

SD OPERA Media Release

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San Diego Opera Announces Opera Hack 2.0

Online ideation summit to explore how technological innovations can enhance the production, presentation, and consumption of opera

Call for participants now open

Made possible by an OPERA America Innovation Grant, supported by the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation

San Diego, CA – San Diego Opera is excited to announce Opera Hack 2.0, an online interdisciplinary event for music/theater and technology experts to explore how technology can be applied to the production, presentation, and consumption of opera. Inspired by “hacks” in the technological sector which often brings together experts in disparate fields to work together to solve a presented problem, this is the second Opera Hack hosted San Diego Opera. Calls for participants are now open at www.sdopera.org/operahack.

For the first Opera Hack, held between the 2019-2020 season, forty multi-disciplinary experts from around North America submitted sixteen proposals to a panel of tech and theater based advisors. \$40,000 in funding was disbursed to the three winning ideas enabling them to develop their proposal over the course of the year. The winners, announced last August and presented by OPERA America, were: *Open Show*, *Becoming*, and *Opera Map*. Last year’s winning presentations can be viewed online at https://youtu.be/e_tD8p0-IW0

Opera Hack 2.0 will partner participants with local universities and tech companies to come up with creative solutions to scenarios opera companies are currently facing in today's changing landscape. San Diego Opera is conducting an industry wide survey to identify these problems, which will be announced when the survey concludes May 1, 2021.

Participant candidates should have expertise in areas such as technical direction, lighting design, composition, costume design, performance, theater project management, stage direction, scenic design, 3D printing, virtual, augmented, and mixed reality, creative coding, A.I. and machine learning, computer vision and haptics, and interactive theater and performance art. Interested parties can apply online at www.sdopera.org/operahack no later than Monday, April 28, 2021.

Opera Hack 2.0 will occur remotely and take place Friday, June 4, 2021 through Friday, July 2, 2021. At the conclusion of Opera Hack 2.0, up to three winning proposals will be awarded funds to develop their proposal over the following year.

Participants will be mentored by an Advisory Panel that includes **Jennifer Dautermann**, founding director of Classical:NEXT; **Sarah Ellis**, Director of Digital Development for the Royal Shakespeare Company; **Ryan Hunt**, Lead Software Engineer with the Walt Disney Company; **Steve Lukas**, Head of Developer Relations Engineering at Magic Leap; and **Vita Tzykun**, award-winning set and costume designer of opera, theatre, and film and a founding member of the GLMMR art collective. A full list of the advisory panel with bios appears at the end of this release.

“I’m very happy to announce the second iteration of our groundbreaking Opera Hack, which resulted in a number of proposals that have generated interest worldwide,” shares San Diego Opera General Director, David Bennett. “It is our hope Opera Hack will continue to foster industry wide-learning and collaboration and continue to move our art form forward. Opera Hack could not be possible without the visionary support of OPERA America.”

Opera Hack 2.0 is made possible by an OPERA America Innovation Grant, supported by the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation. OPERA America's Innovation Grants support exceptional projects that have the capacity to improve the vibrancy of opera in the field's most important areas of practice. These grants invest \$1.5 million annually, enabling organizations to increase their investment in experimentation and innovation, and contribute to field-wide learning.

Opera Hack 2.0 Advisory Panel

MOLLY BRAVERMAN

Molly Braverman is the Director of the Broadway Green Alliance. She previously served as the Managing Director of Theatre Horizon, a non-profit professional theatre company in Norristown, PA. She has worked as a Stage Manager on Broadway, Touring Broadway, and regionally, having spent three years on the road with the National Tour of

Wicked and continuing to serve as a substitute Stage Manager on Wicked and Hamilton. She founded the Philadelphia Green Theatre Alliance, a regional chapter of the Broadway Green Alliance and is a trained Climate Reality Leader.

