

Date: January 31, 2007

Project Director Deborah Burton

Department Music

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Project Abstract (300 to 500 words)

Please also submit a complete budget outline with your project abstract.

Opera is an artform that brings together all areas of the humanities: literature, history, music, art, drama—and very often politics. One need only think of Mozart's radical setting of the *Marriage of Figaro*—whose original Beaumarchais source was considered by Napoleon to be the first stone thrown in the French Revolution—to understand how pivotal an opera can be in the course of a society as a whole.

The proposed interdisciplinary conference, entitled *Opera and Society*, will allow Boston University to become a focal point for a multidimensional inquiry into this fascinating topic. We will create a nexus for humanities experts, from the Boston area and elsewhere, to join together in a cross-specialization symposium centered on the relationship of opera and the cultures and societies that fostered its inception and continued relevance. Interest from faculty members at Harvard University and other institutions has already been confirmed.

The two-day conference will take place on a Friday and Saturday in April 2008, in coordination with the Opera Institute's performance schedule. There will be four main sessions (Friday morning and afternoon, Saturday morning and afternoon), with one of these including a roundtable discussion with invited performers. In addition, there will be an Opera Institute performance one evening. Meals will include breakfast and lunch Friday, a reception/ dinner on either Friday or Saturday night (whichever is the non-performance night), breakfast and lunch Saturday, and a small reception on the performance evening. Needed will be a lecture room/ concert hall furnished with a tuned piano, audio/visual equipment and computer hookups.

I believe that this conference will be of interest to the entire BU community as well as to opera lovers throughout the Boston area. As the organizer of a similar conference at Rome's opera house in June 2000, I can attest to the exciting and valuable contributions such an interdisciplinary inquiry into opera can achieve. That meeting became my edited book *Tosca's Prism* (Northeastern University Press, 2004), and this conference could be a fine candidate for another successful publication as well.

Project Costs:	Request from Foundation: \$ <u>10,000</u>
	Department Contribution \$ <u>3,250</u>
	Total Project Costs: \$ <u>13,250</u>

Project Period: From	<u>February</u> - <u>1</u> - <u>2008</u>	To	<u>May</u> - <u>1</u> - <u>2008</u>
	Month Day Year		Month Day Year

Signatures:

Project Director

Department Chairman or Center manager

Director of Humanities Foundation

Approved _____ Denied _____

Please send your letter of application and a letter of support from your Chairman/Director along with this form to Frances Heaton, The Humanities Foundation, 685 Commonwealth Avenue, CAS, 132A, 353-6250.