

FALL 2019 OPERA SEASON

BRAVO

MICHIGAN
OPERA
THEATRE

Don Giovanni
OCTOBER 19-27, 2019

Sweeney Todd
NOVEMBER 16-24, 2019



2019 Fall Opera Season
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The Official Magazine
of Michigan Opera Theatre

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Opera Season

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Welcome to the Detroit Opera House at the David DiChiera Center for the Performing Arts, and to Michigan Opera Theatre's 49th season! In keeping with our mission to create exceptional and innovative experiences, MOT's 2019-2020 season features opera classics alongside contemporary works that blur the boundaries between jazz, musical theatre and traditional art forms. This autumn, we are thrilled to present Mozart's



Don Giovanni and Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd*.

Written in 1787, Mozart's take on the Don Juan legend has withstood the test of time, exploring the best and worst of human nature with dark humor and exquisite music. This production features beautiful period costumes, designed by our *Don Giovanni* director John Pascoe.

Sweeney Todd returns to our stage after a 35-year absence from MOT's repertoire. In addition to welcoming debut performances, you will recognize several familiar faces, as the ensemble cast for *Sweeney Todd* allows us to showcase many exceptional artists who hail from right here in Southeast Michigan.

Looking forward to our winter/spring season, we are excited to present the resident artists of the MOT Studio in a regional performance of *Gianni Schicchi* and *Buoso's Ghost* at the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts. We return to the Detroit Opera House with Terence Blanchard's recent "opera in jazz" *Champion*, based on the life of welterweight boxer Emile Griffith, and will close the season with Ruggero Leoncavallo's beloved *Pagliacci* in a production that has become a favorite with MOT audiences.

In addition to the exciting presentations this season, MOT is pleased to announce the election of Ethan Davidson as Chairman of our Board of Directors and Trustees. Ethan succeeds long-term Chair R. Jamison "Rick" Williams after a remarkable 17-year tenure. In recognition of his exemplary leadership and unwavering generosity, the Detroit Opera

House stage will be named in his honor as the "R. Jamison Williams Grand Stage." On behalf of MOT, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to Rick. In addition, we look forward to welcoming Ethan to the new Board leadership team.

MOT is pleased to acknowledge the generosity of the William Davidson Foundation as our premier sponsor of the 49th season. In addition we appreciate the leading support of the Ford Motor Company as our fall sponsor, and the generosity of the many local and regional partners who make our work possible. We invite you now to relax enjoy the performance, and we hope to see you again soon at the Detroit Opera House.

Wayne S. Brown
President and CEO
Michigan Opera Theatre



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Don Giovanni

OCTOBER 19-27, 2019

MUSIC

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

LIBRETTO

Lorenzo Da Ponte

WORLD PREMIERE

Estates Theatre, Prague
Oct. 29, 1787



2019 Fall Opera Season
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Christopher Allen

DIRECTOR
John Pascoe

CHORUS MASTER
Suzanne Mallare Acton

CHOREOGRAPHER
JoAnn Cusmano

FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER
Michael Brian Ogden

SET/COSTUME DESIGN
John Pascoe

LIGHTING DESIGN
Kendall Smith

WIG & MAKEUP DESIGN
Joanne Weaver

ASST. DIRECTOR
Christopher Hazlett

REPETITEUR
Jean Schneider

STAGE MANAGER
Ken Saltzman

CAST

(In order of vocal appearance)

Leporello	Matthew Burns
Donna Anna	Ellie Dehn
Don Giovanni	Dan Okulitch
Commendatore	Ricardo Lugo
Don Ottavio	Geoffrey Agpalo
Donna Elvira	Nicole Cabell
Zerlina	Avery Boettcher*
Masetto	Allen Michael Jones*

*Michigan Opera Theatre Studio Artist

SYNOPSIS

Setting: Spain, mid-18th century

Act I

Leporello, servant to the nobleman Don Giovanni, keeps watch outside the Commendatore's home at night. Suddenly, the Commendatore's daughter, Donna Anna, rushes out, struggling with the masked Giovanni and followed by her father. The Commendatore challenges Giovanni to a duel and is killed. Giovanni and Leporello escape. Anna asks her fiancé, Don Ottavio, to avenge her father's death.

In the morning, Giovanni and Leporello encounter one of Giovanni's former conquests, Donna Elvira, who is devastated by his betrayal. Leporello tells her she is neither the first nor the last woman to fall victim to Giovanni and shows her his catalogue with the name of every woman Giovanni has seduced.

Peasants celebrate the marriage of Masetto and Zerlina. Giovanni flirts with the bride, telling her she is destined for a better life. But Elvira

urges Zerlina to flee her suitor. She also warns Anna, who is still unaware of the identity of her father's murderer and has asked Giovanni for help in finding the man. Giovanni, for his part, insists that Elvira is mad, and Anna and Ottavio wonder what to believe. As Giovanni leaves, Anna suddenly recognizes his voice as that of the murderer. Devastated but determined, she once more asks Ottavio to avenge her. He wonders how to restore her peace of mind. Giovanni, who has invited the entire wedding party to his home, looks forward to an evening of drinking and dancing.

Outside Giovanni's home, Zerlina asks Masetto to forgive her. Giovanni enters and leads them both inside. Anna, Elvira, and Ottavio appear masked and are invited in by Leporello. In the ballroom, Giovanni dances with Zerlina, then tries to drag her into the adjoining room. When she cries for help, Giovanni blames Leporello. Anna, Elvira, and Ottavio take off their masks and, along with Zerlina and Masetto, accuse Giovanni, who is momentarily surprised but manages to slip away.

Act II

Having exchanged clothes with Giovanni, Leporello takes Elvira on a nighttime walk, leaving his master free to serenade her maid. When Masetto arrives with a band of peasants to hunt down Giovanni, the disguised Don sends them off in various directions, then beats up Masetto. Zerlina finds her bruised fiancé and comforts him. Later that night, Leporello—still believed by Elvira to be Giovanni—is surprised by Anna, Ottavio, Zerlina, and Masetto, who all denounce the supposed Don. Fearing for his life, Leporello reveals his true identity before making his escape. Ottavio proclaims that he will take revenge on Giovanni and asks the others to look after Anna. Elvira thinks about Giovanni, whom she still loves in spite of everything.

In a cemetery, Giovanni and Leporello meet the statue of the Commendatore, who warns Giovanni that by morning he will laugh no longer. Giovanni forces the terrified Leporello to invite the statue to dinner. The statue accepts.

Once again, Ottavio asks Anna to marry him, but she replies that she will not until her father's death has been avenged.

Elvira arrives at Giovanni's home. She makes a last desperate attempt to persuade him to change his life, but he only laughs at her. The figure of the Commendatore enters and asks Giovanni to repent. When he boldly refuses he is consumed by flames. Elvira, Anna, Ottavio, Zerlina, Masetto and Leporello appear, contemplating their futures and the fate of an immoral man.

THE FUTURE OF OPERA AND DANCE IN DETROIT

MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

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Defining Donna Elvira: Nicole Cabell on the Strength and Humanity of One of *Don Giovanni's* Most Complex Characters

BY ERICA HOBBS

As the relentless scorned lover of Don Giovanni, some have considered Donna Elvira a mad woman.



Despite learning of Don Giovanni's thousands of conquests, murder and attempted rape, she continues her pursuit of him, convinced he will eventually change his ways and return her love.

But Nicole Cabell has a different perspective. Donna Elvira has become a signature role for the soprano, one she has performed throughout the world in Cologne, Berlin, Tokyo, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, San Sebastian, and now, Detroit.

Below she discusses her approach to her staple role and why Donna Elvira is anything but mad.

How would you describe the character and her relationship with Don Giovanni?

Donna Elvira is a noblewoman who will not take her betrayal lying down. Don Giovanni has left her in a precarious position of compromised honor after seducing her, and she is in fierce pursuit of him. She wishes to find him, convert him into an honorable man, and eventually marry him, no matter how angered she is with him in the present moment. When she does find him, she attempts to steer his other victims away from him. It is debatable whether or not this is because she wants him all to herself, or she is trying to protect them, but it's probably a little of both. She is really the only woman in the opera that truly loves him, and she believes, at least for a moment, that he is capable of change.

How do you approach portraying the role?

I believe she must be portrayed with incredible strength and ferocity. The music is written with this in mind, as it can be very militant

and angular during some of her solos. However, her music is also very soft and feminine in parts, and this reflects her dual nature. I try to play her in both respects, to simply do what the music tells me to. She is one of the more complex characters in opera and should never be played as hysterical or manic. We see her duality, her constant push and pull away from Don Giovanni, her anger coupled with pity and love and her ulterior motives dancing alongside her transparency. In actuality, she is very human.

Has the way you portrayed Donna Elvira evolved over time?

While my understanding of her has grown deeper over the years, my portrayal has stayed steadfast. Many of the productions I've been involved with have been contemporary, but even then, Donna Elvira's complex, beautiful character has not been tampered with by directors to the point of altering her motivations. I simply sing her the way she is written, which is so detailed and interesting. Don't mess with a good thing!

How do you feel about portraying the role during today's social climate? Does that affect your interpretation?

I've always played her tough, so that will not change. I know of old productions where my character (along with the other woman on stage) might be put in compromising positions on stage. These days, intimate or violent stage work has to be approached in a way that avoids the gratuitous, which is often unnecessary to get ideas across, but used to be a way of stimulating the

interest of the audience. I'm thankful for the change, and I don't believe it will affect my interpretation.

What do you hope audiences take away from Donna Elvira's story?

I think she is relatable, which is unfortunate given how badly she's been scorned. But no one can say they haven't been the victim of some bad behavior in their lives, and hopefully in this production I can portray a character that is a fighter, that reflects the (albeit doomed, in her case) beauty of perseverance and determination. Also, Donna Elvira's capacity to love even the most wicked



of men is something many can relate to. While she gives into weakness here and there, she is constantly rebounding from her abuse, and comes across as a survivor rather than a victim.

