

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT

Erica Hobbs

517.677.9453

ehobbs@motopera.org

New 9,100-Square Foot Seat and Stage Deck Expands Social Distancing Possibilities at Detroit Opera House

Gift made possible by Floy and Lee Barthel

DETROIT, Aug. 5, 2020 - Michigan Opera Theatre (MOT) has acquired a 9,100-square foot deck for the Detroit Opera House. The deck creates a floor that covers the theater's main-level seating and includes several configurations to connect with the stage. It allows for increased seating flexibility for the Opera House, providing customizable options to accommodate a variety of performances and events during this time of social distancing. Long-term MOT supporters Floy and Lee Barthel provided the gift to enable MOT to purchase the deck from Levitation Staging.

"For several years, MOT has rented a deck from Levitation Staging for use in the Opera House, and it has become a highly preferred feature for events and weddings, including our own annual gala," said MOT President and CEO Wayne S. Brown. "During this time of social distancing, we are pleased to acquire our own deck that offers a permanent solution for providing enhanced staging options for our guests and events. We are very appreciative to Floy and Lee Barthel for once again demonstrating their tremendously generous and long-term support of MOT."

Lee Barthel serves on the MOT Board of Directors, and he and Floy are both Trustees. Their continued generosity has made them among MOT's leading individual donors. Their contributions have supported the Costume Shop and the SkyDeck as well as numerous gifts in support of MOT's administrative offices and Volunteer Association.

"Investing in Michigan Opera Theatre has been one of our great joys, and we are so pleased that we could help MOT take advantage of this great opportunity for the benefit of the Detroit Opera House and the community," Lee Barthel said.

The Stage Deck consists of more than 1,700 individual components, including specially-built shapes, designed to have minimal impact on the seating and architecture of the Opera House. The deck requires three semi-trailers to transport, eight to 10 hours to load in and 18 stagehands to assemble.

MOT's 2020-21 season will feature non-traditional performances, including concert-style and outdoor performances, as well as socially-distanced seating. The Opera House continues to remain available for rental events that meet government health guidelines and mandated capacity restrictions. For rental inquiries contact Holly Clement at hclement@motopera.org.

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About Michigan Opera Theatre

Michigan Opera Theatre, 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 by Dr. David DiChiera, the company's mission is to serve as a major cultural resource to the state of Michigan and the city of Detroit. The organization is led by President and CEO Wayne S. Brown and Chairman of the Board Ethan Davidson. Visit the website at www.michiganopera.org.