



For Immediate Release

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Michigan Opera Theatre to Honor Founder and Artistic Director Dr. David DiChiera with "Grand Salute" May 19

Evening to include star-studded performances, legacy announcement, sponsorship dinner and young patron after-party

Detroit, Feb. 20, 2017 - Michigan Opera Theatre will honor Founder and Artistic Director Dr. David DiChiera with a "Grand Salute" May 19. The event will be a star-studded performance featuring artists from around the globe. This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Detroit audiences assembles some of the great artists from opera and dance on one stage to celebrate the legacy of DiChiera as he transitions to Artistic Director Emeritus as the end of the 2016-17 season. The Grand Salute will include a major legacy announcement and involve civic and industry giants who have been instrumental in helping DiChiera achieve his vision.

The performance will be followed by a sponsorship dinner at the Detroit Athletic Club and a "Bravo Salute" young patron party in the Detroit Opera House. These festivities coincide with the final weekend performances of DiChiera's own opera, "Cyrano," to conclude the 2016-17 season.

"David DiChiera is a visionary, a man of tremendous talent and determination whose passion, business acumen and charisma created a Detroit opera company when they said it could not be done," said Michigan Opera Theatre CEO Wayne Brown. "We are proud to recognize an industry giant and local hero who has led incredible advancements within both the city of Detroit and the opera world."

DiChiera founded Michigan Opera Theatre in 1971 with a mission to create a world-class opera company that served and represented the diverse community in which it resided. Priorities included championing artists of color, mentoring the next generation of opera singers and supporting Detroit's revitalization.

DiChiera personally nurtured the careers of numerous African-American artists such as Kathleen Battle, Maria Ewing, Leona Mitchell and Vinson Cole. He prioritized presenting operas of our time that represent the diverse cultures of our nation such as "Margaret Garner," "Treemonisha," "Anoush" and "Frida." He established the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio residency program, providing advanced training and performance opportunities for significant young artists who are on the brink of successful careers. In Detroit, DiChiera revitalized two abandoned theaters, first Music Hall and then the Detroit Opera House in 1996. These investments ignited the growth of the city's entertainment district and the development of numerous businesses, restaurants and residences.

In addition to Michigan Opera Theatre, DiChiera was the founder of Opera Pacific (CA) and served as artistic director of Dayton Opera (OH). He also served as president of the national service organization OPERA America. With such wide-spanning influence, DiChiera has been one of the leading advocates of opera in America.

“David did much more than build an opera company,” said Michigan Opera Theatre Chairman Rick Williams. “He broke down cultural barriers and served as an inspiration for people and businesses both inside and outside the arts.”

Hosting as Michigan Opera Theatre’s Grand Salute Chairs are Pernilla & Daniel Ammann, Gretchen & Ethan Davidson, Jennifer & David Fischer, Mona & Matthew Simoncini and Karen & R. Jamison Williams. Special advisors include Ali Moiin & William Kupsky and Gary Wasserman & Charlie Kashner. Under their leadership, a significant sponsorship program is underway. Bravo Salute chairs include Amy Ancevski, Andrus McDonald, Frederick Robinson and Will Robinson.

Ticket prices for the performance range from \$59 to \$150. Tickets may be purchased online at www.MichiganOpera.org, by calling (313) 237-7464 or in person at the Detroit Opera House (1526 Broadway, Detroit). Sponsorship dinner and Bravo Salute ticket information is available by calling 313-237-5307.

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About Michigan Opera Theatre

Michigan Opera Theatre (Wayne S. Brown, President and CEO; Dr. David DiChiera, Founder and Artistic Director), 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, the company’s mission is to serve as a major cultural resource to the state of Michigan and the city of Detroit. Visit the website at www.michiganopera.org.