MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

BRAVO

AT THE DETROIT OPERA HOUSE

Fall 2015

THE PASSENGER

Nov. 14, 18, 21 & 22, 2015

The 2015 Fall Opera Season is made possible with support from Ford Motor Company

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—Kenn Wells, Former lead dancer of the English National Ballet

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THE NATIONAL OPERA CENTER AMERICA

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Welcome to Michigan Opera Theatre's production of The Passenger. This monumental work represents one of the largest productions to be mounted on the Detroit Opera House stage, and we are fortunate that MOT is one of four companies to mount the work in the United States.

All of us associated with MOT are appreciative of the steadfast support that the Ford Motor Company Fund has provided as our fall opera season sponsor. This relationship spans a 43-year period. In the aggregate, Ford Motor Company's cumulative support to MOT is in excess of $12 million.

When David DiChiera and I discussed the opportunity to share Mieczyslaw Weinberg's Holocaust-themed opera The Passenger with our community, we knew that it would require significant resources. However, we also knew that it could serve as a significant opportunity to bring people of diverse backgrounds and experiences together through a forum in our community, in tandem with the opera. We then sought to engage organizations throughout Southeast Michigan to join us on this journey. The end result is that MOT is joined by 55 community partners and more than 50 individuals, who are participating in an extensive number of events throughout the entire run of this monumental work. We are appreciative to all who have contributed to this community-wide initiative.

The Passenger marks the third opera supported by a three-year MOT initiative, Opera of Our Time, launched in 2013-14 with A View from the Bridge (William Bolcom) and followed in 2014-15 by Frida (Robert Xavier Rodriguez). We are appreciative to Maxine and Stuart Frankel for their 2:1 challenge grant of $150,000, which was matched by 36 individuals who have enabled MOT to satisfy the requirements of this unique opportunity.

Through a new challenge grant of $600,000 from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, MOT has been given the opportunity to support the third year of the Opera of Our Time initiative, and also to present other new operas in our community in the 2016-17 and the 2017-18 seasons. We are extremely grateful for the opportunity to invest in new works reflective of our time, and invite members of our community to help us meet this remarkable challenge by lending your support in order that we may continue this important initiative.

Finally, we are appreciative for the collective energy and financial support of the Friends of Polish Art, the General Consul to Chicago from Poland, and individual contributors for their support of this project. In addition, we are grateful to the Mandell and Madeleine Berman Foundation for their support of the Berman Panel and numerous community briefings over the past month. We invite you to sit back and experience the power of The Passenger. May we all take note of its numerous messages, and “Let Us Not Forget!”

Wayne S. Brown  
President & CEO

My transition into the role of Artistic Director gave me the opportunity to focus on an artistic initiative that I believed to be very important for the future of our company and for the future of the operatic art form we so dearly love. Audiences of course cherish the works from centuries past that make up the greatest part of the repertoire experienced in our opera houses — from Mozart to Puccini we are happy to see them again and again. But remember that these operas when premiered were always new and very often innovative in their musical and dramatic styles. Yet the audiences were willing and anxious to experience new works just as today we don't hesitate to see a movie that we have never seen. They were operas of their time, and today we must be open to experience, and perhaps embrace, new operas that reflect our time. To this end, beginning with the 2013-14 season we launched a three-year program entitled Opera of Our Time. We began with A View from the Bridge by William Bolcom about 1950's America in an Italian-American neighborhood near the Brooklyn Bridge dealing with illegal immigrants and a dysfunctional family. The following season we presented Frida by Rodriguez about the fascinating life of Frida Kahlo, the famous Mexican painter and wife of Diego Rivera. It was particularly exciting to present this work in conjunction with the Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo in Detroit exhibit at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

And now in our 2015-16 season we present the third in our Opera Of Our Time initiative with The Passenger by Mieczyslaw Weinberg (1919-1996). The composer was a Polish Jew who escaped to Russia when his family perished in a Nazi concentration camp. In Russia he was mentored by Shostakovich and became a very successful and prolific composer of operas, symphonies, and chamber music. But even in Russia he was imprisoned and subjected to Stalin’s persecutions. His lifetime ambition, however, was to compose an opera about the Holocaust in remembrance of his family. Shostakovich introduced him to a novel written by Zofia Posmysz, a survivor of Auschwitz. This novel called Pasazrka finally gave him the opportunity to express in music of luminous beauty and tragic power his own story and the stories of those who struggled to be free of the greatest inhumanity. Unfortunately the Russian government would not allow the work to be performed, and it was not until 2010, 14 years after the composer’s death, that The Passenger had a fully staged premiere in Austria. Shostakovich considered the The Passenger a masterpiece, and in his own words, “A hymn to humanity and it is a work that is needed today.” And so it is now, decades later as we observe the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, that this work, which has gained the freedom and widespread reverence it so richly deserves, is finally able to fulfill that pressing need. We must always remember and be vigilant against the capacity of man's inhumanity towards man.

Dr. David DiChiera  
Founder & Artistic Director
THE PASSENGER

Nov. 14, 18, 21 & 22, 2015

Music
Mieczyslaw Weinberg

Libretto
Alexander Medvedev, based on the novel of the same name by Zofia Posmysz

World Premiere
First performed at the Bregenz Festival, Austria, on July 22, 2010

Conductor
Steven Mercurio

Original Stage Director
David Pountney

Revival Stage Director
Rob Kearley

Chorus Master
Suzanne Mallare Acton

Set Designer
Johan Engels

Costume Designer
Marie-Jeanne Lecca

Original Lighting Designer
Fabrice Kebour

Associate Lighting Designer
Michael Clark

Associate Lighting Designer
Joanne Weaver

Choreographer
Jeff Michael Rebudal

Fight Director
Christopher Barbeau

Assistant Director
Cynthia Stokes

Stage Manager
Ken Saltzman

Supertitles
Paul Hopper based on the English translation by David Pountney

Supertitle Operator
Dee Dorsey

Additional Musical Preparation by Gordon Schermer

Russian Diction Coach, Elena Beck

The Passenger is used by arrangement with Peermusic Classical, New York and Hamburg, Publisher and Copyright Holder.
The Projected English Title translation used in this production is owned by Houston Grand Opera: Patrick Summers, Artistic and Music Director; Perryn Leech, Managing Director

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is made possible with support from Ford Motor Company

The Mandell and Madeleine Berman Foundation
Panel Discussion Sponsor

www.MichiganOpera.org
Michigan Opera Theatre
Cast

In order of vocal appearance

Walter ........................................ David Danholt *
Liese ......................................... Daveda Karanas *
Steward ..................................... Stephen Lusmann
Senior Overseer ......................... Géraldine Dulex *
First SS Officer ......................... Jeff Byrnes †
Second SS Officer ................. Brent Michael Smith †
Third SS Officer .............. Joseph Michael Brent †
Marta .......................................... Adrienn Miksch *
Old Woman ............................... Lauren Skuce Gross *
Yvette ........................................ Angela Theis †
Vlasta ...................................... Kristin Eder
Krzystina ................................. Ashley Maria Bahri Kashat
Bronka .................................... Liubov Sokolova *
Hannah ................................... Courtney Miller *
Katja ........................................ Anna Gorbachyova *
Kapo .......................................... Géraldine Dulex *
Tadeusz .................................... Marian Pop
Elderly Passenger ................. Stephen Lusmann
Violinist ................................... Henrik Karapetyan
Actors ...................................... Harry David,
                                  David Melcher (Fight Captain),
                                  Zeb Mientkiewicz (alternate),
                                  Mina Richards, Joseph Wright

* Michigan Opera Theatre debut
† Michigan Opera Theatre Studio Artist

SYNOPSIS

SETTING: An ocean liner sailing for Brazil in the early 1960s, with flashbacks to Auschwitz concentration camp in the mid 1940s

ACT I

SCENE 1: Ocean liner, day

German diplomat Walter Kreitschmer and his wife Liese are headed to Brazil for a three-year posting. In high spirits, they bid Germany and Europe farewell. Walter remarks upon Liese's youth during the war years, and says Brazil will do her good. Suddenly, Liese blanches at the appearance of a passenger who resembles a prisoner from Auschwitz where, unbeknownst to her husband, Liese served in the SS. Flashing back to Auschwitz, an officer appears and orders Liese to regain her composure, calling her Aufseherin, the term for a female SS overseer. Back in her cabin, Liese tries to shake the fear that the woman on deck was a prisoner named Marta, whom she believed to have been executed at Auschwitz. She summons the ship's steward and bribes him to look into the passenger's identity. Walter joins his wife, ready to go dancing, but as they exit their cabin, the stranger appears in the hallway. Liese drags Walter back inside and confesses that she was an SS overseer at Auschwitz. Blindsided, Walter is furious. Liese admits she never told him of her past for fear of losing him. She tells him how she'd felt drawn to Marta, whose pride and contempt she longed to break. The steward returns, announcing the passenger in Cabin 45 is a British woman traveling alone to Brazil. The couple breathes a sigh of relief, though Walter wonders if there's more to the story.

SCENE 2: Roll-call, Auschwitz, early morning

A group of SS officers watches the female prisoners line up. The men boast they are making history at Auschwitz, purging the Third Reich of its enemies, but complain the killing isn't efficient enough. At roll call, the prisoners' numbers are called. The Chief Women's Overseer and Liese talk about enlisting Marta to help manage the other prisoners. Marta doesn't trust Liese and wonders what she wants from her.

