Ricky Ian Gordon, composer
Royce Vavrek, Librettist

27

MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

Mar. 2 & 3, 2018
Arthur Miller Theatre, Ann Arbor

Mar. 10 & 11, 2018
Macomb Center for the Performing Arts
Welcome to the Michigan Opera Theatre production of 27 by composer Ricky Ian Gordon and librettist Royce Vavrek. The opera explores the relationship of Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas in the setting of their salon on the Left Bank of Paris, where they influenced and inspired some of the most notable artists and writers of their time.

As part of the MOT Community Engagement Initiative, we are committed to bringing opera into our neighboring communities, building on our four-year partnership with the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts. In addition to Macomb, this year we are delighted to present this opera in Ann Arbor at the Arthur Miller Theatre in partnership with the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance. This move complements the partnership between MOT and the University Musical Society – our co-presenter in dance for the past three years, including the most recent performances of Romeo and Juliet by the American Ballet Theatre.

Tonight’s production features the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio, a resident artist program now in its third year. The program provides emerging artists advanced training and performance opportunities as part of our mission to support the next generation of opera singers. We are pleased to present our Studio Artists in 27 and believe that you are in for a delightful experience with these highly talented performers.

The MOT production of 27, the MOT Studio, and the MOT Community Engagement Initiative is supported through the generosity of the William Davidson Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan.

Following performances of 27, our season continues in the Detroit Opera House April 7-15 with Puccini’s Tosca. The season closes May 12-20 with Daniel Sonenberg’s The Summer King, an opera that explores the life of Negro League baseball legend Josh Gibson. The opera is part of an initiative in partnership with the Detroit Tigers exploring the role of arts and sports in our community. We hope you will join us for future performances at our historic Detroit Opera House.

Wayne S. Brown
President and CEO, Michigan Opera Theatre
Throughout my career, my passion has not only been producing great music but nurturing the next generation of opera singers. That means not only identifying young artists but cultivating their talent to guide them to successful careers. It is a passion I share with Michigan Opera Theatre Founder David DiChiera and one that is ingrained in the values and mission of MOT.

For this reason, I am extremely pleased to present our Michigan Opera Theatre Studio Artists and their production of Ricky Ian Gordon’s 27. The opera was originally commissioned by Opera Theatre of Saint Louis for the great Stephanie Blythe. The MOT Studio is a young artists program that provides advanced training and performance opportunities to emerging talent. Following last year’s production of Mark Adamo’s Little Women and 2016’s The Tender Land, these full-length operas present these artists in lead roles, allowing the depth and range of their talent to shine. It also provides audiences in southeast Michigan the opportunity to get a first glance at some of opera’s most promising talent. We are excited to return once again to the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts and to make our debut at Ann Arbor’s Arthur Miller Theatre.

Starring as Gertrude Stein is our mezzo-soprano Briana Elyse Hunter. Those who saw Little Women will recognize her as last season’s “Jo March,” as well as her supporting roles in MOT’s productions of Rigoletto, Silent Night, Carmen and The Girl of the Golden West. Briana is one of the MOT Studio’s first young artists and will complete the program at the end of this season. While in his first year of the MOT Studio, local audiences will also recognize baritone and Michigan native Harry Greenleaf. Harry has performed frequently with MOT, including Rigoletto, Cyrano, The Girl of the Golden West, Carmen and The Tender Land. He will portray Leo Stein and Man Ray in 27.

Soprano Monica Dewey (Alice B. Toklas), tenor Michael Day (Pablo Picasso, F. Scott Fitzgerald) and bass Erik Van Heyningen (Henri Matisse, Ernest Hemingway) have worked with me previously at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and I am personally excited to see the development of their careers and to share them with you. Local patrons may remember Michael as Don Basilio in MOT’s production of The Marriage of Figaro or Erik as Count Ceprano in MOT’s season-opening production of Rigoletto, and both will perform later this season in our April production of Tosca. Monica will make her MOT debut with 27 and recently made her debut with San Francisco Opera singing Poussette in Manon.

As you watch the performance this evening, we invite you to relax and enjoy this talented group of singers and to be on the lookout for their exciting careers ahead!

Stephen Lord
Principal Conductor, Michigan Opera Theatre
Message from Melody L. Racine

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the Arthur Miller Theatre at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance. We are thrilled to be partnering with Michigan Opera Theatre to offer this very special presentation of Ricky Ian Gordon’s celebrated new opera 27. This is a tremendous opportunity for our community to attend a professional opera production in their own backyard, and it is invaluable for our students, whose educations are so enhanced by attending professional productions featuring performances by renowned artists.

As part of our partnership with MOT, we are especially grateful for the master class that was arranged with Mr. Gordon, in which five teams of SMTD piano and voice students performed songs chosen specifically for them by the composer. This was one of those exceptional experiences that SMTD strives to provide for students, and we know that those who participated will remember it for years to come.

The chance to work with a celebrated young opera composer is so special, as is the opportunity of seeing such an exciting new work in the intimacy of a space like our Arthur Miller Theatre. This venue is home to many of our department productions in theatre and musical theatre, and those of us who attend them regularly know how powerful performances can be in this small but artfully designed space. It is so exciting to see it utilized by the MOT professionals.

SMTD’s relationship with MOT is not new; for years our voice students have enjoyed performing in MOT productions. We are so fortunate to have one of the country’s great opera houses in such close proximity to the university. In the coming years, however, we look forward to growing this relationship and finding new ways of partnering with MOT to provide even more opportunities for our students and for the Ann Arbor community.

