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MINNESOTA OPERA EXTENDS PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR CHRISTOPHER FRANKLIN

Franklin will remain with company through 2028-2029 season

MINNEAPOLIS (March 26, 2025) – Minnesota Opera announced today that it will extend the contract of Principal Conductor Christopher Franklin for an additional three seasons, keeping him with the company through the 2028-2029 season. Since his company debut in 2011 conducting *Cinderella*, Franklin has led the MN Opera Orchestra with distinction. Appointed Principal Conductor in 2023, he has received strong reviews for his leadership over the past two seasons. Since then, he has conducted *The Elixir of Love*, *La bohème*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, as well as the benefit concert *Glam Jam* last September. This spring, he returns to the Twin Cities to conduct *The Barber of Seville* and will lead *Così fan tutte*, *Pagliacci*, and a concert presentation of *Edgar* during the 2025-2026 season.

Franklin is also a key member of MN Opera's Artistic Planning Team, working alongside President and General Director Ryan Taylor and the Vice Presidents of Artistic, Production, and Impact.

"When we appointed Christopher in 2023, our goal was to deepen our commitment to a dynamic, sustainable, and inclusive future for the art of opera," says President and General Director Ryan Taylor. "MN Opera has long been dedicated to both reimagining inherited repertoire and bringing new works to life, and Christopher's artistry aligns seamlessly with that approach. He has enriched our work in meaningful ways, and we are thrilled he will continue with us for the next several seasons."

"Christopher brings a creative fire and distinctive wit and grace that makes collaborating with him a true pleasure for our MN Opera family," says Joseph Li, VP, Artistic. "Our orchestra and vocalists thrive so beautifully led by his keen musical instincts and Christopher's commitment to MN Opera for the next several seasons will only energize our mission to sing every story."

Born in Pittsburgh, Franklin earned a Bachelor of Arts in violin and German literature from Macalester College in Saint Paul and subsequent degrees at the University of Illinois and the Peabody Conservatory before launching his conducting career in Italy. Since then, he has conducted at major opera houses, concert halls, and festivals across the globe. He now resides in Lucca, Italy with his wife and three children.

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Minnesota Opera advances the art of opera for today and future generations by expanding the circle of musical storytelling.