



# HIGH NOTES

Highlights from The Academy of Vocal Arts' 2010/2011 SEASON

## ARABELLA



Tenor Sean Arnold sang Count Elemer to Jan Cornelius' ARABELLA, by Richard Strauss.

## THE SCARLET LETTER

The world premiere of Margaret Garwood's THE SCARLET LETTER.

Mezzo-soprano Olivia Vote as Hester Prynne with Anna Grace Coyne as her daughter, Pearl.



## SUOR ANGELICA & IL TABARRO



Mezzo-soprano Margaret Mezzacappa as Frugola and soprano Jan Cornelius as Giorgetta in Puccini's IL TABARRO



Soprano Michelle Johnson sang the title role in Puccini's SUOR ANGELICA in concert at the Kimmel Center.

## DON GIOVANNI



Bass Scott Conner in the title role of Mozart's DON GIOVANNI with soprano Chloé Moore as Donna Elvira.

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# OPERA OUTREACH

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## 2010-2011 THE SCARLET LETTER

On Thursday, November 18th, 2010, the Student Matinée Performance of Margaret Garwood's opera played to a huge audience of over 1,000 students, who had the rare opportunity of experiencing a world premiere before the general public did!



Students and teachers from nine homeschool groups and sixteen public and private schools attended the Student Matinée. Three schools that were unable attend were offered free tickets to one of the actual performances. Cheltenham High School, Haddonfield Memorial High School, and Octavius V. Catto Community School took advantage of this opportunity, with nearly 100 students, parents, and chaperones attending. Participating schools were:



Abington Senior High  
Christian Street YMCA  
Philadelphia HS for Creative and Performing Arts  
Frankford High School  
Friends Select School  
Masterman School  
Upper Moreland High School  
Pottsgrove High School  
Mastery Charter Schools Shoemaker Campus  
ASPIRA of Pennsylvania  
Wakisha Charter School  
Cherokee High School (Marlton, NJ)  
Christus Academy (Camden, NJ)  
Creative Arts High School (Camden, NJ)  
Friends School of Mullica Hill (NJ)  
Urban Promise – Camden Forward School (NJ)

Also participating was a group from Hannah House, a residential setting for women who have been released from prison and are working their way back into society.

Channel 6 ABC News & Lisa Thomas-Laury conducted interviews at the theatre; several students from Abington High School and Wakisha Academy appeared in the piece that was broadcast that evening!

## FEEDBACK HAS BEEN UNANIMOUSLY POSITIVE:

"Thank you for such a wonderful opportunity. We thoroughly enjoyed the performance!"

*Roxanne Stockdale (Homeschooler)*

"Thank you for inviting us to see The Academy of Vocal Arts student matinee performance of the Scarlet Letter. Our students were very receptive to the opera and though I had reservations about the length of the performance, the students were totally engaged during the performance. As teachers we are always looking for musical venues that will inspire and give support to the Arts, and help create in our students a life-long connection to the Arts."

*Sincerely, Nancy L. Voigt - Abington Junior and Senior High School*

"Thank you again for accommodating us (Friends Select). It was a wonderful experience for our kids. THANK YOU."

*-Jenn*

"Our home schooled students had a marvelous time yesterday! Thanks for including us."

*Tracee Edmondson*

"I just wanted to thank you for making me aware of your program and thank you for letting us come. It was a great experience for the women who came and a wonderful opportunity for them. Thanks for all you do."

*Susan Gross*

"Thank you, Rebecca; our entire family enjoyed the dress rehearsal of the production very much! We look forward to reading the reviews...."

*Marisol Vilamil (Homeschooler)*



## DON GIOVANNI

The Spring Student Matinee Performance took place Wednesday morning, May 11th, at The Haverford School's Centennial Hall. The hall was filled with more than 250 students from 12 schools, including Creative Arts High School and Christus Academy (Camden, NJ), Wakisha Charter School, Esperanza Academy, Haddonfield Memorial High School, Agnes Irwin School, Sandy Run Middle School, and from The Haverford School itself. Homeschool groups included were Edmonson Homeschool, Whitten Homeschool and over 100 students from the Homeschool Band of Southern New Jersey, including a large group organized by Mandy Milne, director of their beginning band.