I want to extend my personal thanks to MOT President and CEO Wayne Brown, a proud alumnus of SMTD, who has worked with us to bring 27 to Ann Arbor and to build on the relationship that we value so much. We look forward to more events and collaborations in the future.

Meanwhile, we hope that you will take advantage of the many other performances and events that SMTD presents—more than 450 annually—including concerts, recitals, lectures, and fully staged productions in dance, musical theatre, theatre, and opera. There’s something to see every week of the academic year and most events are free. Please visit our Calendar of Events on our website (smtd.umich.edu) for complete details on all we have to offer. Thank you again for joining us today, and Go Blue!

Melody L. Racine
Interim Dean School of Music, Theatre & Dance
University of Michigan
Message from William Wood

Dear Patrons,

We at the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts have dedicated ourselves to bringing performances of the highest quality to our stage. Michigan Opera Theatre (MOT) shares this same dedication, and we are proud to partner with the state’s premier opera company on these performances of 27.

This opera explores the relationship between Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas at the salon they shared at 27 rue de Fleurus in Paris. It takes place between the two world wars where many of the great writers and artists of the day sought entrée to the Saturday gatherings of the Stein Salon. The opera tells the story of this great American writer and is written by an outstanding American composer, Ricky Ian Gordon with librettist Royce Vavrek in 2014. We are honored to be hosting the Michigan premier of this exceptional work.

Our collaborations with community partners like MOT are vital to ensuring a strong and dynamic cultural community in this region. They ensure that Macomb Community College is able to offer cultural and artistic diversity that is crucial for a vibrant community. It also allows us to bring world-class performers and performances to the people of Macomb County.

We appreciate you joining us for this production and for your support of the Macomb Center and Macomb Community College.

William R. Wood
Director of Cultural Affairs and Community Engagement
Macomb Community College

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

The Macomb Center for the Performing Arts (MacombCenter.com) is a community enrichment program of Macomb Community College dedicated to providing a diverse range of cultural enrichment experiences, and to inspire and encourage artistic expression through education, performance and volunteer opportunities. Hosting more than 100,000 visitors annually, the Macomb Center presents high-quality professional performances, offers educational outreach in the arts, provides a performance venue for community-based arts organizations, and, in partnership with the adjacent Lorenzo Cultural Center, creates unique opportunities for multifaceted cultural programming.
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MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

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By Ricky Ian Gordon

This project is supported in part by an award from:

MichiganOpera.org
MUSIC
Ricky Ian Gordon

LIBRETTO
Royce Vavrek

REDUCED ORCHESTRATION
Roberto Kalb

WORLD PREMIERE
Loretto-Hilton Center, St. Louis, Missouri
June 14, 2014

CONDUCTOR
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STAGE DIRECTOR
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SET DESIGN
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SUPERTITLES
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CAST
(In order of vocal appearance)

Alice B. Toklas............................................................. Monica Dewey+
Gertrude Stein.................................................... Briana Elyse Hunter+
Pablo Picasso/F. Scott Fitzgerald............................... Michael Day+
Leo Stein/Man Ray .............................................. Harry Greenleaf+
Henri Matisse/ Ernest Hemingway ............. Erik Van Heyningen+

+Michigan Opera Theatre Studio Artist

*This production of Twenty-Seven is an original co-production of Opera Theatre of Saint Louis
Directed by James Robinson

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Michigan Opera Theatre
SYNOPSIS

Alice B. Toklas sits in her living room at 27 rue de Fleurus and conjures the world she shared with Gertrude Stein by knitting the memories of their past back to life.

Gertrude enters the salon and invites her guests to peruse her collection, praising the genius of the artists, as Alice attends to everyone. Pablo Picasso reveals his own portrait of Gertrude in a ceremony that is met with disdain by Leo Stein and a bit of jealousy by Henri Matisse. Leo announces he is moving to Italy and storms out. Gertrude and Alice toast his departure and sing of the ringing bells of genius that celebrate their love.

Gertrude and Alice weather the First World War in Paris. Gertrude continues to write as the cold sets in and food becomes scarce. An American doughboy stationed in Paris becomes a friend, and provides them with coal and cigarettes, but fails to return with sought-after eggs. Another boy is added to the tally of the lost generation.

After the war, Gertrude’s attention shifts from painters to writers, now welcoming the likes of Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald, and the photographer Man Ray. Ernest and Scotty are desperate for Gertrude’s endorsement so she encourages them to wrestle for her attention – she will announce the winner a genius. The writers are expelled from the salon as the next war approaches.

Gertrude and Alice survive the Second World War by sacrificing paintings. Picasso’s portrait of Gertrude preys on her conscience, asking her to explain how a Jewish-American authoress survived Nazi-occupied France. The guilt eats away at her and she dies in Alice’s arms.

Alice, now alone, is surprised by the return of Picasso. Together they say goodbye to the portrait of Gertrude as it is being shipped off to The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Picasso sketches an image of Gertrude for Alice as the bells of genius and love chime once more.

Courtesy of Opera Theatre of Saint Louis
Pablo Picasso, Ernest Hemingway, Henri Matisse, F. Scott Fitzgerald — these painters and authors have become household names as leaders in their art. But perhaps less well-known is the woman who bound these men together: Gertrude Stein, writer, art patron and a central figure in American and European Modernism.

Born in Allegheny, Pennsylvania in 1874, Stein was a Jewish-American woman raised in Oakland, California in a wealthy family. After her parents’ passing as a teenager, she was sent to live with relatives in Baltimore, where she met sisters Claribel and Etta Cone who incorporated Stein into their regular artist salons and further developed her appreciation for art.

