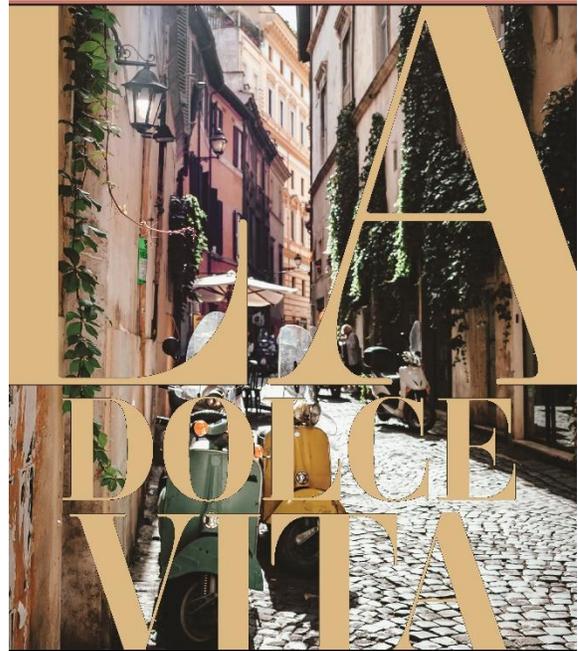




Serenata is a Go!

Join us in commending the Serenata Committee on arranging for a live in-person Serenata this upcoming May! The evening will honor Sarah and Ernest Butler, and transport us (if only for an evening) to springtime Rome for a taste of the sweet life.

While nothing is certain in these uncertain times, we are all grateful to the committee for pressing through the unknowns and finding a way that we can all hopefully meet safely. Be sure to purchase your tickets from the Serenata event website at: <https://one.bidpal.net/serenata2021/welcome> or by contacting Rhanda Luna (737.228.1442).



We Won!

Another spot of brightness in the new year — Austin Opera was recognized as “Opera Company of the Year—2020” by industry publication *BroadwayWorld*. Austin Opera conductor Timothy Myers took home “Best Conductor” as well. These awards celebrate the best in local opera, and Austin won over dozens of excellent regional theaters. Now that’s something to raise a glass to!

WE WON!

**broadway
WORLD REGIONAL
2020 AWARDS**

OPERA COMPANY OF THE YEAR 2020

AUSTIN OPERA

**BEST CONDUCTOR 2020
TIMOTHY MYERS**



President's Letter

by Bill Wallace

Dear fellow Guild members,

This past year has been a challenging time for opera companies all over the world. Despite the very challenging circumstances, I am so proud to see how Austin Opera has forged ahead in creative and exciting ways. The weekly live broadcasts, *Live from Indy Terrace*, are an entertaining and insightful part of my week. The co-production with Houston Grand Opera has given us three delightful operas and a lovely concert. If you didn't make it to these at the drive-in you missed some of the most fun events of the year.



The innovations continue in the new year. A very special *Live from Indy Terrace* featured the wonderful bass-baritone Ryan Speedo Green discussing his biographic book *Sing for Your Life*, written by Daniel Bergner. If you missed it, you can find it archived on the Austin Opera website.

The latest production of the Sarah and Ernest Butler performance series was a concert featuring the great American tenor Larry Brownlee, joined by Donnie Ray Albert, Karen Slack, and others. Giving Voice premiered on Marquee TV at 7:30 PM on January 22 and includes an exclusive post-event with the artists. It is available online through February 21st!

In lieu of our pre-pandemic Enrichment party there will be a virtual meet-the-artists event with the stars from our All-Star gala. A private link to the YouTube stream will automatically be sent to you a few days prior to the meet-and-greet. Expect the release of our All-Star Concert to be in mid-April.

Plans for our *Tosca* are rapidly falling into place. Expect some exciting innovations due to the pandemic.

Like all of you, I miss the thrill of live performance and the camaraderie of our events. But Annie and the wonderful staff of Austin Opera have provided marvelous ways to continue enjoying the art form we love, opera.

Best regards to you all,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Wallace". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Bill Wallace

Texas Teens Explore Opera

by Lissa Anderson

Do you assume that the only music teenagers are into is rap or the latest from the pop princess du jour? Not true! Austin Opera Guild Education and Community Engagement docents can testify that responses to our classroom presentations have sparked lively interest and appreciation. Now opera fans who are 13 to 19 years old have another way to enjoy and support opera--the Teen Opera Club of Texas (TOCT).

