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Seattle Opera's summer lineup features youth programs, free outdoor performances

SEATTLE—The end of the season doesn't mean audiences have to wait until the fall to experience opera! Soak in the summer with Seattle Opera's exciting range of programming, including free public performances, youth opera camps, and a season-opening bash at the National Nordic Museum.

"Summer is the perfect time to explore the many ways opera can expand beyond the opera house," said General Director **Christina Scheppelmann**. "Opera isn't only serious drama—it has always had a lighthearted side, too. Our summer programs highlight this under-appreciated dimension and offer a variety of delights for all ages."

"Being part of our community is vital to Seattle Opera's mission," added Director of Programs and Partnerships **Dennis Robinson, Jr.**, who oversaw the company's efforts to welcome more than 2,000 people into the Opera Center last season for free events like the Open House and *Jashin: A Celebration of Afghan Arts*. "We want to build on the success we had last season by bringing performances out of the opera house and into the community, where it can be experienced by an even broader audience."

Kicking off the summer are performances from the [Jane Lang Davis Creation Lab](#), Seattle Opera's new works program. Started in 2020, Creation Lab fosters young composers and librettists in Washington state by encouraging a diversity of perspectives and providing mentorship from leaders in the field. June's public

performances will feature six new operas from the 2023 cohort of composer/librettist teams, with stories touching on themes of family, love, and self-discovery.

For **Kassey Castro**, a former K-12 music educator, Creation Lab offered the freedom to explore new musical inspirations. "Creation Lab was an opportunity for me to redirect my music career," explained Castro, who collaborated with librettist **Hannah Schoettmer** to create the score for their opera, *Hello World*. "I'm really inspired by the music of Nobuo Uematsu, who wrote the music for the 'Final Fantasy' game series. That sound influenced some of the music I wrote for this opera."

Next, Seattle Opera presents public performances of its 2023 school touring production, [*Frida Kahlo and the Bravest Girl in the World*](#). With music by Joe Illick and an original libretto by Mark Campbell, this 35-minute opera for youth audiences tells the story of Mariana, a young girl living in Mexico City who has her portrait painted by Frida Kahlo. Although nervous at first, Mariana soon befriends Frida and learns two important lessons: how to be brave when you feel scared, and that art can happen anywhere. With a catchy score and a libretto that moves fluidly between English and Spanish, it's the perfect introduction to the magic of opera.

Although performances in Tagney Jones Hall are sold out, Seattle Opera will present a series of **free performances at public parks** throughout the summer, with engagements in Powell Barnett Park and Highland Park in July and August.

In July, budding opera performers will sing, act, and perform while learning all about the art of opera in Seattle Opera's [Opera Camps](#). In the Maestros program, students ages 10–13 will create original opera stories, learn songs from actual operas, and put on their very own opera for friends and family. And in the Teen Performance Workshop, students ages 14–18 will receive individual voice lessons and learn scenes from across the classical repertoire.

Finally, opera fans in their 20s and 30s are invited to celebrate the start of the 2023/24 season with the [BRAVO! Kickoff Party](#) at the **National Nordic Museum** on August 2. Guests will enjoy live performances, an outdoor dance party, refreshing drinks, and light appetizers, plus free access to the [museum's galleries](#).

Event Information:

- **Creation Lab 2023 Performances**

Tagney Jones Hall: June 23 & 24 at 1:00 PM and 5:00 PM

Tickets are free, with RSVP required at seattleopera.org/creationlab

- ***Frida Kahlo and the Bravest Girl in the World***

Tagney Jones Hall: Sunday, June 25, at 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM (sold out)

Free public performances (no tickets required):

—Powell Barnett Park: Saturday, July 22, & Sunday, August 13, at 10:00 AM

—Highland Park: Sunday, July 23, & Saturday, August 12, at 10:00 AM

More information at seattleopera.org/Frida

- **Opera Camps**

Maestros (ages 10–13): July 10–14

Teen Performance Workshop (ages 14–18): July 17–21

No prior musical or theatrical experience necessary, info and registration at

seattleopera.org/operacamps

- **BRAVO! Kickoff Party**

National Nordic Museum: Wednesday, August 2, at 6:30 PM

Tickets and info at seattleopera.org/kickoff

About Seattle Opera

Established in 1963, Seattle Opera is committed to serving the people of the Pacific Northwest through music, storytelling, and programs for people of all ages. Each year, more than 50,000 people attend the company's performances, and more than 100,000 people are served through school performances, radio broadcasts, and more. The organization brings opera to life in a number of different ways, offering artistic excellence through national and international collaborations. Seattle Opera strives to create an environment where artists, staff, behind-the-scenes workers, and members of the community feel a strong connection to the company, and to the art of opera. Follow Seattle Opera on Facebook, Twitter, SoundCloud, and on Classical KING FM 98.1.

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