



Roger Weitz, General Director



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Opera Omaha Celebrates National Opera Week Friday, October 28 – Sunday, November 6

Opera Omaha is proud to join dozens of other opera organizations nationwide to celebrate **National Opera Week (October 28 – November 6)**, coordinated by OPERA America, the national service organization for opera, with support of the National Endowment for the Arts.

National Opera Week celebrates the vibrancy of opera in America today, and brings the inventiveness and excitement of opera to a national audience. The strength and diversity of established opera companies, community opera ensembles and opera training programs across the United States will be shared through free, dynamic activities designed to engage novices, opera lovers and everyone in between.

“From behind-the-scenes tours to enlightening performance talks to Twitter contests and more, there is something for everyone during National Opera Week,” states Marc A. Scorca, president & CEO of OPERA America. “National Opera Week draws attention to the creativity and dynamism that propels our field today. We are proud to highlight this depth of opera activity across the United States.”

During National Opera Week, Opera Omaha will host several events that will provide all ages an opportunity to enjoy and learn about opera and Opera Omaha. In keeping with their mission of Opera for Everyone each of the events will be free of charge.

The following events will take place throughout Omaha:

Hansel and Gretel at the Omaha Children's Museum

On Saturdays starting October 22nd – November 5th Opera Omaha will present free preview performances of *Hansel and Gretel* at the Omaha Children's Museum (OCM) theater. The previews will feature a few of the characters in the production including Hansel and Gretel. Performances dates and times are as follows: 10/22 and 11/5 at 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. 10/ 29 at 11 a.m. and 12 p.m. Local artist, Watie White and visitors to OCM we be building a recycled arts installation of a Gingerbread house. The house will move to the lobby of the Rose Theater on November 11 and be featured during the performances of *Hansel & Gretel*.

Art and Opera.

Opera Omaha and the Opera Omaha Bravo Club (Opera Omaha's Young Professional Club) will host an Art and Opera night on November 1st from 7pm – 9pm at the House of Loom (1012 S 10TH St, Omaha). The Art and Opera night will feature local artists Jun Kaneko, Watie White, and Catherine Ferguson's original artwork and scenic designs for Opera Omaha productions. The artist will display their works from 7pm – 8pm during the Art and Opera Cocktail Hour. Refreshments will be provided free of charge. From 8pm – 8:30pm Opera Omaha General Director, Roger Weitz will lead a discussion with the artist about their inspiration and experiences working with Opera Omaha. Following the presentation Opera Omaha will host an after party with a House of Loom DJ who will spin a music blend of house/techno mixed and opera standards.

Opera in Omaha

Mayor Suttle has proclaimed October 30 – November 5 Opera Omaha Week. Following the MET – LIVE in HD showing of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at Film Streams (1340 Mike Fahey St., Omaha), Opera Omaha will host a gathering for opera enthusiasts at Goodnights Pizza (1302 Mike Fahey St). Food will be provided with a cash bar. Mayor Jim Suttle, Jim Eisenhart, former drama teacher at Omaha South High School; and Karla Ewert, VP of Brand and Image Management at the Omaha Chamber of Commerce will be among the special guests at this event.

"We are so appreciative of the local support that the Omaha gives to us. National Opera Week is the perfect way for us to say thank you to our community." said Brad A. Watkins, Communications Director of Opera Omaha, "This is also a great lead up to our second show of the season, *Hansel & Gretel*, the classic opera for all ages."

Launching National Opera Week will be the **NEA Opera Honors** award ceremony on Thursday, October 27 at 7:30 p.m. in Washington, D.C. For the first time, this event will be available worldwide through a [live webcast](#) that also will be archived after the event and accessible at neaoperahonors.org. The NEA Opera Honors is the nation's highest award in opera and recognizes outstanding artists for their lifetime achievements and contributions to the excellence and perpetuation of opera in America. This year's honorees are stage designer **John Conklin**, general director **Speight Jenkins**, mezzo-soprano **Risë**

Stevens and composer **Robert Ward**. The October 27 award ceremony and live webcast will feature video tributes, guest performances from artists such as tenor Lawrence Brownlee and mezzo-soprano Heather Johnson, and an onstage conversation with the honorees. For additional information, visit neaoperahonors.org.

For more information about National Opera Week events around the country, please visit www.operaamerica.org/operaweek. Join the National Opera Week conversation on Twitter with #OperaWeek and the local conversation with #OperaOmahaWeek.

About Opera Omaha

Opera Omaha, the only professional opera company in Nebraska, began in 1958 as the Omaha Civic Opera Society, a volunteer association, and with tremendous community support became fully professional by 1970. Opera Omaha produces a season of original mainstage productions, presented at the historic Orpheum Theater, and smaller productions and musical events throughout the community. Opera Omaha is internationally known for its productions of eight world premieres and four American premieres of classical masterpieces, and is highly regarded regionally for an extensive education and outreach program that annually reaches as many as 15,000 people from elementary school through adulthood.

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Additional press contact:

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