**The following represents the standards we expect from the members of our Company, and the rules for conduct by which we function.**

Written by Judith Townsend, Executive Director

Latest Revision: 11/16/2014

**Personal Excellence**

1. Strive for excellence.

2. Be willing to learn from your mistakes.

3. Strive to embrace all creative ideas.

4. Accept constructive criticism gracefully.

5. Always be professional.

**General Treatment of others**

6. Producing an opera or other event is a collaborative effort. Always be aware you are part of a team.

7. Treat others lovingly, with respect and with kindness, and always with good manners, courtesy and decency.

8. Always be as supportive as possible. Praise others when they do well, and make sure all your criticism is constructive and is delivered with kindness.

9. Avoid speech or conduct that is belittling, demeaning, degrading or negating of others.

10. Refrain from cursing or using foul or vulgar language, as this brings down the tone and morale of the group, and diminishes your professionalism.

11. Wherever possible, build, nurture and treasure long-term relationships with those in the

Company of high integrity and achievement. You can learn much from them.

12. Always be gracious when interacting with or in front of members of our public.

**Education**

13. Always be cognizant that education and learning are part of our mission—musically, vocally, theatrically, and at all technical and administrative levels. Demonstrate that we are an educational as well as an arts organization by sharing your knowledge and experiences wherever possible. Educate, educate, educate!

14. Speak and write clearly of the high expectations we hold artistically. Do not compromise or give up on these in the long term.

15. Be forgiving and patient with others as they learn. Instruct your juniors gently and with kindness while guiding them to the highest standards.

16. Be inclusive of newcomers at all levels. This promotes your education as well as theirs, and also promotes the health, longevity, expansion and vibrancy of the Company.

17. One of the best ways to educate is by setting a good example.

**Communication & Conflict Resolution**

18. All communication with anyone at any level on any matter is to remain civil at all times.

19. Hear others out, and listen carefully to what they have to say.

20. Always strive to resolve differences or conflicts with others, and to avoid creating them yourself.

21. During rehearsals or performances, constructive criticisms are to be given only by the

Artistic Director, Producer, Stage Director, or the Musical Director. If you have your own criticisms of others, they should be brought to the attention of one of these people for proper handling.

22. You are encouraged to speak up on important issues to your senior(s), but, after adequate dialogue, defer to their wishes gracefully.

23. If you have a criticism of or conflict with one or more of your peers, go to your senior to seek resolution.

24. If you have a conflict with anyone at any level, and resolution is not otherwise forthcoming, please see the Conflict Resolution Manager, Ken Meyer. That is what he is there for.

25. Should there be no resolution of an issue after having gone through the proper chain of command, you may take it to the Executive Director, Judith Townsend, who will be accessible and available to discuss such matters at all times. The decision of the Executive Director is final.

**Responsibility to the Company**

26. The Company is relying on your commitment. Once given, keep your verbal and written word.

27. Read and become familiar with the terms of your contract, and abide by them at all times.

28. Be familiar with the intentions of the Board of Directors, and abide by them.

29. Always be cognizant of the chain of command, and demonstrate the highest regard for it.

Do everything in your power to strengthen and support the Company’s leaders, as this protects all of us and the future of the Company.

30. Be aware that the wheel has already been invented, which is to say that our policies,

structure and operating procedures have been diligently crafted based on past experience, and that we have our reasons for them. If you have questions about any of them, please feel free to go to long-time officers and/or founding members of the Company. Stay open to the input of such individuals.

31. Creative new ideas and healthy dialogue about constructive changes are always welcome!

32. The filling of any role, post, or job with the Company—performers and non-performers alike, paid or volunteer alike—is based on a person’s willingness to take it. No one is forced to work for or contribute to the Company against his or her will.

33. Respect the boundaries of the jobs of others. Allow others to work without interference, unless you are their senior, and/or you foresee potential danger or damage to a person, to property, or to the production.

34. Be diligent in observing all deadlines for submitting required documents and other materials. Failing to do so may be preventing others from doing their job down the line.

35. Everyone involved in the Company on any level, up to and including the Board of Directors, is expected to do everything in his or her power to keep the Company financially viable.

This may require researching, bargain-hunting, thrift-shopping, bartering, and hand-making many of our resources in order to save expense. The more we save, the more we can improve our productions or expand our operations. All volunteerism is deeply appreciated!

**Responsibility to the Current Production or Event**

36. All performers are expected to have a very strong work ethic, which means: Preparation, preparation, preparation!

37. All company members are expected to arrive at the first rehearsal completely prepared to begin. This includes having, at that time, a complete understanding of your role and responsibilities within the company and within the production itself, as described in your contract.

38. Treat dress rehearsal as a performance, which is to say, be sure to be at full performance level by dress rehearsal.

39. Keep your attendance record strong. If you must drop out or be absent at any time, for any reason, you are expected to replace yourself and/or make up the time you miss. This

applies to all Company members for any production or event.

40. Always do your best to assess your ability to accomplish a task. Always take into account personal limitations of time, health, activities, energy or other relevant circumstances before promising to take something on. Failing to complete a promised task is damaging to you and distressing to others who rely on and believe in you.

41. After each rehearsal or production, it is wise to review what you have done that was successful or unsuccessful within your sphere of influence (it might be helpful to make a list). Always repeat what has been successful. Strive not to repeat the unsuccessful.

**Leader Responsibilities**

42. As leaders, many are looking to you for guidance, so set a good example. Avoid asking of your juniors that which you have not done or could not do yourself.

43. All staff members are to be well prepared and ahead of schedule. That is precisely why you are leaders.

44. Praise and reward high production achievement.

45. Penalize failure to produce as promised or contracted. Gross failures should be reported to your seniors.

46. Avoid imposing penalties on your juniors where there is no published policy or warning of consequences for an undesired action or result. If you see a need for new policy, please bring it to the attention of the Board of Directors.

47. Observe. Watch what people do instead of listening only to what they say on a given topic.

Actions speak louder than—and are sometimes different from—words!

**Board Member Responsibilities**

48. As a Board Member, all eyes are on you, so it is important that you set a good example.

49. Board Members are to hold all Board communications confidential and among themselves only. Once finalized, Board intentions, policies and directives will be issued to pertinent members of the Company. These communications will be clearly expressed and preferably issued in writing.

50. Avoid imposing penalties on others where there is no published policy or warning of consequences for an undesired action or result. When need for a new policy presents itself, it should be created, per the following item.

51. One of the Board’s most important jobs is to create, evaluate, reevaluate, clarify or otherwise define policies or rules for the smooth operation of the Company. These should be well defined, written up clearly, and published.

**Issued by the Board of Directors**

**The Celestial Opera Company**