

Detroit Opera

Celebrate the holidays with music and dance at the Detroit Opera this December

Performances include Mark Morris Dance Group's *The Hard Nut*, Detroit Opera Youth Chorus and Resident Artists holiday concerts, Catalina Cuervo gala program and *Aida in Concert* with Angel Blue and Christine Goerke



Mark Morris Dance Group photo by Julieta Cervantes

DETROIT, December 1, 2022—This December, Detroit Opera is embracing the holiday season with music and dance in the opera house and throughout the Detroit metro area.

On **December 3 and 4**, you will not want to miss [The Hard Nut](#), Mark Morris Dance Group's fun take on Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*, at the Detroit Opera House! An international favorite, *The Hard Nut* is seen only in Detroit (nowhere else) this season. These *Nutcracker*-with-a-twist performances will take place on Saturday, December 3, 7:30pm, and Sunday, December 4,

2:30pm. Ticket-buyers also have the option to attend a [master class](#) on December 3 taught by Brooklyn-based choreographer and longtime Mark Morris Dance Group performer John Heginbotham, for free (reservation required, limited capacity). The class (Dec. 3, 11am–12:30pm) is for intermediate to advanced students ages 12 and up. Tickets to the master class may also be purchased for \$25 by those without a ticket to one of the performances.

Detroit Opera's five Resident Artists will perform a free holiday program on Thursday, **December 8 at 7:00pm** at Christ Church Cranbrook (470 Church Road, Bloomfield Hills). The [Detroit Opera Resident Artists](#) for the 2022-23 season were selected for the program from hundreds of applicants this year. Come hear the stars of tomorrow—sopranos Melanie Spector and Elizabeth Polese; mezzo-soprano Gabrielle Barkidjija; tenor Leo Williams; and baritone Ben Reisinger—in this historic church with beautiful frescos, paintings, tapestries, wood carvings, and stained glass.

On Sunday **December 11 at 2:00pm**, the **Detroit Opera Youth Chorus** will perform “A Winter Fantasy,” [an afternoon concert](#) of holiday music, at First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak (529 Hendrie Blvd., south of 4th Street). Founded in 2007, the Detroit Opera Youth Chorus presents an annual winter concert in December and produces its own fully staged children's opera each spring at the Detroit Opera House.

Powerhouse soprano **Catalina Cuervo** will perform [a special gala concert](#) on **December 17 at 7:00pm** at Detroit's Church of the Most Holy Redeemer (1721 Junction Avenue), in the heart of Mexicantown. The concert will also feature guitarist Álvaro Andrés Bermudez, pianist Nathalie Doucet, Detroit Opera's Head of Music, and four Detroit Opera Resident Artists: soprano Melanie Spector; mezzo-soprano Gabrielle Barkidjija; tenor Leo Williams, and baritone Ben Reisinger. Detroit Opera audiences will remember Catalina Cuervo's Frida Kahlo in Robert X. Rodriguez's *Frida* in February 2022. The free concert will feature holiday classics and sacred pieces in English, Latin, and Spanish.

The year closes out with a concert performance of **Verdi's Aida** on **December 30 at 6:30pm** at the Detroit Opera House. This [one-night-only event](#) is a special opportunity to hear this most famous of operas on the Detroit Opera stage for the first time since 2013, and to experience it with two of the most important sopranos of our time: Detroit Opera's very own **Christine Goerke** making her role debut as Amneris, and **Angel Blue** as Aida, in advance of her first full production of the work at London's Royal Opera Covent Garden in May 2023. Jonathon Heyward, an exciting young conductor recently named music director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, will lead the performance. The all-star cast also will feature Riccardo Massi (Radamès), Reginald Smith Jr. (Amonasro), Morris Robinson (Ramfis), Kenneth Kellogg (King of Egypt), plus Resident Artists Melanie Spector and Leo Williams as the Priestess and Messenger, respectively.

Images for December events can be found at the links below:

[The Hard Nut](#)

[Resident Artist Program](#)

[Detroit Opera Youth Chorus](#)

[Catalina Cuervo concert](#)

[Aida in Concert](#)

About Detroit Opera

Detroit Opera (Michigan Opera Theatre), one of the nation's most vibrant nonprofit arts organizations, aspires to influence the future of opera and dance with a goal of invigorating audiences through new and re-imagined productions, relevant to current times. It is creating an ambitious standard for American opera and dance that emphasizes community, accessibility, artistic risk-taking, and collaboration. Founded in 1971 by the late Dr. David DiChiera, Detroit Opera is led by President and CEO Wayne S. Brown; Yuval Sharon, Gary L. Wasserman Artistic Director; Associate Artistic Director Christine Goerke; and Board Chairman Ethan Davidson. For more information, visit www.detroitopera.org. Follow the company on Facebook and Instagram (@DetroitOpera) as well as Twitter (@DetOperaHouse).

Upcoming 2022-23 opera productions at Detroit Opera include a revival of Tazewell Thompson's Glimmerglass production of Handel's *Xerxes* (March 4–12), directed by James Blaszko and conducted by Dame Jane Glover, and Golijov's *Ainadamar* (April 8–16), the latter a co-production with Opera Ventures, Scottish National Opera, and the Welsh National Opera, directed by Deborah Colker and conducted by Paolo Bortolameolli. The dance season continues when **Ballet Preljocaj** takes flight in a reinvention of the timeless masterpiece *Swan Lake*, co-presented with the University of Michigan's University Musical Society (February 17-19). **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** returns to the Detroit Opera House stage to transcend barriers and celebrate the African American experience (March 17-19). Nina Ananiashvili will lead a rare U.S. appearance from the esteemed ballet company, **The State Ballet of Georgia** (April 29-30).

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