After graduating with a degree in psychology from Radcliffe College and dropping out of medical school at Johns Hopkins, Stein decided to follow her brother, Leo, to Paris where he was pursuing his art studies. From 1903 to 1914 the two lived at the now-famous address of 27 rue de Fleurus in Paris, where they began an extensive art collection, including works by Matisse, Cezanne, Picasso, and Renoir. In 1907, Stein met Alice B. Toklas, a woman who would eventually move into the Steins’ Paris apartment and become Gertrude Stein’s lifelong partner.

As the Steins’ art collection grew, so did her group of friends, who would come to see her collection and bring friends of their own. These visits eventually turned into weekly salon gatherings, where modern artists including Picasso, Hemingway, Matisse and Fitzgerald would congregate to discuss their works and others. Stein, an author in her own right, had created the organized weekly salons to avoid disruption of her own work from drop-in guests. Her writing was structured in an experimental literary style of Picasso’s cubism that challenged traditional methods of storytelling and explored themes of the female experience, lesbian sexuality, identity and conformity. Her most famous works include Three Lives, Tender Buttons, and The Making of Americans. She was also an opera librettist and wrote Four Saints in Three Acts and Mother of Us All with composer Virgil Thompson. Her memoir, The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas, led her to literary success and fame.

Stein and Toklas, also a Jewish woman, mostly remained in Europe throughout World Wars I and II, including Nazi-occupied France. It is believed the two were forced to sell paintings and rely on the protection of friends to survive. Stein died of stomach cancer in 1946 in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France. Her legacy continues to live on as a central influencer in American and European Modernism.
Gertrude Stein was a keen observer. While much of her writing can be difficult to riddle out, it is full of phrases that point to what is left unsaid, left unseen, and what is in between: things only discernable to those who already know. Perhaps this is part of why Stein had such a lifelong fascination with portraiture. Portraits display various levels of knowing and intimacy with their subject; they see something of the ‘there that is there’. Picasso sat with Stein on numerous occasions attempting to capture her in his famous portrait, but he found her a difficult subject to pin down. This was imaginably because, like Stein’s writing, the life Gertrude lived with Alice was only truly revealed to those who inhabited it and so Picasso found his portrait to always be missing something essential.

Similar to how one sees the subject of a portrait through the eyes of the painter, what we know of Stein and Alice Toklas is mediated through the viewer. In the press and to the world at large Stein was a confident writer forging a path in the European avant-garde. Toklas receded into the background as her secretary or companion. But when reading the reflections of the denizens of the salon at 27 rue de Fleurus, a different narrative emerges that frames Stein and Toklas assuming the roles of a heterosexual marriage. Stein was warm and masculine, holding court with the important artists of the day, while Alice was the picture of domesticity attending to food, drink, and of course the artists’ wives. But, as recent scholarship has revealed, there was an even deeper level between Gertrude and Alice where gender roles were more fluid, and they were deeply tender and passionate.

Stein herself defined romance as something that is outside of the usual, as Hannah Roche’s forthcoming book *The Outside Thing: Locating Lesbian Romance, 1903-1950* reveals. Stein wrote, “Romance is the outside thing, that remains the outside thing and remaining there has its own existing and so although it is outside it is inside because it being outside and staying outside it is always a thing to be felt inside” (Stein, *An American and France*). Romance is outside, enigmatic and unreachable, but resides within. It is outside the norms but true and real, and felt even more deeply within because of it. Gertrude and Alice created a space within their private lives where the between Gertrude and Alice: self-definition at 27 rue de fleurus

By Kristen Clough

“To those who do not inhabit it there is no there there.”

GERTRUDE STEIN, Everybody’s Autobiography.
queering of romance (an ‘outside’ love) was possible despite the lack of acceptance in wider society. Here neither the artist and assistant, nor the husband and wife constructs were necessary.

Despite all the confidence she showed to the world, for Gertrude a deep understanding shared with Alice was vital. Alice understood and embraced her work before anyone else. Stein wrote about the strange feeling when “you write a book and while you write it you are ashamed for everyone must think you a silly or a crazy one,...” but then “someone says yes to it” (Stein, *The Making of Americans*). Alice said yes to it. I would argue one of the most notable achievements of Ian Gordon’s 27 is its evocation of this private relationship between Gertrude and Alice, in particular during “The bells ring”. Their voices are flexible and shifting, playing with both the differences and the similarities of their registers, beautifully reflecting the dependence they had upon each other and the space they created between themselves at rue de Fleurus to be an ‘outside thing’, to define their romance as they chose.

By defining their romance between themselves, Gertrude and Alice were able create a safe space where they could affirm their love while it remained sheltered from the world. But this technique of separating a part of their lives from the world has led to a questioning of Stein’s actions during the Second World War as 27 itself raises. How did Stein and Toklas survive WWII and persecution of Jews and homosexuals in occupied France? What compromises did they have to make to keep 27 rue de Fleurus a safe space?

27 depicts Stein and Toklas in strong denial about the war—refusing to acknowledge it and becoming culpable in it. They are portrayed sequestered in their apartment on rue de Fleurus (though in reality they weathered the Occupation in their home in the countryside) ignoring the realities of the war, the deportations, and the concentration camps. But one must remember careful ‘denial’ of the inner realities of their relationship was a method familiar to Stein and Toklas. Rather than an outright rejection of the war, their actions seem to be more a purposeful reframing of their public lives against the grain of appearances. While in her writings Stein did indeed maintain her trademark relentless cheerfulness, her *Wars I Have Seen* offers clues to the reality of her wartime experience, and it becomes clear that Stein realizes not only the danger to herself and Toklas but also the danger to Jewish people at large. Yet as Jewish lesbians their options for reacting publically to this reality were very
limited.

