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Michigan Opera Theatre Summer Program to Feature Guest Artists from "Hamilton"

Student Programs Go Virtual

August 2020

DETROIT, July 7, 2020 - Michigan Opera Theatre's summer theater program will feature guest artists from the acclaimed Broadway show "Hamilton" in its line-up. The teen program, "Operetta Remix," will include special guests Jonathan Christopher and Nikisha Williams, who perform in the ensemble of the touring production of "Hamilton." Christopher also understudies the roles of Aaron Burr and George Washington and Williams understudies Eliza, Angelica and Peggy. "Operetta Remix" and its younger counterpart "Create & Perform," will be conducted virtually through the Zoom digital platform to meet social distancing guidelines.

"Michigan Opera Theatre has prided itself on connecting students with renowned industry talent, and we are thrilled to bring these incredible artists from one of Broadway's most successful shows among our guest artists this summer," said MOT Director of Education Andrea Scobie. "Through Zoom, we are excited to continue our commitment to arts education while keeping our students, staff and artists safe during this time of social distancing."

Operetta Remix will take place Aug. 3-7 and provide vocal coaching, acting instruction and dance workshops for students ages 13-18. Under the direction of professional opera singer and instructor Mary Martin, students will explore works from operetta and musical theater. Guest artists will offer roundtables on career and educational opportunities. In addition to Christopher and Williams, guest artists will also include soprano Cecilia Violetta Lopez, named one of opera's "25 rising stars," by Opera News, as well as MOT Assistant Music Director, Chorus Master and Director of the Michigan Opera Theatre Children's Chorus, Suzanne Mallare Acton, among others.

Create & Perform will take place Aug. 10-14. Tailored for students ages 8-12, participants will write and compose short monologues, dialogues and songs which reflect on the events of 2020 as they have experienced them. This program gives participants a platform through which to tell their own stories and to create a sense of community and solidarity through shared experiences and allows them to create a digital time capsule which will capture the events of this unprecedented time.

Meet the Artists

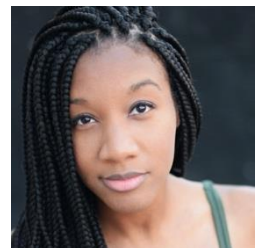
Jonathan Christopher

Jonathan Christopher is a member of the Hamilton national tour, performing in the ensemble and understudying the roles of Aaron Burr and George Washington. He was a 2013 MOT apprentice and has two classical music degrees, including a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Michigan. He has performed in both musical theater and operas throughout the country.



Nikisha Williams

Nikisha Williams is currently part of the ensemble of the Hamilton National Touring company understudying Eliza, Angelica and Peggy. She holds a master's degree in Choral Conducting and a bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Southern Mississippi. Her regional and Broadway touring credits include "The Color Purple," "Memphis" and "Hairspray."



Cecilia Violetta Lopez

Renowned soprano Cecilia Violetta Lopez has performed in opera houses throughout the world. She recently performed in MOT's "Una Noche Navidena para Todos" at Detroit's Most Holy Redeemer Church in December. Recent performances also include roles with Opera Colorado, Opera Southwest, Madison Opera and Opera Idaho.



Suzanne Mallare Acton

Suzanne Mallare Acton wears many hats at Michigan Opera Theatre, serving as its Assistant Music Director, Chorus Master and Director of the Michigan Opera Theatre Children's Chorus. She has prepared the adult and children's choruses for more than 125 productions.



Operetta Remix

August 3 - 7, 2020

Ages 13 - 18

Fee: \$150

Create & Perform

August 10 - 14, 2020

Ages 8 - 12

Fee: \$125

For registration and additional information, visit <https://michiganopera.org/learn/music-and-theater/>.

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About Michigan Opera Theatre

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