



The New Vanguard

| By Jennifer Sergent |

Three huge theater talents have arrived in DC, taking over its legacy institutions from a crop of distinguished and long-serving directors who came before them. We asked what they bring to the stage.



Arvind Manocha

President and CEO, Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts

How did Wolf Trap lure you from your perch atop the storied Hollywood Bowl?

It's a very special organization that embraces classical, opera, rock, pop, country, jazz and everything in between. All that, plus an amazing education program and two incredible venues to work with, added up to a very strong pull for me.

How is it a good fit?

As a kid, everything revolved around music for me. ... To lead one of the great centers of music and music education in our country is something that feels absolutely right.

What was your proudest professional moment at the Hollywood Bowl?

It was our concert to kick off Gustavo Dudamel's tenure as musical director of the L.A. Philharmonic. [A full-day free concert] culminated in a performance of the L.A. Phil with a community chorus made up of choirs from all over L.A., and the Bowl debut of our first youth orchestra—all conducted by Dudamel. It was the hottest ticket in a town full of incredibly hot tickets.



Francesca Zambello

Artistic Director, Washington National Opera

Going from advisor to director, what's your first order of business at the WNO?

DC has an energy that I love. ... I am working to expand programming options, theater venues and audiences.

The first production under your directorship will be your very own *Show Boat*. Was that a coincidence?

It was a fortunate coincidence! I have a 10-year association with the [WNO], so this was a natural evolution.

On the heels of a figure like Placido Domingo, what kind of imprint do you want to leave on the WNO?

Having an American run in what is called a 'national' company will be part of what guides me. We will focus on creating many new American works, discovering American talent and searching further for what is the American interpretation of this European art form.

Is there anything you love about DC?

DC has very thoughtful and intelligent audiences—they are great listeners.



Martin Platt

Artistic Director, Olney Theatre Center

Coming from New York's off-Broadway scene, what do you make of DC?

I've seen four shows at Olney now, as well as productions at Signature, Studio, Arena, Theater J, The Keegan, the Shakespeare Theatre, the Hub and MetroStage. There's an adventurous streak in the audience, and many of the theaters I've been to have a larger under-40 crowd than most places. Encouraging.

How will you make your mark at Olney?

What would be most fulfilling would be to fully realize the potential of OTC as both a producing theater and performing arts center, and to at least double our audience.

What was your top priority when you started there this year?

It was working with Amy Marshall, our terrific managing director, to get our entire staff to start looking forward. OTC has had some rough financial years, but several years of balanced budgets have set us in the right direction. We have only opportunity before us.

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