



MANITOBA OPERA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 14, 2020

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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Manitoba Opera Posts Small Surplus on 2019/20 Season Despite Impact of COVID-19

Manitoba Opera (MO) announced this evening at its 2019/20 Annual General Meeting (AGM), held via Zoom, that the company posted a small surplus on the year, which ended May 31, 2020, despite the cancellation of half the season due to COVID-19.

Manitoba Opera posted an operating surplus of \$1,370 on a budget of \$1,972,497. As a result of the pandemic, the company experienced a significant drop in box office revenue resulting from the cancellation of the spring production of *Carmen*. Box office revenues decreased to \$182,030 from \$555,283 in 2018/19.

The company also had to postpone, until the spring of 2021, a gala reception at which Mrs. Tannis Richardson was to receive The Gail Asper Award. In 2018/19, this event at which The Gail Asper Award honored the award's namesake, netted more than \$173,000.

Contributing to Manitoba Opera's strong year end position were increases in individual giving throughout the year and in a year-end matching campaign; supplemental grants including \$70,967 from the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy; and approximately \$150,000 donated back in gift-in-kind ticket donations and special event admissions resulting from the cancellation of *Carmen*.

"The generosity and support of the community this past season from all levels: patrons, donors, sponsors, and funders has been both heartwarming and critical to enable the company to end the fiscal year in a position of financial stability," commented Elba Haid, Chair, Manitoba Opera Board of Trustees. "We are very thankful for this support and encouragement as we continue to explore the role Manitoba Opera will play in our community in the coming months."

Manitoba Opera's 47th season opened in the fall with the critically acclaimed and artistically successful company premiere of *Susannah*, by American composer Carlisle Floyd. Ten of the 12 leading performers were Manitoba born and were led by Winnipeg soprano Lara Ciekiewicz who was praised for her "tour-de-force performance" by the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

2. Manitoba Opera 2019/20 Annual General Meeting Media Release

The perennial favourite, *Carmen*, was scheduled to close the season in late March and was on track to selling out when rehearsals were cut short in mid-March and the production cancelled due to the evolving nature of the pandemic.

"Manitoba Opera's 47th season will undoubtedly be remembered for the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic and our first-ever mainstage production cancellation, but a number of major accomplishments should also be recognized as well," said Larry Desrochers, General Director & CEO.

"Besides the artistic success of *Susannah* and Lara's outstanding work and career milestone as the lead; the company also continued to provide an interesting and thought-provoking range of community engagement events around our productions; we were fortunate to work once again with the one-of-a-kind, Al Simmons, in our education programming; and in 2019, the company also embarked on a multi-year project to forge meaningful, respectful, and informed connections with Indigenous communities in Winnipeg and Manitoba."

The 2020/21 Board of Trustees was also announced at the AGM. New trustees elected to the Board are Timothy E. Burt, Terence Douglas, and Flavia Fernandez Fabio. Lana Maidment was elected to her first term as a trustee. (Bios follow).

Current trustees re-elected were Judith Chambers, Dr. David Folk, Elba Haid (Chair), Keith Sinclair, Peter George, Alex Robinson, and Dr. Jeffrey Sisler. Returning trustees in mid-terms are Paul Bruch-Wiens, Charlene Ilas, Grant Suderman, Daniela Ignat, Maria Mitousis, Dustin Schneider, and Lori Yorke.

Retiring from the Board of Trustees after completing four full terms was Abbie Grieder and Luisa Matheson who served four full terms and one two-year term as part of a special resolution.

2019/20 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

Once again this season, Manitoba Opera presented a wide variety of community engagement activities related to the productions including an evening of square dancing; a lively discussion on *Carmen* in the Era of #MeToo; and a panel discussion about sexual abuse in faith-based communities. This year, more than 2,500 people participated in these events.

The highlight of the education programming this season was the return of Al Simmons' one-man rendition of *The Barber of Seville* which toured to schools in Winnipeg and the surrounding region. More than 6,300 students at 18 schools were introduced to opera through the magic of Al's ability to put on an opera in 45 minutes, playing 10 characters.

Opera Class introduced more than 800 students to opera through the hands-on workshops. This popular workshop led by local singers was presented 26 times at 18 Winnipeg schools this season.