A comprehensive Study Guide was distributed electronically in advance of the event so that teachers could prepare their classes for what they would see and hear that day. Additionally, a brief review was provided - as time allowed - before and during the performance.

Principle cast members stayed on stage for a Question & Answer Session to answer the questions asked by a number of students chosen from the audience who were invited onstage to interact personally with AVA's Resident Artists.



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# AVA IN THE NEWS

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## THE SCARLET LETTER

Daniel Webster of The Philadelphia Inquirer praised the production stating that, "AVA's resources are deep, and the many small roles were sung with authority and effect." In praising individual singers he said, "Soprano Corinne Winters possesses a vibrant, accurate voice and is an actress able to give nuance to the part of Hester. She never ceded her importance, even to a stage full of characters, and showed strength and pathos throughout...Tenor Zach Borichevsky had the lyrical voice to etch the character of the cowardly minister Dimmesdale, and baritone John Packard sang long-lost, vengeful Chillingworth with force to balance the others in ensemble and in his soliloquies."



## SUOR ANGELICA AND IL TABARRO

David Patrick Stearns, of The Philadelphia Inquirer, had this to say about singer Margaret Mezzacappa: "As Angelica's aunt (and the bearer of bad news), Margaret Mezzacappa matched Johnson's intensity in her own way. The coldness of the character can be played as someone who is dead inside. Not Mezzacappa. While vocalizing with the aristocratic elegance suggesting her character's station in life, she all but quivered with a pathological rage that had been funneled into rigid religious convictions. For lack of staging, her stiff lower lip told you what you needed to know."



## DON GIOVANNI

Kimberly Roberts from The Philadelphia Tribune praised the singers, declaring that, "...[singer Michelle] Johnson has a brilliant instrument and limitless potential; she is certainly at the dawn of what is sure to be a noteworthy career...As Donna Elvira, [Jan] Cornelius' runs were fast and fluent, and she was quite capable as an actress, stealing the scene whenever she stepped on stage...In the role of Don Giovanni's manservant Leporello... Nicholas Masters, with his warm, resonant bass and gift for comedy, was equally appealing." David Patrick Stearns agreed saying "Conductor Christofer Macatsoris was the opera's Dionysian glue, with a swift, muscular manner full of details and often revealing the specific orchestral tint of each aria."

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# AWARDS

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## AVA ARTISTS CONTINUE TO WIN PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS

### SOPRANO MICHELLE JOHNSON

- Winner, 2011 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions
- First Prize, Gerda Lissner Foundation International Vocal Competition
- Encouragement Award, George London Foundation Competition
- First Place, The Marian Anderson Historical Society Scholars Competition Grant
- Grant Winner, Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundational International Vocal Competition

### MEZZO-SOPRANO MARGARET MEZZACAPPA

- Top Prize, Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation International Vocal Competition
- First Prize, Gerda Lissner Foundation International Vocal Competition
- Second Prize, Palm Beach Opera Vocal Competition
- Encouragement Award, George London Foundation Competition
- Third Prize, Loren L. Zachary Vocal Competition
- Fourth Prize, Giulio Gari Foundation

### BASS NICHOLAS MASTERS

- Grand Finalist, 2011 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions
- Second Prize, Gerda Lissner Foundation International Vocal Competition
- Encouragement Award, George London Foundation Competition

### TENOR TAYLOR STAYTON

- Grand Prize, Gerda Lissner Foundation International Vocal Competition

### TENOR LUIGI BOCCIA

- First Prize, Violetta DuPont Singing Competition
- Encouragement Award, Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation International Vocal Competition
- Encouragement Award, Loren L. Zachary National Vocal Competition