SCENE 3: Women's barracks, evening

A transport of new prisoners arrives. An old woman raves that they are all about to go up the chimney as smoke. Marta and Krzystina try to calm everyone. Bronka prays for strength and protection for her family. Krzystina rails that God has forgotten them all, which Bronka and Yvette find blasphemous. The door crashes open and Katja, a Russian partisan, is thrown in. Marta calls for water and a candle. A Kapo finds a note in Polish that Katja brought in. Liese admires Marta's control over her fellow inmates and, knowing her to be a Pole, orders her to read the note. Marta recognizes it as a message between members of the resistance, but reads it as a love note, substituting the name of her own sweetheart Tadek (Tadeusz).

SATISFIED FOR THE TIME BEING, LIESE EXITS. KATJA THANKS MARTA FOR SAVING HER LIFE. BACK ON THE SHIP, LIESE TELLS WALTER SHE LATER DISCOVERED MARTA'S LIE. WALTER REMAINS SILENT AS THE CURTAIN FALLS.

ACT II

SCENE 1: A storeroom for confiscated goods, Auschwitz, morning

Liese watches prisoners sort items confiscated from other prisoners: musical instruments, clothing, shoes, etc. An officer asks Liese to choose a violin so one of his prisoners can play the Kommandant's favorite waltz. Liese finds an instrument, and the officer leaves, saying he'll send the prisoner to collect it. When the prisoner appears, Liese points him to the violin. The chief women's overseer and Liese talk about enlisting Marta's lie. Walter remains silent as the curtain falls.

SCENE 2: Workshop in men's barracks, Auschwitz, day

Tadeusz reads a note from a member of the resistance: Kiev has been liberated from the Nazis. As Liese enters, he hides the note. She scrutinizes a medallion and recognizes the portrait engraved on it as Marta. Liese tries to entice Tadeusz to let her set up a meeting between him and Marta, but Tadeusz refuses. In another flash forward to the ship, Liese tells Walter that Tadeusz—in fact all the prisoners—were "blinded by hate."
Synopsis continued…

SCENE 3: Women’s barracks, evening
The women congratulate Marta on her twentieth birthday. Marta reflects on what she would choose if God let her choose how and when she would die. There are gifts: a carrot and onion from Yvette, a scarf from Vlasta, and roses secretly delivered from Tadeusz. Liese enters and tells Marta that Tadeusz refused her offer to arrange a meeting with Marta; Marta replies she’s certain Tadeusz had good reason. Liese stalks out angrily. Yvette gives Bronka a French lesson, conjugating the verb “to live.” The women describe their longing for home. Katja sings a song of her grandmother’s. The loudspeaker blares numbers for the evening’s selection. A Kapo, Liese, and officers with machine guns appear to collect the women whom have been selected: Vlasta, Hannah, Yvette, and Katja among them. Katja urges her friends not to forget the dying or forgive the Germans. Marta faces off with Liese, who tells her she’ll be selected soon enough, saying she’s spared her to hear Tadeusz’s concert.

SCENE 4: Ocean liner, day
The steward informs Liese and Walter that though the passenger in Cabin 45 is a British citizen, she’s not English and may be Polish. Again, Liese defends her service at Auschwitz. They head to the salon, where Liese dances with the Captain while an elderly passenger teases Walter. The passenger from Cabin 45 requests a tune from the orchestra leader, who strikes up the same waltz the Captain while an elderly passenger selected soon enough, saying she’s spared from Tadeusz. Liese enters and delivers from Tadeusz. Liese stalks out angrily. Yvette replies she’s certain Tadeusz had good reason. Liese enters and delivers from Tadeusz. Liese stalks out angrily. Yvette replies she’s certain Tadeusz had good reason. Liese enters and delivers from Tadeusz. Liese stalks out angrily.

SCENE 5: The concert, Auschwitz
An officer orders Tadeusz to play the waltz. Instead, Tadeusz plays Bach’s Chaconne in D Minor. Before Tadeusz can finish the beautiful piece, an officer seizes and smashes the violin, and Tadeusz is dragged off to his death.

EPILOGUE: The bank of a river
Marta vows to keep the memory of those murdered at Auschwitz alive: “If one day your voices should fall silent, then we are all extinguished.”

This synopsis appeared in the program of Lyric Opera of Chicago and is used by permission.

Suzanne Mallare Acton
Chorus Master
As Chorus Master of MOT, Suzanne Acton has received wide critical acclaim for her choral direction involving more than 125 productions in seven languages. Conducting credits include Frida, West Side Story, Il Barbiere di Siviglia, Music Man, Pirates of Penzance, The Mikado, Daughter of the Regiment, Carmen, La Traviata, Les Pécheurs de Perles and Carmina Burana with The Medium for MOT; My Fair Lady and La Traviata for Dayton Opera; The 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 2007-08 season. She is also the Artistic and Music Director of metro Detroit’s Rackham Choir.

Christopher Barbeau
Fight Director
Currently the fight director and stunt coordinator for Michigan Opera Theatre, Village Shakespeare Festival, and the Michigan Classical Repertory Theater, Master Christopher 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.

David Danholt
Walter
David Danholt attended The Opera Academy and The Royal Danish Academy of Music. He is currently studying with voice coach Klavs Lewinsky. Recent engagements include a role debut as Erik in Der Fliegende Holländer in Wisconsin. Future engagements include Walter in The Passenger at Florida Grand Opera in Miami in 2016, Erik in Fliegende Holländer in Seattle in 2016, and Intermezzo by R. Strauss at Concertgebouw Amsterdam. In 2013-2014 he performed as Claudio in Wagner’s Das Liebesverbot at Oper Leipzig and in Bayreuth, Arindal in Wagner’s Die Fén at Oper Leipzig, Mozart’s Requiem with Danish Radio Sinfonietta, and Handel’s Messiah with Kristians and Symphony Orchestra. Recent engagements include Dvořák’s Stabat Mater with Sønderjylland’s Symphony Orchestra, Beethoven’s 9, Symphony and Missa Solemnis, and Puccini’s Messa di Gloria. In August 2014 David Danholt won the 1st prize in the 3rd International Wagner Competition in Seattle.

Géraldine Dulex
Kapo/Overseer
Géraldine Dulex is thrilled to reprise the role of Overseer/ Kapo at Michigan Opera Theatre, after appearing in the The Passenger at Lyric Opera of Chicago. Géraldine lives in New York City, where she is a company member with Broken Box Mime Theater (IT Award Outstanding Ensemble 2014), with whom she performed in Topography and the recent ABOVE BELOW. Géraldine also appeared in Cosmicomics and Garden of Delights with NYC’s New Stage Theater, and has been seen in over a dozen Chicago theater productions, including Dead Man’s Cell Phone (Steppenwolf) and in the title role of the American Premieres of Howard Barker’s Minna (Trap Door) and Emilio Williams’s Tables and Beds (Stage 773). Originally from Switzerland, she is a recipient of a Foyerbeitrag from Canton Zug for her solo show Fawn, which premiered at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Ms. Dulex has a B.S. from Northwestern University.
Kristin Eder
Vlasta
Kristin Eder, mezzo-soprano, last appeared with MOT in 2014’s Elektra. Dr. Eder is featured in the role of Electre on the 2015 GRAMMY nominated recording of Milhaud’s L’Oreste d’Eschyle. This past season, she made her solo debut at Carnegie Hall, singing Mahler’s Das Lied von der Erde with the Blue Period Ensemble. Dr. Eder has appeared as a guest soloist with organizations such as the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, the Toledo Symphony, the Bozeman Symphony, the Oakland Choral Society, the University Musical Society, and the Adrian Symphony. Her operatic roles include Hansel in Hansel and Gretel, Jo in Little Women, the title role in Gluck’s Armide, Dido and the Sorceress in Dido and Aeneas, Marcellina in Le Nozze di Figaro, Mercedes in Carmen, and Florence Pike in Albert Herring. Dr. Eder teaches in the voice departments at the University of Michigan and Adrian College.

Johan Engels
Set Designer
Johan Engels won the Golden Schikaneder Australian Music Theatre Award for Mathis der Maler in 2012, Theater an der Wien, and TMA Award for Lulu in 2013. Mr. Engels studied Fine Arts and Design at the University of Pretoria and has designed extensively for opera, ballet, and theatre in South Africa. Some of his design credits include The Passenger (English National Opera, Warsaw, Houston Grand Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago); Maskarade (Royal Opera House); Chorus (Houston Grand Opera); Osud (Vienna State Opera); Turandot (Salzburg Festival); Anything Goes (Grange Park Opera); Montemezzi’s L’amore dei tre re, Zemlinsky’s Der Kreidekreis, Johann Strauss’ Simplicius, Pfitzner’s Die Rose vom Liebesgarten, Létolé, Agrippina (Zürich Opera); Parsifal (Lyric Opera of Chicago), Don Carlos, (Washington National Opera and Canadian Opera Company); Mathis der Maler (Theater an der Wien); Faust (Paris National Opera).

Anna Gorbachyova
Katja
Siberian-born soprano Anna Gorbachyova is making her debut with MOT. Ms. Gorbachyova graduated with distinction from the Royal Academy Opera in London in 2012. From 2002 until 2006 she studied at the Ural State University in the Faculty of International Relations and the Music College named after PI. Tchaikovsky in Ekaterinburg. Her recent engagements include Lady Madeline in Usher House and Madeline in La chute de la Maison Usher at Welsh National Opera in 2014, and The First Nymph in Rusalka at Teatro dell’Opera di Roma. Later this season, she will participate in the Mozart Academy of the Festival d’Aix en Provence, will reprise the role of Katja in The Passenger at Florida Grand Opera, and will perform in Handel’s Alexander’s Feast with the American Bach Soloists in San Francisco. Future engagements include participation in the Mozart Academy of the Festival d’Aix en Provence, reprising the role of Katja in The Passenger at Florida Grand Opera, and singing in Handel’s Alexander’s Feast with the American Bach Soloists in San Francisco. Ms. Gorbachyova sang The Queen of the Night in Die Zauberflöte at the Royal Academy Opera, the title role in Le Rossignol by Stravinsky in Lyon National Opera in 2012, and Musetta in La Bohème at Theater an der Wien in 2013.

