

FALL 2017 OPERA SEASON

# BRAVO

*Rigoletto*

OCT. 14-22

*Kathleen Battle  
in Recital*

NOV. 5

*The Marriage  
of Figaro*

NOV. 11-19



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MICHIGAN  
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# BRAVO

The Official Magazine  
of Michigan Opera Theatre

Erica Hobbs, Editor

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# Contents

Fall 2017  
Opera Season

## ON STAGE

FEATURE: Q&A with MOT Principal Conductor Stephen Lord..... 5  
*Rigoletto*..... 6

FEATURE:  
Some Like It Rethought:  
The Artistic Integrity of a Mob *Rigoletto*..... 12

Kathleen Battle in Recital..... 14  
*The Marriage of Figaro*..... 16

## MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

Boards of Directors and Trustees..... 2  
Welcome..... 4

Administration and Staff..... 23

Michigan Opera Theatre Contributors..... 26

General Information ..... 32



MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE'S

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Please contact Christina Wagner at  
(313) 237-3236 or [cwagner@motopera.org](mailto:cwagner@motopera.org)  
for further information.

Welcome to the Detroit Opera House and the beginning of our 2017/18 season! We are pleased to share a new year of great productions. Our season includes the classics *Rigoletto*, *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Tosca*, as well as the exciting contemporary works *27*, about the life of Gertrude Stein, and *The Summer King*, about Negro League baseball legend Josh Gibson. *The Summer King*, presented in collaboration with the Detroit Tigers, marks an initiative that will explore the role arts and sports have played in improving race relations.

Michigan Opera Theatre remains committed to presenting the masterworks while providing a platform for new



productions. Our production of *Rigoletto* has been given a modern update by Director Jonathan Miller. The work, originally set in 16<sup>th</sup>-century Mantua, Italy, places the story within 1950s Little Italy, New York in the world of the Mafia. This version demonstrates the timelessness of the story, offering our audiences a fresh perspective on a beloved classic.

The 2017/18 season marks the third year of the Michigan Opera Theatre

Studio. Five talented young artists will be featured in Ricky Ian Gordon's opera *27* and will also join main stage productions throughout the season. We appreciate the major support of the William Davidson Foundation, which enables MOT to invest in the careers of these artists.

On November 5th, we will present world-renowned soprano Kathleen Battle in recital. Her performance in Detroit follows a highly successful return to the Metropolitan Opera stage last fall. Ms. Battle is one of the most highly acclaimed singers of our time. She has sung with leading opera companies, orchestras and conductors throughout the world and is a five-time Grammy Award winner for her recordings. Of special significance, Ms. Battle made her operatic debut with MOT in 1975 as Rosina in our production of *The Barber of Seville*. Her return to our stage will be a truly memorable occasion.

With the recent retirement of our Founder and Artistic Director David DiChiera, I am pleased to welcome Stephen Lord to the MOT leadership team. As Principal Conductor, he will play a key role in the artistic direction of the company. His career began when David DiChiera hired him in 1975 as a coach/accompanist, and he has conducted numerous MOT productions through the years. Stephen Lord is currently recognized as one of the 25 most powerful names in opera in the United States by *Opera News*. I am delighted that MOT will be the beneficiary of his extraordinary perspective and I look forward to our collaboration.

We hope you and your friends will join us for what promises to be an exciting season and offer your support for opera in the Detroit Opera House and throughout the community!

Warm regards,

Wayne S. Brown  
President and CEO, Michigan Opera Theatre

I am delighted to embark on my first complete season leading Michigan Opera Theatre's artistic direction as Principal Conductor. As we approach MOT's 50th anniversary, I am honored to return to the place where I got my start in 1975 and build upon the foundation set by our founder David DiChiera.

In the season ahead, we look forward to an exciting line up of classic favorites paired with exciting new works that will resonate with our Detroit audience. This fall, in particular, I am



conducting both of our operas: *Rigoletto* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, two productions I hold close to my heart.

Our production of Jonathan Miller's *Rigoletto* was my first production in London, and the experience was life-changing for

me. In this version, the classic tale takes place in a Mafia setting in 1950's New York. The production is one of the most successful updates of an opera I have seen that gets to the heart of the story and Verdi's intentions. It is a true testament to the timelessness of the work. We can't wait to share this fresh perspective with our audiences.

*The Marriage of Figaro* is a production I had the privilege of premiering in 1990 which has since been performed in more than 40 theaters worldwide. I am proud to bring this production to Detroit and share a deeply personal work that I helped to shape.

Opera is my passion. It is an exploration of the human experience that takes you outside of this world to a place of pure beauty, found within even the most painful emotions. I am honored to be able to share my passion with others, especially with a company that has meant so much to me. I hope to share that passion with you this season and invite you to explore the wonder that only opera and dance can convey.

Stephen Lord  
Principal Conductor, Michigan Opera Theatre

# A Q&A with Michigan Opera Theatre Principal Conductor Stephen Lord

BY ERICA HOBBS

## What do you most enjoy about being MOT Principal Conductor?

What I enjoy most is working with CEO Wayne Brown and the staff at MOT, all of whom are excited about a new chapter and proud of their past ones. After that, I enjoy the orchestra who share the feelings of the staff.

## How would you describe your artistic style?

I would define my artistic style as “truthful.” I believe we can be true to the pieces we present within various musical and production styles, and we need to stay true to the legacy that MOT’s legendary founder, David DiChiera, established. We must also be honest and forthright with our artists and, as a company, give them back in equal proportion to what they are giving the audience. In that case, they become part of our artistic family and are eager to return for more.

## What are your goals for MOT during your time here?

My goal at MOT is to prioritize long-term planning in a way that continues to place the company in the spotlight of mainstream industry players worldwide. This includes maintaining a balanced repertoire, increasing orchestra rehearsal time and quality and continuing to attract and retain the best of new talent.

## How does it feel coming back to the company from which you started your career?

It is special to me to return to the company where I got my start in 1975 and come full circle. I also enjoy seeing how much the company and the city have changed over the course of the past few decades and continue to change. As I enter into a new phase of my life and career, I look forward to embracing these exciting times and the new roads ahead!

## What is the biggest challenge of your role?

The biggest challenge of my role is having to pace my ambitions and goals for MOT! I would love to do all new productions, double our number of performances and take our shows to other cities in the United States and abroad. However, as Wayne and I discuss, these are things that have to be done incrementally.



## What is your leadership style?

My leadership style would be one of collaboration. I am used to working in a system where the buck stops in one place, but the input of many is important. I am willing to shoulder mistakes and share successes.

## How does MOT fit into Detroit’s revitalization?

Detroit has been through a lot, and I have the utmost respect for the people who work hard to revitalize this city. As an organization, we will continue to be a cultural anchor and community leader in neighborhood development. I also want people who work, live and raise children here to use MOT as a place to recharge and inspire. We want to be a place where people can look up from their screens and experience something real, where emotions can flow from a stage into their lives.

## Why should audiences care about opera and dance?

In the world of our tightly-scheduled, over-stressed lives, opera and dance supply an island of beauty. Theater takes us from the ordinary to the extraordinary, offering a moving reflection of the human experience. There is no goal in these forms other than the enjoyment of those who take the chance and come.



# Rigoletto

October 14-22, 2017



The 2017 Fall Opera Season  
is made possible by the  
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The Opening Night  
Performance is also  
supported by  
Rick and Karen Williams

Production sponsor

## MUSIC

Giuseppe Verdi

## LIBRETTO

Francesco Maria Piave after Victor  
Hugo's *Le roi s'amuse*

## WORLD PREMIERE

Teatro la Fenice - Venice, Italy  
March 11, 1851

## CONDUCTOR

Stephen Lord

## ORIGINAL STAGE DIRECTOR

Jonathan Miller

## REVIVAL STAGE DIRECTOR

Elaine Tyler-Hall

## CHORUS MASTER

Suzanne Mallare Acton

## SET/COSTUME DESIGN

Patrick Robertson

## LIGHTING DESIGN

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## REVIVAL LIGHTING DESIGNER

Martin Doone

## WIG & MAKEUP DESIGN

Joanne Middleton Weaver

## ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Rebecca Herman

## ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Daniel Black

## SUPERTITLES

Dee Dorsey

## STAGE MANAGER

Ken Saltzman

\*Scenery and costumes were created for English National Opera  
and are owned by English National Opera.

## CAST

(In order of vocal appearance)

<b>The Duke of Mantua:</b> .....	Joshua Guerrero (Oct. 14, 18, 21) John Bellemer (Oct. 22)
<b>Borsa:</b> .....	Matthew DiBattista
<b>The Countess Ceprano:</b> .....	Kara Mulder
<b>Rigoletto:</b> .....	Roland Wood (Oct. 14, 18, 21) Nicholas Pallesen (Oct. 22)
<b>Count Ceprano:</b> .....	Erik Van Heyningen+
<b>Cavaliere Marullo:</b> .....	Harry Greenleaf+
<b>Count Monterone:</b> .....	Kenneth Kellogg
<b>Sparafucile:</b> .....	Christian Zaremba
<b>Gilda:</b> .....	So Young Park (Oct. 14, 18, 21) Hae Ji Chang (Oct. 22)
<b>Giovanna:</b> .....	Briana Elyse Hunter+
<b>Maddalena:</b> .....	Nicole Piccolomini
<b>Usher:</b> .....	Matthew Konopacki
<b>Page:</b> .....	Schlyer Sheltroun

+Michigan Opera Theatre Studio Artist

## SYNOPSIS

## Act 1

## Scene 1

The Duke of Mantua is in his club, boasting to one of his followers about his success with women. He proceeds to flirt with the Countess Ceprano, while Rigoletto cruelly mocks her husband. Meanwhile, another acquaintance, Marullo, tells his friends of a surprising discovery: he has heard that Rigoletto has a mistress hidden away at home.

Rigoletto continues to taunt the Count who retaliates by arranging a midnight meeting with some of the other members present where he will extract his revenge.

An elderly nobleman, Count Monterone, enters and denounces the Duke for seducing his daughter. He curses the Duke and when mocked by Rigoletto, Monterone turns on him and curses him as well. The curse strikes terror in Rigoletto, for the woman he lives with is not his mistress, but his daughter.

## Scene 2

Brooding over Monterone's curse, Rigoletto returns to the home he shares with his daughter, Gilda, hiding her away from the licentiousness that takes place at the Duke's club.

On his way home, he is confronted by Sparafucile, a professional assassin, who offers him his services. Rigoletto sends him away, but then muses on the parallels between their professions.

Gilda greets her father, and begins to ask him questions about their family and background, which he refuses to answer. Determined to protect Gilda he forbids her to leave their home, except to attend church. He also warns Gilda's companion, Giovanna, not to allow anyone to enter the house while he is out. However, the Duke steals in and hides. While in hiding, he is astonished to hear Rigoletto call Gilda his daughter as he bids her farewell.

Gilda confesses to Giovanna that she is in love with a young man who has been following her home every day after church. On hearing this, the Duke appears and declares his love for Gilda, identifying himself as Gualtier Maldè, a penniless student. Hearing footsteps, he rushes off, leaving Gilda thinking lovingly of his name.

The club members appear, masked and ready to abduct Rigoletto's supposed mistress. He surprises them by returning, but Marullo convinces him that they are planning to abduct the wife of Count Ceprano who lives nearby. Rigoletto falls into their trap,

permitting himself to be blindfolded and masked. Unknowingly, he assists the conspirators in their abduction of his daughter. Gilda cries out to her father as she is carried off. Becoming suspicious, Rigoletto tears off the blindfold, realises Gilda is gone and cries, 'Ah, the curse!'

