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## MINNESOTA OPERA COMPLETES ITS CREATIVE TEAM WITH THE APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF ARTISTIC OFFICER PRITI GANDHI

**A native of Mumbai, India, Gandhi comes from San Diego Opera.**

**MINNEAPOLIS (May 7, 2018)** – Minnesota Opera today announced the hiring of Priti Gandhi in the newly created position of chief artistic officer, effective July 2, 2018. Ms. Gandhi comes to Minnesota Opera from San Diego Opera, where she currently serves as artistic administrator. The announcement ends a five-month search, completing MN Opera’s creative team moving forward along with President and General Director Ryan Taylor, Creative Advisor to the President Dale Johnson and Chief Production Officer Karen Quisenberry.

“On behalf of the entire team at Minnesota Opera, I am thrilled to welcome Priti as chief artistic officer,” said President and General Director Ryan Taylor. “She is an experienced artist, a skilled administrator and a respected voice in the opera community. Our board and staff were collectively impressed by her poise, collaborative energy and proven track record of innovation in overseeing the day-to-day artistic operations of a major opera company. I couldn’t be more excited to incorporate her leadership and vision in our creative planning as we move forward!”

“Minnesota Opera’s remarkable history of innovation and excellence in opera make it one of the premier arts organizations in the nation,” said Gandhi. “It is a great privilege to be asked to play a leading role in creating world-class music in Minnesota, and I’m truly looking forward to joining the brilliant team already in place.”

“Because of Priti’s successful career as a performing artist, she brings a unique depth of real-world experience to her role as an artistic leader,” said San Diego Opera General Director David Bennett. “She’s been an incredibly important part of our family, and has helped make San Diego a place where artists feel nurtured, are well-cared for and want to return. She will be greatly missed, but will be a great addition to Minnesota Opera’s team.”

Priti Gandhi is currently artistic administrator of San Diego Opera where she advises the general director on casting and artistic budgeting and oversees all artistic contracting and management. Chief among her accomplishments was serving as a member of the administrative team that helped to save San Diego Opera from near closure in 2014. Gandhi has had a 20-year international opera career, appearing with the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Opera, Seattle Opera, San Diego Opera, Théâtre du Châtelet, the Royal Opera House, Prague Estates Theatre, New York City Opera, Philadelphia Orchestra and San Francisco Opera. Outside of opera administration, Gandhi has previously served as global network membership manager with The Chopra Center for Wellbeing and promotions office manager for KFMB Radio/TV. Gandhi graduated with a bachelor of arts in communications and a minor in theatre from the University of California, San Diego, has served as a published weekly columnist with *The San Diego Union-Tribune* and was an honored

alumna and commencement speaker at Thurgood Marshall College at UCSD in 2016. An alumna of young artist programs at Cleveland Opera and San Diego Opera, Gandhi is also an amateur painter and dedicated flamenco dancer.

Chief Artistic Officer Priti Gandhi joins President and General Director Ryan Taylor, Chief Production Officer Karen Quisenberry and Creative Advisor Dale Johnson to form Minnesota Opera's creative team. Karen Quisenberry, recently promoted from production director, currently oversees all production and design aspects of Minnesota Opera's productions, in addition to serving on the senior leadership team. Previously announced, Dale Johnson continues his work with Minnesota Opera in the new role of creative advisor to the president at the end of the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary season.

Minnesota Opera's 2017-2018 season continues with *Thaïs* (May 12-20) and a special presentation of *Fellow Travelers* (June 16-26) at The Cowles Center. In concert with Minnesota Opera's creative and leadership team, Gandhi will commence planning for the 2019-2020 season upon her arrival.

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