



## From the Director

This time last year at Toledo Opera, we were hard at work preparing for an April 2020 production of *Scalia/Ginsburg*, the critically-acclaimed opera by Derrick Wang about the two Supreme Court justices' friendship. We had no idea, of course, that COVID-19 would soon bring live performances to a halt for months on end.

Now, we are again preparing to perform *Scalia/Ginsburg* in the coming spring, but in a world that has changed in ways that few of us could have imagined. Instead of a full house, our singers will look out from the stage and see masked faces dotting the theater, carefully separated by empty seats. And even as we rejoice in our long-awaited return to the stage, Justice Ginsburg's passing will undoubtedly add a new note of solemnity.

An avid opera-goer, Justice Ginsburg memorably described her love of our art form in a [2015 interview](#): "Most of the time, I'm thinking about legal problems. But when I go to the opera, I'm just lost in it." At its best, opera takes us on a journey outside ourselves: its rich, immersive stories, rendered in stunning vocal artistry, can engage, challenge and expand our imaginations in ways that enrich our lives long after we leave the theater.

I'm approaching *Scalia/Ginsburg*, which will be our first in-person stage performance in over a year, with great excitement and a great sense of responsibility: to honor Justice Ginsburg's life and legacy; to provide our audiences with the kind of powerful, memorable experience that she knew opera is capable of; and to make sure we find ways to share that experience with the Toledo-area community in its full diversity.

That sense of responsibility, to our audiences and the community, has also driven the work we've been doing here at Toledo Opera over the past several months. Through virtual and live events like Opera Outdoors, and [community-engagement initiatives](#) that address challenging issues like racial justice and policing through the lens of opera, we're finding new ways to share the magic and beauty of opera with a wider range of Toledoans than ever before. Below, you'll find some recent highlights from that work, and information about upcoming performances and future events not to be missed.

Even as much remains uncertain about the future of live performance during the COVID-19 pandemic, we're more committed than ever to creating world-class opera experiences — driven by the remarkable talent of our [Resident Artists](#) — that resonate with Toledo communities, with health and safety as our highest priority, in the months to come. We hope you'll join us.

**Suzanne Rorick**  
Executive Director, Toledo Opera

**Toledo Opera Announces *Scalia/Ginsburg* and *Trial By Jury* in April 2021, Revised Season Schedule**

DERRICK WANG'S  
**SCALIA  
GINSBURG**  
GILBERT & SULLIVAN'S  
**TRIAL BY JURY**  
A DOUBLE BILL OF COMIC ONE-ACT OPERAS  
APRIL 16, 17 & 18, 2021

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We're excited to announce our return to in-person stage performance on **April 16, 17, and 18, 2021**, with Derrick Wang's *Scalia/Ginsburg* and Gilbert and Sullivan's *Trial By Jury!* All

previously purchased tickets to our postponed 2020 performances of *Scalia/Ginsburg* and *Trial By Jury* will be honored. More information about additional ticket availability will be released soon - in the meantime, [read more about the newly-scheduled performances, and other changes to our season, on our website.](#)

Toledo Opera would like to give a special thanks to our Presenting Sponsors, **Owens Corning** and **Anspach Law**, for helping make these productions possible.

## Fall Events Roundup



Caption: Resident Artist Olivia Johnson sings at the TARTA Transit Hub on September 19  
Photo credit: Justin Camuso and Bradley Piri

### Opera Outdoors

All September and October, Toledo Opera brought **Opera Outdoors** to Toledoans where they live, shop, and play! The nine free, socially-distanced pop-up performances took place at locations like the Toledo Farmers' Market, Toledo Zoo, and the TARTA Transit Hub, and featured our 2020-21 Resident Artists performing iconic vocal selections from the classical repertoire, along with musical theater, jazz, and other American standards.

We were honored to receive a letter from Senator Sherrod Brown recognizing our community engagement efforts for Opera Outdoors. [Learn more and read Senator Brown's letter on our website.](#)

More on Opera Outdoors:

- [Check out WTOL 11's coverage of the Opera Outdoors kickoff at the Toledo Farmers' Market](#)
- [Watch highlights from our September 19th performance at the TARTA Transit Hub on our YouTube channel](#)
- [Learn more about Opera Outdoors on our website](#)

### Opera On Wheels - Virtual Program Now Free!

One of our highest-impact educational programs, Opera On Wheels introduces the magic of opera to thousands of students in Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan every year. Our fall 2020 program is fully virtual, and now through December, we're offering it completely free of charge to

local educators! [Learn more about our Resident Artists' virtual performance of the fairytale classic \*Cinderella\* on our website.](#)

### [Fright Night at the Toledo Opera](#)



Last night was our scariest performance of the year, Fright Night at the Toledo Opera! Still need some frightfully good music to get in the Halloween mood? [Check out the recording of this virtual concert on our Facebook page.](#)

### [Nevertheless We Persist](#)

Produced as part of the 2020 Momentum Festival organized by the Arts Commission, *Nevertheless We Persist* featured our 2019-20 Toledo Opera resident artists in collaboration with local artists, poets, and activists. [Watch the final episode of the three-part series here](#) and [learn more about the Momentum Festival on their website.](#)

### **2020-21 Resident Artist News**



Photo credit: Steven Mates

Photo caption: Grace Wipfli performs at the grand opening reception of Anspach Law's new downtown Toledo offices on October 8.

Soprano **Grace Wipfli** qualified for the District round of the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions, a program designed to assist in the development of the careers of promising young opera singers. Congratulations, Grace! [Learn more about the program on the Met Opera's website.](#)



Photo credit: Brittany Greeson/New York Times

Mezzo soprano **Olivia Johnson** (center) appeared in the *New York Times* for her role in the Michigan Opera Theater's drive-through Wagner adaptation, "Twilight: Gods." [Read the full story here.](#)

Olivia, along with pianist **Emily Morin**, performed at the 2020 Access to Justice Awards virtual ceremony, hosted by Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc., Legal Aid of Western Ohio, Inc. and the Toledo Bar Association Pro Bono Legal Services Program. [Click here to watch their performance.](#)

### Toledo Opera Welcomes New Board Members



Photo caption: The Rev. John C. Jones (left), Dr. Willie L. McKether (center), and Andrea Delman (right)

Earlier this month, we added three new members to Board of Directors: joining the Board are the **Rev. John C. Jones**, President of HOPE Toledo Promise; **Dr. Willie L. McKether**, Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Toledo; and community arts advocate **Andrea Delman**. We're excited to welcome John, Willie, and Andrea!

### Toledo Opera Receives Ohio Humanities Grant

We were honored to receive a grant from **Ohio Humanities** to support programming around our upcoming production of *Blue*. [Read more on our website.](#)