

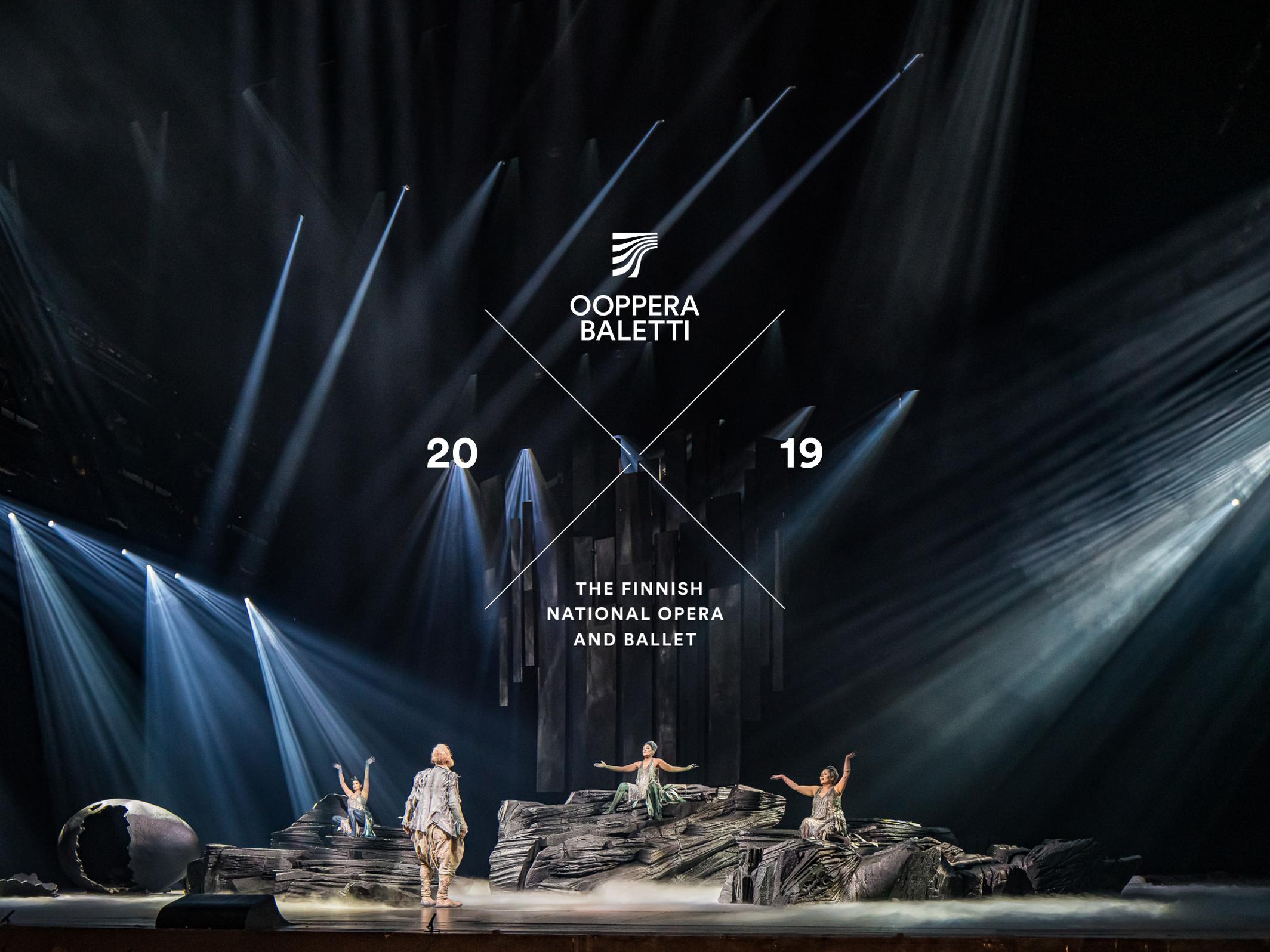


OOPPERA
BALETTI

20

19

THE FINNISH
NATIONAL OPERA
AND BALLET





4

Performances



6

Audience outreach



8

Personnel



10

Finances

National Opera and Ballet in brief

As a national cultural institution, the mission of the Finnish National Opera and Ballet is to provide touching and diverse opera and ballet experiences to a variety of audiences and age groups throughout Finland. The FNOB is committed to developing opera and ballet traditions and improving the level of skills and expertise.

It aims for artistic excellence through creativity and expertise. It seeks to be a key player in the world of opera and ballet as well as other activities that people in Finland can be justly proud of. At the same time, the FNOB is determined to assume a more diversified constructive role in shouldering social responsibility.

