

# Cyrano

May 13-21, 2017

**MUSIC**  
David DiChiera

**LIBRETTO**  
Bernard Uzan

**ORIGINAL ORCHESTRATION**  
Mark Flint

**REVISED ORCHESTRATION**  
Steven Mercurio

**WORLD PREMIERE**  
Michigan Opera Theatre, Oct. 13, 2007  
Opera in three acts  
Approximately three hours with two intermissions  
Sung in French with English surtitle translations

**CONDUCTOR**  
Steven Mercurio

**DIRECTOR**  
Bernard Uzan

**CHORUS MASTER**  
Suzanne Mallare Acton

**SET AND COSTUME DESIGN**  
John Pascoe

**LIGHTING DESIGN**  
Donald Edmund Thomas

**HAIR AND MAKEUP DESIGN**  
Joanne Weaver

**PROPERTY DESIGN**  
Monika Essen

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**  
Maria Todaro

**FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER**  
Kara Wooten

**STAGE MANAGER**  
Ken Saltzman

**SUPERTITLES**  
Roberto Mauro

A Co-Production of Michigan Opera Theatre, Florida Grand Opera and Opera Company of Philadelphia.

Scenery Constructed by Ravenswood Studio, Inc., Chicago, Illinois.

Costumes constructed by Michigan Opera Theatre Costume Shop  
Costume Materials Provided by Haberman Fabrics, Royal Oak, Michigan.

Millinery created by Audry Hawkins, Detroit, Michigan.

Properties constructed by West End Studios, Detroit, Michigan.



The Spring 2017 Opera Season  
is presented by Cadillac

The opening night  
performance is  
presented in honor of  
Lee and Floy Barthel



## CAST

(In order of vocal appearance)

<b>Marquis de Brisaille:</b> .....	Brent Michael Smith+
<b>Marquis De Cuigy &amp; Capucin:</b> .....	Randall Scotting
<b>Ligniere:</b> .....	Bradley Smoak
<b>Christian:</b> .....	Sebastien Gueze (May 13, 17, 20); Jason Slayden (May 21)
<b>Ragueneau:</b> .....	Rolando Sanz
<b>Le Bret:</b> .....	Harry Greenleaf
<b>Un Inconnu:</b> .....	Jeff Byrnes+
<b>Montfleury (speaking):</b> .....	Bernard Uzan
<b>Cyrano:</b> .....	Marian Pop (May 13, 20); John Viscardi (May 17, 21)
<b>De Guiche:</b> .....	Kyle Albertson
<b>La Duegne:</b> .....	Deborah Nansteel
<b>Roxane:</b> .....	Sarah Joy Miller
<b>Carbon:</b> .....	Stephen Lusmann
+Michigan Opera Theatre Studio Artist	

## Synopsis

### Act 1

#### Scene 1

The audience at the Hotel Bourgogne anticipate a performance by the famous actor Montfleury. Christian de Neuville, a handsome new recruit in the Gascon Guards, points out to his drunken friend, Lignière, a woman in one of the boxes with whom he is in love. Lignière tells Christian that she is Madeleine de Robin, known as Roxane. She is beautiful, rich, and intellectual. Christian laments that he is too stupid and coarse to win the heart of such a refined woman. The baker-poet Ragueneau and the soldier Le Bret enter looking for one of the Gascon Guards, Cyrano de Bergerac, who has banned Montfleury from performing for a month. They describe Cyrano as being eloquent and brave, but as being much ridiculed because of his abnormally large nose, a subject on which he is extremely sensitive. Lignière goes out drinking, and Christian is told by a mysterious man of an attempt at Lignière's life. That night when Lignière

goes to the Porte de Nelle on his way home, he will be met by one hundred men sent by a nobleman who is upset that Lignière wrote a poem making fun of him. Christian goes to save Lignière.

The performance commences, but in the middle of it Cyrano chases Montfleury offstage and pays off the theater manager. A nobleman tries to insult Cyrano by saying simply that his nose is "very large". Cyrano counters by coming up with many other more interesting insults the nobleman could have used. Swords are drawn and Cyrano wounds the nobleman. Le Bret tells Cyrano that he is making too many enemies, and Cyrano in turn confesses his love for Roxane. He says that he loves Roxane but she will never be able to love him in return because of his large nose. Roxane's nurse arrives to tell Cyrano that Roxane requests a meeting with him at Ragueneau's bakery the next day, and Cyrano accepts. Cyrano then learns of the plot against Lignière, and determines to take on the mob himself.

