



With the worst of the pandemic behind us, we undertook our first season of (almost) completely live performances! We were overjoyed to reclaim our status as Milwaukee's Microbrewery for Opera,

producing a big ol' batch of the newly-commissioned works and adaptations of the classics that you've come to know and love. Thank you for taking the journey with us.

This season, we produced, or co-produced *Night of the Living Opera* (Concert Reading), *The Meaning of Christmas*, *Requiem*, *Rusalka*, *Impossible Operas*, and *Magnificent Bird*.

Plus, we hosted 4 Voice Labs, continued our Script & Score education initiative at Parkside School for the Arts, and began the Supreme Creativity Studio, a brand new education program in which we partnered with MPS Music Teacher Meaghan Heinrich to teach songwriting and collaborative skills to two classes of 5th graders at Neeskara Elementary School!

THE NUMBERS

With a healthy box office and generous support from grants and individual donors, we were able to end our season in the black, as we have done each year since we were founded.

We reached an audience of over
3,266
(and counting!)

Of the
\$55,892

we spent on those performances,



\$39,200

was paid directly to artists in fees, stipends, and commissions.



94%

was spent on local talent, supporting our bedrock belief that investing in area talent creates a thriving community.

We produced, or co-produced,
28
performances

SEASON REVIEW

In **October 2022**, we produced the world premiere of *Night of the Living Opera*, an operatic adaptation of the classic horror film, in a concert reading. Conceived by MOT alums Josh and Julianne Perkins — along with Denver-based composer Andrew Dewey — *Night of the Living Opera* featured haunting music and life-sized zombie puppets courtesy of our friends at Angry Young Men, Ltd. We're so excited to premiere the fully-staged version of this new opera next season!

In **December 2022**, we unveiled our contribution to the Decameron Opera Coalition's new holiday album, a short video opera entitled *The Meaning of Christmas*. Pulling from Milwaukee's robust talent pool, we were delighted to work with longtime MOT collaborator Adam Qutaishat as composer/lyricist and to forge a new relationship with local illustrator Eric Miranda to create this one-of-a-kind animated holiday treat!

In **January 2023**, we were honored to join forces with one of Milwaukee's preeminent choral ensembles, Chant Claire, to premiere a new Requiem by beloved local composer Paula Foley Tillen. At over 50 voices strong, Chant Claire was joined by pianist Julie Fraleigh and MOT soloists Lydia Rose Eiche, Nathan Wesselowski, and Gladys Rhodes Chmiel to breathe life into this lovingly rendered tribute to loss, grief, and hope.



“What are we in Wisconsin without fearlessly imaginative companies like MOT, daring to dream a better version of who we are so that we might create a better version of the world?”

— Mike Fischer, World Premiere Wisconsin

In **February 2023**, we teamed up with our recurrent collaborative partner Danceworks MKE, to present Dvořák's classic opera *Rusalka* in a new streamlined adaptation. Created by local favorite singer-songwriter Jason Powell (who also narrated the show playing *The Moon*), the production featured performances by some of Milwaukee's favorite singers, including Saira Frank, Colleen Brooks, Tim Rebers, and David Guzmán, joined by eight Danceworks dancers to bring the tale of *Rusalka*'s doomed love to Milwaukee audiences for the first time.

In **May 2023**, we assembled the team of intrepid theater artist Jeffrey Mosser, Quasimondo Physical Theatre Artistic Director Brian Rott, and shadow puppeteer extraordinaire Anja Notanja Sieger to premiere *Impossible Operas*, a compendium of snippets from eight of the most absurd, fantastical, or otherwise impossible operas in the repertoire. Told in song, movement, and shadow puppetry, *Impossible Operas* was unlike anything Milwaukee audiences had ever seen (or are likely to see again!).

And on **May 31 & June 1, 2023**, we closed our season by partnering with Present Music to present *Magnificent Bird*, a live performance of renowned singer-songwriter Gabriel Kahane's new album of the same name exploring what it means to be a traveler through the changing landscape of the 21st century.

