisations offer into one united group to share knowledge, experiences and ideas and to break down barriers to enable us all to grow, thrive and support each other. The forum already has representation from many of the major European Opera/Ballet houses and is happy to welcome new membership from other houses around the world.

The quarterly forums are held in different member houses offering the opportunity for networking and touring other teams environments, in order to network, share knowledge and skills, discuss ideas and find inspiration and creative solutions to common problems.

The forum tackles a number of topics, including:

- Resolving problems around the maintenance and sharing of costume data.
- Standardisation of co-production contracts, management and fees.
- Machinery and technology versus handcraft - exploring the use of computerized pattern making, 3D scanning and cutting systems and how they may help or hinder our craft.
- The opportunity to share skills.
For example, holding Wig and Make-up workshops: looking at options for buying hair, reducing cost, demonstrations etc.
- The possibility of Supplier information exchange, with the aim of building a European group of reliable suppliers of stock accessories.
- Stock systems, barcode labelling, with special reference to the tracking of costumes for co-production and hires.
- Improved liaison between Costume and Make-up on practicalities.

For example, from the very first forum meeting there emerged a clear and overriding set of issues associated with maintaining and sharing basic costume information. Many houses have information distributed over a wide range of teams, media and systems and in diverse formats. This makes it difficult and time consuming to bring all the information together on a production and to share this in a coherent and effective way, not only internally but externally. In addition much of the information is kept on old, slow and out of date technology, and being mainly image based, drives up the need for large amounts of storage capacity for archive and retrieval.

With co-productions being increasingly seen as a way to share and bring down the costs on a show, the need for more effective communication and maintenance of this information has become the number one issue for all the houses.

To that end the forum's first goal has been to commission the production of a new centralised database solution. This has enabled:

- The standardisation of the costume Bible.
- Centralisation of information including costume breakdown and construction.
- Centralisation of measurements.
- Information on suppliers and makers.

By sharing in the buying and creation of the database the houses have reduced the costs of commissioning and installation. As the number of houses using the database increases, the knowledge that can be shared quickly and efficiency also increases both within the production teams and across the houses. Using the latest cloud technology, accessed via the web, allows for easy and efficient access and the storage of large amounts of data without prohibitive costs on storage or installation.

This database is already being used by:

- Opéra de Lyon,
 - Festival d'Aix en Provence, and
 - Nationale Opera en Ballet, Amsterdam;
- Has been commissioned by:
- The Royal Opera House, London (for both Opera and Ballet);
- And is also in advanced stages of discussion with:
- Opéra de Paris,
 - Opéra de Lille,
 - Den Norske Opera, and
 - La Monnaie-De Munt, Brussels.

By joining this forum your house will have an opportunity to be part of a growing community defining the way forward, finding common solutions to problems to reduce cost and time, and ensuring the future of our craft.

The next forum meeting will be in Rome from 12-14 June. The meeting includes sessions on topics listed above and a joint workshop session on Creative Communication.

Marketing and Communications Forum

by Susanne Plaehn , Consultant in Marketing – Teatro Comunale di Bologna

Being part of Opera Europa's M&C steering committee has given me so much in terms of knowledge, shared experience and friendship which in turn benefits my home Opera House.

Last year the forum was held in Dublin, where we were charmed by the young google team, from the heart of the Google headquarters; inspired by professionals from a parallel arts form; and impressed by a customer care program presented to us by the GM of a leading European series A football club. We met local colleagues, saw their theatres and still had time to feel the spirit and energy of the Irish pubs during an evening hard to forget.

The Dublin team were there to share, learn and understand the various usages: IT-systems; marketing tools; ways of treating customers; and how to build and maintain a long lasting relationship with your stakeholders, both audiences and donors. Through which tool and method can your Opera House be cultivated, in order to let your next 'big ideas' be heard, to reinforce the power and potential of the opera? How do you make the vision come alive, so that the Opera House, the audience, the donors and the policy-makers meet?

The in-depth discussion and shared experience of CRM (customer relationship management system), from a broad range of views and fields, gave us a fantastic opportunity to know this method and how CRM can help in planning the customer care and manage BAU (business as usual) in balance with your long term strategic planning.