Ron Raines reigns supreme as an MOT stage favorite and the company's longest performing singer

BY LISA DICHIERA AND ERICA HOBBS

AWARD-WINNING SINGER AND ACTOR RON RAINES has become famous for many things. Some may know him from Broadway, starring as Daddy Warbucks in *Annie*, Joseph Pulitzer in *Newsies* and Billy Flynn in *Chicago*. To others, he is Alan Spaulding from *Guiding Light*, CBS's longest running daytime drama. But



Ron Raines as Pagageno, Kathleen Battle as Pamina, 1977 *Magic Flute*

at Michigan Opera Theatre (MOT), Raines is a cherished opera singer and the company's longest-running performer.

In 1975, Raines was a recent music graduate of Oklahoma City University and an apprentice with Santa Fe Opera. After auditioning with MOT Founder and General Director David DiChiera in Santa Fe, Raines was cast in the 1976 world premiere of *Washington Square*. The role marked the beginning of a close relationship with both MOT and DiChiera.

Throughout the next five decades, Raines' MOT performances would include *The Magic Flute*, *A Little Night Music*, *The Merry Widow*, *Follies*, *Show Boat* and *Side By Side*. It also featured several gala concerts, including a 1994 New Year's Eve celebration and the 1996 Detroit Opera House grand opening with Luciano Pavarotti and Joan Sutherland.

Raines said he still remembers

the day DiChiera took him to see the dilapidated building that would eventually become the Detroit Opera House.

"He dragged Nancy Dussault, Bill Hayes and me out of a *Side By Side* rehearsal at Music Hall over to the Grand Circus Theater. The place was a disaster," he said. "He assured us this

would be Detroit's new state-of-the-art opera house. It was a 'Dream the Impossible Dream' moment and, no surprise, David made it come true."

Raines returned to MOT to honor DiChiera during DiChiera's 2017 Grand Salute retirement concert. Following DiChiera's passing in September of 2018, he came back to Detroit to perform at his memorial service by special request of DiChiera's daughters.

Reflecting on his career, Raines said DiChiera was an important factor in his

success.

"He was the first to cast me in key roles that would become my repertoire," he said. "One of those roles was Ben Stone in *Follies*. Years later, I was nominated for a Tony in that role on Broadway."

This season, Raines portrays Judge Turpin in *Sweeney Todd*, his first appearance at MOT without DiChiera at the helm.



Juliet Prowse as Phyllis Stone, Ron Raines as Ben Stone - 1988 *Follies*

While *Sweeney Todd* marks Raines' first MOT performance without DiChiera at the helm, he said he and his wife have always felt at home in Detroit and as part of the DiChiera family.

"He was a mentor," he said, "but more importantly, a dear friend."



Ron Raines as Ravenal - 1990 *Show Boat*



Ron Raines - Grand Salute 2017

Ron Raines' Michigan Opera Theatre Performances

- *Washington Square* - Oct. 1976
- *The Magic Flute* - Feb. 1977
- *A Little Night Music* - Nov. 1983
- *The Merry Widow* - Oct. 1984
- *Follies* - Oct. 1988
- *Show Boat* - Nov. 1990
- *Side By Side By Sondheim* - Oct. 1992
- *The Merry Widow* - Nov. 1993
- New Year's Eve Gala - De. 1994
- *A Little Night Music* - Nov. 2009
- *DiChiera Grande Salute Concert* - May 2017

NOVEMBER 16-24, 2019

Sweeney Todd

**The Demon Barber of Fleet Street
A Musical Thriller**

Music & Lyrics by
STEPHEN SONDHEIM

Book by
HUGH WHEELER

From an Adaptation by
CHRISTOPHER BOND

Originally Directed On Broadway by
HAROLD PRING

Orchestrations by
Jonathan Tunick

Originally Produced on Broadway
by Richard Barr, Charles Woodward,
Robert Fryer, Mary Lea Johnson,
Martin Richards in Association with
Dean and Judy Mano



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CHORUS MASTER
Suzanne Mallare Acton

CHOREOGRAPHER
Sean Curran

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Eugene Lee

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Emily Rebholz

LIGHTING DESIGN
Christopher Akerlind

**WIG & MAKEUP
DESIGN**

BLOOD EFFECTS DESIGN
Brad and Louise Holoday

SOUND ENGINEER
IATSE Head Sound:
Chris Baker

Joanne Weaver
ASST. DIRECTOR
James Blasko

REPETITEUR
Jean Schneider

STAGE MANAGER
Ken Saltzman

Scenery designed by Eugene Lee,
owned by Portland Opera

Costumes are the property of
Opera Theatre of Saint Louis

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is strictly prohibited.

Sweeney Todd is presented through special
arrangement with Music Theatre International
(MTI). All authorized performance materials are
also supplied by MTI. www.MTIShows.com

CAST

(In order of appearance)

Anthony Hope.....	Nathaniel Hackmann
Sweeney Todd.....	Stephen Powell
Beggar Woman.....	Margaret Lattimore
Mrs. Lovett.....	Karen Ziemba
Judge Turpin.....	Ron Raines
Beadle.....	Scott Ramsay
Johanna.....	Amy Owens
Bird Seller.....	David Moan
Tobias Ragg.....	Kyle Knapp
Pirelli.....	John Riesen
Jonas Fogg.....	David Moan

Music Theatre International

Music Theatre International (MTI) is one of the world's leading theatrical licensing agencies, granting theatres from around the world the rights to perform the greatest selection of musicals from Broadway and beyond. Founded in 1952 by composer Frank Loesser, and orchestrator Don Walker, MTI is a driving force in advancing musical theatre as a vibrant and engaging art form.

MTI works directly with the composers, lyricists and book writers of these musicals to provide official scripts, musical materials and dynamic theatrical resources to over 70,000 professional, community and school theatres in the US and in over 60 countries worldwide.

MTI is particularly dedicated to educational theatre, and has created special collections to meet the needs of various types of performers and audiences. MTI's Broadway Junior™ shows are 30- and 60-minute musicals for performance by elementary and middle school-aged performers, while MTI's School Editions are musicals annotated for performance by high school students.

MTI maintains its global headquarters in New York City with additional offices in London (MTI Europe) and Melbourne (MTI Australasia).

SYNOPSIS

Act I

It is 1845 and Anthony, a young sailor, has arrived home to London. He is accompanied by a man he rescued drowning off the coast of Australia, Sweeney Todd. As they disembark, they are accosted by a beggar woman who alternates between begging for alms and soliciting sex, but seems to recognize Sweeney.

Anthony is thrilled to have returned to London but Sweeney is not – he tells Anthony the tale of a young barber who was sent into exile by a powerful man with designs on the barber's beautiful wife. Sweeney enters a Fleet Street pie shop, owed by the energetic Mrs. Lovett. She bemoans the hard times and the scarcity of meat. Sweeney asks about the empty apartment upstairs, and Mrs. Lovett tells him about the barber, Benjamin Barker, who was falsely accused by Judge Turpin so that the Judge could get to Barker's wife, Lucy. The Judge and Beadle Bramford then lured Lucy to the Judge's house where he tormented and raped her. Sweeney's anger confirms what Mrs. Lovett had suspected – that he is indeed Benjamin Barker.

Mrs. Lovett tells Sweeney that Lucy had poisoned herself, and that his daughter Johanna is now a ward of Judge Turpin. Mrs. Lovett returns a set of silver shaving razors to Sweeney, who vows to use them to get his

revenge.

In Judge Turpin's house, Johanna sits at a window. Anthony happens to wander by and immediately falls in love with the beautiful young woman. Threats from the Beadle only strengthen his resolve to save her.

Barber Signor Pirrelli's assistant, Tobias, hawks a miracle elixir that regrows hair. After exposing the elixir as a fraud, Sweeney challenges Pirrelli to a shaving contest, which Sweeney wins easily. Beadle Bamford, who judged the contest, is impressed. Sweeney invites him to come in for a complimentary shave.

Anthony, not knowing that Johanna is Sweeney's daughter, asks the barber for help. He intends to rescue Johanna, and wants to use the shop as a safe house. Pirelli arrives to pay Sweeney a visit. Mrs. Lovett takes Toby downstairs for a pie, and Pirelli drops his false accent and reveals that he used to be Benjamin Barker's assistant. Rather than give in to blackmail, Sweeney kills Pirelli.

Johanna is terrified because the Judge intends to marry her on Monday, but Anthony has a plan to help her escape. Meanwhile, the Beadle suggests that the Judge clean up a bit to be more attractive to Johanna, and sends him to Sweeney Todd. As the Judge tells Sweeney about his impending marriage, Sweeney shaves him, enjoying the anticipation of his revenge. But before he can slit the Judge's throat, Anthony bursts in and blurts out his plan to save Johanna. The Judge storms out, declaring that he will lock Johanna up and never come to the barber shop again. Sweeney swears to kill as many people as possible, punishing the rich and corrupt and relieving the poor from their misery. Mrs. Lovett sees an opportunity: they can dispose of the bodies by using the meat for her pies, and a new enterprise is born.

Act II

Mrs. Lovett's pie shop is now bustling, and Toby helps with customers. Sweeney has a new barber chair with custom modifications for disposing his victims. When Anthony discovers that the Judge has locked up Johanna in the asylum, he gets Sweeney to help him plan an escape. Anthony will go to the asylum

Opera v. Musical Theater: The Case for *Sweeney Todd*

BY ERICA HOBBS

pretending to be a wigmaker looking for hair from the inmates. Seeing an opportunity to lure the Judge back to his shop, Sweeney writes a letter, warning him of Anthony's plan, and that Anthony and Johanna could be captured at the barber shop.

