



# 2013-2014 ANNUAL REPORT



## 2014 INTERNATIONAL SEASON

SAN DIEGO OPERA

233 A Street, Suite 500 • Centre City Building • San Diego, CA 92101  
Tel: (619) 232-7636 • Fax: (619) 231-6915 • [sdopera.com](http://sdopera.com)

# THE 2014 STORY

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Not so many months ago...

On March 19, 2014, San Diego Opera's Board of Directors voted to cease operations and sell the Company's assets after the final performance of *Don Quixote* on April 14. This action took almost everyone by surprise and began what became an unprecedented movement to save a major US opera company.

The following day, the Company presented a sold-out performance of the Verdi *Requiem* which the Los Angeles Times called "A Stirring Requiem for San Diego Opera's Senseless, Premature Death." This headline proved to be a premature proclamation of the passing of San Diego Opera. Within hours, many awoke from a state of shock and began to take action to change this course of events. Board members began reconsidering their vote. Members of the staff and unions who represent San Diego Opera gathered to form an activist group known as The White Knights. Immediate and intense media scrutiny began on the local, national and international levels. Opera America, the national service organization for opera and musical arts, reached out to offer support and called upon leaders of other opera companies to do the same.

Emergency board meetings were convened. Experts were brought in and board members traveled to other opera companies, such as The Dallas Opera, to meet with leadership and develop a new sustainable business plan. What San Diego Opera was experiencing was not unique in the world of opera - other companies faced dwindling donations and flat ticket sales and managed to reinvent themselves and thrive under a new business model. If other opera companies could do this, so could San Diego Opera! As more and more Board members realized that the decision to close had come too fast, a vote was taken to delay the closing by two weeks to provide more time to explore options other than to cease operations.

The message to save San Diego Opera took to social media with the hashtag #savesdo. The international opera community picked up the cause with artists such as Joyce DiDonato and Greer Grimsley championing on the Opera's behalf. #savesdo trended to the number three position on Twitter. An online petition to save the Company generated over 20,000 signatures in just over a week.

Carol Lazier, then Secretary to the Board of Directors, pledged \$1 million towards the effort to keep San Diego Opera open. On April 17, a Town Hall Meeting took place with Marc Scorca, CEO of Opera America, and David Devan of the Opera Company of Philadelphia to look at new business models. A record capacity





crowd of 500 people attended with hundreds more watching online. Meanwhile across town, a board meeting was held that saw the resignation of numerous board members and left Carol Lazier the most senior executive member remaining on the board. She was elected president by the remaining board and placed the Company's former leadership on administrative leave.

On April 28, a meeting of the Opera's membership was called and a motion preventing the sale of Company assets outside the ordinary course of business was put forth. The vote was overwhelmingly carried, with 2 opposed and 1 abstention. The membership protected our assets and with that, we took another step forward.

The remaining board, with Carol Lazier at the helm, decided in order for the board to agree to keep San Diego Opera open, \$1 million needed to be raised in two weeks to be confident that there truly was community support for this company that had brought great opera to San Diego for almost 50 years. Undaunted, an online crowd-funding campaign was launched. In order to protect gifts from generous donors, the funds were entered into an escrow account and would only be released if the \$1 million goal was reached by the May 19 deadline and a 2015 season. If either of these goals were not met, the money would then be returned to the donors and the curtain would be lowered on our beloved opera company. Within 10 days, the \$1 million goal was achieved, and on May 14, five days before the deadline, we hit the \$2 million mark due to a matching \$500,000 gift from a group of donors and a \$100,000 gift from the Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation. By the May 19 deadline we had received \$2,116,376 in donations from 2461 donors from 36 states as well as 6 countries - Austria, Australia, Canada, England, Italy and Mexico. Gifts ranged from \$10 - \$50,000 with a median gift of \$100. Clearly the public wanted San Diego Opera to remain open. The results were unprecedented. We were humbled and exhilarated. And then we got to work producing opera!



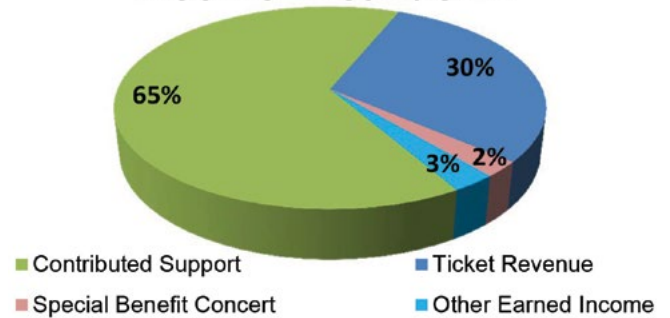
Since then, we have begun to create an arts organization that better represents the diverse community of San Diego and better engage the Southern California audience. As we move forward, we are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead....not just for the upcoming season, but for the next 50 years and beyond.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