## Act 2

The Duke laments the loss of Gilda but when he is told of the abduction, he rejoices that she is now at his club.

When Rigoletto appears, he feigns nonchalance. Once it becomes clear to him that Gilda must be with the Duke, he tries to reach her, but the club members hold him back. His denunciation of their treachery dissolves into a bereft father's pleading.

Left alone with Rigoletto, Gilda confesses that she is in love with the Duke and begs her father to forgive him. As Monterone is led to his execution, Rigoletto swears that they both will be avenged.

## Act 3

Rigoletto has brought Gilda to Sparafucile to prove her lover's faithlessness. As they lurk in the darkness, the Duke enters. After proclaiming the fickleness of women, he showers attentions on Maddalena, the assassin's sister, as Rigoletto tries to comfort his despairing daughter. He orders her to disguise herself as a boy and leave town. After striking a bargain with Sparafucile for the Duke's murder, Rigoletto departs.

Gilda returns in her disguise in time to overhear Maddalena begging her brother to spare the handsome stranger's life. Sparafucile agrees to deceive Rigoletto by substituting the corpse of the next person who appears. Having returned determined to sacrifice herself so the Duke may live, Gilda becomes Sparafucile's next victim.

At the stroke of midnight, Rigoletto pays the assassin and reserves for himself the satisfaction of throwing the sack containing his enemy's corpse into the river. When he hears the Duke's voice in the distance, he opens the sack and finds his daughter instead of the Duke. Begging her father's forgiveness, she dies. The despairing Rigoletto cries out once more, 'Ah, the curse!'

*Courtesy of English National Opera*

## Suzanne Mallare Acton

Chorus Master Suzanne Mallare Acton has received wide acclaim for her choral direction involving more than 125 productions in seven languages.



Conducting credits include *West Side Story*, *The Music Man*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *The Mikado*, *Daughter of the Regiment*, *Carmen*, *La Traviata* and *Carmina Burana* with *The Medium* for MOT; *My Fair Lady* and *La Traviata* for Dayton Opera; *Merry Widow* and *Madame Butterfly* for Artpark; and *Tosca* for Augusta Opera. As founding Director of the MOT Children's Chorus, Ms. Acton was instrumental in developing the inaugural season. She is also the Artistic and Music Director of metro Detroit's Rackham Choir.

## John Bellemer

Possessed of a voice the New York Times described as "clarion-toned", John Bellemer continues to appear in leading roles at opera



houses across North America and Europe. He has previously sung with Michigan Opera Theatre as Don José in *Carmen* in 2009. Throughout his extensive career, Mr. Bellemer has performed as Faust (Austin Lyric Opera, Hawaii Opera Theatre), Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* (Boston Lyric Opera), Der Steuermann in *Der fliegende Holländer* (Austin Lyric Opera), Rodolfo in *La bohème* (Arizona Opera), Nadir in *Les pêcheurs de perles* (North Carolina Opera), Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Hawaii Opera Theatre), Alfredo in *La traviata* (Opera Theatre of Saint Louis), and Male Chorus in *The Rape of Lucretia* (Maggio Musicale, Florence). Mr. Bellemer holds a bachelor's degree from James Madison University and a master's degree from the University of Illinois. He lives in New York with his wife, Sarah Blaze, and their Parson Russell Terrier, Scout.

## Hae Ji Chang

Soprano Hae Ji Chang makes her Michigan Opera Theatre debut as Gilda in *Rigoletto*. She has been described as "an exciting young artist on the rise" (Opera Boston) with a voice "full of silvery color and nuance" (Boston Globe). Recent performances include Mimi in *La Bohème* with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and Pamina in *The Magic Flute* in Korea. Previous work also includes originating the role of Setsuko in Jack Perla's *An American Dream* with Seattle Opera, Gilda with PORTopera, Pamina with Opera San Jose and Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* with Aspen Opera Theater. Ms. Chang has also performed with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, the Colorado Music Festival Chamber Orchestra and the West Los Angeles Symphony. She trained as a Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist with LA Opera, performing under Plácido Domingo, and was a Gerdine Young Artist with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.



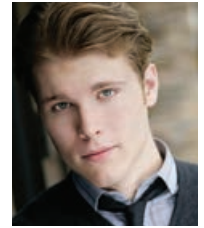
## Matthew DiBattista

Recently described as "brilliant" and "mega-talented" by *Opera News*, tenor Matthew DiBattista makes his debut with Michigan Opera Theatre as Matteo Borsa in *Rigoletto*. He has performed with the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Florida Grand Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Boston Symphony Orchestra, as well as other major orchestras, festivals, and conductors across the U.S. and abroad. An alumnus of University of Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, Mr. DiBattista has recently performed Normano in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Don Basilio in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Boston Lyric Opera, the First Jew in *Salome* with Minnesota Orchestra, and he can be heard in recording as the title role in Kamran Ince's *Judgment of Midas* with Albany Records. In the 2017-18 season, Mr. DiBattista debuts with the Santa Fe Opera as Goro in *Madama Butterfly* and as Scaramuccio in *Ariadne auf Naxos* in the summer of 2018.



## Harry Greenleaf

Wixom, Michigan native Harry Greenleaf is Michigan Opera Theatre Studio's resident baritone. He made his debut with Michigan Opera Theatre in 2016 in the role of Top in *The Tender Land*. His credits with MOT also include Le Bret in *Cyrano*, Jake Wallace in *The Girl of the Golden West* and Morales in *Carmen*. He has been a Studio Artist with the Wolf Trap Opera Company, an Apprentice Artist with Des Moines Metro Opera and a Young Artist with the Glimmerglass Festival. He holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and is an alumnus of the Michigan State University College of Music. Future performances include working as a Young Artist at the Glimmerglass Festival this summer. This season, Harry will perform with MOT as Marullo in *Rigoletto*, Sciarone in *Tosca* and the roles of Leo Stein and Man Ray in Ricky Ian Gordon's *27*.



## Joshua Guerrero

Tenor Joshua Guerrero makes his Michigan Opera Theatre debut as the Duke in *Rigoletto*. Recently Mr. Guerrero was seen at Los Angeles Opera and Zurich Opera in *Macbeth*. He also made his London debut at the English National Opera in *Rigoletto*.

In concert, he toured Europe with Gustavo Dudamel and the Simón Bolívar Orchestra singing Beethoven's Symphony No.

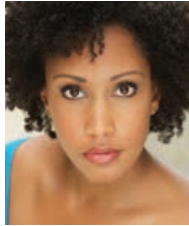


9 and was a featured soloist at the Richard Tucker Music Foundation Gala at Carnegie Hall. Future engagements include debuts with Glyndebourne Festival in *Madama Butterfly*, Florida Grand Opera in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Canadian Opera Company in *Rigoletto* and a return to Santa Fe Opera for *Madama Butterfly*. He will also be heard in a concert of opera arias and duets with soprano Joyce El-Khoury and the NDR Radiophilharmonie, which will be broadcast on television throughout Germany.



## Briana Elyse Hunter Joyce Cohn Young Artist

Briana Elyse Hunter returns for her second year as Michigan Opera Theatre Studio's resident mezzo-soprano. Her MOT credits include Wowkle in *The Girl of the Golden West*, Jo March in *Little Women*, Madeleine Audebert in *Silent Night* and Mercedes in *Carmen*. She has been on the rosters of Santa Fe Opera, Knoxville Opera, American Opera Projects, Opera in the Heights, the I SING BEIJING festival, Sarasota Opera, El Paso Opera and Music Academy of the West. She most recently performed at The Glimmerglass Festival as Annie in *Porgy and Bess* and covered Arsamenes in *Xerxes*. She holds a Master of Music degree from the Manhattan School of Music in vocal performance and a bachelor's degree in theater from Davidson College. This season, she will perform Giovanna and cover Maddalena in *Rigoletto* and star as Gertrude Stein in Ricky Ian Gordon's *27* with MOT.



## Kenneth Kellogg

Washington D.C. bass Kenneth Kellogg makes his Michigan Opera Theatre debut as Count Monterone in *Rigoletto*. He will reprise the role of Sam Bankhead in Daniel Sonenberg's *The Summer King*, which he originated with Pittsburgh Opera in 2017.



Performance highlights include Zuniga in *Carmen* and Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* with Washington National Opera; Mefistofeles in *Faust* and Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* with Opera de Lausanne; Gremin in *Eugene Onegin* with North Carolina Opera and Young Emile Griffith in Terence Blanchard's *Champion* with Opera Parallèle. He holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Michigan and a Bachelor of Music degree from Ohio University. He has also served as a resident artist at the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia and is an alumnus of Washington National Opera's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. Future performances include

Handel's *Messiah* with the Fairbanks Symphony Orchestra and Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* with the National Philharmonic at Strathmore.

## Matthew Konopacki

Baritone Matthew Konopacki, a native of Livonia Michigan, is an active performer of both classical and contemporary works. Equally comfortable on both the operatic and the concert stage, his repertoire ranges from the cantatas of J.S. Bach to the contemporary operatic music of Kevin Puts. With Michigan Opera Theatre, he has performed the roles of 1st Scottish Soldier in Puts' *Silent Night*, Servo in *Macbeth*, and was a part of the featured ensembles in both David DiChiera's *Cyrano* and *The Magic Flute*. He is also a featured singer on the recent release of DiChiera's legacy album, *Letters & Fantasies*. Matthew holds a master's degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Houston and has appeared as a young artist with Pensacola Opera and the Janiec Opera Company. He will sing the usher role in *Rigoletto* and perform in the ensemble of MOT's 2017-18 season.



## Stephen Lord

Stephen Lord joined Michigan Opera Theatre as Principal Conductor in November 2016, and he will lead the company's artistic activities through the 2018-19 season.

*Opera News* named Lord one of the "25 Most Powerful Names in U.S. Opera" (one of four conductors), and he is continually praised for conducting both traditional and contemporary operatic works. For his debut with San Francisco Opera, conducting *Rigoletto*, one critic observed, "He partnered his singers perfectly and gave everything its proper weight – he was master of the score's details and the orchestra played superbly for him." He is currently Music Director Emeritus for Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and



was formerly the music director of Boston Lyric Opera.

In addition to this work in Saint Louis and Detroit, he has been a frequent guest conductor at the Canadian Opera Company, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Santa Fe Opera, San Francisco Opera and the English National Opera, returning there for four consecutive seasons.

An outstanding mentor and discoverer of young talent, he has been directly responsible for the initial work of Lawrence Brownlee, Russell Thomas, Morris Robinson, Susan Graham, Christine Goerke, Patricia Racette and literally scores more of today's best singers.

## Kara Mulder

Kara Mulder, a soprano from Philadelphia, is making her debut with Michigan Opera Theatre as Countess Ceprano in *Rigoletto*.

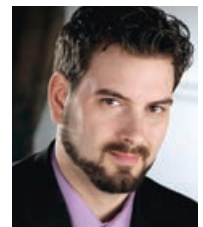
After achieving her Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance from the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester, she immediately began her Master of Music in Voice at the University of Michigan. Some of Kara's past roles include Concepción in *L'heure Espagnole*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, and Juliette in *Romeo et Juliette*.