Toby has begun to suspect that there is something awry at the pie shop, and tries to warn Mrs. Lovett. Mrs. Lovett sends him down to the bakehouse and locks him in. She returns upstairs to find the Beadle waiting; he has come to investigate the reported strange smells and smoke coming from her chimneys. Sweeney comes in and offers the Beadle his free shave. Toby is still in the basement when the Beadle's body tumbles down, and he runs off.

The asylum owner, Jonas Fogg, tries to stop Anthony from rescuing Johanna. She shoots Fogg, leaving the rest of the inmates to wander through the streets of London, as Sweeney and Mrs. Lovett search for Toby. Back at Sweeney's shop, Johanna hides to avoid the beggar woman, and Anthony goes looking for Sweeney. When Sweeney arrives and finds the beggar woman in his parlor, he slits her throat. The Judge arrives, and Sweeney lures him into the chair, reveals his true identity, then kills him. Johanna comes out of hiding and barely escapes Sweeney's knife.

Mrs. Lovett struggles with the bodies in the basement. Sweeney arrives, and in the oven's light finally recognizes the beggar woman as his long-lost wife, Lucy. For jealous love Mrs. Lovett had let Sweeney believe that Lucy was dead. Sweeney shoves Lovett into the oven.

As Sweeney holds the body of his murdered wife, Toby appears and slits Todd's throat. Johanna, Anthony, and the police arrive.

—Courtesy San Francisco Opera

One way to make opera-lovers cringe is to tell them that *The Phantom of the Opera* is their favorite opera. The show features a classical singing style, a dramatic plot and even has "opera" in its name. But Andrew Lloyd Weber's long-running favorite is, in fact, considered a musical.

Sweeney Todd is also considered a musical but one that is often performed by opera companies. The same is true for works like *West Side Story*, *Show Boat*, *A Little Night Music* and *Candide*, which MOT produced in March. So what exactly is the difference?

Some will say that operas are completely sung through while musicals feature spoken dialogue in-between songs. However, productions on both sides don't follow that rule: *Les Misérables*, *Rent* and *Hamilton* are completely sung through while operas like *Carmen*, *The Magic Flute* and *The Daughter of the Regiment* have spoken dialogue.

The reality is, the answer is not always clear. While the line is blurry, these are some primary distinctions between the two:

FOCUS

As a general rule, operas prioritize music over acting, and musicals prioritize acting and the overall story over singing.

"Both contain characters telling stories through music, whether singing, dancing, or playing an instrument," said Karen Ziemba, a Tony-nominated Broadway performer who portrays Mrs. Lovett. "However, a performer must have a large, well-trained voice with nuance to play on an opera stage. There are well-trained vocalists in musical theater too, but acting takes precedence."

Broadway and opera performer Nathaniel Hackmann, who plays Anthony Hope in MOT's *Sweeney*



Todd, said the difference between opera and musical theater even applies to the approach for auditioning.

"An opera singer knows that his/her musical pitch, tone, musicality and facility are top priorities to the ones writing the checks. If a vowel or emotion must be modified or underplayed in order to serve the music, that sacrifice is made," he said. "Likewise, a Broadway hopeful knows when walking into a musical theater audition that the producers want subtlety, contrast of emotion and truthfulness, so if a pitch or beat or vocal timbre is less than pristine, but it serves the character and story, that sacrifice is made."

While acting may reign supreme for musical theater, MOT Director of External Affairs Arthur White said the opera tends to be much more melodramatic than those of Broadway shows.

"Musicals don't typically have the drama, death and great suffering which is often the cornerstone of

Grand Opera,” he said. “Musicals are generally stories which have some conflict, but mostly end happily. Grand Operas fall typically into serious dramas which are not considered comic or in the Opera Buffa (comic opera) category.”



SINGING STYLE

The singing styles of opera and musical theater are arguably the most notable differences between the two. Opera singers are classically-trained, which often requires undergraduate and graduate degrees, private vocal coaching and apprenticeships with opera companies. In fact, the voice isn't considered to be fully matured until a singer reaches his or her later 20s or early 30s.

In modern Broadway shows, most songs are sung with the “chest voice,” the powerful “belting” also found in pop music. Chest voice is closer to the speaking register with the vibrations felt in the chest. In classical style, female singers also sing in “head voice,” the higher registers where the sound vibrations are felt in the head. The difference between the two was not always as distinct with older musicals, like *The Sound of Music*, *Carousel* and *The Music Man*, which use head voice more than contemporary Broadway shows do.

Vibrato, the pulsating change of

a pitch, is used almost continuously in opera, while musical theater singers often save vibrato for the end of a sustained note or may remove it altogether. Enunciation is also a priority for musical theater as opposed to opera, with musical quality sometimes sacrificed in order to be understood.

“The vocal range in an operatic score, whether for grand opera or intimate chamber opera, is different than the type of singing needed to perform a pop score for a contemporary musical,” Ziembra said. “Traditional musicals, however, like Rodgers & Hammerstein, Lerner & Lowe, Kurt Weill and some Sondheim, are classically-based, musically, and require some voices of operatic proportion and quality.”

While music is generally champion in opera, MOT Assistant Music Director and Chorus Master Suzanne said things are changing.

“Opera singers are being cast not only vocally but how they fit the character, and musicals have actors who are trained as legit singers too,” she said. “The two are so closely related--it's hard to define, but easier to understand when you hear it.”

AMPLIFICATION

Opera singers train for years to hone and perfect the quality of their voices, which includes learning to sing to be heard throughout an entire opera house without the assistance of a microphone. This level of projection requires full-body exertion, so much so that opera singers rarely sing more than three performances a week and almost never back-to-back.

Musical theater performers are assisted through microphone amplification, requiring less effort to project their voices throughout an entire theater. As a result, musical theater singers are typically expected to perform up to eight shows a week, including back-to-back matinee and evening performances.

Ziembra said the modern instrumentation in many musical theater shows also requires the use of amplification.

“The theatre-going public has become used to hearing voices through microphones,” she said. “The instrumentation in many

musical theater orchestras is created by electronic synthesizers which a vocalist's sound must be ‘mixed’ with instead of competing to be heard.”

LANGUAGE

While not a requirement, operas are typically performed in foreign languages while musicals are performed in English. Opera originated in Europe, which is why the classics tend to be sung in Italian, French or German. Musical theater, rather, is an American art form.

However, as opera has become popular worldwide, more and more are composed in other languages, including English. Additionally, both musicals and operas are often translated and sung in different languages than their original.

WHAT ABOUT SWEENEY TODD?

“*Sweeney* is one of those works that is certainly a crossover,” said Acton. “It has demands for specific singers that are more operatic, yet need the acting skills necessary in traditional musicals.”

White said he considers *Sweeney Todd* an opera, because it possesses a lot of death and great suffering and is quite dramatic in its writing. However, he said the in-between nature of the work is found within the music itself, especially in the difference in the characters' social classes.

While the role of Joanna sings in a high register, Mrs. Lovett belts in a cockney accent. Others, like *Sweeney Todd* himself or Adolfo Pirelli can float somewhere in-between.

“You don't have to be an opera singer to play Pirelli,” he said, “but you have to be a damn good singer.”

For Hackmann, *Sweeney Todd* offers opera and musical theater the best of both worlds.

“*Sweeney* is an unequalled work of genius in many facets,” he said. “But the marriage of the epic and sophisticated score, the gripping and macabre examination of human emotion and, most prominently, vengeance in the story, make it a worthwhile venture. It has endless challenges and delights for the performers and audiences in equal measure.”

Suzanne Mallare Acton (Chorus Master)

Suzanne Mallare Acton has received wide acclaim for her work as Chorus Master. For Michigan Opera Theatre, she has prepared over 150 productions in eight languages and has conducted 35 operas. She is also the founder and director of the Michigan Opera Theatre Children's Chorus. Guest conducting credits include productions with Dayton Opera, Augusta Opera, Artpark, Saginaw Symphony, Dearborn Symphony, Birmingham-Bloomfield Symphony and Lexington Bach Festival. In addition to her work at MOT, Acton is the artistic director of Rackham Choir and is the conductor of the Detroit holiday favorite, *Too Hot To Handel*, a work she also premiered in Chicago at The Auditorium Theatre and in Memphis at the Orpheum Theatre.



Geoffrey Agpalo (Don Ottavio, Don Giovanni)

Following his portrayal of Jim Casy in Michigan Opera Theatre's spring production of *The Grapes of Wrath*, Geoffrey Agpalo returns to Detroit, making his role debut as Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*. He recently performed Tamino in *The Magic Flute* with Opera Maine and is a frequent performer with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, where he has performed in *La Traviata*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Emmeline* and the world premiere of *Shalimar the Clown*, where he created the role of Copinath. He has also performed in the *The Cousin from Nowhere* and *The Land of Smiles* with Chicago Folks Operetta and *The Merry Widow*, *The Consul*, *The Barber of Seville* and *The Ghosts of Versailles* while at Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music. He is a recipient of the The William Matheus Sullivan Musical Foundation Career Grant. He has performed as a soloist in the Verdi Requiem, Beethoven's 9th Symphony, Bach's Mass in B Minor and Medelssohn's Lobgesang.



Christopher Akerlind (Lighting Designer, Sweeney Todd)

Christopher Akerlind is an American lighting designer for theatre, opera and dance and has designed for more than 650 productions around the world. He won the Tony Award for Best Lighting Design and the Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Lighting Design for *Light in the Piazza* and an Obie Award for sustained excellence for his work Off-Broadway. He is noted for his work for director Lloyd Richards on the first productions of the plays of August Wilson, including *The Piano Lesson* and *Seven Guitars*. He was the Resident Lighting Designer for 12 at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Akerlind was Head of Lighting Design and Director of the Design & Production Programs at the CalArts School of Theater. He was also a Visiting Associate Professor and Director of Production at the University of Southern California School of the Theatre (now the School of Dramatic Arts) and has guest taught at New York University, the University of Connecticut, Yale and for the Broadway Lighting Master Classes. He attended Boston University and the Yale School of Drama.



