

The Crane School of Music • SUNY Potsdam

M U S I C A L T H E A T R E

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The Crane Opera Ensemble

The award-winning Crane Opera Ensemble is a significant source for opera and musical theatre in the North Country region of New York State. The ensemble is unique as it integrates the College's mission of teaching, scholarship and public service, into its performances each year. Participation is through a competitive audition open to any major. One fully staged production is presented each semester in the Sara M. Snell Music Theatre. A variety of styles are presented in rotation to offer students the most diverse experiences. Operas are sung in the original language when appropriate, and our supertitle system allows audiences to more fully enjoy the performances.



2017 production of *Gianni Schicchi*

Recent productions include *Die Fledermaus*; *Albert Herring*; *L'enfant et les sortilèges*; *Gianni Schicchi*; *Egisto*; *The Highwayman*; *Orpheus in the Underworld*; *La Bohème*; *Threepenny Opera*; *Dido & Aeneas*; *Cosi fan tutti*; *The Magic Flute*; *Assassins*; *The Secret Garden*; *Into the Woods*; *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*; *The Tender Land*; and *The Pirates of Penzance*.

Education Outreach

The Crane Opera Ensemble is proud of its opera education outreach program which brings North Country school children to campus to experience opera performances and post-performance activities. Cast members and other students involved with the opera create study guides and engage school children in activities that will help enrich their operatic experience. In turn, Crane students receive valuable experiences beyond the stage and production venues. To date, over 4,000 children have had the opportunity to experience opera, most for the first time.

Pellicciotti Opera Composition Prize

In 2014, Crane presented scenes from three contemporary operas as part of the first ever *Domenic J. Pellicciotti Opera Composition Prize*, with all six composers and librettists in residence. Also on campus were guest panelists and speakers from around the country. The next Pellicciotti Opera, in 2018, was the world premiere of *Mayo*, a new work commissioned from noted composer Tom Cipullo. Crane students and faculty were involved in the section process, when, in 2016, the semi-finalist composers and libret-



2018 production of the Pellicciotti Prize
commissioned opera, *Mayo*

tists were in residence at Crane for several days of panels and presentations. These kinds of unique opportunities for students continued up to the premiere, as Cipullo and other guest artists were on campus multiple times in conjunction with the premiere of *Mayo*. Crane is currently at work on the next Pellicciotti opera commission, to be premiered in 2024.

Musical Theatre

The Crane Opera Ensemble periodically produces a musical theatre production in lieu of an opera. These are produced in collaboration with the SUNY Potsdam Department of Theatre & Dance. Recent musical theatre shows have included *On the Town*, *Cabaret*, *Working*, and *Ragtime*. Crane students may also participate in theatre and dance course offerings each semester.



The a **Musical Theatre Minor** is open to music, dance, or theatre majors by audition. Most of the coursework in the minor is in the two areas outside of your major. For example, music majors who are selected for the Musical Theatre minor take a number of courses in dance and theatre. Regardless of their major, all students take the Directing Musical Theatre course as well as a capstone musical theatre production course.

SUNY Potsdam is also the home to the **Musical Theatre Organization** (MTO), a campus student

organization. Typically, the MTO puts on a different musical each semester.

Affiliations

The Crane Opera Ensemble is a member of the National Opera Association and OPERA America organizations. The ensemble was the winner of the 2019 (Division VI), 2015 and 2003 (Division 3), and co-winner of the 2009 (Division 2) NOA Collegiate Production Competitions, and the 2010 and 2019-2020 winner of the American Prize in Opera Performance, college/university division, while the 2017 production of *The Tender Land* was awarded 3rd place.

Voice Faculty

- **Margaret Chalker**, Soprano
- **Donald George**, Tenor
- **Steven Groth**, Baritone
- **Deborah Massell**, Soprano
- **Sarah Maurer-Groth**, Soprano
- **Kathleen Miller**, Soprano
- **Christopher Sierra**, Tenor
- **Colleen Skull**, Soprano
- **Lorraine Yaros Sullivan**, Mezzo-Soprano
(Vocal Area Head, sullivan@potsdam.edu)
- **Brock Tjosvold**, Pianist/Vocal Coach

<https://bit.ly/3wflyMI>

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