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OPERA America Announces 19 Participants for 2023 Leadership Intensive

June 27, 2023 (New York) — **OPERA America** is pleased to announce the 19 participants selected for the 2023 **Leadership Intensive**. The program exemplifies the organization's long-standing commitment to identify and support the professional growth of leaders who will help move opera forward for years to come.

This 2023 class is the largest cohort in the program's history. It includes 13 participants selected by OPERA America and two participants selected by each of OPERA America's partner organizations: the Association for Opera in Canada, Opera Europa, and Ópera Latinoamérica.

The 2023 Leadership Intensive participants are:

American Participants

- **Kathleen Dean**, Strategy and Governance Manager, Washington National Opera (Washington, D.C.)
- **Daniel Fung**, Creative Development Program Director, Minnesota Opera (Minneapolis, MN)
- **Alyssa Greenberg**, Audience Engagement Manager, Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (Chicago, IL)
- **Michael Hoke**, Associate Director of Development, Arizona Opera (Phoenix, AZ)
- **Pamela Jones**, Artist Development Manager, OPERA America (New York, NY)
- **Stefanos Koroneos**, General and Artistic Director, Teatro Grattacielo (New York, NY)
- **Justin Lucero**, Artistic Director, El Paso Opera; Assistant Professor of Directing, Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama (El Paso, TX)
- **Alexis Peart**, Executive Director, Boston Opera Collaborative (Jamaica Plain, MA)
- **Jamelah Rimawi**, Director of Programs and Events, OPERA America (New York, NY)
- **Maria Sensi Sellner**, Artistic and General Director, Resonance Works (Pittsburgh, PA)
- **Jamie Sharp**, Communications and Publications Manager, Grantmakers in the Arts (Chicago, IL)
- **Andrea Tichy**, Director of Marketing and Communications, Co-Director of External Affairs, Portland Opera (Portland, OR)
- **Brooke Tolley**, General Director, Opera Roanoke (Roanoke, VA)

International Participants

- **Ricardo Appezato**, Artistic Manager, Santa Marcelina Cultura (São Paulo, BR)
- **Guillaume L'Hôpital**, Artistic Producer/Young Artists Program Manager, Théâtre royal de la Monnaie (Brussels, BE)
- **Julie McIsaac**, Stage Director, Dramaturg, Podcast Host, Curator, Consultant (Victoria, BC)
- **Francisca Peró Gubler**, Executive Director, Biobío Theater (Bío Bío, CL)
- **Kate Rooney**, Planning Manager, Royal Opera House, Convent Garden (London, UK)
- **Jennifer Szeto**, Director, Atelier Lyrique (Montreal, QC)

(See below for additional information about the participants.)

The cohort was chosen from a record-breaking pool of applicants through a competitive selection process. Candidates were selected through three rounds of interviews in which they were evaluated based on their career achievements and goals, demonstrated leadership, and contributions to the field.

“Now in its ninth season, the Leadership Intensive has a proven track record as a catalyst for the development of a new generation of opera leaders,” stated Marc. A. Scorca, president/CEO of OPERA America. “Alumni of the program hold leadership positions internationally in the opera field and the arts more generally.”

The Leadership Intensive offers participants an extended professional development experience that will bolster their leadership capacity and advance their careers. Participants will gather at OPERA America's National Opera Center from August 16 to 23, 2023, for a week of seminars and trainings that will address strategic issues, build essential skills, and foster international professional connections.

Participants will take part in additional professional development activities over the course of the next year, including regular group coaching sessions, webinars with field executives, and roundtable discussions at OPERA America's annual conference in Los Angeles in June 2024.

For more information about the Leadership Intensive, including a list of the program's alumni, visit operaamerica.org/Leadership.

ABOUT THE RECIPIENTS ([Publicity Photos](#))

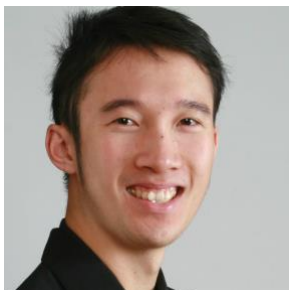
American Participants



Kathleen Dean

Strategy and Governance Manager, Washington National Opera

Kathleen Dean is the strategy and governance manager at Washington National Opera at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. In this capacity, she oversees the governance functions of WNO's board and manages various strategic initiatives throughout the organization. With a background in development and program management for arts nonprofits, Dean has held positions in Washington, D.C., St. Louis, Missouri, and Pittsburgh. She holds a bachelor's degree in music (music education and music theory) from Ohio University and a Master of Arts Management from Carnegie Mellon University. She resides in northern Virginia with her husband, who is a trombonist with the Air Force Band, and their two children.