Stein was not alone in failing to grasp the true danger the Nazis presented at the outset of the Occupation. At first the rise of the Vichy government who administered France during the German Occupation seemed a step in the right direction to many French conservatives. The Vichy leader, Marshal Pétain, promised to realign France with conservative values, and many traditional intellectuals, including composer Francis Poulenc, believed him. Stein had always espoused rather conservative views, hating Roosevelt and supporting General Franco during the Spanish Civil War. Therefore that she would rely on her friends in the Vichy government for help and protection and even begin a project translating Pétain’s Vichy speeches into English seems natural. Their network of friends allowed Stein and Toklas to continue to live their private life as they pleased within the safety of their home.

But as the war continued it became more and more obvious that Vichy was largely a puppet of the Nazi regime. By the summer of 1942 deportations from France were underway in earnest. Why didn’t Stein and Toklas change their alignments? This is a challenging question to answer. Scholars Edward M. Burns and Ulla E. Dydo have shown that Stein continued to work on her translating project even after the rise in deportations. But how much she really knew about Vichy’s crimes remains a puzzle. In their country home she would have been insulated from a lot of information, but it seems hard to believe that she had heard nothing. She and Toklas certainly knew the danger they themselves were in; if they should attempt to escape France was a frequent discussion. When a friend in the Vichy government told them in 1943 that they should illegally leave for Switzerland to avoid deportation to the camps they decided to stay and survive as they always had, through the protection and help of their friends.

As 27 notes, they did indeed sell a painting to have the funds necessary to live in occupied France. And it cannot be denied they survived largely because of the aid of some truly despicable Vichy officials whom they called friends—even if it is unclear if they knew how compromised those friends were. But the idea that Stein and Toklas denied the war, or the suffering of the Jewish people because of their friendships or their choice not to speak of their own Jewish heritage shows a fundamental lack of understanding of the realities of these two women’s lives. Stein and Toklas didn’t publically address their Judaism throughout their lives not just during the war. But if one reads Wars I Have Seen keeping in mind to look for the ‘there’ hidden between, Stein’s understanding of the desperate plight of Jewish people in France emerges. Stein didn’t join the French Resistance, but she also was well aware of the war and eventually its consequences. What looks like denial on the surface is really part of Stein and Toklas’s complex layering of their lives, and their purposeful choices about what ‘there that is there’ they chose to reveal.

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This article is made possible by Michigan Opera Theatre’s Ambassadors program.
Principal Bassoon Francisco Delgado

One of its newest members, Principal Bassoon Francisco “Frankie” Delgado joined the Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra at the beginning of this season. Right away, he said he was able to play one of his favorite operas with November’s production of The Marriage of Figaro.

“This opera was one of the first operas I saw in my youth,” he said. “And I have always enjoyed playing the music of Mozart.”

The 26-year-old has been studying bassoon since age 13. Though he originally went to school to study engineering, Frankie switched to music his first year in college, eventually earning a Bachelor of Music degree from Case Western Reserve University and a Master of Music Performance degree from Northwestern University.

He is originally from Las Vegas but said he enjoys playing in Detroit. “The best part about living and performing in Detroit is the strength and support for the arts from the community,” he said.

In addition to performing with MOT, Frankie enjoys watching the NBA, biking, running, coffee, cooking, and trying new beers.

Principal Oboe Dr. Nermis Mieses

Dr. Nermis Mieses has been the principal oboe with Michigan Opera Theatre since 2012. The 31-year-old Puerto Rico native began playing the instrument at age 12 as a condition to attend her school.

“I felt in love with it as soon as I heard it,” she said. “This is why I believe the instrument picked me instead of the other way around.”

During her time at MOT, she said her favorite experience was during the 2015 production of Mieczyslaw Weinberg’s The Passenger.

“The sight of an entire audience motionless and breathless during some of the most powerful moments of the opera was astonishing,” she said.

Outside of MOT, Nermis is the Assistant Professor of Oboe at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, though she said she loves performing in Detroit.

“Detroit is like a musical oasis for me,” she said. “I do not live in Detroit, but I get to recharge while enjoying the renaissance of the city and collaborating with amazing musicians.”

Along with music, Nermis enjoys running, bird-watching, and taking care of her lawn.
Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra

VIOLIN I
Eliot Heaton, 
Concertmaster+

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Victoria Haltom, 
Principal+

VIOLA
Scott Stefanko, 
Principal+

CELLO
Nadine Deleury, 
Principal+

BASS
Derek Weller, Principal+

HARP
Lycia Cleaver, 
Acting Principal

FLUTE
Laura Larson, 
Acting Principal+

OBOE
Nermis Mieses, 
Principal+

CLARINET
Brian Bowman, 
Principal+

BASSOON
Francisco Delgado, 
Principal+

HORN
Carrie Banfield-Taplin, 
Acting Principal+

TRUMPET
Gordon Simmons, 
Principal+

TROMBONE
Brittany Lasch, 
Acting Principal

PERCUSSION
John Dorsey, Principal+

PIANO
Tessa Hartle

+ Michigan Opera 
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Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra

Tosca

By Giacomo Puccini

April 7, 11, 14 & 15, 2018
At Detroit Opera House

MichiganOpera.org

or 313.237.7464

The 2018 Spring Opera Season made possible by General Motors
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, MOT Founder and Artistic Director Emeritus David DiChiera, Principal Studio 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 specifically for the Studio Program. In addition to Ricky Ian Gordon’s 27, the Studio Artists filled lead and featured roles in MOT’s production of Mark Adamo’s Little Women last season and 2016’s The Tender Land. Through these productions, MOT fulfills its community initiative to produce a full-scale opera annually in venues throughout Metro Detroit.

