CARMEN  
October 15-23, 2016

SILENT NIGHT  
November 12-20, 2016

THE 2016 FALL OPERA SEASON IS MADE POSSIBLE BY FORD MOTOR COMPANY.

MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE
CELEBRATING THE DICHIERA LEGACY
16 | 17 SEASON
Thanks to thousands of generous individuals, families and businesses, the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan is a permanent source of community capital, dedicated to creating lasting positive benefit in our region. Through grantmaking, education and leadership on community issues, we help improve the quality of life for all residents of Southeast Michigan.
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Michigan Opera Theatre is a nonprofit cultural organization, whose activities are supported in part by the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, the National Endowment for the Arts, and other individuals, corporations, and foundations. Michigan Opera Theatre is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

THE NATIONAL OPERA CENTER

ART WORKS. National Endowment for the Arts Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs
Welcome to the Detroit Opera House (DOH) and the 2016/17 Michigan Opera Theatre (MOT) Fall Season — sponsored by our friends at the Ford Motor Company. This season promises to be an unforgettable experience for artists and audiences as we salute our founder and artistic director David DiChiera for his 46 years as the visionary for opera, musical theatre and dance in the City of Detroit and the State of Michigan. Consistent with our Strategic Plan, the opera season embraces the masterworks of the art form along with works of our time — starting with Bizet’s Carmen and culminating with Cyrano, a contemporary work by our own David DiChiera.

In addition to the participation of numerous international and local artists, Michigan Opera Theatre is fortunate to benefit from a dedicated Board of Directors, under the leadership of Board Chairman Rick Williams, along with a committed staff and countless volunteers — all of whom are devoted to presenting exceptional artistic experiences through our programming in the Detroit Opera House and throughout the region.

I am delighted to welcome our season subscribers and numerous single ticket buyers for tonight’s performance. Season subscribers enjoy the most generous range of benefits, including preferred seating, the largest discounts, and advance notification for purchasing tickets to special events. We invite our single ticket purchasers to contact our ticket office and apply the value of your ticket stub toward an opera or dance series in order that you too may enjoy generous benefits.

We appreciate our family of contributors to MOT, your gifts help to bridge the costs of our productions beyond ticket revenue and support our education and community initiatives. Donors to the DiChiera Society receive special benefits. For more information regarding this donor category, we invite you to call our Patron Services Office at (313) 237-3236.

September marked the beginning of the second year of the MOT Studio Artists Program — an initiative that began with the generous support of the William Davidson Foundation. This newly established Resident Artist Program is under the direction of internationally renowned tenor, Richard Leech. Throughout the year, these young artists will be featured on our stage and in various venues throughout the community.

Thanks to our devoted audience, MOT has been able to mount a robust opera and dance season in the DOH and performances of Mark Adamo’s opera Little Women at the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, along with a co-presentation of the Mark Morris Dance Company in partnership with the University Musical Society in Ann Arbor.

This fall we continue to observe the 20th Anniversary of the Detroit Opera House. Our home is a place of pride, and throughout the season we will continue to implement cosmetic changes in order to enhance your performance experience.

Please join us for our many program offerings in the Detroit Opera House and community venues throughout the year. We hope that you will share your experiences with your family and friends. We welcome your feedback, and wish to know how we can make your experience more enjoyable. Thank you for coming!

Warm wishes,

Wayne S. Brown
President & CEO
MUSIC
Georges Bizet

LIBRETTO
Ludovic Halevy and Henri Meilhac

WORLD PREMIERE
Opera Comique – Paris, France
March 3, 1875

CONDUCTOR
Valerio Galli

STAGE DIRECTOR
Ron Daniels

CHORUS MASTER
Suzanne Mallare Acton

CHOREOGRAPHER
Rosa Mercedes

SET DESIGN
Ricardo Hernandez

COSTUME DESIGN
Constance Hoffman

LIGHTING DESIGN
Kendall Smith

HAIR & MAKEUP DESIGN
Joanne Weaver

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
& FIGHT CORREOGRAPHER
Maria Todaro

STAGE MANAGER
Ken Saltzman

SUPERTITLES
Dee Dorsey

A co-production of Michigan Opera Theatre and Houston Grand Opera

October 15-23, 2016

THE 2016 FALL OPERA SEASON IS MADE POSSIBLE BY FORD MOTOR COMPANY.

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THE 2016 FALL OPERA SEASON IS MADE POSSIBLE BY FORD MOTOR COMPANY.
Harry Greenleaf
Joseph Galba
Ginger Costa Jackson
Briana Elyse Hunter

José sits apart, distracted. Drawn by women, airing her philosophy of life: “love is a wild bird that cannot be tamed.” José takes a gypsy who works in the factory, flirts with the local girls from the cigarette factory come to smoke and chat. Carmen, the arriving soldiers, one of whom is José. Girls from the factory: Carmen is involved in a fight. The girls run out, arguing over who started it. Lt. Zuniga orders José to arrest Carmen. Her wrists bound, she is left alone with José, who forbids her to speak to him. Instead, she flirtatiously sings “to herself” about the rendezvous she might make with “a certain officer” who has taken her fancy. José, intoxicated, agrees to let her escape; when she pushes him to the ground and runs off, he is arrested for his negligence.

**ACT TWO**
A month later, at Lillas Pastia’s Inn, Carmen sings a Gypsy song and dances for the customers. The matador Escamillo arrives, boasting of his exploits. He is attracted to Carmen, who puts off his amorous advances. When the inn closes, Dancaire and Remendado try to convince Frasquita, Mercedes, and Carmen to accompany them on their next smuggling trip. The girls are game, except for Carmen who says she is in love with José and is awaiting his return from prison. The others laugh at her, then depart as José is heard approaching. Carmen sings and dances for him, but when a distant bugle sounds the retreat, he says he must return to the barracks. Carmen mocks his blind obedience, saying he doesn’t love her; he replies by telling her how he has kept the flower she threw, the scent of its wilted blossom conjuring up her image in his prison cell. He refuses her suggestion that he desert the army to join her wild mountain life, but when Zuniga breaks in, looking for Carmen, the jealous José attacks his superior. Carmen summons the other Gypsies, who hold Zuniga captive until they can get away.

José, now an outlaw, has no choice but to join their band. The Gypsies rejoice in their life of freedom.

**ACT THREE**
In the smugglers’ mountain hideout, José regrets that he has betrayed his mother’s hopes. Carmen finds his homesickness and obsessive jealousy tiresome. Telling him he may well leave, she joins her friends, reading fortunes in the cards. Frasquita foresees a lover for herself, Mercedes a rich husband, but Carmen sees only death. When the Gypsies leave José as lookout, Micaela enters, frightened but determined to find him. She hides at the sound of a shot, fired by José as a warning to his indifference, Carmen tosses him a flower as the work bell calls the girls back inside. His musings on the bewitching “sorceress” are interrupted by Micaela, who brings news of José’s mother. She has sent him a kiss, which the girl delivers shyly. No sooner has she left than a disturbance is heard in the factory. Carmen is involved in a fight. The girls run out, arguing over who started it. Lt. Zuniga orders José to arrest Carmen. Her wrists bound, she is left alone with José, who forbids her to speak to him. Instead, she flirtatiously sings “to herself” about the rendezvous she might make with “a certain officer” who has taken her fancy. José, intoxicated, agrees to let her escape; when she pushes him to the ground and runs off, he is arrested for his negligence.