Daveda Karanas
Liese
In the 2015-2016 season, mezzo-soprano Daveda Karanas will be seen as Liese in The Passenger at both Michigan Opera Theatre and Florida Grand Opera following her successful role debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago in the same role. Recently, she made a major role debut as Kundry in Parsifal at the Lyric Opera of Chicago under Andrew Davis. She then debuted at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis as Mother Marie in Dialogues of the Carmelites and with the Auckland Philharmonia as Brangäne in concert performances of Richard Wagner’s Die Walküre.
Ashley Maria Bahri Kashat

Krystyna

Ashley Maria Bahri Kashat, a Michigan native, recently made her MOT debut in the company’s 2013 production of La Traviata. She is the first Chaldean American soprano to receive a Master of Music in Voice Performance at The Manhattan School of Music in New York City. Currently, she studies under the direction of Patricia Misslin in New York and Edie Diggory in Michigan, and privately trains at the Metropolitan Opera under the direction of assistant conductor Robert Morrison. Mrs. Kashat performed Verdi’s “Requiem” in Bloomfield Hills and also gave a recital at Shenandoah Country Club in West Bloomfield, to support Michigan Opera Theatre. Recent credits include the role of Salude in Manuel de Falla’s opera vida breve in New York, her debut at the Barre Opera House in a concert performance, and recitals in New Platz, Lake George, and Woodstock, NY. Additionally, Mrs. Kashat attended the Bel Canto Institute in Florence, Italy, where she won four performance awards. Mrs. Kashat received a Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance at Oakland University.

Rob Kearley

Revival Director

As Director Rob Kearley’s productions include Parsifal at Lyric Opera of Chicago; Khovanschina at Oper Frankfurt; Tristan und Isolde at the Canadian Opera Company; Bluebeard’s Castle at the Maggio Musica Firentino; Aida at Arizona Opera, Vancouver Opera, and Glimmerglass Festival; Der Ring des Nibelungen and Madama Butterfly at San Francisco Opera. Ms. Karanas is a winner of the 2008 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and a former Adler Fellow at the San Francisco Opera where she made her mainstage debut as Mamka in Boris Godunov. Prior to her residency at San Francisco Opera, she made debuts with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by James Levine in Schönberg’s Moses and Aron and the Chicago Opera Theater in Il ritorno d’Ulisse in patria conducted by Jane Glover.

Fabrice Kebour

Lighting Designer

Fabrice Kebour has designed lighting for more than 200 productions since 1987. In 1989, Mr. Kebour was accepted for a United Scenic Artists internship in New York, which allowed him to work with some of the leading American lighting designers of the day, both Off and On Broadway. Over the past 20 years, Mr. Kebour’s lighting designs have been seen in France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Japan, the Middle East, and England, as well as the USA and Canada. He has designed for top houses such as La Comédie Française, the Opéra National de Paris, the Wiener Staatsoper, the Bregenzer Festspiele, the Teatro Alla Scala, the Arena di Verona, and the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie. In 2006, Fabrice Kebour designed the opening and closing ceremonies of the 15th Asian Games in Doha and in 2011 he was selected for the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space exhibit “Light Speaks” showing a retrospective of outstanding world renowned lighting designers. Mr. Kebour received a nomination for best lighting design at the Molière Award in 2005, 2009 and 2011, as well as for the Wales Theatre Awards in 2015.

Marie-Jeanne Lecca

Costume Designer

Marie-Jeanne Lecca was born and educated in Bucharest and is now based in London. She has designed costumes for opera companies throughout the UK and in Europe, including for Menna State Opera, Zurich Opera, Bavarian State Opera, the Bolshoi, Opéra Bastille, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Bregenz Festival, Opéra de Lyon, English National Opera, Royal Opera House, Welsh National, and Salzburg Festival. Ms. Lecca received the Martini Medal for Julietta and The Greek Passion. She was nominated for a BAFTA for her costume design of Amahl and the Night Visitors and was a member of the British team that won The Golden Triga at the 2003 Prague Quadrennial.

Stephen Lusmann

Older Passenger/Steward/Commander

Stephen Lusmann has enjoyed a successful international career singing more than forty leading baritone roles with major opera houses, including the Oper der Stadt Bonn, Opera de Monte Carlo, Stadththeater Luzern, Washington National Opera, Fort Worth Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, and Glimmerglass Opera among many others. As an active concert soloist he has performed at Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall and with numerous symphony orchestras and festivals in the United States and Europe. On recordings, Mr. Lusmann may be heard in Richard Strauss’ opera Der Friedenstag and Operngala. He has also recorded CDs of Logan Skelton’s songs: E.E. Cummings: An American Circus, Ohr Songs, Clyburn Songs, and Anderson Songs. His students are having tremendous success performing.
professionally in opera, concert, musical theater, and young artist programs throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and on Broadway. In addition they are winning prestigious international vocal competitions and are members of university voice faculties. He is an Associate Professor of Music at the University of Michigan, a Fort Worth Opera Studio voice teacher, has taught at Music in the Marché in Monдваio, Italy and is a voice teacher at the Seagle Music Colony.

**Jeff Michael Rebudal**  
Choreographer  
Jeff Michael Rebudal is the Artistic Director of New York- and Detroit-based Rebudal Dance and is an original founding member of the critically acclaimed Sean Curran Company. Mr. Rebudal's opera and theatre choreography credits include L'Etoile (New York City Opera, Opéra de Montréal, Glimmerglass Opera, Bergen National Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Austin Lyric Opera), Romeo et Juliette, La Traviata, La Rondine, A Little Night Music and The Merry Widow (Michigan Opera Theatre), and Carmen (Cincinnati Opera), in which the Metropolitan Opera News described the dances as “…delightful choreography…. a bright moment.” His past scholarship titled The Role of Dance and Choreography in Contemporary Opera was funded with a Wayne State University Research Grant. Mr. Rebudal recently choreographed Two Gentlemen of Verona for The Old Globe. His choreography has also been presented at Joyce SoHo, Danspace Project, Lincoln Center, NYC Downtown Dance Festival, Cunningham Studio, and DUMBO Dance Festival, among other venues such as the Cultural Center of the Philippines in Manila and Anargyrios & Korgialenios Theatre of Helioupolis in Greece. Mr. Rebudal is an Associate Professor and Head of Dance at Wayne State University and has an M.F.A. from the American University and a B.A. from the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa.

**Steven Mercurio**  
Conductor  
This fall marks American maestro Steven Mercurio’s 22nd production with MOT, after most recently conducting last spring’s Faust. An internationally acclaimed conductor and composer whose musical versatility encompasses the symphonic and operatic worlds, he was Music Director of the Spoleto Festival and Principal Conductor of the Opera Company of Philadelphia for five years. Mr. Mercurio is also a sought-after collaborator for many award-winning recordings, arrangements and film projects, most notably “Christmas in Vienna with the Three Tenors.” For the stage, he has conducted more than 50 operas in seven different languages in many of the world’s best loved opera houses. His most recent symphonic composition, “A Grateful Tail,” based on a love of dogs, had its world premiere in Prague and is available on Eros Sound Recordings.

**What’s in a Song?**  
Martin Katz  
CURATOR AND PIANIST  
Including appearances by Jamie Barton, mezzo-soprano  
Jesse Blumberg, baritone  
Janai Brugger, soprano  
David Daniels, countertenor  
William Ferguson, tenor  
Frederica von Stade, mezzo-soprano  
Friday, January 8 // 8 pm  
Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre  

**Jamie Barton**  
MEZZO-SOPRANO  
Martin Katz  
PIANO  
Sunday, January 10 // 4 pm  
Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre  

PROGRAM  
Includes works of Turina, Chausson, Schubert, Dvořák, and Rachmaninoff  

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11
ADRIENN MIKSCH
Marta
Adrienn Miksich's current and future engagements include reprising the role of Marta in Mieczyslaw Weinberg's The Passenger at Florida Grand Opera, Countess in Le nozze di Figaro at Festival Hall in Osaka, Japan, Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 2 at Budapest International Choir Festival, and multiple roles with the Hungarian State Opera. Most recent engagements include Chrysothemis in Elektra, and Csáki Lóra in Ferenc Erkel's György Dózsa Hungarian State Opera, Maddalena Andrea Chenier, Amelia in Simon Boccanegra and Zandonai’s Francesca da Rimini (title role) Szeged National Theatre, Santuzza Cavalleria Rusticana The Miskolc Opera, Leonora La Forza del Destino in concert Kassai Szimfonikusok and Winnie in Dellaira’s Destino at Michigan Opera Theatre as Hannah in The Passenger and Hanover. Ms. Miksch graduated from the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music and went on to the Opera Studio of the Hungarian State Opera.