The key values of the Finnish National Opera and Ballet are a high artistic standard, cooperation and social responsibility. We seek to maximise efficiency in all its operations.





PERFORMANCES

Performances of high international standard

The Finnish National Opera and Ballet is a national art institution of high international standard. As Finland's only professional opera and ballet house, we seek to touch a wide range of audiences and serve society at large. Although the core of our activities consists of performances held in the Opera House, it is also important for us to reach other audiences and have a presence throughout Finland.

Normally, four new opera and ballet premieres are put up on the main stage every year. As we also show productions included in the repertoire earlier, dozens of works are presented within one year. Aside from classics, we also stage contemporary opera and dance performances, particularly new Finnish works.

For information about the repertoire in 2019, see encore.opera.fi/en.



As Finland's only opera and ballet house, we assume responsibility for the continuance and development of these art forms at the highest international level.

During 2019, we focused on implementing the strategy announced in 2018. Special efforts were made to determine what our strategic values of creativity, transparency, responsibility and appreciation actually mean when translated into action. Since the public funding we receive obligates us to act responsibly in every respect, we wish to assume a more diversified role in shouldering social responsibility.

Our biggest concern over the next few years is the adequacy of funding. Our current operating grant is 99% of what it was in 2012. Despite the rise in cost levels, we have managed to balance the budget by increasing box office receipts, improving efficiency in operations and developing private fund-raising activities.

In the future, things will be different. At the current level of funding, we will face an unsustainable situation unless we make cuts that affect the scope and quality of operations.

Gita Kadambi, General Director



WE SERVE ALL SECTORS OF SOCIETY

Our mission is to serve society as extensively as possible by offering touching opera and ballet performances of the highest standard for a wide range of audiences and age groups all over Finland. At the same time, we are called upon to shoulder our share of responsibility for the renewal and promotion of Finnish culture.

622

performances

286 408

spectators

351

performances with free admission

962 640

people reached digitally



MINIMISING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

We are active in identifying and minimising the environmental impact of our activities. The objectives for the management of environmental issues are determined in our environmental policy.

IN 2019

During the past three years, we have replaced most of the light sources in the main stage lighting equipment with LED lights, which will give major savings in energy consumption.



When a production leaves the repertoire, costumes are either recycled for use in other works, disposed of or sold, which extends their service life.

The new plastic bags for the storage of shoes in the wardrobe are made of ReLDPE plastic which contains 40–80% recycled materials. As the materials are developed further, we believe to be able to replace plastic with a more sustainable option without sacrificing speed and smoothness in wardrobe services.



AUDIENCE OUTREACH

Activities for all age groups across Finland

The audience outreach activities of the Finnish National Opera and Ballet rely on inclusive artistic activities to reach children and youth from babies to young adults. This allows us to reach close to 50,000 people per year.

The objective is to offer art experiences to people who do not otherwise avail themselves of our services. The guidelines for audience outreach activities are determined by Artistic Directors who aim to achieve the same standard of artistic quality as in the works put up on the main stage.

The established forms of audience outreach activities were continued in 2019: events and performances were organised for babies, toddlers, children, young people and senior citizens.





The First Taste of Opera & Ballet

16 175

Art Testers at performances

We are involved in an extensive joint nationwide 3-year project called Art Testers which was launched in 2017 by the Finnish Cultural Foundation and Swedish Cultural Foundation and which will take all 8th graders to various art institutions to experience and assess art. In 2019, a total of 16,175 attended the 15 performances held on the main stage.



Mini Opera: Carmen



Opera Teatime Dance

AUDIENCE OUTREACH PROJECTS IN 2019

The FNOB's first Swedish-language school opera is called *Djurens planet* (Animal Planet). Lower-level pupils from 13 localities took part in the project. Financial support for the school opera has been provided by Föreningen Konstsamfundet, The Swedish Cultural Foundation in Finland, Svenska kulturfonden i Björneborg, Stiftelsen Brita Maria Renlunds minne, Svenska folkskolans vänner and Stiftelsen Tre Smeder.

So You Think You Can Muuv? dance workshops give ample exercise for upper-level pupils. A joint project organised by the Finnish Schools on the Move and the Western Region Centre for Dance was completed in the Turku area. This multiyear project is the first art project to receive a special grant from the Ministry of Education and Culture.

For us, the key objectives are to make art available to growing numbers of people and engage a wide range of population groups. In 2019, sign language interpretation was provided for *Carmen*, which received highly positive feedback on the two performances held.