“ FROM THE CRITICS

NIGHT OF THE LIVING OPERA

“Deliciously creepy” – *Russ Bickerstaff, The Small Stage*

“The new opera may outdo Donizetti’s *Lucia di Lammermoor* for blood, carnage, and madness.” – *Gwen Rice, GwendolynRice.com*

RUSALKA

“Immensely funny, fanciful, lighthearted, all-around delightful... *Rusalka* will leave you utterly enamored with every inch of the spectacle before you.” – *Kelsey Lawler, Planet Kelsey*

“It’s playful. It’s witty. It’s sad. It’s tragic. Things are so cleverly balanced onstage that the mood seems to make sense even if it really has no business doing so...A graceful and deeply satisfying fusion of music and dance.” – *Russ Bickerstaff, The Small Stage*

IMPOSSIBLE OPERAS

“It’s indescribably refreshing to see something again that’s so truly, daringly experimental, while at the same time utterly playful and unpretentious.” – *Jeff Grygny, PlayOnMke*

“An appealing evening of song and story that feels deliciously surreal in so many interesting ways. I desperately need more of this sort of thing in my life.” – *Russ Bickerstaff, The Small Stage*



“ FROM OUR ARTISTS

NIGHT OF THE LIVING OPERA

“Working with MOT was great every step of the way”
– *Josh Perkins, Night of the Living Opera Librettist*

“I love the challenge of singing new music/roles — presenting it to the world, putting my stamp on it first.”
– *Elizabeth Blood, “Barbara”*

“It was really cool being able to workshop a new piece!”
– *Kaisa Herrmann, “Judy”*

REQUIEM

“How thrilled and honored and touched I am to be a part of this beautiful concert! You know how MUCH it means to me to now be a part of the MOT family!” – *Gladys Rhodes Chmiel, “Speaker”*

SUPREME CREATIVITY STUDIO

“The process of writing a song with the nurturing guidance of the MOT faculty brought out each child’s strength, vulnerability, individuality, and perseverance, and I know it is an experience they will never forget.” – *Supreme Creativity Studio facilitator and MPS Music Teacher Meaghan Heinrich*

“Thank you for giving me confidence when I needed it the most.”
– *Supreme Creativity Studio participant*

“ FROM OUR AUDIENCES

THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

“MOT’s work is brilliant and has so much integrity.”

“MOT serves the city in a unique and beautiful way.”

REQUIEM

“Very beautiful and uplifting. Keep creating and sending out all of that positive energy into the world! It made my day!”

“An unforgettable experience...”

RUSALKA

“*Rusalka* was intoxicating!”

MAGNIFICENT BIRD

“Just a breathtaking, devastating, and ultimately comforting performance.”

“A treat like no other...”

THESE ARE SOME OF THE ARTISTS AND ORGANIZATIONS WE WORKED WITH IN 2022-2023:

Katelyn Altmann, **Angry Young Men, LTD**, Austin Bare, Benjamin Bedroske, Emily Bergeron, Elizabeth Blood, Erin Brooker-Miller, Colleen Brooks, Danny Brylow, **Chant Claire**, Gladys Rhodes Chmiel, Becky Cofta, **Danceworks MKE**, Cecilia Davis, **the Decameron Opera Coalition**, Andrew Dewey, Kevin Eberle, Lydia Rose Eiche, Mohammad ElBsat, Janna Ernst, Paula Foley Tillen, Julie Fraleigh, Saira Frank, Marge Frey, Samer Ghani, Colin Gawronski, Danielle Gedemer, Liz Getschow, David Guzmán, Alice Hammers, Meaghan Heinrich, Deme Hellwig, Kaisa Herrmann, **Hi-Five Studio**, Nick Huff, Allison Hull, Jennifer Jaukbowski, Gabriel Kahane, David Kaye, Carla Kihlstedt, Nekea Leon, Steph Lippert, Brennan Martinez, Nicole McCarty, Jessi Miller, Eric Miranda, Kaitlyn Moore, Jeffrey Mosser, Brit Nicole, **Neeskara School**, Billy Ray Olsen, Ashley Oviedo, **Parkside School for the Arts**, Josh Perkins, Julianne Perkins, Ruben Piirainen, Erin Pipal, Kat Pleviak, Jill Anna Ponasik, Jason Powell, **Present Music**, Miranda Pride, Kathy Pyeatt, **Quasimondo Physical Theatre**, Adam Qutaishat, Ellie Rabinowitz, Cuauhtli Ramirez Castro, Tim Rebers, Tessa Ritchey, Isaac Jerin Robertson, Ryan Rosmann, Brian Rott, **Sea Beast Puppetry**, Eric Segnitz, Jerome Síbulo, Anja Notanja Sieger, Halle Sivertson, Tabettha Steege, Shayne Steliga, Lee Stovall, Erin Sura, Gabi Sustache, Brett Sweeney, Sedra Bee Thomas, Kirk Thomsen, **Traveling Lemur Productions**, Anne Van Deusen, Christal Wagner, Nathan Wesselowski, Mark Wurzelbacher, Ben Yela, and Adrien Zitoun