Christopher Allen (Conductor, Don Giovanni)

Recipient of the 2017 Sir Georg Solti Conducting Award, Christopher Allen is featured in Opera News as "one of the fastest-rising podium stars in North America." He has led acclaimed performances with the Atlanta Symphony, Los Angeles Opera, Opera Philadelphia, English National Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Washington National Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Atlanta Opera, and Daegu Opera House in South Korea. As The John L. Magro Resident Conductor for Cincinnati Opera, Allen has joined the company for three consecutive



seasons, in addition to leading the Cincinnati Symphony in the annual Washington Park Concert each summer. In the 2019/20 season, Maestro Allen returns to Florida Grand Opera and Michigan Opera Theatre to conduct *Don Giovanni*. He makes conducting debuts at Arizona Opera in *La bohème*, Opera Omaha's One Festival in *I Capuleti e I Montecchi* and with Opéra de Montréal for Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. In the spring, he tours the United States as Music Director of the Bel Canto Trio, followed by a return to Cincinnati Opera for *Aida* in their 100th Anniversary Season.

Avery Boettcher* (Zerlina, Don Giovanni)

Avery Boettcher is the resident soprano of the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio. She has performed a wide array of roles both in the United States and abroad, ranging from Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* with La Musica Lirica in Italy to the lighter operetta and musical theater roles of Yum-Yum in *The Mikado* with Viterbo University. She recently performed the role of the Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Aspen Music Festival as well as Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* at Indiana University Opera Theater and Zweite Dame in *The Magic Flute* with the Indianapolis City Orchestra. Prior to MOT, Boettcher was an opera fellow in the Aspen Music Festival where she performed John Harbison's "Mirabai Songs" with the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, as well as Mahler's "Symphony No. 4" with the Aspen Conductors Orchestra. In addition to Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, she will sing the role of Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi* and *Buoso's Ghost* with MOT this season.



Matthew Burns (Leporello, Don Giovanni)

Bass-baritone Matthew Burns returns to the Detroit Opera House following his Michigan Opera Theatre debut as Dr. Bartolo in 2017's production of *The Marriage*



of *Figaro*. A master interpreter of comedic roles, Burns is highly sought-after as Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, which he has performed with Utah Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, Opera Memphis, Opera Cleveland and Opera Omaha. He is also well-known for his performances of Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville* (Dayton Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Sarasota Opera) and Figaro in *The Marriage of Figaro* (Virginia Opera, Opera Grand Rapids). He has recently performed Suplice in *The Daughter of the Regiment* with Opera Carolina, Dulcamara in *The Elixir of Love* with Virginia Opera, Dr. Bartolo in *The Barber of Seville* with Opera Roanoke and Dansker in *Billy Budd* with Central City Opera. Future seasons will see him join the Metropolitan Opera roster for productions of *Manon* and *The Magic Flute* and return to Opera Omaha as Lorenzo in *The Capulets and The Montagues*.

Nicole Cabell (Donna Elvira, Don Giovanni)

Lyric soprano Nicole Cabell returns to Michigan Opera Theatre as Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*. Her previous MOT credits include Countess Almaviva in 2017's *The Marriage of Figaro*, 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, and her recent release, *Mademoiselle: Première Audience*, was nominated for a Grammy award. Recent engagements include her Bess in the award-winning production of *Porgy and Bess* with the English National Opera, Mimi with Pittsburgh Opera, Violetta with the Minnesota Opera and *Romeo and Juliet* with the Cincinnati Opera. Cabell's 2019-20 season includes performances of *Gloria* with the Boston Symphony and *Mater Gloriosa* in Mahler's *Symphony No. 8* with the Atlanta Symphony. Future engagements include debuts at the Theater an der Wien and with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.



Sean Curran (Choreographer, Sweeney Todd)

Sean Curran began his training with traditional Irish step dancing as a child in Boston and went on to perform with the Bill T. Jones/ Arnie Zane Dance Company (1983-1993) and in the original cast of *STOMP!* (1994-1998). Since 1997, Sean Curran Company



has toured Curran's contemporary dance work internationally, including performances at Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Joyce Theater and Dance Theater Workshop. Artistic excellence has been recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Dance Project, New Music USA, the NYC Dance & Performance "Bessie" awards and others. A graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, Curran currently serves as Chair of the Department of Dance. A

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sought-after choreographer/director for opera and theater, notable productions include *Salome* (Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, San Francisco Opera, Opera Montreal, San Diego Opera); *Much Ado About Nothing*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare Theater); *Shalimar the Clown*, *Ariadne on Naxos*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *Nixon in China*, *Champion*, *27*, and *Daughter of the Regiment* (Opera Theater of Saint Louis), among others.

JoAnn Cusmano (Choreographer, *Don Giovanni*)

JoAnn Cusmano has enjoyed a long and diverse career as an accomplished academic and arts administrator and as a professional choreographer and dancer. She has worked with Michigan Opera Theatre in numerous capacities since 1975. She choreographed



productions of *La Traviata* and *Falstaff* and danced in *Rigoletto*, *Die Fledermaus*, *The Merry Widow*, *El Capitan* and *Seven Deadly Sins* at MOT. She also performed the ballet roles of Lady Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*, the nurse in *Sleeping Beauty* and various roles in *The Nutcracker* with MOT. Since 2000, she has been the Children's Rehearsal Director for MOT's production of *The Nutcracker* working with the Joffrey Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet Company, Ballet International, BalletMet and the Grand Rapids Ballet Company. She has also served as the local Rehearsal Director for American Ballet Theatre's production of *The Sleeping Beauty* at the Detroit Opera House. In addition to her work with MOT, Cusmano performed with Detroit City Ballet Company, Michigan Ballet Theatre, Dance Detroit, Max Davey Singers and Dancers, University of Detroit Theatre, Macomb College Barn Theatre and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

Ron Daniels (Director, *Sweeney Todd*)

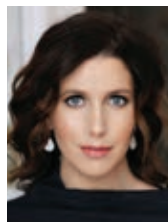
Following 2016's *Carmen*, Ron Daniels returns to Michigan Opera Theatre to direct *Sweeney Todd*. The Brazilian director's recent productions include the world premieres *Il Postino*,

featuring Plácido Domingo, for the LA Opera, which was then seen in Paris, Vienna, Madrid, Mexico City and Santiago de Chile, as well as *Charlie Parker's Yardbird* for Opera Philadelphia, which was also performed at the Apollo Theatre, Madison Opera, the Chicago Lyric Opera and the English National Opera. Other productions include *Morning Star* for the Cincinnati Opera, *Carmen* for the LA Opera, *Don Giovanni* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* for the Santa Fe Opera and *Sweeney Todd*, *Pagliacci*, *Il Tabarro*, *La bohème* and *Orfeo and Euridice* for the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. In the summer of 2018 he directed a revival of his production of *Madama Butterfly* for the Kansas City Opera, 21 years after its premiere in San Francisco. Daniels is an Honorary Associate Director of Royal Shakespeare Company and a former Artistic Director of the RSC's The Other Place Theatre.



Ellie Dehn (Donna Anna, *Don Giovanni*)

American soprano Ellie Dehn makes her Michigan Opera Theatre debut as Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*. She has performed in many of the world's finest opera houses and orchestras, including the Metropolitan Opera, Teatro alla Scala, Royal Opera House, Bayerische Staatsoper, San Francisco Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Houston Grand Opera, San Diego Opera and the opera houses of Geneva, Rome and Bologna. Dehn specializes in works by Mozart, with signature roles including the Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro* and Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, in addition to Donna Anna. Recent career highlights include the title role in *Manon* with San Francisco Opera, the Countess in *Figaro Gets a Divorce* with Grand Théâtre de Genève, Mrs. Naidoo in *Satyagraha* with the Metropolitan Opera and Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* with Teatro alla Scala. This season, she performs Mimi in *La bohème* with Arizona Opera and debuts Boston's Odyssey Opera for concert performances of Catherine of Aragon in *Henry VIII*.



Rob Fisher (Conductor, *Sweeney Todd*)

Rob Fisher is an internationally-recognized music director, conductor and pianist and a leading figure in American music and musical theatre. He has been a guest of virtually every major orchestra in the country as a conductor or pianist. Fisher is currently represented on Broadway as the score supervisor and arranger for *An American in Paris* (Grammy nomination). Additionally, he is represented as the music supervisor and arranger for *Chicago*, which recently celebrated 20 years on Broadway. He was the founding music director and conductor of Encores! at New York City Center until 2005, a series that earned a 2000 Tony Award. Fisher was awarded the Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Special Achievement in 1997 for his work on Encores!, and he conducted the series' Grammy Award-winning *Chicago* cast album. Last season, Fisher served as music supervisor of the Tony-winning Broadway revival of *Anything Goes*, and in April of 2012, he conducted a one-night gala performance of *The Sound of Music* at Carnegie Hall. Fisher has been the producer/music director of Lincoln Center's American Songbook Series' tributes to Gershwin, Porter and Bernstein. Recent collaborations have included performances with such artists as Kristin Chenoweth, Kelli O'Hara, Idina Menzel and David Hyde Pierce.



