

Mr. Tom Horn, President of the Board  
Members of the Board  
War Memorial Performing Arts Center

May 1, 2023

Dear President Horn and Trustees,

I am writing to seek your kind consideration of a bas relief sculpture of San Francisco Opera's sixth General Director, David Gockley, in the lobby of the War Memorial Opera House.

David served as General Director for ten years between 2006-2016, a decade marked by extraordinary vision and energy for San Francisco Opera. He brought nine world premieres to the stage during this period, leaving an indelible mark on the operatic repertoire, and continuing an expansion of the American repertoire that he began in Houston. He also oversaw the prescient creation of the Koret-Taube Media Suite: the first permanent, high-definition video production facility installed in any American opera house, enabling groundbreaking projects such as the simulcasts, OperaVision, commercial recordings and, during the pandemic, the provision of 37 full length titles, streamed to the public for free. David has spent his career devoted to increasing access to opera, broadening connection to the art-form, and being on the forefront of the bold and the courageous.

It was David's vision to consolidate the activities of the Opera that led to the Opera building out the top floor and basement of the Veterans Building and the creation of the Wilsey Center for Opera – a groundbreaking step for the company and one that has led to extraordinary synergies for the Opera, and beautiful new spaces for the City.

David's impact was also deeply felt in the cultivation of young and emerging talent, ensuring that the legacy of this company as a singers' house continued. During his tenure, two hundred and eighty-two artists were given the opportunity to sing roles for the first time; many of them would go on to bring these roles to theaters all over the world.

We feel it very appropriate to continue the tradition of installing bas relief sculptures of past San Francisco Opera General Directors in the lobby of the Opera House, and doing so in recognition of David's contributions to our community. We ask for the Trustee's approval of moving forward with a bas relief very much in the nature, design and scope of the existing bas reliefs.

We would propose the following location for David's sculpture, on the south side of the lobby, facing the stairway (essentially a mirror image of where Pamela Rosenberg's bas relief is situated). We had mentioned this to the Board when we sought approval of Ms. Rosenberg's bas relief and still believe that this is the most appropriate location. A photo of the location is pictured in the appendix to this letter. This location is also proximate to Mr. Adler, who was David Gockley's idol as he developed Houston Grand Opera into the international company it became, so it would be deeply fitting and meaningful to David to have his bas relief in this location.

We have identified a sculptor based in Pennsylvania (a nice synergy as David grew up in Philadelphia), Jennifer Fraudakis. She has done a fair amount of bas relief work, including a number of pieces that have

been commissioned by Bay Area organizations, particularly in the wine country. We've included some examples of her work in the appendix to this letter. Ms. Fraudakis visited with David at the Opera House this past May to determine a pose and visit the War Memorial lobby. She is currently in the process of creating a clay molding, and, if the board elects to proceed, her designs will be shared with the Trustees on August 14<sup>th</sup> for approval before setting the piece in bronze. You can learn more about her work at her website: [www.jenfrudakis.com/](http://www.jenfrudakis.com/).

The bas relief would be the same size as the Pamela Rosenberg bas relief: 23.5 inches (59.75 cm) wide by 30 inches (75.3 cm) high.

The hope would be to have the work installed and unveiled before the end of San Francisco Opera's fall season in early December.

We would deeply appreciate the Trustees' consideration of this request and are very happy to answer any questions that the Trustees may have.

David Gockley has done so much to inflect the course of American opera. I am personally grateful to have had his mentorship over my career and it is with great pride that I put this request before the board at this time.

