

MICHIGAN
OPERA
THEATRE

DETROIT OPERA HOUSE

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Michigan Opera Theatre Names Yuval Sharon as Gary L. Wasserman Artistic Director

Site-specific Wagner project "Twilight: Gods," featuring Christine Goerke, to be performed in the Detroit Opera House Parking Center

Oct. 17, 18 and 20

DETROIT, Sept. 9, 2020 - On the eve of the 50th anniversary of Michigan Opera Theatre (MOT), Yuval Sharon has been announced as the first-ever Gary L. Wasserman Artistic Director. Sharon's five-year appointment is made possible by a generous gift from Gary L. Wasserman, a member of the MOT Board of Directors. MOT, based in the historic Detroit Opera House, has long been an accessible venue for high-caliber performance while inspiring artistic investment and historical preservation in downtown Detroit. Sharon joins President and CEO Wayne S. Brown as the leadership team for MOT going forward. Sharon begins his tenure this October with "Twilight: Gods," a production of Richard Wagner's "Götterdämmerung" ("Twilight of the Gods") staged in the Detroit Opera House Parking Center, featuring Christine Goerke. The 2021-22 season, Sharon's first full season as artistic director, will be announced this spring.

The recipient of both a MacArthur Fellowship and a Foundation for Contemporary Arts grant in Theatre, Sharon is among the most in-demand and innovative names in opera today. In addition to making history as the first American invited to direct at

Bayreuth, the first director entrusted with one of Meredith Monk's works, and the director of the first fully-staged opera in the Musikverein's 150-year history, Sharon is widely known for city-spanning operas staged in moving cars, radically collaborative bulwarks against historical revisionism, and immersive site-specific works with his Los Angeles company, The Industry. In addition to his appointment at MOT, Sharon will continue his role as Artistic Director of The Industry.

"Even as the performing arts face unprecedented challenges in this country, this moment offers an equally unprecedented opportunity for change—for artists and institutions to re-imagine the future of opera," says Gary L. Wasserman Artistic Director Yuval Sharon. "Under Wayne Brown's insightful leadership, with MOT Board President Ethan Davidson's forward-thinking guidance, and with the advocacy of my friend Gary Wasserman, I see MOT seizing that chance to think in new and creative ways about opera in this city. It is an honor to join them and the rest of the MOT board and staff in charting that future and creating work that speaks specifically to the communities that make Detroit so vibrant."

"Yuval shares the drive, vision, and charisma of our beloved founder, David DiChiera, who created an opera company in Detroit against all odds in 1971," said President and CEO Wayne S. Brown. "Now, as we embark on our 50th anniversary, we look forward to building upon DiChiera's vision and taking MOT to its next artistic level under Sharon. In the midst of a pandemic, converting a parking center into a performance venue (while social distancing can be observed) offers further evidence of the creativity that Sharon brings to the art form."

"Yuval's appointment as Artistic Director of MOT could not come at a more opportune time," says Board President Ethan Davidson. "In the midst of this pandemic, when full use of the wonderful Detroit Opera House is not possible, Yuval is uniquely positioned to stage performances in non-traditional spaces. This has the added benefit of making opera and dance more accessible to a wider Detroit community. Expanding upon MOT's nationally recognized history of equity and inclusion, Yuval will bring his dedication to including more diverse voices and perspectives to our productions. I am anxious to see us engage our artistic voice in more communal conversations under Yuval's leadership."

"Yuval Sharon is one of the most important producers and stage directors in opera today," says Opera America President and CEO Marc Scorca. "His work expands the boundaries of the art form and re-examines masterpieces from the inherited repertoire in ways that connect them to the world around us with new energy. Yuval's appointment as Artistic Director is wonderful for Detroit, for Michigan Opera Theatre and for all of American opera."

Tickets for "Twilight: Gods" go on sale to the public at noon on Wednesday, Sept. 9, and can be purchased [online](#), by phone at (313) 237-7464, or in-person at the Detroit Opera House box office (1526 Broadway) from noon until 5 p.m., Monday through

Thursday. Pricing is set at \$79 per car and must be purchased in advance of performances.

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About Michigan Opera Theatre

Michigan Opera Theatre, one of the nation's most vibrant nonprofit arts organizations, is committed to presenting opera and dance of the highest artistic caliber. Founded in 1971 by Dr. David DiChiera, the company's mission is to serve as a major cultural resource to the state of Michigan and the city of Detroit. The organization is led by President and CEO Wayne S. Brown, the Gary L. Wasserman Artistic Director Yuval Sharon and Chairman of the Board Ethan Davidson. Visit the website at www.michiganopera.org.