COURTNEY MILLER
Hannah
Award-winning mezzo soprano Courtney Miller has been praised by the Washington Times for her “excellent sense of comic timing” and by the Virginia-Pilot for her “lovely mezzo timbre.” This season, Ms. Miller will debut at Michigan Opera Theatre as Hannah in The Passenger, Madison Opera as Meg in Little Women, and perform Ravel’s Shéhérazade with Brevard Sinfonia. As a Virginia Opera Emerging Artist in 2013-15, her roles included Meg Page in Falstaff, Second Lady in The Magic Flute, Dryade in Ariadne auf Naxos, Mércédès in Carmen, Page in Salome, and Flora in La Traviata. Other highlights include Suzuki in Madame Butterfly with Glimmerglass Festival, Mrs. Ford in Sir John in Love with Odyssey Opera, and Sister Helen in Dead Man Walking with Boston Opera Collaborative. Ms. Miller has worked with Chautauqua Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, and Ohio Light Opera. A Wisconsin native, Ms. Miller is a University of Michigan alumna.

MARIAH POP
Tadeusz
Permanent resident singer of the Staatsoper Kassel, Mr. Pop’s roles have included Marcello in La Boheme, Gabriel von Eisenstein in Die Fledermaus, and Figaro in Il barbiere di Siviglia, Scarpia in Tosca, and the title role in Verdi’s Rigoletto. Hailed by the Oregonian for “a rich, agile voice and high notes that could nearly part your hair,” baritone Marian Pop’s future roles include a repraisal of the title role of David DiChiera’s Cyrona de Bergerac with Baltimore Opera. Mr. Pop created the role of Cyrono in the opera’s world premiere at Michigan Opera Theatre, and sang subsequent performances with Opera Company of Philadelphia in the 2007-08 season. Last season he returned to Theater Basel for Valentin in Faust and sang Carmina Burana with the St. Petersburg Philharmonia. In recent seasons, Mr. Pop has joined Theater Basel for his role debut as Posa in Don Carlo, Lescaut in Manon, Taglione in Litaliana in Algeri, and Pantalone in Prokofiev’s The Love for Three Oranges. A frequent guest at the Staatsoper Stuttgart, the baritone’s numerous roles with the company have included his signature performances of Figaro in Il barbiere di Siviglia, Beckmesser in Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, and Ulisse in Monteverdi’s Il ritorno d’Ulisse in Patria. Mr. Pop’s concert performances have included Mahler’s Symphony No. 9 in Bucharest and an Aria Evening in Bayreuth, Germany. He also participated in a tour of La Cenerentola and Viva la Mamma with the Musical Theatre of Brasso, which visited Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and Great Britain.

DAVID POULTNEY
Original Stage Director
David Pountney became internationally known through his production of Katya Kabanova at the 1972 Wexford Festival. Between 1975 and 1980, he was Director of Productions for Scottish Opera. Productions there featured a Janáček cycle in collaboration with Welsh National Opera. He directed the world premiere of David Blake’s Toussaint in 1977 (ENO) and went on to become ENO’s Director of Productions in 1980, directing over 20 operas. He has directed many world premieres, including three by Peter Maxwell Davies for which he also wrote the libretto, and has translated operas into English from Russian, Czech, German, and Italian. As a freelance director, from 1992 he worked regularly in Zurich, at Vienna State Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper as well as opera houses in America and Japan, and in the UK, he has a long-standing association with Opera North. He received a Janáček medal for his Janáček cycle in Wales and Scotland, and a Martiní medal for his productions of Julietta and The Greek Passion (Opera North and Bregenz Festival). His productions have twice won an Olivier award. Recent engagements include Saul og David in Copenhagen, The Passenger (Houston, New York and Chicago); Kommissionen, his third opera written in collaboration with Peter Maxwell Davies (Royal Academy of Music and US premiere at the Juilliard School, New York); a new Philip Glass opera, Spuren der Verirrten, for the opening of a new opera house in Linz which won the Schickaneder Prize for best opera production in 2013, and Die Zauberflöte for the lake stage in Bregenz, where he was Intendant from 2003-13. Since 2011 he has been Chief Executive and Artistic Director of WNO, where he has directed Berg’s Lulu, Rossini’s Guillaume Tell, Mosè in Egitto and Pelléas et Mélisande. He is a CBE, a Chevalier in the French Ordre des Arts et Lettres, has the Cavalier’s Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland and was awarded the Ehrenkreuz des Bundes Osterreich in 2014. He was recently awarded an Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and Cardiff University in recognition of his contribution as an artist and cultural leader.

LAUREN SKUCE GROSS
Old Woman
Dramatic soprano Lauren Skuce Gross made her Carnegie Hall debut in 2001 with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and has since been
distinguished for her versatility on both the opera and concert stage. She has performed with the Teatro Municipal de Santiago, Hong Kong Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Portland Opera, Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Bard Music Festival, Kentucky Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Utah Opera, Opera Theater of St. Louis, Boston Baroque, Syracuse Opera, New York City Opera and many more. Ms. Skuce Gross has appeared in solo recitals at the Kennedy Center, Kravis Center in Palm Beach, and Alice Tully Hall. She is a frequent artist with many of the most prestigious chamber music organizations in the country. A Sullivan Award winner, she was the United States representative in the 2003 Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. She received the prestigious Prix du Public in the Montreal International Singing Competition and in April 2007 she was the first place winner of the International Concert Alliance Competition in both the aria and art song categories. *Time Out New York Magazine* printed “we’re ready to crawl on our knees over a mile of gravel to hear Lauren Skuce read the phone book.”

**LIUBOV SOKOLOVA**

Liubka Sokolova was born in Chelyabinsk, Russia and graduated from the St. Petersburg State Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatoire (classes with Professor N.A. Serval) in 1993. In the same year she joined the Mariinsky Opera Company as a trainee. In 1995 she completed a post-graduate study at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire (classes with Professor A.N. Kiselev). With the Mariinsky Theatre, Ms. Sokolova has toured to Germany, Finland (Savonlinna Festival), Portugal, France, Spain, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Israel, Japan, Italy, the USA (Washington, New York, Los Angeles), and South America. Ms. Sokolova’s foreign engagements include Bregenz Festspiele, where she sang Azucena in *Il trovatore*, Amneris in *Aida*; Erda in *Das Rheingold* and Siegfried (Aalto Theater Essen), Ulrica Arlfvidsson in *Un ballo in maschera* (Theater Sankt-Gallen), Erda in *Siegfried*, Countess in *The Queen of Spades*, Waltraute in *Götterdämmerung*, solo in Verdi’s *Requiem* (all at Latvian National Opera), Countess in *The Queen of Spades* (Grand Théâtre de la Ville de Luxembourg), Charlotte in *Werther* (London), Larina in *Eugene Onegin* (Oper Leipzig), Amneris in *Aida* (Royal Albert Hall, London), Yvpraksiya Romanovna in *The Enchantress* (Erfurt), Nurse in *Eugene Onegin* (Warsaw), Bronka in *The Passenger* (Chicago).

**JOANNE WEAVER**

Wig and Makeup Designer
Born in England, Joanne Weaver came to the United States in the late 1980s. She began apprenticing with what was then Washington Opera, now Washington National Opera. Ms. Weaver has since designed at many Opera companies throughout the United States, including Glimmerglass Opera, Central City Opera, Sarasota Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, and Des Moines Metro Opera. Her notable MOT credits include Frédéric, *The Merry Widow*, Faust, *Margaret Garner*, Cyrrano, and *Pearl Fishers*. Weaver has been invited to design wigs for Sarasota Opera’s upcoming Spring season, which will complete the Verdi Cycle they began in 1989.

**Michigan Opera Theatre Studio Artists**

**JOSEPH MICHAEL BRENT**

3rd SS Officer
Joseph Michael Brent is a member of the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio. His roles in Michigan Opera Theatre’s 2015-16 season include Martin in Aaron Copland’s *The Tender Land*, 3rd SS Officer in Mieczyslaw Weinberg *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 Upfold in the Bronx Opera’s production of *Albert Herring*, Edgardo in the New York Opera Exchange production of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and Pinkerton in *Madame Butterfly* at the Quisisana Resort. Of his Edgardo Lei, a coauthor of the Allegri con Fuoco blog, said “Tenor Joseph Michael Brent made me weep too, his sound is beautiful, round and tender but also agile and powerful. Brent is truly a romantic hero, with a handsome stage presence and an expressiveness to match.” Mr. Brent also made two concert debuts, adding both Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 and Mozart’s *Requiem* to his repertoire. Recent summer seasons have seen Mr. Brent in company debuts with Pittsburgh Opera Theatre and Capitól City Opera in Atlanta as Camille in *The Merry Widow*, the Martina Arroyo Prelude to Performance Program as E.T.A. Hoffmann in *Les Contes d’Hoffmann*, and La Musica Lirica as Rodolfo in *La Bohème*. He earned his Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Georgia in the fall of 2014 with a dissertation on selected vocal works of Giovanni Paolo Bottesini. During his tenure as a student at the University of Georgia Mr. Brent sang all of the lead tenor roles between the spring of 2010 and 2014, including Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, E.T.A. Hoffmann in *Les Contes d’Hoffmann*, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöete*, Nemorino in *L’elisir d’amore*, Don Jose in *Carmen*, Frederick in *Pirates of Penzance*, and Ralph Rackstraw in *H.M.S. Pinafore*. He is a native New Yorker, a proud graduate of the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts, holds an undergraduate degree from the conservatory of music at Purchase College SUNY in double bass performance. He was a student of Metropolitan Opera veteran, baritone Frederic Burchinal.

**JEFF BYRNEs**

1st SS Officer
Baritone Jeff Byrnes is excited to return to Michigan Opera Theatre this season as a Studio Artist. Last season, Jeff performed the role of Old Servant in *Elektra* and The Bonze in *Madama 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 Zauberflöte, 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 he was awarded 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. This season at MOT, he appears as Schaunard in La Bohème and Top in The Tender Land.

