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More Than \$82 Million Awarded for Arts Projects Nationwide
Includes \$20,000 awarded to Opera for the Young

Madison, WI—National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Chu has approved more than \$82 million to fund local arts projects and partnerships in the NEA’s second major funding announcement for fiscal year 2016. Included in this announcement is an Art Works award of \$20,000 to Opera for the Young (OFTY) to support the 2016/17 tour of OFTY’s original adaptation of Donizetti’s *The Elixir of Love*. The Art Works category supports the creation of work and presentation of both new and existing work, lifelong learning in the arts, and public engagement with the arts through 13 arts disciplines or fields.

“The arts are all around us, enhancing our lives in ways both subtle and obvious, expected and unexpected,” said NEA Chairman Jane Chu. “Supporting projects like the one from Opera for the Young offers more opportunities to engage in the arts every day.”

Opera for the Young’s Managing Artistic Director Diane Garton Edie said, “*The Elixir of Love* – Opera for the Young’s foray into the Old West – is a perennial favorite with our young audiences. The idiom of cowboys, cavalry officers, ranchers and cure-all peddlers is always appealing to children and our ‘vehicle’ of bel canto opera only makes it more vividly entertaining. Our lively adaptation of Donizetti’s classic comic opera will be seen by over 75,000 Midwestern school children during our 2016-17 season. This production was created by Opera for the Young’s Resident Artists, Musicians and Designers and will showcase opera’s musical storytelling with our special brand of interactive performance. We are honored that the National Endowment for the Arts has honored OFTY’s *The Elixir of Love* with this prestigious award and we hope you will be able to join us at one of more than 180 performances next season.”

OFTY’s adaptation of Donizetti’s *Elixir* brings a wonderful comic opera alive for thousands of children throughout the Midwest. Known for his masterful writing in the bel canto (literally "beautiful singing) style, Donizetti's elegant melodies are set on fire with wonderful displays of vocal ornamentation. Though OFTY's version is truncated, the vocal pyrotechnics remain. The adaptation moves the action to a time in history schoolchildren study: the opera takes place in Lonesome Gulch, a fictitious cowboy town in the American Old West. Miss Addy (Adina), Jimmy Reno (Nemorino), and Bill Corey (Belcore) form the love triangle at the center of the story, and Dr. Dulcamara appears as the “snake oil” peddler who sells Jimmy a love potion (instead of the traditional Bordeaux wine, our “elixir” is nothing more than root beer) to woo Miss Addy. Onstage student choristers play the Justice of the Peace, the Soldier, and the Townspeople of Lonesome Gulch. OFTY's original version offers many classroom discussion

opportunities including issues of bullying and substance abuse, as well as the age old wisdom of “being true to yourself”.

To join the Twitter conversation about this announcement, please use **#NEASpring16**. For more information on projects included in the NEA grant announcement, go to 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 75,000 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.