#### Scene 2

Cyrano arrives at the bakery, eagerly anticipating his meeting with Roxane.

Ragueneau's wife, Lise, enters with some of Ragueneau's manuscripts that she has turned into paper bags for pastries, to Ragueneau's dismay. Roxane's nurse arrives with Roxane and Cyrano gets her out of the room by telling her to go out into the streets and eat some pastries, and then read the poetry written on the bags. Alone with Cyrano, Roxane confesses her love for a man. Cyrano thinks it is him who she loves, but it is actually Christian. Roxane makes Cyrano promise to protect Christian in battle.

The cadets arrive, praising Cyrano. Christian and Le Bret are among them. Cyrano proceeds to tell the story of how he fought the hundred men at the Porte de Nelle, and Christian interjects several references to Cyrano's nose. Cyrano orders the room cleared and is alone with Christian. Cyrano tells Christian that he is Roxane's cousin, and Christian confesses his love. The two become fast friends. They eventually decide that Cyrano will write letters to Roxane under Christian's name.

### Act 2

Roxane is waiting for a meeting with Christian. She and Cyrano converse about Christian's "refinement". Cyrano exits before Le Comte de Guiche enters. He is in love with Roxane and asks her to become his lover before he goes to war against the Spanish. She declines, but not before convincing him to allow Cyrano and Christian's company to stay in Paris.

Christian later arrives, and tells Cyrano that he no longer needs his services, and that he can win Roxane on his own. But when he tries, he fails miserably, angering Roxane with his "loss of charm". Cyrano tells Christian that he will feed him words to say to Roxane. Christian then woos Roxane, who is on her balcony. Eventually Cyrano takes over, speaking while Christian mouths words. Christian climbs up the balcony and kisses Roxane. A Capucin monk, delivering to Roxane a message that De Guiche still wants to meet with her, agrees to marry Christian and Roxane. The couple celebrate their love while Cyrano laments that he has lost Roxane. De Guiche arrives and, seeing that Roxane and Christian are married, orders Cyrano, Christian, and their company to report to go to war against

the Spanish. Roxane makes Cyrano promise that Christian write to her every single day.

## Act 3

### Scene 1

At the battlefield in Arras, the soldiers are asleep. Christian, Carbon, and Le Bret are among them, and Le Bret awakens to find Cyrano running to the camp from enemy lines. He has gone out every day to deliver "Christian's" letters to Roxane. De Guiche arrives and chastises them. After Cyrano insults De Guiche, he waves a white handkerchief as a signal to a spy to tell the Spanish to attack, and ensuring certain death for Cyrano and the guards. Roxane later arrives with Rageneau, bring food. She has crossed enemy territory to see Christian. Cyrano tells Christian about the letters, and gives him a letter to sign so he can give it to Roxane if he dies. Christian notices a mark on the letter, and Cyrano replies that it is one of his tears, as dying is not so terrible as never seeing Roxane again. Roxane tells Christian that she would love him even if he were ugly, and he realizes that she loves Cyrano, not him. Christian convinces Cyrano to tell Roxane about the letters, then rushes into battle. Just as Cyrano is about to do so, Le Bret and Carbon enter carrying the mortally wounded Christian. Cyrano tells Christian that he told Roxane and that she loves him, and Christian dies.

### Scene 2

Fifteen years later, Roxane lives at a convent, mourning the loss of Christian. Cyrano comes to her every day, delivering his Gazette, or news from the outside world. Cyrano comes to visit her, and tell her news, and Roxane notices blood on his head. Cyrano confesses that he has been brutally beaten by one of his enemies, and is dying. Before he dies, Cyrano requests he read Christian's farewell letter to her one last time. Roxane notices that Cyrano is not reading the letter, but he is reciting it. She realizes then that it was Cyrano she loved all along. Cyrano dies in Roxane's arms.