2020/21 SEASON

Sweeney Todd and Tosca

The company announced, on June 29, the cancellation of the season opening production of *Sweeney Todd*. The Manitoba premiere of this Broadway masterpiece was scheduled to run at the Centennial Concert Hall November 7, 10, and 13. The production was cancelled owing to a number of reasons in response to the pandemic: primarily the safety of patrons and artists/crew; rehearsals not being possible with social distancing measures in place; and that the required social distancing measures for the audience would reduce the number of seats available to sell which results in large-scale productions not being economically viable to produce.

Though the fall production has been cancelled, Manitoba Opera will continue to present opera throughout the year. Plans have been developed for a variety of artistic, community engagement, and education programming. Some events will be online, some live, and others will be a combination of both, depending on circumstances.

These plans include live-streamed concerts in November and February; garden tours; a new Digital Emerging Artists Program; for the kids, Celebrity Opera Storytime; and much more that's currently in development.

Season Opening Concert: The Sopranos of Winnipeg, Saturday, November 7, 7:30 pm

The Sopranos of Winnipeg will feature some of North America's most talented artists who all live right here in our Prairie town! Sopranos confirmed to date include Tracy Dahl, Lara Ciekiewicz, Monica Huisman, Lara Secord-Haid, Lida Szkwarek, and Andrea Lett. They, along with members of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, will be performing a selection of works in a 75-minute, live-streamed event from the Centennial Concert Hall, Saturday, November 7, beginning at 7:30 pm. Ticket details and program information to be announced soon.

Tosca, Puccini's suspense-filled political thriller, is still scheduled for April 10, 13, and 16, 2021; however, the company will continue to monitor circumstances closer to the production.

For more information on programming, go to mbopera.ca or call 204-944-8824.

MANITOBA OPERA
2020/21 SEASON BOARD OF TRUSTEES: NEW BOARD MEMBER BIOS



TIMOTHY E. BURT

With 45 years of experience in the industry, Tim Burt is one of the most respected investment professionals in Canada. Since joining the investment department of a large Illinois bank in 1974, Tim has served as a security analyst for brokerage firms in St. Louis and Minneapolis; worked as Richardson Greenshields' senior U.S. equities analyst; and managed the US stock portfolio for London Life Insurance Company. Tim founded Cardinal in 1992.

In addition to his Chartered Financial Analyst designation, Tim has Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Finance from the University of Illinois. He has served as president of CFA Winnipeg, the Portfolio Management Association of Canada (PMAC), and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra.



TERENCE DOUGLAS

Terence Douglas is a Kanienkehaka (Mohawk) lawyer whose family is from Kahnawake Mohawk Territory in Quebec. Terence received his B.A. (Hons) from the University of Guelph in 1993 and his LL.B from the University of Toronto in 2000. For over 20 years, Terence has promoted the legal rights and interests of First Nations and Indigenous Peoples, both domestically within Canada and internationally within the US and at the United Nations, including in the areas of aboriginal and treaty rights, specific claims, economic development, and self-determination implementation.

Moving to Kenora, ON, in 2004 from stays in Vancouver and Washington D.C., Terence is active in the community, where he has operated a number of joint business ventures. He currently sits on the Nechee Friendship Centre Board of Directors. Previously, Terence has served on the Kenora Urban Aboriginal Committee; Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto's Community Council Diversion program; Gabriel Dumont Non-Profit Housing Inc. of Toronto; the Aboriginal Youth Steering Committee of Metropolitan Toronto; and was a council member of the inaugural Aboriginal Council of Toronto in 1996.

Terence currently resides in Kenora and also maintains a residence in Winnipeg.



FLAVIA FERNANDEZ FABIO

Born and raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and from an Italian background, Flavia grew up surrounded by good food, loud family, and great music.

A sommelier since 1989, Flavia is also trained in sales and public relations and holds a Masters in Marketing. She has worked in the wine industry in Argentina, Brazil, the US, and Europe. Flavia moved to Canada in 2011. She currently runs an event company, Ma Vie en Vin, and since 2015, has been provincial manager for a national wine company.



LANA MAIDMENT

Lana Maidment, CFP, is the owner of Komana Financial, where she specializes in insurance. She is a commerce graduate from the University of Manitoba. Lana began her career as a loans officer, and was also a manager at RBC, as well as working in pharmaceutical sales with Pfizer where she specialized in the cardiovascular area.

Lana has always had a passion for philanthropy and was on the board of Starry, Starry Night for five years. Her passion is raising funds for kids of all abilities. She is on the board of Variety, helps with Dream Factory, the RWB, and the MS Society. She loves to give back and loves the arts.