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NEWS

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The Dallas Opera Honors Soprano Sylvia D'Eramo with 2024/2025 Maria Callas Debut Artist Award



The Company Also Announces General Director's Award Recipient and New Board Directors and Trustees

(DALLAS, June 12, 2025)–At **The Dallas Opera's** (TDO) Final Board and Trustees meeting of the 2024/2025 Season Thursday, Kern Wildenthal General Director and CEO Ian Derrer announced the company's annual award recipients. Additionally, seven new board directors and three new trustees were elected.

Award Recipients

Soprano Sylvia D'Eramo has been named as the 2024/2025 "Maria Callas Debut Artist of the Year" for her portrayal of Mimì in Puccini's beloved *La bohème*. This annual award, elected exclusively by TDO subscribers, is given to one performer each season in recognition of a particularly memorable and outstanding company debut. A previous TDO National Vocal Competition winner, D'Eramo's mainstage debut was universally praised by the press. "D'Eramo perfectly captured Mimì's delicate character," wrote *Texas Classical Review*.

"Receiving the Maria Callas Debut Artist of the Year Award is an immense honor as well as a humbling, heartwarming surprise," D'Eramo said. "It is a joy to know that my performances of

Mimì touched the hearts of The Dallas Opera subscribers, as my time with TDO touched my heart. I am so thankful for my incredible colleagues on and off the stage; I cherished working on this production. I accept this award with immense gratitude."

Derrer also named the **O'Donnell Foundation** as the 2025 General Director's Award recipient. Their decades-long support of TDO has helped foster world-class performances and robust education for the North Texas community.

"Our long-term partnership with the O'Donnell Foundation has been inspirational," Derrer said. "With their support, we've rendered new partnerships, grown new audiences and donors, and refined business practices that will help solidly sustain The Dallas Opera into the future."

New Board Members



Announcing the election of seven new members to TDO's Board of Directors, plus one member elected earlier this season, Board Chair Quincy Roberts said, "The varied backgrounds and universal love for the arts of these members will bring fresh, new perspectives to TDO and will help broaden the impact and appeal of opera across North Texas." The new members are:

Fidelity Investments retiree **David Boddie** joined the opera's trustee board in 2019, serving on the Finance Committee. He's also worked at Music Hall at Fair Park and the Majestic Theatre.

Baritone **Armon Golliday** is a seasoned marketing professional, performer, and arts advocate. Gaedeke Group's Tenant Relations and Marketing head, he's been a TDO Chorus member for 20 years and a trustee since 2005.

Alan Herda is a Haynes and Boone, LLP partner, focusing on patent portfolios for a broad range of technologies and counseling clients on patent prosecution, infringement analysis, and IP strategy.

Elected earlier this season, **Gabe Kunda** is a Dallas-based voice actor, singer, and philanthropist. The Grammy-nominated Forbes' 30 Under 30 list recipient founded arts education nonprofit Light Motif Foundation.

Author, TDO trustee, and cheesemaker **Paula Lambert** founded Dallas' Mozzarella Company in 1982. Lambert has written cookbooks, earned numerous accolades, and is an active member of organizations like Les Dames d'Escoffier.

Appointed by President Clinton, **Judge Barbara M.G. Lynn** was the first woman to serve as Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas. Her TDO board term begins August 1, 2025.

Mexico City native **Santiago Mijares** and his family moved to Dallas three years ago. Passionate about arts and education, Mijares is a vice president in Goldman Sachs' Investment Banking Division.

Throughout her life, **Donna Weitzman** has been a businesswoman, elected official, author, philanthropist, wife, and mother. A longtime Dallas Opera patron and donor, she graduated from Midwestern State University and Harvard Business School.

Additionally, three new members were added to the Board of Trustees: **Chrysta Castaneda**, **Elizabeth Mack**, and **Joe O**. These three join fellow newcomer trustee **Mac Irwin**, who was elected earlier this season.

Learn more about **The Dallas Opera** here.

Photo Credits:

P. 1: Sylvia D'Eramo as Mimì in Puccini's beloved *La bohème*. Photo credit: Kyle Flubacker.

P. 2: (L to R) New Board of Directors members David Boddie, Armon Golliday, Alan Herda, Gabe Kunda, Paula Lambert, Barbara M.G. Lynn, Santiago Mijares, and Donna Weitzman. Photo credit: Courtesy of The Dallas Opera

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