We from the M&C forum help 'get the inside out and the outside in' by using more fascinating marketing tools and methods of communication , so you can deliver your message and story the best way and know if the latest up-to-date tools work. MC forums steer your capability to touch the heart and enter the mind of your audience, bringing opera alive long before it does in music.

Smart, intelligent, charming and competent professionals are taking part in the MC steering committee, so you may benefit from the findings and lesson learned. A visit to one of the MC forums enables you to move forward and avoid to waste time and money reinventing and repeating failures or marketing 'ideas' that did not work as expected. Our task is to share, invent and discuss experiences we use on a daily basis. The M&C steering committee is a forum for auditing and monitoring practices and the use of marketing and communication.

Be welcome at the M&C forums and experience the best place to be inspired by open-minded, creative and brilliant ideas, so that your Opera House may tell the best story, and find the best way through the best media.

Martin Luther King did not say: 'I have a plan...' He said: 'I have a dream...' The MC forum facilitates how to make plans, programs and seasons to 'sound' like dreams even before the music and singing start. It stirs up people's motivation to be part of your Opera House in all its proposals and activities.

The MC forum is a facilitator to make your season program and your next big idea go out to the people in your community and come live. The learning and inspiration from the MC forums will enable you, through concrete tools and suggestions, to boost your audience. Shared information, knowledge and research help your Opera House to sell your tickets better and tell your vision in more ways, so you get the 'dream and emotion' out to a broad audience which encompasses old, middle and young aged people to become your preferred audience.

To take part in an MC forum, you just need to 'stay foolish, stay hungry' and join us!

For the next forum meeting we have been invited to Bologna. This will take place in the first half of October. With many topics being mentioned in Venice, the programme promises to be a two day meeting not to be missed!



Some members of the forum at our spring conference in Venice

Human Resources Forum

by Hanna Fontana, HR Manager – Finnish National Opera

Established in 2010, our forum focusing on human resources issues has convened once or twice per year ever since. The meetings are held as either part of the major Opera Europa conference or separately, or in the form of joint meetings with some other forum.

So far, we have met in cities like Helsinki, Warsaw, Lyon, Stockholm, Seville and Düsseldorf. The HR Forum brings together the HR professionals of European opera houses to address issues that are of interest and use to all the parties.

Although the participating opera houses are different in terms of size and operations, it is ultimately a question of people management: how to build a workplace community that best contributes to the attainment of high artistic standards in opera and ballet.

The HR Forum deals with a wide range of personnel issues, such as human resources development and training; managerial training; working ability and occupational healthcare; ageing; staff and workplace atmosphere surveys; working hours; multitasking; flexible use of manpower; recording agreements; collective labour agreements; and the impact of financial challenges on the various forms of activities that opera houses are engaged in. Usually, there are one or two keynote presentations at each meeting, after which the participants discuss and share best practices. At present, the forum has 15 to 20 active members across Europe.

Working time in different Opera houses

Organizing and managing working time in different opera houses and departments is always an important and interesting issue.

Our goal is to find new and flexible reform models, in order to make the work more efficient and flexible. In HR point of view, the question might be: how could we organize our working time in different departments, in order to work in an optimal level, quality, efficiency and optimal amount of people, taking in consideration the restricted financial situation in different opera houses and the general conditions in an art institute.

In our Düsseldorf meeting in December 2013, we had two key-note presentations: Tomi Haapman from Finnish National Opera presented the general ideas of working time legislation and some renovations in the collective agreement negotiations last autumn. After that, Steven Foulston from Royal Opera House presented their working time model of the technical departments.

In order to understand more about the conditions in the different houses, we decided to make a comparison of the working time. This helps us all to create new ideas and learn from the best practices in other houses.

The HR Forum not only serves as a useful source of information, but has also become an important peer group for HR professionals. I for one have no colleagues in Finland because the National Opera is the only opera in this country. That's why it's delightful, stimulating and extremely interesting to see colleagues from other opera houses, knowing for once that the people around you know what this job is all about! It's also been a great pleasure to be able to make friends across Europe.