### TENOR ZACH BORICHEVSKY

- Grand Prize, Annapolis Opera Vocal Competition
- Encouragement Award, George London Foundation Competition
- Grant Winner, Giulio Gari Foundation Competition
- Second Place and Listener's Choice, Giargiari Bel Canto Competition

### SOPRANO MARIA ALEIDA

- Second Prize, Gerda Lissner Foundation International Vocal Competition

### SOPRANO CHLOÉ MOORE

- Encouragement Award, Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation International Vocal Competition
- Encouragement Award, Gerda Lissner Foundation International Vocal Competition
- Finalist, George London Foundation Competition
- Rosalind Jackson Memorial Award, Crested Butte Music Festival
- First Prize, Sacred Music Vocal Competition with Concerts@First

### BASS-BARITONE ZACHARY NELSON

- Second Prize, Gerda Lissner Foundation International Vocal Competition
- Second Prize, Loren L. Zachary Vocal Competition
- Second Prize, Giulio Gari Foundation Competition

### TENOR JOHN VISCARDI

- Lys Symonette Award, Lotte Lenya Competition

### SOPRANO CORINNE WINTERS

- Second Prize, Gerda Lissner Foundation International Vocal Competition
- First Prize, Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation International Vocal Competition
- Second Place, Connecticut Opera Guild Competition
- Winner, Giargiari Bel Canto Competition
- Sullivan Grant Recipient

### BASS-BARITONE RYAN KUSTER

- National Semi-finalist, Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions

Alumni sopranos **JOYCE EL KHOURY** and **JESSICA ROSE CAMBIO** were also winners of the Loren L. Zachary Competition, where Ms. El Khoury took the top prize of \$12,000.



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# CONGRATULATIONS TO

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## CYNTHIA COOK, MEZZO-SOPRANO

Cynthia received an encouragement award from the Gerda Lissner Foundation International Vocal Competition in 2009. At AVA she has sung Mistress Fields in *The Scarlet Letter*, Adelaide in *Arabella*, Clairon in *Capriccio*, Adalgisa in excerpts from *Norma*, Meg Page in *Falstaff*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, Glasa and Marfa Ignatevna Kabanová in *Kát'a Kabanová*, Smelton in *Anna Bolena*, The Abbess and The Monitress in a concert version of *Suor Angelica*, and Sabina in *La fiamma*. She participated in Ghenady Meirson's Russian Opera Workshop this past summer. Cooks holds a B.M. in Vocal Performance from the Hartt School of Music.



## JAN CORNELIUS, SOPRANO

During the 2010/2011 season, Jan debuted with Atlanta Opera as Musetta in *La bohème*, Virginia Opera as Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, and Micaëla in *Carmen* with The Hawaii Performing Arts Festival. At AVA she has sung Giorgetta in a concert version of *Il tabarro*, the title role in *Arabella*, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, Mimi in *La bohème*, the title role in Act III of *Manon Lescaut*, Countess in *Capriccio*, Violetta in *La traviata*, Silvania in *La fiamma*, and the title role in *Anna Bolena*. As a Spectrum Resident Artist with Virginia Opera, she performed the roles of Frasquita in *Carmen* and Nedda in *I Pagliacci*.

In 2010 Jan represented the Mid-Atlantic Region as a semi-finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. In 2009 she made her international competition debut as a finalist in the prestigious Monserrat Cabellé International Singing Competition in Zaragoza, Spain. She has also received awards and recognition from the Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation, the Fritz & Lavinia Jensen Foundation, and the Loren L. Zachary Society.