## Suzanne Mallare Acton

Chorus Master

Suzanne Acton has received wide acclaim for her choral direction involving more than 125 productions in seven languages.

Conducting credits include *West Side Story*, *Music Man*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *The Mikado*, *Daughter of the Regiment*, *Carmen*, *La Traviata* and *Carmina Burana* with *The Medium* for MOT; *My Fair Lady* and *La Traviata* for Dayton Opera; *Merry Widow* and *Madame Butterfly* for Artpark; and *Tosca* for Augusta Opera. As founding Director of the MOT Children's Chorus, Ms. Acton was instrumental in developing the inaugural 2007-2008 season. She is also the Artistic and Music Director of metro Detroit's Rackham Choir.



## Kyle Albertson

Bass-baritone

Kyle Albertson is renowned not only for his versatile voice, confidence, and style, but also for his ability to bring a character to life on stage. Of his recent role début as Bartolo in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* at Fort Worth Opera, *The Dallas Morning News* raved: "With a drop-dead gorgeous bass-baritone, Kyle Albertson is younger than the usual Dr. Bartolo, but he's no less delightful an object of mockery. When he turns on his falsetto to demonstrate an aria from his youth, he sounds like the famously out-of-tune Florence Foster Jenkins." This season, Mr. Albertson will be making quite a large number of débuts, including a role début of Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* at Northern Lights Music Festival; a house début at Lyric Opera of Chicago for their production of *Das Rheingold*; plus role and house débuts as Donner in Minnesota Opera's first production of *Das Rheingold*, in which he also covers Wotan; Lieutenant Horstmayer in *Silent Night* with Opera San Jose, Magnifico in *Cenerentola* with El Paso Opera, and DeGuiche in *Cyrano* here at Michigan Opera Theatre. He will also perform a solo in Bruckner's *Te Deum* with Houston Symphony.



## Jeff Byrnes

Baritone Jeff Byrnes returned to Michigan Opera Theatre last season as a Studio Artist. He performed the roles of Schanuard in *La Bohème*,

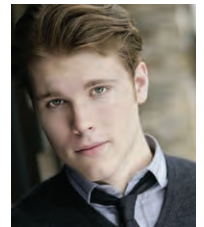
1st SS Officer in *The Passenger*, Old Servant in *Elektra* and The Bonze in *Madame Butterfly*. Prior to joining MOT, he performed the role of Owen Hart in *Dead Man Walking* with Dayton Opera, and he covered Germont in *La Traviata* and Balstrode in *Peter Grimes* with Des Moines Metro Opera. Other operatic highlights include Leporello in *Don Giovanni* and the title role in *The Mikado* with the Natchez Opera Festival, and Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Sprecher in *Die Zauberflöte*, and Pilate in *St. John Passion* with CCM Opera. He was a regional finalist in the Rocky Mountain Region of the Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions in 2014.



## Harry Greenleaf

Baritone Harry Greenleaf is a native of Wixom, Michigan. He is a proud alumnus of the Michigan State University College of Music,

and received a Master of Music at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. In 2013 and 2014 he was a Studio Artist with the Wolf Trap Opera Company. While there he sang the role of Baron Douchol in *La traviata* with the National Symphony Orchestra, and Monsieur Barbu in *Les mamelles de Tirésias*. In the summer of 2015 he was an Apprentice Artist with Des Moines Metro Opera, covering the role of Sonora in *La fanciulla del West*. In 2015 he debuted with Cincinnati Chamber Opera, singing *The Pilot* in *The Little Prince*. In the summer of 2016 he will perform with the Glimmerglass Festival as Anthony Hope in *Sweeney Todd*. He made his debut with Michigan Opera Theatre in 2016, singing the role of Top in *The Tender Land*, and will appear as Moralès in *Carmen*, Jake Wallace in *La fanciulla del West*, and Le Bret in *Dr. David DiChiera's Cyrano* for the 2016-2017 season.