Come and join the HR Forum!

If you are an HR professional or hold an administrative or managerial position, the forum has a lot of interesting topics to offer. We share experiences and best practices – issues that are highly beneficial to us all.

The HR Forum will continue to convene once or twice per year. The 2014 spring meeting is taking place in Rome on the 13 and 14 June, where dates will be set for the autumn meeting at Den Norske Opera in Oslo.



Forum meeting in Düsseldorf last November

Technical and Production Forum – The Way Ahead !

by Bob Brandson, Production manager – Dutch National Opera and Ballet

The Technical and Production Forum of Opera Europa is one of the specialist forums from the Opera Europa family. The members are technical directors, their assistants and production managers of our member opera houses, opera companies, opera theatres or any other organisation that are affiliated to opera.

Started in 2004 in Copenhagen, the TP forum has evolved as a warm community of technical directors and production managers where we are amongst friends and close colleagues. The ability for technical directors and production managers to discuss various and difficult topics amongst peers is a rare opportunity that is highly valued by TP members. Freed from daily stress in positive working sessions, experiences are shared, questions are answered and views are discussed. Though every opera house or company has its own characteristics, new insights are given to broaden the horizons of our members by discussing a wide range of topics that affect all in our business. Targeting on these issues, there is the opportunity to zoom in on solutions found by colleagues and use them in part or as a whole when members return to their companies.

The Forum has a long list of topics discussed linked to the themes of our conferences and I would like to share some of them with you.

At the conference of Monte Carlo of 2005, two members of the TP forum wrote a cohesive 2 page document which was called 'Guidelines to a better Co-production' where guidelines were described to improve co-production contracts. This document proved not only valuable to the TP forum, but caught the interest of general managers and artistic administrators and is used even today. You can find it on the website of Opera Europa.

Management issues are returning topics in our meetings. How to change the culture of management in your opera house and technical departments, what changes have been made in management policies, how did you do it and, more important, is it working for you ? How is your production process to make new productions and what tools do you use for efficiency and cost control? By discussing these questions, members are given more insight in possibilities and chances used by others that can help making change.

Labour topics such as multi skilled employees, technical training programs, exchange of employees, planning programs to support workflow on stage and off, are items that return on the agenda for we can learn from each other and use members of the forum as consultants for those who seek advice.

On the important issue of health and safety instructions as well as risk assessments, a dynamic exchange of tools formats has been presented and shared. It has given the TP forum as well as the Human Resources Forum clear instruments that can be adapted to every country's specific laws and regulations to manage working processes in the area of health and safety.

The renovation of older theatres to current demand for audiences as well as technical requirements has been a big project done by many members. The presentations of these renovations as well as newly formed Green Forum which was formed in Lyon in 2012 is derived from gaining concern from opera companies to include to work in opera houses in larger issues such as sustainability and ecological conscience.

The Technical and Production Forum is a great network for technical directors and production managers to share their work, to get to know each other and each other's work methods. Members appreciate the use of the network to simply pick up the phone to call each other and resolve conflicts through professional and personal friendships. Our members return after the conferences to their workplace with new energy and vigour to face the tasks ahead. Truly The Way Ahead !



Bob Brandson © Marjolijn van Dijk

Of Business & Finance, HR and data-gathering

by Mathieu Jouvin, Directeur administratif et financier – Opéra de Lyon

Opera Europa's conferences and forums have added value to my work, as it has always seemed important to me to know other institutions to better understand the organisation of which I am in charge. Opera Europa is a tangible manifestation of the benefit each of us has from the European construction: each country has its own traditions and working customs, and understanding them allows us to challenge ourselves in order to grow.

With regard to my day-to-day areas of responsibility (finances, HR, management and governance), the existence of such specialised forums in Business & Finance and Human Resources has allowed me to deepen my reflexion on these topics, thanks to the openness and willingness to share among participants.

