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Opera for the Young Receives National Endowment for the Arts Grant
*Grant to support a new production of André Grétry's **Beauty and the Beast***

Madison, WI — National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Acting Chairman Joan Shigekawa announced today that Opera for the Young is one of 886 nonprofit organizations nationwide to receive an NEA Art Works grant. Opera for the Young is recommended for a \$20,000 grant to support a multistate school tour of a new production of ***Beauty and the Beast*** ("Zémire and Azor") by composer André Grétry (adapted by Dan Plummer and Diane Garton Edie).

Handsome is as handsome does.... A princely (yet frightening!) beast finds redemption and transformation through the love of a loyal young woman. Bubbling with memorable Mozart-like melodies, this re-telling of the beloved fairy tale is set on an exotic and bewitched island in the Indian Ocean and features Bollywood touches. Student chorus members take the parts of birds and enchanted (kid-sized) fruit, and are joined onstage by Opera for the Young's exciting professional musicians.

NEA Acting Chairman Shigekawa said, "The NEA is pleased to announce that [insert organization name] is recommended for an NEA Art Works grant. These NEA-supported projects will not only have a positive impact on local economies, but will also provide opportunities for people of all ages to participate in the arts, help our communities to become more vibrant, and support our nation's artists as they contribute to our cultural landscape."

Opera for the Young's General Director Dan Plummer said, "In celebration of Opera for the Young's 45th anniversary, the company has commissioned a reimagined ***Beauty and the Beast*** which will be seen by over 70,000 Midwestern school children during our 2014-15 season. This new production was created by Opera for the Young's Resident Artists, Musicians and Designers and will showcase opera's musical storytelling in a way that is accessible and appealing to young audiences. Opera for the Young's original adaptation of ***Beauty and the Beast*** will bring Grétry's classical opera alive for children through a compelling story, exciting music, as well as the active participation of children, and we hope you will be able to join us at one of more than 180 performances next season. We are honored that the National Endowment for the Arts has honored ***Beauty and the Beast*** with this prestigious award."

Art Works grants support the creation of art that meets the highest standards of excellence, public engagement with diverse and excellent art, lifelong learning in the arts, and enhancement of the livability of communities through the arts. The NEA received 1,515 eligible applications under the Art Works category, requesting more than \$76 million in funding. Of those applications, 886 are recommended for grants for a total of \$25.8 million.

For a complete listing of projects recommended for Art Works grant support, please visit the NEA website at arts.gov.

About Opera for the Young: Opera for the Young, Inc. is a leading provider of arts-in education services in the Midwest, as well as a pre-eminent producer of opera for children in the United States. Each year OFY brings opera to more than 80,000 children. Opera for the Young's award winning programming focuses on arts education (educating children about the value and beauty of the arts) and also arts-in-education (using the arts as a springboard to teach other core curriculum subjects).

Founded in 1970, Opera for the Young's mission is to: *Ignite a love for the arts in every child.*

The organization's artistic vision, in support of that mission:

- Engage and educate children about opera with professional, affordable school-based performances;
- Involve students in all aspects - from design to performance;
- Provide professional opportunities for artists;
- Foster the creation of new operatic works expressly intended for young audiences;
- Broaden access to opera for the entire community.

Since its founding Opera for the Young has performed to more than 2.5 million children throughout the Midwest and it is the **only** opera company in the United States, funded by the National Endowment of the Arts that deals strictly with educational outreach and opera for children.

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