JENNIFER DAUTERMANN

Classical:NEXT Founding Director Jennifer Dautermann majored in classical music performance with a minor in studio photography at the Interlochen Arts Academy and the University of Michigan School of Music with parallel professional engagements at institutions such as the Michigan Opera Theater. After moving to Berlin, Jennifer was posted in the British Council's Arts and Creative Industries department for over seven years and was active in projects across the innovative arts spectrum. In 2009, she independently initiated and realized the C3 Festival (Club Contemporary Classical), a showcase for contemporary music mixing elements of new classical and electronica which took place at Berlin's renowned Berghain club. C3 2011 expanded to 3 cities (Berlin, Essen, Gdansk) and was supported by the German Federal Cultural Foundation. In 2015, she wrote a successful application submitted to the Creative Europe funding scheme of the European Union to realise an adapted version of the C3 Festival which places more emphasis on network and professional capacity building. In 2011, she was given the task of initiating Classical:NEXT, an international art music professionals' meeting, which quickly attracted well over 1,000 delegates from 45 countries to its annual, onsite editions. Classical:NEXT unites the global art music scene and investigates possible future paths forward in all aspects of the industry.

SARAH ELLIS

Sarah Ellis is an award-winning producer currently working as Director of Digital Development for the Royal Shakespeare Company to explore new artistic initiatives and partnerships. The latest partnership for the RSC is the Audience of the Future Live Performance Demonstrator funded by Innovate UK - a consortium consisting of arts organisations, research partners and technology companies to explore the future of performances and real-time immersive experiences. In 2017, she became a fellow of the University of Worcester for her work in the arts and technology. In 2016 she was awarded The Hospital Club & Creatives Industries award for cross industry collaboration for her work on the RSC's The Tempest in collaboration with Intel and in association with The Imaginarium Studios. In 2013 she was listed in the top 100 most influential people working in Gaming and Technology by The Hospital Club and Guardian Culture Professionals. In partnership with Google, she produced Midsummer Night's Dreaming winning two Lovie Awards for Innovation and Experimentation. In 2012, she produced myShakespeare an online commissioning platform for the World Shakespeare Festival. In 2011, she produced Adelaide Road for the RSC, which mixed live performance with an app and website map. As a spoken word producer, she has worked with the Old Vic Tunnels, Battersea Arts Centre, Birmingham REP, Contact, Improbable, Southbank Centre, Soho Theatre, and Shunt. She has been Head of Creative Programmes at the Albany Theatre and Programme Manager for Apples & Snakes. She commits to the development of the arts and technology sector by being a mentor and advisor to programmes such as the Sundance Institute's New Frontier Labs, Creative XR

programme supported by Arts Council England and Digital Catapult and CPH:LABS. She is a regular speaker and commentator on digital arts practice, as well as an Industry Champion for the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, which helps inform academic research on the creative industries to lead to better policies for the sector. She has been appointed Chair of digital agency, The Space, established by Arts Council England and the BBC to help promote digital engagement across the arts.

CHARLES MURDOCK LUCAS

Charles Murdock Lucas, member USA 829, is an international scene and media designer based in San Diego, California. Awards and honors include: scene design work exhibited in the Professional/Transformation Exhibit from the USA at the 2019 Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space, the Robert L.B. Tobin Director- Designer Showcase sponsored by OPERA America for production concepts for The Cradle Will Rock, the A. J. Fletcher Opera Fellowship in Scene Design at UNCSCA, a nomination for the 2017 San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Craig Noel Awards for Theatrical Excellence for Outstanding Scene Design, and the USITT Scene Design Award sponsored by Rose Brand. www.charlesmurdocklucas.com

RYAN HUNT

Ryan Hunt is a Lead Software Engineer with The Walt Disney Company. He has over 20 years of experience working with multimedia technologies including graphics engines, novel user interfaces, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence. Much of his career has been in advertising and entertainment where he has focused on creating unique interactive experiences and solving problems in challenging domains like sound and gesture-based interfaces. Ryan has earned numerous awards for interactive design and programming, including a Clio Award for the 2004 Acura Interactive Showroom, and a Keyart Award for the online film site for Michael Mann's The Insider.

ROCKY JONES

Rocky Jones(he/him/his) is a writer, musician, and video artist, who has spent his life and career committed to the idea that art and artmaking can serve as catalysts for a more inclusive, equitable and just world. A native of the Washington, DC area, he is also an experienced marketing and communications professional with nearly twenty years of experience in industries as varied as retail, design, and non-profit arts administration. Now based in St. Paul, Minnesota, he is currently the Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at Minnesota Opera, as well as the chair of the company's EDI Council. In 2020, he was a primary author of MN Opera's landmark 2020 EDI Charter, which explicitly commits the company to bringing its work into alignment with anti-racist and anti-oppressive values.

