



For Immediate Release

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Michigan Opera Theatre to Debut "Amahl and the Night Visitors"

Christmas opera presents special take on Nativity story

Performed at the Grosse Pointe War Memorial and the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts

December 9 & 22

DETROIT, Nov 28, 2018 – This holiday season, Michigan Opera Theatre will present Gian Carlo Menotti's "Amahl and the Night Visitors," a unique Christmas opera that presents a special take on the Nativity story. The opera, produced for the first time by MOT, will be presented at community partner venues, including the Grosse Pointe War Memorial and the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts.

The opera tells the story of Amahl, an impoverished boy who must use a crutch to walk, and his miraculous encounter with the Three Kings the night of the birth of the Christ-child. On their way to present their gifts to the baby, the kings look for shelter at the home of Amahl and his mother, who has very little to offer them and is tempted by their riches. As the night continues, Amahl develops a close relationship with the kings, resulting in a miracle that will change Amahl's life forever.

"Amahl and the Night Visitors" is a heartwarming story of how faith, charity and love can work miracles," said MOT Principal Conductor Stephen Lord. "It's a beautiful story to experience and illustrates the true spirit of the holidays. It is a perfect opera for young and old."

NBC premiered the opera on television Dec. 24, 1951, which was viewed by an estimated 5 million people—the largest audience to ever see a televised opera. The production was an instant hit and became an annual tradition performed by the NBC Opera Theatre from 1951

until 1966. This new production of Menotti's popular family opera brings the tradition of holiday operas back to Detroit audiences.

"Amahl" stars Michigan Opera Theatre Children's Chorus singers Natalie Nikolajevs and Ashton Fell sharing the title role. The opera also features the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio resident artists including soprano Cheyanne Coss as Amahl's mother, tenor Michael Day as King Kaspar, baritone Harry Greenleaf as King Melchior and bass Allen Michael Jones as King Balthazar. Baritone Branden C.S. Hood fills out the cast as the Page. The opera is conducted by Oriol Sans and is directed by Jennifer Williams.

The opera is sung in English. The production is made possible by Ideal Group and the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan.

Ticket prices are \$30 for adults and \$15 for children. Tickets for the Grosse Pointe War Memorial performances are available on their website at <https://www.warmemorial.org/holidays/2018/12/9/amahl-and-the-night-visitors>. Tickets to the Macomb Center performances may be purchased at www.MichiganOpera.org, by calling (313) 237-7464 or in person at the Detroit Opera House (1526 Broadway, Detroit).

For additional information visit <https://michiganopera.org/events/amahl-and-the-night-visitors/>.

"Amahl and the Night Visitors"

Music and libretto by Gian Carlo Menotti

Performed at the Grosse Pointe War Memorial, 32 Lake Shore Dr, Grosse Pointe Farms

- Sunday, Dec. 9 at 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Performed at the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Rd, Clinton Township

- Saturday, Dec. 22 at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

About Michigan Opera Theatre

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