



DETROIT OPERA HOUSE

For Immediate Release

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TOO HOT TO HANDEL CELEBRATES 15 YEARS AT THE DETROIT OPERA HOUSE ON DEC. 10

DETROIT, November 15, 2016 – Rackham Choir and the Detroit Opera House are proud to present the 15th anniversary performance of *Too Hot To Handel* on Saturday, December 10 at 7:30 p.m., at the Detroit Opera House. Hailed as the holiday celebration that is "too hot to miss," this jazz-gospel version of Handel's classic *Messiah* has become a tradition for the Motor City, combining decidedly Detroit-inspired styles such as jazz and gospel while weaving in blues, swing, classical and scat. The Opera House pulses with music and the true spirit of the holidays as more than 120 musicians fill the stage and share a soul-stirring experience with the audience!

"We're so honored that after 15 years the community continues to embrace this important work," said Rackham Choir Artistic Director Suzanne Mallare Acton. "*Too Hot To Handel* brings together Detroit's greatest classical and jazz musicians and powerhouse singers to inspire new audiences every year. It's truly a community celebration, and it remains one of the most uplifting holiday events in Detroit."

Too Hot is conducted by Acton and features Rackham Choir; tenor Rodrick Dixon, formerly of the "Three Mo' Tenors;" soprano Alfreda Burke; and alto Karen Marie Richardson. They are joined by a full roster of Detroit jazz musicians including, the *Too Hot Trio* - Marion Hayden, Alvin Waddles and Dave Taylor, the *Too Hot To Handel* Orchestra - Chris Collins, Al

Ayoub, Fred Hughes and James Simonson, as well as Walter White, James Simonson, Michael Dease and Russ Miller. They are also joined by members of the Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra.

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Bob Christianson, co-arranger of *Too Hot*, will be giving a special pre-show talk at the Detroit Opera House beginning at 6:30 p.m., one hour before the performance.

Local student and senior groups are invited to attend a special dress rehearsal on Friday, December 9 at 11 a.m. Tickets purchased in advance for the dress rehearsal start at \$10 for students K-12, \$20 for college students, and \$25 for adults in groups of 10 or more. Tickets at the door are \$35.

This production is made possible by The Kresge Foundation, Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, the National Endowment for the Arts, St. John Providence Ascension, Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, and the DTE Energy Foundation.

Tickets for *Too Hot To Handel* are available for purchase through the Detroit Opera House at www.MichiganOpera.org, or by phone at (313) 237-7464.

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About Rackham Choir

Since 1949, Rackham Choir has provided both classical and contemporary choral masterpieces of the highest artistic quality to audiences throughout Southeast Michigan. Under the visionary leadership of critically-acclaimed conductor Suzanne Mallare Acton, the choir has expanded its rich tradition of musical performance. Acton also serves as Chorus Master for Michigan Opera Theatre and Director of the MOT Children's Chorus. Information about Rackham Choir, including the complete season schedule, is available at www.rackhamchoir.org.