San Diego Opera Announces Presentation of Opera Hack Finalists
August 26, 2020 at 11 AM, (PDT)/2 PM, (EST) at https://www.youtube.com/operaamerica

Two-day ideation summit held in 2019 explored how technological innovations enhance the production, presentation, and consumption of opera.

Moderated by Marc Scorca, President and CEO of OPERA America

Supported by OPERA America Innovation Grant and the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation

San Diego, CA – In July of 2019, San Diego Opera partnered with Microsoft, with support from Opera America and the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, to bring together professionals from theater companies, tech companies, and prominent university engineering and theater programs for a two-day hackathon to discover new ways for technology to be used in theater. Inspired by “hacks” in the technological sector which often brings together experts in disparate fields to work together to solve a presented problem, usually in a limited amount of time, San Diego Opera’s Opera Hack partnered participants with local universities and tech companies to come up with creative solutions to scenarios presented by San Diego Opera. Forty multi-disciplinary experts from around North America submitted sixteen proposals to a panel of tech and theater based advisors. $40,000 in funding was disbursed to the three winning ideas enabling them to develop their proposal over the course of the year. The winners, announced last year at the completion of the hack, are: Open Show, Becoming (formerly Hamsafar), and Opera Map.
San Diego Opera is pleased to present the three winning projects on **Wednesday, August 26, 2020 at 11 AM (PDT)/2 PM (EST) at [https://www.youtube.com/operaamerica](https://www.youtube.com/operaamerica)**. Winning teams will present their projects and take part in live Q&A sessions with the Opera Hack advisory panel. The event is free and open to the public and is moderated by OPERA America’s President and CEO, **Marc Scorca** with participation from San Diego Opera General Director, **David Bennett** and Opera Hack project manager, **Angel Mannion**.

“I am so proud of the outcomes of Opera Hack, and look forward to sharing these projects publicly,” adds San Diego Opera General Director, David Bennett. “When we created the Hack, we wanted to have brilliant minds from the opera and theater worlds share thinking with other brilliant minds in technology, to address challenges facing the production of live theater today. These three projects all do that, in unique and innovative ways. I’m also thrilled that we’ve just been awarded funding for Opera Hack.2, which will further advance this sort of collaborative thinking.”

**About the winning proposals:**

**Open Show**

A collaborative, interactive, visual “show bible” made for and by creative and production teams that is easy-to-use and saves money during rehearsals, productions and production re-mounts. Received $16,500 in funding. Team members: Miller Puckette, h0t club (Kate Bergstrom, Todd Anderson, Martin Galvão), and Bryan Jacobs.

**Opera Map**

A professional database using 360 photogrammetry capture for design, planning, and production rental. Received $13,500 in funding. Team members: Anne Hiatt, Emily Wells, Muntaser Syed, Fabian Kim, and Victoria Robertson.

**Becoming (formerly “Hamsafar”)**

A musical experience combining virtual reality, haptic feedback, and Space3D at the Qualcomm Institute. Received $10,000 in funding. Team members: Shahrokh Yadegari, John Burnett, Jeremy Cooperstock, Louis Pisha, and Francesca Talenti.

**Opera Hack Advisory Panel**

**Ryan Hunt – Interactive Experience**

Ryan Hunt is a Lead Software Engineer with The Walt Disney Company. He has over 20 years of experience working with multimedia technologies including graphics engines, novel user interfaces, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence. Much of his career has been in advertising and entertainment where he has focused on creating unique interactive experiences and solving problems in challenging domains like sound and gesture-based interfaces. Ryan has earned numerous awards for interactive design and programming, including a Clio Award for the 2004
Acura Interactive Showroom, and a Keyart Award for the online film site for Michael Mann’s The Insider.

**C. Murdock Lewis – Scenic and Media Design**
Charles Murdock Lucas, member USA 829, is an international scene and media designer based in San Diego, California. Awards and honors include: scene design work exhibited in the Professional/Transformation Exhibit from the USA at the 2019 Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space, the Robert L.B. Tobin Director-Designer Showcase sponsored by OPERA America for production concepts for *The Cradle Will Rock*, the A. J. Fletcher Opera Fellowship in Scene Design at UNCSA, a nomination for the 2017 San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Craig Noel Awards for Theatrical Excellence for Outstanding Scene Design, and the USITT Scene Design Award sponsored by Rose Brand.

**Anne E. McMills – Lighting Design and 3D Printing**
Anne E. McMills is the Head of Lighting Design at San Diego State University. Her far-reaching career extends across the many facets of the lighting world—from theatre, including Broadway and the West End, to television and theme parks to architecture, industrials, concerts, award shows, dance, and opera. Anne is a proud member of United Scenic Artists, Local 829. In addition, Anne is the author of The Assistant Lighting Designer's Toolkit and 3D Printing Basics for Entertainment Design.

