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Austin Opera announces Opera ATX 2022-2023 season

Bella Noche de Música

in collaboration with the Consulate General of Mexico in Austin
and Mexico City's Ópera de Bellas Artes
Moody Amphitheater at Waterloo Park
April 4, 2023

Vuyani Dance Theatre's

Cion: Requiem of Ravel's Boléro

in collaboration with Texas Performing Arts
Bass Concert Hall
April 19, 2023

The return of Beethoven in VR

in collaboration with Washington National Opera
Pop-up installations throughout Austin
January–May, 2023

(Austin, TX—October 28, 2022) Austin Opera today announced that a grand-scale concert at the new Moody Amphitheater at Waterloo Park will sit at the heart of the 2022-2023 season of Opera ATX, the programming series founded in 2018 to celebrate the unique spirit of Austin and extend Austin Opera's programming beyond its opera performances at the Long Center into the community.

The new Opera ATX season centers on the *Bella Noche de Música* concert, the company's first offering at the stunning Moody Amphitheater at Waterloo Park in central Austin. Curated by Claudia Chapa, Austin Opera's Curator of Hispanic and Latinx Programming, the concert is presented in collaboration with the Consulate General of Mexico in Austin and the Ópera de Bellas Artes in Mexico City. Thanks to a generous \$75,000 grant from the Moody Foundation, 3,000 free tickets will be made available to the community.

The 2022-2023 Opera ATX Season also includes a South African production reimagining Ravel's *Bolero* and the return of a virtual reality rendering of Beethoven's only opera, *Fidelio*.

Annie Burridge, General Director and CEO of Austin Opera, said, “This season’s Opera ATX offerings are the result of years of relationship building at the local, national, and international level. Opera is the ultimate collaborative art form, and these productions exemplify the exciting possibilities for our future when partnership is at the center of our work. We created Opera ATX as a platform to defy traditional boundaries of production and audience-building, and we are thrilled about the ways in which these three additions to our season will accomplish that.”

Bella Noche de Música

Moody Amphitheater at Waterloo Park, April 4, 2023

in collaboration with the Consulate General of Mexico in Austin and Ópera de Bellas Artes, Mexico City

On April 4, 2023, Austin Opera will partner with the Consulate General of Mexico in Austin to present a grand-scale concert at the open-air Moody Amphitheater at Waterloo Park, which opened in 2021. The venue features eleven acres of revitalized green space in downtown Austin and is only a short walk from the Texas Capitol. The program features three studio artists from the Ópera de Bellas Artes in Mexico City: Génesis Betania Moreno González; Ricardo Ceballos de la Mora; and Jorge Alain Echeagaray Gutiérrez. They will be joined by Austin Opera Curator for Latinx and Hispanic Programming, Claudia Chapa, and the Austin Opera Orchestra, led by Timothy Myers, Austin Opera’s Sarah and Ernest Butler Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor.

The Studio of the Ópera de Bellas Artes, the national opera company of Mexico, is an internationally-recognized young artist development program. This concert marks the launch of an important ongoing cultural collaboration between Austin Opera and the Ópera de Bellas Artes to expand Spanish-language operatic repertoire. Alonso Escalante Mendiola, the Director of Ópera de Bellas Artes, said, “We are very pleased to partner with Austin Opera to showcase the world-class operatic talent that exists in Mexico. This cultural exchange will provide both institutions with the possibility of showing part of Latin America’s artistic richness”.

Bella Noche de Música will also feature San Antonio-based Mariachi group Trío Chapultepec, comprising Vincent Pequeño, Israel Alcalá, and William Carlton Galvez, and the Austin classical guitarist, Arnold Yzaguirre.

Claudia Chapa said, “Throughout the *Bella Noche de Música* program, we will highlight Latinx artists performing Spanish-language vocal music from Mexico, Chile, Argentina and Venezuela, alongside some familiar opera repertoire and also some new opera offerings, including a selection from the late Pepe Martínez’s beautiful and uplifting mariachi opera,

Cruzar la Cara de la Luna – Crossing the Face of the Moon. Curating the concert was a collaborative process, as we felt it was important that the artists offer what music they felt represented them the best.”

Bella Noche de Música will be the first project supported by Austin Opera’s recently announced Butler Fund for Spanish Programming, created by Sarah and Ernest Butler with a record-breaking endowment gift of \$3.3 million. Austin Opera will make 3,000 free general admission tickets underwritten by the Moody Foundation and reserved premium tickets available on December 5, 2022. Premium tickets support innovative projects as part of Opera ATX and will include hospitality opportunities at the concert.

The concert develops further the partnership between Austin Opera and the Consulate General of Mexico in Austin. During the 2021-2022 season, the two organizations partnered on a new free performance series, “Concerts at the Consulate,” that included seven events spotlighting Hispanic and Latinx artists and composers. The series welcomed over a thousand community members to the Consulate’s expansive East Austin campus and over seven hundred households viewed the series on-demand. The series was planned around important dates in the Mexican calendar, supported talented BIPOC artists, and spotlighted organizations doing important work in the Latinx community. The “Concerts at the Consulate” series will continue during the 2022-2023 season with two concerts and one children’s program at the Mexican Consulate.

Consul General, Pablo Marentes, said, “I am a longtime advocate of the performing arts as an expression for culture and identity, and I believe experiences like these provide members of our community a way to feel closer to their culture and serve as a source of enormous pride. It is opportunities such as this concert that give our community representation, and I’ve seen firsthand the impact that Austin Opera has had. This partnership with Ópera de Bellas Artes to bring Mexico City’s finest artists to be accompanied by the Austin Opera Orchestra is thrilling, and I am excited for us to continue our partnership for this concert and through the coming season.”

