



MANITOBA OPERA

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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MANITOBA OPERA'S 45th SEASON BOASTS UNPARALLELED ARTISTIC ACCLAIM AND SURPLUS ON THE YEAR

Manitoba Opera (MO) announced this evening at its 2017/18 Annual General Meeting (AGM), held at the McKim Building in Winnipeg, that the 2017/18 season which ended May 31, 2018, received unparalleled artistic acclaim and posted a surplus of \$10,995 on a budget of \$2,358,152.

This season's financial success was marked by significant increases in attendance, historic fundraising levels, and an increase in funding from the Canada Council for the Arts. Total box office cash revenues (subscription and single tickets) increased by 32% to \$666,131 from \$502,797 in 2016/17.

Fundraising from all campaigns reached an all-time high of \$914,417, increasing by 19% over 2016/17. More than \$90,000 special gifts were raised to assist with MO's new production of *La Traviata*.

The Canada Council for the Arts' operating grant increased by \$105,100 to \$240,000 from \$134,900 the prior season. Base funding from the Manitoba Arts Council and Winnipeg Arts Council remained the same at \$370,000 and \$135,000 respectively.

"I am so proud of the company's work this season, both on the stage and in the community," commented Elba Haid, Chair, Manitoba Opera Board of Trustees. "Our productions were so well received by patrons, and we are so appreciative of the generous support from individuals, corporations, and the public sector. I want to thank all the board and staff for their tireless efforts again this year."

In celebration of the company's 45th season, Manitoba Opera presented two of opera's greatest works by two of opera's greatest composers: *Madama Butterfly* by Giacomo Puccini (November 2017) and *La Traviata* by Giuseppe Verdi (April 2018). Although each opera was written over a century ago, the stories of the two heroines, *Butterfly's* naïve, young Cio-Cio-San, and *Traviata's* savvy woman of the world, Violetta, proved to be poignant and eerily relevant for 21st century audiences, demonstrating that these operas still have much to teach us about society, our actions, and ourselves.

Japanese-born soprano Hiromi Omura as Cio-Cio-San and American soprano Angel Blue as Violetta Valery had stellar company debuts, and along with strong fellow cast members, brought audiences to their feet at every performance.

Manitoba Opera premiered an impressive new set and costumes for *La Traviata*, which re-set the opera to 1920s Paris. This production was an historic joint venture between five Canadian opera companies (MO, Edmonton Opera, Pacific Opera Victoria, Vancouver Opera, and l'Opera de Montreal).

"Through our productions at the Concert Hall, our expanding education programs, and our community engagement activities, we are reaching more and more Manitobans," commented Larry Desrochers, General Director & CEO. "In an age of iPhones, Youtube, and fake news, it is refreshing to see that live opera still has the power to profoundly affect people through the beauty of the human voice."

Manitoba Opera continued to build relationships through its community engagement work and education programming. Community engagement extends the company's voice beyond the stage and provides opportunities for it to be active in the community. More than 6,000 people participated in community engagement activities throughout the season. Patrons enjoyed a beautiful kimono display and 1920s dance demonstration at performances; engaged in a panel discussion on cultural appropriation and the arts, and learned more about Tuberculosis through a lecture. As well, Manitoba Opera patrons donated more than \$6,000 worth of much-needed items through a Baby and Mom Supplies Drive held at *Madama Butterfly*. Items were donated to assist young mothers at Villa Rosa.

Education programming continues to be an important component of MO's work. This season, through the Student Night at the Opera program, more than 1,000 students attended the dress rehearsals of both productions for just \$13 a ticket. Opera in a Trunk, a self-contained education resource for teachers, reached over 1,000 students including those in Altona and Woodlands, Manitoba. There were 21 sessions of Opera Class led by professionally trained singers throughout the season. More than 625 students experienced this hands-on "crash course" on opera.

3. Manitoba Opera 2017/18 Annual General Meeting Media Release

The 2018/19 Board of Trustees was also announced at the AGM. New trustees elected to the Board are Judith Chambers, Dr. David Folk, and Keith Sinclair (bios follow media release). Current trustees re-elected are Peter George, Elba Haid (Chair), Sue Jurkovic-Bracken, Dr. Hermann Lee, Luisa Matheson, Alex Robinson, and Dr. Jeffrey Sisler. Returning trustees in mid-terms are Abbie Grieder, Leona Herzog, Daniela Ignat, Maria Mitousis, Dr. Bill Pope, Dustin Schneider, and Lori Yorke.