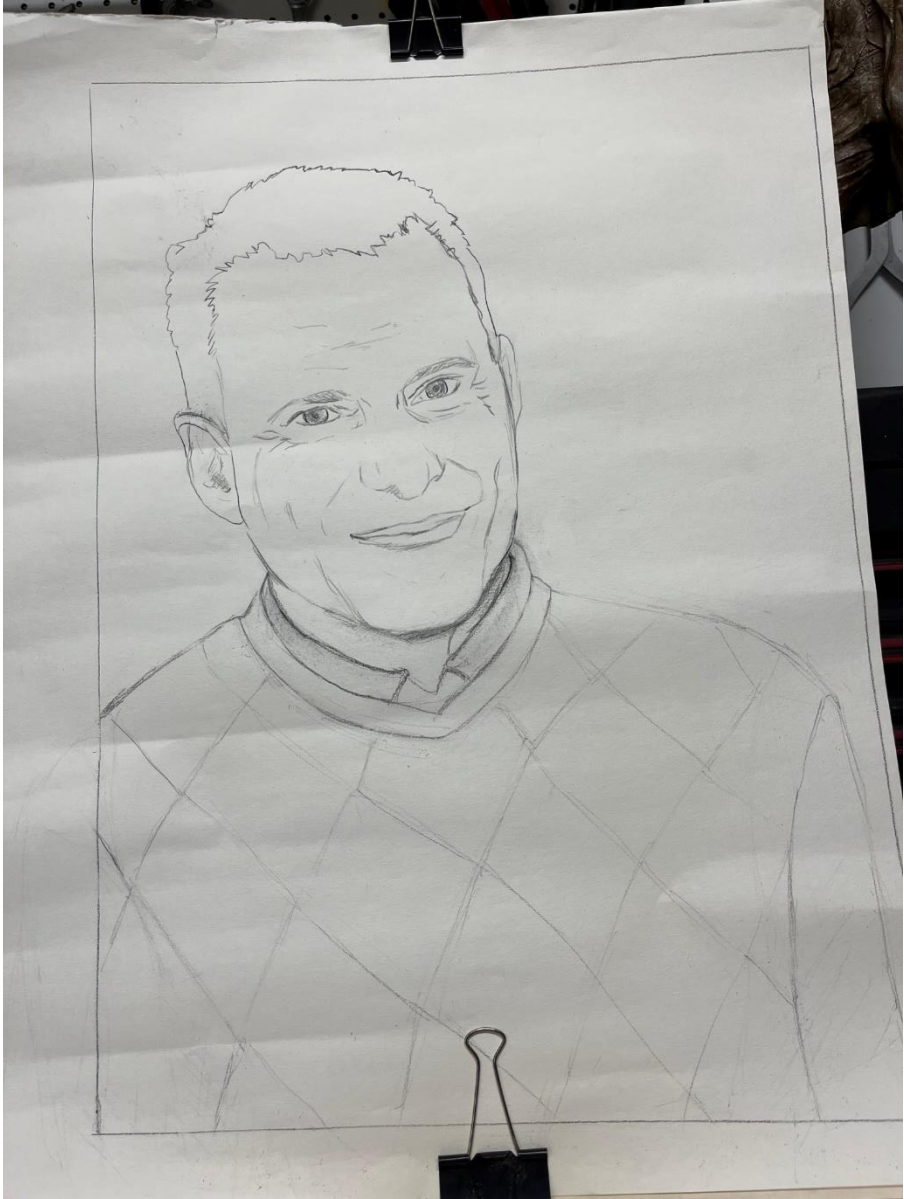
With warmest wishes,

Matthew Shilvock  
General Director  
San Francisco Opera

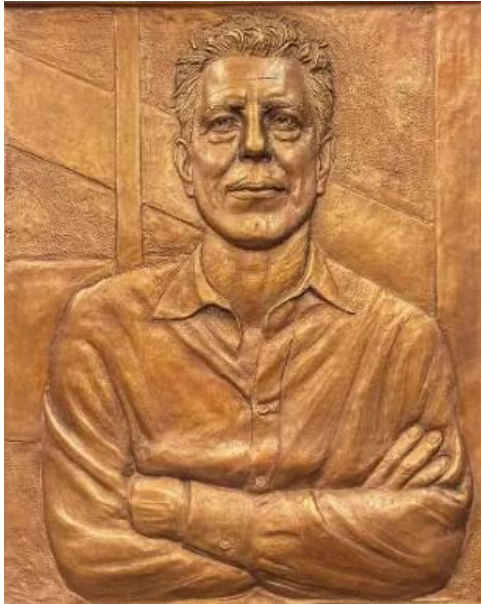
Appendix: San Francisco Opera proposed bas relief location for a David Gockley bas relief



**Appendix: Sketch of David Gockley Bas Relief**



**Appendix: work samples from proposed sculptor Jennifer Fraudakis**



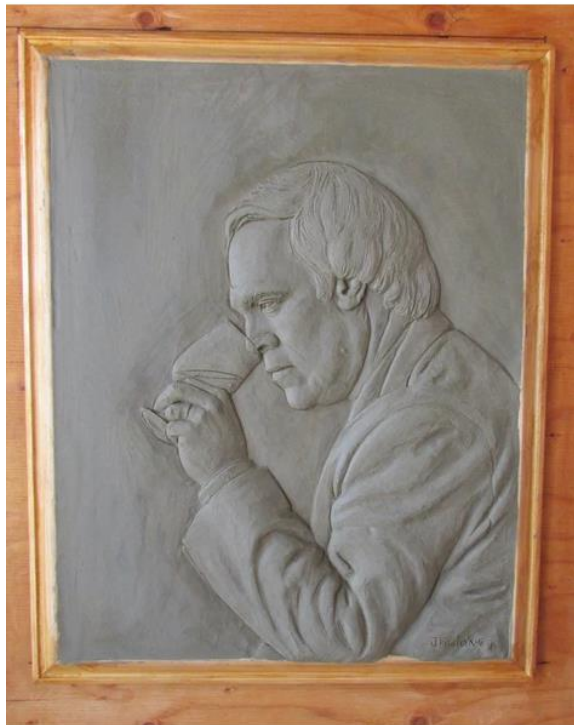
**Anthony Bourdain** Bas-Relief at the Culinary Institute of America (Hyde Park, NY 2019)



**Herman Pogachefsky Memorial** (1998)



Meredith "Merry" Edwards, Vinter Hall of Game Intuctees (Santa Helena, CA 2015)



Robert M Paker Jr., Culinary Institute of America, Vintner Hall of Fame (Napa CA)