**Synopsis**

**ACT ONE**
In a square in Seville, soldiers watch the passing crowd. Micaela arrives in search of her sweetheart, Don José, a corporal. A fellow officer, Morales, tells her José will be along soon; when Morales offers himself as a substitute, she leaves hastily. As the guard changes, children imitate the arriving soldiers, one of whom is José. Girls from the cigarette factory come to smoke and chat. Carmen, a gypsy who works in the factory, flirts with the local men, airing her philosophy of life: “love is a wild bird that cannot be tamed”. José sits apart, distracted. Drawn by

**Cast**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morales (a corporal)</td>
<td>Harry Greenleaf</td>
<td>October 15, 19, 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micaela (a peasant girl)</td>
<td>Cecilia Violetta Lopez</td>
<td>October 15, 19, 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don José (a corporal)</td>
<td>Marcelo Puente (October 15, 19, 22)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zuniga (Don Jose's commanding officer)</td>
<td>Brent Michael Smith</td>
<td>October 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carmen (a gypsy)</td>
<td>Ginger Costa Jackson (October 15, 19, 22)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frasquita (Carmen's friend)</td>
<td>Angela Theis</td>
<td>October 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercedes (Carmen's friend)</td>
<td>Briana Elyse Hunter</td>
<td>October 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Escamilo (a matador)</td>
<td>Luis Alejandro Orozco</td>
<td>October 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>El Dancairo (a smuggler)</td>
<td>Jeff Byrnes</td>
<td>October 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>El Remendado (a smuggler)</td>
<td>Joseph Michael Brent</td>
<td>October 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lillas Pastia (Innkeeper)</td>
<td>Rob Grodin</td>
<td>October 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supernumeraries</td>
<td>Timothy Brown, Christian Darmakasih, Bruce Davis, Bella Dow, Mark Ely, Jennifer Kieffer, Laura Lavelly, Lauren Lenz, George Manning, Jacob Robertson, Joe T. Sanders, Jr., Elina Suave, Paul Snyder, Marvin Tookes, Lindsey Tycholiz, Wendell Walker, Paul Wenger, Hilary Zabawski</td>
<td>October 22, 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flamenco Dancer</td>
<td>Victoria Treglowe (October 15, 19)</td>
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<td>Lisa Montes (October 22, 23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Torero Boy</td>
<td>Joseph Galba</td>
<td>October 15, 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional Cast Members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sung in French with English supertitle translations</td>
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<td>Running time: 3 hours, 15 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>The last MOT production of Carmen was May 9-17, 2009</td>
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Carmen
The last MOT production of Carmen was May 9-17, 2009

- Michigan Opera Theatre Studio Artist
- An opera in three acts
- Sung in French with English supertitle translations
- Running time: 3 hours, 15 minutes

Courtesy of Opera News
Finding the Real Carmen
by Austin Stewart

Casting the first Carmen was no small task for Georges Bizet. Now, it is hard to imagine a singer not jumping at the opportunity to perform the role, one that has helped make the careers of no less artists than Regina Resnik, Marilyn Horne, Risë Stevens, Muriel Smith, and Denyce Graves. She is hands down the most famous character in all of opera. Her melodies are immortalized in countless films, commercials, and cartoons, and chances are we’ll go home humming a few of them today. And yet, in nineteenth-century Paris, Carmen was far more scandalizing than she is today. Agreeing to perform the role meant that a singer risked a professional—and perhaps personal—association with the sensual femme fatale.

TOO GREAT A RISK

Zulma Bouffar, who was the composer Jacques Offenbach’s muse and mistress, first refused the role on account of the story’s fatal conclusion. One gossip columnist in the Paris press revealed that “The librettist did not want her to play the part because it was out of the question for Zulma to be stabbed,” stipulating that the end of the story be rewritten. Bizet was vehemently opposed to any such change. He then approached Marie Rôze, who responded to the composer in writing, confessing that unless the salacious nature of Carmen was moralized in some way, she felt that “the role would not suit me, or, more accurately, that I would not be suited to it.” (Rôze eventually came to a different conclusion after Carmen met success in Vienna, and played the role in as distant locales as Boston, Cincinnati, and possibly Detroit.) Until then, the character Prosper Mérimée fashioned thirty years earlier in his novella had been safely restrained by the written page. Now even the rumor of bringing Carmen to life was impinging upon a successful premiere. Tensions between Bizet, the librettists, and the directors were running high, and a leading lady had to be found.

Exasperated, Camille Du Locle, a co-director of the Opéra-Comique where Carmen would receive its premiere, wrote to Célestine Galli-Marié. She was part of a small, though not insignificant, theatrical dynasty. She was brought up around the Opéra—a competing theatre that produced the grand opéra of Hector Berlioz and Giacomo Meyerbeer—where her father was a singer and singing instructor. He is most remembered for originating Tonio in Donizetti’s The Daughter of the Regiment. Galli-Marié was only ever instructed in singing by her father. In 1862 the directors of the Opéra-Comique discovered Galli-Marié singing The Bohemian Girl at Rouen (under the baton of a nineteen-year old Jules Massenet), and she was contracted on the spot to sing in Paris. Four years later, and after a career primarily spent playing pageboy “trouser roles,” Ambroise Thomas composed the title role in Mignon for Galli-Marié. She claimed that, in this role, she tried to create a living, three-dimensional manifestation of the paintings that inspired her interpretation. It was the first of two roles she would immortalize.

Galli-Marié was on holiday in Spain when the first correspondence from Du Locle regarding Carmen arrived. Then thirty-six years old, and just a few months older than Bizet, Célestine Galli-Marié was regarded as an auspicious choice for the role. When news surfaced that she had agreed to play Carmen, one critic wrote: “She is small and alluring, moves like a cat with an expression at once rebellious and full of mischief—there is something capricious, brazen about her whole manner and personality.” Another report came from a fellow actor, alleging that she only agreed to take the role because “She had not read the novel, and knew nothing about this immortal character.” Du Locle and Bizet had found their Carmen.

PUTTING THE FATAL IN FATALE

From the start, Galli-Marié was an active participant in the final molding of Carmen. She instructed Bizet not to observe too closely the vocal range Thomas used for Mignon, writing Du Locle to tell Bizet that “he should follow instead the higher and partly coloratura Marguerite in Gounod’s Faust.” Clearly Bizet was almost finished drafting the work, and there were only a few scenes left to compose where he could follow this instruction. Then there is the often-repeated story about Galli-Marié and the creation of Carmen’s famous entrance aria, the Habanera, which Charles Pigot, Bizet’s first biographer, told this way:

“The popular Habanera that Carmen sings at her entrance was written during rehearsals. Bizet had initially written a song with chorus... but Galli-Marié didn’t find it to her taste. She wanted from the first to have a big effect, to establish the gypsy’s character boldly and definitely... a Spanish song, highly colored and a little bit sexy... Bizet didn’t dare refuse. We know about singers’ demands and their tyranny.”

She is painted here as the “diva” with big demands that exhaust the composer, but a more nuanced reading echoes the multi-faceted character study that she brought to Mignon. Galli-Marié was not demanding a showpiece for her voice, but looking for the right music that would catalyze the physical insubordination of Carmen: “caresses of the voice and glance, sensual inflections, provocative looks, sexy gestures...” (Pigot) They settled on adapting a Cuban-inspired dance tune by the Spanish composer Sebastián Yradier, which at the time Bizet believed was a Spanish folksong. When they learned that the actual composer of the melody had died only ten years earlier, Bizet was obliged to acknowledge his source in his score. With its serpentine descending
lines, seductive exoticism and layers of rhythmic oomph, Galli-Marié got exactly what Carmen needed to make an unforgettable and realistic entrance.

To that effect, journalists at the premiere responded to the “réalisme” of Galli-Marié not too positively. “She has her charms and a distinctive casualness. On this occasion, though, one could criticize her for having gone beyond her natural talents. Instead of being lively, she was base.” Many of the newspapers in 1875 shared this opinion, and blamed Galli-Marié’s realistic representation of a seductive, Romani, cigarette-rolling, gypsy for the work’s initial failure. In short, it was her “exaggerative,” “repulsive,” and insufficiently restrained gestures that “oozed vice.” But this would not stop Galli-Marié from creating a faithful actualization of the Carmen she envisioned. She found time to study flamenco dance while performing Carmen in Barcelona, and began using carnations instead of roses in her hair, as the gypsy women she spoke with in Spain said they were their preferred flower. There is also a legend that on the eve of the 33rd performance of Carmen on 2 June 1875, Galli-Marié had a premonition of Bizet’s death while reading the tarot cards in Act III. She fainted, and the rest of the performance was cancelled. Bizet died that night of a heart attack.

