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PROJECT OPERA PRESENTS TWO FULLY STAGED YOUTH OPERAS: *BRUNDIBÁR* AND *THE GONDOLIERS*

Minnesota Opera's premiere vocal training program is celebrating its 15th season.

MINNEAPOLIS (January 9, 2018)—Project Opera celebrates its 15th season with *Brundibár*, and *The Gondoliers*. Both premiere on Friday, February 8, 2019 in two youth-performed, fully staged productions at The Lab Theater (700 1st St N, Minneapolis).

Ragazzi, Project Opera's mixed group of talented youth singers in grades 4-8, presents *Brundibár*, a heartwarming fairy tale by Czech composer Hans Krása with a libretto by acclaimed playwright Tony Kushner. Originally performed by the children of Theresienstadt concentration camp in occupied Czechoslovakia, *Brundibár* is the story Aninku and Pepíček, two penniless siblings who must raise money for their ill mother by singing in the public square, much to the chagrin of the evil organ grinder Brundibár. Hopeful and heartfelt, *Brundibár* is a charming fable all about the power of community and overcoming obstacles.

Meanwhile, Giovani, Project Opera's mixed group of talented youth singers in grades 9-12, presents *The Gondoliers*, composed and written by the legendary duo Arthur Sullivan and William Schwenk Gilbert. This classic tale of mistaken identities tells the story of two Venetian gondoliers who must jointly rule the fictional kingdom of Barataria until it can be determined who is the rightful heir. A winking satire of class distinctions inside an absurd and hilarious comedy, *The Gondoliers* is sure to delight.

"I'm so impressed by how our kids have risen to the occasion to create two such charming and compelling works of art, as they each present a unique set of vocal and acting challenges," says Project Opera Music Director Matthew Abernathy. "These operas cover all the bases: gorgeous music, comic relief and poignant moments of storytelling that our kids convey so beautifully. I'm very excited to share them with our audiences."

"Minnesota Opera strives to sing every story," says Chief Learning Officer Jamie Andrews. "We're proud of our commitment to providing high quality opportunities for young singers to sing their stories with Project Opera for 15 years."

What: Hans Krása's *Brundibár* and Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Gondoliers*
Sung in English with English captions projected above the stage.

Where: The Lab Theater, 700 1st St N, Minneapolis, MN 55401

When: *Brundibár*
Friday, February 8, 2019 at 6 p.m.
Saturday, February 9 at 11:30 a.m.
Saturday, February 9 at 1 p.m.



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The Gondoliers

Friday, February 8 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, February 9 at 4 p.m.

Saturday, February 9 at 6:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$15 for adults, \$5 for kids 18 and under. Call Minnesota Opera Patron Services at 612-333-6669, Monday-Friday, 10am to 5pm, or purchase online at mnopera.org.

About Project Opera

Project Opera, a vocal training program for students in grades 4-12, is the centerpiece of Minnesota Opera's expanding education program for young singers. Led by Music Director Matthew Abernathy, Project Opera teaches healthy vocal technique, exposes students to repertoire in the major operatic languages and instills the fundamentals of acting technique throughout the year-long program. Project Opera casts its youth participants in leading roles and enlists young instrumentalists to serve in the opera orchestra. Founded in 2004, the group produces a fully staged opera each year, as well as several other concerts.

To learn more about *Brundibár* and *The Gondoliers*, please visit mnopera.org/project-opera.

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Minnesota Opera changes lives by bringing together artists, audiences and community, advancing the art of opera for today and for future generations.