## RYAN KUSTER, BASS-BARITONE

Ryan Kuster, from Jacksonville, Illinois, was a national semi-finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions this year. In January 2011, Ryan was named an Adler Fellow. Recent engagements include Sam in *Trouble in Tahiti* with Opera Santa Barbara, Patalone in *Le donne curiose* with Wolf Trap Opera, the Mandarin in *Turandot*, Astolfo in *Lucrezia Borgia*, Masetto and the cover of Leporello in *Don Giovanni* with San Francisco Opera. His roles at AVA included the Governor in *The Scarlet Letter*, Schaunard in *La bohème*, Oroveso in excerpts from *Norma*, Enrico in *Anna Bolena*, and the title role in *Don Pasquale*. He has sung with the Chautauqua Opera, Chicago Opera Theatre, Opera New Jersey, and Opera North, as well as the Oberlin in Italy Program and the Merola Young Artist Program.

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# THE CLASS OF 2011!

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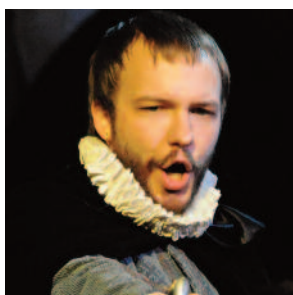
## ALEX LAWRENCE, BARITONE

Alex Lawrence received awards from the Gerda Lissner Foundation, Opera Index Foundation, Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation, and the American Opera Society. This summer Alex made his Glimmerglass Opera debut as Doncaïro in *Carmen* and covered the role of Joe Harland in Musto's *Later the Same Evening*. Among his roles at AVA are the title role in *Don Giovanni*, Mandryka in *Arabella*, Marcello in *La bohème*, Count in *Capriccio*, Roger Chillingworth in *The Scarlet Letter*, Ford in *Falstaff*, Dottore Malatesta in *Don Pasquale*, and Enrico in *Lucia di Lamermoor*.



## NICHOLAS MASTERS, BASS

Nicholas has performed with the Banff Center "Opera as Theatre" Program, Glimmerglass Opera Young Artists Program, and Wolf Trap Opera Filene Young Artists program. Mr. Masters is a 2011 grand finalist for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. He also won second prize in the Gerda Lissner Foundation International Vocal Competition and an encouragement award from the George London Foundation Competition. While at AVA he has sung Colline in the *La bohème*, Count Waldner in *Arabella*, the Governor in *The Scarlet Letter*, Direktor in *Capriccio*, Oroveso in excerpts from *Norma*, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lamermoor*, Leporello and Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*, Lord Rocheford in *Anna Bolena*, and Pistola in *Falstaff*. This fall, he joins the 2011/2012 Houston Grand Opera Studio.



## TAYLOR STAYTON, TENOR

Taylor Stayton was the grand prize winner of the Gerda Lissner Foundation International Vocal Competition. Taylor made his debut at the Teatre dell'Opera di Roma as Fention in a new Franco Zeffirelli production of *Falstaff* in 2010. At AVA he has sung the roles of Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, Gaston in *La traviata*, Lord Percy in *Anna Bolena*, Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*, the Italian Singer in *Capriccio*, Arturo in *Lucia di Lamermoor*, and Fenton in *Falstaff*. This summer Taylor performed Ernesto in *Don Pasquale* at Des Moines Metro Opera. During the 2011/2012 season, he will cover the roles of Percy in *Anna Bolena* (which will be sung by fellow AVA alumnus, Stephen Costello), and Tonio in *La Fille du Régiment* at the Metropolitan Opera.



## CORINNE WINTERS, SOPRANO

In 2011 Corinne Winters won the Giargiari Bel Canto Competition, first prize in the Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation International Vocal Competition, second place in the Connecticut Opera Guild Competition, second prize in the Gerda Lissner Foundation International Vocal Competition, and was named the recipient of the Sullivan Grant. Ms. Winters made her Metropolitan Opera debut as Countess Ceprano in *Rigoletto* this spring. Over the summer, she returned to Crested Butte Music Festival to sing Micaëla in *Carmen* and the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis for *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Ms. Winters roles at AVA include Hester Prynne in *The Scarlet Letter*, Norina in *Don Pasquale*, the title role in a concert version of *Suor Angelica*, Nannetta in *Falstaff*, the title role in *Arabella*, and Monica in *La fiamma*.