While Bizet never witnessed the success of his masterpiece, Galli-Marié became virtually inseparable from the role she unwittingly agreed to create. She gave her final performance of Carmen on December 11, 1890, in a charity performance to raise funds for a monument to Bizet. After fifteen years and nearly 500 performances, Célestine Galli-Marié had become the incomparable embodiment of Carmen: “It is a rare pleasure to see an artist exert herself body and soul to give the spectator the most intense illusion of reality. . . She rendered the passionate, bizarre, dynamic, cruel portrait of this girl of the streets with a power and an ease that compel admiration.”

Richard Sloan was a loyal patron of Michigan Opera Theatre since the company’s founding. Together with his wife Sheila, Richard served as a Trustee from 1976 until 2012. As the President of Suburban Detroit Theatres, Richard was known throughout the community as “Mr. Movie”, and as such his career led him to the forefront of the entertainment industry. Richard was one of Barbara Streisand’s early fans dating back to when she was an 18 year-old singer at the Caucus Club, and she recognized his encouragement on one of her first albums. During his tenure with MOT, Richard saw the company he loved establish its presence in Detroit, grow to tour across the state, and renovate and move into its home at the Detroit Opera House. Richard cared deeply about the arts across the community, supporting and serving local cultural organizations, including the DIA, DSO and the Jewish Ensemble Theatre. In honor of his commitment and all that the Sloans have contributed to the life of Michigan Opera Theatre, the October 15, 2016 performance of Carmen is dedicated to his memory. Richard Sloan, 1924-2014.

Roger Sherman worked with Michigan Opera Theatre in his professional life as Program Manager at WRCJ, and as a dedicated supporter, and as a Director and Trustee from 1993 until 2012. Both Roger and his wife Judie served on numerous Board committees and as chairs of multiple Opera Ball and special event committees. These included the 1993 Triumphal Ball and the first Ball on the stage of the soon to be Detroit Opera House, What it Was...What it Will Be in 1994. Fittingly, Roger’s Trustee service was centered in the Communications and Public Relations sphere. Judie played active roles on Education and Community Outreach and various Development Committees, including her work on the “New Century Fund” and “The Crowning Achievement” Campaigns. In honor of his commitment and all their service together as a couple, the October 22, 2016 performance of Carmen is dedicated to his memory. Roger Fowler Sherman, Sr., 1938-2015.

A gift in loving memory of Roger Sherman has been made by Jack and Kathleen Turner.
Silent Night

November 12-20, 2016

MUSIC
Kevin Puts

LIBRETTO
Mark Campbell

WORLD PREMIERE
November 12, 2011, Ordway Theatre - St. Paul, Minnesota

CONDUCTOR
David Charles Abell

STAGE DIRECTOR
Eric Simonson

CHORUS MASTER
Suzanne Mallare Acton

SCENIC DESIGN
Francis O’Connor

COSTUME DESIGN
Kärin Kopischke

LIGHTING DESIGN
Marcus Dilliard

HAIR & MAKEUP DESIGN
Joanne Weaver

PROJECTIONS DESIGN
Andrzej Goulding

SOUND DESIGN
C. Andrew Mayer

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
Andrew Nienaber

FIGHT DIRECTOR
Chris Barbeau

ORIGINAL FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHY
Doug Scholz-Carlson

STAGE MANAGER
Ken Saltzman

SUPERTITLES
Dee Dorsey

SCOTTISH DIALECT CONSULTANT
Michael J. Barnes

Silent Night, based on the screenplay by Christian Carion for the motion picture Joyeux Noël produced by Nord-Ouest Production

Commissioned by Minnesota Opera
A Minnesota Opera New Works Initiative Production

by arrangement with Aperto Press, publisher Bill Holab Music: Sole Agent

Scenery, properties, costumes and media files for this production are owned by Minnesota Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Cincinnati Opera, and Fort Worth Opera and were constructed by the Minnesota Opera Shops.
**Cast**

*In order of vocal appearance*

- Anna Sorensen (an opera singer & Nikolaus Sprink’s lover) ................. Erin Wall
- Nikolaus Sprink (an opera singer & German soldier) .................... Chad Johnson
- German General .......................... See Program Insert
- Father Palmer ............................ Daniel Belcher
- Jonathan Dale (a Scottish soldier) ............... John Robert Lindsey
- Madeleine Audebert (wife of Lt. Audebert) .......... Briana Elyse Hunter +
- Lt. Audebert (a French officer) ............ Philip Addis
- William Dale (brother of Jonathan Dale) ............ Jeff Byrnes +
- Lt. Gordon (a Scottish officer) ............ Gabriel Preisser
- French General .............................. Ricardo Lugo
- Ponchel (aide-de-camp of Lt. Audebert) .................... Alexandre Sylvestre
- Kronprinz (son of Kaiser Wilhelm II) .................... Joseph Michael Brent +
- Lt. Horstmayer (a German officer) ............ Kristopher Irmiter
- British Major ................................. Brent Michael Smith +

+ Michigan Opera Theatre Studio Artist
An opera in two acts
Sung in English, German, and French
with English supertitle translations.
Running time: 2 hours, 30 minutes
A Michigan Opera Theatre premiere

**Synopsis**

**PROLOGUE**

Late summer, 1914. War is declared. In Berlin, the announcement disrupts a performance by opera singers Anna Sorensen and Nikolaus Sprink. In a Scottish church, William convinces his younger brother Jonathan to enlist with him. In the Paris apartment of the Audeberts, Madeleine excoriates her husband for leaving while she is pregnant with their first child.

**ACT ONE**

A battlefield near the French border, just before Christmas. A battle is fought between the German, French, and Scottish troops. William is shot and Jonathan must leave him to die. Back at the Scottish bunker, Father Palmer offers Jonathan solace. In the French bunker, Lt. Audebert finds the French General in his office, who reprimands him. Audebert laments the loss of his wife’s photograph. He sings of needing sleep, soon echoed by the other soldiers. In the German bunker, Nikolaus reveals his despair.

Later, gifts arrive for the German soldiers, courtesy of the Kronprinz. Horstmayer receives word that Nikolaus has been ordered to sing with Anna at the Kronprinz’s nearby chalet. Ponchel brings coffee to Audebert, which reminds Ponchel of having coffee every morning with his mother; the alarm clock he carries rings each day to mark the ritual. Jonathan writes to his mother, not mentioning his brother’s death. Anna and Nikolaus perform for the Kronprinz. Anna has arranged for Nikolaus to spend the night with her, but he insists on returning to the battlefield. She vows to accompany him.

The French soldier Gueusselin volunteers to infiltrate the German bunker and heads into no man’s land. The Scottish soldiers drink whiskey and play the bagpipes, and Father Palmer sings a sentimental ballad, which the other soldiers overhear. Nikolaus returns, and the soldiers are stunned to see Anna. When the Scottish song ends, Nikolaus responds with a Christmas song, and a bagpiper joins in. Nikolaus ascends the bunker and slowly moves to the center of no man’s land. Gueusselin abandons his plan. The three lieutenants, each waving a white flag, agree to a cease-fire... but only for Christmas Eve. The soldiers cautiously move toward each other, eventually sharing provisions and trading names. Anna appears, inspiring awe among the men. Father Palmer celebrates mass, while Jonathan finds his brother’s body, vowing revenge. Father Palmer urges them to “go in peace”.

**ACT TWO**

The next morning, Jonathan tries to bury his brother. Because the truce is officially over, two German sentries are prepared to shoot him, but Father Palmer and Lt. Gordon intervene. Horstmayer proposes that they bury the dead, and the three lieutenants decide to extend the truce. Father Palmer delivers last rites to the dead and the soldiers form a processional bearing the wagon of bodies away. Anna promises Nikolaus that he will not suffer the same fate. News of the cease-fire has reached headquarters, and the British Major, the Kronprinz, and the French General all react in anger. Horstmayer prepares to return to war, and Nikolaus berates him for his allegiance to the Fatherland. Horstmayer arrests Nikolaus for insubordination, but Anna takes his hand and leads him across no man’s land to the French bunker, where he demands asylum.

