

PLÁCIDO DOMINGO ELI AND EDYTHE BROAD GENERAL DIRECTOR  
JAMES CONLON MUSIC DIRECTOR

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## **Winners Announced in 2006 Operalia Contest**

**Two Inaugural Participants of LA Opera's  
Domingo-Thornton Young Artist Program  
Receive Top Prizes**

**Tenor David Lomeli Wins Top Honors in Both Opera and Zarzuela;  
Soprano Karen Vuong Wins CulturArte Prize**

(LOS ANGELES, CA) November 7, 2006 – Operalia, the international competition for young singers founded by Plácido Domingo, has announced its 2006 winners, who were awarded a total of \$175,000 in prizes. David Lomeli, a 25-year old Mexican tenor in the first group of LA Opera's newly created Domingo-Thornton Young Artists Program, took two top prizes, one for 1<sup>st</sup> Place Male Singer in Opera and the other for 1<sup>st</sup> Place Male Singer in Zarzuela. It was the first time in Operalia's thirteen year history that the two top male awards went to the same singer. 22-year-old American soprano Karen Vuong, another of the Domingo-Thornton Young Artists, took home the CulturArte Prize.

The competition took place from October 24-29 in Valencia, Spain, at the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia, a stunning new venue designed by Valencian architect Santiago Calatrava, which opened last year.

Maija Kovalevska, a 27-year-old Latvian soprano, won best female singer. French tenor Sebastien Gueze and American soprano Ailyn Pérez placed second among male and female singers, while third prizes went to Spanish soprano María Teresa Alberola Bañuls and to American baritone Trevor Scheunemann. Ms. Bañuls, the only contestant from Valencia, was also named best female singer in the zarzuela genre and she won the competition's audience award as well.

The 2006 Operalia jury included Jean-Pierre Brossmann, Peter Katona, Helga Schmidt, Jean-Louis Grinda, Marta Domingo, Jean-Luc Choplin, Antonio Moral, Joan Matabosch and Thierry Fouquet.

Previous winners of the Operalia competition, established by Mr. Domingo in 1993, include (among others) sopranos Isabel Bayrakdarian, Elizabeth Futral, Ana María Martínez and Nina Stemme; mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato; countertenor Brian Asawa; tenors Daniil Stoda, Rolando Villazón, Joseph Calleja and José Cura; and basses Eric Owens and Erwin Schrott.

Under the guidance of Plácido Domingo, Operalia was conceived in 1993 as a competition which sought to discover promising new international-quality talents, amongst young singers looking for an opportunity to build careers in the difficult world of opera.

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Thirteen years later, Operalia has become one of the most important international opera contests in the world. The competition not only rewards the excellent abilities of the participants but also offers them an opportunity to make an international name for themselves. Plácido Domingo thus provides these promising young artists with personal guidance and supports them at the outset of their careers.

Operalia is held each year in a different country, from Paris, the home of Operalia and where the first event took place, to Los Angeles, Madrid and Valencia, where it was held this year for the first time in conjunction with the opening of the Palau de Les Arts Reina Sofía.

For more information on the Domingo-Thornton Young Artists Program visit  
<http://www.losangelesopera.com/yap/index.htm>

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