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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



NASHVILLE OPERA TO RECEIVE \$25,000 GRANT FROM NEA FOR NEW DIGITAL MASTERCLASS SERIES WITH TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Nashville, TN—National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Mary Anne Carter has approved more than \$84 million in grants as part of the Arts Endowment’s second major funding announcement for fiscal year 2020. Included in this announcement is an Art Works award of \$25,000 to Nashville Opera to support an enhanced partnership between Nashville Opera and **Tennessee State University** that provides access, promotes inclusion, and expands career pathways for African-American artists. The collaboration includes digital masterclasses, digital and/or live community-engagement panel discussions, and virtual outreach at HBCUs around the country.

“These awards demonstrate the resilience of the arts in America, showcasing not only the creativity of their arts projects but the organizations’ agility in the face of a national health crisis,” said Mary Anne Carter, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. “We celebrate organizations like Nashville Opera for providing opportunities for learning and engagement through the arts in these times.”

Nashville Opera CEO and Artistic Director John Hoopes said, “We are deeply grateful for this support from the National Endowment for the Arts, which helps us do the important work of creating more equity in our art form.”

Nashville Opera has a relationship with the prominent HBCU Tennessee State University that spans more than a decade and includes such activities as presentations of masterclasses, free student tickets to performances, and Opera 101 lectures for the Department of Music. In the upcoming season, Nashville Opera will grow this partnership, expanding access to professional coaching with some of the foremost Black artists in the opera world through a series of monthly masterclasses which will be presented virtually beginning in September 2020 and made available for free to the public through livestreaming. This virtual masterclass series will be jointly managed by Nashville Opera and TSU’s Big Blue Opera Initiative Program.

For more information on this National Endowment for the Arts grant announcement, visit [arts.gov/news](https://www.arts.gov/news).

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About Nashville Opera

Nashville Opera, Tennessee's largest professional opera company, creates artistic experiences that elevate our world. Among the most successful regional companies in the country, Nashville Opera has presented three different world premiere operas since its inception in 1981. Mainstage performances are presented at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center and the Noah Liff Opera Center, playing to over 10,000 people annually. Each year, Nashville Opera's extensive education and outreach touring program reaches approximately 25,000 students throughout Middle Tennessee. Visit nashvilleopera.org for more information.

About Tennessee State University

Located in Music City USA, a music industry capital of the world, the Tennessee State University Department of Music offers both a Bachelor of Science Degree (B.S.) in Music and an M.Ed. in Curriculum & Instruction-Music, as well as a Minor in Music for students majoring in other disciplines. The Department of Music supports a full range of vocal and instrumental performance opportunities, including Orchestra, String Ensemble, Tennessee State University Choir, Meistersingers, Symphonic and Concert Band, Jazz Ensembles, Percussion Ensemble, Pep Band, the TSU Aristocrat of Bands marching band, the Commercial Music Ensemble, and a host of small vocal and mixed ensembles. The Opera Workshop mounts at least one fully staged opera each year. For more information, please visit tnstate.edu/music/

About Big Blue Opera Initiatives

Founded in the fall of 2015, Big Blue Opera Initiatives serves the vocal music community of Tennessee State University, its surrounding areas, and HBCUs nationally. It is an outreach and performance training program for HBCU students and underserved communities whose aim is to promote, expose, and support deserving students and communities too often left out of quality performing arts opportunities in Nashville and around the country. For more information, please visit facebook.com/BigBlueOperaTSU/