

Detroit Opera

"One of my ambitions is to make opera aspirational and accessible by bringing new unique voices to the table"—Yuval Sharon

Detroit Opera Announces its 2022–23 Opera and Dance Season

Opera season features four fully staged productions all new to Detroit, as well as a concert performance and a site-specific operatic experience

Major house debuts by directors Lileana Blain-Cruz and Deborah Colker; conductors Sir Andrew Davis, Jonathon Heyward, Dame Jane Glover, and Paolo Bortolameolli; and singers Angel Blue, Key'mon Murrh, Alan Held, and Talise Trevigne

Subscriber packages starting at \$80 are now available



Photo credit: Karli Cadel / Glimmerglass Opera

[Detroit Opera](#) announces its 2022–23 Opera and Dance season under the leadership of President and CEO Wayne S. Brown and Gary L. Wasserman Artistic Director Yuval Sharon and Artistic Advisor for Dance Jon Teeuwissen. In its first full season in the newly renovated Detroit Opera House, Detroit Opera will present a wide array of operas, from beloved classics in fresh new stagings to a contemporary masterpiece in an international co-production.

The opera season opens on September 17th in Sharon's new staging of *Die Walküre: Act III*, co-produced with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, conducted by Sir Andrew Davis, and starring Detroit Opera Associate Artistic Director Christine Goerke. The season also includes a new production of Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar*, marking Detroit Opera's first international co-production with Opera Ventures and Scottish Opera. Other staged productions include Gounod's *Faust*, directed by Lileana Blain-Cruz and conducted by Dame Jane Glover, in a revelatory production from Opera Omaha, and Tazewell Thompson's staging of Handel's *Xerxes* from the Glimmerglass Festival. Rounding out the season are a concert performance of Verdi's *Aida*, featuring role debuts by soprano Angel Blue (*Aida*) and Goerke (*Amneris*), and conducted by Jonathon Heyward; and a Detroit-specific production devised by Sharon will premiere in the summer of 2023.

The dance season at the Detroit Opera House provides patrons with envelope-pushing dance experiences. **Alonzo King LINES Ballet** brings their signature combination of contemporary choreography and classical ballet esthetic to Detroit for their 40th anniversary tour, while **Mark Morris Dance Group's *The Hard Nut*** will make its first appearance in Detroit. **Ballet Preljocaj** takes flight in a reinvention of the timeless masterpiece *Swan Lake*, co-presented with the University of Michigan's University Musical Society. **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** returns to the Detroit Opera House stage to transcend barriers and celebrate the African American experience. Nina Ananiashvili will lead a rare U.S. appearance from the esteemed ballet company, **The State Ballet of Georgia**.

“One of my ambitions for Detroit Opera is to make opera aspirational and accessible by bringing new unique voices to the table,” said Yuval Sharon. “I’m thrilled to work with Wayne Brown, Christine Goerke and the entire Detroit Opera team to create a fresh, ambitious standard for opera in Detroit—one that reflects the creativity and vibrancy of a city that has always celebrated innovation and looking at things differently.”

Since Sharon was named Artistic Director in 2020, the company has received national recognition for its daring productions, beginning with Sharon's site-specific *Götterdämmerung* adaptation *Twilight: Gods*, set in the Opera House Parking Center. To support its adventurous programming, Detroit Opera received the largest gift in its institutional history, in the form of a \$5,000,000 grant from the William Davidson Foundation, Sponsor for Detroit Opera's 2022-2023 season. Dance at the Detroit Opera House during 2022-23 is made possible with support from Richard & Joanne Brodie,

Maxine & Student Frankel Foundation, Marvin Betty, and Joanne Danto Family Foundation, the Gilbert Family Fund, and Kevin Dennis and Jeremy Zeltzer.

According to Wayne S. Brown, President and CEO, "The upcoming season of Detroit Opera promises to be an adventurous and exciting series of Opera Productions, Dance Presentations, and unique events that will mark our return to distinct, consistent programming in the Detroit Opera House. We look forward to welcoming our subscribers and new patrons, providing enhanced accessibility to main floor facilities and a new elevator tower to access upper levels of the auditorium."



Photo courtesy of Osvaldo Golijov

Opera Season

For its 2022/2023 opera season, the first full season presented under the name "Detroit Opera", the company will present an ambitious line-up that includes an unprecedented three company premieres, making good on Artistic Director **Yuval Sharon's** objective to expand the company's repertoire.

