



620 North First Street, Minneapolis, MN 55401 TEL: 612-333-2700 FAX: 612-333-0869

BOX OFFICE HOURS: Monday – Friday, 10am – 5pm

News Release

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Contact: Eric Broker, Communications Manager, 612-342-1612, ebroker@mnopera.org

Minnesota Opera Announces Allen Perriello as new Head of Music and Jonathan Brandani as Assistant Conductor

Perriello comes from Arizona Opera and The Glimmerglass Festival, and Brandani is a current Minnesota Opera Resident Artist

MINNEAPOLIS (February 21, 2017) – Minnesota Opera today announced the hiring of Allen Perriello as the new head of music and Jonathan Brandani as Minnesota Opera’s first permanent assistant conductor. Mr. Perriello comes to Minnesota Opera from Arizona Opera, where he serves as head of music and director of the Marion Roose Pullin Opera Studio. He is also in his first season as director of the Young Artist Program at The Glimmerglass Festival. Jonathan Brandani, an emerging Italian-born conductor, entered the Minnesota Opera Resident Artist Program as a coach during the 2014-2015 season before filling the role of assistant conductor during the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 seasons. Perriello and Brandani will assume their new roles at the beginning of the 2017-2018 season.

Perriello takes over for Robert Ainsley, the previous head of music at Minnesota Opera. Ainsley began his new position as director of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program at Washington National Opera in the summer of 2016. The permanent assistant conductor position is newly created.

“We’re proud to announce that these two first-rate musicians will be taking on leadership roles on our artistic team at Minnesota Opera,” said Artistic Director Dale Johnson. “Both are talented artists, and respected collaborators in the opera industry. We were collectively impressed by Allen’s proven track record, and are confident we have found the right person to raise our musical efforts to the next level of excellence. Additionally, I couldn’t be more proud of Jonathan. During his three seasons at the opera, he has become a valued and trusted member of our creative team. I’m so excited to have the opportunity to collaborate with them both moving forward.”

“Minnesota Opera is a true industry leader in the field of opera, and I couldn’t be more excited to join this fine organization,” said Perriello. “The New Works Initiative has set the standard for excellence and innovation across the country and abroad for new opera, and the Resident Artist Program has launched many prominent careers. It is a great privilege to be asked to play a leading role in creating world-class music in Minnesota, and I couldn’t be more excited to join the brilliant team already in place.”

“We’re proud to have Brandani working with us at this important stage of his career,” said Music Director Michael Christie. “This new position offers a more complete immersion in the artistic activities at Minnesota Opera. We’re particularly looking forward to having Jonathan take the conducting lead for *Don Pasquale*, the opening production of the 2017-2018 season.”

Jonathan Brandani added, “Minnesota Opera has been a phenomenal creative home. In the three years I have been here, I’ve grown immensely as a musician and a conductor. I’ve been so fortunate to work with outstanding musicians and a devoted staff, and I’m looking forward to continuing to engage with this wonderful organization.”

More about Allen Perriello

Allen Perriello is in his fifth season at Arizona Opera as head of music and director of the Marion Roose Pullin Opera Studio, where he oversees the musical preparation of all mainstage productions, as well as the selection and training of the Studio Artists. Allen has been appointed director of the Young Artists Program at The Glimmerglass Festival, starting in the summer of 2017. He recently completed his sixth season with Des Moines Metro Opera as a pianist/coach for mainstage productions and the Apprentice Artist Program. A graduate of the Merola Opera Program and Adler Fellowship at San Francisco Opera, Allen worked on six mainstage productions over two seasons. He has been a member of the music staff at Pittsburgh Opera, Seattle Opera, and Boston Lyric Opera. Other previous engagements include the Seattle Opera Young Artists Program faculty, Opera Santa Barbara, Opera Cleveland, and Ash Lawn Opera. Allen has appeared in recital as part of the Tucson Desert Song Festival with Daniela Mack, Alek Shrader, and Heidi Stober. With San Francisco Opera's Schwabacher Debut Recital series, Allen has collaborated with Susannah Biller, Daveda Karanas, Austin Kness, Talya Lieberman, and Edward Nelson. He has also appeared in recital with Zach Borichevsky, David Portillo, and Corinne Winters. Allen has led master classes at Arizona State University, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and University of Arizona, and has been a guest coach at Baylor University and Ithaca College. He has served as a judge for the Pittsburgh District of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. The Gibsonia, Pennsylvania native holds a master’s degree in collaborative piano from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and a bachelor’s degree in piano performance and music education from Ithaca College.

More about Jonathan Brandani

Minnesota Opera Assistant Conductor Jonathan Brandani has been appreciated for his “fine regard for the score’s details, his clear, purposeful indications, and his enthusiasm” (*Seen and Heard International*). He recently made a very successful debut at the Deutsche Opera am Rhein (Düsseldorf, Germany) as Guest Conductor of *L’Elisir d’amore*. He has worked as associate conductor of Des Moines Metro Opera (2015), as assistant conductor of the Philharmonia Orchestra of Yale University (2012-2014) and as guest conductor of the St. Cloud Symphony Orchestra. He is music director of LuccaOPERAfestival (Italy). A graduate of Yale University and of the University of Music in Vienna (Austria), he was part of the Merola Opera Program in summer 2016 at San Francisco Opera. Mr. Brandani is currently in his third season as a Resident Artist at Minnesota Opera. Having conducted performances of *Tosca* last year, he will also lead performances of *La Bohème* this spring and will be the music director of *Don Pasquale*, the opening production of the 2017-2018 season. You can read more about Jonathan Brandani [here](#).

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Minnesota Opera combines a culture of creativity and fiscal responsibility
to produce opera and opera education programs that expand the art form, nurture artists,
enrich audiences and contribute to the vitality of the community.