Nathaniel Hackmann (Anthony Hope, *Sweeney Todd*)

Central Michigan University graduate Nathaniel Hackmann has emerged as a singer and actor of international renown. He has been seen on stage in some of the repertoire's most demanding roles with many of the world's greatest orchestras and companies. He has portrayed Jean Valjean and Javert on Broadway in *Les Misérables* as well as the titular roles in *Jekyll and Hyde* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. For the BBC Proms he



appeared as Curly with John Wilson Orchestra in the acclaimed production of *Oklahoma!* As a member of the Merola Opera Program at San Francisco Opera, Hackmann appeared as Raul in the world premiere of *The Hotel Casablanca*. He has also appeared with such companies as Hong Kong Philharmonic, Opera Theater of Saint Louis, Virginia Opera and Sun Valley Opera.

Brad and Louise Holoday (Blood Effects Design, *Sweeney Todd*)

Brad and Louise Holoday are excited to provide the special blood effects for *Sweeney Todd*. They also created the customized foam latex prosthetics for Michigan Opera Theatre's 2017 production of *Cyrano*. Additional local special effects design includes *Dracula*, *Into the Woods*, *Frankenstein*, *Wit*, *Arsenic and Old Lace* and *The Addams Family*. Louise Holoday is an accomplished makeup artist with experience in theatre, television and film. Brad Holoday is an experienced special effects and makeup artist that enjoys making and teaching the practical effects for theatre. They are a husband and wife team of over 30 years that enjoy working together in the local theatre community. They are avid bikers in the summer and switch to skiing in the winter months.



Allen Michael Jones* (Masetto, *Don Giovanni*)

Atlanta native Allen Michael Jones is the resident bass of the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio. He recently performed Maximilian in *Candide*, Balthazar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and Zaretsky in *Eugene Onegin* with MOT. Previous roles include Don Bartolo in *The Marriage of Figaro* with the University of Georgia, Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*, Colline in *La bohème* with Georgia State University (GSU) and Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville* with both GSU and Atlanta Opera's Touring Company. He holds a master's degree in Voice from Georgia State



University and is also a professional voice-over and radio artist. This season, he will perform Masetto in *Don Giovanni* and Betto di Signa in *Gianni Schicchi*/*Buoso's Ghost* with MOT.

Kyle Knapp (Tobias Ragg, *Sweeney Todd*)

Tenor Kyle Knapp is a singer, composer and pianist. His performances include Flute in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Tobias in *Sweeney Todd* and Count Almaviva with *Opera Theatre of Saint Louis*, the title role in *Jason and the Argonauts* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, *The Scarlett Letter* with Opera Colorado and *Cinderella* with the *New Jersey Festival Orchestra*. He has also performed with Palm Beach Opera, Pennsicola Opera, the Crested Butte Music festival and Ohio Light Opera and has sung concerts at Carnegie Hall, with the Finger Lakes Choral Festival and with the New Jersey Festival Orchestra. His recordings include John Philip Sousa's *El Capitan* and Victor Herbert's *The Only Girl*, as well as Gilbert & Sullivan's *Patience* and *Mikado* with Albany Records. He also sung a recording with Lori Laitman's *The Scarlet Letter* with Naxos Records.



Margaret Lattimore (Beggar Woman, *Sweeney Todd*)

This season, Grammy-nominated mezzo-soprano Margaret Lattimore performs the role of the Beggar Woman in *Sweeney Todd* with Michigan Opera Theatre. Shortly after her engagement in Detroit, Lattimore will perform the role of Aunt Hannah in *Emmeline* with Tulsa Opera. Career highlights include the role of Mrs. Patrick Derocher in *Dead Man Walking*, Praskowia in *The Merry Widow*, Mother Goose in *The Rake's Progress*, and the mezzo-soprano solo in Verdi's *Requiem* and Rossini's *Le comte Ory*. Lattimore has been a house favorite at The Metropolitan Opera after winning the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions at the age of 24. Additional



awards include the Eleanor McCollum Award from the Houston Grand Opera Studio, a Jacobson Study Grant from the Richard Tucker Foundation and the prestigious Vienna Award from the George London Foundation. Lattimore was also a member of the Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.

Eugene Lee (Set Design, *Sweeney Todd*)

Eugene Lee has designed sets and productions ranging from Broadway to film to television. On Broadway, he won a Tony award for his work on *Sweeney Todd*, *Candide* and *Wicked*. His Broadway work also includes *Bright Star*, *Ragtime* and *Show Boat*. His film credits include *Hammett*, *Mr. North*, *Malle's Vanya on 42nd Street* and *A Master Builder*. On TV he is the production designer of *Saturday Night Live*, *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon* and *Late Night with Seth Meyers*. In addition to his Tony awards, Lee has received the American Theatre Wing's Design Award, Outer Critics' Circle Award, Drama Desk Award, Lucille Lortel Award, Elliot Norton Award for Sustained Achievement and Pell Award and is a recent inductee into the New York Theater Hall of Fame. He is the resident designer of the Trinity Repertory Company and a resident artist at Long Wharf Theatre.



Ricardo Lugo (Commendatore, *Don Giovanni*)

Puerto Rican bass Ricardo Lugo returns to Michigan Opera Theatre as Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* after previous roles in MOT's *Silent Night*, *A View from the Bridge*, *Turandot* and *Fidelio*. Having made his Metropolitan Opera debut as Un Barnabotto in *La Gioconda*, Lugo has since been involved in multiple productions with the company including *The Nose*, *Otello*, *Tannhäuser*, *Tosca*, *Turandot*, *Manon Lescaut*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Ariadne on Naxos*, *The Khovansky Affair*,



Billy Budd, The Girl of the Golden West, Adriana Lecouvreur, Macbeth, The Gambler, The Magic Flute and *Salome*. Additional roles include Dulcamara in *The Elixir of Love* with Opera Memphis, Mr. Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* with Boston Midsummer Opera and the Sacristan in *Tosca* and Bartolo in *The Marriage of Figaro* with Sarasota Opera. This season he will perform Beethoven's *Mass* with the Phoenix Symphony, Il Pedone in *La Wally* with Sarasota Opera and return to the Metropolitan Opera for *Tosca*.

David Moan (Jonas Fogg, Bird Seller, Sweeney Todd)

David Moan returns to Michigan Opera Theatre following his performance of Martin in *Candide* last spring. Originally from Pittsburgh, Moan received a bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance from Manchester University where he currently serves as Instructor of Diction. Previously, Moan has performed with MOT as Edward G. Robinson and a Calveras in *Frida*, Mike in *A View from the Bridge* and St. Brioche in *The Merry Widow*. He also performed the title role in the MOT Touring Company's production of *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and he is a frequent performer with the MOT Chorus. Other notable local credits include John Wilkes Booth in *Assassins* (Wilde Award Winner) and *Sweeney Todd* in *Sweeney Todd* (Wilde Award Nominated) at the Encore Musical Theatre Company, Cinderella's Prince/Wolf in *Into The Woods* at The Ringwald Theatre and God/Himself in an *Act of God* at The Dio Theatre.



Michael Brian Ogden (Fight Choreographer, Don Giovanni)

Michael Brian Ogden is a performer and a playwright. He is a member of the Society of American Fight Directors and holds his Master of Fine Arts degree in Acting from the Hilberry Theatre at Wayne State University a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre from Western Michigan University. He has been an Artist and Playwright in



Residence for Jeff Daniels' *The Purple Rose Theatre Company* in Chelsea, writing *Corktown* and *Bleeding Red* for the theater as well as performing in *Our Town*, *Bleeding Red*, *Apartment 3A* and *Growing Pretty*. Other credits include performances the Royal Shakespeare Company, Moscow Art Theatre and Tipping Point Theatre.

Daniel Okulitch (Don Giovanni, Don Giovanni)

Canadian bass-baritone Daniel Okulitch is a leading interpreter of Mozart roles, most notably Don Giovanni, Count Almaviva and Figaro, which he has performed at New York City Opera, Teatro Colón, Los Angeles Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Opera Warsaw, Vancouver Opera and Dallas Opera. Okulitch also excels in creating leading roles in contemporary opera, including Ennis del Mar in *Brokeback Mountain* at Teatro Real; Seth Brundle in *The Fly* at Théâtre du Châtelet and Los Angeles Opera; Willy Wonka in *The Golden Ticket* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and Atlanta Opera; Lyndon B. Johnson in *JFK* at Fort Worth Opera and Herman Broder in *Enemies, A Love Story* at Palm Beach Opera. Future engagements include his Tokyo debut as Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, his Liceu Opera Barcelona debut and a return to Theatre du Chatelet in *Lessons in Love and Violence*. His first solo recording, *The New American Art Song*, was released on GPR Records in 2011.



Amy Owens (Johanna, Sweeney Todd)

Amy Owens enjoys a diverse career in concert work, opera, new music, alternative pop and jazz. She has appeared in concert in venues ranging from Wolf Trap to Carnegie Hall with renowned orchestras across the United States, including the National Symphony Orchestra, Utah Symphony, Omaha Symphony, Virginia Symphony and Buffalo Philharmonic. Her operatic engagements have taken her to Santa Fe Opera, Houston Grand Opera



and Dallas Opera, and she appears regularly with the New York Festival of Song. Her debut album of original music, HAETHOR, was released last year to acclaim in the electronica world, and she recently released an album of Leonard Bernstein songs, including previously unrecorded pieces, with pianist Michael Barrett. She performed at the 50th annual New Orleans Jazz Fest with the renowned musician Glen David Andrews, and as a budding conductor, she was selected to audit in the Hart Institute for Women Conductors at Dallas Opera and the International Conducting Workshop Festival in Bulgaria. She has received awards from the Sullivan Foundation, the George London Foundation, the Jensen Foundation and the Metropolitan Opera National Council.

