

Opera is a multifaceted art form that comprises music and text to move a story or dramatic concept forward. The National Endowment for the Arts is committed to advancing the highest levels of operatic artistry across the nation's cultural landscape.

**Funding through the  
opera-musical theater  
and opera programs,  
1980-2015:**

**\$98.7 million**

### ADVANCING LEARNING

The National Endowment for the Arts supports learning opportunities for students and the public.

- Opera companies and artists do school tours and residencies presenting operas adapted for children and accompanied by curriculum such as Madison, WI's Opera for the Young tour of the operetta *Pirates of Penzance*.

National Endowment for the Arts funding supports professional development for opera artists.

- The American Lyric Theater in New York City provides training for composers and librettists through mentorships and workshops of commissioned operas in development.

- Wolf Trap in Vienna, VA and its Filene Young Artists and Opera Studio Artists provide training for young singers and fully-staged opera performances.
- The Merola Opera Program in San Francisco offers training for singers, apprentice coaches, and an apprentice stage director.

### FUELING CREATIVITY

The National Endowment for the Arts funds the creation of new operas.

- The Michigan Opera Theatre commissioned *Margaret Garner* by composer Richard Danielpour with librettist and author Toni Morrison based on the true story of a slave woman's quest for freedom.
- The premiere of Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* was at San Francisco Opera with productions in three other cities.

- Through the New American Works program (1980 to 1995), the NEA invested \$9.5 million for "the creation, development, and production of new and/or seldom-seen American works," an investment that continues today with grants such as one to the Minnesota Opera for a new production of *Wuthering Heights* by American composer Bernard Herrmann.
- NEA-funded new works have gone on to garner major recognition such as *Madame White Snake* by composer Zhou Long that was awarded the 2011 Pulitzer Prize for Music.



## CONNECTING AND CELEBRATING

The National Endowment for the Arts has supported countless performances by opera companies and ensembles.

- Since 2006, the NEA has made more than 420 awards to support opera performances totaling more than \$12 million.
  - In 2005-2007, the NEA presented the Great American Voices: Military Base Tour, which offered free performances of melodies from opera and Broadway for military personnel and their families at more than 40 military installations, support that continues today through projects such as Hawaii Opera Theatre's project to engage military communities throughout the state.
  - The Opera Iowa Education Touring Troupe at Des Moines Metro Opera serves rural mid-western schools with residencies including teacher preparation, workshops with the troupe, and a closing performance.
- The National Endowment for the Arts is committed to bringing music to as many people as possible especially audiences that are geographically isolated.
- Opera performances on the radio have significant audience reach and the NEA has consistently supported these programs such as the Saturday Matinee Broadcast from the Metropolitan Opera which is broadcast to more than 600 stations worldwide.
  - Through television broadcasts, millions of Americans watch world-renown artists in full productions of operas. *Great Performances* on PBS featured a broadcast of Bartok's *Bluebeard's Castle* in July 2015.
  - The NEA supports simulcasts, bringing together excellent productions and the latest digital technology to broad and diverse audiences such as the Dallas Opera's 2015 broadcast of *La Boheme* in Cowboy's Stadium.

## BUILDING THE FIELD

National Endowment for the Arts funding has had a significant impact on the size of the opera field, investing in performing, training, and service organizations that deeply enrich the country's artistic life.

- Through partnerships and grants to OPERA America, the NEA has provided cornerstone support for numerous initiatives in the opera field, including: the Field Assistance Program to assist small and mid-sized companies; the development of educational initiatives such as Music! Words! Opera!; the Opera Fund to generate new commissions; and the New Works Forum to showcase new operas in development.

