



**OPERA THEATRE OF SAINT LOUIS**  
EARNING ACCLAIM, SERVING SAINT LOUIS  
**2009 ANNUAL REPORT**

## A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL DIRECTOR

TIMOTHY O'LEARY



*"The 2009 fiscal year was one of artistic triumphs for Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and, despite the challenging economy, also a year of institutional strength."*

The 2009 fiscal year was one of artistic triumphs for Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and, despite the challenging economy, also a year of institutional strength. Thanks to the skill, dedication, and support of so many colleagues and friends, the company produced a landmark season while continuing its record of balanced budgets.

Attendance and box office revenues were both up. Audiences were thrilled by Kelly Kaduce's unforgettable *Salome* led by music director Stephen Lord, sellout performances of *La bohème*, the stylish artistry of former Gerdine Young Artists in Mozart's *Il re pastore*, and a fitting finale, James Robinson's haunting and hilarious production of *The Ghosts of Versailles*.

An overall 6% increase in contributed revenue was made possible by a year-end challenge gift from board members and an outpouring of generosity in response. Volatility in the financial markets brought losses to investments, but, amazingly, the year ended with a net gain to the endowment thanks to conservative stewardship and bequests that were immediately held in reserve. At the same time, the ingenuity of all departments produced substantial cost savings without compromising on quality.

At the end of my first year as general director, I am hugely grateful to my colleagues and to Opera Theatre's extraordinary board and friends. Although this continues to be a challenging time for arts organizations, we are above all optimistic and excited as we look to the future.

### Timothy O'Leary

General Director, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis

September 30, 2009

## A MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIRMAN

SPENCER BURKE



It is a pleasure to present Opera Theatre's 2009 Annual Report as I end my first year as chairman and to applaud once again this company's record for balanced budgets. Given the uncertainties of this year, the budget is an extraordinary achievement on the part of OTSL's leadership at all levels and represents a powerful vote of confidence in the company's future.

The company's stakeholders – board, staff, volunteers, and community partners – met in the spring to affirm a Strategic Plan to expand and carry forward the goals first articulated in 2003. Looking forward to 2010 and beyond, we see that while OTSL's role in the local and international communities continues to evolve, its core values have remained constant.

We took great pride in re-affirming Opera Theatre's dedication to producing opera of the highest quality in a festival setting with a style that is intimate, accessible, and exciting – welcoming the audience, the artists, the staff, the volunteers, and the board as colleagues in a creative adventure. We continue to nurture the finest young artistic, technical, and managerial talent, and reach out to future audiences through year-round educational and community programs of the same quality as the festival season – all within the framework of responsible fiscal management that appears in these pages.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of its contributors Opera Theatre has flourished since 1976, and we look forward to the future with confidence.

### Spencer B. Burke

Chairman, Board of Directors, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis

September 30, 2009

*"We took great pride in re-affirming Opera Theatre's dedication to producing opera of the highest quality in a festival setting with a style that is intimate, accessible, and exciting."*

## THE 2009 FESTIVAL SEASON



### LA BOHÈME

GIACOMO PUCCINI

*"It's always a delight to experience this opera with a cast whose ages match those of the characters, and OTSL's lineup had all the verve and camaraderie of college dormmates."*

OPERA NEWS

Major support was provided by lead corporate sponsor 

### IL RE PASTORE

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

*"...a graceful evening of intelligent entertainment."*

RIVERFRONT TIMES

*"Go to Il re pastore for the superb singing..."*

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

*Made possible in part by a generous grant from Whitaker Foundation*



### SALOME

RICHARD STRAUSS

*"A tour de force that has not lost its power to shock...Kaduce was simply stunning in the title role."*

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

*"Kaduce emerged as the Salome one dreams of..."*

GRAMOPHONE.COM

*Co-producers: San Francisco Opera and L'Opéra de Montréal*

### THE GHOSTS OF VERSAILLES



JOHN CORIGLIANO & WILLIAM M. HOFFMAN

*"...[a] captivating new staging"*

OPERA (LONDON)

*"...a brilliant success."*

OPERA NEWS

*Co-producers: Wexford Festival Opera and Vancouver Opera. OTSL gratefully acknowledges leadership gifts from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Susan and Elihu Rose Foundation,  National Endowment for the Arts, Mrs. Walter F. Brissenden, and the estate of Colin Graham. Additional support provided by the Rudolph W. Driscoll Endowment for Contemporary Opera, the Fred M. Saigh Endowment Fund, Emily Rauh Pulitzer, and lead corporate sponsor *