The TOCT is associated with the Texas Opera Alliance (TOA), a collaborative initiative of Austin Opera, The Dallas Opera, Fort Worth Opera, Houston Grand Opera, and OPERA San Antonio. The teen group began in October 2020 when the companies' education leaders, including Austin Opera's Debra Erck, met to discuss the idea of joining forces to create a new opportunity for teens to engage with the world of opera. Now students who cannot get to performances in the major cities can enjoy being together for these virtual programs. Students from across Texas and beyond can now participate without leaving their homes. The organization boasts more than 60 members, and the roster continues to grow.

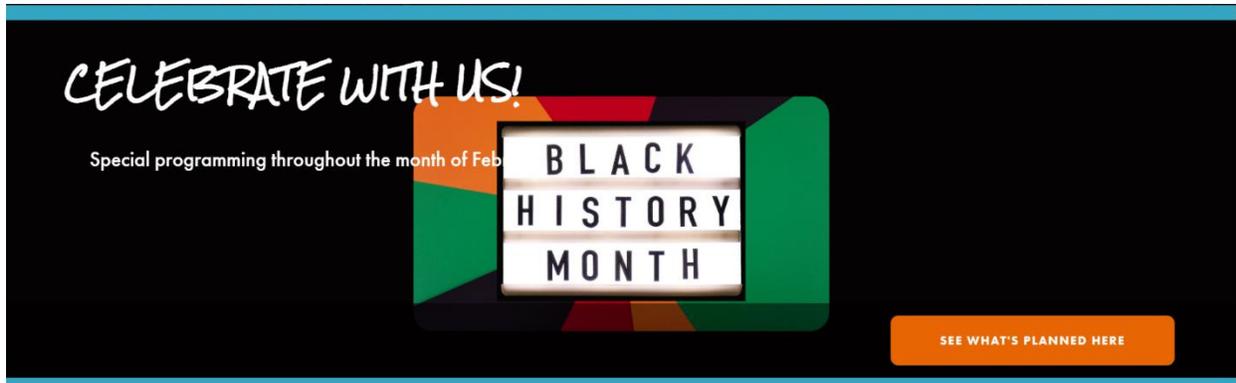
All the TOA companies signed on, and each is hosting a program to get the club started. Previous events included a watch party and cast interviews for Houston Grand Opera's premiere of *Katie: The Strongest of the Strong* and a behind-the-scenes look at designs for *The Cunning Little Vixen*, sponsored by OPERA San Antonio. The Dallas Opera provided information on careers onstage and behind the scenes. "Storytelling, Standing Ovarions, and Stage Presence" was the Fort Worth Opera contribution. Then in February, Austin Opera will present a conversation with Timothy Myers, Sarah and Ernest Butler Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor for Austin Opera, with special focus on the role of the conductor and the orchestra in performing an opera. Plans are in the works to continue the TOCT into the summer of 2021, with opportunities for the student members to take leadership roles to guide program topics and discussion.



SIGN UP TODAY!

TEEN OPERA CLUB OF TEXAS



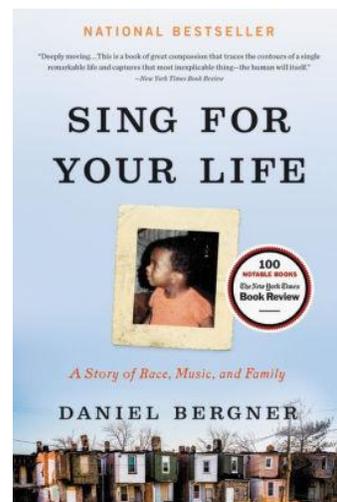


Celebrate Black History Month

February is Black History Month! Austin Opera celebrates with artist spotlights, conversations, and exclusive performances highlighting the artistry and contribution of Black singers to the world of opera. Catch celebratory episodes Live from Indy Terrace through the month of February. We premiered with a conversation with **Donnie Ray Albert** on February 5th – click [here](#) to view the episode!

Austin Opera has arranged for fifty complimentary copies of *Sing for Your Life* to be picked up from independent bookseller **Black Pearl Books**, first-come-first-served, during their regular business hours. Located inside Ten Thousand Villages at 4803 Burnet Road. Pick up *Sing For Your Life* while supplies last!

Giving Voice, part of the Sarah & Ernest Butler Performance Series. Available on-demand until **February 21**, don't miss the complete spectacular concert Giving Voice – co-hosted by tenor Lawrence Brownlee and soprano Nicole Heaston! Enjoy! Cost: FREE with registration. Learn how to sign up for the HGO's Digital Series here: <https://www.houstongrandopera.org/events-tickets/hgo-digital/marquee-tv/>



Join Austin Opera on **February 21, at 2:00 pm CST** in support of **A Night of Black Excellence: Past, Present, and Future**, an all-star virtual benefit concert with Fort Worth Opera to celebrate Black History Month. FWO General Director Afton Battle, her company, and this incredible line-up of artists will pay tribute to Black excellence through music, dance, and spoken word poetry. You don't want to miss this! Cost: \$25-80 Click [here](#) for ticket information.