The season opens with a stand-alone presentation of Act III of Richard Wagner's **Die Walküre**, the second of four operas encompassed by the composer's epic *Ring Cycle* in co-production with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Zooming in on Act III allows a deeper focus on the central relationship of the entire cycle, while the production deploys 21st-century technology to bring to life the proto-cinematic nature of Wagner's vision. The production unites the artistic team of Detroit Opera, with Sharon being the first American director to create a production at Wagner's legendary Bayreuth Festival; and Detroit Opera Associate Artistic Director **Christine Goerke** as Brünnhilde, a role that has made her one of the world's most celebrated and sought-after Wagnerian sopranos. Internationally renowned bass baritone **Alan Held** makes his Detroit Opera debut as Wotan. **Sir Andrew Davis**, former Music Director of Lyric Opera of Chicago, will lead the Detroit Opera Orchestra in a remarkable showpiece for the orchestra, including the

iconic “Ride of the Valkyries” and “Magic Fire Music.” *Die Walküre Act III* will be performed in its original German language with English translations at the Detroit Opera House for three performances, September 17 - 20, 2022.

“I am thrilled to have *Die Walküre: Act III* open our 2022–23 season and the opportunity to portray Brünnhilde on the Detroit Opera House stage in such a unique way,” said Christine Goerke. “It is her courage and self-sacrifice that restores the universe to its natural order. It is my hope that the Detroit community will connect with the tenacity powered by her redeeming love.”

Detroit Opera’s fall season continues with Charles Gounod’s grand opera *Faust*, a work that the company has staged on five occasions since its first production in 1978. The 2022 production of the opera, directed by award-winning **Lileana Blain-Cruz**, will provide audiences with a revolutionary approach to Goethe’s timeless story of the scholar who sells his soul to the devil in return for eternal youth. Originally produced by Opera Omaha in 2019, the production employs a new critical edition of the score, which restores Gounod’s original music, omitted scenes, and a balletic element not heard or seen in 150 years. American stars **Talise Trevigne** and **Jonathan Johnson** appear as Marguerite and Faust, respectively, with Canadian bass **Robert Pomakov** making his Detroit Opera debut as Méphistophélès. Italian conductor **Valerio Galli** will lead the Detroit Opera Orchestra and Detroit Opera Chorus. The opera will be performed in its original French language with English translation for three performances, November 12-20, 2022 at the Detroit Opera House.

The company premiere of George Frideric Handel’s baroque masterpiece *Xerxes* will open the 2023 spring opera season. Best known for its aria “Ombra mai fu,” commonly known as “Handel’s Largo,” this late work is a fast-paced mixture of comedy and tragedy, making it an ideal introduction to the exquisite beauty of Handel’s music. The lush production, originally created and directed by Detroit Opera veteran **Tazewell Thompson** at the Glimmerglass Festival, includes set designs by **John Conklin**. **James Blaszko** returns as revival director of the Detroit Opera presentation. Renowned Handel specialist **Dame Jane Glover** conducts a cast that includes countertenor **Key’mon Murrah**, making his Detroit Opera debut in the title role, and soprano **Lauren Snouffer** in the role of Romilda. *Xerxes* will be presented at the Detroit Opera House in three performances, April 8-16, 2023. The opera will be performed in Italian with English translation.

“The sharp abstraction of this production’s design is the perfect fit for an opera that defied so many constructs of its time,” said James Blaszko. “What could have become a standard dramatization of an obsessive King and his court was transformed by Handel through the use of humor and musical brevity. There’s a unique balance of beauty, brutality, and wit to *Xerxes* that I think this production emphasizes so well with its vivid costumes and striking stage pictures.”

In its first international co-production, Detroit Opera partners with Opera Ventures and Scottish Opera to present the company premiere of Argentinian composer Osvaldo Golijov's dramatic *Ainadamar* ("Fountain of Tears"), the tragic story of legendary poet Federico García Lorca who was assassinated by fascists during the Spanish Civil War. Golijov is widely acknowledged as one of the most original and eclectic composers of our time; his arresting and far-reaching score for *Ainadamar* melds flamenco, klezmer, classical singing and electronic music to invoke an inimitable sound world. Brazilian director-choreographer Deborah Colker, best known for her choreography of the 2016 Olympics opening ceremony and Cirque du Soleil's show *Ovo*, directs her first opera, with Chilean conductor Paolo Bortolameo leading the Detroit Opera Orchestra and Detroit Opera Chorus. The opera will be performed in its original Spanish language with English translations presented for three performances, April 8-16, 2023.

"Something extraordinary is brewing in Detroit Opera," said Osvaldo Golijov. "The confluence between the vision of its artistic direction and the community's sense of ownership at this particular moment in the city's history are generating a galvanic river of energy. I am moved to have Deborah Colker's revelatory new production of *Ainadamar* presented here at this time."

