

Dear UofT Opera Community,

I would like to take an opportunity, on behalf of UofT Opera, to reaffirm our ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and the provision of safe spaces in which we learn and create opera. In anticipation of our upcoming Spotlight on Diversity concert I want to take a moment to reflect on the valued time we have spent this past year in sessions with our Diversity Coach Korin Thomas-Smith, the team at Opera InReach and the ARCDO workshops. Our world has changed and continues to evolve as we open our hearts, minds and repertoire to the stories and journeys of not only those around us, but all of humanity. We are learning from the past and present, and I believe we are facing a rich and imaginative future that is inclusive and supportive of everyone.

We are continuing to work with the U of T Sexual and Gender Diversity Office (<https://sgdo.utoronto.ca>) and will be reaching out to the U of T Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Centre (<https://www.svpscentre.utoronto.ca/support/>) to ensure that our spaces of rehearsing and working are safe for everyone. We do not now, nor have we ever, tolerated harassment of any nature and we intend to continue on this path. Our goal as a division within the Faculty of Music has always been to be aware of what is happening in the world around us and respond with empathy and transparency for the benefit of all students.

In light of recent events and perceived inaction, please let me assure you that we are working within the process that exists at the Institution to which we belong, and will continue to advocate on behalf of our entire community.

UofT Opera stands in solidarity with the mission of the Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Committee: *“The ARAO is committed to fostering an environment where all Faculty of Music students, faculty, and staff feel safe, represented, respected, and valued. Any form of oppression, racism, sexual harassment and violence will not be tolerated. In particular, we will do everything we can do to uphold student safety and security.”*
<https://change.music.utoronto.ca/>

If you are in need of further support you can reach out to the excellent resources listed above, or the Faculty of Music Students and ARAO’s Safe Spaces document: https://music.utoronto.ca/docs/u_of_t_faculty_of_music_safe_space_final_version.pdf

We will continue to build on the progress we have already made in the areas of diversity, equity, inclusion and providing safe spaces with the best interests of our UofT Opera community at the forefront.

Sincerely,

Sandra Horst, on behalf of UofT Opera