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.
Michael Day

Tenor Michael Day comes from Rockford, Illinois and recently made his Michigan Opera Theatre debut as Don Basilio in *The Marriage of Figaro*. His performance credits also 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. This past summer, he returned to the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 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 from Indiana University and is currently completing a master’s degree from the university. This spring, Michael will perform Spoletta in *Tosca* at MOT.

**Voice Type:** Tenor  
**Age:** 25  
**Hometown:** Rockford, IL  
**Training:** Master of Music degree from Indiana University Jacobs School of Music (completing), Bachelor’s degree in music education and vocal performance from Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, Utah Festival Opera and Musical Theater, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis

**Past Roles:**
- Al Joad, *The Grapes of Wrath*, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2017
- Arcadio, *Florentina en el Amazonas*, Indiana University Opera Theater 2016
- Tanzmeister (cover), *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2016
- Officer, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2016
- Alfred, *Die Fledermaus*, IU Opera Theater 2015
- Padre, *Man of La Mancha*, Utah Festival Opera and Musical Theater 2015

**Future Roles:**
- Spoletta, *Tosca*, Michigan Opera Theatre 2018
- Leo Hubbard, *Regina*, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2018
What is your favorite opera and why?
My favorite opera is *La Fille du Regiment* (*The Daughter of the Regiment*). There is something so charming about Marie and her relationship with all her “fathers,” and I think the melodies are some of the greatest Donizetti ever wrote.

What has been your favorite performance experience?
My favorite performance experience was singing the role of Al Joad in Ricky Ian Gordon’s *The Grapes of Wrath* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Not only is this a devastatingly beautiful story and score, but I got to work with an all-star cast and with a composer and librettist that truly understand storytelling through music. It was very formative for me as a singer and artist.

What is your dream role?
My dream role is to sing Rodolfo in *La bohème*. His music is difficult to sing but is just divine, all the way through the role.

What’s been the best part about being in the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio program?
The best part about being in the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio program has been the talent I am surrounded by. I learn so much every day from our teachers, Richard Leech and Tessa Hartle, and also from my immensely talented colleagues and of course our principal conductor Stephen Lord.

What’s the best part about living in Detroit?
For me, the best part of living in Detroit is simply the experience of living and working in a big city. I have never spent this much time in a major city, so I am still pretty enamored with the buzz and excitement of everyday life here.

If you weren’t an opera singer, what would you be?
If I weren’t an opera singer, I would be a choir teacher. My undergraduate degree was in choral music education, and I have always loved conducting and singing in choirs. In another life (or maybe later in this one), I am a high school choir teacher who pretends not to like show choir.

What is one thing people would be surprised to know about you?
People would be surprised to know that I play chess almost every single day.
Monica Dewey
Atlanta native Monica Dewey is Michigan Opera Theatre Studio’s resident soprano. She recently made her debut with San Francisco Opera singing Pousette in *Manon*. Prior to joining the MOT Studio, she performed her second season with the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, where she made her role debut as Servilia in *Titus (La Clemenza di Tito)*. Her awards include first place at the 2017 Hilde Zadek International Voice Competition in Vienna, second place at the 2016 Central Region of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and a 2017 Sullivan Foundation Award. She has been a young artist with Chautauqua Voice Institute, Lyric Opera Studio Weimar and Harrower Opera Workshop. She received her Master of Music degree from Indiana University’s Jacobs School of Music and a dual bachelor’s degree in Music and Arts Administration from the University of Kentucky. This summer, she will perform the role of Alexandra Giddens in *Regina* at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.

**Name:** Monica Dewey  
**Voice Type:** Soprano  
**Age:** 27  
**Hometown:** Stone Mountain, GA  
**Training:** University of Kentucky, BA Music and Arts Administration; Indiana University MM Music, Voice

**Past Roles**
- Pousette, *Manon*, San Francisco Opera 2017
- Servilia, *La clemenza di Tito*, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2017
- Echo cover, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2016
- Marie, *La fille du Régiment*, Indiana University Opera Theater 2016
- Rosina, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Indiana University Opera Theater 2015
- Morgana, *Alcina*, Indiana University Opera Theater 2015
- Pamina, *Die Zauberflöte*, Lyric Opera Studio Weimar 2013
- Rose, *Street Scene*, Harrower Opera Workshop 2013

**Future Roles:**
- Alexandra Giddens, *Regina*, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2018
What is your favorite opera and why?
Opera continually surprises me, and there is always something new to explore. However, I fell in love with opera because of *La bohéme*. I started listening to opera in high school and this piece totally blew my mind. I used to listen to it on repeat when I was doing calculus homework thinking, “I would MUCH rather be doing this...” It was the ultimate motivator.

What has been your favorite performance experience?
I loved singing Marie in *Daughter of the Regiment*. I’m a tomboy at heart, so it was fun to explore those elements onstage through the character. We had an awesome cast and creative team and the staging was a blast. I was marching, jumping on my colleague’s back, climbing over huge piles of furniture...I definitely earned my dinner after the show!

What is your dream role?
My dream role is Wotan in Wagner’s *Ring Cycle*, because who wouldn’t want to be the king of the Gods?! But since that won’t happen in this lifetime, I’ll have to say Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*. It’s some of the most beautiful music I’ve ever heard.