The British Major admonishes the Scottish soldiers for participating in the truce. They are to be transferred to the front lines. When a German soldier is seen crossing the battlefield, the Major orders him killed, and Jonathan compiles. Audebert returns to his office and discovers the French General, who delivers word of his punishment. Audebert informs the General – his father that he has a son. The Kronprinz banishes the German soldiers to Pomerania. As the soldiers are taken away, they hum the Scottish ballad from Christmas Eve. Over a now-empty battlefield, snow begins to fall.

*Courtesy of Minnesota Opera*
The Christmas Truce of 1914, as the events at the center of Silent Night are popularly known, was an outbreak of peace amid the devastation of war along the industrialized battlefields of the Western Front. It is one of the most documented and romanticized non-combat stories of the First World War—football matches, the exchange of cognacs, chocolates, and cigars, and of shared memorial services over the fresh graves in no man’s land. Silent Night is but one example that takes on the subject of the 1914 holiday cease-fire, from novels and histories to Paul McCartney’s 1983 music video for the anti-war song “Pipes of Peace.” Soldiers at the front that winter wrote diaries and letters home, and official records kept by the battalions and regiments establish the timeline of events that took place during that, as one young English private called it, “weird Christmas.” These are a few of those first-hand recollections, many of which have recently come to light in Terri Blom Crocker’s The Christmas Truce: Myth, Memory, and the First World War.

“War today,” announced a December 25, 1914 diary entry for the 16th Queen’s Westminsters infantry regiment, commenting also on the amicable “conversation with enemy between the trenches” that took place. “No shot fired all day,” wrote another diarist for the 1st Royal Warwickshire regiment, while another called it a “curious state of affairs” that occasioned an informal exchange of courtesies between troops. War records and letters sent from both sides of the Western Front convey the sense of relief, even delight, experienced by soldiers during their unexpected holiday in the trenches near the small village of Ploegsteert, Belgium. Following the First Battle of the Marne in September that had dashed any hopes of a swift conquest, both sides attempted to outflank the other. Eventually the soldiers had to dig in, creating some 475 miles of trenches from the North Sea to Switzerland. Emerging for just a few hours from those foxholes and ditches was a welcomed change. The cease-fires that occurred were not prearranged or coordinated. Similar events were not uncommon during the conflict, but the spontaneity and quantity of those that happened outside Ploegsteert make the Christmas Truce an almost unbelievable story.

The idea of a truce on Christmas was first suggested by Pope Benedict XI early in December 1914. As it became obvious that the conflict would not come to a quick end, the pope pleaded with combatant countries to let their “guns fall silent at least upon the night the angels sang,” allowing time for negotiations to lead to an honorable peace. Military leadership on all sides ignored the appeal. Sir John French, commander in chief of the British Expeditionary Force, was the first to order “instant fire” on any German white flag raised on the Western Front. On December 22, Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, sent a similar message to the Royal Navy: “Any white flag hoisted by a German ship is to be fired on as a matter of principle.” Yet while the pontiff’s request was officially rejected, news of it spread among the soldiers.

Roughly two-thirds of the troops along the front participated in some type of cease-fire on that day, with regiments stationed across more than fifteen miles of the twenty-mile front near Ploegsteert reporting no combat. In some cases, as Graham Williams of the Fifth London Rifle Brigade recalled, the armistice was foreshadowed the night before by carol singing: “First the Germans would sing one of their carols and then we would sing one of ours, until when we started up “O Come, All Ye Faithful” the Germans immediately joined in singing the same hymn to the Latin words Adeste Fideles. And I thought, well, this is really a most extraordinary thing—two nations both singing the same carol in the middle of a war.” Germans placed lit Christmas trees, which had been provided to every unit, along the parapets of their dugouts. Rifleman Ernest Morley of London described in a letter home how the truce began in his sector: “A German shouted ‘A Merry Christmas English. We’re not shooting tonight.’
yelled back a similar message.... As fighting ceased the two lines looked like an illuminated fête... we had all the candles & lights we could muster stuck on our bayonets above the parapet.”

Lt. Michael Holroyd, a British machine gun officer in the 1st Battalion, Hampshire Regiment, noted that “the carols of Christmas Eve were followed by friendly exchange of greetings on Christmas morning,” and impromptu meetings were arranged in no man’s land. And they did not go empty handed. A young Private Squire wrote home that the “Germans came out of [their trench] and we met halfway and talked and exchanged souvenirs, our own bullets for theirs, and they also gave some of our fellows cigars of which they said they had plenty and we gave them tins of bully beef as they said they have very little food.” Others reported exchanging local liquors received from home for the holiday, buttons from their uniforms, and sharing photos of family.

Another element of the meetings were makeshift football matches. A few games were actually played with teams being chosen and scores recorded, though without a proper soccer ball they were kicking about whatever they could find, and the outcome always favored the regiment reporting the game in their diary.

Not all of the interactions between the troops were this lighthearted, however. A number of battalions used the cease-fire as an opportunity to retrieve the bodies of their fallen comrades. Sergeant Richard Lintott recorded in his diary that he found in no man’s land men from both sides “burying some dead which had been lying about since October 21st.” Another English officer was present when “they stuck a bit of wood over the grave–no name on it only ‘Fur Vaterland and Freiheit’ (For Fatherland and Freedom).” The troops also shared prayer services over the dead. These burial services, as brief as they were necessary, were a primary reason for many of the troops to observe the truce. “Our [chaplain] arranged the prayers and Psalms etc., and then our interpreter wrote them out in German. Then the service was read first in English by our own Padre and then in German by a boy who was studying for the ministry. It was an extraordinary and most wonderful sight.”

While the Christmas Truce reflected our better instincts and empathy as humans, it lasted but a few days at most and was not to be repeated the next year. In the end, the desire for peace would not be confused with the need for victory. Bruce Bairnsfather, a British officer and cartoonist whose personal account of wartime in the trenches, Bullets and Billets, became a bestseller in Britain, spoke for many comrades when he wrote, “There was not an atom of hate on either side that day; and yet, on our side, not for a moment was the will to beat them relaxed. It was just like the interval between the rounds in a friendly boxing match.” But the end of the Great War was nowhere near its last round. Bairnsfather’s report of the day ends with him heading back over the parapet, looking back to see a man in his battalion “who was a bit of an amateur hair dresser in civil life, cutting the unnaturally long hair of a docile Boche [German soldier],” and reminding us that our enemy can also be a friend.
**MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE CHORUS – CARMEN**

**SOPRANO**
- Brandy Adams*
- Mysti Byrnes*
- Claire Chardon
- Fidelia Darmakasih
- Suzanne Grogan
- Nicole Joseph
- Mary Martin
- Valerie Martinez
- Sandra Periord
- Kyle Schreiber*
- Schyler Sheltrown
- Heidi Bowen Zook

**TENOR**
- Gregory Ashe
- Errin Brooks
- Darren DeWitt
- Michael Fowler
- Mark Istratie
- Richard Jackson, Jr.
- Adrian Leskiw
- Bradley Miller
- Carrick Secorski
- Jason Thomas

**ALTO**
- Andrea Apel*
- Yvonne Friday
- Hillary LaBonte*
- Rachel McIntosh
- Meggan Muhle
- Anna Nadasky*
- Diane Schoff
- Tiffanie Waldron
- Tamara Whitty
- Chantel Woodard

**BASS**
- Joseph Edmonds
- Kurt Frank
- Branden Hood
- Matthew Konopacki
- Miroslav Manovski
- Blair Mellow
- Pette Moore
- Paolo Pacheco
- Gregory Stinson
- David Twigg
- Justin Watson
- Norman Weber

*Gypsy dancers

**MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE CHORUS – SILENT NIGHT**

**TENOR**
- Gregory Ashe
- French Soldier #3
- Errin Brooks
- Scottish Soldier #2
- Mark Craig
- Darren DeWitt
- Bagpipe
- Michael Fowler
- Mark Istratie
- Richard Jackson, Jr.