## Nicholas Pallesen

Baritone Nicholas Pallesen returns to the title role in Michigan Opera Theatre's *Rigoletto* having sung in this same production at the English National Opera earlier this year. Later this season, he sings both Rigoletto and Germont in *La Traviata* with Oper Köln and Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* at the Santa Fe Opera. Nicholas has performed with the Metropolitan Opera and is a former Met National Council Auditions Finalist, where he was featured in the documentary, *The Audition*.

Concurrent to his performing career, Nicholas is also a Board Certified Hypnotist and Transformational Coach who



specializes in assisting artists in career and life. In addition to a full schedule of clients, he speaks regularly on mental wellness at conservatories and young artist programs and is a guest faculty member at Wolf Trap Opera and the New World Symphony. Following this season, Nicholas will retire from performing in order to focus on his private practice.

### So Young Park

After performing as the Queen of the Night in Michigan Opera Theatre's 2016 production of *The Magic Flute*,

soprano So Young Park returns to MOT as Gilda in *Rigoletto*. A native of Pusan, South Korea, she is a graduate of the Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist program with the Los Angeles Opera, where she performed the role of Queen of the Night, Gossip in *The Ghosts of Versailles* and Barbarina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, as well as Pat Nixon in the Music Center's 50th Anniversary Concert. She recently made her Los Angeles Philharmonic debut as a Soprano Soloist in Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy*. She has performed the Queen of the Night with Boston Lyric Opera, Houston Grand Opera (Miller Theater), the Glimmerglass Festival, Hawaii Opera Theatre, and Opera Colorado. Most recently, she returned to Los Angeles as Blonde in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Top Daughter in *Akhmaten* and Olympia in *The Tales of Hoffmann*. This season she is a member of the Metropolitan Opera.



### Nicole Piccolomini

This season, mezzo-soprano Nicole Piccolomini makes her Michigan Opera Theatre debut as Maddalena in *Rigoletto*. She is a resident

concert artist in Kunnersdorf, Germany and will release her first album in collaboration with pianist Christoph Staude featuring songs of Mahler, Wagner, Berg and Brahms. Last season included performances of Quickly in *Falstaff* with *Shanghai Opera*,



the title role in *Maria de Buenos Aires* at Theater Bonn, the Page in *Salome* with Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Erda in *Siegfried* with Oper Leipzig. Other recent performances include: *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried* (Oper Leipzig); *Wesendonck Lieder* (Venice Chamber Orchestra); *Rigoletto* (Santa Fe Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Deutsche Oper Berlin); *Cherevichki* (Teatro Lirico di Cagliari); *Nabucco*, *Götterdämmerung*, *Luisa Miller*, *Das Rheingold*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Elektra*, and *Die Walküre* (Deutsche Oper Berlin); *Götterdämmerung* and *Cavalleria rusticana* (Opéra national de Paris). Originally from Long Island, New York, she was a resident artist at the prestigious Academy of Vocal Arts and holds a Bachelor of Music from the Juilliard School.

### Schyler Sheltroun

Schyler Sheltroun is a soprano hailing from Mattawan, Michigan, where her love for music and opera blossomed, studying with David Hook at Mattawan High School. She is a graduate of Michigan State University, where she received both her bachelor's and master's degrees in vocal performance under the tutelage of Melanie Helton. Since graduation, Ms. Sheltroun has been in hot pursuit of her operatic career, performing across Michigan. In her first year out of school, she received an Encouragement Award in the Michigan District's Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, performed the role of Princess Yolanda in *The Free Lance* with the Comic Opera Guild in Ann Arbor, Michigan and sang her first Beethoven 9th Symphony as the soprano soloist with the Livingston Orchestra in Howell, Michigan. You also may have seen her in the chorus of *Carmen* last fall. She is thrilled to be back with Michigan Opera Theatre for the full season, especially as the Page in *Rigoletto*.



### Elaine Tyler-Hall

Director, choreographer and former dancer Elaine Tyler-Hall has worked with opera companies worldwide. As a staff director for English National Opera, she has revived ENO productions including *Orpheus and Eurydice*, *Orfeo*, *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*, *The Turn of the Screw* and *Semele*. She has also worked as assistant and staff director for opera companies including the Royal Opera House, Scottish Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Bayerisches Staatsoper in Munich, Opernhaus Zurich, and the Kammeroper in Vienna and has directed works for the Psappha ensemble, Riverside Opera and Blackheath Halls. Her choreography in opera includes *La fedelta premiata* (Garsington Opera), *The Jacobin* (Scottish Opera), *The Greek Passion* (Royal Opera House), *Benvenuto Cellini* (Zurich Opernhaus) and *Pelleas et Melisande* (Mariinsky Theatre). She has also worked on TV productions and films, including *Shakespeare in Love*. Revivals of David Pountney's very popular *The Cunning Little Vixen* have taken her to London, Venice, Milan, Seville, Tel Aviv, Glasgow, Cardiff and Athens. Earlier this year she revived Peter Sellar's production of *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* in Bonn and choreographed and assisted on a new production of *Sadko* with Daniel Kramer in Antwerp.



### Roland Wood

English baritone Roland Wood has performed in prestigious opera houses in the United Kingdom and throughout the world. He was a company principal at the Scottish Opera and has performed with The Royal Opera and the English National Opera. He has also performed at the Glyndebourne Festival, Opera North, the Canadian Opera Company, Santa Fe Opera, the English Touring Opera, Nationale Reisopera, the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and Grange



Park Opera. He studied at the Royal Northern College of Music then National Opera Studio in England. Future performances include *Rigoletto* with the Canadian Opera Company, Renato in *Un ballo in maschera* with Grand Park Opera and Giorgio Germont in *La Traviata* with Welsh National Opera in autumn of 2018.

### Erik Van Heyningen

Bass-baritone Erik Van Heyningen makes his debut at Michigan Opera Theatre as a Studio Artist. He has sung with opera companies across the country, including performing as a Richard Gaddes Festival Artist and a Gerdine Young Artist with the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Erik performed as an Apprentice Artist at Santa Fe Opera this summer. An avid recitalist, Erik has appeared in recital in cities such as Toronto, San Diego, Boston, and New York. This season, Erik will perform Count Ceprano in *Rigoletto*, Figaro in *The Marriage of Figaro* (cover), Ernest Hemingway in Ricky Ian Gordon's *27* and Angelotti and the Jailer in *Tosca* at MOT.



### Joanne Middleton Weaver

Born in England, Joanne Weaver came to the United States in the late 1980s. She began apprenticing with what was then Washington Opera, now Washington National Opera. Ms. Weaver has since designed at many opera companies throughout the U.S., including Climmerglass Opera, Central City Opera, Sarasota Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City and Des Moines Metro Opera. Her notable Michigan Opera Theatre credits include *The Magic Flute*, *Macbeth*, *The Passenger*, *Frida*, *The Merry Widow*, *Faust*, *Margaret Garner*, *Cyrano* and *The Pearl Fishers*.



### Christian Zaremba

Praised by the *New York Times* as "a stage animal with a big bass voice," Christian Zaremba makes his Michigan Opera Theatre debut as Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*. He has recently performed as Master Fal in the U.S. premiere of Milhaud's *La mère coupable* with On Site Opera; Colline in *La Bohème* with Portland Opera and Opera Omaha; Collatinus in *The Rape of Lucretia*, Bartolo



in *Le Nozze de Figaro*, Passagallo in Gassmann's *L'Opera Seria* with Wolf Trap Opera; Jake Wallace in *La fanciulla del West* with Opera Omaha; and Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* with New York's Venture Opera. A graduate of New York University, Mr. Zaremba was previously a stage-combat-fighter in multiple productions with the Metropolitan Opera. In the 2017-18 season, Mr. Zaremba will return to the Metropolitan Opera for his stage debut as Angelotti in *Tosca* and will make his debut with Austin Opera as Zuniga in *Carmen*.

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# Some Like It Rethought: The Artistic Integrity of a Mob *Rigoletto*

By Michael Yashinsky

In Michigan Opera Theatre's *Rigoletto*, the company stays close to the truth of the story while diverging fascinatingly from the piece's original place and period. So says Principal Conductor Stephen Lord of the Jonathan Miller production, which moves the action from the ducal court of 16<sup>th</sup>-century Mantua to the mob underground of 1950s New York City. Lord, with great excitement and conviction, chose to bring this production of the Giuseppe Verdi classic to open his first full season as MOT's artistic leader. He will also conduct the opera as he has done once before with English National Opera in London.

Since the production's premiere at the ENO in 1982, audiences have taken to the clever temporal shifts in the staging. In Francesco Maria Piave's libretto, *Rigoletto* is a miserable jester in the employ of the Duke. Here, he is a bartender working for a mafia don. But the story is the same: the title character's love for his daughter, his failure to protect her from a world of sinister men, her longing for freedom tragically twinned with her faithfulness.

All of those same values drive the action in this production, says Lord, though the singers may sport fedoras, not farthingales, and crew cuts, not codpieces. To demonstrate the production's dramatic integrity, Lord borrows a metaphor from outside of opera. He tells the story of the Canadian musician Glenn Gould reviving interest in the music of Bach by playing it on the piano instead of the traditional harpsichord. While in the middle of the last century, it was considered a bold choice, Lord maintains it was not overly bold:

"Glenn Gould was a brilliant musician," Lord said. "He made this work in a way that was and continues to be a revelation."

The key, Lord finds, is reinterpreting the opera in a way that



is not distracting from its fundamental themes.

"If Glenn Gould came out and played Bach on the piano, wearing a clown costume, where the clown costume distracts from the music and from Bach and from what Mr. Gould is trying to do, then it's junk!" he said. "We don't want to wear clown costumes. But we do want to present great works in a way that maybe they've not been done before, but also, as Glenn Gould did with Bach, allowing the public to hear and see things in another way—while retaining the essence."

It is apt that Lord alludes to a master of a different field to explain the company's choice to present the opera this way. It was said that Verdi himself could hold forth in brilliantly erudite fashion on an altogether different artistic discipline: sculpture. He was deeply interested in the plastic arts and counted many sculptors among his friends. Some have even written that his operas betray a fascination with starkly molded and monumental personalities, grand and terrible, and that the excitement of his signature duets comes from seeing these contrasting types meet

each other face-to-face, notes of music like shards of stone flying as the characters clash.

Opera is, after all, an all-encompassing art form, one in which a variety of disciplines – singing, acting, dancing, painting, carpentry, lighting, bowing the cello and banging the timpani – get to know each other, uniting to create a new whole out of the practiced parts. It is appropriate, then, that a composer for the operatic stage should have diverse interests, extending beyond the orchestra pit. And it is appropriate that a conductor should have them, too, and likewise, a stage director.

Miller's inspiration for his staging of *Rigoletto* came from a Marilyn Monroe movie. A chance conversation with his wife had reminded him of a silly exchange in 1959's *Some Like It Hot*. A mob boss, "Spats" Colombo, played by George Raft, is being questioned by one Detective Mulligan about a massacre that took place in Chicago:

MULLIGAN: Say, maestro, where were you at 3 o'clock on St. Valentine's Day?

SPATS: Me? I was at *Rigoletto*.

MULLIGAN: What's his first name? Where's he live?

SPATS: That's an opera, you ignoramus.

And so the seed was planted and was watered with a keen sense for the parallels that connect the opera's plot to the mafia *mise-en-scène*. In the mad, melodramatic, mighty *Rigoletto*, we get powerful people considering doing away with rivals by having them imprisoned or bounced out of town. We hear about upholding family honor and insults that cannot be tolerated and a plan to dispose of a corpse in that most stereotypically mafia fashion: tossing it into the river so it can sleep with the fishes. And we are exposed to a horrible cycle of violence and vendettas, of acts of revenge that top the acts that prompted them in

horror and severity but that ultimately bring greater ruin still on the avenger's head.

