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Roger Weitz Named New General Director of Opera Omaha.

After a three month search, Opera Omaha is pleased to announce the hiring of Mr. Roger Weitz as their General Director. Weitz is currently General Manager of Chicago Opera Theater, but was born and raised in Omaha, Nebraska.

Mr. Weitz holds a degree in music from Carleton College where he also studied voice and sang in multiple ensembles. After college, Weitz moved to Chicago and began a decade-long tenure with Chicago Opera Theater. For the last three years, he has served as the company's General Manager, after working as the Artistic Administrator for seven years prior. Through these posts, Weitz became well-versed in opera production from both the artistic and business perspectives. He has managed the planning and execution of over 30 new productions, working with illustrious artists and creative teams under the leadership of General Director Brian Dickie. Between his posts as Artistic Administrator and General Manager, Roger spent a year in Washington, DC as a Fellow in the Arts Management Institute at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the highly selective program created by Michael M. Kaiser. It was Opera Omaha, however, that gave Weitz his first professional experience in arts administration; a summer internship in 1998. Weitz is thrilled to return to the company, and the city, that gave him his start.

At the end of January, 2011 the Opera Omaha Board of Directors appointed a General Director Search Committee with John Newman as chair. The committee was comprised of members of the Opera Omaha Board, Advisory Board and community leaders. Jane Hill, Interim Executive Director and Kim Simon, Interim Resident Administrator served as staff support for the committee. In addition to meeting with committee members,

finalists had an opportunity to visit Omaha, observe a production and meet with nearly forty opera supporters, the full staff and civic leaders.

Hill said, "After 6 intensive months of re-organization and planning for new leadership, I am thrilled at the board's selection of Roger Weitz as General Director. Roger has exactly the right qualities for the job: intelligence, experience, vision and energy. It's especially gratifying that he got his start in the opera field more than a decade ago as an intern with this company. His appointment signals the start of a new exciting era for Opera Omaha."

Weitz is expected to begin his tenure this summer. He and his wife, Kate, will be moving to Omaha to set up their residency.

Opera Omaha recently announced their 54th Season, "Experience Greatness". Focusing on collaboration, expanded offerings, and beloved professional singers, the company will be presenting a concert celebration, a classic production for families and children, a rarely produced Rossini opera, and a Gilbert and Sullivan masterpiece. Shows and performance dates are as follows:

This is Opera! Season Opening Concert, Saturday, October 15, 7:30pm at the Orpheum Theatre.

Hansel & Gretel by Engelbert Humperdinck, Friday, November 11, 7:30 pm, Saturday November 12, 1pm and 3pm; and Sunday, November 13, 1pm and 3pm at The Rose Theater.

The Marriage Contract by Gioacchino Rossini, Friday, February 17, 7:30 pm, Saturday, February 18, 7:30 pm, and Sunday, February 19, 2 pm at The Jewel Box Theatre in downtown Omaha's Scottish Rite Center.

The Mikado by Gilbert & Sullivan, Friday, April 13, 7:30 pm, Sunday, April 15, 2 pm at The Orpheum Theater.

About Opera Omaha

Opera Omaha, the only professional opera company in Nebraska, began in 1958 as the Omaha Civic Opera Society, a volunteer association, and with tremendous community support became fully professional by 1970. Opera Omaha produces a season of original mainstage productions, presented at the historic Orpheum Theater, and smaller productions and musical events throughout the community. Opera Omaha is internationally known for its productions of eight world premieres and four American premieres of classical masterpieces, and is highly regarded regionally for an extensive education and outreach program that annually reaches as many as 15,000 people from elementary school through adulthood.