

OMAI OPERA MANAGERS ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

December 2022

Dear OMAI members,

A very busy and unusual year is coming to an end.

While we continue to struggle with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we also face additional unsettling problems, especially since the outbreak of the war in February 2022 in Ukraine.

In the opera business we find ourselves in a phase of ongoing transition. Challenges and questions have emerged on all fronts:

on funding and the sustainability of opera, in international travel and inflation, on the question of audiences returning, on the need for new narratives and to end outdated hierarchical structures, and on a heightened awareness of the necessity for more diversity, equality and fairness in culture.

2023 will be a crucial year in which we will discover how much re-thinking and re-structuring will be possible, and how it will influence our work as opera managers.

Especially in a difficult period like this it is important for us to come together. As a group we have a common home where problems can be discussed and solutions explored. This home is and will be OMAI for opera managers.

In April of 2022 we held a successful inaugural **OMAI Annual Conference** at the Deutsche Oper Berlin. The highlight of the conference was being able to gather in person for the first time since the pandemic and to get to know each other. We were especially proud to organize two joint sessions with the 50 Opera Europa members. Representatives of other associations joined us for these productive sessions. IAMA, AEAA, Doka, AFAA, Ariacs and the artists' association Krea[k]tiv.

At the conference, we held three round table sessions on topics that concern us: the Sustainability of the Opera Manager Profession, Social Media and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). We were grateful that three illustrious guests – Cornelia Preissinger (Oper Leipzig), Patrick



OMAI wishes you a Happy New Year in 2023!

Yours,
The OMAI Board of Directors

Kabongo (Tenor), Lucia Lucas (Baritone) and Lawrence Brownlee (Tenor)- joined the DEI panel for an enlightening discussion.

Sarah has made a fun video trailer of the OMAI Annual Conference that is now posted on our **OMAI YouTube channel**. Have a look. Please subscribe and like our channel!

[OMAI 1st Annual Conference Trailer](#)

Our committee work in the Opera Committee, Communications Committee and Media Committee has been fundamental to our association. We want to thank the two outgoing chairs for their hard work during the first difficult year of our existence on behalf of OMAI: Dari Dimova for chairing the Opera Committee and Graham Cozzubbo for chairing the Digital Committee.

Please note; the Opera Committee meetings are now **open to all OMAI members**. We meet on the first Wednesday of every month. A Zoom link will be sent out via email the day before. Please join us!

We also would welcome new members to join the committees and help do the important work of our association. Let us know if you are available.

We have some very good news. In collaboration with numerous OMAI members, Sarah has compiled an **OMAI Data Base**. It includes contact information for hundreds of casting and artistic directors from around the world as well as a list of all our members with emails. It now accessible to all members on Google Docs. Please know this is a constant work-in-progress and needs constant updating. Any help with updates is appreciated!

[OMAI Data Base](#)

The poster for 'OMAI Talks' is titled 'Casting after the Pandemic'. It features three speakers: Isla Mundell-Perkins (Casting Direktorin, Hamburg), Erik Malmquist (Head of Casting, Munich), and Michael Barobeck (Künstlerischer Betriebsdirektor, Graz). The event is scheduled for Dec. 1st, 2022, at 4:00 pm Berlin, 3:00 pm London, and 10:00 am NYC. The poster also includes logos for Staatsoper Hamburg, Bayerische Staatsoper, and Oper Graz, along with the OMAI logo and the website www.operamangers.org.

Our virtual meetings with key players in the opera world – the **OMAI Talks** - have been very informative and had a good turnout, especially the most recent one with our guests the casting directors Isla Mundell-Perkins, Erik Malmquist and Michael Barobeck. Sarah has made a video of the talk. Have a look here: [OMAI Talk-8: Casting after the Pandemic](#)

We are happy that the active cooperation with the other associations is proceeding so well; this will be of special importance in 2023. Thanks to our president Mitchell Piper for his involvement in this and the immense time he is investing into the association work.

At the end of this year, we especially want to thank the Board of Directors and the Committee members. Your involvement has made OMAI what it is and is greatly appreciated!

We will start the new year 2023 with our traditional virtual **Neujahrsempfang** which will take place on Thursday, January 12, 2023 at 12 pm New York / 17:00 London / 18:00 Berlin. A link will be sent out early January.

Soon we will send you the dates for our next **OMAI Talks**, which will host Elisabeth Sobotka as our guest, the designated intendant of Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin, and the next **OMAI One-Off**, a conversation with AGMA.

Lastly, we are pleased to announce the our **next 2nd OMAI Annual Conference!** It will take place in person in Madrid, April 19 -21, 2023. Marc Mazy is working on putting on a good conference for us. Please save the date! More infos and details will follow soon.

For now, we send you the warmest Season's Greetings, wish you all some relaxing time with your families and, as the Germans say, "einen guten Rutsch" into the new year 2023!

See you on January 12, 2023!!

Markus Laska & Sarah Stephens
The Communications Committee