



## NEWS Opera Theater of Pittsburgh

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### OPERA THEATER OF PITTSBURGH PRESENTS SIXTH ANNUAL MILDRED MILLER INTERNATIONAL VOICE COMPETITION FREE SEMIFINALS ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, TICKETED FINALS AT THE FRICK ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30

PITTSBURGH, PA (September 16, 2016) – The future stars of opera shine during the sixth annual Mildred Miller International Voice Competition presented by **Opera Theater of Pittsburgh** on Oct. 29 and 30,

On Sat., Oct. 29, a field of 20 semi-finalists will sing for the international panel of judges led by the company founder and competition's namesake **Mildred Miller Posvar** with **Robert Chafin, Robert Croan, Eugene Perry, and George Shirley**.

The semifinals, running 11 am–1 pm and 3–6 pm at Carnegie Mellon University's Mellon Institute Auditorium in Oakland, are open to the public free of charge. Seats may be reserved online at [otsummerfest.org](http://otsummerfest.org) or obtained at door. Mellon Institute Auditorium is located at 4400 Fifth Ave., Oakland, Pittsburgh (15213), entrance on Bellefield Ave, opposite Heinz Chapel. The free day of music is one of the nation-wide events kicking off **National Opera Week** (Oct. 28–Nov. 6, 2016), an initiative of **OPERA America**.

Eight singers will present their arias during the finals located at the Frick Art and Historical Center, an elegant museum housing multiple collections of fine and decorative art and much more. The final round before the judges takes place Sun., Oct. 30, 2–5 pm at the Frick's intimate auditorium at 7227 Reynolds St., Point Breeze (15208).

Finals are hosted by **Jim Cunningham**, the drive-time voice of Classical WQED-FM,

Of the eight finalists, three will be selected as winners and a fourth will be selected as "Audience Favorite". Winners receive cash prizes and resident artist contracts in Opera Theater's SummerFest 2017 ranging from \$3,000 to \$7,000.

**The Mildred Miller International Voice Competition** is named in honor of the Opera Theater's founder who created the company in 1978. **Mildred Miller Posvar**, one of America's best-loved opera stars with a 23-year career at the Metropolitan Opera, says about 'her' international voice competition: "It is wonderful to be able to support a new generation of talented young singers, and to help launch their careers onto the professional opera stage."

The \$35 general admission tickets include refreshments during the intermission while the judges deliberate. Students with a valid ID may reserve free tickets in advance. Walk-up student admission with valid ID will be dependent on seat availability. A VIP package for \$125 includes preferred seating and a

post-concert reception with the contestants and judges in the ballroom of the historic Benedum house in Shadyside.

**Tickets** are on sale by phone at: (412) 326-9687 or online at [otsummerfest.org](http://otsummerfest.org) where parking and event details can be found.

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Sixth Annual Opera Theater Mildred Miller International Voice Competition 2016

## About the Mildred Miller International Voice Competition

“Our competition is different – as well as awarding monetary prizes, we offer young singers leading roles in productions, helping them develop their performing experience and build their repertoire,” says Opera Theater’s Artistic and General Director **Jonathan Eaton**.

Previous MMIVC award winners are embarking on stellar careers, including leading roles at SummerFest:

- Countertenor [Andrey Nemzer](#), 2011 first-place winner, was cast in leading roles in SummerFest productions and went on to win the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and was a third place winner in the prestigious Operalia competition led by Placido Domingo. At the Met, Nemzer covered for David Daniels in the title role of Handel’s *Giulio Cesare (Julius Caesar)*, a role he sang for the first time in Opera Theater’s SummerFest, July 2016. In 2017, he will appear in Handel’s *Xerxes* at SummerFest.
- Tenor [Juan José de León](#), 2012 winner is a rising star in demand to sing leading Rossini roles. He was showcased at SummerFest as Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, a role he also sang as a resident artist at Pittsburgh Opera. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut in the World Premiere of *Two Boys*. Since, he has sang with the opera companies of La Scala, Paris, Rome, Verona, Mallorca, Stuttgart, and Tel Aviv, among others.
- [Elizabeth Baldwin](#), the 2013 MMIVC winner, received critical acclaim for her performance in the title role of *Ariadne on Naxos* in SummerFest 2014, and has contracts with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra. She was recently seen as Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin* at Chautauqua Opera Company and the title role in *Tosca* at both the California Theater and Opera San Jose.
- [Karen Chia-ling Ho](#) placed first in the 2014 MMIVC event. She sang Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* with San Francisco’s prestigious Merola Opera and made her debut at St. Petersburg Opera (Tampa) as Liu in *Turandot*.
- [Kisma Jordan](#) placed first in the 2015 MMIVC competition. Kisma has appeared in multiple recital series around the country since winning the competition and will appear this fall as Michaëla with the Western Opera Reserve.

Last year, the 2015 MMIVC attracted 180 emerging young professionals from throughout North America (US, Canada, Mexico) and from Bulgaria, France, Russia, Korea, China, Japan and Taiwan.

**About the Frick Art and Historical Center** The culture and refinement of the Gilded Age is celebrated through the beautiful grounds and breathtaking collections of the Frick Art and Historical Center. The museum and its multiple collections are the legacy of Helen Clay Frick, daughter of Henry Clay Frick, one of America’s greatest industrialists and art collectors. Visitors view fine and decorative arts and artifacts, magnificent exhibitions and vintage cars and carriages, take part in educational programs and concerts, and enjoy fine dining.

**About National Opera Week** [National Opera Week](#), Oct. 28-Nov. 6, 2016, is led by **OPERA America**, the national service organization for opera, with support from the National Endowment for the Arts. National Opera Week celebrates the vibrancy of opera in America today, and brings the inventiveness and excitement of opera to a national audience.

**About Opera Theater of Pittsburgh and SummerFest** Since its founding in 1978 by Mildred Miller Posvar, Opera Theater of Pittsburgh has served a diverse market of music drama audiences in Western

Pennsylvania. Jonathan Eaton has served as artistic and general director since 1999. By presenting high-quality productions of music drama not available elsewhere, the company works at the forefront of the genre. In its 38-year history, Opera Theater has presented numerous world premieres and more than 50 Pittsburgh premieres, many of them American operas that would not have been produced by other regional companies. Opera Theater reaches out across traditional lines of demarcation in the arts, presenting works which engage diverse, new and younger audiences, bringing in supporters of music, theater, dance and the visual arts.

Over its first five seasons, SummerFest has drawn more than 30,000 people to operas, musicals, new works and recitals. SummerFest features a company of performers including top national and regional singers, and rising stars from its Young Artist Program.

Members of the six-week Young Artist Program are recruited from more than 300 candidates in auditions in Pittsburgh and six cities across the US. It combines performance opportunities for emerging professionals with a comprehensive training experience including coaching, master classes, and special events. Forty young artists, including singers, pianists and stage directors from six countries--the US, Korea, Russia, Lithuania, Canada, and Australia--took part in SummerFest 2016.

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