PERSONNEL

Staff in the heart of strategy

The Finnish National Opera and Ballet is a multicultural workplace community that employs top professionals from a variety of fields. Our performances are supported by a huge production machinery behind the scenes. Our highly skilled craftspeople in the numerous workshops produce everything that the audience sees on stage.

The professional skill, creativity and enthusiasm of the staff and smooth cooperation between the various professional groups play a key role in the successful execution of our strategy – they are essential to accomplishing our vision of leading the way in giving spectators unforgettable art experiences.

570

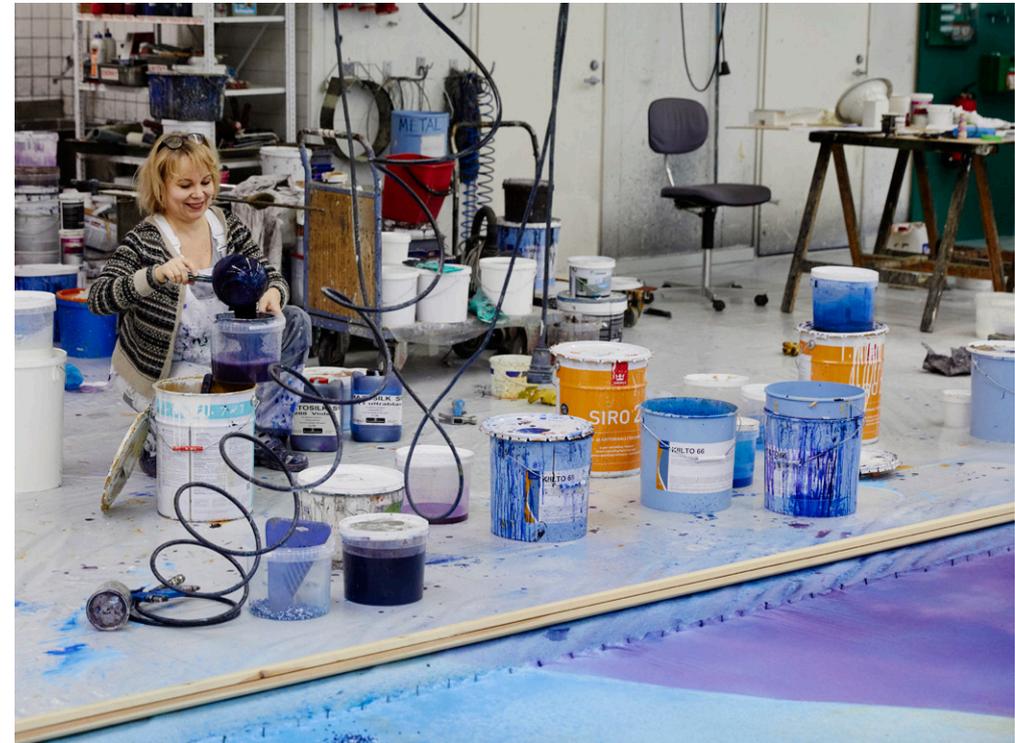
employees

36

nationalities

100

job titles





INVESTING IN EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

Our human resources management seeks to create a sound and inspiring workplace for all professional groups by treating people equally, transparently and fairly. We encourage staff members to look after their own health and working ability. To this end, the FNOB offers versatile occupational healthcare and safety services as well as recreational activities. We conduct regular staff appraisal discussions to determine the need for professional skills development.

IN 2019

To enhance the psychological security of the staff, we have reinforced the model for responsible workplace conduct, updated the Proper Conduct Allowed guidelines and provided information for staff members serving as sponsors.

We have improved on-stage safety (e.g. protective equipment, stage traffic lights) as well as exercised and made preparations for emergencies.

Additionally, we have developed and harmonised administrative processes by means of Lean workshops, joint projects, etc.