## A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR OPERA THEATRE

*Opera Theatre stakeholders came together in the summer of 2008 to begin the next phase of strategic planning for the company.*

*The company's goal is to be an essential local and international destination for artists and audiences through the quality of its performances and the innovation of its repertory while setting the standard for financial and administrative management.*

The major goals of the 2003 strategic plan – the construction of the Sally S. Levy Opera Center, completion of the \$11 million *Building for Opera* campaign, strengthening of volunteer and board involvement, and planning for a transition to new OTSL leadership – had been achieved, and it was time to move forward with planning for 2009-2014.

107 friends of the company – members of the staff, Board of Directors, Guild Board, and National Patrons Council, with artists, educators, and community partners – met during the year and agreed on a plan, building on the company's artistic and institutional success to reach a new level of artistic impact, community service, and organizational success. Task forces focused on six priorities: Artistic Mission, Audience Development, Education and Community Outreach, Facilities, Organizational Development, and Fundraising.

The OTSL stakeholders affirmed that the company's goal is to be an essential local and international destination for artists and audiences through the quality of its performances and the innovation of its repertory while setting the standard for financial and administrative management. The eighteen financial and artistic strategic priorities that make up this goal include – among others – commitments to expand the operatic repertoire, lead co-productions, broaden and diversify the audience,

ensure permanence and stability through sufficient endowment resources and stewardship, build diversity, and reach the next generation.

Above all, these priorities support OTSL's core values: we are an ensemble company with all that implies, performing a diverse repertory of opera of the highest quality in the language of our audience in a festival setting, reaching out across the community with programs of equal quality, while remaining pledged to responsible financial stewardship.

### **The Strategic Planning Task Forces reaffirmed and enhanced the Mission and Vision Statements adopted in 2003:**

#### **Mission**

To communicate the power and beauty of live opera to audiences of all ages and experiences by presenting world-class productions in a festival format. To build a vibrant future for opera and serve our community through professional development and community education programs. To strengthen the cultural and economic vitality of our region.

#### **Vision**

To be a world leader in producing opera of outstanding artistic quality. To become the nationally recognized leader in developing and nurturing the talents of the finest opera artists, artisans, and administrators of this generation. To enrich the experience of our audiences and reach out to the next generation of artists and audiences. To strengthen Opera Theatre's position as an internationally acclaimed company and an essential destination for opera-goers and artists alike.

## ADVANCING PROFESSIONAL CAREERS IN OPERA

*“The company’s competitive Gerdine Young Artists Program is a training ground for up-and-coming professional singers...”*

OPERA MAGAZINE, LONDON



Former Gerdine Young Artist Amanda Majeski in a master class with famed operatic star Shirley Varrett.

### 2009 GERDINE YOUNG ARTISTS PROGRAM

31 young singers played small parts and covered leading roles in mainstage productions; they coached repertory with the music staff and appeared as soloists in master classes, recitals, and concerts. Chosen from over 400 in nationwide auditions, their quality plays an important part in attracting well-known conductors and directors to St. Louis.

*Special performance and education awards for young artists showing exceptional promise are supported by the Charles MacKay Career Development Fund, Founder’s Award of the Richard Gaddes Fund, and funds established in memory of OTSL founding board members Elihu Hyndman and Barbara & Stanley Richman.*

### THE 2009 BOEING ADMINISTRATIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

A substantial program for advancing the next generation of arts management professionals. Many go on to full-time positions at OTSL and other arts organizations.

*Sponsored by The Boeing Company with support from the Charles MacKay Career Development Fund, the Dixie Long Memorial Fund and gifts made in memory of Mrs. John Sausele.*

### 2009 EMERSON BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Training programs for 21 young people beginning careers in professional theater.

