

PITTSBURGH OPERA

Facts about the company's growth and accomplishments

Since Pittsburgh Opera's inaugural season in 1939–1940, the company has grown from a fledgling community arts organization to a world-class, professional company. Pittsburgh Opera creates artistically diverse opera productions, trains promising young singers, directors, and arts administrators in its season-long Resident Artist program, provides extensive education programs to engage participants of all ages, and makes opera accessible to everyone in the community.



Photos above and below by David Bachman

A Blend of Contemporary and Standard Repertoire

Pittsburgh Opera offers a mix of contemporary works, including world premieres, and familiar operas to appeal to a variety of artistic tastes.

Contemporary works

* World Premiere

afterWARDs, conceived by David Paul
As One by Laura Kaminsky
Ashes & Snow (*Savage Winter*) by Douglas J. Cuomo *
Billy Budd by Benjamin Britten
Blue by Jeanine Tesori
Charlie Parker's Yardbird by Daniel Schnyder
Dark Sisters by Nico Muhly
Dead Man Walking by Jake Heggie
Denis & Katya by Philip Venables
Dialogues of the Carmelites by Francis Poulenc
Flight by Jonathan Dove
Florencia en el Amazonas by Daniel Catán
Glory Denied by Tom Cipullo
The Grapes of Wrath by Ricky Ian Gordon
In a Grove by Christopher Cerrone *
The Last American Hammer by Peter Hilliard
Little Women by Mark Adamo
The Long Walk by Jeremy Howard Beck
A Midsummer Night's Dream by Benjamin Britten
Moby-Dick by Jake Heggie
Orphée by Philip Glass
The Passion of Mary Cardwell Dawson by Seaton
Paul's Case by Gregory Spears
Proving Up by Missy Mazzoli
The Rake's Progress by Igor Stravinsky
The Rape of Lucretia by Benjamin Britten
The Rose Elf by David Hertzberg
Soldier Songs by David T. Little
Street Scene by Kurt Weill
Sumeida's Song by Mohammed Fairouz
The Summer King by Daniel Sonenberg *
The Threepenny Opera by Kurt Weill
La Tragédie de Carmen, adapted by Peter Brook
The Turn of the Screw by Benjamin Britten
27 by Ricky Ian Gordon
We Shall Not Be Moved by Daniel Bernard Roumain
Woman with Eyes Closed by Jennifer Higdon *

Standard Repertoire

(listed by number of Pittsburgh Opera productions)

- 23 *Carmen* by Georges Bizet
- 20 *La bohème* by Giacomo Puccini
- 20 *La traviata* by Giuseppe Verdi
- 19 *Tosca* by Giacomo Puccini
- 19 *Madama Butterfly* by Giacomo Puccini
- 15 *Rigoletto* by Giuseppe Verdi
- 15 *The Barber of Seville* by Gioachino Rossini
- 14 *The Marriage of Figaro* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- 13 *Faust* by Charles Gounod
- 13 *Lucia di Lammermoor* by Gaetano Donizetti
- 12 *Aida* by Giuseppe Verdi



Pittsburgh Opera Highlights

- 2021 Pittsburgh Opera re-named its headquarters the **Bitz Opera Factory**, in grateful recognition of Francois Bitz's exceptional generosity and long affiliation with the company.
- 2017 Pittsburgh Opera produced the world premiere of *The Summer King—The Josh Gibson Story*.
- 2013 The *FRIENDS of Pittsburgh Opera*, a friend-raising and fund-raising auxiliary, was launched during the company's 75th Season by merging the Guilds and Pittsburgh Opera Association.
- 2008 Christopher Hahn was named the General Director and the company began rehearsing in its new headquarters in the Strip District, the former **George Westinghouse Air Brake Factory** at 2425 Liberty Avenue. The U.S. Green Buildings Council awarded Pittsburgh Opera LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification, establishing the company as the first green opera company in an existing building in the U.S. and the headquarters as the oldest LEED-certified structure in Pittsburgh.
- 2000–2008 General Director Mark Weinstein, Artistic Director Christopher Hahn, and Music Director John Mauceri brought fiscal stability, new artistic excellence, and excitement to the company. Antony Walker was appointed Music Director in 2006.
- 1987 First performances presented at the **Benedum Center for the Performing Arts**, where Pittsburgh Opera's first production was *Turandot*. **Luciano Pavarotti** sang a benefit concert for Pittsburgh Opera on October 6, 1987.
- 1986 Pittsburgh Opera established Resident Artist summer workshops. More than 250 young singers and directors have participated in the Resident Artist training program.
- 1984 OpTrans first used at performances of Verdi's *La Battaglia de Legnano*. Supertitle projections became standard for all subsequent productions.
- 1983–2000 **Tito Capobianco** set high standards for productions. The production values have risen steadily during the decades.
- 1976–1979 Artistic Director Barbara Karp, the conductor's talented daughter, introduced the company to some of its most innovative and successful productions up to that time.
- 1971 Pittsburgh Opera took a giant step forward with its move to **Heinz Hall** in October 1971, presenting a lavish new production of *Aida*.
- 1942–1977 **Richard Karp** conducted 171 Pittsburgh Opera productions. In 1945, he moved the company to **Syria Mosque** in Oakland, with its fully-equipped professional stage and an orchestra pit.
- 1939–1940 Pittsburgh Opera's first production, *The Tales of Hoffmann*, was at Carnegie Music Hall on March 15, 1940. Five visionary ladies took the first steps to establish and fund The Pittsburgh Opera Society.



Liberty Avenue, Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Streets.

