

# MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

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## MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE NAMES RICHARD LEECH, CELEBRATED TENOR, AS DIRECTOR OF RESIDENT ARTIST PROGRAMS

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*Newly-created role to lead MOT's New Studio Program for Young Artists*

**DETROIT, July 28, 2015** – Michigan Opera Theatre (MOT) President and CEO Wayne S. Brown announced today the company has appointed Richard Leech to the newly-created position, Director of Resident Artist Programs. Effective immediately, Leech will head Michigan Opera Theatre Studio, a new program, launching with the 2015-16 season, which offers full-time engagement to artists in the early stages of a professional career in opera. Leech has relocated to Detroit from Binghamton, New York.

In this key role, Leech will provide leadership for MOT's newest initiative of offering advanced training and professional performance opportunities to a select group of highly talented young artists. From September to June each season, Studio Artists will gain valuable experience through myriad performance opportunities in main stage and community productions, and hone their skills through master classes and individual training with an array of professionals, guest artists, and coaches. Studio Artists will also fill leading and featured roles in an annual production mounted specifically for the Studio program and presented on multiple stages throughout metro Detroit. MOT's 2016 production of Aaron Copland's *The Tender Land* will feature the first class of MOT Studio Artists.

"Following a nationwide search, we are delighted to welcome internationally renowned singer and coach, Richard Leech, to MOT," said Brown. "He will lead this new initiative to complement main stage, and other community and educational programs. Through this latest program, young artists will enable MOT to provide a year-round presence in our community in a variety of settings - concurrent with the ability to work with leading guest artists and coaches in the industry."

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“Richard Leech has enjoyed an accomplished career as an internationally celebrated tenor in the world’s leading opera houses,” said Dr. David DiChiera, founder and artistic director of MOT. “I cannot think of anyone more qualified to mentor these young artists as they prepare for significant careers. It will be a pleasure to work with him.”

"I am truly excited to join the remarkable team at Michigan Opera Theatre, and honored to be given the opportunity to work closely with David DiChiera, one of the true heroes of opera in America,” said Leech. “In a career that has given me so much already, I couldn’t hope for a more rewarding “next step” than being involved in the creation of this program, and helping train the next generation of talented artists as they work to make their own dreams a reality."

### **About Richard Leech**

American Tenor Richard Leech is one of the most celebrated lyric tenors of his generation. For more than 30 years he has interpreted many of the most demanding and well-known roles of the Italian, French, and German repertoire both on disc and on the stages of the world’s leading opera houses and symphonies. From 1989–2014 he sang nearly 200 performances of more than a dozen leading roles with the Metropolitan Opera, most recently adding beloved Czech and Russian works to his broad repertoire. In 2012 Mr. Leech joined the voice faculty of Rutgers University, Mason Gross School of the Arts, and Rutgers Opera Institute where he will remain an adjunct professor. He has presented master classes and served as guest master teacher for many organizations including The Martina Arroyo Foundation’s *Prelude To Performance*, The Castleton Festival’s Artist Training Seminar, and the NY Singing Teachers Association’s Professional Development Program. He attended Eastman School of Music and Binghamton University and credits his success to the training he received under the long-term mentorship of Peyton Hibbitt and the late Carmen Savoca at Tri-Cities Opera in Binghamton, NY. **For more information, please see the attached biography.**

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### **About Michigan Opera Theatre**

Michigan Opera Theatre (Wayne S. Brown, President and CEO; David DiChiera, Founder and Artistic Director), one of the nation’s most vibrant nonprofit arts organizations, is committed to presenting opera and dance of the highest artistic caliber. Founded in 1971, the company’s mission is to serve as a major cultural resource to the state of Michigan and the city of Detroit. Visit the website at [www.michiganopera.org](http://www.michiganopera.org).