



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Opera Colorado and AGMA Reach Historic Agreement Honoring the Artists Who Bring Operatic Storytelling to Colorado

New agreement marks a milestone partnership between Opera Colorado and the American Guild of Musical Artists.

DENVER, CO — July 15, 2026 — Opera Colorado and the American Guild of Musical Artists (AGMA) announced today their first-ever collective bargaining agreement. The parties reached an agreement on June 18, and it was ratified by AGMA’s Board of Governors on July 13.

“This agreement begins an important new chapter in the story of Opera Colorado, one that I believe honors our superb artists and strengthens both the company and the art we create in our community,” said Barbara Lynne Jamison, the Ellie Caulkins Artistic Director and CEO of Opera Colorado.

The three-year agreement with AGMA, the national labor union for opera singers, staging staff, and dancers, provides all artists and artisans with safe and healthy working conditions and reliable pay that honors their essential work in the production of opera. The agreement recognizes the chorus and AGMA artists as professionals.

The agreement is the product of years of collaboration between Opera Colorado and AGMA. The artists first petitioned in 2023, and negotiations proceeded in earnest after Jamison’s appointment in May 2025.

“After three years, we are thrilled to have reached this milestone in building a new relationship between Opera Colorado and its artists,” said Adam Da Ros, who served on the negotiating committee. “This agreement reflects a great deal of hard work on both sides and keeps artists at the center of creating opera, allowing us to move forward together with confidence and a shared belief in a sustainable future for opera in Colorado.”

The parties also reached agreement on a side-letter to govern the Artists in Residence program, Opera Colorado’s emerging artist apprenticeship program, providing them with housing, weekly wages, and additional contract opportunities for mainstage productions. This program helps emerging artists bridge from academic training into professional careers.

“A first agreement lays the groundwork for every agreement that follows,” said Tracy Jones, AGMA’s Director of Collective Bargaining. “The time invested in this process allowed both sides to work through important issues thoughtfully, resulting in a strong contract that provides meaningful protections for AGMA Artists and reflects a collaborative relationship with Opera Colorado built on mutual respect.”

Like performing arts organizations across the country, Opera Colorado has been navigating the financial pressures brought to the industry by the pandemic, including difficult decisions in recent seasons to reduce programming. Opera Colorado is part of a stabilizing sector. This agreement reflects that progress — a company moving toward a stronger future, with its artists as full partners in building it.

“This agreement strengthens our ability to bring operatic storytelling to Colorado for years to come,” said Jamison. “Opera Colorado has a place in the cultural life of this city, and we’re building toward that future together with our artists.”

Opera Colorado opens its 2026–27 season in September with the Artists in Residence showcase, followed by *Macbeth* in November. Tickets on sale at <https://www.operacolorado.org/this-season/>.

Media Contact

Lisa Chensvold
lisa@chensvoldcommunications.com
202-240-7737

###

About Opera Colorado Opera Colorado has been enriching the cultural life of Colorado for more than four decades through world-class productions, education programs, and community engagement initiatives. The company presents internationally acclaimed artists alongside emerging talent and serves thousands of students and community members annually through performances, educational programming, and partnerships throughout the region.

About AGMA The American Guild of Musical Artists (AGMA) is the labor union of singers, dancers, and staging staff in opera, ballet and contemporary dance, and concert choral performance in the United States. A national union with a membership of approximately 7,000 artists, AGMA provides advocacy and defense of its members' employment and artistic rights. AGMA negotiates and enforces more than 75 collective bargaining agreements nationwide, working to ensure fair and safe working conditions and enhance the quality of life for its members. AGMA holds a direct charter from the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with the AFL-CIO Branch of Associated Actors and Artists of America and the Department for Professional Employees (DPE) and is part of the Coalition of Broadway Unions and Guilds (COBUG). AGMA is currently celebrating its 90th anniversary.