The relevance of the work done within Opera Europa resides mostly in the free exchange of competence and experiences in these areas contributing to true progress. For various reasons, most of our theatres allocate limited means to human resources and organisational management, in order to maximise the means awarded to the artistic project of the company. It could also be due to a lack of knowledge or trust in these topics. Too many people believe that the only concerns of our theatres are artistic and technical matters, but that requires nuances. As in many other sectors, questions of management and human resources have a central place as they have the potential to better production capacity. National traditions are very different on these issues, and Scandinavia can be considered a pioneer. For instance, many of our theatres now face the aging of staff, which can have artistic and technical consequences. In the same way, hiring policies is an important asset. Internal communication is a useful tool within all organisations, and especially for those depending on human interactions such as opera companies. These subjects can be best tackled when there is a competent HR department in the theatre.

In the same way, some consider that financial matters should be pushed aside as they are often seen as a resistance to the making of projects. But a good budget management allows a theatre to maximise its potential to put on shows. Opera Europa and its specialist working groups offer a wonderful opportunity to structure and increase our shared know-how in order for our organisations to grow their activity for the public.

For that reason, having access to precise data on our different theatres seems to help each one of us to be more objective towards our own situation. Opera Europa has carried out important work over the last few years, and we are working toward creating an opera company identity card combining HR data (organisational chart, staff, age of staff etc), with financial and marketing data. This tool will give a good understanding of each company's situation. Expect to receive a unique questionnaire gathering the various areas into one document. We understand it can be a challenge for theatres to fill in this questionnaire, but I know that our work will contribute to making each theatre's work easier, so it's a profitable investment in time.

When preparing this initiative, some participants argued that each theatre had its specific organisation according to its history, culture, architecture, and that this sort of centralising of information was useless. It is undeniable that easy comparisons can be dangerous. But please remember that this endeavour doesn't aim to create a common model to be adopted by all, but to allow management to call upon resources enabling them to deepen their understanding of similar or aspirational organisations. In a time when financial resources are under pressure, to work with the economic and organisational dimensions of one's theatre is making them an asset rather than an obstacle.

The idea is not to manage a theatre only on a financial and organisational basis, but to gain a good understanding of these topics in order to better serve the artistic and cultural ambitions of our theatres.



Paola Dubini and Ilaria Morganti from Bocconi University ASK project, Milan

Opera Research

by Paola Dubini – Bocconi University ASK project, Milan

What type of field is opera at the global level? And what is the role of Italian opera in it? These are the questions we are asking ourselves at ASK – Bocconi in the paper we presented at Opera Europa conference in Venice.

The paper is part of a broader research program examining the relationships between artistic, and economic performances at theatre level and the impact of policies. We are tracking 808 theatres and festivals in 71 countries for the time interval 2011-2014; moreover, we are looking at 84 theatres and festivals in Italy for the time interval 2006 – 2014. We wish to complete our Italian dataset dating back to 2001.

The global opera field is tightly interconnected, with a core number of countries dominating the scene in terms of number of theatres, productions, number and variety of titles performed. Yet, as in a peonia, clusters of countries act as brokers between the more established directors and conductors and new players. Northern European countries and Japan are becoming central in the scene, while Eastern European and a selected number of Asian and Latin American countries are gradually converging into the densely interconnected global field. Opera is a vibrant growing, and globalising field and is a dense network. The number of new opera houses is remarkable. 90 new theatres in our sample have been built and 148 renovated since 1991 worldwide, with an average seating capacity of over 1.000 seats each.

In this field, Italy has undoubtedly a critical position. Opera was born in Italy, Italy is rich of theatres and productions; Italian composers are very popular and most productions of Italian theatres refer to Italian composers; the top list of most performed composers and titles shows the popularity of a handful of Italian titles and composers, at the expense of a rich variety of Italian artists.

The network of Italian theatres is very local, with a significant difference among theatres based on governance structure; only a few Italian lyric foundations show a systematic collaboration with international players. Stable local networks exist as far as directors and producers are involved, mostly characterised by geographical proximity.

This structural characteristic of Italian theatres could open up opportunities to exploit the globalising market; in times of crisis, this requires a careful assessment of trajectories of production and specificity enhancement.

This is a growing market...Italy is the second producer of opera worldwide. It is a massive opportunity... Opera is an expression of 'made in Italy'; but not all Italian theatres are embedded in the global network.