**BASS**
- Kurt Frank
- Brandon Hood
- German Sentry/Soldier #2
- Marko Farion
- Matthew Fleisher
- Brett Thompson
- Jeff Wilkinson

**BASS**
- Pette Moore
- Constantine Novotny
- Guesselin
- Paolo Pacheco
- French Soldier #1
- Bradley Schick
- Ken Shepherd
- Gregory Stinson
- Daniel Twigg
- French Sentry
- Justin Watson
- Norman Weber

**2016 CHORUS SPONSORS**

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**A Special Thank You to Our Chairman**

R. Jamison “Rick” Williams has been a member of the MOT Board of Directors and a Trustee since 2000 and its board chair since 2003. As Trustees, Rick and his wife Karen have supported our company with their leadership, generosity, and vision, aiming to make a lasting impact. As leadership volunteers, they have played a central role guiding the company through significant challenges. Together, they have championed David DiChiera's vision to produce and present productions that connect directly and emotionally with diverse audiences, playing a significant role in many of the company’s successes including _Cyrano, Frida, The Passenger, and The Tender Land_.

The Williams are central figures in the great story of this institution. Their influence, expertise, and support has been essential to MOT’s success, survival, and stability.

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Rick and Karen Williams
Michigan Opera Theatre Children's Chorus (MOTCC) is a groundbreaking ensemble and 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!

Michigan Opera Theatre Children's Chorus performing in the Saturday October 15 and Saturday October 22 performances of Carmen:
- Shiloh Beaton
- Alexandria Beck
- Natalie Corrigan
- Portteia Davidson
- Xaneveya Davidson
- Cavelle Doucet Lefebvre
- Gabrielle Duso
- Eddie Eichenhorn
- Jaedyn Footitt
- Jehnya Footitt
- Katherine Fuller
- Soleil Garcia-Johnson
- Micah Hobbs
- Noah Lash
- Molly Levin
- Mia Martin
- Emma McDonald
- Emma Palmer
- Beatrix Reilly
- Kevyn Roessler
- Campbelle Stencel
- Hazel Ward
- Arsh Wasnik
- Brigitte Zook

Michigan Opera Theatre Children's Chorus performing in the Wednesday October 19 and Sunday October 23 performances of Carmen:
- Melody Balos
- Stephanie Barroso
- Ryan Blankenburg
- Amelia Borys
- Brooke Bugajewski
- Jessica Decker
- Kristen D'Souza
- Nina Georgeff
- Charles Graff
- Emily Johnson
- Rebecca Lucksom
- Ryan Lutes
- Kathryn Migrin
- Rachel Miltimore
- Amber Ohlsson
- Brooke Pacifico
- Matteo Papadopoulos
- Samantha Radman
- Skylar Reynolds
- Laura Estela Rosales
- Noah Trudeau
- Isabella Vespri
- Benjamin Ward
- Grace Watson
- Natalie Watson

UPCOMING MOTCC PERFORMANCES:

**A Winter Fantasy**
Sponsored by Neighborhood SEEN Holiday Concert and Fundraiser – at the Detroit Opera House
Sunday December 11, 2016 at 3 p.m.
Ring in the season with beautiful choral music sung by the MOTCC. Doors open at 2:30 p.m. to register for silent auction at 3 p.m.
Tickets are $25 for adults 18 and older, $50 for box seats, $10 for ages 5 and older, and free for children 4 and younger.
Tickets include entrance to the concert and silent auction.

**The Hobbit**
MOTCC Children's Opera – at the Detroit Opera House
Student Dress Rehearsal:
Friday April 28, 2017 at 11:00 a.m.
Tickets (must be purchased in advance):
$10/Student; 1 FREE chaperone ticket for every 10 tickets.
$15 students; $25 adults
Public Performance:
Saturday April 29, 2017 at 2:30 p.m.
Tickets: Adult, $35 and Children $15 for ages 5 and older and free for children 4 and under.

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
The five artists of 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 in main stage and community productions and myriad other performance settings. Throughout their residency they work to hone their skills through master classes and training with an array of world-class professionals, guest artists, coaches, directors, and conductors. They receive advanced individual training from Director of Resident Artist Programs, celebrated tenor, Richard Leech, Assistant Music director, Suzanne Mallare Acton, and Studio Coach/Accompanist, Tessa Hartle, and others, and importantly, benefit from the guidance and mentorship of Dr. David DiChiera.

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 productions are now selected and mounted specifically for the Studio Artist Program. This season, the Studio Artists will fill leading and featured roles in MOT’s production of Mark Adamo’s *Little Women*, as MOT continues to fulfill its community initiative to annually produce full-scale opera outside of the Detroit Opera House in venues throughout metro Detroit.

This second season of the Studio Program sees the return of four of our Studio Artists: soprano, Angela Theis; tenor, Joseph Michael Brent; baritone, Jeff Byrnes; and bass Brent Michal Smith. Joining us is the dynamic and exciting mezzo-soprano, Briana Elyse Hunter. Audiences will enjoy Ms. Hunter and all of our Studio Artists in *Carmen*, and other productions throughout the season, and as the leads in *Little Women* at the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts in March. Please see the Artist Profiles in this program for more information about each of them. Also joining our Studio Artist Program team as staff Coach/Accompanist is Tessa Hartle. As a coach, Maestra Hartle brings a wide range of experience and expertise to the program, and as an accomplished accompanist, this season she will lend her talent to many MOT Studio performances throughout metro Detroit.
THE ARTISTS OF MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE STUDIO

Michigan Opera Theatre Studio curriculum includes:

Career Development
* Master classes
* Audition preparation and support
* Vocal study support through private voice instruction

Performances
* Main stage and community engagement performances
* Studio and company events
* Master class presentations in Detroit Public Schools

Additional Areas of Focus
* Stagecraft
* Movement and Dance Styles
* Theatrical Makeup
* Stage Combat

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.

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 greatest opera houses and symphonies. Best known for his interpretation of iconic tenor roles such as Rodolfo, Cavaradossi, Pinkerton, Don José, Faust, Roméo, Hoffmann, The Duke in Rigoletto, and Riccardo in Un Ballo in Maschera and he is featured on over twenty recordings and videos. His solo release “from the heart” can be found on the Telarc label. In his leadership role with MOT Studio Mr. Leech is able to utilize all aspects of his broad experience as he oversees the development of some of opera’s most exciting artists and brings their performances to our stage and into our community.

TESSA HARTLE
MOT Studio Coach/Accompanist

Tessa Hartle has established herself as one of opera’s most valued and in demand young artist coach/accompanists. In addition to joining the team with Michigan Opera Theatre Studio, she will continue to serve on the music staff of Opera Theatre of St. Louis’ summer season. Since 2008 she has worked with young artists throughout the U.S. with companies such as Florida Grand Opera, Sarasota Opera, Virginia Opera Association, Des Moines Metro Opera, Aspen Opera Theater Center, Opera North, Urban Arias, and many others. She holds a Master’s degree in Collaborative Piano from the University of Maryland and a Bachelor’s degree in Piano Performance from the University of Michigan.

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DAVID CHARLES ABELL
Conductor, Silent Night
For conductor Mr. Abell, classical music, opera, film, music, and musical theater all contribute to a diverse career, unified by a serious, yet theatrical approach. David has conducted many of the top British orchestras including the London Symphony, London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, and the Bournemouth Symphony. Stateside, he has appeared with the Atlanta, Cincinnati, Boston Pops, and Philly Pops Orchestras.
David’s many television and radio appearances encompass a wide repertoire, as do his catalog of recordings. In 2015, he made his English National Opera debut, conducting Sweeney Todd, starring Emma Thompson and Bryn Terfel.

SUZANNE MALLARE ACTON
Chorus Master, Carmen, Silent Night
Suzanne Acton has received wide acclaim for her choral direction involving more than 125 productions in seven languages. Conducting credits include West Side Story, Music Man, Pirates of Penzance, The Mikado, Daughter of the Regiment, Carmen, La Traviata and Carmina Burana with The Medium for MOT; My Fair Lady and La Traviata for Dayton Opera; Merry Widow and Madame Butterfly for Artpark; and Tosca for Augusta Opera. As founding Director of the MOT Children’s Chorus, Ms. Acton was instrumental in developing the inaugural 2007-2008 season. She is also the Artistic and Music Director of metro Detroit’s Rackham Choir.