## Sebastien Gueze

Despite his relative youth, the young french tenor, Sébastien Guèze, has already had tremendous success singing at internationally renowned venues such as La Fenice di Venezia, La Monnaie de Bruxelles, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Schwetzingen Festival, Festival di Spoleto, Santa Cecilia Roma, Koeln Opera, Warsaw Wielki Theater, Opera of Athens, Les Chorégies d'Orange, Paris Théâtre des Champs Elysées, Salle Pleyel, Helsinki National Opera, Tokio Oji Hall, Valencia Palao de Les Arts, Harare International Festival of the Arts (Zimbabwe), and Miami Florida Grand Opera to name but a few.



## Stephen Lusmann

During the course of his rich, international operatic career, baritone Stephen Lusmann has sung more than 40 leading roles with major opera houses. On recordings Lusmann may be heard in Richard Strauss' opera *Der Friedenstag* recorded at Carnegie Hall on the Koch International label; *Operrgala* recorded at the Konzerthaus Luzern, Switzerland on Tonstudio AMOS; and on *E.E. Cummings: An American Circus*, songs by Logan Skelton, recorded on the Centaur Records label.



## Steven Mercurio

This fall marks American maestro Steven Mercurio's twentieth production with MOT, after most recently conducting last fall's *The Passenger*. An internationally acclaimed conductor and composer whose musical versatility encompasses the symphonic and operatic worlds, he was Music Director of the Spoleto Festival and Principal Conductor of the Opera Company of Philadelphia for five years. Mr. Mercurio is also a sought-after collaborator for many award-winning



recordings, arrangements and film projects, most notably "Christmas in Vienna with the Three Tenors." For the stage, he has conducted more than 50 operas in seven different languages in many of the world's best loved opera houses. His most recent symphonic composition, "A Grateful Tail," based on a love of dogs, had its world premiere in Prague and is available on Eros Sound Recordings.

## Sarah Joy Miller

Acknowledged as one of the industry's foremost emerging talents, Ms. Miller began turning heads at her New York City Opera and BAM débuts to great critical acclaim singing the title role of Anna Nicole Smith in the Royal Opera House commissioned opera *Anna Nicole* by Mark-Anthony Turnage. She most recently appeared as Marguerite in MOT's production of *Faust* in 2015. This season, Ms. Miller performs Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette* at Opera Tampa, and Mabel in *Pirates of Penzance* at Palm Beach Opera. Miller will also perform as a featured soloist in a "Puccini to Pop" concert with Tulsa Opera.

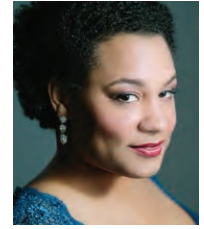


## Deborah Nansteel

"A formidable display of vocal power and dramatic assurance," mezzo-soprano Deborah Nansteel recently

completed the Washington National Opera Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, where she performed many roles including

Tisbe in *La Cenerentola*, Third Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*, Curra (cover Preziosilla) in *La forza del destino*, Paula (cover) in *Florenca en el Amazonas*, as well as The Cat in Tony Award winning composer Jeanine Tesori's *The Lion, the Unicorn, and Me*. She recently earned the highly esteemed Betty Allen Award and a grant from the Sullivan Foundation.



## Marian Pop

Marian Pop originated the role of Cyrano with Michigan Opera Theatre and most recently appeared as Tadeusz in last season's acclaimed production of *The Passenger*. In recent seasons, Mr. Pop has joined Theater Basel for his role debut as Posa in *Don Carlo* as well as performing Lescaut in *Manon*, Taddeo L'italiana in *Algeri*, and Prokofiev's Pantalone in *The Love for Three Oranges*. A frequent guest at the Staatsoper Stuttgart, the baritone's numerous roles with the company have included his signature performances of Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, plus Beckmesser in *Die*



### The May 13 performance is dedicated in honor of Mr. Lee and Mrs. Floy Barthel, Michigan Opera Theatre Trustees since 1997.

Lee and Floy Barthel have been loyal patrons and regular attendees to Michigan Opera Theatre since its inception. When MOT began looking for a permanent home, they were first in line to offer renovation work to help create the beauty that is now the Detroit Opera House. Since opening the house doors in 1996, Lee and Floy have been steadfast supporters, continuously looking for ways to make sure the company thrives for future generations. Numerous projects have been completed in the Opera House through their support, some of which bear their name, including the Lee and Floy Barthel Costume Studio. Most recently, they have supported the improvements to the DOH Skydeck and the purchase of new vehicles for transportation needs. Lee serves on the Board of Directors. Lee and Floy both have served as Trustees with MOT for more than 18 years. In honor of their commitment and all that the Barthels have contributed to MOT, the May 13 performance of *Cyrano* is presented in their honor.



*Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, and Ulisse in Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*. With the Vienna Staatsoper and Volksoper, he has sung a variety of roles, including Malatesta in *Don Pasquale*, Dandini in *La Cenerentola*, Valentin in *Faust*, Ping in *Turandot*, Graf Homonay in *Zigeunerbaron*, and Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus*.

### Rolando Sanz

Rolando Sanz is thrilling audiences with his impeccable technique and musical depth, as well as his "[vocal] color and heartfelt interpretations" (Milwaukee Journal Sentinel). This season, Mr. Sanz sings the tenor-solo of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with Asheville Symphony, and, becoming a house favorite at the esteemed opera house, returns to The Metropolitan Opera for their productions of *Salome*, *Idomeneo*, *Fidelio*, and *La traviata*.



### Randall Scotting

Randall Scotting, whose "strong masculine countertenor matches his handsome muscular physique" continues to garner praise in the opera house and on the concert stage for his versatility and depth of musical interpretation. His repertoire spans from the Renaissance to contemporary works and he has been particularly praised for his performances of Baroque operas' leading men.

Recent and upcoming engagements include the title role in Handel's *Rinaldo* at Merkin Concert Hall in New York; the role of Hera in *PARIS!* with Company XIV in New York; a concert of arias from the baroque pasticcio *Andromeda* in California; Gluck's *Ezio* with Odyssey Opera in Boston; and Castrovillari's seventeenth-century opera *La Cleopatra* in San Francisco.



### Jason Slayden

Winner of a 2012-13 Sullivan Career Grant, tenor Jason Slayden has been celebrated for the warmth and beauty of his voice, as well as demonstrating "considerable



subtlety as an actor". Last season included his debut with Lyric Opera of Chicago as Tybalt and the cover of Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette*, Virginia Opera as Rodolfo in *La bohème*, Cedar Rapids Opera Theatre as Alfredo in *La traviata*, Opera Santa Barbara as Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*, Don José in *Carmen* with the Colorado Music Festival, and Pinkerton with the Berkshire Opera Festival. The 2016-2017 season includes Gabriele Adorno in *Simon Boccanegra* with Pacific Opera Victoria, and Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* with Annapolis Opera.

### Brent Michael Smith

Brent Michael Smith is an artist of Michigan Opera Theatre Studio. Last year he was an Apprentice Artist with Des Moines Metro Opera, where his performance as Billy Jackrabbit in *La fanciulla del West* received critical acclaim by Opera News as a "standout." Colorado Music Buzz praised him for "making the most of his brief appearances."

He received his Master of Music degree under the tutelage of John Hines. He received his Bachelor's in music in piano performance from Hope College (Holland, MI). Mr. Smith is a first-place winner in the Grand Rapids Opera Competition (2012).



### Bradley Smoak

With a voice of "rich presence and power" (Opera Today), American bass-baritone Bradley Smoak has rapidly emerged as one of opera's most exciting and sought-after young talents. Known for his compelling presence on both the operatic and concert stages, Smoak continues to delight audiences with his "easy charismatic charm" and unique versatility across a wide variety of musical styles and theatrical characterizations.



### Bernard Uzan

Bernard Uzan returns to Michigan Opera Theatre to direct *Cyrano*, the opera for which he wrote the libretto. In addition to his longstanding relationship with MOT, including directing more than 25 productions,

Uzan's background in the performing arts includes great achievement as a General Director, Artistic Director, Stage Director, Artist Manager, Set Designer, Librettist, Educator, Actor, and most recently, published Novelist and Internet Journalist. Last year, Mr. Uzan received a lifetime achievement award from the Giulio Gari Foundation. This season, in addition to *Cyrano*, he directs *Il barbiere de Siviglia* at Toledo Opera and Opera Carolina, *Carmen* at Florida Grand Opera, and *Roméo et Juliette* at Opera Tampa following its massive co-production across five cities last season.