What’s been the best part about being in the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio program?
The Michigan Opera Theatre Studio program is unique in that each individual artist is supported in a way that benefits him or her. I have received amazing support and resources to pursue my goals and continue working on my craft. In the past few months I have engaged in fitness, Alexander Technique, acting classes, language study, and private voice lessons, all supported by the Studio program.

What’s the best part about living in Detroit?
I’m constantly in awe of this city. It’s full of style, flavor, culture, and variety. I love living downtown because I can literally see the city transforming. I honestly think this is the most exciting time to live in Detroit.

If you weren’t an opera singer, what would you be?
It’s hard to imagine myself doing anything else because I’m so invested in this path. I do like playing pool, though!

What is one thing people would be surprised to know about you?
I meditate twice a day, every day. I started last summer and it’s been a really important discovery. I have to say, it’s a game changer and a vital part of my process.
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 Marullo in *Rigoletto*, Le Bret in *Cyrano*, Jack 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. This spring, Harry will perform with MOT as Sciarrone in *Tosca*.

**Voice Type:** Baritone  
**Age:** 26  
**Hometown:** Wixom, MI  
**Training:** Bachelor of Music from Michigan State University; Master of Music from University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music; Glimmerglass Festival Young Artist; Des Moines Metro Opera Apprentice Artist Wolf Trap Opera Studio Artist

**Past Roles:**
- Le Bret, *Cyrano* (David DiChiera), Michigan Opera Theatre 2017
- Anthony Hope, *Sweeney Todd*, New Orleans Opera 2017
- The Pilot, *The Little Prince*, Cincinnati Chamber Opera 2015

**Future Roles:**
- Sciarrone, *Tosca*, Michigan Opera Theatre 2018
What is your favorite opera and why?
My favorite opera is La fanciulla del West (Girl of the Golden West) by Puccini. I have been in it twice, singing in the chorus at Des Moines Metro Opera and singing Jake Wallace here in Detroit last season. It’s a very fun show for the chorus men to be a part of, playing gambling, drinking, and gun-wielding miners in the California Gold Rush. I think that the music for the opera is very touching and exciting.

What has been your favorite performance experience?
My favorite performance experience was performing the role of Anthony Hope in Sweeney Todd at New Orleans Opera last season. It was my first time reprising a role, and luckily, I was well suited for it. Anthony Hope is an easy sell for audiences, his number “Johanna” is usually a memorable part of the show. The main reason for enjoying the performance was the cast. The production featured mostly the same cast from the production I did with the Glimmerglass Festival. Because of this, we were able to start rehearsals with a high level of comfortability built in, which is so important in a dialogue heavy show. Combined with the new friendly faces filling smaller roles, there was a great bond in the cast and a lot of love in the rehearsal room. The entire experience from start to finish was one I’ll treasure.

What is your dream role?
My dream role is Billy Budd in Billy Budd. I conveniently fit Herman Melville’s description of the character pretty well, and I very much enjoy the music of Benjamin Britten. I’ll have to stay away from American Coney Island and Buddy’s Pizza though if I want to be considered for the role some day!

What’s been the best part about being in the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio program?
I am very much looking forward to the stability that MOT will provide me. I am still in the middle of my training, and MOT gives me professional and technical guidance. Continuing to appear on the main stage and getting to observe and work with the seasoned professionals which pass through will continue to help me learn and grow.

What’s the best part about living in Detroit?
I grew up in Wixom, so I have a first-hand knowledge of the difficulties and growth that the city has faced over the last two decades. Being at the center of the resurgence of culture downtown for a few years will be a real treat. We are lucky to have four major sports franchises downtown, with MSU and U of M providing extra entertainment as well.

If you weren’t an opera singer, what would you be?
I wanted to either be a play-by-play radio announcer for the Detroit Tigers, or a World War II historian.

What is one thing people would be surprised to know about you?
I spent two years as a bouncer while I was finishing my studies at Michigan State University, working at two different bars.
Erik Van Heyningen

A native of Poway, California, Erik Van Heyningen is Michigan Opera Theatre Studio’s resident bass-baritone. He recently made his Michigan Opera Theatre debut as Count Ceprano in *Rigoletto* this fall and performed as an Apprentice Artist at Santa Fe Opera this past summer. He has sung with opera companies across the country, including performing as a Richard Gaddes Festival Artist and Gerdine Young Artist with the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and recently had his debut with Austin Opera as Truffaldino in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Erik holds a bachelor’s degree in vocal performance at Boston University and will attend the Juilliard School for his Artist Diploma in Opera Studies in the fall of 2018. He will perform the roles of Angelotti and the Jailer in MOT’s production of *Tosca* this spring. Afterwards, he will return to the Santa Fe Opera to sing Imperial Commissioner in *Madame Butterfly* and Ragotzki/Archbishop in *Candide*. There, he will also cover Haly in *L’Italiana in Algeri*, Voltaire/Pangloss/Cacambo in *Candide*, and Robert Oppenheimer in *Doctor Atomic*.