PHILIP ADDIS
Lieutenant Audebert, Silent Night
Canadian baritone Philip Addis is praised for his creamy, bright, smooth voice as much as for his spell-binding, daring, yet sensitive interpretations. A rising star on the international stage, Addis has performed in opera, concerts and recitals throughout Canada, the United States, Europe, and Japan.

CHRISTOPHER BARBEAU
Fight Director, Silent Night
Currently the fight director and stunt coordinator for Michigan Opera Theatre, Village Shakespeare Festival, and the Michigan Classical Repertory Theater, Mr. Barbeau has been involved in stunt work for 42 years with 28 feature films, over 600 stage credits and many appearances as a stunt performer. Formerly the fight master for the Michigan Renaissance Festival, he holds a 3rd degree black belt in Aikido, a 2nd degree black belt in Jiu Jitsu, and was the 1975 National Junior épée champion. Mr. Barbeau holds a BA from the University of Michigan in English literature, History, Philosophy and Physics. Twenty-six years ago he created and currently directs the Ring of Steel Action Theatre, with which he teaches a variety of classes at all levels for schools across the nation, and provides instruction in theatrical combat and stunts. He has worked with opera singers for the past 16 years and serves as a regular guest artist at Cornell and for both the National Educational Theater Association’s Michigan and International Thespian Festivals.

DANIEL BELCHER
Father Palmer, Silent Night
Grammy Award winning baritone Daniel Belcher has performed in many of the world’s music capitals, including Paris, London, New York, San Francisco, Berlin, Stuttgart, Amsterdam, Geneva, Toronto, Tokyo, Seoul, and Houston. With a repertoire of more than 60 roles, Belcher has championed roles from the Baroque and those composed expressly for him. He came to international attention in 2004, creating the role of Prior Walter in Peter Eötvös’ Angels in America for the Theatre du Chatelet in Paris for which he was hailed by London’s The Guardian as “possessing the kind of powerhouse stuff that indicates a star in the making.”

RON DANIELS
Director, Carmen
A native of Brazil, Mr. Daniels is a founding member of the renowned Teatro Oficina, in São Paulo. He is also a former Artistic Director of The Other Place Theatre, the Royal Shakespeare Company’s experimental theater in England. In the 1990s, Mr. Daniels served as Associate Artistic Director of the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge, MA. Mr. Daniels presently lives in NYC and works as a freelance director. Besides directing at many of the major regional theatres in the U.S., his work in opera has included a number of new productions for Boston Lyric (Re Pastore), Houston Grand Opera (Carmen), Colorado Opera (Tosca), and LA Opera (Madame Butterfly).

MARCUS DILLIARD
Lighting Designer, Silent Night
Marcus has designed for opera and theater across North America, including numerous productions for Minnesota Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Madison Opera, and Portland Opera. Previous designs include Don Giovanni for Lyric Opera of Kansas City, The Barber of Seville for Madison Opera, Gypsy and All is Calm for Theatre Latta Da, To Kill a Mockingbird for the Guthrie Theater, Carmina Burana for Minnesota Dance Theater, and Silent Night for L’Opera de Montreal. Recent projects include Tales of Hoffman and Romeo et Juliette for Madison Opera and Dead Man Walking for Lyric Opera of Kansas City.
SANDRA PIQUES EDDY
Carmen, Carmen (October 23)
Last season, mezzo soprano Sandra Piques Eddy made her role debut as Charlotte in Werther with Boston Lyric Opera before returning to the Metropolitan Opera roster to cover Maddalena in Rigoletto. Career highlights include numerous appearances to great acclaim as the title role in Carmen, at Portland Opera, Opera Colorado, Opera North (UK), Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Opera Coeur d'Alene and Chicago Opera Theater. Other signature roles include: Dorabella in Così fan tutte with Hyogo Performing Arts Center - Japan, Boston Lyric Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, New York City Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Rosina with Vancouver Opera, Opera Omaha, Austin Lyric Opera, Jacksonville Symphony, Lyric Opera of Kansas City and Crested Butte Music Festival.

VALERIO GALLI
Conductor, Carmen
A Viareggio native, Maestro Galli was born into the cradle of where some of the greatest versimo operas were written, and he is emerging as one of the foremost authoritarians on Puccini and his fellow composers of the era. Mr. Galli launched his career in 2007 at the age of 27 with Tosca, for the 53rd Puccini Festival in Torre del Lago. His opera conducting debut occurred in 2004 with Madama Butterfly.
Past conducting engagements include: Rigoletto, Pagliacci, Carmen, Cavalleria Rusticana, La Traviata, and The Masked Ball.
Maestro Galli made his MOT debut with Turandot, in 2014.

HARRY GREENLEAF
Morales, Carmen
Baritone Harry Greenleaf is a native of Wixom, Michigan and an alumnus of Michigan State University College of Music. He is pursuing a Master’s of Music at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Recent roles include Top in MOT’s 2016 production of The Tender Land, Anthony Hope in Sweeney Todd for Glimmerglass Opera, Sonora in La fanciulla del West for Des Moines Metro Opera, Danilo in CCM Opera’s The Merry Widow and as The Forester in CCM’s The Cunning Little Vixen. In 2013 and 2014 he was a Studio Artist with the Wolf Trap Opera Company.

KRISTOPHER IRMITER
Lieutenant Horstmayer, Silent Night
A Grammy nominated artist who has performed in all 50 states and throughout Canada, bass-baritone Kristopher Irmiter is one of the most sought after voices in the U.S. He has appeared with San Francisco Opera, Opera de Montreal, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, Baltimore Opera, Atlanta Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Utah Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, Opera Lyra Ottawa, Arizona Opera, and Florida Grand Opera among many others. In addition to his accomplished performing credits, Mr. Irmiter has a strong and growing reputation as a teacher and mentor to young singers.

GINGER COSTA-JACKSON
Carmen, Carmen
Mezzo soprano Ginger Costa-Jackson is a graduate of the Metropolitan Opera’s Lindemann Young Artist Development Program, and a Samling Scholar.
Last season she performed the role of Rosina in Il Barbiere di Siviglia with the Metropolitan Opera, and the title role in Bizet’s Carmen with the San Francisco Opera. This season, after her engagement with MOT, Ms. Jackson will make her debut at Opera de Paris as Despina in a new production of Così fan tutte conducted by Philippe Jordan, Dorabella in Così fan tutte with the Seattle Opera, and the role of Rosina with the Santa Cruz Symphony.

CHAD JOHNSON
Nikolaus Sprink, Silent Night
Noted as a “blond hunk with a bright tenor sound”, Chad Johnson has impressed audiences and critics throughout his career. This season’s engagements include Lenski in Eugene Onegin with Florida Grand Opera. Mr. Johnson’s recent tenor roles include Nikolaus Sprink in Silent Night with Fort Worth Opera and in his debut with The Wexford Festival; Tonio in La fille du regiment with Mill City Summer Opera; Gerald in Lakmé with Minnesota Opera and Florida Grand Opera; Peregrino in Via Lactea with Opera Bend; Nadir in Les pêcheurs de perles with Virginia Opera and Opera Carolina; Ruggero in La Rondine with Fresno Grand Opera; Lysander in Britten’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream with Boston Lyric Opera; Jacquino in Fidelio with Opera Omaha; Emilio in Il sogno di Scipione with Gotham Chamber Opera; and Lance in the rarely performed Gluck opera, L’arbre enchanté with Fire Island Opera for their inaugural season.

