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## **Pittsburgh Opera awarded Innovation Grant by OPERA America**

Pittsburgh Opera is one of twenty opera companies from across North America to be awarded an Innovation Grant by [OPERA America](#).

Launched in fall 2016, Innovation Grants support exceptional projects that have the capacity to strengthen the field's most important areas of practice, including artistic vitality, audience experience, organizational effectiveness and community connections. The grants are generously funded by the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation.

Pittsburgh Opera will oversee the development and implementation of a mobile app experience, tentatively named *Inside Track*, to provide unique simultaneous engagement experiences for its audiences in the theater. Through a potential mix of live and prerecorded narration or other types of streamed content, *Inside Track* will create a user-centered experience that offers interpretive assistance to help patrons explore the themes of an opera production intellectually and connect with it emotionally.

To develop the technical aspects of the *Inside Track* app, Pittsburgh Opera is partnering with Carnegie Mellon University's [Entertainment Technology Center](#) (ETC), the premiere professional graduate program for interactive entertainment. ETC has previously created projects for organizations like Amazon, the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, and Walt Disney Imagineering.

"Pittsburgh Opera is grateful to OPERA America and to the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation for helping fund this important initiative. We continue the work to partner with other funders to help raise matching dollars," said Pittsburgh Opera General Director [Christopher Hahn](#). "We know we've found the right partner in CMU's Entertainment Technology Center, who has a proven track record of combining art and technology in compelling, creative ways. We have sought for some time to identify the right collaborative project, and I think this is it!"

"We're excited to work with Pittsburgh Opera on this initiative," said ETC Director [Drew Davidson](#). "Our faculty and students excel at tackling design challenges to help create the best interactive experiences. Working together with the Opera is a great collaborative opportunity."

OPERA America is the national service organization for opera and the nation's leading champion of American opera. [See OPERA America's full Innovation Grant media release](#).

Carnegie Mellon University's Entertainment Technology Center's mission is "providing leadership in education and applied research that combines technology and art, to explore learning, storytelling, innovation and entertainment, and to create experiences that educate, engage and inspire." [Learn more about the Carnegie Mellon University Entertainment Technology Center](#).

*Pittsburgh Opera celebrates its 79th season in 2017-18. 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.*