Lord recognized the resounding power in these dramatic echoes.

"The story has relevance, and yet is slightly removed from everyday life in our time," he said. "It is removed just enough so that the way in is fascinating."

The "way in" to a great work is personal. For Lord, Gould channeling Bach on the piano is his way in to the idea of risk-taking, of pushing the envelope, while adhering to the truth of an original creation. Perhaps Verdi's way in to writing opera was imagining his characters as sculpture. Miller's way in for this production was Hollywood gangster movies.

Audiences are now invited to find their own "way in" to *Rigoletto*, a way in to a new emotional sensation or philosophical rumination as they sit in 2017 Detroit and watch a drama play out in the bars, hotels, and tenements of 1950s New York. Fedoras optional.



Opera in Concert  
Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*  
Apollo's Fire

Jeannette Sorrell, conductor  
Karim Sulayman, Orfeo  
Erica Schuller, Eurydice  
Sunday, April 15 // 4 pm  
Hill Auditorium

As one of the earliest examples of the form, and certainly the earliest that still has a place in the present repertoire 400 years later, *L'Orfeo* sets to music the famous myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, whose long-awaited wedding night ends in tragedy when Eurydice is bitten by a poisonous snake and Orfeo storms the gates of hell to rescue her. Jeannette Sorrell leads Apollo's Fire, Cleveland's celebrated Baroque orchestra, in this semi-staged production with period dancers.

Performed in Italian with English supertitles.

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# Kathleen Battle in Recital

Sunday, November 5, 2017, 4:00 PM  
Detroit Opera House





## Kathleen Battle, Soprano

Since making her professional opera debut with Michigan Opera Theatre in 1975, Kathleen Battle has soared to classical music heights, winning five Grammys and worldwide acclaim. Her luminous voice has been called "... without qualification, one of the very few most beautiful in the world." (*The Washington Post*)

Throughout a remarkable career that has brought her to the stages of the world's leading opera houses and major concert halls, critics have never tired of rhapsodizing over her limpid, unmistakable sound.

Since her student years, Kathleen Battle has collaborated with colleagues who rank among the world's most talented musicians. She has been a favorite soloist with the world's leading orchestras and esteemed conductors such as Herbert von Karajan, Sir Georg Solti, Riccardo Muti, James Levine, Claudio Abbado, Lorin Mazell, Seiji Ozawa, Leonard Slatkin, and Sir Neville Marriner. Her partnerships with soprano Jessye Norman, tenors Luciano Pavarotti and Plácido Domingo, violinist Itzhak Perlman, trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, guitarist Christopher Parkening, flautists Jean-Pierre Rampal and Hubert Laws, and the late saxophonist Grover Washington, Jr., to name but a few, are documented on numerous recordings and video discs.

Kathleen Battle won accolades for the world premiere of "Honey and Rue," commissioned by Carnegie Hall for its 100th Anniversary, and written for her by Nobel Prize-winning author Toni Morrison and composer Andre Previn.

Kathleen Battle's gifts as a singer extend beyond the realm of classical music. Her work as a great interpreter of spirituals is well documented. Always seeking to expand her artistic horizons, Ms. Battle was joined by stellar jazz musicians for her first crossover album, "So Many Stars."

Ms. Battle has been inducted into the "NAACP Image Award Hall of Fame," the "Hollywood Bowl Hall of Fame," and was the first recipient of the Ray Charles Award, bestowed upon her in 2005 by Wilberforce University in Ohio.

In addition to eight Honorary Doctorates, five Grammy Awards, and an Emmy Award, Ms. Battle was the first American to receive the Laurence Olivier Award, the British equivalent of a Tony Award.

## Joel A. Martin, Accompanist

Pianist/producer/  
composer/arranger

Joel A. Martin is the creator of Jazzical®, a marriage of classical and jazz, and more. In the last couple of years he has collaborated with and/or written music for Grammy® Award-winners Kathleen Battle, Fergie of the Black Eyed Peas, Brooklyn Youth Chorus, cellist Eugene Friesen of the Paul Winter Consort, and Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Jaimoe of the Allman Brothers, among many other artists.



Joel was the youngest pianist ever, and the first African American pianist, to compete in the 1985 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. He has appeared as soloist with the NY Philharmonic, El Paso Symphony, Springfield Symphony Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, New Hampshire Festival Orchestra, Cab Calloway Orchestra, and the Hartford Symphony.

For more information: [jazzical.com](http://jazzical.com), [footstepspeace.com](http://footstepspeace.com)

Management for Ms. Battle:  
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Ms. Battle records for CBS/Sony Classical, Deutsche Grammophon, EMI/Angel, Decca/ London, RCA, Vox Cum Laude, and Telarc.

## Remembering Dr. Robert E. L. Perkins, Michigan Opera Theatre Trustee 1993-2017

Dr. Robert E.L. Perkins was a Michigan Opera Theatre Trustee, serving the Board of Trustees for nearly 25 years. A longtime arts and music lover, he also supported the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the Detroit Institute of Arts, particularly championing the organizations' African-American arts and cultural programs. Other patronage included support for the Your Heritage House children's museum and the Brazeal Dennard Chorale and serving as an opera panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts. Professionally, he was the first African-American oral surgeon in Michigan. At MOT, Dr. Perkins was the first to host an opera club in his home, an action that has since spurred the development of 27 opera clubs throughout Metro Detroit each year. He is remembered as a kind gentleman and an opera enthusiast who enjoyed watching productions from his longtime subscribed front row, center seats. Dr. Robert E.L. Perkins, 1925 - 2017.



# The Marriage of Figaro

November 11-19, 2017



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**MUSIC**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

**LIBRETTO**

Lorenzo Da Ponte

**WORLD PREMIERE**

Burgtheater - Vienna, Austria  
May 1, 1786

**CONDUCTOR**

Stephen Lord

**STAGE DIRECTOR**

Michael Albano

**CHORUS MASTER**

Suzanne Mallare Acton

**SET/COSTUME DESIGN**

Susan Benson

**LIGHTING DESIGN**

Kendall Smith

**WIG & MAKEUP DESIGN**

Joanne Middleton Weaver

**RECITATIVE ACCOMPANIMENT**

Jean Schneider

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

Christopher Hazlett

**ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR**

Daniel Black

**SUPERTITLES**

Dee Dorsey

**STAGE MANAGER**

Ken Saltzman

Production created by  
Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity

**CAST**  
(In order of vocal appearance)

<b>Figaro:</b> .....	Aubrey Allicock (Nov. 11, 15, 18) Matthew Stump (Nov. 19)
<b>Susanna:</b> .....	Devon Guthrie (Nov. 11, 15, 18) Maeve Hoglund (Nov. 19)
<b>Dr. Bartolo:</b> .....	Matthew Burns
<b>Marcellina:</b> .....	Susanne Mentzer
<b>Cherubino:</b> .....	Sarah Coit
<b>Count Almaviva:</b> .....	Paulo Szot (Nov. 11, 15, 18) Edward Nelson (Nov. 19)
<b>Don Basilio:</b> .....	Michael Day+
<b>Countess Almaviva:</b> .....	Nicole Cabell (Nov. 11, 15, 18) Julie Adams (Nov. 19)
<b>Antonio:</b> .....	Nicholas Davis
<b>Barbarina:</b> .....	Angela Theis
<b>Don Curzio:</b> .....	Sasha Noori
<b>Bridesmaid:</b> .....	Tiffanie Waldron
<b>Bridesmaid:</b> .....	Schylar Sheltroun

+Michigan Opera Theatre Studio Artist

**Synopsis**

**ACT I**

Figaro, former barber of Seville, measures the room he will occupy after his marriage to Susanna. Both are in the service of Count Almaviva, and when Susanna warns her fiancé that the Count has given them this room near his own because he has designs on her, Figaro vows to outwit his master (“Se vuol ballare”). After they leave, Dr. Bartolo, the Countess’s onetime guardian and suitor, arrives with his housekeeper, Marcellina. Bartolo is eager for revenge on Figaro, whose machinations caused him to lose his ward to Almaviva. Knowing that Figaro once gave Marcellina his promise of marriage as collateral on a loan, Bartolo persuades her to foreclose (“La vendetta”) and leaves. When Susanna returns, she trades insults with her would-be rival (“Via resti servita”), who storms out. The skirt-chasing page Cherubino steals in, begging Susanna’s protection from the Count, who has caught him flirting with Barbarina, the gardener’s daughter. After pouring out his amorous enthusiasm (“Non so più”), he hides as the Count enters

to woo Susanna. Interrupted by the arrival of the music master, Don Basilio, the Count in turn hides, but he steps forward when Basilio hints that Cherubino has a crush on the Countess. Just as the Count discovers the hapless Cherubino, Figaro brings in a group of peasants to salute their lord for abolishing the *droit du seigneur*, an old custom giving the local landowner the first night with any bride among his retainers. Feigning good will, the Count drafts Cherubino into his regiment. Figaro teases the boy about his new military life (“Non più andrai”).

**ACT II**

In her boudoir, the Countess laments the waning of her husband’s love (“Porgi, amor”). When Figaro and Susanna arrive with news of the Count’s machinations, the three plot to chasten him. Cherubino, disguised as Susanna, will keep an assignation with the Count. When Figaro leaves, the page comes to serenade the Countess with a song of his own composition (“Voi che sapete”). While dressing the boy in girl’s clothes, Susanna goes out for a ribbon, and the Count knocks, furious to find the door barred. The Countess

locks Cherubino in a closet before admitting her husband. The jealous Count hears a noise; the Countess insists it’s Susanna, but he doesn’t believe her. Taking his wife with him, he goes to fetch tools to force the lock. Susanna, who has slipped in unnoticed during their confrontation, helps Cherubino out a window and takes his place in the closet, baffling both Count and Countess when they return. As the Count tries to make amends, the gardener, Antonio, appears, complaining that someone has stepped in his flower bed. Figaro, arriving to say the wedding ceremony is ready to begin, claims it was he who jumped from the window and fakes a twisted ankle. When the Count asks him about a paper found among the geraniums, Figaro, prompted by the women, correctly identifies it as Cherubino’s commission. Bartolo and Basilio burst in with Marcellina to press her claims against Figaro. The Count gladly postpones the wedding, pledging to judge the case himself.

**ACT III**

At the Countess’s prompting, Susanna promises the Count a rendezvous (“Crudel! perchè finora”), but his suspicions are aroused when he overhears her assuring Figaro that the case is won. Enraged, he vows revenge (“Vedrò, mentr’io sospiro”). Alone, the Countess hopes to revive her husband’s love (“Dove sono”). Marcellina now demands that Figaro pay his debt or marry her, but a birthmark proves he is her long-lost son by Bartolo, and the parents call off their suit, confounding the Count (“Riconosci in questo amplesso”). The conspiracy continues: the Countess dictates a note from Susanna, inviting the Count to the garden (“Che soave zeffiretto”). Peasants, among them Cherubino, disguised as a girl, bring flowers to their lady. Figaro arrives, and, as the wedding ceremony at last takes place, Susanna slips the note, sealed with a pin, to the Count.