### John Viscardi

Baritone John Viscardi, New York native and graduate of the Academy of Vocal Arts (AVA), is a rising talent notably acknowledged for his diversity of vocal repertoire. He most recently appeared as Valentin in MOT's production of *Faust* in 2015.

2015/16 season included Vaughn Williams' *Five Mystical Songs* at Carnegie Hall, *Carmina Burana* with Opera Philadelphia, Silvio in *Pagliacci* with Opera San Louis Obispo, Bill Calhoun in *Kiss Me Kate* with the Phoenicia International Festival of the Voice, Morales in *Carmen* with Lyric Opera of Kansas City.



### Joanne Middleton Weaver

Wig and Makeup Designer

Born in England, Joanne Weaver came to the U.S. in the late 1980s. She began apprenticing with what was then Washington Opera, now Washington National Opera. Ms. Weaver has since designed at many opera companies throughout the U.S., including Glimmerglass Opera, Central City Opera, Sarasota Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City and Des Moines Metro Opera. Her notable MOT credits include *The Magic Flute*, *Macbeth*, *The Passenger*, *Frida*, *The Merry Widow*, *Faust*, *Margaret Garner*, *Cyrano* and *The Pearl Fishers*.



## MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE ORCHESTRA - *THE GIRL OF THE GOLDEN WEST*

<b>VIOLIN I</b> Eliot Heaton, <i>Concertmaster+</i> Laura Roelofs, <i>Assistant Concertmaster +</i> Molly Hughes + Bryan Johnston + Velda Kelly + Beth Kirton + Charlotte Merkerson, <i>Concertmaster Emeritus+</i> Andrew Wu + Yuri Popowyc Jenny Wan	Elizabeth Rowin Judith Teasdle	Jon Luebke Robert Stiles	<b>BASSOON</b> Gregory Quick, <i>Acting Principal +</i> Roger Maki-Schramm Marat Rakhmatullaev Spencer Phillips	Bryan Pokorney John Rutherford
<b>VIOLIN II</b> Victoria Haltom, <i>Principal +</i> Kevin Filewych + Henrik Karapetyan + Daniel Stachyra + Sherri Marttila Jacqueline Nutting	<b>VIOLA</b> John Madison, <i>Principal +</i> Scott Stefanko + Barbara Zmich- McClellan + Catherine Franklin James Greer Julianne Zinn	<b>FLUTE/PICCOLO</b> Laura Larson, <i>Acting Principal +</i> Dennis Carter Jung-Wan Kang Helen Near	<b>HORN</b> Andrew Pelletier, <i>Principal +</i> Carrie Banfield-Taplin + David Denniston Tamara Kosinski	<b>TIMPANI</b> Alison Chang, <i>Principal +</i>
	<b>CELO</b> Nadine Deleury, <i>Principal+</i> Daniel Thomas + Andrea Yun + Katri Ervamaa Stefan Koch Irina Tikhonova	<b>OBOE</b> Nermis Mieses, <i>Principal+</i> Lydia Dempsey Stephanie Shapiro	<b>TRUMPET</b> David Ammer, <i>Principal +</i> Gordon Simmons + Derek Lockhart	<b>PERCUSSION</b> John Dorsey, <i>Principal +</i> Daniel Maslanka David Taylor
	<b>BASS</b> Derek Weller, <i>Principal +</i> Clark Suttle +	<b>ENGLISH HORN</b> Sally Heffelfinger - Pituch +	<b>TROMBONE</b> David Jackson, <i>Acting Principal+</i> Gary Hellick	<b>HARP</b> Patricia Terry-Ross, <i>Principal +</i>
		<b>CLARINET</b> Brian Bowman, <i>Principal+</i> J. William King + Chad Burrow Lisa Raschiatore		<b>CELESTE</b> Jean Schneider  + Michigan Opera Theatre Core Orchestra Detroit Federation of Musicians Local #5 American Federation of Musicians

## MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE ORCHESTRA - *CYRANO*

<b>VIOLIN I</b> Eliot Heaton, <i>Concertmaster +</i> Laura Roelofs, <i>Assistant Concertmaster +</i> Molly Hughes + Bryan Johnston + Velda Kelly + Beth Kirton + Charlotte Merkerson, <i>Concertmaster Emeritus+</i> Andrew Wu + Yuri Popowyc Jenny Wan	Jacqueline Nutting Elizabeth Rowin	Jon Luebke Jean Posekany	<b>BASSOON</b> Gregory Quick, <i>Acting Principal +</i> Roger Maki-Schramm	<b>TIMPANI</b> Alison Chang, <i>Principal +</i>
<b>VIOLIN II</b> Victoria Haltom, <i>Principal +</i> Anna Bittar-Weller+ Kevin Filewych + Henrik Karapetyan + Daniel Stachyra +	<b>VIOLA</b> John Madison, <i>Principal +</i> Scott Stefanko + Leslie DeShazor-Adams Catherine Franklin James Greer Julianne Zinn	<b>FLUTE</b> Christopher James, <i>Acting Principal +</i> Jung-Wan Kang Brandon LePage	<b>HORN</b> Andrew Pelletier, <i>Principal+</i> Kristi Crago David Denniston Tamara Kosinski	<b>PERCUSSION</b> John Dorsey, <i>Principal +</i> David Taylor
	<b>CELO</b> Nadine Deleury, <i>Principal+</i> Daniel Thomas + Andrea Yun + Katri Ervamaa Andrew McIntosh Irina Tikhonova	<b>OBOE</b> Nermis Mieses, <i>Principal+</i> Sally Heffelfinger - Pituch + Amy Houck	<b>TRUMPET</b> David Ammer, <i>Principal +</i> Gordon Simmons + Derek Lockhart	<b>HARP</b> Patricia Terry-Ross, <i>Principal +</i>
	<b>BASS</b> Derek Weller, <i>Principal +</i> Clark Suttle +	<b>ENGLISH HORN</b> Sally Heffelfinger - Pituch +	<b>TROMBONE</b> David Jackson, <i>Acting Principal+</i> Greg Near+ Bryan Pokorney	<b>CELESTE</b> Jean Schneider  + Michigan Opera Theatre Core Orchestra
		<b>CLARINET</b> Brian Bowman, <i>Principal+</i> J. William King + Sandra Jackson		Detroit Federation of Musicians Local #5 American Federation of Musicians

## MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE CHORUS – *THE GIRL OF THE GOLDEN WEST*

<b>Tenor</b>		<b>Bass</b>	
Gregory Ashe Fred Buchalter Darren DeWitt Michael Fowler Mark Istratie Richard Jackson, Jr.	Adrian Leskiw Bradley Lieto Bradley Miller Jason Thomas Brett Thompson Jeffrey Wilkinson	Joseph Edmonds Kurt Frank Glenn Healy Branden Hood Matthew Konopacki Miroslav Manovski David Moan	Pette Moore Paolo Pacheco Luke Randall Brandon Spencer Gregory Stinson Justin Watson Norman Weber

## MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE CHORUS – *CYRANO*

<b>Soprano</b>	<b>Tenor</b>	<b>Alto</b>	<b>Bass</b>
Brandy Adams Molly Bruner Claire Chardon Fidelia Darmahkasih Nicole Joseph Mary Martin Valerie Martinez Sandra Periard Heidi Bowen Zook	Gregory Ashe Fred Buchalter Mark Craig Darren DeWitt Michael Fowler Mark Istratie Richard Jackson, Jr. Bradley Lieto Ron Reinhart Jason Thomas Brett Thompson Jeffrey Wilkinson Christopher Wolf	Andrea Apel Mysti Byrnes Yvonne Friday Leslie Mason Anna Nadasky Diane Schoff Tiffanie Waldron Tamara Whitty Chantel Woodard	Joseph Edmonds Branden Hood Matthew Konopacki Brandon Langeland Miroslav Manovski David Moan Paolo Pacheco Luke Randall Ken Shepherd Brandon Spencer Kevin Starnes Gregory Stinson David Twigg Justin Watson

*The American Guild of Musical Artists is the official union of the Michigan Opera Theatre Chorus.*

# DiChiera Deconstructed: THE COMPOSER

BY ERICA HOBBS

When people think of David DiChiera, they think of the man that brought opera to Detroit. But before Michigan Opera Theatre, before the Detroit Opera House, there was David DiChiera, the musician, with a deep-rooted artistic passion of his own.

