

Minnesota Opera Names Ryan Taylor President and General Director

New President Currently Leads Arizona Opera
Ties to Minnesota Opera as an Alumnus of the Resident Artist Program

MINNEAPOLIS (January 14, 2016) – Minnesota Opera is pleased to announce that **Ryan Taylor** will become its new president and general director, effective May 1, 2016. Taylor succeeds Nina Archabal, who has served in an interim capacity since November 2014. The announcement by Board Chair James E. Johnson and Search Committee Chair Bernt von Ohlen ends a nationwide six-month search, and brings dynamic new leadership to this acclaimed organization.

“On behalf of the entire board of directors and search committee, I am thrilled Ryan is joining us as our next president and general director,” said Johnson. “He is an opera artist of the first order, a skilled executive, and respected leader in our field. In addition, as an alumnus of our renowned Resident Artist Program, Ryan is no stranger to the Twin Cities or Minnesota Opera. We were collectively impressed by Ryan’s progressive vision and proven track record, and are confident we have found the right person to lead and inspire our company and community, and raise Minnesota Opera to the next level of excellence.”

“Minnesota Opera’s remarkable 50-year history of innovation and excellence in opera, education, and longstanding dedication to developing new works, make it one of the premier arts organizations in the nation,” said Taylor. He added, “Having been fortunate enough to receive valuable training from Minnesota Opera at a formative time early in my career, I am especially honored to carry the organization’s remarkable reputation forward. With a dynamic staff and passionate board of directors, we will embrace and expand the company’s role as a vibrant artistic member of not only the Twin Cities, but the national and international opera communities.”

Ryan Taylor is currently general director of Arizona Opera where he began a dramatic turnaround of the organization’s finances, marked by record-breaking success with fundraising. Chief among his accomplishments was the inception and implementation of the company's Arizona BOLD initiative, which brings new and exciting stories to the company's artistic and education programming, featuring authentic and intimately familiar tales to a larger, more diverse statewide audience. Taylor spent more than a decade as an operatic baritone, amassing more than 30 roles to his credit. He was invited to participate in Minnesota Opera’s Resident Artist Program during the 2000-2001 season, and returned in 2004 to sing Sharpless in *Madame Butterfly*. Taylor has also held positions as Artist Manager and Public Relations Director for ADA Artist Management in New York, Manager of Community Development for Wolf Trap Opera Company, General Director of the Berkshire Opera Company, Artistic Director of Singers Beyond Borders, and Co-founder of the Southeastern Festival of Song. A full biography and photos are available upon request.

More than a year ago, Minnesota Opera began its process to identify a new president and general director. Following a needs assessment conducted by the board of directors, a search committee was

formed to conduct an extensive nationwide search. After a thorough interview process, the board of directors unanimously approved Taylor's 5-year appointment on January 13. Taylor will join Minnesota Opera full-time on May 1, 2016.

Minnesota Opera's 2015-2016 season continues with *Rusalka* (January 23 – 31), *Tosca* (March 12 – 19), and the world premiere of *The Shining* (May 7 – 15). The 2016-2017 season will be announced on January 21. Taylor will commence planning for the 2017-2018 season immediately.

ABOUT MINNESOTA OPERA

Founded in 1963, Minnesota Opera has paved a bold, illustrious path. As an artistic pioneer, its dedication to excellence and inventive vision make it a steadfast leader in the opera community and beyond. Each year the company reaches nearly 400,000 people through its mainstage productions, groundbreaking education and training programs, community engagement, radio broadcasts and digital content. Heralded for its commitment to develop original works, the company has commissioned and produced more than 40 new operas that have been seen throughout the world. One of the nation's largest and most distinguished opera companies, Minnesota Opera is consistently recognized for its innovation and world-class artistry, delighting audiences young and old for more than 50 years.

Together with the Ordway, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and The Schubert Club, Minnesota Opera is a member of the Arts Partnership and performs on the stage of the Ordway.

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