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# 2011 GALA

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On April 3, 2011 AVA celebrated legendary Argentine stage director Tito Capobianco with buenos ARIAS! Mr. Capobianco's career as a stage director included launching the career of soprano Beverly Sills. His groundbreaking operatic productions profoundly influenced the art form.

The young Capobianco was discovered by AVA founders Franca Warden and Adele Paxson, who offered him a position at AVA. Mr. Capobianco was the resident stage director and Professor of Acting and Interpretation from 1962 to 1968. After nearly forty years, Mr. Capobianco returned to AVA to direct Verdi's *Falstaff* in 2009, and Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in 2011.

The gala event took place at the luxurious Rittenhouse Hotel, and kicked off with "Mar-Titos" and "Mo-Titos" drinks, specially created by the hotel chef for this occasion. A silent auction was held in the Cassatt Tea Room, then followed by a spectacular Argentine-themed dinner, and rousing live auction in the Grand Ballroom. Resident Artists Scott Conner, Jan Cornelius, Michelle Johnson, Alex Lawrence, Margaret Mezzacappa and Taylor Stayton serenaded guests between courses.

Buenos ARIAS! raised more than \$100,000 for AVA's scholarship fund. Co-chairs Ann Stephenson and Martin Janowiecki and lead sponsor Merrill Lynch were key to the gala's success. Corporate and Foundation sponsors included The Independence Foundation, PricewaterhouseCoopers, The Rose Group, First Niagara, Wells Fargo, Donnelly Marketing Services Associates, PECO, The Diversified Search Companies, and Pitcairn. AVA is grateful to these, as well as each and every guest who supported buenos ARIAS! A special thank you to Suzanne and Norman Cohn for hosting the Directors Circle Dinner in their lovely penthouse apartment.

buenos  
ARIAS!



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# ALUMNI NEWS

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- **Ailyn Pérez** and **Stephen Costello** reprised the title roles in Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet* at the Opera Company of Philadelphia. They first sang the roles together at San Diego in 2010. Mr. Costello will sing the role of Percy in *Anna Bolena* at the Metropolitan Opera in the fall. Ms. Pérez was seen as Marguerite in *Faust* at Santa Fe Opera this summer. She returns to Philadelphia to star as Micaëla in the Opera Company of Philadelphia's production of *Carmen*.
- This summer, **Angela Meade** performed Act I of *Norma* and the Act II trio from Verdi's *I Lombardi* in the opening night of the Tanglewood Festival and sang at New York's Central Park SummerStage as part of the Metropolitan Summer Recital Series. She will sing the title role in *Anna Bolena* at the Met this October opposite fellow alumni Stephen Costello in the role of Percy and Keith Miller as Lord Rochefort. (Join the AVA bus trip to see this performance!) In February 2012 she sings Elvira in *Ernani*, which will be seen Live in HD at movie theatres across the country.
- In May, **Bryan Hymel** performed the title role in *Werther* at The Royal Opera House at Covent Garden. He then traveled to Santa Fe Opera to sing the title role in *Faust* opposite Ailyn Pérez. Rounding out the year, Mr. Hymel will sing Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Dallas Opera in October. Mr. Hymel took time out of his busy schedule to marry Irini Kyriakidou on May 28<sup>th</sup> in his hometown of New Orleans.
- Tenor **Michael Fabiano's** 2011/2012 season featured several prestigious debuts: the Duke in *Rigoletto* at the Semperoper Dresden, Edgardo in *Lucia Lammermoor* at Vancouver Opera, Gennaro in a new production of *Lucrezia Borgia* at English National Opera, Verdi's Requiem with Columbus Symphony, Rodolfo in *La bohème* at Opéra de Limoges, *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Bilbao, and Cassio in *Otello* at Opéra national de Paris. Mr. Fabiano will make his San Francisco Opera debut this fall in *Lucrezia Borgia* opposite Renée Fleming.
- **Ellie Dehn** performed the role of Inez in *L'Africaine* in March with the Opera Orchestra of New York. In June, she sang the role of Musetta in *La bohème* with Teatro dell'Opera di Roma. She followed this with Donna Anna in the San Francisco Opera production of *Don Giovanni*.
- In January and February, **Richard Troxell** performed the role of Don José in *Carmen* with Opera Australia at the Sydney Opera House. In May, he was the tenor soloist in *Carmina Burana* with the St. Louis Symphony. Next, he will perform Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette* at San Antonio Opera.
- This year, **Joyce DiDonato** celebrated the release of her CD *Diva Divo*. In July, Ms. DiDonato took on the title role in Massenet's *Cendrillon* at The Royal Opera House at Covent Garden. In the fall she returns to the Metropolitan Opera to sing Sycorax in *The Enchanted Island*.
- **Eglise Gutiérrez** joined Ms. DiDonato in The Royal Opera House production of *Cendrillon* as the Fairy Godmother. She returns to Covent Garden to sing Amina in *La sonnambula* in November. Last October, she and her husband Burak Bilgili welcomed their first child, daughter Lucia. Mr. Bilgili sang with Avignon Opera in April in the role of Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*. He then sang the bass solos in Dvořák's *Stabat Mater* with the New York Choral Society at Carnegie Hall in May.
- **James Valenti** sang the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* with Michigan Opera Theatre, which also featured mezzo-soprano Carla Dirlikov as Maddalena. He also performed Lt. Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* with The Royal Opera House at Covent Garden in June and July. Mr. Valenti will return to Covent Garden to sing Alfredo in *La traviata* in October.

