Dear SPO Family and Friends,
Since mid-March, when we canceled performances and sent our staff to work from home because of the global pandemic, we have made difficult decisions and kept moving forward. We have learned to livestream on Facebook, put some of our most popular productions online for the whole world to enjoy, called as many of our supporters as we could, and put out a newsletter--or two--every week to keep in touch with you. We are positive, and hopeful, and dreaming big dreams for the future of St Petersburg Opera. Our intention is to emerge stronger, more skilled, and more prepared than ever. Forged in the fire of crisis, our team is ready to reach new heights of creative achievement with a renewed sense of urgency.

We miss all of you!
We have been struggling to plan our next steps in a time when even the immediate future is uncertain.

We are excited to present to you the results of our careful consideration of what Opera looks like in the midst of global pandemic. It’s not enough to keep our community safe by keeping the theaters dark. We will bring you Opera, we will learn what we must, do what we must, to keep the music going!

The rest of this season will focus on virtual performances.

• Because of safety concerns, we are cancelling our Pops Spectacular (July 3 – 5) and Broadway Cabaret (May 23). We are also cancelling our plans to produce Daughter of the Regiment in the fall of 2020.
• Our annual fund-raising gala previously planned for May 8 will now occur on May 23 at 7:00pm as a virtual event. Please look for information at http://stpeteopera.org/gala. The theme is VINCERÔ—victory!—and comes from the aria “Nessun Dorma” in Puccini’s Turandot.
• The Cocktails and Mornings with the Maestro programs planned for May 14 and May 15 will be produced virtually on May 14th at 6:00pm. I am entitling the program “The Wonderful (Wacky) World of Opera,” and it will incorporate eight arias performed at Opera Central by singers Christopher Holloway (baritone), Aleksandra Ritums (soprano) and Chris Romeo (tenor), accompanied by pianist Teresa Ancaya. Although there will not be an in-person audience during this live stream, I will be introducing and discussing each selection in Maestro-series style, fun and chatty, with lots of back story and insider points for you. If you hold tickets for Cocktails with the Maestro or Mornings with the Maestro, you will be given a link to view the broadcast version of “The Wonderful Wacky World of Opera.” If you would like to see this virtual show, and do not currently have tickets, you can purchase an online pass for $20 at this link.
• We are still planning to remount Creative Collaborations, previously scheduled for March 13 and 14, when the opportunity presents itself. If you hold tickets to this event, they will still be valid at that time.

Please donate your tickets, or make a special donation.
This is a difficult time for all arts organizations, and St Petersburg Opera needs your support now more than ever. If you hold tickets for an event that has been cancelled, please consider making your cancelled tickets a donation to the St Petersburg Opera Company. This will
help ensure our survival and ability to present future productions. Donating back your unused tickets is a charitable contribution to the St Petersburg Opera, which also has benefits for you. The recently approved Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act allows for special deductions for contributions to non-profit organizations. More information is available here.

You can turn your tickets into a donation by simply clicking this link and filling out the form. There is also an option to turn your tickets into a gift certificate for future use or to request a refund, as we understand the donation option may not be right for everyone. You make may an online donation any time on our website.

Next season is a landmark for St Petersburg Opera!
We have been planning for our next season for months because it’s a big one—our 15th!! These are the performances that we have planned so far. We’ll confirm and publicize these shows and dates as soon as we can.

**Pinocchio – November 2020 at Opera Central (Complimentary Valet Parking)**
Public performances:
Friday, Nov 13, 7pm; Saturday, Nov 14, 2pm; Friday, Nov 15, 7pm; Saturday, Nov 21, 2pm; Sunday, Nov 22, 2pm

**Holiday Sparkle – December 2020 at Opera Central (Complimentary Valet Parking)**
Dec 10, 11, 12, 17, 18 and 19, 7:30pm
Two Sunday matinees: Dec 13 and 20, 2pm

**Winter Opera – Jan/Feb 2021 at the Palladium Theater, Così fan tutte by Mozart**
Sunday Jan 31, 2pm; Tuesday Feb 2, 7:30pm; Friday Feb 5, 8pm; Sunday Feb 7, 2pm

**Spring Opera – June 2021 at the Palladium Theater, Tosca by Puccini**
Friday June 4, 8pm; Sunday June 6, 2pm; Tuesday June 8, 7:30p; Friday June 11, 8pm; Sunday June 13, 2pm

**2020-2021 SPO 15th Season Maestro Series**
- **Mornings with the Maestro at the Museum of Fine Arts**
  Friday, Oct 2, 2020, 11am Opera History with a Twist
  Friday, Jan 15, 2021, 11am Preview to Così fan tutte
  Friday, May 21, 2021, 11am Preview to Tosca

- **Evenings with the Maestro at Opera Central (Complimentary Valet Parking)**
  Thursday, Sept 16, 2020, 6pm Opera 101
  Thursday, Oct 1, 2020, 6pm Opera History with a Twist
  Thursday, Jan 14, 2021, 6pm Preview to Così fan tutte
  Thursday, Feb 25, 2021, 6pm Arts Festival: Opera and The Sea
  Thursday, May 20, 2021, 6pm Preview to Tosca
Thank you to so many of our opera family and members of the community for the numerous messages of love and enthusiasm. We are moved beyond measure by your encouragement. You remain our light at the end of the tunnel. The staff and board of the St Petersburg Opera Company stand strong in the knowledge that we will overcome the challenges of the present, we will persist, and we will thrive into the future.

Musically Yours,

Mark Sforzini
Executive and Artistic Director