Brent Michael Smith
2nd SS Officer

As a Studio Artist with Michigan Opera Theatre this season, Brent sang Colline in La Bohème and will sing the Grandpa in The Tender Land, among other roles.

He was an Apprentice Artist with Des Moines Metro Opera this summer, where his performance as Billy Jackrabbit in La fanciulla del West received critical acclaim by Opera News as a “standout.” Colorado Music Buzz praised him for “making the most of his brief appearances.”

This year, Brent 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.

In 2014, Brent sang the role Jim Larkens in Kentucky Opera’s production of La fanciulla del West, as well as Doctor Grenvil in their touring production of La Traviata. Additionally he made his debut with Central City Opera, as an Apprentice Artist, singing Antonio in their production of Le nozze di Figaro.

Brent sang Balthazar in Amahl and the Night Visitors with the University of Northern Iowa, where 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). While at Hope, he studied voice with Linda Dykstra and sang Harry Easter in Street Scene. Brent is a first-place winner in the Grand Rapids Opera Competition (2012).

Angela Theis
Yvette

Soprano Angela Theis will perform several roles this year at Michigan Opera Theatre through her engagement as a Studio artist, including Laurie in The Tender Land 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. Outside of her native Detroit area, Ms. Theis has performed Adina in L’elisir d’amore and Mabel in Pirates of Penzance (Eugene Opera), Clorinda in La Cenerentola and Frasquita in Carmen (Opera Roanoke), Johanna in Sweeney Todd (Syracuse Opera), and Pamina in The Magic Flute School Programs Tour (Syracuse Opera), and Pamina in The Magic Flute School Programs Tour (The Metropolitan Opera Guild). 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.

Mieczysław Weinberg, composer

Mieczysław Weinberg was born in Warsaw, Poland on December 8, 1919. His father worked as a composer and bandleader in a travelling Yiddish theater, and his mother was a leading Yiddish theater actress. Mieczysław, known at home as Moisey, began writing music in early childhood, and joined his father’s band at the age of ten as a pianist. Two years later he entered the Warsaw Conservatory. Weinberg’s talent as a pianist was recognized at an early age, and were it not for the outbreak of World War II, he would have been remembered as one of the great piano virtuosos of the twentieth century. In 1939 Weinberg fled Warsaw for the Soviet Union on foot, leaving his family behind. His parents and little sister Esther stayed behind, and were interned in the Lodz Ghetto, later perishing in the Trawniki concentration camp in Poland. Weinberg fled first to Minsk and then, in advance of the invading Nazi armies, to Tashkent. In 1943, he sent the score of his First Symphony to Dmitri Shostakovich, who was so impressed that he arranged for Weinberg to be officially invited to Moscow. For the rest of his life, Weinberg remained in Moscow, and he and Shostakovich became close friends and colleagues.

Weinberg’s music is often programmatic, terse and intense, depicting the sounds of World War II and the loss of innocence. At other times it is meditative, reflecting his philosophy of universal harmony and unity through melodic and harmonic clarity and proportion. He regarded his opera The Passenger as his most important work, followed by his final Symphony No. 21, “Kaddish,” written in commemoration of the burning of the Warsaw Ghetto where many of his close relatives died. When The Passenger was discussed within the Union of Composers of the Soviet Union, one of the musicians said that the opera was written with the “blood of the heart.” The music lacks any empty space, and nothing is superfluous. Everything is from the composer, what he lived through and experienced; everything is true and expressed with passion. The opera was set to premiere at the Bolshoi in Moscow in 1968, but it was postponed indefinitely; marked as “abstract humanism,” contrary to the principles of Socialist Realism valued by Stalin’s government. Weinberg died in Moscow in 1996, and never saw his opera The Passenger performed.
UNITING OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITY

Michigan Opera Theatre is honored to partner with a growing number of organizations and individuals, whose joint mission is to explore universal themes examined in The Passenger. This opera teaches us the danger of denying the humanity of others and the importance of remembering all victims of genocide. Each partner is helping to educate about The Passenger through a series of events and dialogues.

“The combined power of all these people is extraordinary. Art can unite. Music can make a difference; Opera can serve as a catalyst for productive dialogue. We honor our community partners who are joining us on this journey with The Passenger.”

—Wayne Brown, President & CEO of Michigan Opera Theatre

ORGANIZATIONS
Adat Shalom Synagogue • Arab American National Museum • Arab American Women's Business Council • Armenian Mirror-Spectator • The Berman Center for the Performing Arts • The Bottle Crew • The Carr Center • Center for Neurological Studies • Chaldean-American Chamber of Commerce • Chaldean Foundation • Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History • Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Chicago • Contract Professionals, Inc. • Detroit Interfaith Outreach Network • Detroit Jewish News • Detroit Public Television / WRCJ 90.9 FM • Farmington Community Library • Ferndale Public Schools • Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning • Friends of Polish Art • Grant Elementary/Middle School • Gender-Identity Network Alliance • Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan • Hadassah Greater Detroit • Hartford Memorial Baptist Church • Hemophilia Foundation of Michigan • Heritage of Armenian Culture Radio Program • Holocaust Memorial Center • InterFaith Leadership Council of Metropolitan Detroit • International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit • Italian Film Festival • Jewish Book Fair • JCC SAJE (Seminars for Adult Jewish Enrichment) • Jewish Gay Network • Jewish Hospice & Chaplaincy Network • Legacy Preservation Services • The Maple Theater • Michigan Philharmonic • Michigan Veterans Task Force • Michigan Youth Appreciation Foundation • National Arab Orchestra • National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Detroit Section • Northville District Library • Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine • On My Own of Michigan • Pickles and Rye Deli • Planterra Conservatory • Ruth Ellis Center • Scarab Club • Steinway Piano Gallery of Detroit • Temple Israel • Tri-County Educational Center Ferndale • University of Detroit Mercy • University of Michigan • Verdi Opera Theatre of Michigan • WAY Charter Schools • Wayne State University • Women's Interfaith Solutions for Dialogue and Outreach • WISDOM • Women's Philanthropy, Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit • Yad Ezra

INDIVIDUALS
Renee Ahee • Dan Alpert • Edmond Azadian • Professor Robert Berg • Nancy Bechek Bluth • Dr. Sabrina Black • Roz Blanck • Leonard Borman • Gerald Brisson • Edie Broda • Alexander Citron • Linda Collins • Roz Lulove Cooperman • Nada Dalgamouni • LaNesha Debdelaben • Edward Deeb • Nadine Delutey • Dave Devereaux • Judy Dolan • Charlene Dwyer • Dr. Herbert Eagle • Carole Ebner • Rabbi Dorit Edut • Isra El-bashir • Kathryn S. Grabowski • Charles Ezra Ferrell • Jeff Forrester • Susan Friedman • Susan Gertner • Linda Gillom • Mark Gutman • Dr. Fatma Müge Göçek • Maria Harris • Hannah Hartley • Terry Hollander • Tim Hoy • Rev. Charmaine Johnson • Michael Ibrahim • Gail Katz • Velda Kelly • Rabbi Joseph Krakoff • Susan Lech • Gary Lichtman • Carol Lipsitt • Judy Loeb • Kristie Lohmeyer • Lea Lugner • Dr. Howard Nathan Lupovitch • Susan Lutz • Susan Marwil • Lee Miller • Dan Misteravich • Gail Mitchell • Juanita Moore • Wendy Mutch • Mindy Nathan • Maj. Melvin H. Patton • Adina Pergament • Jerry Peterson • Shane Plisha • Dr. Deborah Smith Pollard • Oliver Ragsdale, Jr. • Faith Robinson Renner • Dr. Jennifer Rike • Pietro Sarcina • Dr. Sam Scheinfeld • Sgt. Stephanie Shannon • Sharon Shapiro • Diane Shultz • Michelle Sider • Spencer Silk • Meredith Skowronski • Linda Soberman • Dr. Guy Stern • Beth Stewart • Carol Surma • Omari Taylor • Judith R. Trepeck • John Zaretti • John Zielinski • Linda Zlotoff
PARTNER STATEMENTS

_The Passenger_ reminds us that humanity has the capacity for devastating cruelty, but collaborating on this project has also reminded us that there are so many wonderful, inspiring people in our city, who work tirelessly to make the world a better place. The power of this group is amazing and it’s been an honor to be a part of it!

**NADINE DELEURY AND VELDA KELLY**
Chamber Music at the Scarab Club

It is such an honor and pleasure to be able to participate in something so great! _The Passenger_ really highlights the historical perseverance of human survival — A lesson that we should never forget.

**JOHN ZIELINSKI**
Lakehouse Studios

It is heartening to see the outpouring of interest and to be part of the joint efforts by everyone involved in support of the love of music and the repudiation of violence, of oppression, of intolerance. Bravo MOT and bravi tutti!

**JOHN ZARETTI**
President, Verdi Opera Theatre of Michigan

I am working on _The Passenger_ Community Partners Project to help my children practice kindness. My hope is that they can help end the cycle of hatred and violence that seems to be consuming the world today. We must never forget the horrors of the Holocaust; and _The Passenger_ opera is an artful remembrance of man’s inhumanity to man.

**CHARLENE DWYER**
Silverkey Productions

The Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History is proud to join the Michigan Opera Theatre and its partners in supporting _The Passenger_ that highlights man’s inhumanity to man. Over 100,000,000 Africans were extingushed during the Trans-Atlantic Enslavement Trade. King Leopold II of Belgium was responsible for the deaths and mutilation of 10 million Congolese Africans during the late 1800’s. The Native American population numbered 10,000,000 and was decimated to 300,000. The German Nazis murdered 6,000,000 Jews in gas chambers. Today, let’s learn, unite, and defeat forces of genocide.