**Voice Type:** Bass-Baritone  
**Age:** 24  
**Hometown:** Poway, CA  
**Training:** New Music on the Point Festival, Emmanuel Music Bach Institute, Atlantic Music Festival, Toronto Summer Music Academy, Opera Theater of Saint Louis, Santa Fe Opera Apprentice  
**Past Roles:**
- Count Ceprano, *Rigoletto*, Michigan Opera Theatre 2017
- Second Boyar (Cover), *The Golden Cockerel*, Santa Fe Opera 2017
- Frosch (Cover), *Die Fledermaus*, Santa Fe Opera 2017
- Truffaldino, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2017
- Colline (Cover), *La bohème*, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2016
- Doctor (Cover), *Macbeth*, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2016
- Ernesto (Cover), *Parisina d’Este*, Opera Orchestra of New York 2016
- Simon Fenton, *Emmeline* (Tobias Picker), Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2015
- Berardo (Cover), *Riccardo Primo*, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2015
- Jailer, *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2014
- Ernest Hemingway et.al (Cover), *Twenty-Seventy* (Ricky Ian Gordon), Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2014
- Spokesman (Cover), *The Magic Flute*, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2014
What is your favorite opera and why?
I find myself returning to *Le nozze di Figaro* by Mozart. The craftsmanship combined with the pure human joy in that piece is unparalleled.

What has been your favorite performance experience?
I have a dear friend and colleague, Dr. Matthew Larson, with whom I perform art song recitals almost biannually. We find such joy in planning these programs of poetry, and I find these concerts to be some of my happiest moments in any season.

What is your dream role?
This is always a tough one... Rigoletto has quickly become a dream of mine.

What’s been the best part about being in the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio program?
I think the best part about being a part of MOT’s studio is the immense flexibility we are allowed in crafting our own training. That room to develop yourself as an artist and reach out when you have your own questions is so valuable. Most of the process of training as an artist isn’t deciding what you know, it is deciding what you want to ask.

What’s the best part about living in Detroit?
It certainly is an amazing experience to be present for the immense rebirth that Detroit is undergoing. You can feel the city shifting and I’ve so loved being even the smallest part of that.

If you weren’t an opera singer, what would you be?
I’d be a chef. I am notorious among my friends for being a big foodie.

What is one thing people would be surprised to know about you?
I can’t stand cucumbers. I’ll eat anything in the world, but not a cucumber.

Current/Future Roles:
Angelotti/Jailer, *Tosca*, Michigan Opera Theatre 2018
The Imperial Commissioner, *Madame Butterfly*, Santa Fe Opera 2018
Ragotzki/Archbishop, *Candide*, Santa Fe Opera 2018

Haly (Cover), *L’Italiana in Algeri*, Santa Fe Opera 2018
Voltaire/Pangloss/Cacambo (Cover), *Candide*, Santa Fe Opera 2018
Robert Oppenheimer (Cover), *Dr. Atomic*, Santa Fe Opera 2018
Briana Elyse Hunter

Originally from Malvern, Pennsylvania, Briana Elyse Hunter is completing her second year as MOT Studio’s resident mezzo-soprano. Her MOT credits include Giovanna in Rigoletto, 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. In addition to her roles at MOT, 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 spring, she will perform with the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis as Flora in La Traviata and Pvt. Stanton in An American Soldier.

Voice Type: Mezzo-Soprano
Age: 31
Hometown: Malvern, PA
Training: Davidson College, BA Theater, Manhattan School of Music MM Vocal Performance
Past Roles:
- Giovanna, Rigoletto, Michigan Opera Theatre 2017
- Annie, Porgy and Bess, The Glimmerglass Festival 2017
- Arsamenes cover, Xerxes, The Glimmerglass Festival 2017
- Wowkle, La fanciulla del West, Michigan Opera Theatre
- Jo March, Little Women, Michigan Opera Theatre 2017
- Madeleine Audebert (Silent Night), Michigan Opera Theatre 2016
- Mércèdes, Carmen, Michigan Opera Theatre 2016
- TV Announcer - Play by Play, Bum Phillips: An All-American Opera, Monk Parrot, Inc. 2015
- Carmen, Carmen, Opera in the Heights 2015
- Mércèdes, Carmen, Knoxville Opera 2015
- L’écureuil/La chatte, L’enfant et les sortilèges, Bare Opera 2015
- Giulietta, Les contes d’Hoffmann, Santa Fe Opera 2015
- Prince Orlofsky, Die Fledermaus, Sarasota Opera 2013
- Laura, Iolantha, Opera Slavica 2013
Future Roles:
- Flora, La Traviata, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2018
- Pvt. Stanton, An American Soldier, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis 2018
What’s your favorite opera and why?
Madama Butterfly, because it’s impossible for me to watch it or listen to it and not cry. That music pulls on my heartstrings.

What has been your favorite performance experience?
My very first, Carmen. It may seem trite, but it was the first time I was really able to fill up the stage with such an incredible character. It helped that I had the privilege of working on it with Marilyn Horne, one of the greatest mezzos of all time, and many of my colleagues became lifelong friends.

What is your dream role?
Azucena from Il Trovatore. It’s a monster of a role, but man is it good.

What’s been the best part about being in the Michigan Opera Theater Studio?
My colleagues! I love our studio family.

What’s the best part about living in Detroit?
Watching it grow right before my eyes, so many new things sprouting up like flowers out of the rubble.

If you weren’t an opera singer, what would you be?
A psychologist/therapist, specializing in performing artists.

What is the one thing people would be surprised to know about you?
I am also a fine artist (drawing, painting, sculpting), but I don’t get to create new things as much as I’d like to these days.
ADDITIONAL ARTIST PROFILES

JEFFREY BUCHMAN
Director

*Opera News* calls Director Jeffrey Buchman “a formidable talent.” Constantly pushing the limits of the performing arts, Mr. Buchman’s versatility leads him to a variety of venues to explore some of opera’s classics while also constantly premiering new works. His innovation puts him at the forefront of a new era in directing. This season, Mr. Buchman will direct *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Madama Butterfly* at Opera Naples, *L’elisir d’amore* for the Brancaleoni International Music Festival, *Tesla* at SoBe Arts, and *As One*, a new work that Buchman recently directed at Opera Colorado, with Hawaii Opera Theatre. Additionally, this season Buchman has taken the position of Stage Director for the Frost School of Music at University of Miami.