John Pascoe (Director, Set and Costume Design, Don Giovanni)

Don Giovanni director and production designer John Pascoe celebrates the 40th anniversary of his career in opera this fall. He made his professional debut with his 1979 production of *Julius Caesar* at English National Opera, which was later presented by the Metropolitan Opera. He had a close relationship with Michigan Opera Theatre's late founder David DiChiera, for whom he created multiple productions including *Anna Bolena*, *Norma*, *Don Giovanni*, *Don Pasquale* and *Fidelio*, as well as DiChiera's own opera, *Cyrano*. Internationally, Pascoe's productions have been presented at London's Royal Opera House, Rome's Teatro dell'Opera, the United States and Italy's Spoleto Festivals, Australia's Sydney Opera House and Canada's Toronto, Ottawa & Quebec opera companies. His productions have also appeared with opera companies throughout the United States in Chicago, San Francisco, Washington, Los Angeles, Dallas and Houston. Throughout his career many of operas most luminous figures have specifically requested that Pascoe create their productions, including Joan Sutherland, Renée Fleming, Plácido Domingo, Gian Carlo Menotti and Vittorio Grigolo.



DVDs featuring Pascoe's work include *Julius Caesar*, (1980 English National Opera), *Lucrezia Borgia* (1980 Royal Opera House), *Anna Bolena*, (1984 Canadian Opera), the award-winning *Ercole su' l Termodonte*, (2006 Spoleto Festival) *Ariodante* (2007 Spoleto Festival) and *Lucrezia Borgia* (San Francisco 2013). Pascoe dedicates this production of *Don Giovanni* to DiChiera.

Stephen Powell (Sweeney Todd, Sweeney Todd)

The dynamic American baritone Stephen Powell brings his handsome voice, elegant musicianship and robust stage presence to a wide range of music,



from Monteverdi and Handel through Verdi and Puccini to Sondheim and John Adams. The Wall Street Journal has lauded his "rich, lyric baritone, commanding presence, and thoughtful musicianship." Powell has previously sung with Michigan Opera Theatre in the title role of *Macbeth*, Germont in *La Traviata*, and Count Almaviva in *The Marriage of Figaro*. He also performed as part of the Grand Salute tribute concert for MOT Founder David DiChiera. Known for his performances of the title roles of *Rigoletto* and *Simon Boccanegra*, and Scarpia in *Tosca*, Powell has sung leading roles with San Francisco Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Minnesota Opera, San Diego Opera, Seattle Opera and Cincinnati Opera, and has appeared as a soloist with the orchestras of Philadelphia, Boston, Atlanta, Baltimore, Houston, Minnesota, Dallas, Detroit and Zürich.

Ron Raines (Judge Turpin, Sweeney Todd)

Ron Raines is an award-winning singer and actor who has performed all over the world on both stage and television.



His Broadway credits include starring roles as Daddy Warbucks in *Annie*, Joseph Pulitzer in *Newsies*, Billy Flynn in *Chicago*, Gaylord Ravenal in *Show Boat*, Nick Longworth in *Teddy & Alice* and Benjamin Stone in *Follies*, for which he

was nominated for both a Tony and Grammy in 2012. Other Broadway credits include roles in *A Little Night Music*, *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, *Can Can*, *South Pacific*, *Rose Marie*, *Oklahoma!*, *Carousel*, *Side by Side by Sondheim*, *Guys and Dolls* and *Man of La Mancha*. He has been a soloist with over 60 major American and international orchestras, including the Boston Pops, the Philly Pops, the BBC Concert Orchestra, the

Jerusalem Symphony and the Israel Philharmonic. He has also performed at Carnegie Hall, Tanglewood and London's Palladium. His TV works includes his Emmy-nominated portrayal of Alan Spaulding on CBS's longest running daytime drama *Guiding Light*. He has also appeared on CBS primetime in *Elementary*, *Person of Interest* and *The Good Wife*.

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Scott Ramsay (Beadle, *Sweeney Todd*)

Following tenor Scott Ramsay's portrayal of Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Lyric Opera of Chicago, the critic of the Chicago Sun-Times proclaimed, "He brought a passionate intensity to the role that matched the fire of Dessay's riveting Lucia." Of his Verdi's Requiem with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the critic of Toronto Globe & Mail declared, "He proved a real find. His *Ingemisco*, *Hostias* and solo in the *Lux Aeterna*, had a sweetness and modest purity reminiscent of vintage Bjoerling and Simoneau." *Sweeney Todd* is Ramsay's debut with Michigan Opera Theatre. His past performances in Detroit include Narraboth in *Salome* and *Dum Dee Tweedle* with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Other highlights include performances with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Virginia Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, Long Beach Opera, Portland Opera, Madison Opera, Pacific Symphony, Jacksonville Symphony and West Virginia Symphony.



Jonathan Riesen (Pirelli, *Sweeney Todd*)

Hailed as "impassioned...and vibrant" by Opera Today, award-winning American tenor John Riesen is consistently impressing audiences in the world of opera with his "fantastic, powerful voice" (Texarkana Gazette). Recent roles include Alfredo in *La Traviata* (Gulfshore Opera, Tri-Cities Opera), Younger Thompson in *Glory Denied* (Opera Birmingham, Des Moines Metro Opera), *Candide* in *Candide* (Chautauqua Opera), Tony in *West Side Story* (Central City Opera/Boulder Philharmonic), Tony in the *West Side Story Suite* (New York City Ballet), Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* (Pensacola Opera), Frederic in *The Pirates of Penzance* (Opera Ithaca) and Rodolfo in *La bohème* (Shreveport



Opera). In 2019, he will be performing across the United States in roles including Lensky in *Eugene Onegin* (Intermountain Opera Bozeman), Prince Charmant in *Cendrillon* (Opera Company of Middlebury and Opera Birmingham) and Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* (Brevard Music Festival guest artist) as well as appearing in concert with Berkshire Opera Festival.

Emily Rebholz (Costume Design, *Sweeney Todd*)

Costume designer and stylist Emily Rebholz has created costumes for opera and musical theater productions throughout the country. Her opera credits include *Don Giovanni*, *Pagliacci*, *La bohème* and *Il Tabarro*. Additional theater credits include *Dear Evan Hansen*, *If/Then*, *Into the Woods*, *Othello*, *The Tempest*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *The Last Five Years* and *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*, among numerous others both on and off Broadway. Rebholz's goal is to understand people through the observation of what they wear and to help tell their stories through the language of clothing. Her inspirations range of travel destinations throughout the world, including Paris, Italy and India, as well as places closer to home, including the NYC Subway, Upstate New York, The Dutchess County Fair and her favorite magazine and tobacco shop.



Kendall Smith (Lighting Design, *Don Giovanni*)

As Resident Designer for Michigan Opera Theatre for the past 30 years, *Don Giovanni* marks Kendall Smith's 75th opera with the company. Regional Opera companies include Florida Grand Opera, San Diego Opera, Minnesota Opera, Kentucky Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City and Virginia Opera. Ballet companies include Royal New Zealand Ballet and Queensland Ballet. Theatre credits include Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Walnut Street, GEVA Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Alabama Shakespeare, Weston Playhouse,



Syracuse Stage and North Shore Music Theatre.

Stephen Sondheim (Music and lyrics, *Sweeney Todd*)

Stephen Sondheim wrote the music and lyrics for *Saturday Night* (1954), *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1962), *Anyone Can Whistle* (1964), *Company* (1970), *Follies* (1971), *A Little Night Music* (1973), *The Frogs* (1974), *Pacific Overtures* (1976), *Sweeney Todd* (1979), *Merrily We Roll Along* (1981), *Sunday in the Park with George* (1984), *Into the Woods* (1987), *Assassins* (1991), *Passion* (1994) and *Road Show* (2008) as well as lyrics for *West Side Story* (1957), *Cypsy* (1959) and *Do I Hear a Waltz?* (1965) and additional lyrics for *Candide* (1973). Anthologies of his work include *Side by Side by Sondheim* (1976), *Marry Me a Little* (1981), *You're Gonna Love Tomorrow* (1983), *Putting it Together* (1993/99) and *Sondheim on Sondheim* (2010). He composed the scores of the films *Stavisky* (1974) and *Reds* (1981) and songs for *Dick Tracy* (1990) and the television production *Evening Primrose* (1966). His collected lyrics with attendant essays have been published in two volumes: *Finishing the Hat* (2010) and *Look, I Made a Hat* (2011). In 2010 the Broadway theater formerly known as Henry Miller's theatre was renamed in his honor.



Joanne Middleton Weaver (Wig and Make-up Design, *Don Giovanni, Sweeney Todd*)

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. Weaver has since designed at many opera companies throughout the United States, 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.

Hugh Wheeler (Book, Sweeney Todd)

Hugh Wheeler was a novelist, playwright and screen writer. He wrote more than 30 mystery novels under the pseudonyms Q. Patrick and Patrick Quentin, and four of his novels were transformed into films: *Black Widow, Man in the Net, The Green-Eyed Monster* and *The Man with Two Wives*. For films, he wrote the screenplays for *Travels with My Aunt, Something for Everyone, A Little Night Music* and *Nijinsky*. His plays include *Big Fish, Little Fish* (1961), *Look: We've Come Through* (1961) and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (1966, adapted from the Shirley Jackson novel), he co-authored with Joseph Stein the book for a new production of the



1919 musical *Irene* (1973), wrote the books for *A Little Night Music* (1973), a new production of *Candide* (1973), *Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (1979, based on a version of the play by Christopher Bond), and *Meet Me in St. Louis* (adapted from the 1949 M-G-M musical), contributed additional material for the musical *Pacific Overtures* (1976), and wrote a new adaptation of the Kurt Weill opera *Silverlake*, which was directed by Harold Prince at the New York Opera. He received Tony and Drama Desk Awards for *A Little Night Music, Candide* and *Sweeney Todd*. Prior to his death in 1987 Mr. Wheeler was working on two new musicals, *Bodo and Fu Manchu*, and a new adaptation of *The Merry Widow*.