ALOK KUMAR
Don José, Carmen (October 23)
Most recently, Mr. Kumar performed Don José in Bizet’s Carmen in New York, with stage director Bernard Uzan. He returned to Connecticut as the tenor soloist in Dvorak’s Stabat Mater with the Fairfield County Chorale, under the baton of Emmanuel Plasson.
Mr. Kumar has appeared with the Santa Fe Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, Asheville Lyric Opera, Opera Delaware, Cedar Rapids Opera Theatre, and Portland Repertory Theatre amongst others and has most frequently portrayed leading roles in the opera’s of Bizet, Puccini, and Verdi.
As a solo artist, he has appeared with symphonies and orchestras in Spain, California, Connecticut, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Texas, and Massachusetts.
In recent seasons, Mr. Lugo has joined Salome and Macbeth, The Gambler, fanciulla del West, Adriana Lecouvreur, Naxos, Khovanshchina, Billy Budd, La fanciulla del West, Adriana Lecouvreur, Macbeth, The Gambler, and Salome. In recent seasons, Mr. Lugo has joined MOT as Timur in Turandot, Alfieri in Bolcom’s A View from the Bridge, and Don Fernando in Fidello, and has sung Dulcamara in L’elisir d’amore with Opera Memphis, Mr. Page in The Merry Wives of Windsor with Boston Midsummer Opera, the Sacristan in Tosca and Bartolo in Le nozze di Figaro with Sarasota Opera and with the Princeton Festival.

ROSA MERCEDES
Choreographer, Carmen
Born in Barcelona, Ms. Mercedes is an internationally acclaimed dancer and choreographer. Featured by dance companies, dance festivals, and symphonies throughout the U.S. and Europe, her extensive work in opera has been seen on the stages of The Met, Teatro dell’ Opera di Roma, Seattle Opera, Atlanta Opera, Baltimore Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Florentine Opera, Austin Lyric, Dallas Opera, Florida Grand Opera, and Palm Beach Opera. Ms. Mercedes teaches master classes and workshops in movement for singers, including the Young Artist programs at many of today’s leading opera companies.

Luis Alejandro Orozco
Escamillo, Carmen
This season’s engagements for baritone Luis Alejandro Orozco include the title role in Don Giovanni at Bar Harbor Music Festival, his MOT debut as Escamillo in Carmen, Figaro in Il barbiere di Siviglia in his house debut with Florentine Opera, and a reprisal of his signature role, El Payador, in Maria de Buenos Aires with The Atlanta Opera.

Gabriel Preisser received rave reviews once again for his performance of Lieutenant Gordon in the world premiere of Kevin Puts’ Pulitzer Prize-winning Silent Night with Minnesota Opera. He then reprised this role at Opera Philadelphia, Cincinnati Opera, and here in Detroit with his debut at MOT.

Marcelo Puente
Don José, Carmen
Tenor Marcelo Punte makes his U.S. debut in this MOT production of Carmen. He has had great success as Cavaradossi in Tosca and as Don José in Carmen at the Landestheater Linz, as well as in the role of Rodolfo in La Bohème at the Oper Stuttgart. Mr. Puente studied voice at the Conservatorio of Cordoba (Argentina) and at the Teatro Colon of Buenos Aires with Maestro Renato Sassola.

Eric Simonson
Director, Silent Night
Mr. Simonson’s directorial credits include The Dream of Valentino, Wuthering Heights, Rusalka, and The Handmaid’s Tale, all for Minnesota Opera, as well as its world premiere engagements of Silent Night, The Grapes of Wrath, and The Shining. Additional credits include productions at Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Opera Colorado, Boston Lyric, Steppenwolf Theatre, The Huntington Theatre, Milwaukee Rep, NYC’s Primary Stages, LA Theatre Works, The Kennedy Center, Pittsburgh’s City Theatre, Seattle Rep, and San Jose Rep.

Kendall Smith
Lighting Designer, Carmen
Kendall Smith has designed lighting for more than 70 productions with MOT, making his debut in 1988 with The Ballad of Baby Doe, and most recently designed lighting for the company’s spring 2015 production of The Merry Widow. His work has been featured in numerous productions by
respected companies, theaters, and festivals including Florida Grand Opera, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Royal New Zealand Ballet, Minnesota Opera, and Walnut Street Theatre.

ALEXANDRE SYLVESTRE

Ponchel, Silent Night

A native of Québec, Alexandre Sylvestre studied at the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal where he successfully obtained the “Premier Prix avec Grande Distinction”. Recent and upcoming engagements include Colline in La Bohème and the premiere of Les Feluettes for Opera de Montreal, Bartolo in The Barber of Seville for Saskatoon Opera, Timur in Turandot for Calgary Opera and Mozart’s Requiem for Orchestre Symphonique de Québec. Of special interest is Opera Lafayette’s Leonore project, performances of Beethoven’s original version of Fidelio and the version by Gaveaux on the same subject, in Washington and New York.

ERIN WALL

Anna Sorensen, Silent Night

Soprano Erin Wall is acclaimed for her musicality and versatility, with an extensive opera and concert repertoire that spans three centuries from Mozart and Beethoven to Britten and Strauss. She has sung leading roles in the world’s great opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, the Vienna Staatsoper, Opera National de Paris, and Lyric Opera of Chicago, and appears in concert with leading symphony orchestras and conductors worldwide. Recent career highlights include the title role in Strauss’ Arabella and Helena in Britten’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream with the Metropolitan Opera; a highly acclaimed debut as Clemence in L’amour de loin with the Canadian Opera Company in 2012; the title role of Thais at the Edinburgh Festival; and the 50th Anniversary performance of Britten’s War Requiem with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra led by Andris Nelsons at Coventry Cathedral. Ms. Wall’s discography includes Strauss’ Vier Letzte Lieder with the Melbourne Symphony, conducted by Sir Andrew Davis, Mahler’s 8th Symphony with the Berlin Staatskapelle conducted by Boulez and the Grammy winning recording of the same work with the San Francisco Symphony and Michael Tilson Thomas.

JOANNE MIDDLETON WEAVER

Wig and Makeup Designer, Carmen, Silent Night

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 and The Pearl Fishers.

Michigan Opera Theatre Studio Artists

JOSEPH MICHAEL BRENT

Remendado, Carmen Kronprinz, Silent Night

Joseph Michael Brent is a returning artist in Michigan Opera Theatre Studio program. Recent roles at MOT include 3rd SS Officer in Mieczyslaw Weinberg’s The Passenger, Malcolm in Verdi’s Macbeth, and first armored man in Mozart’s The Magic Flute. In 2015, Mr. Brent made both role and company debuts as Mayor Uphold in the Bronx Opera’s production of Albert Herring and Edgardo in the New York Opera Exchange production of Lucia di Lammermoor. He earned his Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Georgia in 2014 with a dissertation on selected vocal works of Giovanni Paolo Bottesini. He is a native New Yorker, a proud graduate of the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts, and holds an undergraduate degree from the conservatory of music at Purchase College S.U.N.Y. in double bass performance. He was a student of Metropolitan Opera veteran, baritone, Frederick Burchinal.

JEFF BYRNES

Dancairo, Carmen William Dale, Silent Night

Baritone Jeff Byrnes is excited to return to Michigan Opera Theatre this season as a Studio Artist. Most recently at MOT, Mr. Byrnes performed the roles of Schanuard in La Bohème, 1st SS Officer in The Passenger, Old Servant in Elektra and The Bonze in Madame Butterfly. Prior to joining MOT, he performed the role of Owen Hart in Dead Man Walking with Dayton Opera, and he covered Germont in La Traviata and Balstrode in Peter Grimes with Des Moines Metro Opera. Other operatic highlights include Leporello in Don Giovanni and the title role in The Mikado with the Natchez Opera Festival, and Figaro in Le Nozze di Figaro, Sprecher in Die Zaubermütze, and Pilate in St. John Passion with CCM Opera. He was a regional finalist in the Rocky Mountain Region of the Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions in 2014 and received the Encouragement Award in the New Orleans district in 2010. Jeff has also participated in the young artist programs at Dayton Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, and the Seagle Music Colony. He is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and Louisiana State University.

BRIANA ELYSE HUNTER

Mercedes, Carmen Madeleine Audebert, Silent Night

Briana hails from Malvern, Pennsylvania, where she was a student in the Great Valley Schools, a district recognized for their strong music and theatre programs. Ms. Hunter attended Davidson College in North Carolina, and found herself on stage again under the direction of the Royal Shakespeare Company, as well as in myriad other productions. She then went on to attend the prestigious Manhattan School of Music for
Classical Voice, where she performed in main stage productions with the opera department.