The two other projects within the 2022-2023 Opera ATX season also celebrate the importance of partnership and collaboration within Austin Opera’s mission.

Vuyani Dance Theatre’s *Cion: Requiem of Ravel’s Boléro*
Bass Concert Hall, April 19, 2023
in collaboration with Texas Performing Arts

On April 19, 2023, Opera ATX will partner with Texas Performing Arts to bring the acclaimed Vuyani Dance Theatre from South Africa to Austin, presenting choreographer Gregory Maqoma’s opera/dance piece, *Cion: Requiem of Ravel’s Boléro*. This visually stunning, full-

length work brings literature to life, and was hailed by the *Financial Times* as “A gripping dance-opera.” *The New York Times* reported that “A Dance Steals the Show at an Opera Festival”, and called *Cion*, “a haunting South African mixture of choreography and voice.”

For this innovative multi-artform piece, Maqoma draws inspiration from the character Toloki in South African author Zakes Mda’s novel *Cion*, and music from French composer Maurice Ravel’s *Boléro*. Maqoma leads the Vuyani Dance Theatre company as it performs in Austin for the first time. The performance at Bass Concert Hall is presented by Texas Performing Arts in collaboration with Austin Opera.

Cion: Requiem of Ravel’s Boléro is a universal story encompassing the past and the present that champions our ability to band together to share the burden of grief. Set in a graveyard with the persistent cries of people in mourning and the a cappella music of singers in the background, the performance vividly elicits emotions associated with the loss of life. Ultimately, Maqoma has created a powerful requiem that seeks to stand against the darkness of death and bring audiences hope for humanity.

Bob Bursey, Executive and Artistic Director of Texas Performing Arts, said, “We’re thrilled to bring this stunning international performance to Austin and to partner with Opera ATX for the first time.” He noted “I first saw the production in the PROTOTYPE Festival of new opera, where the poignant music of its Isicathamiya singers—a South African a cappella singing style—captivated audiences.”

Tickets to *Cion: Requiem of Ravel’s Boléro* are currently on sale at texasperformingarts.org.

The return of *Beethoven in VR*

Pop-up installations throughout Austin, January–May, 2023

in collaboration with Washington National Opera

Austin Opera brings ***Beethoven in VR*** back to Austin in early 2023 following a sold-out premiere at the Fusebox Festival in April 2022. During the festival, over two hundred people experienced the intimate and awe-inspiring experience of being within scenes from Beethoven’s only opera, *Fidelio*, via virtual reality headsets.

During the winter and spring of 2023, the immersive experience, which was created in collaboration with Washington National Opera, will be made available at a number of pop-up installations throughout Austin. This 17-minute guided journey in the metaverse drops audience members into two scenes from *Fidelio*, placing them at the center of Leonora and Florestan’s epic journey to overcome political tyranny.

Beethoven in VR was directed by the visionary Francesca Zambello and stars Tamara Wilson, Russell Thomas, and the Washington National Opera Orchestra conducted by WNO Principal Conductor Evan Rogister. *Beethoven in VR* is a project of Washington National Opera, a program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, and was created in collaboration with TimeLooper, Inc. and Austin Opera.

Austin Opera's 2022-2023 Season

Opera ATX forms an important part of Austin Opera's 2022-2023 Season, along with the three fully staged productions at The Long Center for the Performing Arts. These are Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* in November 2022, Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* in January 2023, and Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers*, April 2023. Subscriptions and single tickets are currently on sale at austinopera.org.

Free general admission tickets and limited premium reserved tickets for *Bella Noche de Música* will be available at austinopera.org beginning on December 5, 2022.

Tickets to *Cion: Requiem of Ravel's Boléro* are currently on sale at texasperformingarts.org.

Beethoven in VR locations and ticket information will be available in December 2022.

About Austin Opera

Serving Central Texas since 1986, Austin Opera inspires audiences with its trademark blend of innovation and artistic excellence. With the leadership of General Director & CEO Annie Burridge and the Sarah and Ernest Butler Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor Timothy Myers, Austin Opera presents a curated season of grand opera productions at the Long Center, the crown jewel of Austin performing arts venues. Combining the finest American and international stars with the outstanding local talent of our Orchestra and Chorus, Austin Opera's productions include accessible takes on classic operas as well as challenging new works that reinforce the continuing relevance of opera.

Opera ATX, powered by Austin Opera, brings groundbreaking new works, emerging artists, exciting composers, and dynamic directors to Austin. By tapping into the city's live music DNA, Opera ATX reflects the spirit of the city and the pioneering image it is known for. The Company creates the conditions for operatic experiences completely new to Austin—and perhaps completely new to the art form—by exploring alternative venues and unique local partnerships. Driven by Austin Opera's love of opera, love of audiences, and love of Austin, Opera ATX shows how Austin is shaping its opera company and inspiring innovative experiences.

Live from Indy Terrace, Austin Opera's digital channel is the home of original content free to patrons and includes recitals, interviews, fan-favorite programs like Conductor Cues and Opera Overtures, and broadcasts of the company's new series *Concerts at the*

Consulate. Concerts at the Consulate, programmed in partnership with the Consulate General of Mexico in Austin, spotlight Latinx composers and performers and celebrate Hispanic culture.

Austin Opera is also a force in hundreds of classrooms across Central Texas, nurturing the next generation of opera audiences through its award-winning education programs. Austin Opera works directly with educators, community leaders, students, and parents to make opera relevant, educational, and entertaining for students of all ages.

In 2020, Austin Opera was voted “Opera Company of the Year”—and Timothy Myers was named “Conductor of the Year”—in the [BroadwayWorld Opera Awards](#).

To learn more about Austin Opera, visit austinopera.org or follow along on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), or [Twitter](#) at @austinopera.

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