

ERIC DILLNER

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CURRENT POSITION

Managing Director — The Skylight, 2008 to Present

The Skylight was founded in 1959 and has grown to be a cornerstone of the Milwaukee performing arts community. Producing the full range of music theatre, The Skylight's repertoire includes traditional opera, operetta, Gilbert & Sullivan and musical productions. All productions are presented in English in The Skylight-owned Broadway Theatre Center.

In its efforts to reach out to a wide and diverse audience, The Skylight seeks to present dynamic, challenging and inspiring productions. The company is driven to provide high quality programs to the entire Milwaukee community. This is accomplished through its Enlighten education program which seeks to encourage and guide aspiring young artists and establish arts education as a vital component of a well-rounded curriculum. Enlighten serves nearly 17,000 students annually, many of whom receive free, in-school programming at Milwaukee Public elementary, middle & high schools.

As Managing Director, Mr. Dillner works closely with Artistic Director Bill Theisen, Board and staff on the financial, production and administrative goals of the company. Collaboration with other arts organizations and community groups is a primary focus of Mr. Dillner's and has guided his initial months as Managing Director.

POSITIONS PRIOR TO THE SKYLIGHT

SHREVEPORT OPERA

General and Artistic Director — Shreveport Opera, 2001 to 2008

Shreveport Opera debuted in 1949 with a production of *Carmen* and has grown to produce three world premieres, commission three education operas and feature concerts with such well-known singers as Placido Domingo, Leontyne Price, Beverly Sills, Renee Fleming and Sherrill Milnes.

Shreveport Opera has evolved from a single performance to a season that includes three fully produced operas, opera galas, Broadway revues, a national singing competition and a yearly schedule of over 150 performances in local schools by Shreveport Opera Xpress (SOX), the company's educational touring arm. SOX, celebrated its fifth anniversary season, by touring its third world premiere children's opera *Why Dinosaurs Don't Litter* in partnership with Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco and the National Keep America Beautiful organization. Currently, Shreveport Opera has a projected annual budget of \$880,000+, a staff of six full-time employees, two part-time employees, 47 Board of Directors, 16 Honorary Board members and 420 Shreveport Opera Guild members.

Over Mr. Dillner's six year tenure with Shreveport Opera, he has more than doubled the company's operating income. Mr. Dillner secured funding (over a two year period) to abolish a \$160,000 accumulated deficit, completing the season with \$90,000 in accumulated profit. Mr. Dillner secured the companies largest corporate and individual donations in the 59 year history as well as secured

\$179,000 in funds in three months as acting grant writer. Additionally, he secured the largest gift to Shreveport Opera from the Louisiana State Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism in the amount of \$50,000 to produce *La Boheme*. For four consecutive years, Mr. Dillner has received National Endowment for the Arts funding and as well as two consecutive years funding from the internationally prominent Annenberg Foundation. Shreveport Opera is one of five opera companies in the world to receive a grant in the Annenberg Foundation's history of giving. Awarded the advertising industry's Addie Award, Shreveport Opera's marketing campaign contributed to the 30.9% increase in Individual Ticket Sales and 9% increase in Season Subscription. For the first time in decades, sellout crowds were attained this season. Prior to *Why Dinosaurs Don't Litter*, Mr. Dillner commissioned *Why Dinosaurs Don't Smoke* by Susan M. Yankee and *What is Freedom* by Michael Ching. Currently, Mr. Dillner is commissioning *Herman the Horse*, a comic interactive educational piece to address our nation's challenges with obesity.