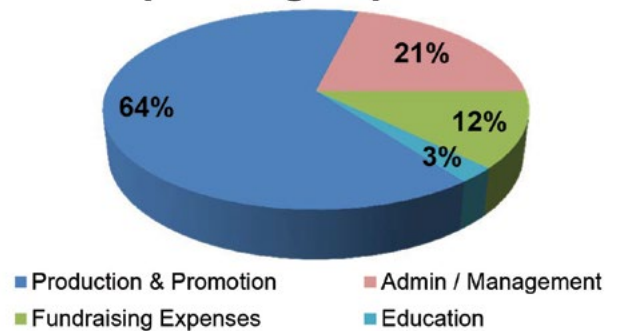
San Diego Opera is a 501(c)3, not-for-profit organization incorporated in the state of California that produced four productions and sixteen performances along with one special concert event throughout the five month 2014 season (January - May) downtown in the San Diego Civic Theatre. Operas are produced and staged completely by San Diego Opera and feature internationally renowned artists. The chorus and stage crew are drawn from the local community and San Diego Symphony is contracted as the orchestra. San Diego Opera finished the 2014 fiscal year with a balanced budget thanks, in part, to the generosity of donors, efficiencies by the production team and the planned release from the Kroc Production Fund. San Diego Opera's financial statements are audited on an annual basis.

	<b>Pagliacci</b> <b>The Elixir of Love</b> <b>A Masked Ball</b> <b>Verdi Requiem</b> <b>Don Quixote</b> <hr/> <b>ACTUAL</b>
Earned Income (Tickets, Scenic Studio, Investment Income, Other)	5,641,650
Operating Expenses (Production, Administration, Development, Marketing, etc)	<hr/> 15,953,733
<b>(DEFICIT TO FUND) / EXCESS</b>	<b>(10,312,083)</b>
Contributed Support (Annual Fund, Government, Gala, Net Assets Released)	10,260,016
Other Changes in Net Assets (Investment Gains & Losses, Change in Value of Gift Annuities)	<hr/> 54,611
<b>(DEFICIENCY) / EXCESS</b>	<b><hr/><hr/>2,544</b>

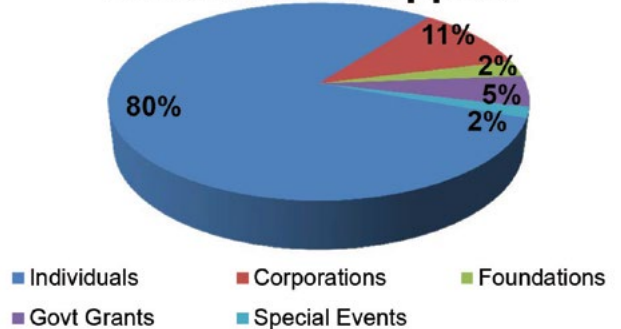
## Income Breakdown



## Operating Expenses



## Contributed Support





The numbers below reflect the 2013-2014 Season, as of June 30, 2014

**Status:** Not-for-profit

**Year founded:** 1965

**President of Board:** Carol Lazier

**Immediate Past President:** Karen S. Cohn

**Programs and Services:** Production of mainstage operas, English supertitles for all performances, Opera education and outreach, set and costume building, set and costume rental

**Full-time regular staff:** 38

**Part-time employees:** 354

**Chorus:** 80

**Orchestra:** 55 to 75 per opera, depending on production (San Diego Symphony Orchestra)

**Unions:** Five – Stagehands, Wig & Makeup, Wardrobe, Scenic Artists and Chorus, Dancers and Stage Management

**Board of Directors:** 54 plus three Life Directors

**Advisory Board:** 84 members

**Volunteers:** 178

**2013/2014 Volunteer hours:** 6,300

**2013/2014 Operating expenses:** \$15,953,733

**Attendance:** 49,731

**Educational events:** 372

**Attendees at educational events:** 42,502

**Student attendance at performances and dress rehearsals:** 12,032

**Administrative offices:** 233 A Street, Suite 500, Centre City Building, San Diego, CA 92101

**Patron Services office:** 237 A Street, Centre City Building, San Diego, CA 92101

**Scenic Studio & Warehouse:** 3064 Commercial Street, San Diego, CA 92113

**Costume Shop:** 233 A Street, Suite 600, Centre City Building, San Diego, CA 92101

**Performance venue:** San Diego Civic Theatre, 3<sup>rd</sup> and B Streets, San Diego, CA 92101

**Seating Capacity:** 2,877 (for Opera)

## SAN DIEGO OPERA MISSION STATEMENT

San Diego Opera is dedicated to producing opera and vocal arts of the highest artistic caliber that enrich local community life. Through extensive education and outreach activities, we strive to make opera engaging and accessible for everyone.

