

NEWS RELEASE

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OPERA NEW JERSEY NAMES FORMER GOV. THOMAS KEAN AND MARIE L. MATTHEWS AS CHAIRS OF ANNUAL GALA

PRINCETON, NJ – **Opera New Jersey** is thrilled to announce that former New Jersey **Governor Thomas H. Kean** has been named Honorary Chair and longtime Princeton resident **Marie L. Matthews** was named Gala Patron Committee Chair of the Fourth Annual Celebrate Opera Gala. The black-tie event takes place Saturday, November 1 at the Princeton Marriott at the Forrestal.

The exciting evening will include riveting opera performances, silent and live auctions, as well as cocktails and great food and wine.

One of the featured performers of the evening will be international opera star **Verónica Villarroel**, Soprano. Since her professional debut in 1990 in Barcelona, Ms. Villarroel has sung at the Metropolitan Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Dallas Opera, Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Washington Opera, Tokyo New National Theater and Chile's Teatro Municipal.



Sponsorship levels start at \$500 and all sponsorships include recognition in invitation and gala program book, an exclusive champagne toast with the artists, silent and live auctions, dinner, open bar, wines and live musical entertainment. Benefits included at other sponsorship levels include preferred seating, an aria sung at your table, premium advertisements in the program book, the opportunity to have an artist sit at your table and inclusion on all event publicity.

Individual tickets start at \$250 and include the auction, live opera entertainment, cocktails, dinner and wine.

Proceeds from the Celebrate Opera Gala will benefit Opera New Jersey's upcoming season.

For information on sponsorships, individual tickets, or to request an invitation, please contact Carrie Houtz, Development Coordinator, at 609-799-7700 x106 or at CHoutz@Opera-NJ.org.

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About Opera New Jersey

Opera New Jersey is recognized nationally as a leader among regional opera companies, providing high quality opera performances and exceptional educational offerings. OperaNJ seeks to stimulate, promote and satisfy interest in opera, build a strong and diverse audience base for the art form and foster the development of emerging artists. **Opera New Jersey** recently received its third straight prestigious Citation of Excellence from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts (NJSCA). The Citation is NJSCA's highest honor and recognizes arts organizations that "exhibit the highest standards of excellence in artistry, operations, governance, public benefit and fulfillment of areas of Council priority." OperaNJ received its first citation in 2006, during their first year of eligibility.

This season is made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

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