Opera Brain Breaks - Una pausa para disfrutar de la ópera

by JL Baralt

Puccini's *Tosca*, with a dramatic and heartfelt performance by Renata Scotto, was my first live opera when I was 4 years old. That performance, Renata's voice, and her huge platform shoes (I was sitting in the 1st row) marked the beginning of my passion for the opera. This passion has grown over the years with university opera courses and my attendance to more than 30 operas at the Metropolitan Opera House. My experience as a young boy was an exception – and this is why I am passionate about children's education on this unique artform.

Austin Opera launched OPERA BRAIN BREAKS to expand the educational resources available on the Austin Opera website. OPERA BRAIN BREAKS are short videos, designed for children ages 3-8. Each installment is designed around a music skill, for example "M is for Melody" and "T is for Tenor." They are fun and engaging, which facilitates the introduction of the world of opera to children.

Last December I had the opportunity, and the pleasure, to collaborate with Debra Erck, Director of Education at Austin Opera, to provide Spanish translations for three OPERA BRAIN BREAKS or *Una pausa*

para disfrutar de la ópera (as the program is titled in Spanish). The first *Una pausa para disfrutar de la ópera* to debut will be "C is para Cantar" ("S is for Singing"), featuring the song *Granada* by Agustin Lara, performed by tenor David Portillo and pianist Allen Perriello. I am extremely grateful to Debra for inviting me to collaborate and enhance Austin Opera's educational resources, something I highly enjoyed and hope to continue doing. Translating these resources into Spanish shows our commitment to arts education and to engaging more of the greater Austin community.

These "self-serve" online resources are more critical now as we continue our path through COVID-19 times. The work of the Guild's Education and Community Engagement Committee has been dampened as schools struggle to deal with remote and in-person learning, as well as limiting visitors to campuses.

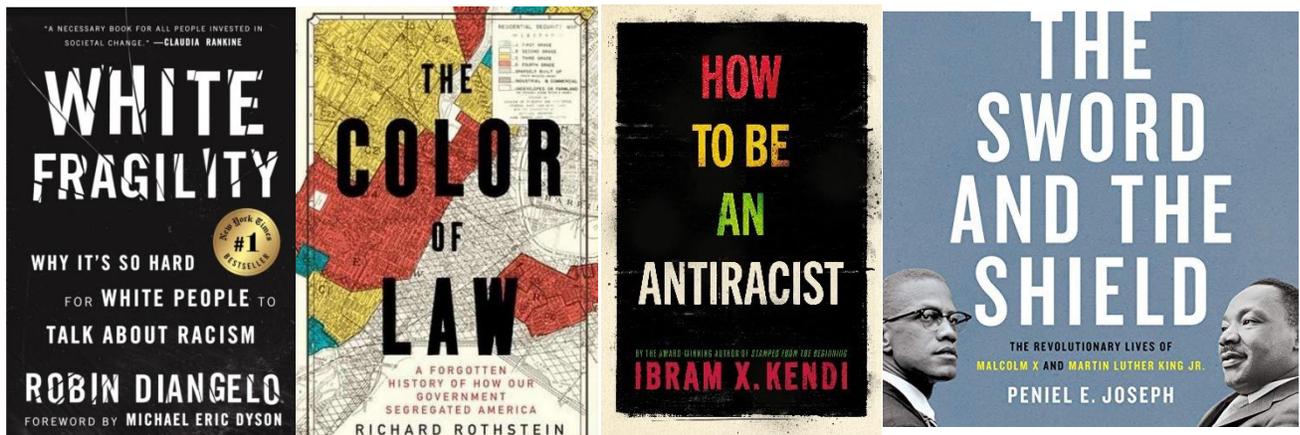
Anyone can access the OPERA BRAIN BREAKS by visiting Austin Opera's website. Please visit the link, enjoy one of the BREAKS and spread the news! <https://austinopera.org/education/>



