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INTRODUCING THE LUMINARY ARTS CENTER

Formerly known as the Lab Theater, MN Opera's newly acquired and renovated performance space will open in September 2022.

MINNEAPOLIS (February 26, 2022) – Minnesota Opera today introduced the Luminary Arts Center, the new name for the venue located next door to the Minnesota Opera Center in Minneapolis' North Loop (700 N 1st St., Minneapolis, MN 55401). Minnesota Opera announced the acquisition of the space, previously known as the Lab Theater, in February of 2019. The building is currently being renovated and is scheduled to open in September 2022, at which time Minnesota Opera plans to welcome new and returning tenants to the space, in addition to staging productions at the Luminary starting next season.

“We couldn't be more thrilled to introduce the Luminary Arts Center as a part of our North Loop home,” said Minnesota Opera President and General Director Ryan Taylor. “The new name for the venue speaks to the space's role in revealing, discovering, and illuminating the work and ideas of artists in our community. It builds upon the illustrious history of the building, which has had several different names over the years. We are honored to be a part of the life of the space and serve as stewards of this community resource in its next chapter.”

The new name was arrived at through a comprehensive exploratory and branding process in partnership with creative agency La Bang Studio. The process included input and feedback from tenants of the space, BIPOC and accessibility advisory committees, and community organizations.

The Luminary Arts Center building is an 8,000 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 space served as the Guthrie's second stage until the completion of its current theater complex in 2006. More recently, under executive producer Mary Kelley Leer, the Lab Theater became a lively stage for both emerging and established performing artists in theater, music, dance, cabaret, fashion and burlesque. Though Minnesota Opera purchased the space in 2019, the previous managers (Lab Productions) and tenants continued their work and performances without interruption through the start of the pandemic. On June 1, 2021, Minnesota Opera assumed management of the space.

Beginning in July 2021, Minnesota Opera embarked on a major, \$6-million-dollar renovation of the building. The renovation includes enhancements to front-of-house facilities, structural and mechanical improvements, and improvements to the theater and its support spaces. The addition of a freight elevator improves the efficiency and safety of load-in processes for all users, and a



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tension wire grid allows for increased flexibility for event turnaround and a safer technical teaching arena. New flooring offers a safer environment for a variety of performers, including dancers, and new acoustic treatments render the space appropriate for a variety of performance disciplines. Updated technical systems expand the capacity of the space for a variety of potential renters. The renovated theater will have 224 seats.

Shelter Architecture is serving as the architect and interior designer for the renovation. Additional partners include general contractor LS Black, theater design and lighting consultant Schuler Shook, acoustics and audiovisual consultant Kirkegaard and owner's representative NTH.

The addition of the renovated Luminary Arts Center adds to Minnesota Opera's Minneapolis campus, which already includes three warehouses that were renovated in 1990. The three properties provide for a clear-span scenic shop, costume shop, a large rehearsal hall the size of the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts Music Theater 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 the most recent renovation of the Minnesota Opera Center and the previous renovation of the Luminary Arts Center. Once completed, the Luminary Arts Center will bring Minnesota Opera's North Loop campus to a total of 62,500 square feet. The MN Opera North Loop campus is [located on Dakota Land](#).

"The Minnesota Opera Center is already one of the finest and most comprehensive opera facilities in the nation. Increasing the capacity of our campus through the renovation of the Luminary directly aligns with our desire to more broadly support the Twin Cities arts ecosystem and provide a wider diversity of operatic experiences to our patrons. It represents an opportunity to take a major step forward in the growth of this company, and we're excited for what the future holds," said Taylor.

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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.