Daniel Fung

Creative Development Program Director, Minnesota Opera

Daniel Fung is a pianist, collaborative artist, educator, and administrator. He recently became the creative development program director at Minnesota Opera, where he has led collaborations with local Hmong students for the world premiere of *The Song Poet*. An alumnus of the University of Calgary and The Juilliard School, Fung has worked as a score consultant for *The Met: Live*

in HD team and served on the faculties of UW-Madison, University of Nevada, Reno, and UMKC Conservatory. He has performed as a soloist with renowned symphony orchestras and collaborated with members of the New York Philharmonic and Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. Beyond work, he enjoys exploring new culinary experiences and traveling the world.



Alyssa Greenberg

Audience Engagement Manager, Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association

Dr. Alyssa Greenberg is an academic, facilitator, and organizer specializing in community engagement and racial justice in the arts. In March 2023, she was appointed audience engagement manager at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association. Previously, as community engagement director at Toledo Opera, Greenberg managed adult public programming, led strategic initiatives for racial justice, and expanded community partnerships. During COVID-19, she led Toledo Opera's institutional pivot from mainstage opera to outdoor and virtual programming and raised over \$130,000 to support community engagement. Greenberg is also a founding member of the Museum Workers Speak collective, which has raised substantial funds for museum workers affected by the pandemic. Greenberg holds degrees from Oberlin College, Bard Graduate Center, and the University of Illinois at Chicago.



Michael Hoke

Associate Director of Development, Arizona Opera

Michael Hoke joined Arizona Opera in October 2022 as the associate director of development. In this role, he plays a key part in leading strategic initiatives for the fundraising team, with a primary focus on expanding and stewarding their mid-level donor program. Prior to joining Arizona Opera, Hoke served on the development team at San Francisco Opera and worked as the patron services manager at Madison Opera. A native of Richmond, Virginia, Hoke holds a B.A. in music and Russian language from Dickinson College and an M.M. in vocal performance from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.



Pamela Jones

Artist Development Manager, OPERA America

Pamela Jones is the artist development manager at OPERA America, where she facilitates discussions about the opera field among voice teachers, coaches, artist managers, arts administrators, and singers. Jones works with the Opera Teaching Artist and the Performer Development networks, the IDEA Opera Resident Artists, and the HBCU Opera and Musical Theater Collective. She helps to plan programs to educate the field and create greater access and representation for all artists.



Stefanos Koroneos

General and Artistic Director, Teatro Grattacielo

Stefanos Koroneos was named artistic and general director of Teatro Grattacielo in 2020 after having served as artistic administrator since 2019. During Koroneos' tenure, Teatro Grattacielo has expanded its programming to a year-long schedule in New York City with co-productions in several European locations. Koroneos previously enjoyed a stage career, appearing with the Greek National Opera, New York City Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Gotham Chamber Opera, Teatro alla Scala, Rossini Opera Festival, Teatro Regio di Parma, Teatro del Giglio di Lucca, the Bolshoi Theater, Athens Concert Hall, Den Nye Opera, Staatstheater Freiburg, Theater Osnabrück, and Verdi Festival in Bussetto. He is fluent in Italian, German, English, Spanish, and Greek.



Justin Lucero

Artistic Director, El Paso Opera

Assistant Professor of Directing, Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama

Justin Lucero is the artistic director of El Paso Opera and a professor at Carnegie Mellon University's School of Drama, where he serves as associate chair for the John Wells Directing Program. A stage director with national credits, Lucero was named to the 2022–2023 Rising Leaders of Color program by Theatre Communications Group (TCG) and the 2021–2022 BIPOC Leadership Circle by artEquity in partnership with the David Geffen School of Drama at Yale. He is an inaugural member of TCG's Next Generation Taskforce, contributing to its governance ecology. With an M.F.A. in directing with distinction from London's East 15 Acting School, Justin works at the intersection of the performing arts, education, and community building — aiming to normalize the voices of the underrepresented and historically marginalized.



Alexis Peart

Executive Director, Boston Opera Collaborative

Alexis Peart is a mezzo-soprano, teaching artist, and arts administrator who advocates for diversity in opera and accessibility in arts education. Peart is a 2023 resident at the Harvard American Repertory Theater's Arts and Culture Organization Management Fellowship. She has worked with several institutions, including Boston University, Sigma Alpha Iota, Thompson Street Opera Company, and Washington Concert Opera, on their DEIA practices and community engagement. Peart is also a teaching artist with Castle of Our Skins and the executive director of Boston Opera Collaborative, where she supports emerging artists and amplifies diverse voices in the Boston arts scene. Peart holds degrees in vocal performance (B.M., M.M.) and music education (B.M.), and she is currently completing an M.S. in arts administration at Boston University.



