

Media Contact:

[Catherine Wendlandt](mailto:Catherine.Wendlandt@thedallasopera.org), 214.443.1068

## The Dallas Opera Honors Etienne Dupuis with 2025/2026 Maria Callas Debut Artist of the Year Award



### The Company Also Welcomes New CEO, Board Director, and Trustees, and Announces General Director's Award Recipient

**(DALLAS, Thursday, June 11, 2026)**—It was a busy evening Thursday at **The Dallas Opera's** (TDO) Final 2025/2026 Season Board and Trustees meeting. The event celebrated outgoing Kern Wildenthal General Director and CEO **Ian Derrer** and his long tenure with the company, and it welcomed new CEO **David Lomelí**, who began his new role with TDO on June 1.

"I met Ian Derrer 23 years ago in Italy, when we were performing in a production of *Gianni Schicchi*—two young opera people finding their way in the world. That chance encounter became one of the most enduring friendships of my life," Lomelí said. "When Ian later brought me to The Dallas Opera in 2014, I came not just as a colleague, but as someone who already knew and deeply admired the person he is. Watching Ian build this institution with vision, integrity, and real love for this art form has been one of the great privileges of my career. He leaves behind something extraordinary, and I feel both honored and genuinely moved to carry it forward. Coming back to Dallas is a homecoming in every sense for me. My son was born here, my heart has always been here, and I cannot wait to write this next chapter of TDO's story."

#### **Award Recipients**

At the meeting, Derrer announced the recipients of The Dallas Opera's two annual awards.

Canadian baritone **Etienne Dupuis** received the 2025/2026 ["Maria Callas Debut Artist of the Year" award](#) for his heartfelt portrayal of Rodrigo in Verdi's *Don Carlo* this past spring. Elected exclusively by TDO subscribers, this award is given to one performer each season in recognition of a particularly memorable and outstanding company debut. Subscribers selected Dupuis as the standout in a competitive list of 21 debut artists this season. Press likewise raved over his "handsomely textured" (*Dallas Morning News*) and "warm, noble baritone" (*Parterre Box*).

"I have always believed that the characters, the story, should come first," Dupuis said. "We should strive to achieve a certain communication of our emotional and psychological arcs, despite the sometimes ridiculously hard vocal requirements and, perhaps, even the quite challenging modern interpretations of these timeless masterpieces. To receive such a prize for a role I have honed for the last 10 years brings me such a deep and powerfully emotional sense of accomplishment. I hope you felt even a tiny fraction of the joy I experienced performing for you all. I am humbled, thank you!"

Derrer also named The Dallas Opera Board of Directors Chair **Quincy Roberts** as the 2026 General Director's Award recipient for his stewardship during last fall's O'Donnell Foundation Challenge Grant campaign, in which TDO raised \$54.5 million in six months, and this spring's search for a new CEO.

"Quincy has shown exemplary leadership in this time of both great achievements and transitions," Derrer said. "I could not have asked for a better boss and partner to mobilize all we did for the O'Donnell Foundation match. His first-hand knowledge of opera and its many complexities has been a huge asset to TDO, as has his proven passion for this beautiful, historic art form."

### **New Board Members**

At Thursday's event, the Board of Directors and Trustees announced the election of three new Board of Directors members:

A professional painter and longtime supporter of TDO, **Carole Silverman** was active in the former Dallas Opera Guild and has been a company Trustee since 2016.

After a 27-year career in Bank of America/Merrill Lynch's executive leadership, **Maisie Heiken**, elected earlier this season, serves on boards and advisory councils for the Mayo Clinic, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and its Foundation, the World Affairs Council of Dallas/Fort Worth, and the University of Texas at Dallas.

Former HF Sinclair Corporation President, CEO, and Chairman **Michael Jennings**, elected earlier this season, is currently a director of SunocoCorp LLC, serves on several corporate boards, and is a longtime TDO Inner Circle member and donor.

Additionally, four new members were added to the Board of Trustees: **Patricia Crocker, John Gilbert, Louise Hallam,** and **Deidria "DeeDee" Redic.** They join fellow new Trustees, **Vanessa Cain** and **Belinda Hancock,** who were elected earlier this season. Three honorary Board of Directors members were also announced: **C.H. Moore, Marla Muns,** and **Stephen Sands.**

"The Dallas Opera is fortunate to be supported by an extraordinary group of leaders who bring diverse professional expertise, deep community connections, and a shared commitment to the transformative power of the arts," Roberts said. "We are excited to welcome our new board members, trustees, and honorary board members, whose passion and leadership will help advance our mission, strengthen our impact across North Texas, and support an exciting new chapter for The Dallas Opera."

Learn more about **The Dallas Opera** [here](#).

Above photo: Etienne Dupuis in TDO's *Don Carlo*. c. Kyle Flubacker

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