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## MINNESOTA OPERA PURCHASES THE LAB THEATER, EXPANDING ITS NORTH LOOP CAMPUS

**MINNEAPOLIS (February 6, 2019)** – Minnesota Opera announced a deal today to buy The LAB Theater (700 N 1st St., Minneapolis, MN 55401), the 350-person theater located next door to the Minnesota Opera Center in Minneapolis' North Loop.

“We couldn’t be more thrilled to add The LAB Theater to our North Loop home,” said President and General Director Ryan Taylor. “The expansion to include The LAB Theater allows us to preserve an important resource for the broader artistic community while giving us an opportunity to grow our own footprint.”

Though Minnesota Opera is acquiring the space, the current managers (Lab Productions) and tenants will continue their work and performances without interruption through at least May 2020. Noted Taylor, “We believe it is important that we maintain this space as an artistic home for local companies in the Twin Cities. We are still formulating plans at this time, but we do anticipate a need in the future to renovate the space and we want to make sure that we fully understand community needs as a part of that process.”

The LAB Theater is a 6,000 square foot stone box with 30-foot ceilings, carved out of the foundation of a historic Itasca warehouse along the Mississippi River. The theater, like its North Loop neighborhood, is rich in history. Designed and developed in 1988 for the Guthrie Theater as a laboratory for new works, The LAB served as the Guthrie’s second stage until the completion of its new theater complex in 2006. Since then, under executive producer Mary Kelley Leer, The LAB Theater has become a lively stage for both emerging and established performing artists in theater, music, dance, cabaret, fashion and burlesque.

“The Minnesota Opera Center is already one of the finest and most comprehensive opera facilities in the nation. Increasing the capacity of our campus at this point directly aligns with recent strategic plans of the organization that include expanding programming for learning and engagement activities and continuing the development of new work. It represents an opportunity to take a major step forward in the growth of this company,” said Taylor.

The purchase of The LAB Theater expands Minnesota Opera’s Minneapolis campus, which already includes three warehouses that were renovated in 1990. The three properties, at a total of 50,000 square feet, provide for a clear-span scenic shop, costume shop, a large rehearsal hall the size of the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts stage, a smaller rehearsal hall, coaching rooms, administrative offices and extensive storage facilities for scenery and costumes. Philips Klein Companies served as the architect and general contractor for both of the most recent renovations of the Minnesota Opera Center and The LAB Theater.

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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.