**ACT IV**

The pin is meant to accompany the Count’s reply, but Barbarina, his messenger, has lost it in the dusky garden (“L’ho perduta, me meschina”). She explains her predicament to Figaro, who, unaware of the ladies’ latest plot, thinks Susanna has



# THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

betrayed him. He gives Barbarina another pin, planning to ambush his bride with the Count, then turns to his mother, Marcellina, for comfort. The crafty Basilio says it pays to play the fool. Figaro, left alone, curses women for their duplicity (“Aprite un po’”), then hides when Susanna appears, rhapsodizing on her love for Figaro without naming him (“Deh vieni”). Figaro is beside himself, assuming her serenade is meant for the Count. Susanna and the Countess secretly exchange dresses, and in the darkness both Cherubino and the Count woo the Countess, thinking her to be Susanna (“Pian, pianin le andrò più presso”). Figaro at last perceives the joke and gets even by wooing Susanna in her Countess disguise, provoking and then pacifying her. When the Count returns, he sees Figaro flirting with what appears to be the Countess. He calls the whole company to witness his judgment but is silenced when the real Countess appears and reveals the ruse. She grants the Count’s plea for forgiveness (“Contessa, perdono”), and everyone celebrates.

## ARTIST PROFILES

### Suzanne Mallare Acton

Chorus Master Suzanne Mallare Acton has received wide acclaim for her choral direction involving more than

125 productions in seven languages. Conducting credits include *West Side Story*, *The Music Man*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *The Mikado*, *Daughter of the Regiment*, *Carmen*, *La Traviata*



and *Carmina Burana* with *The Medium* for MOT; *My Fair Lady* and *La Traviata* for Dayton Opera; *Merry Widow* and *Madame Butterfly* for Artpark; and *Tosca* for Augusta Opera. As founding Director of the MOT Children’s Chorus, Ms. Acton was instrumental in developing the inaugural season. She is also the Artistic and Music Director of metro Detroit’s Rackham Choir.

### Julie Adams

Soprano Julie Adams has been praised by the *New York Times* for possessing a voice that is “rich, full and slightly earthy in an expressive way.” She is a winner of the 2014 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the 2015 George London Award, the 2015 Elizabeth Connell prize for aspiring dramatic sopranos and a recipient of a 2015 Sara Tucker Study Grant. Performance highlights include Mimi in *La Bohème* and covering both Eva in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and the title role in *Jenůfa* at San Francisco Opera. Future performances include Freia in *Das Rheingold* and Gerhilde in *Die Walküre* in Richard Wagner’s *Der Ring des Nibelungen* with San Francisco Opera and Blanche in André Previn’s *A Streetcar Named Desire* with Opera Idaho.



### Michael Patrick Albano

Michael Patrick Albano’s directorial credits include *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* for the New York City Opera, *La Bohème* for the Canadian Opera Company, *Le Comte Ory* for the Manhattan School of Music, *La Belle Hélène* for the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, *La Fille du Régiment* for L’Opéra de Montreal, *La Traviata* for the Opera Festival of New Jersey, *The Gondoliers* for the Brevard Festival, *Die Fledermaus* for the Kentucky Opera and *Le Nozze di Figaro* for both the Wolftrap Opera Company and the Yale School of Music.



In addition, Mr. Albano is the resident stage director of Opera Studies at the University of Toronto’s Faculty of Music where he has staged over 50 operas including the Canadian premieres of Debussy’s *L’Enfant Prodigue*, Paisiello’s *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and Britten’s *Paul Bunyan*.

An accomplished writer and librettist, Mr. Albano wrote *Loss of Eden* (based upon the lives of Charles and Anne Lindbergh) which was premiered by the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, subsequently repeated in Minneapolis, and broadcast over

National Public Radio. In addition, he has written librettos for seven frequently performed children’s operas. His current libretto undertaking is *Fall River, The Legend of Lizzie Borden* slated for performance in March of 2019.

Following Michigan Opera Theatre’s production of *The Marriage of Figaro*, Mr. Albano returns to Canada to direct a new production of George Gershwin’s *Of Thee I Sing*.

### Aubrey Allicock

Bass-baritone Aubrey Allicock makes his Michigan Opera Theatre debut as Figaro in *The Marriage of Figaro*. Appearing with the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis on several occasions, he originated the roles of Young Emile Griffith in Terence Blanchard’s *Champion* and Bulbul Fakh in *Shalimar the Clown*. Highlights from recent engagements include reprising his role in *Champion* with Washington National Opera and debuts with The Royal Concertgebouw in John Adams’s *El Niño* and the BBC Symphony Orchestra in *Doctor Atomic*. Notable debuts include: the Glyndebourne Festival as Argante in *Rinaldo*, the Metropolitan Opera as Mamoud in *The Death of Klinghoffer* and principal artist engagements with the Wexford Festival, Seattle Opera, Ojai Festival, Carnegie Hall and Komische Oper Berlin. This season he will perform with Opera Philadelphia in *We Shall Not Be Moved* with a reprise at the Apollo Theater in Harlem and the Hackney Empire theater in London as co-producer with English National Opera. He will also reprise his role in *Champion* with New Orleans Opera.



### Matthew Burns

Bass-baritone Matthew Burns will be making his Michigan Opera Theatre debut this season as Dr. Bartolo in *The Marriage of Figaro*. Some career highlights of Mr. Burns include an Austin Opera debut as the role of Leporello in *Don Giovanni*,



which he also performed with Arizona Opera; several role debuts including Gus O'Neill in *Later That Same Evening* and Pistacchio in Donzetti's *Il campanello di notte* with Opera Memphis and Bagaers in Milhaud's *La mere coupable* with Onsite Opera; Otec in Smetana's *The Kiss and Rambaldo in La Rondine* with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis; and the title role in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Virginia Opera. Mr. Burns has recently been appointed to the voice faculty of his alma mater, Virginia Commonwealth University. This season, he performs the role of Dr. Primus/Sir Simon in *The Canterville Ghost/Usher House* with The Center for Contemporary Opera and Los Angeles Opera; Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Virginia Opera; and Bartolo in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*.

### Nicole Cabell

Lyric soprano Nicole Cabell returns to Michigan Opera Theatre as Countess Almaviva in *The Marriage of Figaro*.

Her previous MOT credits include Mimi in 2015's *La Bohème*, Violetta in 2013's *La Traviata* and Musetta in 2005's *La Bohème*. She is the 2005



winner of the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition whose solo album "Soprano" was named "Editor's Choice" by Gramophone magazine. Recent engagements include her debut as Bess in *Porgy and Bess* with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and appearances as Mimi in *La Bohème* with the Minnesota and Cincinnati operas. She also performed Countess Almaviva with Angers Nantes Opera. Ms. Cabell's 2017-18 season includes performances as the Countess Almaviva with the Grand Théâtre de Genève, Flavia in *Eliogabalo* with the Dutch National Opera, Micaela in *Carmen* with the Atlanta Opera, and a solo recital at the Frankfurt Opera. Future engagements also include returns to London, Geneva, Atlanta, and a debut in Amsterdam.

### Sara Coit

Mezzo-soprano Sarah Coit holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Michigan and is delighted to return to Michigan! She

recently sang Alisa in Santa Fe Opera's production of *Lucia di Lammermoor* as a member of the 2017 Apprentice Singer Program. She also has spent the last year performing in workshops, eventually covering the role of Laurene Powell Jobs in the world premiere of Mason Bates' *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*. She is a recent graduate of the Utah Opera Resident Artist Program where she recently performed the role of Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*. She was a 2017 National Semi-Finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Along with her degree from Michigan, she holds bachelor's degrees in Music Studies and Theatre Performance from the University of South Florida. Upcoming engagements include Mama/Madre Luna in *Shoes for the Santo Niño* with Santa Fe Opera's Opera for All Voices program and Santa Fe Opera's Winter Tour.



### Nicholas Davis

Nicholas Davis made his Michigan Opera Theatre debut as Happy in last season's *The Girl of the Golden West* and returns as Antonio in *The Marriage of Figaro*. Acknowledged for his rolling mellifluous baritone by *Opera Today*, Mr. Davis is enjoying success both at home and internationally. In 2014, he became the first American to win first prize in the International Antonín Dvořák Singing Competition. The 2015-2016 season saw Mr. Davis' international debut in concert with the National Theatre in Prague. He was also hosted in recital at the American Center for the United States Ambassador to the Czech Republic. Mr. Davis made his Santa Fe Opera debut in the 2016 season as Jake Wallace in *The Girl of the Golden West* and as Gregorio in *Romeo et Juliette*. Most recently, he has been engaged by Chicago Opera Theater, Opera Philadelphia, Chicago Sinfonietta and the Glimmerglass Festival.



### Michael Day

Tenor Michael Day makes his Michigan Opera Theatre debut this season as a Michigan Opera Theatre Studio Artist. His performance credits include singing with Indiana University Opera Theatre, the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Indianapolis Pro Musica, the Bloomington Chamber Singers and Utah Festival Opera, where he worked as a young artist. He recently returned to the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis this summer as a Richard Gaddes Festival Artist, singing the role of Al Joad in a new performing version of Ricky Ian Gordon's *The Grapes of Wrath*. He holds a bachelor's degree in music education and vocal performance and a master's degree in vocal performance from Indiana University. This season, Michael will perform Don Basilio in *The Marriage of Figaro*, the dual role of Pablo Picasso/F. Scott Fitzgerald in Gordon's *27* and Spoletta in *Tosca* at MOT.



### Devon Guthrie

American soprano Devon Guthrie made an acclaimed debut as Susanna in a new production of *Le Nozze di Figaro* at English National Opera when she was still a student at the Juilliard School. Recent operatic roles include: Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus* with Santa Fe Opera; Konstanze in *Abduction from the Seraglio* with Kentucky Opera and creating the role of Mary Johnson in the world premiere of *Fellow Travelers* with Cincinnati Opera. Other roles include Daisy Buchanan in John Harbison's *The Great Gatsby*, Pamina and Erste Dame in *Die Zauberflöte* and Chocholka in *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Guthrie has won such awards as the Gerda Lissner Competition, Houston Grand Opera Eleanor McCollum Competition, Licia Albanese Competition and the Liederkrantz Vocal Competition. She was also an apprentice at the Santa Fe Opera and Tanglewood Music Festival, where she worked with James Levine. In the 2017/2018 season, she will be returning to the role of Mary Johnson



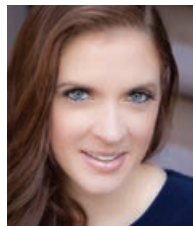


with The Prototype Festival and Lyric Opera of Chicago.

## Maeve Höglund

Maeve Höglund makes her Michigan Opera Theatre debut as Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. The *New York Times* praised her as “a striking soprano,” and one who “stands out among singers.” Her recent highlights include performing

Musetta in *La Bohème* with Charleston Opera; Margaret Hughes in Floyd’s *Prince*



of *Players* with Little Opera Theatre of New York; Arminda in Mozart’s *La Finta Giardiniera* with On Site Opera; Frasquita in *Carmen* with PORTOpera; Giunia in Mozart’s *Lucio Silla* with Chicago Opera Theater; and the News Anchor in Ter Veldhuis’ *The News* with Long Beach Opera. Ms. Höglund holds a Master of Music degree from the Manhattan School of Music and a Bachelor of Music degree from New England Conservatory. She makes her Opera Philadelphia debut in the 2017-18 season as Lola in the world premiere of David Hertzberg’s opera *The Wake World*. She will also be a concert soloist in *Messiah* with Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra.

