

KENTUCKY OPERA

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KENTUCKY OPERA ANNOUNCES TWO LANDMARK GIFTS FOR VISIONARY NEW OPERA CENTER IN LOUISVILLE

Business and civic leader Christina Lee Brown gives \$1 million and philanthropist Rose Mary Toebbe bequeathed more than \$325,000 to support the visionary new cultural hub

Louisville, KY – Kentucky Opera announced today a \$1 million gift from longtime donor and former board member Christina Lee Brown and over \$325,000 bequest from Rose Mary Toebbe, a close friend of the opera and donor for many years. Both are foundational gifts toward the opera’s campaign for its recently opened opera center in downtown Louisville.

"We are grateful for the visionary philanthropy of these two remarkable Louisville citizens," said Matthew Hamel, Chair of the Kentucky Opera’s Board of Trustees. "Christy’s extraordinary dedication to the arts and to the physical, spiritual, and cultural health of our community is truly inspirational. Rose Mary’s bequest caps a life dedicated to supporting the arts across our area, and we are proud that a central feature of the Opera Center will bear her name."

Both Brown’s and Toebbe’s donations are naming gifts. At a press conference today, Kentucky Opera announced the opera center’s new name – Kentucky Opera Center for Cultural Health – in recognition of Brown's commitment to promoting healthy communities. Additionally, the Center’s community hall is now called the Rose Mary Toebbe Community Hall.

Brown is a prominent philanthropist and business and civic leader. She calls opera “the queen of the arts” and believes it – and the arts in general – to be a powerful tool for engaging and connecting communities. In addition to the arts, Brown supports a

host of initiatives focused on the holistic health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

“Kentucky Opera is a vitally important cultural institution and a model for collaboration across art forms, sectors, and communities,” said Brown via a representative. “As an opera lover and proud member of the Louisville community, it is my deep joy to help propel Kentucky Opera on its journey to strengthening the health our region.”

Brown is also a pivotal donor to the Christina Lee Brown Envirome Institute at the University of Louisville, a multidisciplinary research group focused on building healthy communities. She developed the Circle of Health and Harmony, a tool to help guide people to live the healthiest, most-balanced lives possible and to understand the interconnection between all forms of health. This symbol is displayed in the Opera Center for Cultural Health’s lobby.

“By boldly featuring the Circle of Health and Harmony where all visitors can see it, Kentucky Opera is putting on full display our commitment to the cultural health and vitality of Louisville and to welcoming new partners in our shared goal of community health and wellness,” said Kentucky Opera General Director/CEO Barbara Lynne Jamison.

The Kentucky Opera Center for Cultural health is a complement to the historic Brown Theatre, where Kentucky Opera has performed for over 60 years. Over 16,000 ft² of newly renovated space at 708 Magazine Street enables Kentucky Opera to serve thousands more individuals, expand youth and family programs, host other nonprofit organizations, provide collaborative programming, performances, and services through community partnerships, offer a safe and welcoming space to make and explore art, music, and theatre as a community.

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About Kentucky Opera

Kentucky Opera, under the current leadership of Barbara Lynne Jamison, sparks discovery, joy, and connection among the varied and diverse communities of our region through the shared experiences of opera - on and off stage. The Kentucky Arts Council, the state arts agency, supports Kentucky Opera with state tax dollars and federal funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.