TESSA HARTLE
Studio Principal Coach/Accompanist

Tessa Hartle joined the music staff of Michigan Opera Theatre last season and is currently a pianist/coach on the music staff of Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. She has previously served on the music staffs of Florida Grand Opera, Virginia Opera, Sarasota Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Opera North, and Aspen Opera Theater Center. In addition to her work as a coach in the standard repertory, Tessa has also prepared and performed numerous new contemporary American works, most notably the world premieres of Greg Spears’ *Paul’s Case* (UrbanArias, Arlington, VA), and John Musto’s *Later the Same Evening* (University of Maryland Opera Studio.) She holds her bachelor’s degree in piano performance from the University of Michigan and her master’s degree in collaborative piano from the University of Maryland - College Park.

ROBERTO KALB
Conductor

Roberto Kalb is currently the Resident Conductor and Head of Music at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Upcoming engagements include debuts with Tulsa Opera (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) and Kentucky Opera (*Rigoletto*). A University of Michigan graduate, Kalb’s awards include: Winner of the American Prize; Second Prize in the Washington International Composition Competition; and the Ann Arbor Symphony Sight and Sound Competition Award. Additional credits include conducting the San Francisco premiere of Rossini’s *La scala di seta*, conducting the Orquesta Carlos Chávez in Mexico City, the Orquesta Sinfonica da USP in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and most recently, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra as cover conductor for.
Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. He recently assisted productions at Canadian Opera Company, Michigan Opera Theatre, and Florida Grand Opera. As an active composer, his music has been performed in Mexico, France, Germany, and throughout the United States. Kalb holds degrees from the University of Michigan, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and New England Conservatory of Music.

**ROSA MERCEDES**

*Choreographer*

Born in Barcelona, Spain, Rosa Mercedes is an internationally acclaimed dancer and choreographer who Jennifer Dunning of *The New York Times* calls “sexy and hypnotically precise”, and *The Coral Cables Gazette* calls “incomparable”. Featured by dance companies, dance festivals and symphony orchestras throughout the United States and Europe, her extensive work in opera has been seen on the stages of companies such as The Metropolitan Opera, Teatro dell’Opera di Roma, Seattle Opera, Atlanta Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Baltimore Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Florentine Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, Dallas Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Washington Summer Opera, Tulsa Opera, Palm Beach Opera and many others. Her repertoire includes *Salome, Samson et Dalila, Aida, La traviata, Carmen, Die Zauberflöte, Faust, Rigoletto, Lucia di Lammermoor, Don Giovanni, Il barbiere di Siviglia, Turandot, Don Quichotte, Il trovatore, The Bartered Bride, La bohème, Così fan tutte, Hänsel und Gretel, Un ballo in maschera, The Merry Widow, La Gioconda, Die Fledermaus, L’incoronazione di Poppea*, and *Roméo et Juliette*.

**DONALD EDMOND THOMAS**

*Lighting Designer*

One of opera’s leading Lighting Designers, Donald Edmund Thomas designed productions for companies worldwide including Opéra de Montréal, Seattle Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Washington National Opera, Opera de Puerto Rico, Dallas Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Virginia Opera, Opera Pacific, the Florentine Opera in Milwaukee, Baltimore Opera, Opera Carolina, New Orleans Opera, Arizona Opera, Opera Columbus, Fort Worth Opera, Kentucky Opera, Opera Delaware, Toledo Opera and Sarasota Opera. He was the Principal Designer for the Summer Opera Theatre Company (Washington, DC), from 1990 through 2008, designing over 25 productions. Last season’s projects included a return to the production of David DiChiera and Bernard Uzan’s new classic opera *Cyrano* for Michigan Opera Theatre, after its world première at the same house in 2007, which Thomas also designed.
ADDITIONAL ARTIST PROFILES

JOANNE WEAVER
Wig and Makeup Designer

Born in England, Joanne Weaver came to the U.S. 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 MOT credits include The Magic Flute, Macbeth, The Passenger, Frida, The Merry Widow, Faust, Margaret Garner, Cyrano, The Pearl Fishers, Rigoletto and The Marriage of Figaro.

MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE PRODUCTION

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

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

TECHNICAL & DESIGN STAFF
Daniel T. Brinker, Technical Director
Monika Essen, Property Master & Scenic Artist
Heather DeFauw, Assistant Lighting Designer & Assistant Technical Director
Kevin Neuman, Assistant Technical Director
Dee Dorsey, Supertitle Operator

COSTUMES
Suzanne M. Hanna, Costume Director
Rosemarie I. Di Rita, Wardrobe Mistress
Susan A. Fox, First Hand
Craig Wickham, Cutter, Draper
Maureen Abele, Patricia Sova, Mary Ellen Shuffett, Stitchers

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

IATSE Local #38, Stage Crew
IATSE Local #786, Wardrobe
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! (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 Formaggio. 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: July 9-27, 2018
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 Detroit Opera House.

Create & Perform: July 9-20, 2018
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.
Ricky Ian Gordon, composer
Royce Vavrek, Librettist

Wayne S. Brown
President & Chief Executive Officer

Stephen Lord
Principal Conductor

David DiChiera
Founder & Artistic Director Emeritus

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