## Stephen Lord

Stephen Lord joined Michigan Opera Theatre as Principal Conductor in November 2016, and he will lead the company’s artistic activities through the 2018-19 season.

*Opera News* named Lord one of the “25 Most Powerful Names in U.S. Opera” (one of four conductors), and he is continually praised for conducting both traditional and contemporary operatic works. For his debut with San Francisco Opera, conducting *Rigoletto*, one critic observed, “He partnered his singers perfectly and gave everything its proper weight – he was master of the score’s details and the orchestra played superbly for him.” He is currently Music Director Emeritus for Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and was formerly the music director of Boston Lyric Opera.



In addition to his work in Saint

Louis and Detroit, he has been a frequent guest conductor at the Canadian Opera Company, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Santa Fe Opera, San Francisco Opera and the English National Opera, returning there for four consecutive seasons.

An outstanding mentor and discoverer of young talent, he has been directly responsible for the initial work of Lawrence Brownlee, Russell Thomas, Morris Robinson, Susan Graham, Christine Goerke, Patricia Racette and literally scores more of today’s best singers.

## Susanne Mentzer

American mezzo-soprano Susanne Mentzer has been enjoying a significant opera, concert, chamber music and recital career for more than 30 years, appearing on four continents with nearly every great opera house and orchestra. She has been a guest artist at the Metropolitan Opera in leading roles since 1989



and specializes in the music of Mozart, Berlioz, Rossini, and Strauss. She is widely admired in trouser roles of Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Idamante in *Idomeneo*, der Komponist in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*. Other noted roles include Dorabella and Despina in *Così fan tutte*, Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*, Adalgisa in *Norma*, and Jane Seymour in *Anna Bolena*. Susanne recently added new roles to her repertoire as Mrs. Patrick DeRocher in Jake Heggie’s *Dead Man Walking*, the Beggar Woman in *Sweeney Todd* with Opera Theatre Saint Louis and Nellie in Carlisle Floyd’s *Wuthering Heights*, which has also been recorded for commercial release.

## Edward Nelson

Baritone Edward Nelson makes his Michigan Opera Theatre debut as the Count in *The Marriage of Figaro*. Mr. Nelson made his European and role debut singing Pelléas in *Pelléas et Mélisande* with the Norwegian National Opera. Other recent



engagements include Schaunard in *La Bohème* with Cincinnati Opera and the title role in *Hamlet* with West Edge Opera. As an Adler Fellow at the San Francisco Opera he performed the roles of Malatesta in *Don Pasquale*, Yamadori in *Madama Butterfly* and Moralès in Calixto Bieto’s production of *Carmen*. Additionally, he originated roles in two world premieres: Eunich/Stone in *Dream of the Red Chamber* and Lt. John Buckley in *Two Women*. Other recent appearances include *The Wanderer* (Schubert’s *Die Schöne Müllerin*) with Jessica Lang Dance at Chicago’s Harris Theater. Upcoming engagements include a debut at Washington National Opera as Maximilian in *Candide*.

## Sasha Noori

Tenor and Monroe, Michigan native Sasha Noori is a frequent performer with Michigan Opera Theatre. He appears this season as Don Curzio in *The Marriage of Figaro* and sang the comprimario role of French Soldier #2 in MOT’s production of *Silent Night* last season. He has been singing in the MOT Chorus since 2013 and is a part of MOT’s community outreach program, where he sang the roles of Scarpio in *La Pizza con Funghi*, and The Prince in *Rumpelstiltskin*. He is a proud alumnus of the University of Toledo, where he received his Master of Music degree.



## Matthew Stump

Matthew Stump is a bass-baritone from Goshen, Indiana. He has performed in Michigan previously, recording with Metro Detroit-based choir, Sounding Light. This summer, he portrayed Publio in *La Clemenza di Tito* and The Bonze in *Madame Butterfly* at Opera Theater of Saint Louis. Before that, Matthew was an Adler Fellow at San Francisco Opera, where he performed several roles including Trojan Soldier in *Les Troyens*, Ufficiale in the *Barber of Seville*, Monk in *Don Carlo* and Foreman in *Jenufa*. He also performed with West Bay Opera singing in *Gianni Schicchi* as





Simone. During his time in Texas, Matthew performed with Dallas Opera and Fort Worth Opera singing in *Salome*, *Pearl Fishers* and *Silent Night*. He has received training through the San Francisco Opera Center and holds a master's degree from the University of North Texas.

### Paulo Szot

Baritone Paulo Szot most recently appeared with Michigan Opera Theatre in 2003 in the title role of *Don Giovanni*. After starring in the Broadway revival of *South Pacific* at Lincoln Center, Szot won the Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critic's Circle and Theater World awards for his portrayal of Emile De Beque in 2008, becoming the first Brazilian actor to receive such honors. Other career highlights include Kovalev in *The Nose*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Lescaut in *Manon* and Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus* with the Metropolitan Opera; Guglielmo and Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* with Opera National de Paris; Filippov in *A Dog's Heart* with Teatro alla Scala in Milan and Kovalev with Teatro dell'Opera di Roma. He studied at Jagiellonian University in Poland and has been singing professionally since 1990. Future performances include Frank Murrant in Kurt Weill's *Street Scene* at the Teatro Real in Madrid, Bernstein's *Mass* with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and Don Alfonso at the Opera National de Paris.



### Angela Theis

Soprano Angela Theis of Grosse Pointe, Michigan is an original member of the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio, having recently finished her second year in the program. She is featured on the David DiChiera *Letters & Fantasies* album and continues to be an ambassador for Michigan Opera Theatre and the music of its founder. Since her company debut in 2011, she has performed Beth in *Little Women*, Frasquita in *Carmen*, Papagena (Pamina) in *The Magic Flute*, Laurie in *The Tender Land*, Yvette in



*The Passenger*, the High Priestess in *Aida*, and Marzelline in *Fidelio*. Around the country, opera highlights include Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Toledo Opera), Clorinda in *La Cenerentola* (Opera Roanoke), and Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Eugene Opera). As part of her studies in Austria, she completed a fellowship at the Universität Mozarteum Salzburg. In March, she will appear as the soprano soloist in *Voices of Light* at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

### Erik Van Heyningen

Bass-baritone Erik Van Heyningen makes his debut at Michigan Opera Theatre as a Studio Artist. He has sung with opera companies across the country, including performing as a Richard Gaddes Festival Artist and a Gerdine Young Artist with the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Erik performed as an Apprentice Artist at Santa Fe Opera this summer. An avid recitalist, Erik has appeared in recital in cities such as Toronto, San Diego, Boston, and New York. This season, Erik will perform Count Ceprano in *Rigoletto*, Figaro in *The Marriage of Figaro* (cover), Ernest Hemingway in Ricky Ian Gordon's *27* and Angelotti and the Jailer in *Tosca* at MOT.



### Joanne Middleton Weaver

Born in England, Joanne Weaver came to the United States in the late 1980s. She began apprenticing with what was then Washington Opera, now Washington National Opera. Ms. Weaver has since designed at many opera companies throughout the U.S., including Glimmerglass Opera, Central City Opera, Sarasota Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City and Des Moines Metro Opera. Her notable Michigan Opera Theatre credits include *The Magic Flute*, *Macbeth*, *The Passenger*, *Frida*, *The Merry Widow*, *Faust*, *Margaret Garner*, *Cyrano* and *The Pearl Fishers*.



# ANNOUNCING OPERA teens

Are you a teenager interested in opera, or do you know one who is eager to learn more and ready to be a part of this exciting program?

Opera Teens is a national movement that empowers teenagers to pursue their interests in opera, share opera learning with others, and leverage the power of the art form to serve local communities. Through local Councils, Opera Teens will explore Opera Creation, Production, and Administration by attending Michigan Opera Theatre performances and engaging in conversations with professionals in the field of opera.

### What You Can Do

Learn more and JOIN THE CONVERSATION using #OperaTeens @operaamerica to connect with others in online discussions.

E-mail Mysti at [mbyrnes@motopera.org](mailto:mbyrnes@motopera.org) to apply!

# PROFILES FROM THE PIT:



Heaton

## Introducing our Orchestra: Concertmaster Eliot Heaton:

Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra Concertmaster Eliot Heaton embarks on his second complete season with MOT this October. He first performed with the orchestra during the 2016 production of *The Sleeping Beauty* with American Ballet Theatre, a performance he described as very special to him.

"I was still in graduate school at the time," he said. "Coming here to play in a packed opera house with this killer orchestra, along with the spectacular show that American Ballet Theatre put on, it felt like I was on another planet."

The 27-year-old has been playing violin since age 3, eventually

studying music professionally earning a bachelor's degree in violin performance at Oberlin College and Conservatory and a master's degree at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. In addition to the MOT Orchestra, the Geneva, New York native recently signed on as the Concertmaster of the Saginaw Bay Symphony and performs in the area with the Cut Time Players, Chamber Soloists of Detroit, the Scarab Club, the Detroit Jazz Festival and the Bridge Chamber Players. Outside of music, Eliot enjoys tennis, reading, NBA basketball, baking bread and talking with members of the audience during intermissions.



Bowman

## Principal Clarinet Brian Bowman

Principal Clarinet Brian Bowman has played with the Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra since its earliest days. The 55-year-old Milford Township resident will begin his 31st season with MOT, having experienced the company and the city's myriad changes over the past three decades. His favorite experience was playing the clarinet solo/duet from *Tosca* with famed tenor Luciano Pavarotti during the late singer's 1988 performance with MOT.

"It was really an education and experience to hear his voice up close," he said. "Pavarotti was so gracious and patient, and the

performance went great. I've been playing that solo the same way ever since."

Brian began playing clarinet at age 11 in his sixth grade band class and says that, even after all these years, he still finds playing relaxing and rewarding. When not performing with MOT, Brian works as the Design Systems Manager at Ford Motor Company and enjoys playing golf and traveling with his wife, Evelyn. Brian said he looks forward to sharing the *Tosca* piece he perfected with Pavarotti during MOT's spring production this season.