## 2014-2015 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### OFFICERS

**Carol Lazier**, *President*

**Courtney Ann Coyle**, *Executive Vice President*

**James A. Merritt**, *Vice President, Finance*

**Frances R. Marshall**, *Secretary/Parliamentarian*

### MEMBERS AT LARGE

Robert B. Horsman\*, David E. Kleinfeld, Sarah B. Marsh-Rebelo\*, Anita Norton\*, Gloria Rasmussen\*, Joe Watkins\*

### DIRECTORS

David Brenner, M.D., Candace Carroll\*, Teresa Fischlowitz, Nathan Fletcher, Kathryn Hattox, John Ippolito, Ann Irwin, Robert H. Kaplan, Ph.D., Matthew Leivo, Alex Lukianov, Zandra Rhodes, Thomas Shiftan, M.D., Linda Spuck\*, Tony Thornley

\*Committee Chair

## STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

### Student Nights At The Opera

4 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 9,938

Free of charge to students in Grades 3-12, students enjoy the excitement and energy of the final dress rehearsal.

### Student Night Show & Tell

1 SESSION; TOTAL REACH: 2,515

Dr. Nicolas Reveles introduces the entire opera cast and crew onstage during one Student Nights at the Opera performance.

### Docent Presentations

211 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 8,157

Docents prepare students for their evening at the opera with a visit to their classroom for one of two programs: ABCs of Opera and See You At The Opera!

### Docent Training Lectures

10 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 200

Annual training for all of San Diego Opera Docents preparing them for the upcoming season.

### Words and Music Residencies

6 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 2,451

An in-school residency that provides students the opportunity to create an original opera including dramatic writing and composing music.

### Music and Science Online Curriculum

11 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 656

Online curriculum examining the connection between opera and science.

### Master Classes

4 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 230

Intimate master classes presented by San Diego Opera's world-class artists at local colleges and universities.

### Next Steps

5 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 115

Students who attend Student Nights at the Opera receive a follow-up visit from a teaching artist or docent in order to support their experience of opera.

### Study Guides & Web Resources

1,821 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 22,763

Hosted by Dr. Nicolas Reveles, the Study Guides are fun, lively and kid-targeted videos which prepare students for Student Nights At The Opera with age-appropriate facts and animation.

### Student Ticket Initiative

15 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 1,251

Serves full time college and university students who can experience opera by purchasing tickets at a greatly reduced rate.

### Teacher Professional Development

1 SESSION; TOTAL REACH: 52

Prior to the Student Nights at the Opera, teachers may receive three hours of professional development which includes basic information on the art form, a season overview and curriculum preparation.





## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

### Audio Description Service

16 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 520

Available at the Tuesday and Sunday performances for ticketed patrons with visual disabilities. Service provides verbal readings of the Program and synopsis of the opera, along with a "Play-by-Play" description of the action onstage during the performance.

### Backstage Tours

12 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 1,002

Free of charge, patrons can discover the magic backstage where they can see all of the pre-performance bustle.

### Community Conversations

7 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 503

Wildly popular, these free, exciting and thought-provoking collaborations at well-known venues around town discussing the powerful themes in the current season.

### Opera Lectures to Community Groups

24 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 398

### Community Collaborative Efforts

3 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 5,479

### Opera Insights Series

4 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 580

Dr. Ronald Shaheen, one of San Diego's most prominent musical scholars, fascinates with stories, historical and musical background about the composers and operas. Series takes place at San Diego Regional Libraries.

### Pre-Opera Lectures

17 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 9,643

Enlightening and insightful 25-minute lectures before each performance in the Civic Theatre, free for ticket holders.

### Stars in the Salon

4 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 989

Free and open to the public, world-class opera stars and directors share behind-the-scenes stories and answer audience questions.

### Taste of Opera & Pre-Opera Dinner Lectures

20 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 656

Creatively-themed pairings of delectable cuisine and exciting opera discussions at some of San Diego's hottest restaurants and Great News! Cooking School.

## ONLINE & MULTIMEDIA PROGRAMS

### Operapaedia Website

TOTAL REACH: 5,351

Operapaedia is an online encyclopedia which provides a collection of articles giving background on the opera season, plus a large amount of information on opera in general.

### Video Podcasts - Downloads

43 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 46,438

Dr. Nicolas Reveles introduces you to the upcoming season with these informative and entertaining video podcasts.

### Radio/Web Live Broadcasts

4 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 34,800\*

Enjoy the excitement of live broadcasts from the opening night performances of each of our four productions.

