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## Linda and Mitch Hart Institute for Women Conductors Wins Award for Equal Opportunities & Impact at International Opera Awards Today in Athens, Greece



### The Dallas Opera's Groundbreaking Program Celebrates 10 Years this Season with a Showcase Concert in January 2026

[DALLAS, November 13, 2025]— [The Dallas Opera](#)'s (TDO) [Linda and Mitch Hart Institute for Women Conductors](#) (HIWC) won top honors in its category today at the prestigious International Opera Awards in Athens, Greece. TDO's Board Chair Quincy Roberts was on hand to receive the award for Equal Opportunities and Impact on behalf of the company and its landmark program.

"The work of the Hart Institute has supported women conductors and created opportunities for them on podiums around the world," said TDO Board Chair Quincy Roberts." He continued, "We are grateful for this esteemed recognition for what we have

accomplished in the past 10 years, but none of these achievements would be possible without the visionary support of Linda and Mitch Hart.”

Celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this season, TDO’s Hart Institute was launched in 2015 to address the gender imbalance on opera podiums by training women conductors. More than 500 candidates from 40 nations have applied to be trained, advised, and supported by this extraordinary leadership initiative over the past decade.

This season, in honor of this milestone, the Hart Institute will celebrate the Institute’s achievements in a special 10<sup>th</sup> **Anniversary Showcase Concert** on **Sunday, January 25, at 3 PM** at the Winspear Opera House. Alumnae from the Institute’s first decade, including Tiffany Chang, Michelle Di Russo, Tianyi Lu, Shira Samuels-Shragg, and more—will conduct The Dallas Opera Orchestra and guest singers in selections from operas significant to TDO’s history, including *L’italiana in Algeri*, *Moby-Dick*, *Turandot* and more. The evening will also include video retrospectives and reminiscences from distinguished guests. A virtual reunion for all Institute alumnae will take place later next week.

Among the distinguished faculty this season are renowned arts administrators Deborah Borda, Serge Dorny, and Deborah Rutter, as well as TDO’s artistic consultant David Lomelí and this season’s inaugural Martha R. and Preston A. Peak Fellow, HIWC class of 2023 alumna and conductor Jingqi Zhu.

“When the Hart Institute began 10 years ago, we knew it had the potential to create a significant impact,” TDO’s Kern Wildenthal General Director and CEO Ian Derrer said. “Now we see how this program has made a huge difference in the lives and careers of many talented conductors. We are so proud of our alumnae, and we look forward to this program continuing to make change in this field.”

For 10 years, the Hart Institute has served as the gold standard for career advancement for conductors, becoming an experience that hiring companies seek as a qualification for potential new conductors. The Institute’s more than 45 alumnae have gone on to receive appointments as music directors, principal conductors, principal guest conductors, and guest conductors on some of the world’s most prestigious stages, including those of the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Vienna’s Musikverein, Opera Australia, Washington National Opera, BBC Proms, LA Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, West Australian Ballet, English National Opera, Minnesota Opera, and many more.

**Lead image:** HIWC class of 2020 member Michelle Di Russo. c. Karen Almond

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