**CHARLES FERRELL**
Director, Public Programs

I believe that we all have the responsibility to combat evil in this world. The message “Never Again” must not be forgotten. It must be repeated in all ways and in all places. It is our obligation to ourselves and to humanity.

**SHARONA SHAPIRO**

Hadassah is proud to be part of a community that values and remembers “never to forget” man’s inhumanity to man and works towards tolerance and respect.

**NANCY BECHEK BLUTH**
President, Hadassah Greater Detroit

This opera reminds us that humanity acts inhumanly at times and we must work hard to stop the cycle which continues to threaten our efforts for a more compassionate world.

**LEA A. LUGER**
Yad Ezra, Executive Director

The Arab American Women’s Business Council is proud to partner with the Michigan Opera Theatre in its production of _The Passenger_ and many other diverse community organizations for important dialog and bridge building in stark contrast to the human hatred our world is experiencing today.

**RENÉE AHEE**
AAWBC Chief Executive Officer

I support _The Passenger_ and the work of the partners because of its universal theme. We are all “passengers” in life with various “obstacles” to overcome.

**SUSAN BENSON FRIEDMAN**

This Opera is important to National Council of Jewish Women, for one of our guiding principles states, “The continuity of the Jewish people must be assured from generation to generation through Jewish education, culture, values, and respect among all streams of Judaism.”

**SUSAN GERTNER**
Executive Director
National Council of Jewish Women

“It is important to remember our past so that we can plan our future.”

**DR. SAM SCHIENFIELD**

Friends of Polish Art supports _The Passenger_ because it is a major artistic achievement by a Polish composer based on the work of a Polish author and survivor of the Nazi German camp at Auschwitz and because _The Passenger_ presents Polish themes as well as the universal theme of humanity’s need for vigilant compassion and the moral resolve to resist the evils of tyranny.

**CAROL SURMA**
President, Friends of Polish Art

_The Passenger_ is a powerful opera that asks us to remember the past as we determine our future.

We examine the lessons of the Holocaust, while celebrating heroism and resistance to inhumanity.

Together, we are reminded that it is up to us to learn from the past, protect and honor our diverse cultures and personal stories.

**BERNARD OFFEN**
Holocaust Survivor, Auschwitz Prisoner, B7815

It is our belief in the power of the human spirit to overcome any obstacle; in order to grow, thrive and ultimately triumph. Our unyielding belief that standing up for others when they can’t or acting as a voice for the voiceless aligns with the message of _The Passenger_. It is not a choice but an obligation to fight for what is right. We are humbled and grateful to be a part of this community movement.

**KRISTIE LOHMEIER**
Contract Professionals, Inc

_The Passenger_ is so important today to spread the message that we all need to work together to fight the hate and fear in our world, and bring diverse people together to dialogue and increase respect and understanding!

**GAIL KATZ**
InterFaith Leadership Council
PARTNER STATEMENTS

For over a five year period, I filmed survivors at the concentration camps. Each, in their own way, said that they needed to stay alive so the story of the Holocaust could be told. Our partner collaboration, of organizations and individuals, speaks volumes that we are working together to teach the lessons of the Holocaust. By doing so, we continue to generate dialogue that will protect our future within a mutual connection. The collaboration and dedication of the MOT has been a powerful experience that will always stay with me.  

ROSALIND LULLOVE COOPERMAN  
Creator of Community Partner Initiative

The Hemophilia Foundation of Michigan (HFM) exists to enhance the quality of life for all affected by bleeding disorders, many who were directly impacted by HIV/AIDS. Our community understands the significance of collaboration and unity in the face of fear and misunderstanding — we are grateful to the Michigan Opera Theatre’s leadership in supporting diversity through partnership.  

SUSAN LERCH  
Hemophilia Foundation of Michigan

Our diverse community also includes individuals who suffer with close head injuries. The acceptance of every individual, including those with disabilities, speaks of our humanity. The lessons of the Holocaust have taught us that every individual has the right to be part of the community. We are proud to be among the partners.  

DR. RANDALL BENSON  
Center for Neurological Studies

Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan is honored to be a community partner of Michigan Opera Theatre’s The Passenger. Every meal Gleaners distributes makes a difference for all of life’s passengers, making it easier to study, find work, recover from illness, or face difficult challenges. No one should have to go hungry, and together we’re reaching our neighbors with the nutritious food they need to achieve a brighter future.  

OMARI TAYLOR  
Gleaners

The Maple Theater is always excited to partner with the MOT. We are thrilled to be participating in this event. The Passenger has brought us together and the collaboration of all partners will keep the dialogue of our humanity alive in our community.  

RUTH DANIELS  
Maple Theater

We have all at some point been “The Passenger” on this journey of life and experienced pain and suffering. This phenomenal production represents the voices of those who have sacrificed that we may remember our history and be a voice of hope, liberty and justice for future generations. It has been a great joy to be a member of the planning committee for The Passenger as we have been privileged to engage with one another’s cultures and contribute to the rebirth and reconnection of our global community.  

DR. SABRINA D. BLACK  
Author, “Live Right Now”

The Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine (OUWB), the newest medical school in Southeast Michigan, offers a unique liberal arts approach toward teaching the science of medicine and is therefore grateful to the Michigan Opera Theatre for allowing us to be a community engagement partner in the MOT’s presentation of The Passenger. Our event was hosted on November 11, Veterans Day. The program at OUWB included a focus on the victims of the Holocaust and on the health issues of the concentration camp liberators because the men and women in our armed forces, to this day, serve not only those in combat but also civilians who suffer from the effects of inhumanity.  

ROBERT FOLBERG, MD  
Founding Dean

The Passenger was the catalyst for a diverse ethnic group of individuals and organizations to come together with a common goal. Forums were created to discuss the lesson of man’s inhumanity to man so that it will never be forgotten and not to be repeated. The Passenger, its message and the terrific energy of the MOT has generated an environment across the area to bring better understanding of our shared concerns. Let the dialogue continue.  

SPENCER A. SILK  
Board Member, On My Own

The powerful artistry of The Passenger and the dialogue it fosters exemplify and illuminate the shared struggles and the mutual challenges faced by immigrants and communities around the world. For the last 10 years, the Arab American National Museum has empowered Arab Americans to tell their own stories in their own words, and then presented those real-life experiences within the context of American society. In the spirit of understanding and respecting the range of human experience, it is our honor and pleasure to support this production.  

Arab American National Museum

The Michigan Philharmonic is proud to partner with the Michigan Opera Theatre on the MOT’s groundbreaking performance of The Passenger commemorating the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. The opera is a musical expression of the tragic events of that time as well as joyous celebration of life and forgiveness. This opera performance is an illustration of how the arts can move us to remember, to think and to act on behalf of victims of genocide around the world both past and present. Bravo!  

BETH STEWART  
Executive Director
ROBERTO COIN
POIS MOI COLLECTION

GREENSTONE’S
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THE PASSENGER

Photos: Robert Kusel/Lyric Opera of Chicago
The concentration and extermination camp complex known as Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest of the death factories created by the Nazis, was in operation from 1940 to 1945. On January 27, 1945 the Soviet army entered the camp and liberated the 7,000 prisoners who still remained alive there, most of them sick and on the point of death. That day is still marked around the world as International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

2015 is the 70th year since the liberation of Auschwitz, a site that forever remains burned in the world’s historical memory as representing the height of man’s potential for inhumanity towards his fellow man. To pay tribute to the victims and survivors of the Nazi Holocaust, which claimed the lives of six million Jews and five million other victims of Nazi persecution, Dr. David DiChiera chose to present this opera, in this significant year, at Michigan Opera Theatre.

Detroit is a particularly worthy place to host such an opera (MOT will be the third American company to do so, after Houston Grand Opera and the Lyric Opera of Chicago). Our metropolitan area has been home to many Holocaust survivors since the end of the Second World War. We encourage those who wish to learn more about their stories to visit the Holocaust Memorial Center, located in Farmington Hills and an accompanying website, www.portraitsofhonor.org. There, Detroit-area survivors tell of their lives before, during, and after the catastrophe that, in most cases, took nearly their entire families away.

In honor of these esteemed Michigan residents, the precious survivors all over the world, and the millions of souls whose flame was extinguished in the Holocaust… In honor of the millions who fought or worked on behalf of the Allied forces, to free Europe from the fist of tyranny (many of whom, of course, were from Detroit or worked in its factories of war materials, in the time when our city was proudly called “the arsenal of democracy”)… To all of them, we dedicate this production of The Passenger, an enduring reflection on memory, resistance, and loss.

“If one day your voices should fall silent, If they should fall still, Then we are all extinguished… Do not forget them, never ever!”

—The character of Marta in the epilogue to The Passenger
THIS YEAR, TWO NEWS STORIES have closely mirrored the plot unfolded in The Passenger, as, like Liese in the opera, two elderly people in Germany have been forced to come to terms with their former membership in the SS. Standing for “Schutzstaffel” [protection squadron], this was the infamous organization in control of the Nazi police force and the concentration camp system.

In July of 2015, at 94 years of age, German courts sentenced former SS man Oskar Gröning to four years in prison for his participation in crimes against humanity as an “accessory to murder in at least 300,000 cases” at Auschwitz. There, from 1942 to 1944, he had served principally as a bookkeeper, making accounts of the money stolen from arriving prisoners and forwarded on to the Nazi government. Gröning had formerly endeavored to keep this history concealed, stating in an interview that once at a dinner with his wife and in-laws, after discussion arose of his past, he stamped his fist on the table and shouted, “This word and this connection are never, ever, to be mentioned again in my presence, otherwise I’ll move out!”