#### Emerson Opera Production Workshops

A classroom introduction to operatic design and construction and its career potential

#### Emerson Production Assistants

Practical experience in opera production for college-level assistants

#### Emerson Costume Apprentices

Advanced training in costume design and construction for college-level students with visiting designers and OTSL professionals

#### Emerson Production Artists

Young entry-level professionals work with renowned designers and directors

*Made possible with a leadership gift from Emerson and additional support from Rabbi Dr. Jay & Erika Goldberg and a fund established in memory of Catherine Vail Levy. Distinguished young designers are supported by the Dr. Alvin R. Frank Memorial Fund.*

*Additional funding for these programs is generously provided by the E. Desmond Lee Family Fund for Professional Development, the William T. Kemper Fund – Commerce Bank, Trustee, and the Herman T. and Phenie R. Pott Foundation.*

*“The chorus...had a particularly powerful impact.”*

OPERA CANADA

*“...the combination of...the superb young ensemble and the return of favorite stars...continued this season.”*

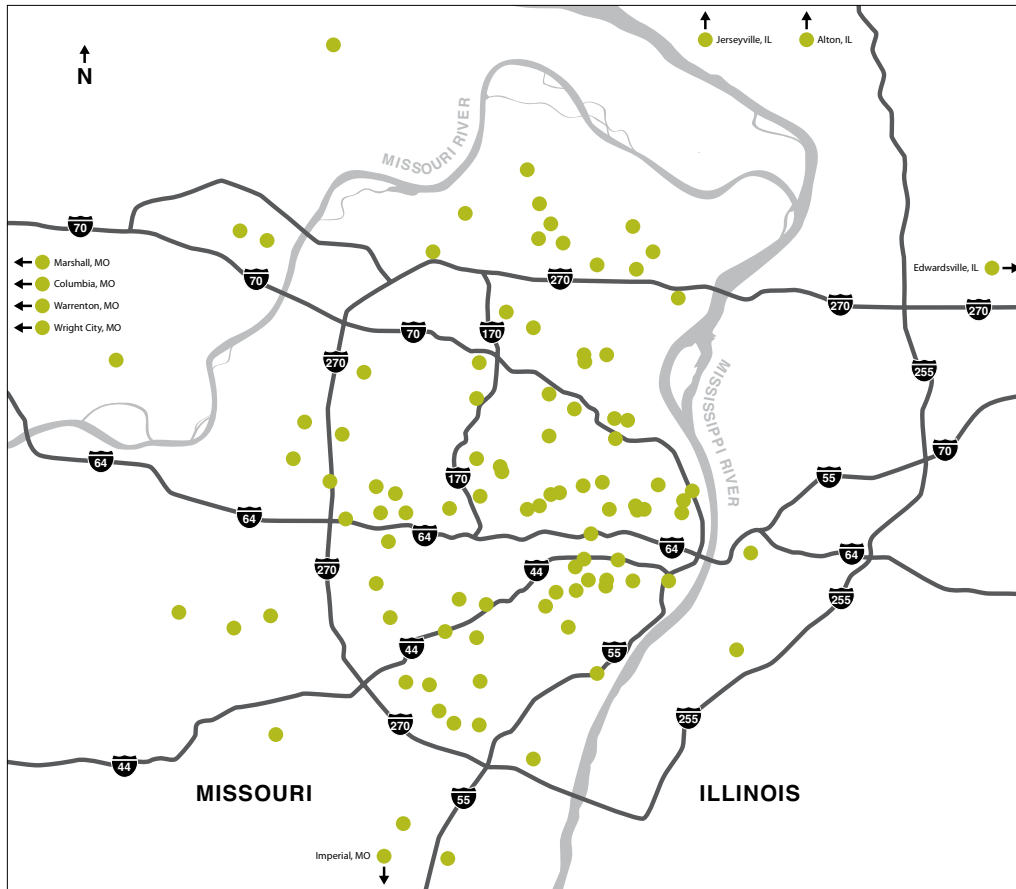
OPERA NEWS

*“Opera Theatre’s training program...regularly throws off future stars...”*

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

**A COMMITMENT TO OUR COMMUNITY**

*In fiscal year 2009, Opera Theatre's education and outreach programs served more than 9,000 children in 21 school districts throughout the bi-state area.*



● Indicates Opera Theatre education program site

**MONSANTO ARTISTS-IN-TRAINING**

Now in its 20th year, *AIT* is an extensive partnership with Monsanto Fund and the Saint Louis Public Schools, nationally recognized by the President's Committee for the Arts and the Humanities. High school students from across the metro area are selected by audition to study with voice teachers at Washington University, SIU Edwardsville, Webster University, or the University of Missouri-St. Louis and compete for scholarship awards at a year-end recital at the Sheldon Concert Hall.



*Opera scene from AIT College Retreat.*

**AIT Advanced Study Awards**

Program alumni audition for scholarship assistance with continued vocal studies.