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at Austin Opera

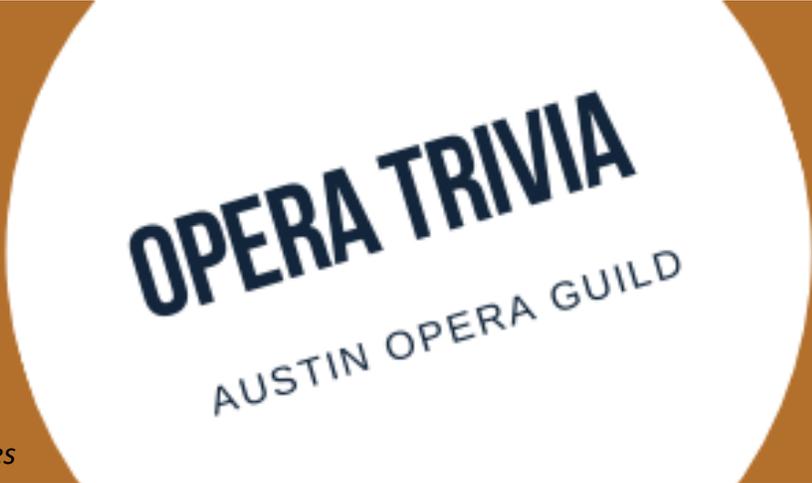
by Carol Logan

Austin Opera has established a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Trustee Tina Barrett chairs the new group. In 2021, priorities and deliverables include setting long and short-term goals, among them to inform and educate personnel, diversify from within and reallocate funding. The group has embarked on a reading and discussion agenda to further understand the impact of racism in the arts. Several zoom sessions have been held and will continue during 2021. Austin Opera is working with Joelle Allen, Chief Inclusion Strategist at Interaction Traction who has provided guidance.



Upcoming Austin Opera & Guild Events

Upcoming Events			
February 12, 2021	LIT: Selections from Giving Voice	3:00 p.m.	Facebook
February 19, 2021	LIT: A Night of Black Excellence	3:00 p.m.	Facebook
February 26, 2021	LIT: Special surprise guest..!	3:00 p.m.	Facebook
March 4 – 5	Amplify Austin Day	6 – 6 p.m.	Amplify
March 8, 2021	Guild Board Meeting	11:15 a.m.	Zoom

The logo features the text "OPERA TRIVIA" in a large, bold, blue sans-serif font, slanted upwards. Below it, "AUSTIN OPERA GUILD" is written in a smaller, blue sans-serif font, also slanted upwards. The text is centered within a white circle that is set against a dark brown background.

OPERA TRIVIA

AUSTIN OPERA GUILD

By Jack Reeves

1. For tears and melodrama, one might attend an opera seria; for laughs (and melodrama), one might visit its counterpart...
 1. opera comica
 2. opera mezze
 3. opera lagrima
 4. opera buffa
2. *La Boheme* premiered in 1896. Exactly 100 years later, this rock opera re-interpretation (which turned 25 this January) took the action from Paris's Quartier Latin to Manhattan's East Village:
 1. *Rent*
 2. *West Side Story*
 3. *Avenue Q*
 4. *Hair*
3. Handel's noted aria "Lascia ch'io pianga" ("Let me weep") is written in the key of E-sharp... Or, as it's more commonly known, the key of: ____
4. Austin enjoyed a rare snowfall this winter. In St. Petersburg, Russia, snow is a bit more common (they average 75 snowfall days per year). In Deborah Werner's production of *Eugene Onegin*, the pivotal final moment takes place in the falling snow, outside of a...
 1. High society ball
 2. Courtroom
 3. Wedding
 4. Pub trivia night

Bonus: Take the letters that correspond to the correct answers for each clue (for #3, use the actual answer). Play them in the bass clef of a piano keyboard to hear the opening bass line of one of opera's best-known arias. It will take some fiddling to get the rhythm right :)

Amplify Austin is March 4 – 5, 2021

[View our profile here.](#)

In the last year, **Austin Opera successfully pivoted** to producing operatic films and digital offerings in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. **Live from Indy Terrace**, a weekly 30-minute broadcast, is on austinopera.org.

The 2020-2021 Season opened with the **Sarah & Ernest Butler Performance Series**

, an unprecedented collaboration with Houston Grand Opera present a diverse slate of opera films. This new series was launched at the **Blue Starlite Drive-In** movie theaters and was made available for streaming.

The company responded to **educators' needs for virtual programs** by creating several new offerings and a robust online portal with digital lessons and resources free of charge. **Opera on the Spot** replaces an in-school performance with a live classroom experience featuring professional artists. **Opera Brain Breaks** are provided to educators as a quick escape for music and mindful listening. Other programs include **Virtual Opera Storytime, Virtual Field Trips, Animated Listening Maps, Vocal Pedagogy Videos, Opera Mail, and others**. In the year since the pandemic began, Austin Opera's education webpage has been viewed by 5,701 people, and our education videos have been viewed by 2,266 people - although that count is likely much higher since educators are sharing these resources with their students!



Amplify Austin

available



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