# Administration & Staff

**Wayne S. Brown**  
President and Chief Executive Officer

**Stephen Lord**  
Principal Conductor

**David DiChiera**  
Founder and Artistic Director  
Emeritus

## DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS

Richard Leech, Director of Resident Artist Programs  
Rock Monroe, Director of Safety and Security, DOH and DOHPC  
David W. Osborne, Director of Production  
Patricia Walker, Chief Administrative Officer

## ADMINISTRATION

William Austin, Executive Assistant  
Timothy Lentz, Archivist and Director, Alleesee Dance and Opera Resource Library  
Bryce Rudder, Senior Librarian, Alleesee Dance and Opera Resource Library

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Mitchell Carter, Website Coordinator  
Crystal Ceo, Account Executive, Real Integrated Advertising  
Leo Dovel, Boutique Manager  
Amelia Gillis, Patron Services Associate, Development  
Christy Gray, Patron Services Associate, Development  
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Kathi Kucharski, Corporate, Foundation and Government Grants Manager  
Assia Likomanov, Special Events Manager  
Laura R. Nealssohn, Communications Consultant  
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Jon Rosemond, Group Sales Associate  
Cathy Talifer, Senior Patron Officer, Development  
Christina Wagner, Patron Services Manager, Individual Giving

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Mysti Byrnes, Program Coordinator  
Colin Knapp, Audience Engagement Associate  
Andrea Scobie, Manager of Education and Community Programs  
Austin Stewart, Audience Engagement Coordinator  
Mark Vondrak, Associate Director of Community Programs

## MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE STUDIO

Michael Day, Tenor  
Monica Dewey, Soprano  
Harry Greenleaf, Baritone  
Briana Elyse Hunter, Mezzo-soprano  
Erik Van Heyningen, Bass

## TOURING ARTISTS OF COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

**Sopranos:** Clodagh Earls, Nicole Joseph, Mary Martin  
**Mezzo-Sopranos:** Olivia Johnson, Mimi Lanseur, Diane Schoff  
**Tenors:** Mark Istrate, Joseph Leppek, Sasha Noori  
**Baritones:** Branden Hood, Matt Konopacki, Paolo Pacheco  
**Pianists:** Joseph Jackson, Alvin Waddles

## COMPUTER SERVICES

Chris Farr, Network Administrator  
John Grigaitis, Information Technology Manager

## DANCE

Kim Smith, Dance Coordinator

## FINANCE

Kimberly Burgess, Rita Winters, Accountants

## DETROIT OPERA HOUSE

HOUSE MANAGEMENT  
Randy Elliott, House Manager

## FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Johnny Benavides, Building Engineer  
Jesse Carter, Senior Building Engineer  
Dennis Wells, Facilities Manager  
David Bradley, Building Maintenance

## CATERING AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Holly Clement, Events Manager  
Angela Donaldson, Catering and Special Events Manager  
Tiiko Reese-Douglas, Events Assistant  
Demetrius Skeens, Catering and Special Events Coordinator

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Darrin Cato, Stage Door Officer  
A.M. Hightower, Control Center Officer  
Lt. Lorraine Monroe, Supervisor  
Demetrius Newbold, Control Center Officer  
Sgt. Daryl Stuckey, Sergeant

## DETROIT OPERA HOUSE

PARKING CENTER  
Paul Bolden, Event Supervisor for Parking  
Robert Neil, Manager

## PRODUCTION

### ADMINISTRATION

Elizabeth Anderson, Production Coordinator and Artistic Administrator  
Kathleen Bennett, Production Administrator  
Ken Saltzman, Stage Manager  
Nan Luchini, Hailli Ridsdale, Assistant Stage Managers

### MUSIC

Suzanne Mallare Acton, Assistant Music Director and Chorus Master  
Tessa Hartle, Studio Principal Coach/Accompanist  
Molly Hughes, Orchestra Personnel Manager  
Paul Beck, Orchestra Librarian  
Jean Schneider, Repetiteur

### TECHNICAL AND DESIGN STAFF

Daniel T. Brinker, Technical Director  
Monika Essen, Property Master and Scenic Artist  
Heather DeFauw, Assistant Lighting Designer and Assistant Technical Director  
Kevin Neuman, Assistant Technical Director  
Dee Dorsey, Supertitle Operator  
Stephanie Baugher, Technical Assistant

### COSTUMES

Suzanne M Hanna, Costume Director  
Craig Wickham, Assistant Costume Director  
Rosemarie Di Rita, Wardrobe Mistress  
Susan A. Fox, First Hand  
Maureen Abele, Patricia Sova, Mary Ellen Shuffett, Margaret Bronder, Stitchers

### MAKEUP AND HAIR

Elizabeth Geck, Assistant Wig & Makeup Designer  
Erika Broderdorf, Crew Leader  
Corene Bridges, Kristine Clifton-Higgins, Shannon Kozlowski, Kacilee Legato, Paige Parks, Erin Puffpaff, Briana Robins, Shannon Schoenberg, Carol Taylor, Denitra Townsend, Dayna Winalis, Sierra Wingerter

### STAGE CREW

John Kinsora, Head Carpenter  
Frederick Graham, Jr., Head Electrician  
Pat McGee, Head Propertyman  
Henry Ruiz, Head Sound  
Mary Ellen Shuffett, Head of Wardrobe  
Robert Martin, Head Flyman  
Gary Gilmore, Production Electrician

IATSE Local #38, Stage Crew  
IATSE Local #786, Wardrobe



## MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE ORCHESTRA - *RIGOLETTO*

### VIOLIN I

Eliot Heaton  
*Concertmaster+*  
 Laura Leigh Roelofs  
*Assistant*  
*Concertmaster+*  
 Molly Hughes +  
 Velda Kelly +  
 Beth Kirton +  
 Ran Cheng  
 Jacqueline Nutting  
 David Ormai  
 Yuri Popowycz  
 Jennifer Wan

### VIOLIN II

Victoria Haltom  
*Principal+*  
 Anna Bittar-Weller+  
 Henrik Karapetyan+  
 Daniel Stachyra+  
 Florina Conn  
 Joseph Deller  
 Sherri Martilla  
 Judith Teasdale

### VIOLA

John Madison  
*Principal+*  
 Scott Stefanko+  
 Barbara Zmich-  
 McClellan+  
 Catherine Franklin  
 James Greer  
 Julianne Zinn

### CELLO

Nadine Deleury  
*Principal+*  
 Daniel Thomas+  
 Andrea Yun+  
 Yulia Kim  
 David Peshlakai  
 Irina Tikhonova

### BASS

Derek Weller  
*Principal+*  
 Clark Suttle+  
 Robert Rohwer  
 Robert Stiles

### FLUTE

Laura Larson  
*Acting Principal+*  
 Dennis Carter

### OBOE

Nermis Mieses  
*Principal+*  
 Sally Heffelfinger-Pituch+

### CLARINET

Brian Bowman  
*Principal+*  
 J. William King +

### BASSOON

Francisco Delgado  
*Principal+*  
 Gregory Quick+

### HORN

Andrew Pelletier  
*Principal+*  
 Carrie Banfield-Taplin+  
 Tamara Kosinski  
 Susan Mutter

### TRUMPETS

David Ammer  
*Principal+*  
 Gordon Simmons+

### TROMBONE

David Jackson  
*Acting Principal+*  
 Greg Near+  
 Bryan Pokorney

### CIMBASSO

Matthew Lyon  
*Principal*

### TIMPANI

Alison Chang  
*Principal+*

### PERCUSSION

John Dorsey  
*Principal+*  
 Keith Claeys

### BANDA

**Violin I**  
 Henrik Karapetyan+

### Violin II

Yuri Popowycz

### Viola

James Greer

### Cello

David Peshlakai

### Bass

Clark Suttle+

+ Michigan Opera  
 Theatre Core Orchestra

Detroit Federation of  
 Musicians Local #5  
 American Federation of  
 Musicians

## MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE ORCHESTRA - *THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO*

### VIOLIN I

Eliot Heaton  
 Concertmaster +  
 Laura Leigh Roelofs  
*Assistant*  
*Concertmaster+*  
 Molly Hughes+  
 Beth Kirton+  
 Andrew Wu+  
 Emily Barkakati+  
 Ran Cheng  
 Jennifer Wan

### VIOLIN II

Victoria Haltom,  
*Principal+*  
 Anna Bittar-Weller+  
 Henrik Karapetyan+  
 Daniel Stachyra+  
 David Ormai  
 Yuri Popowycz

### VIOLA

Scott Stefanko, *Acting*  
*Principal+*  
 Leslie DeShazor-Adams  
 Catherine Franklin  
 James Greer

### CELLO

Daniel Thomas,  
*Acting Principal+*  
 Andrea Yun +  
 David Peshlakai  
 Irina Tikhonova

### BASS

Derek Weller,  
*Principal+*  
 Clark Suttle +

### FLUTE

Laura Larson,  
*Principal+*  
 Brandon LePage

### OBOE

Sally Heffelfinger -  
 Pituch,  
*Acting Principal+*  
 Geoffrey Johnson

### CLARINET

Brian Bowman, *Principal+*  
 J. William King +

### BASSOON

Francisco Delgado,  
*Principal+*  
 Gregory Quick +

### HORN

Andrew Pelletier  
*Principal+*  
 Carrie Banfield-Taplin+

### TRUMPET

David Ammer  
*Principal+*  
 Gordon Simmons +

### TIMPANI

Alison Chang,  
*Principal+*

### HARPSICHORD

Jean Schneider

+ Michigan Opera  
 Theatre Core Orchestra

Detroit Federation of  
 Musicians Local #5  
 American Federation of  
 Musicians

## MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE CHORUS – *RIGOLETTO*

### Tenor

Francisco Bedoy  
 Fred Buchalter  
 Michael Fowler  
 Richard Jackson, JR.  
 Seth Johnson

Joseph Leppek  
 Adrian Leskiw  
 Brandon Motz  
 Braun Oldenkamp  
 Jeffrey Wilkinson

### Bass

Benton DeGroot  
 Kurt Frank  
 Glenn Healy  
 Branden Hood  
 Matthew Konopacki

Brett Pond  
 Branden Spencer  
 Jacob Surzyn  
 David Twigg  
 Justin Watson

## MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE CHORUS – *THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO*

### Soprano

Brandy Adams  
 Fidelia Darmahkasih  
 Nicole Joseph  
 Sandra Periord  
 Schyler Sheltrown

### Alto

Diane Schoff  
 Andrea Apel  
 Madison Montambault  
 Tiffanie Waldron

### Tenor

Richard Jackson, JR.  
 Seth Johnson  
 Joseph Leppek  
 Bradley Miller  
 Brandon Motz

### Bass

Benton DeGroot  
 Kurt Frank  
 Branden Hood  
 Matthew Konopacki

# MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

STUDIO ARTISTS

The five resident artists of the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio represent some of the most exciting emerging talent in opera today.

Coming to Detroit from all different areas of the country, these early career opera professionals gain valuable experience through myriad performance opportunities in main stage and community productions, and hone their skills through master classes and training with an array of world-class professionals, guest artists, and coaches.

Throughout their residency, Studio Artists receive advanced individual training and guidance from MOT's Director of Resident Artist Programs **Richard Leech**, MOT Founder and Artistic Director Emeritus, **David DiChiera**, Studio Principal Coach/Accompanist **Tessa Hartle** and MOT's Assistant Music Director **Suzanne Mallare Acton**.

Supported by a major grant from the William Davidson Foundation, the program serves as a central component of MOT's enhanced presence in the community through productions in the Detroit Opera House, community venues, recitals and special events. MOT's community initiative productions are now selected and mounted



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ERIK VAN HEYNINGEN, HARRY GREENLEAF, MICHAEL DAY, BRIANA ELYSE HUNTER AND MONICA DEWEY

specifically for the Studio Program. This season the studio artists will fill lead and featured roles in MOT's production of Ricky Ian Gordon's *27*. Following last season's *Little Women*, MOT fulfills its community initiative to produce a full-scale opera annually in venues throughout Metro Detroit.

# MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

CHILDREN'S CHORUS

Michigan Opera Theatre Children's Chorus is a groundbreaking ensemble featuring children 8-16 years old. Founded in 2007, the chorus is the first of its kind for Metro Detroit children. It has charmed audiences of all ages, embracing diverse cultures and traditions in an extensive range of genres from folk songs to opera. Come see the MOTCC perform!



### MOTCC Staff

Suzanne Mallare Acton, Director  
Dianna Hochella, Assistant Director, Principal Chorus Conductor  
Jane Panikkar, Preparatory Chorus Conductor  
Twannette Nash, Chorus Administrator  
Joseph Jackson, Principal Chorus Accompanist  
Maria Cimarelli, Preparatory Chorus Accompanist

### Christmas in Ida

Friday, December 1, 2017, 7 p.m.  
Holiday Concert at St. Joseph's Church  
8295 Van Aiken St., Ida, Michigan  
Admission is free.