**AIT Preparatory Program**

Training for high school students preparing to audition for *AIT* is held at Central VPA and Gateway High Schools.

**AIT Spring Training**

A one-week course during opera season is offered to students interested in applying for the *AIT* program.

*Major support for Artists-in-Training programs is provided by Monsanto Fund for the nineteenth consecutive year and made possible in collaboration with the Leigh Gerdine College of Fine Arts at Webster University. The Artists-in-Training endowment is funded by Whitaker Foundation, the Gertrude and William A. Bernoudy Foundation, William T. Kemper Foundation – Commerce Bank Trustee, AmerenUE, the Marielle Huber Memorial Fund, and the OTSL William E. Maritz Memorial Endowment Fund. The Wedgewood Award for Advanced Study is presented by Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Guerriero.*

*An array of high-quality education and outreach programs served more than 13,000 people of all ages across the metro area in 2009, of whom almost half were minority populations.*

## A COMMITMENT TO OUR COMMUNITY

*“Opera on the Go...uses everything from Homer Simpson to Bugs Bunny...to get across opera’s appeal to children age 7 through high school.”*

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

*“Opera on the Go! — the best production in my 30+ years!”*

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

### **OPERA ON THE GO!**

Gerdine Young Artists Rachel Sliker, Candra Savage, Brian Arreola, James Ivey, Jennifer Feinstein and pianists Christopher Cano and Alice Nelson presented a new version of *Opera on the GO!* at 25 area schools and in outstate Missouri and Illinois during two weeks in November and one in February. Stage director Kevin Newbury and videographer Greg Emetaz used elements from pop media and live opera performance to introduce students to the world of opera – including videos, workshops, and a 20-minute performance of *Madame Butterfly* “reported” by KMOV-TV News Channel 4’s Vickie Newton. The program reached approximately 3,300 students in grades 3-12.

*The Opera on the Go! video and related technology made possible by Dana Brown Charitable Trust, U.S. Bank Trustee. Major program support was provided by Monsanto Fund, and Michael & Carol Staenberg in conjunction with THF Realty, Inc., with additional funding from Target Stores and Macy’s.*

### **MUSIC!WORDS!OPERA!**

A K-12 interdisciplinary academic year program in forty-three public, private, and parochial schools culminated in original operas created and performed by students. *Sponsored by MetLife Foundation.*

### **M!W!O! TEACHER TRAINING**

A one week teacher training course at UMSL for implementing the *M!W!O!* curriculum in the classroom by original authors Roger Ames and Clifford Brooks. This year the revised, updated curriculum included the study of Puccini’s exotic *Turandot*.

### **OPERA CAMP FOR KIDS**

A one-week session during opera season offered workshops in singing, acting, and dance and performances of *La bohème* for 111 campers aged 8-13. To accommodate growing demand, OTSL added a second camp in 2008 for students from City Academy and Herbert Hoover Boys & Girls Club, held at City Academy in North St. Louis. *Sponsored by William T. Kemper Foundation – Commerce Bank, Trustee and Fox Performing Arts Charitable Foundation.*

### **ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE**

Gerdine Young Artists Megan Radder and Jay Ivey gave concerts for audiences totaling about 2,500 at 19 venues including two juvenile detention centers during one week in December.

### **DRESS REHEARSALS**

Senior adults, students, and community groups attended each of the four final opera dress rehearsals as part of OTSL’s outreach efforts. *Sponsored by Wells Fargo Advisors, The Saigh Foundation, and Employees Community Fund of Boeing St. Louis.*



*Students perform in Opera on the Go! production.*



Soprano Jeanette Vecchione in a 2009 Little Lunch Music concert.

### SPOTLIGHT ON OPERA

Panel discussions by the directors, designers and – in one instance – the creators of the season’s operas were held at the Ethical Society, highlighted by special performances by Gerdine Young Artists and members of OTSL’s music staff. A new topical presentation by an outside expert – ranging from the St. Louis Psychoanalytic Institute to the Saint Louis Art Museum – gave greater perspective and context for each opera. *Sponsored by Charter Communications.*

### A LITTLE LUNCH MUSIC

Three free noontime concerts by principal artists from the 2009 season were presented at three distinct community locations: The Grandel Theater in Grand Center, the Pursor Center at Logan Chiropractic College in Chesterfield, and the First Presbyterian Church in Kirkwood. *Sponsored by Chesterfield Arts and Kirkwood Area Arts Council.*

### JOHN D. LEVY MASTER CLASSES

Legendary performers Craig Rutenberg and Sherrill Milnes offered master classes for the Gerdine Young Artists; two were open to the public.