Concurrently, Mr. Dillner holds positions as Assistant Director for Sherrill Milnes' V.O.I.C. Experience at Walt Disney World, (2004, 2005, 2006, 2007) as well as in New York City and continues freelance stage directing. In 2001-2002, Mr. Dillner was Artistic Director for Longview Opera (Texas) and Adjunct Voice Instructor at Centenary College.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

Director of Opera/Assistant Professor of Voice—University of Missouri-Columbia, 1998-2001
Vocalogist (Voice Specialist)—University of Missouri, Hospitals and Clinics, 1999-2001

Upon employing Mr. Dillner, Show-Me Opera was a university opera workshop producing a concert opera and a scenes program on a yearly budget of \$8000. In Mr. Dillner's first year, Show-Me Opera produced *Die Fledermaus* and a elaborate scenes program both with orchestra, sets and costumes, in addition to numerous classical and Broadway concerts. In his second year, he received a \$20,000 grant from A.P. Green and a \$60,000 award from the Provost Office as seed money for the commissioning of Michael Ching and Hugh Moffat for an opera later to be named *Corps of Discovery, a Musical Journey of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*. In less than three years, Show-Me Opera had gained national attention and a projected budget of \$5 million dollars based on pledges and commitments to initiate a separate 501 C 3 corporation. *Corps of Discovery* became the University of Missouri-Columbia's cornerstone for a campus-wide capital campaign.

Two faculty members were hired to replace Mr. Dillner when he accepted the General Director position at Shreveport Opera.

Concurrently, at the University of Missouri Hospitals and Clinics, Mr. Dillner was the vocalogist for the otolaryngology clinic, providing vocal therapy and diagnoses for professional users of the voice. Mr. Dillner was also the Director of Education and Outreach for Seagle Music Colony for three seasons and Stage Director, Set Designer, Lighting Designer and Voice Instructor for Seagle Music Colony for four seasons as well as continued freelance singing and stage directing.

NEW YORK CITY OPERA AND LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY

While resident tenor for New York City Opera, Mr. Dillner was Assistant Professor of Voice for Long Island University, CW Post Campus from 1996 to 1998. Mr. Dillner acquired funding to initiate the return of fully produced operas as well as incurred surplus revenue for future projects.

FREELANCE SINGER AND OPERATIC STAGE DIRECTOR 1991-2005

Mr. Dillner performed singing the lyric tenor repertoire for such companies as New York City Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Sarasota Opera, Chautauqua Opera, Virginia Opera and with symphonies including the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra of New Orleans, Lake Charles Symphony, New Jersey State Opera Orchestra and Annapolis Symphony. Additionally, Mr. Dillner has sung with Swedish Radio Orchestra at Berwald Hall in Stockholm, Sweden, Brussels Festival Orchestra, at Cathédrale St-Michel, Bruxelles, Belgium, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Holland and numerous other halls throughout Sweden, Denmark, Germany, and Belgium. He is a recording artist for the Music Masters Classics for BMG. As Pete Peterson, he appeared in the PBS "Live from Lincoln Center" broadcast in New York City Opera's production of *Paul Bunyan*. Mr. Dillner's professional directing credits include *Die Fledermaus*, *Così fan tutte*, *The Magic Flute*, *The Tender Land*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Carmen*, *L'elisir d'amore* and *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, as well as several children's opera's including *Many Moons* and the world premiere of *Wonderland*. Upcoming directing engagements include *Rigoletto* and *Don Giovanni*.

EDUCATION

Master of Music in Opera Production, Florida State University

Mr. Dillner received the Opera Fellowship from Florida State University which included full tuition and a \$20,000 yearly stipend. While receiving his Master of Music in Opera Production, he also received the Career Advancement Award from the Richard Gaddes Fund for Young Singers.

Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance, Butler University

Mr. Dillner completed two years of a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Business with an emphasis in Accounting at Hendrix College prior to attending Butler University.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND MEMBERSHIPS

Louisiana Alliance for Arts Education, Vice-President of Board of Directors
Shreveport Symphony, Board of Directors
Louisiana Partnership for the Arts
Louisiana Presenters Network
Juniper Place Home Owners Association, President (2nd term)
Rotary, Membership Committee
Shreveport Chamber of Commerce
Bossier Chamber of Commerce
Opera America
AGMA
AFTRA

REFERENCES UPON REQUEST