Karen Ziemba (Mrs. Lovett, Sweeney Todd)

Karen Ziemba is thrilled to be making her Michigan Opera Theatre debut as Mrs. Lovett in *Sweeney Todd*. She is a proud Michigander, born in St.

Joseph and later attended middle and high school in Farmington Hills. She has appeared in 10 Broadway shows, including *A Chorus Line, 42nd Street* and *Chicago*, and is a four-time Tony Award nominee. She received the Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle awards for her performance in *Contact* at Lincoln Center Theatre. She has also starred with The New York City Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, The Boston Pops, Encores! at City Center and in PBS' Great Performances in "My Favorite Broadway: The Leading Ladies", "Ira Gershwin at 100 - A Celebration at Carnegie Hall" and "Sondheim: A Celebration at Carnegie Hall". Her TV credits include roles on *Law & Order, The Good Wife, Madam Secretary, Scrubs* and *Elementary*.



The Katherine McGregor Dessert Parlor

...at The Whitney.

Named after David Whitney's daughter, Katherine Whitney McGregor, our intimate dessert parlor on the Mansion's third floor features a variety of decadent cakes, tortes, and miniature desserts.

The menu also includes chef-prepared specialties, pies, and "Drinkable Desserts." Don't miss the amazing flaming dessert station featuring Bananas Foster and Cherries Jubilee.



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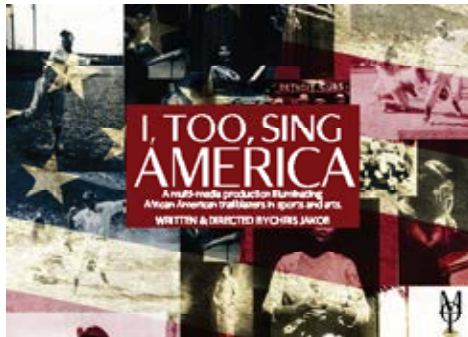
TOURING ENSEMBLE

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 2019-20 touring season includes a variety of performances; call today to bring opera to your community!

I, Too, Sing America

By Chris Jakob with poetry by Jessica Care Moore
(Grades 6-12)

This new multi-media performance incorporates video, live song, narrative and poetry to highlight the stories and achievements of African American artists and athletes who defied limitations and paved the way for integration in their fields. (Subjects: American History, Humanities, English Language Arts, Arts Education- Music and Theatre.)

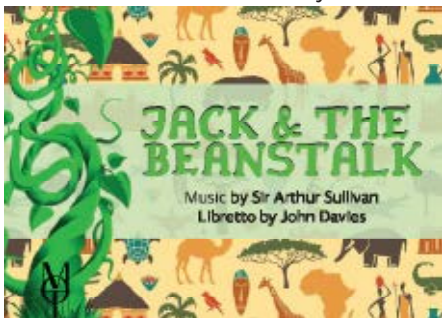


Jack and the Beanstalk

Arranged by John Davies with compositions by Sir Arthur Sullivan
(Grades K-6)

When Jack sells the family cow to a mysterious man for a handful of beans, he has no idea what kind of adventure awaits him! When the beans take root, and a magical stalk grows to the sky, Jack will discover a land of giants, a golden hen and an important lesson about treating other people with kindness. MOT's new production sets the story in the ancient West African Mali

Empire and tells the tale through music from the operettas of Sir Arthur Sullivan. This new twist on an old favorite is a must-see for children of all ages! (Subjects: English Language Arts, Social Studies, early Math, Arts Education – Visual Arts, 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, the Grosse Pointe War Memorial, and the Detroit Zoo.

Learning at the Opera House: July 2020

Students ages 8-18 work with professional singers, directors, choreographers and writers to explore and strengthen skills in singing, acting, writing, composition, healthy vocal care and stage movement. All programs culminate in a final performance at the Detroit Opera House.

To learn more about any of these programs e-mail ascobie@motopera.org.



From left to right: Darren Lekeith Drone, Edward Graves, Avery Boettcher, Katherine DeYoung and Allen Michael Jones.

Michigan Opera Theatre Studio Overview

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 from MOT's Director of Resident Artist Programs, renowned American tenor Richard Leech, Principal Coach/Accompanist Michael Sherman 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 specifically for the Studio Program. Studio Artists filled lead and featured roles in Leonard Bernstein's *Candide* last season, Ricky Ian Gordon's *27* in 2018, Mark Adamo's *Little Women* in 2017 and *The Tender Land* in 2016. They will present a double bill of Giacomo Puccini's *Gianni Schicci* and Michael Ching's *Buoso's Ghost* Feb. 29-March 1. Through these productions, MOT fulfills its community initiative to produce a full-scale opera annually in venues throughout Metro Detroit.

"The Michigan Opera Theatre Studio serves as a central component of MOT's enhanced presence in the community. The Studio Artists benefit from the guidance of some of the leading coaches in the opera industry."

– Wayne S. Brown,
President and CEO of
Michigan Opera Theatre

RICHARD LEECH

Director of Resident Artist Programs

American tenor Richard Leech is one of the most celebrated tenors of his generation. From the Met to Vienna, and Carnegie Hall to the Hollywood Bowl, for more than three decades he has made his home on the stages of the world's great opera houses and symphonies. In addition to singing, he is also a professor of voice and opera with Rutgers University. His leadership role with the MOT Studio allows Mr. Leech to utilize all aspects of his broad experience as he oversees the development of some of opera's most exciting emerging artists and brings their performances to our stage and into our community.



2019-20 Michigan Opera Theatre Studio Artists

Avery Boettcher - soprano

Katherine DeYoung - mezzo-soprano

Edward Graves - tenor

Darren Lekeith Drone - baritone

Allen Michael Jones - bass

PROFILES FROM THE PIT



Molly Hughes

Molly Hughes has a unique position in the Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra. She is both a violinist and the Orchestra Personnel Manager, a role she describes as a conduit between management and the musicians.

This season marks her seventh in the double role, and she said shifting between a manager and a musician continues to be a learning process.

"I wear many hats, which requires a little bit of juggling," she said. "Even when we are deep in rehearsing, I have my eye on the clock for calling a break time or keeping tabs on the temperature in the pit to be sure it does not pass a certain degree mark."

Molly has been with the orchestra for 17 years and is a Michigan girl through and through. She's a Berkley, Mich. native and current resident who has lived on the same street her entire life. She also holds a Bachelor of Music in Violin Performance and a Graduate

Certificate in Orchestral Studies from Wayne State University.

"There are so many varied musical opportunities to be had throughout Michigan," she said. "In one week, you can be in the studio recording for an R&B artist, performing a collaborative concert at an art museum, playing for a wedding ceremony and performing with an orchestra on the weekend. The variety keeps life interesting from week to week!"

At MOT, she said she's passionate about ballet, especially performing works like Stravinsky's *Firebird* and Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*. Her favorite opera composer is Puccini, especially *Turandot*.

Outside of music, Molly enjoys studying the Bible, being outdoors, paper crafts, hand lettering, modern calligraphy, dog walks, tennis with her husband and time spent with family.



Gordon Simmons

At 72, trumpet player Gordon Simmons has the honor of being the oldest member of the Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra. He is also one of the orchestra's longest-serving members, embarking on his 40th season with MOT this fall.

One of Gordon's favorite things about being in the orchestra is performing with his colleagues, especially during the Three Tenors concert in 1999. But one of his most memorable moments was in *Don Pasquale* with a dog.

"One day just before our first rehearsal, I got a call from the director of production wanting to know if I would do the trumpet solo on stage," he said. "That is hard enough, but then he said they want me to be a blind trumpet player with a dog. I had to hurry from the pit get on a simple costume and go on stage with a dog in a matter of

minutes. It was challenging to say the least."

Gordon began playing trumpet when he was nine years old, eventually attending Taylor University, Wheaton College and Wayne State University, studying trumpet with Arnold Jacobs, Frank Kaderabek, and Donald Green. Now, he teaches trumpet himself, both at Oakland University and through his own private studio.

"For many musicians teaching and performing go hand in hand," he said. "I tend to be a people person which helps immensely in the area of teaching."

He said his life as a musician in Michigan has given him great experiences.

"Working in Detroit has allowed me to play a variety of musical work," he said. "Having spent several years on the road has helped me to appreciate Michigan."

MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE ORCHESTRA – DON GIOVANNI

VIOLIN I Eliot Heaton+ <i>Concertmaster</i> Laura Roelofs+ <i>Assistant</i> <i>Concertmaster</i> Beth Kirton+ Jenny Wan+ Anna Bittar-Weller+ Andrew Wu+ Daniel Stachyra+ Mallory Tabb David Ormai	Florina Petrescu Judith Teasdle	BASS Derek Weller+ <i>Principal</i> Clark Suttle+	BASSOON Francisco Delgado+ <i>Principal</i> Gregory Quick+	TIMPANI John Dorsey+ <i>Acting Principal</i>
VIOLIN II Henrik Karapetyan+ <i>Principal</i> Kevin Filewych+ Molly Hughes+ Yuri Popowycz Melody Wootton	VIOLA John Madison+ <i>Principal</i> Jacqueline Hanson+ Scott Stefanko+ Barbara Zmich- McClellan+ James Greer	FLUTE Seo Hee Choi+ <i>Principal</i> Laura Larson+	HORN Andrew Pelletier+ <i>Principal</i> Carrie Banfield-Taplin+	MANDOLIN Al Ayoub
	CELO Jonathan Tortolano+ <i>Principal</i> Yuliya Kim+ Andrea Yun+ Eugene Zenzen	OBOE Sally Heffelfinger- Pituch+ <i>Principal</i> Yuki Harding	TRUMPET David Ammer+ <i>Principal</i> Gordon Simmons+	+ Michigan Opera Theatre Core Orchestra
		CLARINET Brian Bowman+ <i>Principal</i> J. William King+	TROMBONE Brittany Lasch+ <i>Principal</i> Gary Hellick Bryan Pokorney	Detroit Federation of Musicians Local #5 American Federation of Musicians

MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE ORCHESTRA – SWEENEY TODD

VIOLIN I Eliot Heaton+ <i>Concertmaster</i> Laura Roelofs+ <i>Assistant</i> <i>Concertmaster</i> Beth Kirton+ Velda Kelly + Anna Bittar-Weller+ Bryan Johnston+ Jenny Wan+ David Ormai	VIOLA John Madison+ <i>Principal</i> Jacqueline Hanson+ Scott Stefanko+ Barbara Zmich- McClellan+	FLUTE Seo Hee Choi+ <i>Principal</i> Laura Larson+	HORN Andrew Pelletier+ <i>Principal</i>	PERCUSSION John Dorsey+ <i>Principal</i>
VIOLIN II Victoria Haltom+ <i>Principal</i> Kevin Filewych+ Molly Hughes+ Henrik Karapetyan+ Andrew Wu+ Daniel Stachyra+	CELO Jonathan Tortolano+ <i>Principal</i> Andrea Yun+ Yuliya Kim+ David Huckaby	OBOE Sally Heffelfinger- Pituch+ <i>Principal</i>	TRUMPET Robert White <i>Acting Principal</i> Gordon Simmons+	HARP Patricia Terry-Ross+
	BASS Derek Weller+ <i>Principal</i> Clark Suttle+	CLARINET Brian Bowman+ <i>Principal</i> J. William King+	TROMBONE Brittany Lasch+ <i>Principal</i> Gary Hellick Bryan Pokorney	+ Michigan Opera Theatre Core Orchestra
		BASSOON Francisco Delgado+ <i>Principal</i>	TIMPANI Alison Chang+ <i>Principal</i>	Detroit Federation of Musicians Local #5 American Federation of Musicians

MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE CHORUS – DON GIOVANNI

Soprano Brandy Adams Claire Chardon Fidelia Darmahkasih Sandra Periord Heidi Bowen Zook	Tenor Fred Buchalter Dorian Dillard Mark Istrate Richard Jackson, Jr. Robert Skyllis	Alto Andrea Apel Rachel Ann Girty Olivia Johnson Tiffanie Waldron Tamara Whitty	Bass Kurt Frank Brandon C.S. Hood Matthew Konopacki Frank Pitts Kevin Starnes
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MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE CHORUS – SWEENEY TODD

ENSEMBLE		OFFSTAGE CHORUS	
Soprano Alaina Brown Claire Chardon Nicole Joseph Audrey Kline	Alto Brandy Adams Hillary LaBonte Tiffanie Waldron Antona Yost	Soprano Kimberley Sanders Suzanne Grogan	Alto Andrea Apel Serafina Belletini
Tenor Dorian Dillard Richard Jackson, Jr. Adrian Leskiw Robert Skyllis	Bass Kurt Frank Matthew Konopacki David Moan Kevin Starnes	Tenor Brett Thompson Fred Buchalter	Bass Brandon Spencer Branden C.S. Hood
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1.7" x 4

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 patrons Michigan Opera Theatre who have made plans to include the organization in their estates—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 exclusive special events and previews.

Michigan Opera Theatre is honored that so many patron have chosen to declare their membership in the Avanti Society and has 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.

Please fill-out and mail in the confidential reply form to indicate your gift or contact
Angela Nelson-Heesch, Director of Development, at
313.237.3416 or anelsonheesch@motopera.org.

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In recognition of their foresight and commitment, Michigan Opera Theatre profoundly thanks and recognizes members of the Avanti Society.

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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. As of October 31, 2018, more than \$25.7 million has been committed.

\$1 Million and above

Sarah and Doug[†] Allison
William Davidson Foundation
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Laura Nealssohn, Director of Communications
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David W. Osborne, Director of Production
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Jon Rosemond, Marketing Operations Associate
Maery Simmons, Assistant Manager CRM Operations

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Tunisia Brown, Box Office Manager
Evan Carr, Keontay Carter, Patron Services Associate, Ticketing

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Matthew Murray, Education and Community Programs Coordinator

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Accompanist
Edward Graves, Tenor
Avery Boettcher, Soprano
Darren LeKeith Drone, Baritone
Katherine DeYoung, Mezzo-soprano
Allen Michael Jones, Bass

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Mezzo-Sopranos: Aja Dier, Olivia Johnson
Tenor: David Moan
Baritones: Branden C.S. Hood, DeVonte King
Pianist: Joseph Jackson
Percussionist: Marwan Aman-Ra

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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
Emily Crombez, Theory Teacher

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John Grigaitis, Information Technology Manager

DANCE

Jon Teeuwissen, Artistic Advisor to Dance
Kim Smith, Dance Coordinator

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Desiree Seltzer, Controller
Kimberley Burgess, Rita Winters, Accountants
Kathy Kercorian, CFO

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Randy Elliott, House Manager

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

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Bridgette Leising, Associate Director of Sales, Detroit Opera House
Tiiko Reese-Douglas, Events Assistant
Jennifer Consiglio-George, Events

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A.M. Hightower, Control Center Officer
Lt. Lorraine Monroe, Supervisor
Demetrius Newbold, Control Center Officer
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Kathleen Bennett, Production Administrator
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Nan Luchini, Hailli Ridsdale, Assistant Stage Managers

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Molly Hughes, Orchestra Personnel Manager
Jean Posekany, Orchestra Librarian
Jean Schneider, Repetiteur

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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
Shane O'Connor, Technical Assistant

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Rosemarie Di Rita, Wardrobe Mistress
Susan A. Fox, First Hand
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Sweeney Todd: Guilia Bernardini, Erika Broderdorf, Kristine Clifton-Higgins, Paige Parks, Shannon Schoenberg, Denitra Townsend, Dayna Winalis, Jessica Wood

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Frederick Graham, Jr., Head Electrician
Pat McGee, Head Propertyman
Chris Baker, Head of 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

VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION

Greetings from the MOT Volunteer Association.

I have been a music lover for many years and Michigan Opera Theatre is very important to me. Our MOTVA volunteers provide the company a tremendous level of support. We have over 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 host parties to celebrate events such as opening night performances. Last year our members logged almost 20,000 volunteer hours. Bravi!

If you are hearing about our volunteer programs for the first time and you would be interested in joining us, please give us a call. Volunteering is a great way to meet other interesting and involved patrons. Membership information is located on the MOTVA web page at michiganopera.org/get-involved/volunteers/ or call Colin Knapp at (313) 965-4271 or email cknapp@motopera.org. Colin will be happy to speak with you and connect you with a volunteer opportunity to meet your needs.



I offer my sincere thanks to all of our current volunteers. You are THE BEST!

Sincerely,

Terry Shea, President, MOTVA

MOTVA Committees, Chair(s)

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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
EMERGENCIES (313) 237-3257
Michigan Opera Theatre (313) 961-3500
General Information (313) 961-3500
Lost and Found (313) 961-3500
Ticket Office (313) 237-7464
Theater Rental Information (313) 961-3500
Detroit Opera House Fax (313) 237-3412
Press and Public Relations (313) 237-3403
Herman Frankel | Opera House Parking Center (313) 965-4052



MICHIGAN
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CHILDREN'S CHORUS

The Michigan Opera Theatre Children's Chorus (MOTCC) is a groundbreaking ensemble and the first of its kind for Metro Detroit children. Founded in 2007, the MOTCC, with children ranging from 8-16 years old, 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!

A Winter Fantasy: Holiday Concert and Fundraiser
Sunday, Dec. 15, 2019 4 p.m.

Join us for our annual showcase concert featuring beautiful choral music by the MOTCC. 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.

Concert at 1st Presbyterian Church, 529 Hendrie Blvd, Royal Oak
Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019 2 p.m.

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
Emily Crombez, Theory Teacher



The Very Last Green Thing – MOTCC Children's Opera

By Cary John Franklin
Presented at the Fisher Theatre inside the Fisher Building at 3011 W. Grand Blvd, Detroit

A timeless environmental message of hope makes *The Very Last Green Thing* a must-see for all ages! Joining MOTCC will be the Michigan Science Center sharing a 15-minute interactive presentation about what we can do to be good stewards of our planet. Volunteers will be invited on stage to help demonstrate different scenarios.

Student Dress Rehearsal

Friday, April 24, 2020 at 11 a.m. in the Fisher Theatre
Tickets must be purchased in advance at the Detroit Opera House box office: \$10/Student;
1 FREE Chaperone Ticket for every 10 tickets

Public Performance:

Saturday, April 25, 2020 at 2:30 p.m., Fisher Theatre

MOTCC's Earth Day Celebration begins at 1:30 p.m. in the Fisher Theatre lobby with family-friendly activities.

Tickets include parking:
Premium Seats: \$55 • Adult: \$40 • Children: \$15

For more information about the MOTCC and to order tickets visit www.motcc.org or contact MOTCC Chorus Administrator, Twannette Nash at TNash@motopera.org

MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE



In remembrance of our founder and long term general director,
The David DiChiera Artistic Fund
 has been established to support and honor his artistic vision.

This fund enables Michigan Opera Theatre to produce compelling opera, present innovative dance, and engage with thousands of students and members of our community through our educational and outreach programs. Most importantly, it allows MOT to preserve David's legacy and his dedication to the young people of Southeast Michigan and young emerging artists from all over the country. To contribute or for more info, please visit www.michiganopera.org or contact **Colin Knapp, Manager of Donor Engagement at 313.965.4271 or cknapp@motopera.org.**

Michigan Opera Theatre gratefully acknowledges the generous corporate, foundation, and individual donors whose gifts to The David DiChiera Artistic Fund were made before June 30, 2019.

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