### DOCENT PRESENTATIONS

Docent volunteers presented lectures throughout the community to students and adult audiences after training from Dr. Hugh MacDonald of Washington University, Dr. Michael Budds of the University of Missouri-Columbia, and Dr. Glenn Bauer of Webster University.

## FISCAL YEAR 2009

*Opera Theatre’s 2009 fiscal year was a success by every measure, thanks to extraordinary generosity from Opera Theatre’s dedicated patrons and sound fiscal management from the staff and board.*

Early in Opera Theatre’s fiscal year, which began October 1, 2008, the stock market fell and looked as though it might keep falling. We reacted by cutting budgets back as far as possible without damaging artistic quality and managed to reduce 2009 expenses to 2008 levels.

On the revenue side, we drastically reduced the endowment draw from the budgeted 5.5% to 3.86%, but were able to make up the difference in increased box office income and contributions from a year-end challenge. Six of Opera Theatre’s board members contributed a total of \$45,000 to launch a 1:1 challenge in July 2009 to bridge the revenue gap; by the end of September, 184 donors had responded, raising a total of nearly \$128,000 in new and increased gifts. In a year that was economically challenging for both organizations and individuals alike, the tremendous support provided by Opera Theatre’s ticket buyers and donors was even more meaningful.

These generous friends have enabled Opera Theatre to sustain a long-standing record of balanced budgets, which provides a secure foundation for adventurous new work, outstanding professional development programs for artists, and innovative education programs for the community.

*“Precisely what an opera festival should be...OTSL has an impressive track record...”*

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Despite volatility in the financial markets, Opera Theatre transferred a net of \$1.1 million into its endowment during FY2009 — results of pledges received and extraordinary bequests. By year-end, these transfers, together with market recovery and conservative stewardship, had resulted in a net gain to the endowment of \$1.2 million during FY2009.

<b>Assets</b>	As of September 30, 2009
Case and Cash Equivalents	1,105,888
Investments	17,550,606
Working Capital Reserve	1,640,034
Contributions Receivable	2,408,936
Other	519,902
Facilities and Equipment	5,797,596
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>29,022,962</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	277,557
Deferred Revenue	339,518
Annuity Liability	223,148
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>840,223</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	
Net Assets Excluding Unrealized Gains and Losses	26,186,431
Unrealized Gains (Losses)	1,996,308
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>28,182,739</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>29,022,962</b>

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

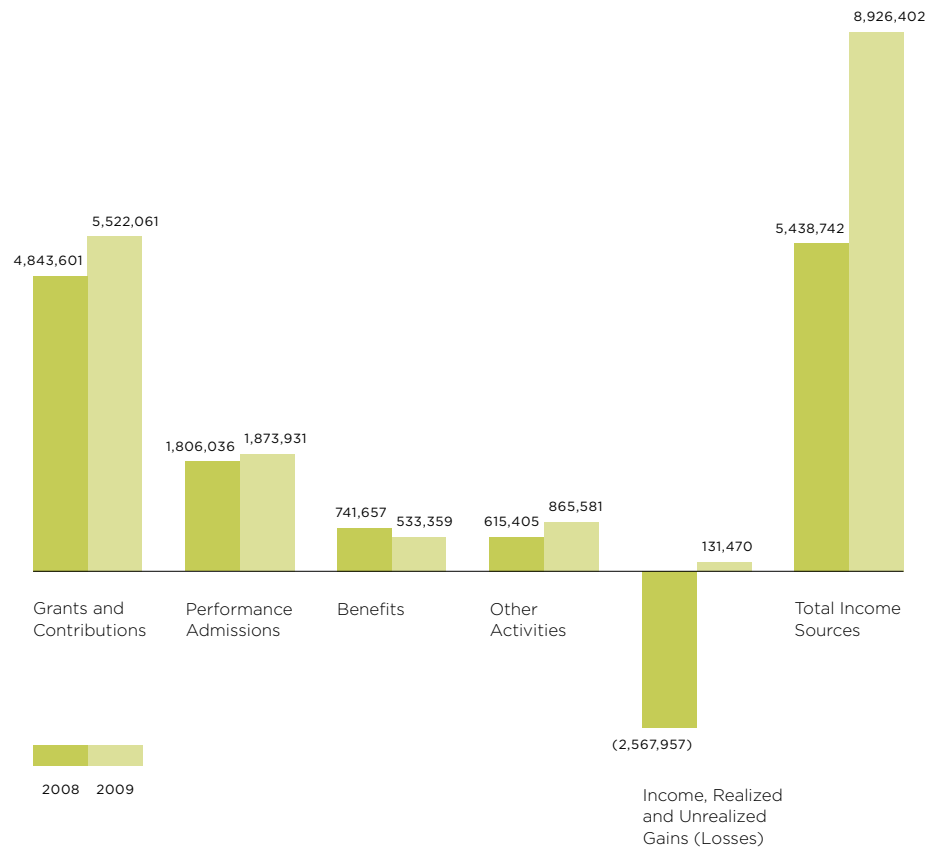
Total operating revenues exceeded total operating expenses by \$3,810 resulting in a balanced budget for FY2009.