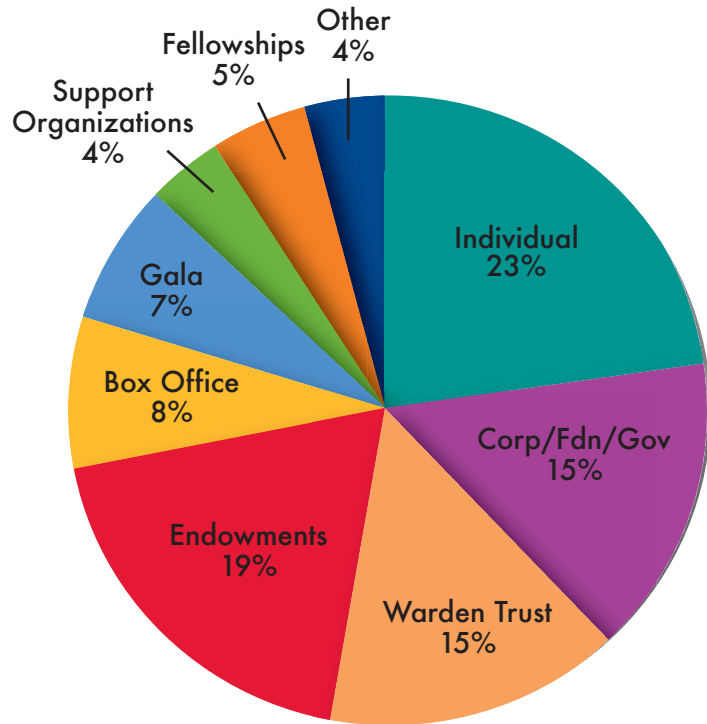


# FINANCIALS

## 2010-2011 Operating Income

\$ 3,083,249

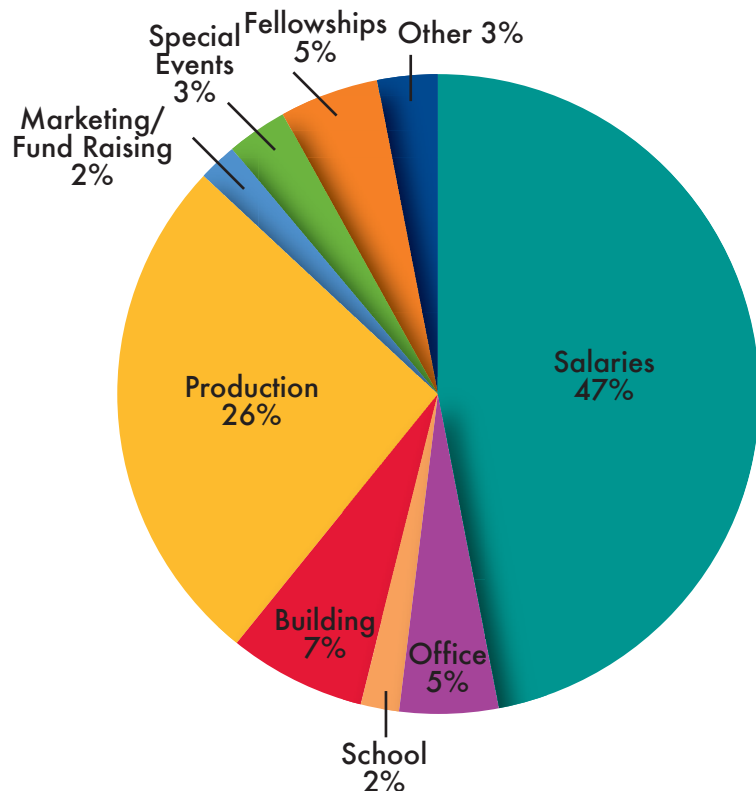
Operating income consists of approximately 34% endowment income (as defined by a spending rule), 38% contributed income from individuals (annual fund), corporations, foundations and government, 8% from box office ticket sales, and the remainder from special events such as the annual Viva la Voce Gala.



## 2010-2011 Operating Expenses

\$ 3,080,566

Operating expenses are divided among salaries (47%), direct production expenses (sets, costumes, orchestra, theater rentals, etc. 26%), and the remainder of expenses cover office expenses, building expenses (maintenance and insurance), utilities, fundraising and marketing activities, and special events.



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# A SPECIAL THANK YOU!

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## We would like to express our gratitude to the Following Generous 2010-2011 Season Sponsors:

**Jeannine Bouchard Cowles**, for underwriting the world premiere of Margaret Garwood's *The Scarlet Letter*

**The Presser Foundation** and the **National Endowment for the Arts** for special grants in support of *The Scarlet Letter*

**Rosalie Burns and Herbert I. Goldberg and the Jacob Burns Foundation**, for sponsoring Mozart's *Don Giovanni*

**Charlotte and Bob Watts** for sponsoring Tito Capobianco's participation as stage director for Mozart's *Don Giovanni*

**Ann R. Stephenson and Marty Janowiecki**, Co-Chairs of Buenos ARIAS!

**Michael Paolone and Merrill Lynch**, presenting sponsors for Buenos ARIAS!

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Celebrating the world premiere of *The Scarlet Letter* are seated, (l-r) Sponsor Jeannine Bouchard Cowles, Susan Garwood, Don Chittum, Margaret Garwood, Barbara Silverstein, Adele Hebb, Christofer Macatsoris. Standing (l-r) are Christine Meadows, Peggy and Bob Lyon



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# IN MEMORIAM

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Elena (Gigi) Capobianco, beloved wife and artistic collaborator of Tito Capobianco, passed away in April, a few weeks after her husband was honored at Buenos ARIAS! Although ill, Gigi traveled to Philadelphia to be part of the celebration. It turned out to be the last time she and her whole family would be together.

Tito and Gigi had met in 1954 when Tito took a directing position at the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, where Gigi was working as a young ballerina. Gigi played a vital role in Tito's professional career, working as his choreographer, make-up and wig consultant, lighting designer and assistant stage director.

At Tito's request, family and friends were invited to make memorial contributions to the Gigi Capobianco Scholarship Fund to help future opera singers who aspire to careers in the beloved art form to which Tito and Gigi dedicated their professional lives.

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