In complement to the staged opera season, Detroit Opera will present Giuseppe Verdi's beloved opera *Aida* in concert on December 30, 2022, with **Jonathon Heyward** leading the Detroit Opera Orchestra and Detroit Opera Chorus. The concert will feature one of today's most exciting singers, **Angel Blue**, in her role debut as Aida. Blue has taken the opera world by storm, recently winning audience and critical acclaim for her performance as Destiny in Terrence Blanchard's landmark opera *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* at the Metropolitan Opera. **Goerke** will also make a significant role debut as Amneris, with **Riccardo Massi** singing Radamès. The company last presented a concert version of Verdi's *Aida* in December of 2000, when Luciano Pavarotti sang his first-ever concert version of the opera.

Building off the recent site-specific operatic immersions *Twilight: Gods and Bliss*, a new signature "Detroit-specific" project devised by Sharon will close out the season beyond the Detroit Opera House. More details will be announced at a later date.

Additional special events, Artists-in-Residence for the 2022-23 season, the Studio Artist Program for emerging artists and other community initiatives will be announced later this Spring.



Photo Credit: Alonzo King

Dance at the Detroit Opera House

The 2022–23 Detroit Opera Dance Season will feature five dance experiences including some of the most new and exciting artists as well as titans of the dance world.

Artistic Advisor to Dance Jon Teeuwissen has curated the season. “2022-23 brings an eclectic dance series to the Detroit Opera House that showcases the full spectrum of genres from contemporary dance to classical ballet, paying homage to iconic choreographers Alvin Ailey and George Balanchine with the presentation of original signature works such as *Revelations* and *Serenade*, while celebrating creativity and innovation with the presentations of reimagined productions of *The Nutcracker* and *Swan Lake* by two of today’s foremost contemporary choreographers, Mark Morris and Angelin Preljocaj.”

First, from October 22–23, 2022, **Alonzo King LINES Ballet** bring their signature combination of contemporary choreography and classical ballet aesthetic to Detroit. Described by the San Francisco Chronicle as “one of the few bona fide visionaries in the ballet world today” with “gripping, urgently beautiful choreography,” Alonzo King and his LINES Ballet company are exquisitely talented dancers and among the most celebrated names in the world of dance. Since 1982, LINES Ballet has collaborated with noted composers, musicians and visual artists from around the world to create performances that alter the way we look at ballet today. This performance is a part of the company's 40th anniversary tour and features the music of jazz composer Jason Moran.

On December 2–4, 2022, **Mark Morris Dance Group's *The Hard Nut*** comes to Detroit. Set to Tchaikovsky’s beloved music, performed with the Detroit Opera Orchestra, The

Hard Nut is a beloved retro-modern reimagining of *The Nutcracker*, which channels the warm spirit of this essential holiday tradition into the swinging '70s: with raucous parties, dancing G.I. Joes, and whimsical costumes influenced by comic book artist Charles Burns. The *New York Times* writes: "Fun and amazement dance in the same steps; the choreography lifts the whole audience through a crescendo of changing emotions."

Detroit Opera's dance season continues February 17–19, 2023 with ***Swan Lake***, performed by **Ballet Preljocaj** in a co-presentation with the University Musical Society. In this visionary take on a classic masterpiece, contemporary ballet superstar Angelin Preljocaj combines Tchaikovsky's music with contemporary arrangements and bridges ballet and modern dance, reinventing the timeless tale of love, betrayal, seduction, and remorse into an ecological tragedy. *Broadway World* exclaims: "From the moment the dancers...walked onto the stage, they managed to hold the audience in their grasp." In Preljocaj's vision, the evil sorcerer von Rothbart is re-envisioned as an industrialist who wants to exploit fossil fuels against a backdrop of unbridled capitalism, while Siegfried and Odette are the two eco-conscious heroes who try to thwart his plans. Based in Aix en Provence in France, this production, with 26 dancers—known for dramatic and virtuosic choreography and direction, striking music and spectacular design—will render a beautiful tribute to the original *Swan Lake*.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater returns to grace the Detroit Opera House stage on March 17–19, 2023, revisiting their renown dance work *Revelations*. For more than 50 years, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has entertained generations. The Ailey company has performed for an estimated 25 million people at theaters in 48 states and 71 countries on six continents—and has reached millions more online and through television broadcasts. The *New York Times* touts "Watching Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater can change your life." Now, under the leadership of visionary artistic director Robert Battle, the company continues to honor the monumental legacy of its founder, while expanding the Ailey repertory and developing the next generation of choreographers. Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater at the Detroit Opera House is presented by the Gilbert Family Fund.