<b>Operating Revenues</b>	As of September 30, 2009
Grants and Contributions	2,529,517
Performance Admissions	1,873,931
Benefits	533,359
Other Activities	897,137
Investment Income Including Realized and Unrealized Gains and Losses	305,559
Net Assets Released from Designations and Restrictions	2,330,139
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>8,469,642</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	
Program Services	6,558,666
General and Administrative	921,664
Fundraising	985,502
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>8,465,832</b>
<b>Designated Revenue and Restricted Support</b>	
Grants and Contributions	2,992,544
Investment Income Including Realized and Unrealized Gains and Losses	(174,089)
Other Activities	(31,556)
Net Assets Released from Designations and Restrictions	(2,330,139)
<b>Total Increase in Net Assets</b>	<b>456,760</b>
Increase in Operating Net Assets	3,810
Decrease in Board Designated Net Assets	(1,224,921)
Increase in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	1,555,894
Increase in Permanently Restricted Net Assets	125,787
<b>TOTAL INCREASE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>460,570</b>

## INCOME SOURCES

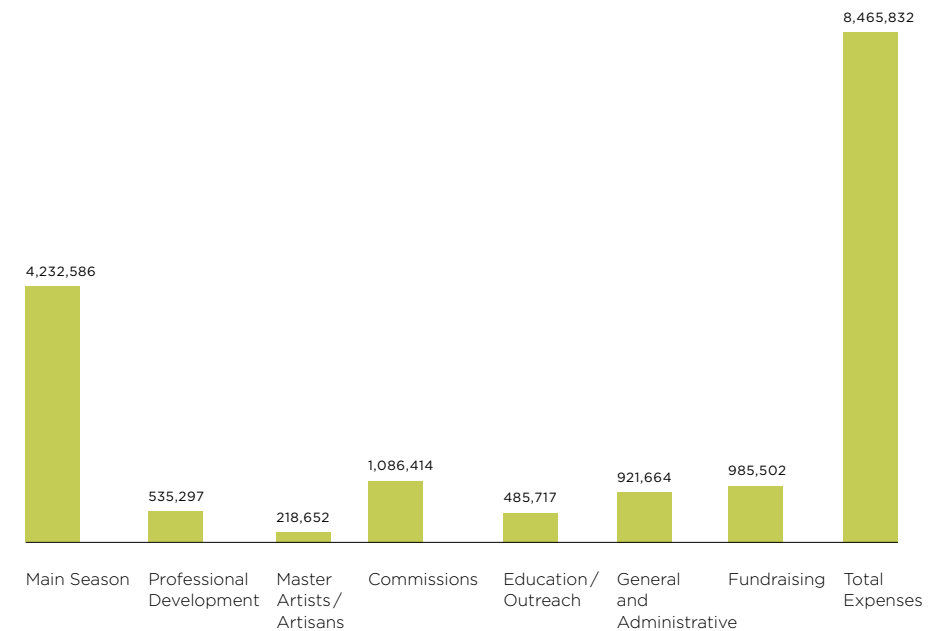
### Revenue sources increased almost across the board between 2008 and 2009.

Investment gains went from losses of \$2.5 million to a small gain of \$131,000. While the increases in most areas were modest, Opera Theatre's accomplishment in increasing contributed revenue and ticket sales during a down economy demonstrates the financial strength of the organization.