**David Adam Moore – Stage Direction, Video, and Performance**
With over 60 principal roles to his credit, David Adam Moore is a highly sought-after leading baritone by major opera houses and orchestras worldwide. A celebrated interpreter of contemporary music, he has created roles for some of today’s most important living composers, including Thomas Adès, Peter Eötvös, and David T. Little. Also known for his work as a stage director, composer, and video designer, Moore co-founded two NYC-based arts collectives - GLMMR and Choreo Teatro - with whom he has created music, video, and performance works in venues including the 92nd St. Y, NO Gallery, and The Cell.

**Victoria Robertson – Opera Performance and VR**
Victoria Robertson is an opera singer, television producer, and virtual reality entrepreneur. She sang with the San Diego Opera for 12 seasons, produced a travel television series for AWE TV, and founded the virtual reality production company World Travel VR. In music, tech, and media, Victoria is known for putting together great teams and executing a variety of creative concepts digitally and live.

**Vita Tzykun – Set and Costume Design**
Recent projects include set design for the critically acclaimed World premiere of the *(R)Evolution of Steve Jobs* at Santa Fe Opera, set and costume design for *Faust* at Lyric Opera of Chicago in collaboration with the acclaimed sculptor John Frame, costume design for the World premiere of *Dinner At Eight* at Minnesota Opera, and costume design for the Russian premiere of *The Passenger* at the Yekaterinburg State Academical Opera and Ballet Theatre, and at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow. Her numerous film and TV credits include art direction for Lady Gaga’s ABC Thanksgiving Special, production design for several award winning feature films and shorts, and commercials for leading entities such as PBS, DirectTV, Axe, Bulova, and
Qualcomm. Tzykun has also served as a panelist on the Opera Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts and taught as a guest lecturer at the Weill Music Institute at Carnegie Hall. In 2016, the International Opera Awards nominated Victoria Tzykun for Best Design. She is a co-founder of GLMMR.

**Dr. Chris Warren – Sound Design and Composition**

Dr. Chris Warren is a sound artist, signal processing researcher, and musical instrument inventor. Warren earned a Ph.D. in Computer Music from UC San Diego studying with Dr. Miller Puckette, author of the Max and Pure Data programming languages, and an M.A. in Music, Science, and Technology from Stanford University. He teaches sound design and digital composition at San Diego State University. His sonic installations have been featured at the Museum of Making Music, the Fleet Science Center, NAMM, and the Havana Biennial.

**Matt Witkamp - UX, UI, and VR**

Matt Witkamp, founder and CEO of Kampfire Studios LLC, has been advancing digital experiences for more than 20 years through UX and UI design for companies such as AT&T, T-Mobile, Siemens Medical, Intel, HTC, Comcast, and Stanford Medical. He is passionate about experience in all forms, both digital and non-digital, but his love of technology has lead him to design experiences and UI for everything from the days of DOS, to desktop, to mobile, to TV, to today’s emerging XR. Matt takes a multi-lens approach to leveraging design to realize business opportunities that takes into account not just the design and experience aspect, but also business drivers and market opportunities. Matt was involved early on with the HoloLens and was part of the team that brought x-ray vision to surgeons with Stanford Medical. Since then he has been striving to establish best practices around experience design for immersive technologies.

Visit [www.operahack.org](http://www.operahack.org) to view all submitted proposals and learn more about the project. Opera Hack is made possible by an OPERA America Innovation Grant. Supported by the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation. Sponsored by Microsoft Corporation.

**San Diego Opera Mission Statement**

The mission of San Diego Opera is to deliver exceptional vocal performances and exciting, accessible programs to diverse audiences, focusing on community engagement and the transformative power of live performance.

**San Diego Opera Vision Statement**

San Diego Opera will be recognized internationally as a leading example of adaptability, innovation and sustainability in the operatic arts, promoting diversified programming and unique performance venues with world-class and emerging talent.

**San Diego Opera Core Values Statement**

Through excellence in innovative programming and education, SDO provides a lasting cultural service to the community.

- Our tradition of excellence in fully staged opera is augmented with new models of opera and venues. Our unique and deep commitment to the community propels us to explore ways of increasing affordability and accessibility.
- Through fiscal responsibility and nimble adaptation to the changing marketplace, we protect the future of San Diego Opera.
- Our educational and community involvement coupled with relevant programming will build the audience of the future.

[www.sdopera.org](http://www.sdopera.org)

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