The parallel to Liese’s agitated behavior with her husband aboard the ship in The Passenger, as she is wracked with the sins of her past and must finally reveal them, is striking.

A German woman, not yet named, has also been charged this year for her participation in genocide. She is a 91-year old accused of having served as a radio operator at Auschwitz. Her trial is likely to take place next year.

The cases are setting a new precedent for bringing former Nazis to trial in Germany, where legal inaction in this domain had been the norm for years. 6,500 SS members served at the camp, and only 49 of them have ever been convicted of war crimes.

2015 marks 70 years since the liberation of Auschwitz and 100 years since the Armenian Genocide at the hands of the Ottoman Empire. We are witnessing these ongoing trials in Germany, and horrific atrocities taking place throughout Africa and the Middle East. It is evident that this is a crucial time for producing works like The Passenger, that we may further examine genocide and the ways in which it continues to impact our fragile world.

American author William Faulkner perhaps put it best, in his 1951 novel Requiem for a Nun. As is clear from the cycles of our human society, and from The Passenger, in which characters move freely from one historical period to another and back again, their memories ever affecting their present lives, “The past is never dead. It’s not even past.”

Echoes of the Past and The Passenger
Unfading Voices: The Many Languages of The Passenger

When the curtain rises on The Passenger, composer Mieczysław Weinberg’s memory opera of the Holocaust, a former Nazi guard at Auschwitz and her husband are en route to a new life in Brazil. The man sings jubilantly, piercing the sea air with his tenor: “Das Ufer in der Ferne ist nicht mehr zu seh’n. Und wir sind ganz allein, ganz allein” [The faraway shore can no longer be seen. And we are all alone, all alone.]

Sung as it is in German, the lines echo the Nazi ideals of superiority and separation. He and his wife are rarefied people, alone at the top. Meanwhile, other passengers drift to and fro behind the couple. A waiter soon comes forward to offer drinks. An audience of hundreds watches them from the seats of the opera house. These two are clearly not alone, much as they would like to be. Nor do only people surround them. They are soon closed in by the haunting, insisting echoes of the past, the voices of the concentration camp.

In Michigan Opera Theatre’s production of The Passenger, which uses a multilingual version of the libretto, those voices float to us in the characters’ native languages—seven in total, surely more than in any other opera in the standard repertory. After the opening aboard the ship, we descend into the memory of the guard, the barracks of Auschwitz. Women prisoners murmur to each other in the dark. German gives way to the caresses of French, the rich stew of Polish and Russian and Czech, the homey poetry of Yiddish.

In one quietly moving scene, the French teenager Yvette teaches a fellow inmate, the middle-aged Russian Bronka, a lesson in her native language. “When you have finally reached Dijon,” Yvette sings, assuring Bronka she will bring the woman back to meet the girl’s family once they are liberated, “you will have to speak French or they'll laugh at you.” And she proceeds to teach her conjugations, in a bright voice full of impossible hope, “Je vis, tu vis, elle vit,” insisting that Bronka repeat after her. “I live, you live, she lives.”

The opera presents to us something like a historical photograph, refracted through art and through memory. There in Auschwitz, the “cemetery of the world,” men, women, and children came as captives from wooden shtetls and grand cities, from mansions and orphanages. They spoke in every language of Nazi-occupied Europe, and struggled to understand each other and their overseers. So it was in Auschwitz, and so it is in this astonishing opera, which prompts us all to reflect on the present as we hear testimony, in so many tongues, of the horrors of the past. In its internationalism, it may speak more directly to us, the people of Detroit, who come from every land, who represent every color and creed, who speak so many languages so beautiful and so varied. Detroit’s International Institute covers 93 ethnicities represented in the metropolitan area, many of whose communities came to America seeking refuge from oppression and strife all over the world.

Weinberg, the librettist Alexander Medvedev, and the writer of the original story Zofia Posmysz (herself a survivor of Auschwitz), chose as an epigraph for their opera the words of the French poet Paul Éluard, “As the echo of her voice fades away, we also fail and fade.”

That the voices of the Holocaust’s victims may not so fade, the creators of The Passenger gave us an opera rich with sound and memory, its characters speaking to us in their multiplicity of languages. Seventy years since the liberation of Auschwitz, sufferers of persecution like them cry out still today. Let us listen.
Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra — *The Passenger*

**VIOLIN I**
- Laura Leigh Roelofs, *Acting Concertmaster*
- Velda Kelly
- Andrew Wu, *Acting Assistant Concertmaster*
- Bryan Johnston
- Charlotte Merkerson
- Beth Kaufman
- Molly Hughes
- Jenny Wan
- Emily Barkakati
- Jaqueline Nutting
- David Ormai
- Joseph Deller

**VIOLIN II**
- Victoria Haltom, *Principal*
- Daniel Stachyra
- Anna Bittar-Weller
- Judith Teasdale
- Sherri Martila
- Janet Sullins
- Elizabeth Rowin
- Constance Markwick
- Henrik Karapetyan
- Bethany Moses

**CELLO**
- Nadine Deleury, *Principal*
- Stefan Koch
- Daniel Thomas
- Katri Ervamaa
- Irina Tikhonova
- Nancy Chaklos
- Eugene Zenzen

**FLUTE**
- Amanda Blaikie, *Principal*
- Dennis Carter
- Laura Larson

**OBEO**
- Nermis Mieses, *Principal*
- Stephenie Shapiro
- Sally Heffelfinger-Pituch

**ENGLISH HORN**
- Sally Heffelfinger-Pituch

**BASS CLARINET**
- J. William King

**ALTO & TENOR SAXOPHONES**
- Jeffrey Heisler

**BASSOON**
- Roger Maki-Schramm, *Acting Principal*
- Gregory Quick
- Phelan Young

**PIANO**
- Jean Schneider

**PERCUSSION**
- John Dorsey, *Principal*
- Lynn Koch
- Cary Kocher
- Dan Maslanka
- David Taylor

**HORN**
- Andrew Pelletier, *Principal*
- Susan Mutter
- David Denniston
- Tamara Kosinski
- Kristi Crago

**TRUMPET**
- David Ammer, *Principal*
- Gordon Simmons
- Derek Lockhart

**TROMBONE**
- Tyler Vahldick, *Principal*
- Greg Near

**PIANO**
- Dale Grisa

**ACCORDER**
- Pamela McGowan

**BASS**
- Robert Stiles

**DRUMS**
- Geoff Kinde

**TUBA**
- Neal Campbell

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**Michigan Opera Theatre Chorus — The Passenger**

**Soprano**
- Brandy Adams
- Alaina Brown
- Claire Chardon
- Fidelia Esther Darmahkasih
- Deanna Johnson
- Desiree Nicole Johnson
- Hillary LaBonte
- Sheena Law
- Leslie Mason
- Jessica Pistor
- Jennifer Zabelsky
- Heidi Bowen Zook

**Alto**
- Yvonne Friday
- Janet Geisler
- Helen Hass
- Julia Hoffert
- Mimi Lanser
- Rachel McIntosh
- Anna Nadasky
- Amanda O'Toole
- Diane Schoff
- Tiffanie Waldron
- Tamara Whitty

**Tenor**
- Gregory Ashe
- Fred Buchalter
- Darren DeWitt
- Michael Fowler
- Mark Istratie
- Richard Jackson
- Adrian Leskiw
- Brad Lieto
- Brad Miller
- Carrick Secorski
- Jason Thomas
- Jeffrey Wilkinson

**Bass**
- Matthew Daniels
- Joseph Edmonds
- Kurt Frank
- Branden Hood
- Matthew Konopacki
- Miroslav Manovski
- Blair Mellow
- David Moan
- Pette Moore
- Paolo Pacheco
- Bradley Schick
- Kevin Starnes
- David Twigg
- Justin Watson
- Norm Weber

*The American Guild of Musical Artists is the official union of the Michigan Opera Theatre Chorus.*
Volunteers

Dear Friends of Michigan Opera Theatre,

Greetings from the MOT Volunteer Association (MOTVA) as we begin our 2015-2016 Season!

I have been an opera lover for many years and Michigan Opera Theatre is very important to me. That’s why I have been a proud MOT volunteer for nearly 30 seasons. I am very proud to be a small part of our world-class company which showcases some of the most diverse opera and innovative dance series in the country. As we are all aware, these performances require the collaboration of many, especially those who help out behind the scenes. Our founder, Dr. David DiChiera, has often said, “Volunteers are the lifeblood of our company.”

If you are not yet a volunteer, please consider joining us! Volunteering is a great way to meet other interesting and involved people. Our key volunteer groups do everything from ushering and guiding tours, to hosting events and planning sold-out fundraisers.

Your tax-deductible MOTVA membership entitles you to participate in our individual volunteer groups. For membership information please view the MOTVA webpage at www.michiganopera.org/working-with-us/volunteer, or call Christina Wagner at (313) 237-3236. Christina would be very happy to discuss volunteer opportunities with you, and connect your interests with the appropriate volunteer group.

To those of you who currently support us through generous gifts of time and resources, I offer my sincere thanks.

I hope you enjoy the 2015-2016 season. We look forward to working with you and thank you for your interest and involvement in the Michigan Opera Theatre Volunteer Association.

Terry Shea, President, MOTVA

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Some of the world’s most creative minds suffer from one of the most devastating conditions...

Be a source of hope. Help find a cure for bipolar disorder.

What makes a person bipolar, prone to manic highs and depressed lows? We are advancing research on the personalized treatment of this illness that affects close to 6 million Americans.

