



## **MORE OPERA RECEIVES NYC OPERA GRANT FROM OPERA AMERICA TO MAKE PROGRAMMING ACCESSIBLE TO UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES**

**NEW YORK (May 8, 2024)** – [The Manhattan Opera Repertory Ensemble](#) (MORE Opera), a New York City-based nonprofit focused on providing vocal arts education and culturally responsive musical programming to underserved communities, today announced its selection as one of the recipients of the NYC Opera Grants: Support for Small-Budget Companies, administered by OPERA America. The \$25,000 grant will provide vital funding for MORE Opera to engage in strategic initiatives over the next two years that increase visibility, expand programming, and reach new audiences who otherwise may not be afforded the opportunity for exposure to opera.

MORE Opera was selected for its distinct contribution to New York City's opera ecosystem, the demographic alignment of its leadership, programming, and audiences, and the potential that a grant will have a lasting impact on the organization.

"We are deeply grateful to OPERA America and the Howard Gilman Foundation for their generous support of MORE Opera's mission," said Cheryl Warfield, founder and artistic director, MORE Opera. "This grant will enable us to hire an arts consultant to develop a comprehensive strategic plan that will elevate our organization to new heights. We are excited to embark on this journey of growth and innovation, and we look forward to the positive impact it will have on the community."

A total of \$195,000 was awarded to 10 opera companies across the five boroughs of New York City to provide flexible operating support to help small New York City opera companies innovate, produce, and engage audiences and their communities. The grant is made possible with the support of the Howard Gilman Foundation, a private foundation that provides funding and support to New York City-based performing arts organizations that are reflective of the city's vibrant cultural community.

For over 20 years, MORE Opera has made classical music and opera accessible through culturally responsive programming, free public performances, educational initiatives, and community choral training. As a minority-founded opera company, it emphasizes Black musical themes and amplifies all artists, especially artists of color.

"The community nature of our work is especially important. We take pride in our efforts to bring professional-level opera performances directly to audiences in underserved New York City communities that might not otherwise have opportunities to enjoy and participate in high-quality multicultural programs," said Warfield. "With the assistance of the NYC Opera Grant, MORE Opera will continue to serve as a beacon of artistic expression and cultural enrichment for residents of Manhattan, Bronx, Queens, and beyond."

In addition to receiving the monetary grant, MORE Opera will have the opportunity to engage in peer learning groups, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange among grantee organizations with similar objectives. The organization was also recently awarded a Lower Manhattan Cultural Council grant for its upcoming Juneteenth concert on June 17 at Bela Abzug Park and is the first-time recipient of the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs' Cultural Development Fund for its Seniors Sing! program in the Bronx.

For more information about MORE Opera and its upcoming programs, including a June Juneteenth performance on June 19 at the Bronx Music Heritage Amphitheater, please visit [www.moreopera.com](http://www.moreopera.com). For more information about OPERA America's grant programs, visit [www.operaamerica.org/Grants](http://www.operaamerica.org/Grants).

**About The Association for the Development of Vocal Artistry and Neighborhood Cultural Enrichment (ADVANCE)/MORE Opera**

Association for the Development of Vocal Artistry and Neighborhood Cultural Enrichment dba Manhattan Opera Repertory Ensemble (MORE Opera) is a 501(c)3 community-based vocal arts organization that makes classical music and opera accessible through its culturally responsive programming of free public performances, educational initiatives, and no-cost community choral training for hundreds of young people, adults, and seniors. Founded by soprano Cheryl Warfield, MORE Opera strives to present high-quality programming, attract and sustain diverse audiences, and promote the growth and integrity of its artists through performance opportunities, masterclasses, and vocal training, thereby enriching the opera ecosystem at large. MORE Opera tailors its programs to meet the needs of the communities it serves, including bilingual Spanish and English programming in Washington Heights and East Harlem, interactive choral training for adults aged 60 and over in three Bronx neighborhoods, and a year-long opera residency for sixth graders in Sunnyside Queens at a public STEAM middle school.

**ABOUT OPERA AMERICA**

Founded in 1970, [OPERA America](http://www.operaamerica.org) 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.

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