STEVE LUKAS

Steve Lukas is the head of Developer Relations Engineering at Magic Leap. He has over 15 years of experience in user-interface design and software development, with previous roles at Sony Online Entertainment and Qualcomm's Ventures.

ANNE E. MCMILLS

Anne E. McMills is the Head of Lighting Design at San Diego State University. Her far-reaching career extends across the many facets of the lighting world—from theatre, including Broadway and the West End, to television and theme parks to architecture, industrials, concerts, award shows, dance, and opera. In addition to designing her own work, Anne has assisted many award-winning Broadway lighting designers, including Ken Billington, Brian MacDevitt, Howell Binkley, Peter Kaczorowski, Jason Lyons, David Lander, Brian Monahan, and others, as well as projections designer Elaine J. McCarthy. Anne has mounted productions in the United States, Japan, Australia, England, Scotland, France, and Germany. Anne is a proud member of United Scenic Artists, Local 829. In addition, Anne is the author of *The Assistant Lighting Designer's Toolkit* and *3D Printing Basics for Entertainment Design*.

<http://www.annemcmillslighting.com/>

DAVID ADAM MOORE

With over 60 principal roles to his credit, David Adam Moore is a highly sought-after leading baritone by major opera houses and orchestras worldwide. A celebrated interpreter of contemporary music, he has created roles for some of today's most important living composers. Also known for his work as a stage director, composer, and video designer, Moore co-founded two NYC-based arts collectives - GLMMR and Choreo Teatro. With GLMMR and his artistic partner, Vita Tzykun, Moore directed and designed the world largest-scale production of Nyman's *The Man Who Mistook His Wife For a Hat* for Indianapolis Opera, and designed sets, costumes, and projections for a new production of David T. Little's *Soldier Songs* at Atlanta Opera and San Diego Opera.

www.davidadammoore.com

ISAAC MUÑOZ

Isaac Muñoz is developing the next generation of audio technologies as a staff engineer at Qualcomm. Isaac received an electrical engineering B.S. degree from the California Institute of Technology and completed his PhD. in computer music at UCSD. His path to combining music and engineering was kickstarted when he received the Thomas J. Watson Fellowship which enabled him to travel throughout Latin America building musical instruments. Isaac worked as an audio engineer at UCSD for a wide range of acts including jazz, rap and opera. He has also enjoyed performing as a percussionist in a local jazz-fusion band and violinist in the Greater San Diego Music Coterie Chamber Orchestra. As part of the Multimedia R&D team, Isaac participates in international conferences to demonstrate Qualcomm's latest audio features. In his spare time Isaac participates in outreach programs teaching music technology.

ZACHARY SHARPELL

Zach Sharpell is a mechanical engineer at Qualcomm and is focused on sustainability, mechatronics (mechanics + electronics), and startup companies. He created his first startup while in college and has since advised multiple others in industries such as travel, entertainment, and clean energy. Running primarily on caffeine and the excitement of innovation, Zach enjoys helping others make their dreams a reality regardless of how grandiose a dream may be. He's pitched to investors all over the world, met with members of Parliament to discuss technological innovation in various sectors, drafted a

myriad of business plans & BMCs, and wants to share the excitement of startups and his experience with all who are ready to take the plunge – creating a startup.

VITA TZYKUN

Victoria “Vita” Tzykun [tsee-‘koon] has designed sets, costumes, and projections for companies such as The Bolshoi Theater (Russia), Norwegian Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Santa Fe Opera, LA Opera, Seattle Opera, Minnesota Opera, Opera Philadelphia, and Wexford Opera Festival (Ireland) among others. Her numerous film and tv credits include art direction for "Lady Gaga’s ABC Thanksgiving Special", production design for several award-winning films, and commercials for leading entities such as PBS, DirectTV, Axe, Bulova, and Qualcomm. Holding an MFA from NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts and a BFA from Tel Aviv University, Vita has given workshops and masterclasses at Weill Institute of Music at Carnegie Hall, San Diego State University, University of Missouri Kansas City, Montclair State University, and the O’Neill Institute. Tzykun is a founding member of GLMMR - a NYC-based interdisciplinary art collective that fuses the worlds of fine art, audiovisual technology, and live performance. Her work was showcased in a solo exhibition at the National Opera America Center in New York, and has been featured in exhibitions at the Entertainment Industry Expo in NYC, Habima National Theater in Tel-Aviv, the World Stage Design Exhibition in Toronto, in Entertainment Design and Lighting and Sound America magazines. Tzykun has also served as a panelist on the Opera Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts. In 2016, the International Opera Awards nominated Victoria Tzykun for Best Design.