Detroit Opera's Dance Season closes April 29–30, 2023 with a rare U.S. performance from the **State Ballet of Georgia**, the world-class ballet company of the Z. Paliashvili Opera and Ballet State Theatre in Tbilisi, Georgia. Since 2004, international ballet star Nina Ananiashvili has led this dynamic group, who has won acclaim in performances around the world. Ananiashvili honors native Georgian George Balanchine, considered one of the most important choreographers of the last century, to perform two of his works—*Serenade* and *Concerto Barocco*, as well as a Possokhov ballet, all accompanied by the Detroit Opera Orchestra. This program will provide Detroiters with a truly unique dance experience.



Photo courtesy of Detroit Opera

Detroit Opera House – The Next Act

Since the grand reopening of the Detroit Opera House in 1996, it has welcomed upwards of four million visitors. As the company seeks to continually engage future generations, offer main stage productions and educational programs more accessible and welcoming than ever before, Detroit Opera is in the midst of a \$15,000,000 comprehensive multi-year capital effort, with construction slated through 2023.

This project, which aims to address critical infrastructure renovations at the historic Detroit Opera House, is partially funded through two major grants. In 2020, the National Endowment for the Humanities awarded Detroit Opera a \$750,000 Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grant. Including a 4:1 match from private contributions to disburse the grant funds, grant funding totals \$3,750,000 over a two-year period. With an additional \$3,000,000 of funding from the William Davidson Foundation—part of the largest contribution in the company's history—Detroit Opera has begun necessary initial modifications and improvements.

As audiences return for the company's first full season in its home venue in more than two years, they will be greeted by a new elevator tower that provides elevator access to every level, Americans with Disabilities Act compliant restrooms on the main floor, plus other major renovations. Once completed, these renovations will help remedy occupant access limitations, increase capacity for public humanities and educational programs, and allow for greater outreach and access to the arts by all members of the Detroit community and beyond.

The purchase of a subscription package allows the patron to enjoy priority seating, easy and free ticket exchanges, savings up to 40 percent on tickets, exclusive access to pre-paid parking in the Opera House Parking Center and additional perks. Packages start at \$80. Visit Detroitopera.org or call 313-237-7464 for more details.

The safety of all patrons is a priority for Detroit Opera and the Detroit Opera House. The company will continue to monitor health and safety precautions and will regularly update its website to reflect those precautions when appropriate.

Detroit Opera
2022–23 Opera Season
Complete casting to be announced later this spring

DIE WALKÜRE: ACT III
September 17, 18 & 20, 2022
Detroit Opera House

Music and libretto by Richard Wagner
Director: Yuval Sharon
Conductor: Sir Andrew Davis
In collaboration with the Los Angeles Philharmonic

Featuring Christine Goerke as Brünnhilde

FAUST
November 12, 18 & 20, 2022
Detroit Opera House

Music and libretto by Charles Gounod
Director: Lileana Blain-Cruz
Choreographer: Raja Feather Kelly
Conductor: Valerio Galli
A Production from Opera Omaha

Featuring Talise Trevigne as Marguerite
Jonathan Johnson as Faust
Robert Pomakov as Méphistophélès

AIDA IN CONCERT
December 30, 2022
Detroit Opera House

Music by Giuseppe Verdi
Libretto by Antonio Ghislanzoni
Conductor: Jonathon Heyward

Featuring Angel Blue as Aida
Christine Goerke as Amneris
Riccardo Massi as Radamès
Reginald Smith as Amonasro
Morris Robinson as Ramphis

XERXES
March 4, 10 & 12, 2023
Detroit Opera House

Music by George Frideric Handel
Libretto adapted from one by Silvio Stampiglia
Original production created & directed by Tazewell Thompson
Revival Director: James Blaszko
Conductor: Dame Jane Glover
A production from Glimmerglass Festival

Featuring Key'mon Murrell as Xerxes
Lauren Snouffer as Romilda

AINADAMAR
April 8, 14 & 16, 2023
Detroit Opera House

Music by Osvaldo Golijov
Libretto by David Henry Hwang
Director: Deborah Colker
Conductor: Paolo Bortolameo
Production originated in Co-Production with Opera Ventures and Scottish Opera

2022–23 Dance at the Detroit Opera House

Alonzo King LINES Ballet
40th Anniversary Tour
October 22 & 23, 2022
Detroit Opera House

Choreography by Alonzo King

Mark Morris Dance Group
The Hard Nut
With Orchestra
December 2, 3 & 4, 2022
Detroit Opera House

Choreography by Mark Morris

Ballet Preljocaj
Swan Lake
February 17, 18, & 19, 2023
Detroit Opera House

Choreography by Angelin Preljocaj

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater
March 17, 18 & 19, 2023
Detroit Opera House

Artistic Director: Robert Battle

The State Ballet of Georgia
Tour of the U.S. from Tbilisi
With Orchestra
April 29 & 30, 2023
Detroit Opera House

Artistic Director: Nina Ananiashvili

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