

Detroit Opera

"To see the most innovative opera company in America, visit Motor City. Yuval Sharon has long used unconventional settings in unexpected ways, but now, as the artistic director of the Detroit Opera, he is breaking new ground." –[TIME](#)

Yuval Sharon named to TIME100 Next—*TIME*'s list of the world's rising stars

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[Yuval Sharon](#) has been named to the 2022 TIME100 Next list. An expansion of the TIME100 list of the most influential people in the world, TIME100 Next highlights 100 emerging leaders

who are shaping the future of business, entertainment, sports, politics, health, science and activism, and more. The full list and related tributes appear in the October 10 / October 17 issue of TIME, available on newsstands this Friday, and [online](#) now.

Yuval Sharon is the Gary L. Wasserman Artistic Director of [Detroit Opera](#) and the founder and co-Artistic Director of The Industry in Los Angeles. The recipient of both a MacArthur Fellowship and a Foundation for Contemporary Arts grant in Theatre, Sharon is among the most in-demand and innovative names in opera today. In addition to making history as the first American invited to direct at Bayreuth, the first director entrusted with a new production of one of Meredith Monk's works, and the director of the first fully-staged opera in the Musikverein's 150-year history, Sharon is widely known for city-spanning operas staged in moving cars, radically collaborative bulwarks against historical revisionism, and immersive site-specific works staged in unconventional locations.

In naming Sharon to the TIME100 Next list, [TIME](#) highlighted his work with Detroit Opera, including his productions of *La bohème* and Act III of Richard Wagner's *Die Walküre*:

"To see the most innovative opera company in America, visit Motor City. Yuval Sharon has long used unconventional settings in unexpected ways, but now, as the artistic director of the Detroit Opera, he is breaking new ground. Lauded for past projects such as his reverse chronological staging of Puccini's *La Bohème*, Sharon in July premiered a high-tech reimagining of a Wagner opera. Onstage action blended with computer animations with the help of green-screen tech. And of course: although the staging debuted in Los Angeles, it soon headed home to Michigan."

Since assuming the role of Artistic Director of Detroit Opera in 2020, Sharon has been credited with transforming the company into the new center for opera in the United States. Sharon began his tenure in October 2020 with *Twilight: Gods*, a site-specific *Götterdämmerung* adaptation which he both conceived and directed, staged in the Detroit Opera House Parking Center. The 2021–22 season, Sharon's first full season as Artistic Director, featured collaborations with arts organizations from around the country—including co-productions with Boston Lyric Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Metropolitan Opera, Opera Omaha, Seattle Opera, and Spoleto Festival USA—as well as two of his own productions: a recreation of Ragnar Kjartansson's 12-hour exercise in radical forgiveness, *Bliss*, and a reverse-chronology production of *La bohème*.

Detroit Opera's 2022–23 season launched September 17 with *The Valkyries*, a unique staging of Act III of Richard Wagner's *Die Walküre* directed by Sharon and conducted by Sir Andrew Davis. First staged at the Hollywood Bowl with Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, *The Valkyries* uses green screen technology to seamlessly blend onstage action with real-time computer graphics and animation, created by Jason Thompson and Kaitlyn Pietras of PXT Studio; in doing so, *The Valkyries* draws audiences deeper into Wagner's proto-cinematic vision than ever before, while inviting them to question the roles of technology in opera and their own lives.

"At quick glance, Sharon's production has the appearance of window dressing; the action ultimately unfolds in a conventional way. But, as ever, the medium is the message.." wrote Joshua Barone in The New York Times. "What, now, is a live performance? Sharon provokes a

tension of perception, with the eye and ear unsure of whether to focus on the singers or the screen. What is lost, and gained, in their interplay? He doesn't offer an answer so much as lay out a balance sheet that the audience is left to settle. If Sharon does make a case, it's for the durability of an opera's essence."

Upcoming productions at Detroit Opera include Faust, directed by Lileana Blain-Cruz and conducted by Valerio Galli (November 12–20); a revival of Tazewell Thompson's production of Xerxes (March 4–12), directed by James Blaszko and conducted by Dame Jane Glover; and Osvaldo Golijov's Ainadamar (April 8–16), appearing in a co-production with Opera Ventures, Scottish National Opera, The Metropolitan Opera, and the Welsh National Opera directed by Deborah Colker and conducted by Paolo Bortolameolli.

"It's hard to overstate the unlikelihood of a director as innovative and internationally celebrated as Sharon taking the reins of a decidedly regional (and in certain respects conservative) opera company like Detroit's," wrote Mark Binelli in a recent profile for The New York Times Magazine. "But today, nearly two years into his five-year contract, Sharon has already radically elevated Detroit Opera's status in the larger cultural ecosystem."

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