



For Immediate Release

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Michigan Opera Theatre to Present Dance Theatre of Harlem

Ballet company celebrates African American culture with program of classical, neoclassical and modern works

March 24-25 at the Detroit Opera House

DETROIT, March 14, 2018 – Michigan Opera Theatre continues its 2017-18 dance season with Dance Theatre of Harlem. The multi-ethnic ballet company celebrates African American culture with a forward-thinking repertoire that includes classical and neoclassical works as well as innovative and bold new forms of artistic expression commissioned to connect to contemporary audiences.

“The trajectory of this company from its beginning as grassroots community outreach to an internationally acclaimed performing ensemble is remarkable,” said MOT Principal Conductor Stephen Lord. “They embody the ideal of the arts enriching the whole community.”

MOT CEO Wayne S. Brown said he is pleased to present a dance company that shares MOT’s values.

“In a similar fashion to MOT, Dance Theatre of Harlem values making the arts inclusive, accessible and reflective of a diverse population,” he said. “We are confident their works will resonate with our Detroit audience.”

This year’s program includes “Harlem On My Mind,” a love letter to Harlem set to music by Wynton Marsalis, Count Basie and Chris Botti; “Brahms Variations,” a neo-classical work where the court of Louis XIV meets Harlem swag; and “Change,” a work inspired by women of color who have refashioned the world around them through vision, courage and endurance. The March 24 performance also includes the popular bravura showpiece “Le Corsaire Pas De Deux,” taken from a three-act ballet that tells a tale love’s ultimate triumph despite betrayal and disaster. The March 25 performance includes “This Bitter Earth,” a ballet by choreographer Christopher Wheeldon set to music by Dinah Washington and Max Richter.

“Dance Theatre of Harlem has had a very special relationship with the city of Detroit for more than 40 years,” said Dance Theatre of Harlem Artistic Director Virginia Johnson. “Detroit is a city where our mission to transform lives through our art in performances, arts education and community engagement has been especially fulfilled. Michigan Opera Theatre is the perfect partner as we work to bring a distinctive vision of classical ballet for the 21st century.”

MOT will offer an afterglow following Saturday evening’s performance where attendees will have the opportunity to meet company dancers. The event also includes beverages, a strolling buffet and dancing.

Ticket prices for the performance range from \$29 to \$100. Tickets for the afterglow are \$50 in advance or \$60 at the door. Afterglow tickets are not included with a performance ticket purchase. 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).

The 2017-18 dance season is made possible by the Lear Corporation.

For more information visit <http://www.michiganopera.org/dance/dance-theatre-of-harlem/>.

Dance Theatre of Harlem

At the Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway, Detroit

Saturday, March 24, 7:30 p.m.

- Works: "Brahms Variations," "Le Corsaire Pas de Deux," "Change," "Harlem on My Mind"

Sunday, March 25, 2:30 p.m.

- Works: "Brahms Variations," "The Bitter Earth," "Change," "Harlem on My Mind"

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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.

About Dance Theatre of Harlem

Forty-eight years ago, Arthur Mitchell and his mentor, Karel Shook, founded Dance Theatre of Harlem as a beacon of hope for the youth in the underprivileged neighborhood where Mitchell grew up. An acclaimed principal dancer with George Balanchine's New York City Ballet, Mitchell took the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as a call to action. Drawing on his expertise and his prominence as the first African American to be a member of a major U.S. ballet company, Mitchell's ground-breaking idea was to transform the lives of young people in Harlem by providing training in classical ballet. In a few short years his response to tragedy became a leading dance institution comprised of a touring company, training school and arts education program of unparalleled global acclaim. Now a singular presence in the ballet world, the Dance Theatre of Harlem Company tours nationally and internationally, presenting a powerful vision for ballet in the 21st century. The 16-member, multi-ethnic company performs a forward-thinking repertoire that includes classical and neoclassical works as well as innovative and bold new forms of artistic expression commissioned to connect to contemporary audiences.