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Pittsburgh Opera to hold ‘virtual’ online gala Sunday, June 14

PITTSBURGH, PA

Pittsburgh Opera’s 36th annual season-ending fundraising gala, [Maecenas XXXVI](#), is going digital. The event, which historically takes place at venues such as the Benedum Center or Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, will instead be broadcast online on Sunday, June 14th.

From 7:00-7:30 PM, Pittsburgh Opera will broadcast a live ‘pre-show’ hosted by [Natalie Bencivenga](#), the syndicated *Ask Natalie* advice columnist and former editor of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette’s SEEN column. The pre-show will be broadcast on [Pittsburgh Opera’s Facebook page](#), and is free. This virtual red carpet will take a look back at the glitz and glamour of past Maecenas galas, preview what you can expect from this year’s virtual event, and has some special surprises to build the excitement as we count down to the start of Maecenas XXXVI.

At 7:30PM, Pittsburgh Opera will release a ‘pay-per-view’-style ~45-minute video presentation featuring brand-new content. The video will encompass many components of in-person Maecenas galas, including three musical performances by Pittsburgh Opera’s acclaimed [Resident Artists](#).

Maecenas galas celebrate the conclusion of Pittsburgh Opera’s seasons, as well as recognize individuals who have contributed significantly to the performing arts in Pittsburgh or within their respective fields. Each year a few worthy recipients receive Awards from Pittsburgh Opera, and this year is no exception.

Vincent Sarni, former Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of [PPG Industries Inc.](#), will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award, in honor of both his professional career and his tremendous philanthropic history. Pittsburgh Opera General Director [Christopher Hahn](#) will be presented with the Renaissance Award, honoring his many accomplishments at the company in the first 20 years since he arrived in 2000.

The video presentation will include testimonials about each winner, and ‘presentation ceremonies’ with the two winners. In addition, to showcase some of Mr. Hahn’s most notable achievements to-date with Pittsburgh Opera, the video presentation will include a retrospective section with long-lost performance footage from Pittsburgh Opera’s archives.

“Just because we can’t be together in person doesn’t mean we don’t have a lot to celebrate,” says Pittsburgh Opera Director of Development Michael Braxton. “Through this online event, which we are calling the Maecenas Mask-erade, we will be able to honor these two distinguished people and enjoy this vibrant, resilient art form, while still raising money for one of Pittsburgh’s most venerable arts organizations.”

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Pittsburgh Opera celebrates its 81st season in 2019-20. Established by five intrepid women in 1939, Pittsburgh Opera is viewed as one of the most vibrant opera organizations in the U.S., with a rich artistic tradition, outstanding educational programs, an acclaimed artist training program, and a progressive outlook toward the future. Its green initiative culminated in LEED® Silver certification for its Strip District headquarters, and its capacity as a true community partner has increased significantly under General Director Christopher Hahn’s leadership.

Tickets to watch the video presentation are \$25, and are available online at pittsburghopera.org/maskerade. Ticket buyers will receive a special link via email the day of the event to watch the video presentation. The video will be available for viewing until June 21st, so people who are unable to watch when it debuts will be able to watch it at their convenience. More information is available at pittsburghopera.org/Maecenas.

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