



ANNAPOLIS OPERA

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ARTISTIC DIRECTOR TO DEPART AFTER 37 YEARS

For Public Release
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Maestro Ronald J. Gretz has announced his decision to retire as the Artistic Director of the Annapolis Opera Company, effective June 30, 2020. In the opera company's 47 years, Maestro Gretz is only the second person to serve as Artistic Director, providing artistic direction for 37 of those years.

Mr. Braxton Peters, who has served as Stage Director for 28 years, will also step down at the end of the 2020 season.

Under the leadership of Mr. Gretz and Mr. Peters, the company has enjoyed a stellar reputation for its artistic excellence and its development of emerging artists. They will continue this excellence and lead the company during the 2019-2020 season through its many programs and events, and will bring Carlyle Floyd's acclaimed American opera, *Susannah*, to life as their final opera production in March 2020.

Mr. Gretz expanded the company's programs by reaching into the community through its children's opera, educational lectures and community concerts. During his tenure, he has been responsible for 51 opera productions, and countless other concerts and events. Mr. Gretz is currently on the faculty of the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University.

"It has been a privilege to be the Artistic Director and conductor of this dynamic organization and I am happy to be retiring at a time when Annapolis Opera is continually experiencing financial and artistic growth. I am so appreciative of the Board, sponsors, contributors, and patrons for their faith in me and in the Annapolis Opera. I hope that my successor experiences the same joy and support that I have experienced during my tenure."

Opera President Patrick Lee, Jr. said, "Words are insufficient to express our deep gratitude for Ron's contributions to the Annapolis Opera, and the entire community. Ron brings excitement and warmth to all he does to the delight of audiences and artists alike. Braxton is an unsung hero at the opera, but his influence and impact can be seen in every work he has touched. Ron's successor will inherit a respected cultural community asset on which he or she will continue to build. We hope you will join us as we celebrate Ron and Braxton during the upcoming 2019-2020 season."

Maestro Gretz shared his decision to retire with the Board of Trustees in the fall of 2017. The Board formed a search committee to secure Mr. Gretz's successor, selecting two candidates who will be showcased as Guest Artistic Directors in the March 2019 production of *Carmen* and in the November 2019 production of *Tosca*.