\*Estimated based on KPBS Listenership

### Operatalk! TV Program

42 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 24,000

Dr. Reveles takes you on an intriguing journey through the story, music and history of each opera. You'll pick up rich insight into the structure and composition of the music, along with recommendations of the best recordings. Broadcast on UCSD-TV as well as available online.

### Opera Spotlight TV Program

6 SESSIONS; TOTAL REACH: 84,053

A unique look behind-the-scenes at how the singers, directors, conductor and crew work together to create each opera, plus a sneak peek at rehearsal footage and exclusive interviews with the stars. Broadcast on UCSD-TV as well as available online.

### Facebook - Followers

1 SESSION; TOTAL REACH: 5,555

### Twitter - Followers

1 SESSION; TOTAL REACH: 11,500

2013-14 EDUCATION & COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS TOTAL REACH:  
**286,225**

# 2014–2015 SEASON

## LA BOHÈME

Giacomo Puccini • January 24, 27, 29, February 1, 2015

Young love...nothing is more all-consuming and passionate. Share the struggles, joys and ultimate tragedy of bohemian friends and the passion of a couple, whose love is so intense it is unbearable to be apart, yet impossible to be together. Perfect for first-timers! Starring: *Rodolfo* Harold Meers, *Mimi* Alyson Cambridge, *Musetta* Sara Gartland, *Marcello* Morgan Smith, *Conductor* Karen Keltner, *Director* Isabella Bywater

## DON GIOVANNI

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart • February 14, 17, 20, 22, 2015

Pompous, lustful and masochistic, Don Giovanni is the ultimate bad boy, but is he more? In this intense opera, Giovanni stalks his latest conquest, but he cannot escape his past sins. In a shocking conclusion, the living are not the only ones who can seek vengeance. Starring: *Don Giovanni* Ildebrando D'Arcangelo, *Leporello* Alex Esposito, *Donna Anna* Ellie Dehn, *Donna Elvira* Myrtò Papatnasiu, *Don Ottavio* Paul Appleby, *Zerlina* Emily Fons, *Masetto* Kristopher Irmiter, *Conductor* Daniele Callegari, *Director* Nicholas Muni

## NIXON IN CHINA

by John Adams • March 14, 17, 20, 22, 2015

An opera of fact and fiction about the historic goodwill meeting in Peking in 1972 between President Richard Nixon and China's Chairman Mao Tse-Tung. Experience this whirlwind diplomatic trip that changed history. A stunning political story. Starring: *Richard Nixon* Franco Pomponi, *Mao Tse-Tung* Chad Shelton, *Chou En-Lai* Chen-Ye Yuan, *Pat Nixon* Maria Kanyova, *Henry Kissinger* Richard Paul Fink, *Madame Mao Tse-Tung* Kathleen Kim, *Conductor* Joseph Mechavich, *Director* James Robinson. Nixon in China is a co-production of Houston Grand Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Minnesota Opera and Portland Opera.

## Special Events:

### AILYN PÉREZ AND STEPHEN COSTELLO IN RECITAL

Dubbed "America's fastest rising husband and wife opera stars", Ailyn Pérez and Stephen Costello join us in a piano recital performing songs from their first album together "Love Duets" including Verdi, Puccini and Bernstein.

Friday, September 5, 2014  
at 7:00pm  
Balboa Theatre

### We'll Meet Again: The Songs of Kate Smith

#### STEPHANIE BLYTHE AND CRAIG TERRY

Experience opera star Stephanie Blythe and pianist Craig Terry in this powerful and uplifting recital celebrating American singer Kate Smith, whose bold voice inspired a nation through the Great Depression and devastating wars with popular standards like *We'll Meet Again*, *When You Wish Upon a Star* and *God Bless America*.

Thursday, December 11, 2014  
at 7:00pm  
Balboa Theatre

### 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION CONCERT

Celebrate our 50th Anniversary with an amazing concert filled with favorite arias, duets, ensembles and choruses, with the San Diego Symphony. Featuring Lise Lindstrom, Marianne Cornetti, Stephen Powell, René Barbera, Sean Panikkar, Reinhard Hagen and Scott Sikon, come and enjoy a tribute to our 50-year history and celebrate our new beginning.

April 18 & 19, 2015  
Jacobs Music Center  
Copley Symphony Hall

### EL PASADO NUNCA SE TERMINA (THE PAST IS NEVER FINISHED)

Music by José "Pepe" Martínez, Libretto by Leonard Foglia

The great Mariachi Vargas De Tecalitlán return with an entirely new Mariachi opera from the same team which created *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna* in 2013.

Saturday, April 25, 2015  
at 2:00pm & 7:00pm  
San Diego Civic Theatre