### A Winter Fantasy: Holiday Concert & Fundraiser

Sunday, December 17, 2017, 3 p.m.  
Join us for our **10th Anniversary Celebration** featuring beautiful choral music by the MOTCC with special alumni guest performers. Doors open at 2:30 p.m. to register for silent auction at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$30 for adults 18 and older, \$50 for box seats, \$15 for ages 5 and up, and free for children 4 and younger.

### HMS Pinafore – MOTCC Children's Opera

By Gilbert and Sullivan  
Student Dress Rehearsal: Friday, April 27, 2018  
11 a.m. at the Detroit Opera House  
Tickets: Students: \$10 advanced purchase, \$15 day of  
Adults: \$25, 1 FREE chaperone ticket for every 10 student tickets

Public Performance: Saturday, April 28, 2018  
2:30 p.m. at the Detroit Opera House  
Tickets: Box Seats: \$50. Adult: \$35, Children: \$15

For more information about the MOTCC and to order tickets, visit [www.motcc.org](http://www.motcc.org) or contact MOTCC Chorus Administrator Twannette Nash at [tnash@motopera.org](mailto:tnash@motopera.org)

# Michigan Opera Theatre Donor Honor Roll

Michigan Opera Theatre gratefully acknowledges the generous donors for their cumulative life-time giving. Their support has played a key role in the establishment of Michigan Opera Theatre since its founding in 1971 along with the building of the Detroit Opera House. Their leadership has and continues to play an integral part in the company's viability, underwriting quality opera and dance performances, alongside award-winning community and educational programs.

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# MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

## AVANTI SOCIETY

### Ensuring the Future

Imagine a gift that outlives you, allowing future generations to experience and enjoy the world of opera and dance. That's the goal of the Avanti Society, Michigan Opera Theatre's Planned Gift Recognition Program.

The Italian word "avanti" means "ahead," or "forward." The Avanti Society at Michigan Opera Theatre represents a designated group of friends of Michigan Opera Theatre who have made plans to include the organization in their estate plans – whether by will, trust, insurance, or life income arrangement. Membership in the Avanti Society is open to all.

In thanks for their generous support, Avanti Society members are given special benefits and recognition for their heartfelt commitment to Michigan Opera Theatre.

#### Avanti Society Members are Recognized:

In "Bravo" opera and dance program books and the Annual Report.

#### Avanti Society Members are Invited:

To an exclusive annual Avanti Society event, previews and other special events. Michigan Opera Theatre is honored that so many patron have chosen to declare their membership in the Avanti Society and designed a small lapel pin for members to wear proudly at Michigan Opera Theatre events.

#### AN AVANTI FOR TOMORROW

The growth of Michigan Opera Theatre's permanent Endowment Fund ensures the growth and future vitality of one of the region's greatest cultural assets. You are invited to create your own legacy – your Avanti – through Michigan Opera Theatre.

To make your gift, contact Christina Wagner, Patron Services Manager, at 313.237.3236 or [cwagner@motopera.org](mailto:cwagner@motopera.org).

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# Historic Path to a Bold Future

## *The Campaign for Michigan Opera Theatre*

Pursuant to a comprehensive strategic plan, the Board and Trustees of Michigan Opera Theatre have launched a *Historic Path to a Bold Future* campaign to invest \$50 million in exceptional artistic experiences, broad-based community initiatives, enhanced institutional efficiencies, and facilities improvement. This campaign is designed to ensure that the David DiChiera legacy thrives beyond his tenure by positioning MOT for continued artistic success and community engagement well into the future. The following individuals, businesses, and foundations have declared their initial leadership gifts to the campaign. Through May 5, 2017, nearly \$20 million has been committed.

### **\$1 Million and above**

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<sup>†</sup> = Avanti Society



# MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

## VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION

Greetings from the MOT Volunteer Association.

I have been an opera lover for many years and Michigan Opera Theatre is very important to me. Our MOTVA volunteers provide the company with a tremendous level of support. We have more than 700 members who serve as ushers, tour guides, and Boutique volunteers. Our Divas and Divos provide artist hospitality, and the Opera League and Dance Council members hold parties to celebrate moments such as opening night performances. Our members logged almost 20,000 volunteer hours last year. Bravi!!

If you are not yet a volunteer please consider joining us! Volunteering is a great way to meet other interesting and involved patrons. For membership information please view the MOTVA web page at [michiganopera.org/working-with-us/volunteer](http://michiganopera.org/working-with-us/volunteer) or call Christina Wagner at 313.237.3236. Christina would be happy to speak with you and connect you with those volunteering in support of Michigan Opera Theatre.

To those who currently support us through the gifts of your time, I offer my sincere thanks. To those reading about our volunteer program for the first time, please consider joining.



Sincerely,

Terry Shea, President, MOTVA

### MOTVA Committees, Chair(s)

Boutique, Leo Dovelle  
 Dance Films, Larry Glowczewski  
 Divas and Divos, Helen Arnoldi-Rowe  
 Opera House Tour Guides, Myrna Mazure  
 Opera League, Dodie David  
 Publicity, Annette Marchesi  
 Secretary, Nancy Moore  
 Special Events, Gwen Bowlby, Don Jensen  
 & Curtis Posuniak  
 Ushers, Kathie Booth

### Past Presidents

Steven Marlette, Dodie David, Betty Brooks,  
 Gloria Clark

# General Information

## PHOTOGRAPHY, RECORDING & COMMUNICATIONS DEVICES

Photography or recording during any performance is strictly prohibited. You are welcome to take photographs in the lobby before or after a performance and during intermission. As a courtesy to our guests, please switch all electronic devices to silent mode and refrain from using them during the performance.

## IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Doctors and parents are advised to leave their seat location (located on ticket) and our emergency number, (313) 237-3257, with their service or sitter in case of an emergency. Please observe the lighted exit signs located throughout the theater. In the event of an emergency, please remain calm and walk - do not run - to the nearest exit. Our ushers are trained to lead you out of the building safely. A trained Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) is onsite during most events. Please see an usher or staff member to contact the EMT.

## RESTROOMS

Ladies' restrooms are located off the Ford Lobby (Broadway Street entrance), down the stairs; and on the third floor (Madison Street entrance) - press "3R" on the elevator to reach this facility. Gentlemen's restrooms are located under the Grand Staircase and also on the third floor (Broadway Street side) - press "3" on the elevator to reach this facility. All third floor restrooms are wheelchair accessible. A unisex, wheelchair accessible restroom is located in the Cadillac Opera Café.

## NO SMOKING

The Detroit Opera House is a smoke-free facility.

## USHERS

Ushers are stationed at the top of each aisle. If you have a question or concern, please inform an usher, who will contact management. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer usher, please call the House Manager at (313) 237-3252.

## LOST & FOUND

Lost and Found is located in the Safety and Security Department. Please see an usher if you have misplaced an article, or call (313) 961-3500 if you have already left the theater. Items will be held in Lost and Found for 30 days.

## SERVICES

Concessions stands are located on all levels. Please note that food and drinks are not permitted in the auditorium at any time. Coat Check is located at the Guest Services desk in the Vincent Lobby (Madison Street side). Please note that the Detroit Opera House does not accept responsibility for any personal articles that are not checked at the coat check.

## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Website ..... [www.MichiganOpera.org](http://www.MichiganOpera.org)  
 EMERGENCIES ..... (313) 237-3257  
 Michigan Opera Theatre ..... (313) 961-3500  
 General Information ..... (313) 961-3500  
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 Detroit Opera House Fax ..... (313) 237-3412  
 Press and Public Relations ..... (313) 237-3403  
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# Community Programs



## TOURING ENSEMBLE

Taking opera to the community, last season the Michigan Opera Theatre Touring Ensemble presented more than 70 performances to students, seniors, and adults throughout the state of Michigan, bringing opera to over 17,000 individuals. Performances are 30-60 minutes in length and include a Q&A session with the cast immediately following the production. Our 2017-18 touring season includes a variety of performances; call today to bring opera to your community!

### Rumpelstiltskin

By David and Karen DiChiera (Grades K-6)

When a "dusty, crusty" old miller aspires to become a man of the noble court, he lies to the Prime Minister saying his daughter can spin straw into gold. But his plan backfires and his daughter is taken prisoner in the palace dungeon! With the help of a mysterious stranger, the miller's daughter escapes. She will even become queen...but everything has a price! Chock-full of twist, turns, and tricks in every scene, this magical opera is a must-see! (Subjects: English Language Arts, Social Studies, early Math, Arts Education – Visual Arts, Music, and Theater)



### La Pizza Con Funghi

By Seymour Barab (Grades 6-12 & Adult)

This spoof on Italian opera will tickle your funny bone! Voluptua is in love with Scorpio. In order to be free to marry him, she plans to poison her husband, Count Fromaggio. Her maid, Phobia, warns the count of his wife's plans and for her loyalty, she must lose her life. Eventually, of course, so must all the other members of the cast. This operatic parody is sure to keep you laughing. (Subjects: English Language Arts, Humanities, Social Studies, Arts Education – Music and Theater)



**Opera & Broadway Revues:** From the American Songbook Classics of Irving Berlin and Jerome Kern to the operatic favorites of Bizet, Puccini, and Verdi, our Opera & Broadway revues continue to delight audiences of all ages! A favorite in a variety of venues including: schools, libraries, senior living communities, theaters, and community centers.

## SUMMER PROGRAMMING

**Summer Serenade:** Michigan Opera Theatre hosts outdoor Grand Opera concerts throughout the Metro Detroit area. Recent concerts include venues such as Grand Circus Park, Campus Martius Park, and the Detroit Zoo.

**Operetta Workshop:** Students ages 13-18 learn singing, acting, healthy vocal care, and stage movement. This workshop culminates in a final performance of a Gilbert & Sullivan operetta on the Main Stage of the Michigan Opera Theatre.

**Create & Perform:** A summer program in which students ages 8-12 use improvisation to create their own unique musical drama. This program can be conducted as an in-school residency, based on any classroom curriculum.

To learn more about any of these programs visit [www.MichiganOpera.org](http://www.MichiganOpera.org).



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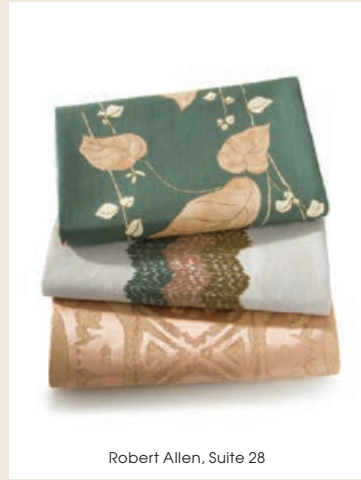


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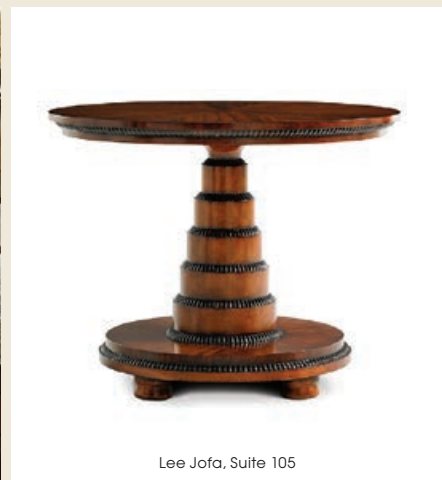
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