

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, PLEASE:

Opera Las Vegas is thrilled to announce that they have matched the \$20,000 on offer during the month of June, thanks to the generosity of Helms Helps Foundation.

Jim Sohre, General Director, noted: "This was the most substantial foundation grant our company has received to date, and we are so grateful for this infusion of resources which will greatly assist in executing our 2022-2023 Twenty-Fourth Anniversary Season. To qualify, OLV had to raise \$20,000 by the 30th of June, which Helms Helps will now match. Thanks to our many generous new friends, the campaign will ultimately enrich the operating coffers by just over \$47,000."

In addition to next year's five staged operas, including three West Coast Premieres, and the Verdi classic, *La Traviata*, OLV notably sponsors various education and outreach programs that teach youth and young families about the beauty of opera, and demystifies how to appreciate the glories of operatic singing in its many manifestations. In partnership with Thurman White Academy, the company also sponsors the OLV Youth Chorus, now in its sixth year.

Recent school shows included the annual version of *Who's Afraid of Opera?* and John Davies' family friendly adaptation of the Grimm Brothers classic *The Bremen Town Musicians*. The latter was adapted for one Sensory Friendly presentation that was specifically tailored to engage Special Needs youth and their families. Sohre said, "We weren't sure how that audience would respond, but as soon as our accomplished vocalists began to sing, the viewers were rapt in wide-eyed attention."

It was especially poignant when the cast asked the audience to recite the Bremen Town oath before the finale: "Consider the feelings of everyone in everything you do; for everyone everywhere is very special. . .and so are you." "There were few dry eyes in the house," said Sohre. The concept was so successful, that there are plans to video record the performance to make it more widely available to schools, including underserved students. Online and in-person, Opera Las Vegas has presented its education programs to more than 20,000 schoolchildren since the first schools tour in 2016.

The Helms Helps Foundation was established by entrepreneur Terry Helms. Terry has had a successful career in real estate investment and has many hobbies, including photography and scuba diving. He has been a Las Vegas local for over thirty years and founded the Helms Helps Foundation as a way to give back to the community he loves.

Sohre concluded: "We can't thank Terry enough for making this investment in our efforts to lift our voices in song as we bring the operatic art form to new young audiences and aficionados alike. His philanthropic gift will help us reach thousands with impactful programming."

For more information about Opera Las Vegas, please visit: www.operalassvegas.com