Jamelah Rimawi

Director of Programs and Events, OPERA America

Jamelah Rimawi was born and raised in New York City to Black and Palestinian parents. In 1997, Rimawi's father bought an Andrew Lloyd Webber compilation record and the household was never the same. From an early age, Rimawi had an infectious love and appreciation of all kinds of performance art. As a management associate with the New York International Fringe Festival, Rimawi brought a different outlook to the entire festival, from selecting plays to ensuring that performances were planned and orchestrated without a hitch. Rimawi is an accomplished and dedicated event planner who has both a strategic vision and a willingness to consider even the smallest detail. Rimawi is currently the director of programs and events at OPERA America. Rimawi is also an avid gamer and reader who plans to return to school to complete a master's degree in arts administration.



Maria Sensi Sellner

Artistic and General Director, Resonance Works

Maria Sensi Sellner's artistry, versatility, and reputation for innovation have made her a sought-after collaborator and an impresario for the 21st century. She is a three-time winner of the prestigious American Prize for Opera Conducting and a proud alumna of The Dallas Opera's Hart Institute for Women Conductors. Sellner currently serves as the artistic and general director of Resonance Works, the groundbreaking performing arts company she founded in her hometown of Pittsburgh in 2013. She is also the co-founder and lead producer of the Decameron Opera Coalition and frequently acts as a cover conductor for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Her unique, artist-driven programming has been praised for its "innovative streak" (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*) and for bringing a "welcome infusion of sophistication and diversity" (*I Care If You Listen*) to Pittsburgh's cultural landscape.



Jamie Sharp

Communications and Publications Manager, Grantmakers in the Arts

Jaime Sharp (she/they) is a Black queer arts leader, vocalist, and advocate residing on the stolen territory of the Three Fire Peoples, also known as Chicago. She strives to transform organizational culture by challenging structural exclusion and promoting diversity in classical arts leadership. They currently serve as communications manager at Grantmakers in the Arts and are the co-founder and executive director of the choral ensemble Hear Us, Hear Them. Sharp is a cohort member of BIPOC Leadership Circle (artEquity), Turn the Spotlight Fellowship, and the Executive Program in Arts and Culture (National Arts Strategies). She has worked for Opera NexGen, American Repertory Theater, Black Opera Alliance, Cincinnati Symphony, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and University Musical Society. Sharp previously participated in OPERA America's Mentorship Program for Opera Leaders of Color.



Andrea Tichy

Director of Marketing and Communications, Co-Director of External Affairs, Portland Opera

Andrea Tichy (she/her) is the director of marketing and communications at Portland Opera, where she co-leads external affairs, supporting the integrated development, marketing, communications, and patron services teams. She is the organizer of the company's cultural equity committee and recently helped guide the company through an inclusive rebranding process. Tichy previously served as manager of communications and special events at the Theatre School at DePaul University in Chicago while also pursuing acting and freelance public relations consulting for storefront theaters. She is a member of the Portland Business Alliance's 2023 Leadership Portland cohort and serves as the president of the board of directors for the Cultural Coalition of Washington County. Tichy holds a B.F.A. in acting from The Theatre School at DePaul University.



Brooke Tolley

General Director, Opera Roanoke

Brooke Tolley is the general director of Opera Roanoke in Roanoke, Virginia. After working with the company in different positions since 2015, she was appointed to her current post in 2019. As a trained opera singer, Tolley enjoys representing the company throughout the community and is a sought-after soloist and voice teacher in the region. She is a past participant of the Hart Institute for Women Conductors and Administrators with The Dallas Opera and a past member of Leadership Roanoke Valley, Roanoke's premier leadership mentoring program through the Chamber of Commerce. She is passionate about connecting audiences of all ages with opera in both traditional and non-traditional venues and believes that opera should be accessible to all.

International Participants



Ricardo Appezzato,

Artistic Manager, Santa Marcelina Cultura (São Paulo, BR)

Ricardo Appezzato is the artistic manager at Santa Marcelina Cultura, a nonprofit association responsible for managing the Teatro São Pedro, the School of Music of the State of São Paulo – EMESP Tom Jobim, and the Guri Program. There, he is responsible for the artistic and production team. Appezzato has collaborated on projects between Santa Marcelina Cultura and partners such as The Juilliard School in New York City, Sage Gateshead in Newcastle, England, and the Paris Conservatory. He also contributed to the project to create the Orquestra da América Latina, which integrated students from music education and sociocultural inclusion programs from three countries: Fundación Batuta (Colombia), Guri Santa Marcelina (Brazil), and Sinfonía por el Perú (Peru). Appezzato is a member of the executive board of the Brazilian Forum of Opera, Dance, and Concert Music.