Operabase, at your service!

by Mike Gibb

Operabase provides services that can be used by the artistic departments and by the marketing departments of an opera house. A full subscription to Opera Europa includes automatic access to all of the benefits of Operabase Pro.

In past newsletters and conferences, we have talked a lot about what Operabase Pro offers the artistic departments of an opera company – casting tools, artist information, management contacts, production rentals database, performance archive – but we also offer important advantages to marketing departments.

Complementary marketing

Your company has good connections with your existing and local audiences– through Friends, social media, local advertising, database of previous ticket purchasers, but how do you reach new audiences from other places? someone who may be interested in something in your season, or a singer or director you are using?

Operabase provides the global listings of works and artists, and these are used by opera fans for planning single trips and longer tours. In one survey of our users, we found that 68% of the 500+ who replied, had travelled abroad in the previous 18 months to attend opera performances.

This mobility of opera-goers means that your potential audience is both large, and dispersed.

We have made it very simple to bring people who find performances in our pages onto your website.

Every time we reference one of your productions, you can include a block of information alongside it: provide pictures, text links directly to your web page for this production, direct links from our page to your ticket sales. All of this is under your direct control, and with immediate updates (allowing you make special offers) to our large, mobile and operaphile audience.

Joined up thinking

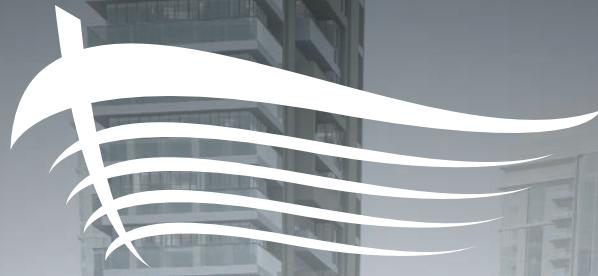
In a street full of booksellers, you sell more books. Kasper Holten

Operabase brings together the lyric offer from multiple opera companies, making the destination or the region more attractive – this is marketing above the level of a single house, through maps, the 'what's on near here' feature, city-wide listings. The information is presented in a uniform way, and in 27 languages.

Opera is in competition with other art forms, and the barriers to booking tickets need to be as low as possible.

Adding direct links to your webpages and your ticket sales, and links to hotels (coming in the autumn), and we have made a good start to an integrated and seamless whole where both the company and the audience benefit.





DUBAI OPERA



the
opera
district

DOWNTOWN DUBAI



emaar.com

Opera Europa welcomes new members in 2014

by Nicholas Payne

The German-speaking nations are the most productive opera-makers in the world, so we are especially happy to welcome nine important new recruits to our association from Austria, Germany and Switzerland, plus six from elsewhere in Europe and one from Asia: an aggregate of 16 new member theatres so far in 2014.

Theater an der Wien, flagship of the City of Vienna, offers a complementary stagione programme to the state-supported repertoire seasons at the Staatsoper and Volksoper. Imaginatively directed by Roland Geyer, it offers a stimulating contrast within the unrivalled choice available in the capital of Austria.

Across the border in Switzerland, we are joined by two new companies from either side of the country. **Theater Basel** has acquired a formidable reputation recently, under the direction of Georges Delnon and formerly Dietmar Schwarz, for its innovative stagings, including winning Opernwelt's Opera House of the Year in 2009 and 2010. Towards the east, **Theater St Gallen** offers its citizens a rich mix of opera, led by Peter Heilker, operetta, musicals, dance and concerts culminating in a June festival.

We were pleased that Roland Geyer and his Director of Artistic Administration Sebastian Schwarz, Peter Heilker and Laura Berman, designated Opera Director in Basel, were all able to join our conference in Venice.

Moving north to Germany, six new member theatres strengthen our association in 2014. **Berlin's Deutsche Oper** and **Oper Köln** belong to the élite group of leading theatres which form the Opernkonzert. The former is now led by Dietmar Schwarz and the latter by Birgit Meyer, both of whom will bring valuable insights to our work, and Frau Meyer already moderated a panel session in Venice. **Theater Dortmund** is an important Fünf-Sparten-Haus in the Ruhrgebiet, offering some 750 performances to 250,000 people each season, with its Opera under the direction of Jens-Daniel Herzog. **Theater Augsburg**, in Bavaria's historic free imperial city, is a Vier-Sparten-Haus led by Juliane Votteler with Georg Heckel, formerly of Darmstadt, as its new head of Musiktheater.