DiChiera's journey to music started early as a child learning to play piano in McKeesport, PA. As a young adult, DiChiera studied piano, musicology and composition at UCLA, eventually earning his PhD in 18th-century opera. His philosophy was opera as a living, breathing art form, one reflective of the times in which they exist and also of the communities in which they serve.

As a young academic with a desire to make his own music, DiChiera struggled with the opera environment of his time. Despite his passion for the creation of new works, DiChiera felt his traditional style, which contrasted with the atonal and electronic themes of the 1950s and 60s, would not be welcomed in operatic circles.

"I dreamed of being a concert pianist and expressing my emotions through my own music," he said. "But it was the 1960s, a time when writing music in any style other than atonal, serial or even electronic was considered irrelevant and redundant in academic circles, so I felt compelled to abandon my muse. There I was, a neo-romantic totally out of step with what was 'in.'"

Instead, DiChiera pursued other artistic passions that brought opera to the people. From 1962 - 73, he served on the faculty at Oakland University while producing short opera works in Detroit. In 1971, he founded Michigan Opera Theatre, which would become the crux of his life's work. His impresario career also included establishing Detroit's Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts; founding Opera Pacific in Orange County, CA; serving as General Director of Dayton Opera; serving as President of OPERA America and the restoration and creation of the Detroit Opera House.

Throughout all these endeavors,



DiChiera fought for his artistic vision of opera as a reflective, evolving art form that changed with the times. He championed diversity in opera, presenting new works from different cultures that represented experiences often untold. He nurtured the careers of minority artists and, through OPERA America, created "Opera for a New America" which supported companies' outreach to underserved communities. In his effort to encourage the development of new works, he created "Opera for the 80s and Beyond," another initiative through OPERA America that encouraged the development of new opera and musical theater.

But through it all, DiChiera maintained passion for his own music. His work included "Four Sonnets," music composed to the poetry of Edna St. Vincent Millay. It included children's opera, composed with his then-wife Karen DiChiera, as well as numerous smaller compositions. But it wasn't until the 21st century that the world was ready for DiChiera's own full-length opera.

"During these decades of intense operatic activity on my part, the secret composer in me observed, with growing interest, a musical environment that now allows composers to draw from all styles and past periods as well as current trends (including popular and ethnic music)," DiChiera said. "With this, I felt that perhaps I could find the courage to return to my own muse without fear of rejection. At last, I felt liberated to write

my own opera."

DiChiera knew his opera would tell a great love story and when director Bernard Uzan suggested Edmond Rostand's "Cyrano de Bergerac," he knew he had found it. The play tells the story of Cyrano, a nobleman and poet whose insecurities over his large nose prevent him from pursuing his true love. Instead, he assists his handsome, though less intellectually-inclined rival, Christian, pursue the heart of his beloved Roxanne in a long, frustrating story of delayed passion. For DiChiera, the character of Cyrano reflected his own journey as a musician.

"I was drawn to the character of Cyrano whose exterior life was fearless and outgoing with exciting esprit and panache, but who inside suffered a sense of overwhelming inadequacy which denied him from achieving personal fulfillment," he said.

After more than eight years of work, "Cyrano" premiered at the Detroit Opera House on Oct. 13, 2007. With a style reminiscent of the great operas of the past, "Cyrano" opened to a warm reception - the opposite of his initial fears a half-century before. The Washington Post's Anne Midgette described "Cyrano" as "utterly sincere, and affecting: a love story that comes from the heart." David Fleschler, with South Florida Classical Review, said "DiChiera's music is melodic and passionate, a fresh, energetic modern expression of rich 19th-century harmonies, with a couple of melodies that will stay with you as you leave the opera house." And Tom Purdom from Broad Street Review said "DiChiera creates an emotional climax with music in the same way playwrights achieve their effects with language and film directors work with images."

After 46 years building and leading Michigan Opera Theatre, DiChiera retires at the end of this season to Artistic Director Emeritus, winding down a successful career as opera impresario. As he looks to the future, he is ready to dedicate himself to his earliest passion as a musician and composer.