Guillaume L'Hôpital

Artistic Producer/Young Artists Program Manager, Théâtre royal de la Monnaie

Originally trained as a singer, Guillaume L'Hôpital earned a master's degree in law and management from Grenoble School of Political Science in 2011. He began his professional career in Paris, with posts at Accentus, the Louvre Museum, and the Philharmonie, before moving to Belgium, where he worked initially at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel. In 2018, he joined La Monnaie.

He has been a member of the advisory committee and the board of ENOA (European Network of Opera Academies) for five years and is a regular guest speaker for several organizations.



Julie McIsaac

Stage Director, Dramaturg, Podcast Host, Curator, Consultant

Based in British Columbia, Canada — where she lives and creates on the traditional territories of the ɫəkʷəŋən peoples (Songhees and Esquimalt Nations) — Julie McIsaac reshapes and revitalizes the stories we sing on stage. As a stage director, dramaturg, creator, and consultant, she advocates for ingenuity and excellence in 21st-century opera and theater, staging new works for today's audiences. McIsaac has worked closely with Canadian Opera

Company (COC), where she served as the company's first director/dramaturg-in-residence; led the curation of COC's digital season in 2020–2021; acted as director/dramaturg for the acclaimed premiere of *Fantasma*; and now co-hosts the COC podcast *Key Change*. She holds a master's degree in theater from the University of York (U.K.) and is a graduate of the Canadian College of Performing Arts and Carleton University.



Francisca Peró Gubler

Executive Director, Biobío Theater

In 2017, Francisca Peró Gubler became the first executive director of Biobío Theater, a new cultural infrastructure in the south of Chile. She previously worked from 2010 to 2017 as a performing arts coordinator of national and international artistic programming at GAM in Santiago, Chile. Peró Gubler holds a Bachelor of Humanities from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile and studied acting at UCLA.



Kate Rooney

Planning Manager, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

Kate Rooney is the planning manager at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Born in Northern England, she discovered her passion for the arts through her involvement in choir. Rooney moved to Paris in 2006 and later to Germany, where she developed an understanding of European languages and cultures. After returning to England, she studied music and psychology at Royal Holloway University while continuing to nurture her love for the arts.

She pursued a master's degree in arts administration from Goldsmiths University while interning at an orchestra. After graduation, Rooney joined the Royal Opera House's planning department and, over seven years, progressed from PA to planning manager, responsible for all artistic season plans.



Jennifer Szeto

Director, Atelier Lyrique

Pianist Jennifer Szeto carves a dynamic path as a performer, pedagogue, and administrator. She is a graduate of the San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship, Canadian Opera Company Ensemble, and Merola Opera Program. A sought-after coach and producer of contemporary works, she is the founding artistic director of Musique 3 Femmes, which commissions and produces operas by female composers and librettists in Canada. Recent credits include the world premieres of Keiko Devaux's *L'Écoute du perdu* with Paramirabo and *Le Vivier* at Fonderie Darling and Laurence Jobidon and Pascale St-Onge's *L'hiver attend beaucoup de moi* with Opéra de Montreal. Szeto also serves on the board of directors of the Association for Opera in Canada and on the opera faculty of Sewanee Music Center in Tennessee.



ABOUT OPERA AMERICA

OPERA America (operaamerica.org) leads and serves the entire opera community, supporting the creation, presentation, and enjoyment of opera. The organization is committed to:

- Promoting collaboration and effectiveness among opera companies, universities, and allied businesses.
- Delivering professional development to artists, administrators, and trustees.
- Increasing appreciation of opera through educational and audience development resources.
- Offering support and services that foster the creation and presentation of new works.
- Fostering equity, diversity, and inclusion across all aspects of the opera industry.
- Undertaking national research and representing the field to policymakers and the media.
- Managing the National Opera Center, a custom-built facility that provides a centralized space for collaboration, rehearsal, and performance.

Founded in 1970, OPERA America fulfills its mission through public programs, an annual conference, regional workshops, consultations, granting programs, publications, and online resources. It is the only organization serving all constituents of opera: artists, administrators, trustees, educators, and audience members. Membership includes 200 professional opera companies; 500 associate, business, and education members; and 3,500 individuals. OPERA America extends its reach to 80,000 annual visitors to its National Opera Center and over 83,000 subscribers and followers on digital and social media. Representing over 90 percent of eligible professional companies, OPERA America is empowered to lead field-wide change.

Over the past five decades, OPERA America has awarded over \$23 million to opera companies and artists across North America. This strategic philanthropy, made possible through OPERA America's Opera Fund endowment and in partnership with committed foundations, supports new work development, audience building, civic practice, co-productions, and field-wide innovation at its member opera companies. Awards to individuals advance the careers of women and people of the global majority in creative roles, highlight emerging artists, and recognize the leadership of exceptional trustees.

