



# OPÉRA LOUISIANE

## Case for Support

Since the beginning of civilization, mankind has relied upon the human voice as a means to express emotion, promote change, and enlighten society. Our voices increase their potential for communication when combined with music. Mothers use songs to teach children the building blocks of learning, young people find comfort in a playlist on their ipod, and marketing directors vie for the best soundscape for a product. Our nation's constant search for the next great sound often overlooks one of the most powerful manifestations of the human voice: opera. This centuries old art form has been wrongly designated as archaic.

Truly live performances are uncommon, if not rare in our nation today. Performers rely heavily on the use of auto-tune and pre-recorded tracks even in events promoted as "live." Few of the nation's greatest pop stars could stand on stage and belt out an a cappella version of their hit single.

Cities work to attract industry and business by offering tax incentives, building entertainment centers, and revitalizing downtowns. However, the value of a diverse offering of the arts is often underestimated when promoting a city as a great place to live, work, and play.

As school systems struggle to educate students for pennies on the dollar, art and music programs are rapidly being cut from school budgets. In Baton Rouge, many public schools do not have a permanent music teacher and very few have access to quality music programming.

Across the country, opera companies are responding to the need for music in the schools through creative and engaging outreach programs. Studies show that students who are involved in the arts score higher on verbal and math portions of tests, stay in school longer, and increase their socialization and verbal skills. Opera companies are moving out of the comfort of their gilded houses and bringing opera to the people in non-traditional spaces. These audience-building efforts have garnered a new generation of opera patrons that is a diverse representation of their vibrant communities. Through these efforts, audiences are discovering opera again.

Opéra Louisiane, Inc. (OLI) was formed to provide professional opera for the capital city and beyond. OLI is committed to presenting professional quality opera, educating the youth of Louisiana, cultivating young talent, and fostering Louisiana's appreciation for the arts. Through our Young People's Opera Program, mainstage season, and outreach events, OLI promotes the power of the human voice to express emotion, promote change, and enlighten society. Additionally, OLI helps to draw world-class talent to the LSU School of Music through our Young Artist Program, so that Baton Rouge can continue to cultivate singers with highly successful careers that take them to the Metropolitan Opera and beyond. OLI provides a unique form of entertainment that will draw people from around the state and across state lines, benefiting our economy and culture. We are focused on the continuous growth of Baton Rouge as a center for the arts not only in our state, but also across the nation. To achieve our goals for 2012, OLI needs to generate \$294,000, of which \$200,000 will come from charitable support.