FINANCES

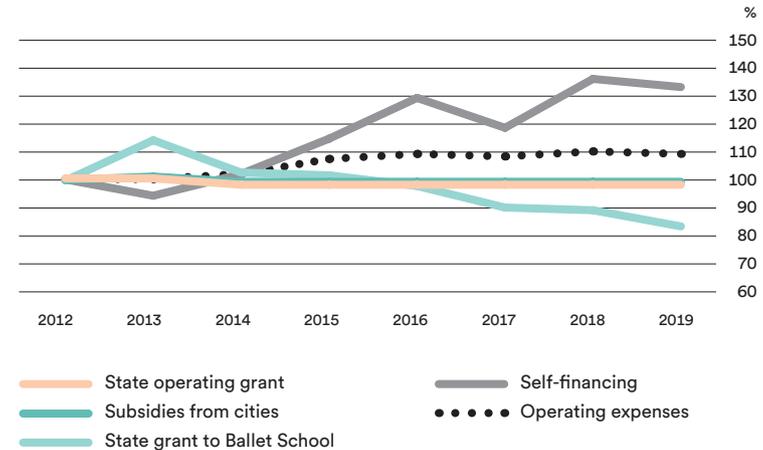
Adequacy of funding creates concerns

To make it possible for people in Finland to enjoy opera and ballet, society finances our operations with substantial amounts. About 60% of our funding consist of subsidies paid by the state and metropolitan area municipalities, of which the biggest single tranche is the operating grant paid by the Ministry of Education and Culture out of national lottery funds. The rest of the budget is covered in-house with box office receipts and private fundraising activities. The rents charged by Senate Properties are paid out of the state rent subsidy.

The operating grant has remained unchanged since 2014. In 2020, it was increased by half a per cent and will remain at this level up to 2024 in accordance with the letter of intent signed with the Ministry of Education and Culture, provided that Parliament allocates the necessary funding for this purpose each year. The pressures affecting public financing and potential decline in national lottery funds have increased the uncertainty concerning the amount of the operating grant in the coming years.

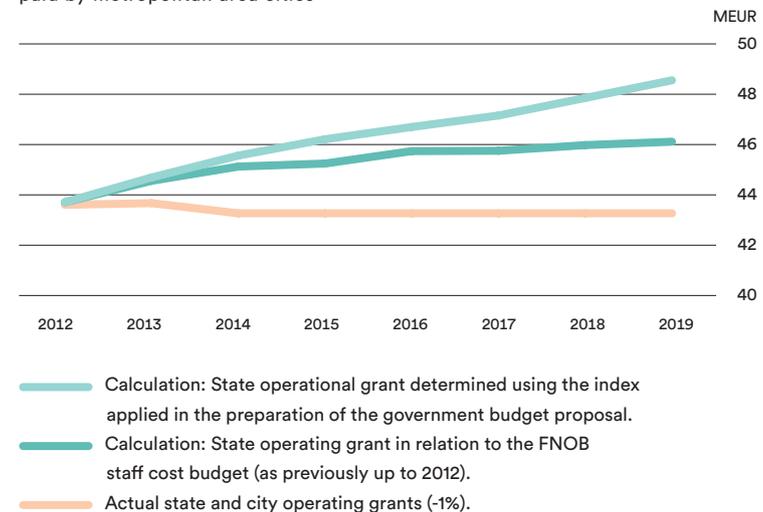
Typically, opera and ballet are more labour-intensive than other performing arts. To set up a production on the main stage, an input from an average 300 professionals is required.

RELATIVE CHANGE IN FINANCIAL ITEMS AND EXPENSES



PUBLIC SUBSIDIES

Includes the state operational grant and subsidies paid by metropolitan area cities





PUBLIC FUNDING CALLS FOR RESPONSIBILITY

The public funding we receive obligates us to act responsibly in every respect.

IN 2019

The new production-centred management model contributes to financially sound decisions in which due consideration is given to the big picture. Additionally, more detailed advance planning and coordination offer savings potential in additional costs and overtime.

We have explored the potential for automating and improving efficiency in administrative processes and the financial spin-off effects of proposed investments.

Our cultural responsibilities obligate us to maintain extensive archives. We have continued the digitalisation of files, making the archives available to external researchers. The Encore performance database is available to all.

The renovation and reorganisation of the National Ballet shoe storeroom has given a 15% saving in ballet shoe costs.

Accordingly, about 80% of operating expenditure consists of staff costs, if the rents paid out of the state rent subsidies are disregarded.

However, despite the increased costs due to the pay rises specified in collective agreements and inflation, we have in recent years succeeded in balancing our budget by increasing box office receipts and campaign proceeds and by improving in-house efficiency. We have implemented all efficiency-enhancing measures available to us without compromising the scope and quality of our repertoire.

To boost box office receipts, we will increasingly focus on creating a repertoire that appeals to large audiences and optimising the number of performances. At the same time, we will continue active efforts to develop private fundraising activities. However, it is essential to understand that private funding will never account for much of the financing required by an art organisation such as the FNOB.

Since the existing state subsidies are not enough even to cover fixed costs, our concerns over the adequacy of funding for maintaining diverse performing activities of high international standard are really pressing.



Ballet School of the Finnish National Opera and Ballet: Nutcracker





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