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Alan Israel
Amy Jidov
Delphine Kerney
Glen & Linda Moon
John Novak
Michigan Opera Theatre Children’s Chorus (MOTCC) is a ground breaking 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!

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES:

A Winter Fantasy: Holiday Concert & Fundraiser

Sunday, December 13, 2015 at 3 PM
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 $30 for adults 18 and older, $50 for box seats, $15 for ages 5 and older, and free for children 4 and younger. Tickets include entrance to the concert, silent auction, and a variety of delectable desserts.

Silent auction online bidding will be available December 5-11 with final bidding at A Winter Fantasy on December 13. Please visit www.motcc.org to register and bid.

The Mikado — MOTCC Children’s Opera

By: Gilbert and Sullivan
Synopsis: This beloved, hilarious Gilbert & Sullivan operetta has been re-imagined for a younger generation. Be prepared for an explosion of fun and color on stage with Japanese anime mixed with Candyland.

Student Dress Rehearsal
Friday, April 29, 2016
11 a.m. at the Detroit Opera House
Tickets (must be purchased in advance): $10/Student; 1 FREE Chaperone ticket for every 10 tickets, if purchased the day of rehearsal: $15 students; $25 adults

Public Performance:
Saturday, April 30
2:30 p.m. at the Detroit Opera House
Tickets: Adult: $30, Children: $15

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

MOTCC Principal and Prep Choruses

Michigan Opera Theatre Children’s Chorus

Principal Chorus
Melody Balos
Shiloh Beaton
Alexandra Beck
Ryan Blankenburg
Brooke Bugajewski
Miranda Cancelosi
Lacey Cooper
Porttiea Davidson
Xaneveya Davidson
Kristen D’Souza
Edward Eichenhorn
Jaeden Footitt
Jehnya Footitt
Katherine Fuller
Soleil Garcia-Johnson
Lilly Geer
Nina Georgeff
Jayla Granger
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Emma Guzman
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Emma Huber
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Stephanie Martin
Emma McDonald
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Nadia Morman-Williams
Katherine Moses
Amber Ohsllson
Matteo Papadoiopoulos
Owen Pichla
Samantha Radman
Kevyn Roessler
Laura Rosales
Raquel Segars
Caitlin Simonds
Lauren Trainor
Noah Trudeau
Benjamin Ward
Natalie Watson
Violet Whitmore
Natalie Wilson
Preparatory Chorus
Neah Bloch
Amelia Borsys
Adrielle Caldwell
Emily Cooper
Savannah Da Silva
Conor Field
Madison Flint
Kyla Gryczan
Mackenzie Jackson
Cosette Keil
Mia Martin
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Isabella Vesprini
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MOTCC Staff
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Dianna Hochella, Assistant Director, Principal Chorus Conductor
Annie Klar, Preparatory Chorus Conductor
Twannette Nash, Chorus Administrator
Joseph Jackson, Principal Chorus Accompanist
John Pavik, Preparatory Chorus Accompanist
Ensuring the Future

Imagine a gift that outlives you—that touches future generations in your absence—to experience and enjoy the world of opera.

That’s the goal of the Avanti Society, Michigan Opera Theatre’s Planned Gift Recognition Program. The Avanti Society represents a designated group of friends of Michigan Opera Theatre who have made plans to include the organization in their estate plans—whether by will, trust, insurance, or life income arrangement. Membership in the Avanti Society is open to all.

Members of the Avanti Society receive a beautifully designed lapel pin, recognition at the annual Avanti Evening and invitations to special events and performances, and are listed as members in our program books throughout each season.

AN AVANTI FOR TOMORROW

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

Estate of Mr. Douglas Allison
Estate of Miss Halla F. Claffey
Estate of Ms. Anne E. Ford
Estate of Ms. Rema Frankel
Estate of Richard Sloan

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TOURING ENSEMBLE
Taking opera to the community, last season The MOT Touring Ensemble presented more than 100 performances for students, seniors, and adults throughout the state of Michigan, bringing opera to over 20,000 individuals. Performances are 30-45 minutes in length and include a Q&A session with the cast immediately following the performance. Our 15-16 Touring season will include a variety of performances which are listed below.

FEATURED:
How Nanita Learned to Make Flan by Enrique Gonzalez-Medina. (Grades K-6)
This multicultural chamber opera performed in English and Spanish displays some of the struggles of Hispanic immigrants. Nanita's papa is a shoemaker who works so hard he doesn't even have time to make his own daughter a pair of shoes. Now Nanita's First Communion is coming up, but how can she appear before Our Lady of Guadalupe in bare feet? So Nanita decides make the shoes for herself. But somehow, her odd little creations turn out to be enchanted, and they sleep walk her far, far away. When she awakens, poor Nanita is lost. How this feisty heroine finds her way back home is sure to delight all youngsters, as will the recipe for magical flan. (Subjects: English Language Arts, Spanish, Humanities, Social Studies, Arts Education — Music & Theater)

I, Too, Sing America
by Dr. Emery Stephens (Grades 7-12)
This interactive lecture / recital highlights the achievements of African-American musicians. Dr. Emery Stephens, Assistant Professor of Voice at Wayne State University and Alvin Waddles, Award-Winning Concert Pianist give a history lesson on how various genres of music were created and the world events surrounding their creation. (Subjects: World History, African-American History, Social Studies, Humanities, Music)

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.

COMING SOON:
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 opera is sure to keep you laughing.

ALSO OFFERED EACH SEASON:
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 selected Gilbert & Sullivan operetta on the Main Stage of the Michigan Opera Theatre.

To learn more about any of these programs go to www.MichiganOpera.org.
DANCE EDUCATION

MASTER CLASSES
All classes are held in the Detroit Opera House Margo V. Cohen Dance Studio. FREE with ticket to corresponding dance performance. Class fee is $25 without corresponding ticket.

Pre-registration required: dance@motopera.org.
For information: (313) 237-3251

BalletMet Columbus
Ballet master class – Ages 11 to 15
Beginner/Intermediate level
Saturday, Nov. 28, 2015 – 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 5, 2015 – 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Eisenhower Dance
Modern master class – Ages 14 and older
Intermediate/Advanced level
Saturday, January 23, 2016 – 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Dance Theatre of Harlem
Ballet master class – Ages 14 and older
Intermediate to advanced levels
Saturday, February 13, 2016 – 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

American Ballet Theatre
Ballet master class - Ages 14 and older
Intermediate and advanced levels
Saturday, April 2, 2016 - 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Get Involved! Michigan Opera Theatre Volunteer Association Dance Council
Do you love dance and have a desire to support the arts by volunteering? Become a member of the MOTVA Dance Council. This is a group dedicated to sharing dance and building audiences at the Detroit Opera House. The Dance Council is in need of highly motivated dance lovers with new ideas willing to host gatherings, come up with new fundraising ideas, and most of all enjoy dance in Detroit. For more information please contact dance@motopera.org

Enjoy Dance Film, Refreshments, and Discussion
Dance lovers from all over Detroit come together for dance films, popcorn, drink, and discussion on Tuesday evenings. All dance films take place at the Detroit Opera House in the Ford Center for Arts and Learning. A $10 donation is payable at the door, and this includes the film presentation, refreshments and beverages. No reservations are required. For more information, call 313.237.3251.

Film Dates - programming TBD
Nov. 10, 2015
Jan. 5, 2016
Feb. 2, 2016
Wayne S. Brown  
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Founder & Artistic Director

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Dewen Mitchell, Director of Bookings & Events Management
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Michigan Opera Theatre gratefully acknowledges the generous donors who made major general operating support and restricted gifts of $25,000 and above between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015. Their support plays an integral part in the company’s financial stability which is necessary for producing quality grand opera, dance and award-winning educational activities.

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- Michigan Opera Theatre gratefully acknowledges the generous corporate, foundation, government, and individual donors whose contributions were made between July 1, 2014, and June 30, 2015. Their generosity is vital to the company’s financial stability, which is necessary to sustain MOTs position as a valued cultural resource.

**Michigan Opera Theatre**

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

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY
Doctors and parents are advised to leave their seat location (located on ticket) and our emergency number, (313) 961-3300, 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 three floor restrooms are wheelchair accessible. A unisex, wheelchair accessible restroom is located in the Cadillac Opera Cafe.

NO SMOKING
The Detroit Opera House is a smoke-free facility. Ash receptacles are provided at the exterior of all entry doors for those who wish to smoke.

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) 961-3300 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. 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.

ACCESSIBILITY
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.

CHILDREN
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.

CONCEALED WEAPONS
Be advised that, for purposes of Michigan Compiled Laws, Section 28.4250(1)(i), 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.

RENTAL INFORMATION
The Detroit Opera House is available for rent by your organization. Please call (313) 961-3300, and ask to speak with the Director of Booking & Events Management.

TICKET INFORMATION
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 all TicketMaster outlets, by phone at (800) 745-3000, or at www.TicketMaster.com.

DETROIT OPERA HOUSE TOURS
Come join the Opera House Ambassadors for a backstage tour of the Detroit Opera House! Learn about the history of the Opera House and its restoration, meet the people behind the scenes, tour the stage and see how it operates. Tours are $10 per person, for groups of 20 or more. For more information, please call (313) 237-3279, or visit www.MichiganOpera.org.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION
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Emergencies: (313) 237-3257
Michigan Opera Theatre: (313) 961-3300
General Information: (313) 961-3300
Lost and Found: (313) 961-3300
Ticket Office: (313) 237-SING (7464)
Theater Rental Information: (313) 961-3300
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