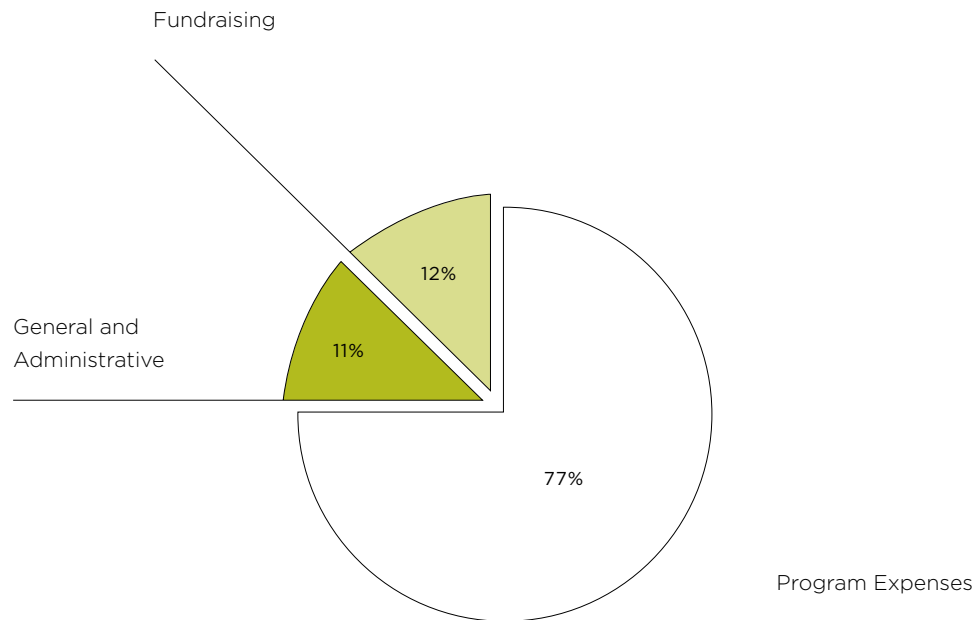
## EXPENSES BY FUNCTION

Expenses remained constant with 2008, even declining by a small amount, due to tight expense controls placed over budgets when the markets first began to decline. Expenses were cut by 3% during the course of 2009.



## 2009 EXPENSES

The overall allocation of expenses among program, fundraising, and administration remained similar to prior years although overall spending on fundraising and administration decreased by a total of \$150,000 or 1.8% of the total budget.



## CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION DONORS

This list represents contributions of \$1,000 or more made to the Annual Operating Fund in the fiscal year of 2009 (October 1, 2008 – September 30, 2009). **We are immensely grateful to our donors at all levels and to those who supported capital and endowment projects**, but regret that we do not have space here to list them all.

### Special Donors

Arts and Education Council of Greater St. Louis  
 The Bravo Charitable Trust  
 Dana Brown Charitable Trust, U.S. Bank Trustee  
 Centene Corporation  
 Emerson  
 The Mabel Dorn Reeder Foundation - Mabel L. Purkerson, M.D., Trustee  
 The Margaret Blanke Grigg Foundation  
 The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation  
 Missouri Arts Council  
 Monsanto Fund  
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 The Tony & Ruthe Ponturo Charitable Gift Fund  
 The St. Louis Trust Company  
 U.S. Bancorp Foundation

## Levels of Giving

Special Donors:  
\$50,000 & above

Chairman's Circle:  
\$25,000

Sponsor: \$10,000

Producer: \$7,500

Benefactor: \$5,000

Guarantor: \$2,500

Director's Circle: \$1,000

### Guarantor

The Battram Family Foundation  
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The Susan W. & Stuart J. Zimmerman Gift Fund

*\*In-kind*

## INDIVIDUAL DONORS

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Producer: \$7,500

Benefactor: \$5,000

Guarantor: \$2,500

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AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2009

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General Director

Stephen Lord  
Music Director

James Robinson  
Artistic Director

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Outreach Programs

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Development Officer and  
Events Coordinator

Kate Leslie  
Development Officer and  
Volunteer Coordinator

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Development Systems  
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Keisha Black  
Accounting and  
Payroll Associate

Peggy Brooks  
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Assistant Manager

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Michael Simpson

#### COMPANY PHOTOGRAPHER

Ken Howard

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