Our most recent recruits are **Staatstheater Braunschweig**, whose new Artistic Director Philipp Kochheim also participated in Venice; and **Aalto Musiktheater Essen**, another important and multi-faceted ensemble from the Ruhrgebiet, with its magnificent orchestra and concert hall alongside its opera house, all under the new direction this season of Hein Mulders, formerly of Netherlands Opera. We look forward to adding further to our list of German theatres next season, but these six form an impressive bridgehead.

Happily anticipating next autumn's conference, we are pleased to welcome a fourth Czech member with the accession of the **J K Tyl Theatre in Plzeň**, whose International Project Manager Luděk Golat, warmly remembered from his time in Ostrava, joined us in Venice. Plzeň, the fourth largest city of the Czech Republic, will celebrate 2015 as European Cultural Capital.

The countries bordering the Mediterranean contribute five new members this year. The Canarian capital Santa Cruz de Tenerife supplies Spain's and Europe's southernmost candidate with the magnificent 10-year-old **Auditorio de Tenerife** designed by Santiago Calatrava Valls and led by General Director José Luis Rivero Plasencia. From Italy, we are thrilled to welcome **Pesaro's Rossini Opera Festival**, one of Europe's most distinctive festivals under its sovrintendente Gianfranco Mariotti.

The relatively under-explored territories of south-eastern Europe this year bring us the recently renovated **Slovene National Theatre Ljubljana** under General Director Peter Sotošek Štular and new Artistic Director of Opera Rocco, both of whom were able to make the relatively short trip to Venice. **Cluj-Napoca's Opera Nationala Romana**, under General Director Marius Vlad Budoiu, doubles our Romanian contingent. Finally, there must be a big welcome back to **Greek National Opera** and its ambitious plans for a new theatre in Athens.

A welcome addition to our Asian affiliate members is the **Beijing Music Festival**, brainchild of eminent conductor Yu Long and represented in Venice by his Artistic Coordinator Francesco Stochino Weiss.

The theatres and festivals described above demonstrate the inclusive nature of our association and its openness to a broad range of companies across diverse nations and even continents. We also encourage smaller companies without a theatre base to take advantage of our reduced Associate Member rates; and even find a place for a limited number of Affiliate Members which are not opera companies but whose field of activity complements ours and offers mutual benefits.

If you wish to pursue any of these options, we are always ready to talk with you.

Save these dates – check www.opera-europa.org for full details

12-14 June 2014

Costume, Make-up and Wig forum and Human Resources forum meetings at Teatro dell'Opera in Rome
Full programme available from Opera Europa office and website

20-23 June 2014

OPERA America conference hosted by San Francisco Opera
Audiences REIMAGINED

30 June 2014

Deadline for applications for BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition, open to singers at the start of their careers and whose finals take place 14 - 21 June 2015. DVD applications to be followed by worldwide auditions of the shortlisted candidates in the autumn. Rules and application form to be found on www.opera-europa.org/cardiff2015

14 July 2014

Deadline for applications for Fedora Prizes for Opera and Ballet. Rules and application form to be found on <http://www.fedora-prizes.com/>

25-30 August 2014

Opera Management Course in Como
Details of programme, speakers and group leaders available from Opera Europa office and website

October 2014 - date to be confirmed

Marketing & Communication forum meeting at Teatro Comunale di Bologna.
More information to be found on our website very soon.

16-18 October 2014

RESEO conference in Glasgow
All aboard

20-23 November 2014

**Opera Europa autumn conference at 4th International Janáček Festival at National Theatre Brno
and at National Moravian-Silesian Theatre Ostrava, Czech Republic**
Year of Czech Music / Introduction to European Opera Digital Project

27-28 November 2014

Pearle conference in Lyon

