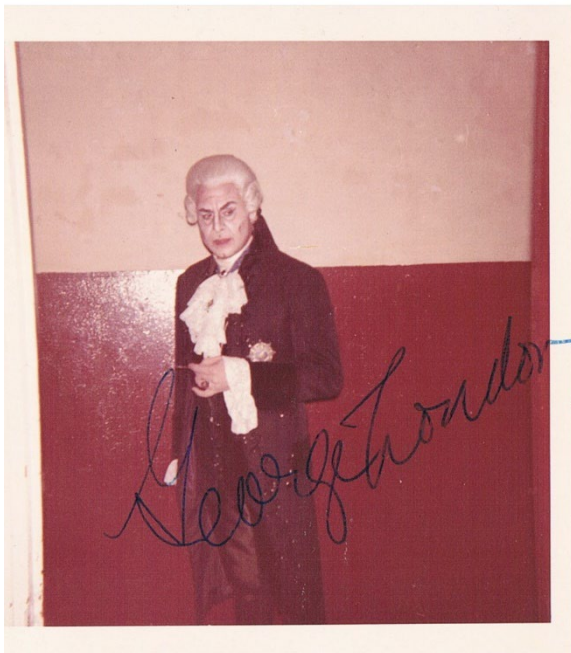




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## George and Nora London Foundation for Singers Receives a Gift of \$215,000 from the Estate of Lois Kirschenbaum



*Photo of George London as Scarpia in Tosca taken by Lois Kirschenbaum backstage at the old Metropolitan Opera (photo courtesy of Ken Benson)*

The George and Nora London Foundation for Singers has received a gift of \$215,000 from the estate of Lois Kirschenbaum, the famously devoted and ubiquitous New York opera fan who passed away in March 2021 at the age of 88.

Ms. Kirschenbaum, described by The New York Times as [“one of New York’s biggest and longest-standing opera buffs,”](#) was a beloved member of the opera community, a regular figure in the audience and at the stage door of the Metropolitan Opera, Carnegie Hall, and wherever great singers were performing. She was good friends with George and Nora London, and a regular attendee at the London Foundation’s vocal recitals and annual competition.

The foundation made the announcement on January 8, 2024, which would have been Nora London’s 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

“Lois’s love and dedication to opera and its artists was absolute,” said John Hauser, the foundation’s president. “She was a real friend to the foundation, and whenever she was in the audience, we were the center of the New York opera world.”

Hauser announced that at the next George and Nora London Foundation Competition one of the George London Awards will be given in her memory. The competition for American and Canadian opera singers marks its 52<sup>nd</sup> year in 2024, and at the public final round on February 16 at New York’s Morgan Library & Museum, approximately a dozen singers will compete for George London Awards of \$12,000 each.

Rounding out the foundation’s season of events at The Morgan, baritone Blake Denson, a 2020 George London Award winner, performs in recital with pianist Kevin Miller on Sunday, April 28, 2024, a program of music by Francesco Santoliquido, Shawn E. Okpebholo, Franz Schubert, and Johannes Brahms.

### **George London and the George and Nora London Foundation for Singers**

George London (1920-1985) was one of the greatest opera stars of the 20th century, who blazed a trail for American singers on the international stage and created some of the most indelible interpretations of prominent bass-baritone roles. In his later years, he devoted much of his time and energy to the support and nurturing of young singers, in partnership with his wife, Nora. Since 1971, the foundation’s annual competition has given more than 300 awards, and a total of more than \$2 million, to an outstanding roster of young American and Canadian opera singers who have gone on to international stardom – the list of past winners includes Joyce DiDonato, Renée Fleming, Christine Goerke, Ryan Speedo Green, Catherine Malfitano, James Morris, Eric Owens, Matthew Polenzani, Sondra Radvanovsky, Neil Shicoff, Dawn Upshaw, and Willard White.

In addition to the annual competition, the George and Nora London Foundation also presents a recital series to give grantees exposure and experience, and, in many cases, a New York recital debut. The foundation also awards scholarships to promising high school students attending the pre-college program of The Juilliard School, a program now in its 12th year.

[www.georgeandnorahondon.org](http://www.georgeandnorahondon.org)

*January 8, 2024*