

For Immediate Release

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Mafia-Style "Rigoletto" to Open Michigan Opera Theatre's 2017-18 Season

Opera to be first production under artistic leadership of Stephen Lord

Oct. 14-22 at the Detroit Opera House

Detroit, Sept. 19, 2017 - Michigan Opera Theatre will open its 2017-18 season with the iconic Jonathan Miller production of "Rigoletto," set in New York's Little Italy. The opera marks the beginning of the first full season under the artistic leadership of Principal Conductor Stephen Lord. MOT will present four performances Oct. 14-22 at the Detroit Opera House.

Considered one of Giuseppe Verdi's operatic masterpieces, "Rigoletto" tells a story of love, vengeance and tragedy in a father's attempt to protect his daughter. Miller's production brings the traditional setting of a 1500s Italian dukedom to a 1950s New York crime family. Instead of a duke preying upon the daughter of his court jester, the updated version includes a mafia boss attempting to seduce the daughter of his bartender. The work features Verdi's beloved score, including the famous aria "La donna è mobile."

Lord, who will also conduct the opera, said the production is the most successful update of an opera he has seen.

"It illuminates the story without distracting from Verdi's intentions," he said. "It is a true testament to the timelessness of the work."

MOT CEO and President Wayne Brown said he is excited to offer patrons a fresh perspective on a well-known opera.

"We take pride in presenting a balanced season featuring classic operas in tandem with works of our time," he said. "With this updated production of 'Rigoletto,' a Verdi favorite among opera audiences, we offer our patrons an opportunity to experience this masterpiece through a new lens."

The cast includes Joshua Guerrero and John Bellemer sharing the role of Duke of Mantua, Roland Wood and Nicholas Pallesen as Rigoletto and So Young Park and Hae Ji Chang as Gilda. Elaine Tyler-Hall directs the production. For complete casting and production information visit www.MichiganOpera.org.

An opera talk will be given one hour before each performance. The opera is sung in Italian with English supertitles projected above the stage.

This production is made possible by Fall Opera Season Sponsor Ford Motor Company.

Ticket prices range from \$30 to \$170. 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).

For more information visit <http://www.michiganopera.org/opera/rigoletto/>.

"Rigoletto"

Music by Giuseppe Verdi, Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave after Victor Hugo's "Le roi s'amuse," Production by Jonathan Miller

Performed at the Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway, Detroit

Saturday, Oct. 14, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 18, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 21, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 22, 2:30 p.m.

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About Michigan Opera Theatre

Michigan Opera Theatre (Wayne S. Brown, President and CEO; Stephen Lord, Principal Conductor, Dr. David DiChiera, Founder and Artistic Director Emeritus), 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.