

# THE ATLANTA OPERA

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## **APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN FOR THE ATLANTA OPERA'S 96-HOUR OPERA PROJECT**

### **Judges and Story Partners Announced**

ATLANTA –December 1, 2021 – The Atlanta Opera announced that applications are now open for the 96-Hour Opera Project, a composition showcase and competition in which teams of composers and librettists have four days to direct and stage completely new and compelling 10-minute operas.

All participating teams will travel to Atlanta after preparing their works in advance of the program. Travel, housing, singers, pianists and space will be provided to each composer/librettist team in order to showcase their new mini-operas, based on the stories of Atlanta and greater Georgia. The winning team will split a \$10,000 prize and be commissioned to write a chamber opera for a future season at the Atlanta Opera. All other participating artists are guaranteed a \$1,000 honorarium.

Applications are now open and available at [atlantaopera.org/competition](http://atlantaopera.org/competition). There is no application fee.

Additionally, three judges for the competition have been announced. **Priti Gandhi**, Artistic Director of Portland Opera; librettist and writer **Andrea Davis Pinkney**; and recently appointed General Director of the Houston Grand Opera, **Khori Dastoor**, will mentor, guide and judge the

participants. Bass **Morris Robinson**, who is also an artistic advisor on the project, was previously announced as a member of the panel.

**The National Center for Civil and Human Rights, We Love Buford Highway, the Fulton County Library System, the Japan American Society of Georgia and The Atlanta History Center** will assist the opera in providing compelling local story prompts and creative briefs for the participating librettists and composers. The creative teams will be paired with story partner organizations and given their story briefs in advance of the competition with time to engage in collaborative discussion and exploration. The stories will fall into broad categories, paired with applicants based on interests identified in the application.

### **The 96-Hour Project**

Designed specifically for composers and librettists from historically underrepresented communities, the 96-Hour Project is only open to those who self-identify as Black, Indigenous, Asian-American, Pacific Islander, Arab-American, Latin-American or other communities of color, including those artists from outside the US.

The showcase will be hosted in partnership with Morehouse College, School of Music. The finals will be open to the public and will be held at the Ray Charles Center for the Performing Arts on Monday, June 20, 2022. The finals will include a special commemorative performance honoring the Juneteenth holiday.

Internationally renowned bass and Atlanta native Morris Robinson will serve as the artistic advisor for this year's competition, working with creative teams throughout the competition as well as serving as one of the judges.

"Projects like this one are necessary in order to move the needle for composers and librettists of color," said Robinson. "I'm proud to be part of a company that is doing this work."

Applications for 96-Hour Opera Project are now open. More information on the process and application timeline can be found at [atlantaopera.org/competition](http://atlantaopera.org/competition). The four-day competition runs from June 17 to June 20. Every participant is guaranteed an honorarium and travel and lodging support. There is no application fee.

"The diversity of Atlanta—racial, ethnic, cultural—is the reason for the vibrancy and richness of this city. We want diversity to be a vital part of every aspect of our company and reflect the city we call home," said Tomer Zvulun, the company's Carl W. Knobloch Jr. General and Artistic Director. "This new initiative will achieve two major goals: sharing inspirational stories that reflect the multicultural history of Atlanta and amplifying the voices of diverse artists."

Each creative team will be paired with a story drawn from Georgia's past and present based on materials provided by this year's "Stories that Resonate" partners, representative nonprofit organizations with storytelling at their core. Stories will be provided in advance of the showcase, so that teams can spend time on both research and creation.

The Atlanta Opera provides singing talent, a pianist and a director to assist with staging, plus, a treasure trove of background information from the Stories that Resonate partner organizations to spark imagination.

In partnership with Georgia Public Broadcasting, The Atlanta Opera Film Studio will produce a mini-series using filmed portions of the competition and supplemental interviews that will be shown on GPB stations across the state and online.

### **About The Atlanta Opera**

The Atlanta Opera's mission is to build the major international opera company that Atlanta deserves, while reimagining what opera can be. Founded in 1979, the company works with world-renowned singers, conductors, directors, and designers who seek to enhance the art form. Under the leadership of internationally recognized stage director and Carl W. Knobloch, Jr. General & Artistic Director Tomer Zvulun, The Atlanta Opera expanded from three to four mainstage productions at Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre and launched the acclaimed Discoveries series. In recent years, the company has been named among the "Best of 2015" by the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, has been nominated for a 2016 International Opera Award, and won ArtsATL's 2019 Luminary Award for Community Engagement in recognition of its successful Veterans Program in partnership with the Home Depot Foundation. In addition, The Atlanta Opera was featured in a 2018 Harvard Business School case study about successful organizational growth, and Zvulun presented a TEDx Talk at Emory University titled "The Ambidextrous Opera Company, or Opera in the Age of iPhones." During the COVID-19 pandemic, The Atlanta Opera was one of the only companies in the world to create a full, alternative season, consisting of no less than 40 live performances in two different outdoor venues, including a revolutionary custom-designed circus tent. The fundraising goal was tripled, and four new productions were created, each of which employed 150 cast, crew and staff. The critically acclaimed productions and concerts were streamed in HD in the newly created streaming platform "Spotlight Media," allowing The Atlanta Opera to reach a global audience. National media coverage of the "pandemic season" included features in the Wall Street Journal and PBS Newshour. For more information, visit [atlantaopera.org](http://atlantaopera.org).