Since graduating from the MSM, Ms. Hunter has been on the rosters of many notable programs and companies from the U.S. to China, and France, including Sarasota Opera and Santa Fe Opera, where she has been an Apprentice Artist.

BRENT MICHAEL SMITH
Joyce Cohn Young Artist
Zuniga, Carmen
British Major, Silent Night

As a Studio Artist with Michigan Opera Theatre, Brent's recent roles include Colline in La Bohème, Second S.S. Officer in The Passenger, the Doctor in Macbeth and the Speaker in The Magic Flute.

He was an Apprentice Artist with Des Moines Metro Opera, where his performance as Billy Jackrabbit in La fanciulla del West received critical acclaim by Opera News as a "standout."

Mr. Smith sang Harry Hopkins in the world premiere of Daron Hagen's A Woman in Morocco, as a part of Kentucky Opera's American Opera Initiative, and was an Apprentice Artist with Sarasota Opera where he covered Charles V/The Monk in Don Carlos as well as sang in scenes from Fidelio, L'italia in Algeri and I Lombardi.

He received his Master of Music degree under the tutelage of John Hines. He received his Bachelor's in music in piano performance from Hope College (Holland, MI). Mr. Smith is a first-place winner in the Grand Rapids Opera Competition (2012).

ANGELA THEIS
Frasquita, Carmen

Soprano Angela Theis has performed several roles this year at Michigan Opera Theatre through her engagement as a Studio Artist, including Laurie in The Tender Land, 2nd Apparition in Macbeth, and Papagena in The Magic Flute. Previously, she has appeared with the company as Marzelline in Fidelio, Barbarina in The Marriage of Figaro, and the High Priestess in Aida. A highlight of her career was when Dr. David DiChiera chose her to sing his compositions at his 2013 Kresge Eminent Artist award presentation and his 2015 tribute concert at the Detroit Opera House. The Boston Globe praised her for “a bright, bold, and beguilingly sung Zerlina” in Mozart’s Don Giovanni. In 2013, Ms. Theis won the Audience Choice Award at the 2013 Meistersinger Competition in Austria. Ms. Theis completed a postgraduate fellowship in Salzburg, Austria, and holds degrees from New England Conservatory and University of Notre Dame.
MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE ORCHESTRA – CARMEN

VIOLIN I
Eliot Heaton, Concertmaster +
Laura Roelofs, Assistant Concertmaster +
Molly Hughes +
Bryan Johnston +
Velda Kelly +
Beth Kirton +
Charlotte Merkerson, Concertmaster Emeritus +
Ran Cheng
Yuri Popowcyz
Jenny Wan

VIOLIN II
Victoria Haltom, Principal +
Kevin Filewych +
Henrik Karapetyan +
Anna Bittar-Weller +
Daniel Stachyra +
Sherri Marttila
Jacqueline Nutting
Judith Teasdle

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

CELLO
Nadine Deleury, Principal +
Miriam Eckelhoefer +
Daniel Thomas +
Andrea Yun +
Katri Ervamaa
Stefan Koch

BASS
Derek Weller, Principal +
Clark Suttle +
Greg Sheldon
Robert Stiles

FLUTE/PICCOLO
Laura Larson, Acting Principal +
Jung-Wan Kang

OBOE
Nermis Mieses, Principal +
Sally Heffelfinger-Pituch +

CLARINET
Brian Bowman, Principal +
J. William King +

BASSOON
Gregory Quick, Acting Principal +
Marat Rakhmatullaev

HORN
Andrew Pelletier, Principal +
Carrie Banfield +
David Denniston
Tamara Kosinski

TRUMPET
David Ammer, Principal +
Gordon Simmons +

TROMBONE
David Jackson, Acting Principal +
Greg Near +
Bryan Pokorney

TIMPANI
Alison Chang, Principal +

PERCUSSION
John Dorsey, Principal +
David Taylor

HARP
Patricia Terry-Ross, Principal +

MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE ORCHESTRA – SILENT NIGHT

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Molly Hughes +
Bryan Johnston +
Velda Kelly +
Beth Kirton +
Andrew Wu +
Ran Cheng
Yuri Popowcyz
Jenny Wan

VIOLIN II
Victoria Haltom, Principal +
Anna Bittar-Weller +
Kevin Filewych +
Henrik Karapetyan +
Daniel Stachyra +
Sherri Marttila
Jacqueline Nutting
Judith Teasdle

VIOLA
John Madison, Principal +
Scott Stefanko +
Leslie DeShazor-Adams

Catherine Franklin
James Greer
Julianne Zinn

CELLO
Nadine Deleury, Principal +
Miriam Eckelhoefer +
Daniel Thomas +
Andrea Yun +
Katri Ervamaa
Stefan Koch

BASS
Derek Weller, Principal +
Clark Suttle +
Greg Sheldon
Robert Stiles

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Laura Larson, Acting Principal +
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Susan Mutter

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TOURING ENSEMBLE
Taking opera to the community, last season the MOT Touring Ensemble presented more than 70 performances for 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 performance. Our 16-17 touring season includes a variety of performances; call today to bring opera to your community!

FEATURED:
Rumpelstiltskin
By David and Karen DiChiera (Grades K-8)
When a “dusty, crusty” old miller aspires to become a man of the noble court, he lies to the Prime Minister saying his daughter can spin straw into gold. But his plan backfires and his daughter is taken prisoner in the palace dungeon! With the help of a mysterious stranger, the miller’s daughter escapes. She will even become queen...but everything has a price! Chock-full of twists, turns, and tricks in every scene, this magical opera is a must-see! (Subjects: English Language Arts, Social Studies, early Math, Arts Education – Visual Arts, Music, and Theater)

La Pizza Con Funghi
by Seymour Barab (Grades 9-12 & 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 & Theater)

CREATE & PERFORM:
A program in which students ages 8-18 use improvisation to create their own unique musical drama. This program can be conducted as an in-school residency, based on any classroom curriculum.

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.

OPERA IN THE PARKS: 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: Coming this summer! Students learn singing, acting, healthy vocal care, and stage movement. This workshop culminates in a final performance of a Gilbert & Sullivan operetta on the Main Stage of the Michigan Opera Theatre.

To learn more about any of these programs visit www.MichiganOpera.org
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Brent Michael Smith, Bass
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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.

LATE SEATING
Latecomers may be seated only during an appropriate pause in the program. Late seating policies are at the discretion of the production, not Opera House management.

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.

PARKING
We encourage all our guests to take advantage of the Detroit Opera House Parking Center, located next to the Detroit Opera House. Pre-paid parking is available for all guests and can be purchased with tickets online or through the Detroit Opera House ticket office. Pre-paid parking must be purchased 72 hours prior to performance date. This facility is reserved specifically for Detroit Opera House patrons during regularly scheduled performances. Entrances and exits are located on both John R. Street and Grand River Ave. Call (313) 237-7464 for more information.

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Accessible seating locations for patrons in wheelchairs are located in all price ranges on the orchestra level. When purchasing tickets, please ask about these locations if you require special accommodations.

Assisted Listening Devices are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Please see an usher to request this service, or visit the Guest Services desk located in the Vincent Lobby (Madison Street entrance). Although this is a complimentary service, we will hold a piece of personal identification while you are using the device. Please contact the ticket office at (313) 237-7464 should you desire special consideration.

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Children are welcome; however, all guests are required to hold a ticket, regardless of age. In all cases, babes in arms are not permitted.

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.

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Be advised that, for purposes of Michigan Compiled Laws, Section 28.425o(1)(f), this is an entertainment facility which has a seating capacity of more than 2,500 individuals. It is therefore against the law to carry a concealed pistol on the premises.

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The Detroit Opera House is available for rent by your organization. Please call (313) 961-3500, and ask to speak with the Director of Booking & Events Management.

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The Detroit Opera House ticket office hours are Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. On performance days, hours are 10 a.m. through the first intermission of the performance, except weekends, when the ticket office will open two hours prior to curtain time. Tickets are available online at www.MichiganOpera.org. Tickets for all public events at the Detroit Opera House are also available through TicketMaster, by phone at (800) 745-3000, or at www.TicketMaster.com.

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