



INDIANAPOLIS OPERA

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Indianapolis Opera Celebrates 40 Years and Turns Focus to the Future

Organizational Assessment and Planning Effort to be Funded by Lilly Endowment and Directed by Indianapolis Arts Leader Steven Stolen

The Indianapolis Opera began a celebration of its 40th anniversary this weekend, as the Basile Opera Center played host to nearly 300 opera supporters for the Opera's 5th annual *Lobsterpalooza* event.

At the event, the Opera revealed plans for an intensive period of organizational assessment and planning this fall, focused on the development of a new artistic vision and business model that reflect the interests of Indianapolis audiences and the realities of today's arts and culture landscape.

"The Indianapolis Opera is on the front end of an important period of discovery and reinvention," said Arnie Hanish, Acting President of the Opera's Board of Directors. "We are eager to honor the success and tradition of the Opera's first 40 years, while developing a bright and sustainable strategy for the future."

Indianapolis arts leader Steven Stolen, formerly of the Indiana Repertory Theatre and Butler University, will partner with the Opera's board to direct the assessment and strategic planning effort, which is being funded through a generous grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., with additional support from the Arts Council of Indianapolis. This effort will help to gauge the level of support for opera in the Indianapolis community and to guide the company's future development.

"I am thrilled to join the Indianapolis Opera to direct this effort over the coming months," said Stolen. "As someone with strong personal ties to the art form, I believe there is a place for opera in Indianapolis, but also recognize that it can't be 'business as usual'. We are anxious to evolve the Opera to appeal to today's arts market."

The Opera also outlined plans for their 40th Anniversary Season, which includes the 40th Anniversary Opera Gala on November 15, a concert, and a mainstage production. Additional season details will be announced in the near future.

"We are grateful for the overwhelming support of our patrons and sponsors, who made *Lobsterpalooza* a great success and who will be critical to our continued momentum," said Hanish. "We are also

grateful for the support of Lilly Endowment and the Arts Council, which will help us chart a bold course for the Opera's future."

Celebrating its 40th anniversary season, Indianapolis Opera (IO) brings the passion, excitement and art of the opera to Indiana. As the only professional opera company in Indiana, IO delivers the opera experience to diverse audiences throughout the state. With a mainstage series showcasing both grand and chamber opera and educational programming delivering diverse artistic experiences throughout the state, IO is proud to be a unique cultural resource for the people of Indiana.