www.vitavision.net | www.glmmr.org

CHRIS WARREN

Dr. Chris Warren is a sound artist, signal processing researcher, and musical instrument inventor. Warren earned a Ph.D. in Computer Music from UC San Diego studying with Dr. Miller Puckette, author of the Max and Pure Data programming languages, and an M.A. in Music, Science, and Technology from Stanford University. He is the Assistant Professor of Digital Composition and Sound Design at San Diego State University. His sonic installations have been featured at the Museum of Making Music, the Fleet Science Center, NAMM, and the Havana Biennial. www.alloyelectric.com

MATT WITKAMP

Matt Witkamp, founder and CEO of Kampfire Studios LLC, has been advancing digital experiences for more than 20 years through UX and UI design for companies such as AT&T, T-Mobile, Siemens Medical, Intel, HTC, Comcast, and Stanford Medical. He is passionate about experience in all forms, both digital and non-digital, but his love of technology has led him to design experiences and UI for everything from the days of DOS, to desktop, to mobile, to TV, to today’s emerging XR. Matt takes a multi-lens approach to leveraging design to realize business opportunities that takes into account not just the design and experience aspect, but also business drivers and market opportunities. Matt was involved early on with the HoloLens and was part of the team that brought x-ray vision to surgeons with Stanford Medical. Since then he has been striving to establish best practices around experience design for immersive technologies.

DEBI WONG

Debi is an interdisciplinary performance artist that loves to weave together sound, text, movement and technology to create contemporary stories. Her performances have been recognized as “unique and magical” (Rondo Classic, Finland) and “electric & poignant” (Schmopera). Debi is also the founding artistic director of re:Naissance Opera in Vancouver, BC. With re:Naissance she created #DidoAndAeneas (2014), an interactive, social-media opera and Acis & Galatea which was recognized by Vancouver Classical Music as one of the city’s best operas in 2017. In 2019 she co-created and co-directed Tap EX: Augmented Opera for Tapestry Opera which was hailed by the Globe and Mail as an "experimental success". Debi is also the creative director of OrpheusVR, a new interactive operatic experience in development for the Oculus Quest. OrpheusVR was recently featured in the Globe & Mail and was an official selection of the Immersed Exhibit at the 2020 Vancouver International Film Festival. www.reopera.com | www.orpheusVR.ca

ANGEL MANNION

PROGRAM DIRECTOR, OPERA HACK

In 2018 and 2020, Angel successfully proposed and acquired two (2) \$150,000 OPERA America Innovation Grants (via the Anne and Gordon Getty Foundation), funding San Diego Opera’s Opera Hack project and securing Microsoft Corporation and Qualcomm as lead sponsors. As a baritone and conductor, Angel frequently performs with professional choirs and symphony orchestras, and his choir Folklore Guild has recorded for television and video game soundtracks.

DAVID BENNETT

GENERAL DIRECTOR, SAN DIEGO OPERA

David Bennett is the General Director of San Diego Opera. Under his leadership since 2015, the Company has embarked on a series of community based initiatives including a citywide Listening Tour series, free public performances, and family friendly operas to better serve the diverse San Diego region. In 2016, the Company debuted its wildly popular dētour Series, which explores the expressive nature of opera with the potency of intimate theater.

San Diego Opera Mission Statement

The mission of San Diego Opera is to deliver exceptional vocal performances and exciting, accessible programs to diverse audiences, focusing on community engagement and the transformative power of live performance.

San Diego Opera Vision Statement

San Diego Opera will be recognized internationally as a leading example of adaptability, innovation and sustainability in the operatic arts, promoting diversified programming and unique performance venues with world-class and emerging talent.

San Diego Opera Core Values Statement

Through excellence in innovative programming and education, SDO provides a lasting cultural service to the community.

- Our tradition of excellence in fully staged opera is augmented with new models of opera and venues. Our unique and deep commitment to the community propels us to explore ways of increasing affordability and accessibility.
- Through fiscal responsibility and nimble adaptation to the changing marketplace, we protect the future of San Diego Opera.

- Our educational and community involvement coupled with relevant programming will build the audience of the future.

www.sdopera.org

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