Retiring from the Board of Trustees is Robert Vineberg, with Brent Bottomley having retired mid-season. The company also lost a trustee in July 2017 with the passing of David White.

2018/19 Season

A season of legends, lovers, and laughs will be presented by Manitoba Opera in 2018/19. Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, considered to be one of the greatest operas ever written, will open the season **November 24, 27, 30, 2018**, and Rossini's funny and frenetic opera, *The Barber of Seville*, will be presented **April 6, 9, 12, 2019**.

A timeless classic of tragedy and dark comedy, *Don Giovanni* tells the legendary story of Don Juan, the dangerous and irresistible cad whose incessant pursuit of women at any cost earns him a dramatic punishment as the supernatural demands his repentance. This new production, with sets and costumes by Edmonton Opera, places the story in Spain where bad boy Giovanni is a celebrated matador with a "rock star" persona. *Don Giovanni* was last performed by Manitoba Opera in 2003.

Figaro, Figaro, Figaro! It is one laugh after another as the scheming barber and jack-of-all-trades plots to help his friend Count Almaviva woo the lovely Rosina. In the process, they foil the plans of the spirited young woman's lecherous old guardian, Dr. Bartolo, who has his eyes on her and her money. Also set in Spain, *The Barber of Seville* was last seen on the Manitoba Opera stage in 2010 and will feature a new set and costumes created by Pacific Opera Victoria.

Both productions will be sung in Italian with projected English translations and presented at the Centennial Concert Hall.

Subscriptions are now on sale and single tickets for both productions go on sale Monday, August 27. To order tickets, call 204-957-7842 or go to www.manitobaopera.mb.ca

MANITOBA OPERA
2018/19 SEASON BOARD OF TRUSTEES: NEW BOARD MEMBER BIOS

Judith Chambers, B. Commerce, PFP, CFP, FMA

Judith Chambers is Vice President & Market Manager for TD Wealth Private Wealth Management. Her career spans over 25 years in the financial services industry with the last 15 in the area of wealth management where she works exclusively with high net worth individuals and families. She joined the TD Bank in 2013 and currently leads a team of wealth management professionals in the areas of private banking, advisory services, and private trust.

Chambers holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree and her CGP, PFP, TEP, and FMA designations. She is working on pursuing her MBA at Dalhousie University.

In terms of community work, Chambers has had roles with the national board of the Children's Wish Foundation of Canada and is Cabinet Chair of the local Children's Wish Foundation Advisory Board. She has also been an active participant in community events with the United Way, Canadian Museum for Human Rights, JDRF, and YM/YWCA of Winnipeg.

Chambers is married and has two children.

Dr. David Folk

Born in Lusaka, Zambia, Dr. David Folk studied medicine at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. He practiced in London, England, for three years and then moved to Canada, initially settling in Winnipeg.

He worked for a number of years in Gillam and Russell, Manitoba, as well as South Bend, Indiana, returning to Winnipeg in 2011. Currently, he is a fly-in doctor servicing the Indigenous peoples of northern Manitoba and northwest Ontario.

He is married to Winnipegger Laurel Malkin and they have two grown children. Dr. Folk's love of opera and music started as a child. He began piano lessons at age five and listened to opera played by his father on the gramophone. The Triumphal March from *Aida* is one of his earliest memories of that time.

Keith Sinclair, BA Honours, CMC, CPHR

Keith Sinclair is President & CEO of Harris Leadership Strategies, a Winnipeg consulting company focused on executive search, coaching, strategy facilitation, and organizational development. He joined The Harris Consulting Corporation in 2004 as an owner and principal and led the organization in its transformation and rebranding.

As a human resources (HR) executive and vice-president, Sinclair has worked in senior HR roles from companies with revenues from \$50M to \$5B including Northern Telecom, Federal Industries, and ENSIS Corporation. Prior to his current position, Sinclair was a Principal with the Osborne Group in Toronto. He

is often requested to speak on leadership, strategy, and HR at international, national, and regional industry associations and conferences, as well as guest lecturing at universities and colleges.

Sinclair has sat on the board of a number of organizations include the Victoria General Hospital Foundation, Economic Development Winnipeg, the Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce HR Committee, The Conference Board of Canada HR Executive Council, and The Belleville, Calgary, Winnipeg, and Toronto Chambers of Commerce.

He holds a BA (Honours) degree in Political Science from the University of Winnipeg and has taken post-graduate studies towards a Master's in Public Administration. He is a Certified Management Consultant, a Certified Human Resource Professional, and is trained in executive coaching, leadership development, strategic thinking, balanced scorecard and process improvement.

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