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Skylight Opera Theatre to end season in a positive financial position.

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Milwaukee, WI - Managing Director, Amy Jensen recently announced that the Skylight Opera Theatre will end the 2009-10 season in a positive financial position. The season began on uncertain financial ground, shaken by the economic downturn and mounting debt. However, Skylight is pleased to report that they have begun to turn things around by not only meeting, but exceeding, their financial goals and by reducing operating expenses. While the fiscal year end results are not yet finalized, Skylight is projecting a small operating surplus for the year ending June 30, 2010.

Skylight's actual operating expenses came in \$165,000 lower than the original \$3.25 million budget. Additionally, contributed income exceeded budget, partially offsetting a 10% decline in subscription and single ticket sales. Skylight implemented an aggressive debt reduction plan during the year which resulted in a \$155,000, or 30%, decrease in accumulated debt. All combined, total liabilities for Skylight have decreased by approximately \$250,000 over the previous year.

An additional \$221,500 was raised for the building reserve fund, with the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation leading the way to help cover a number of deferred maintenance projects on the Broadway Theatre Center, which is owned and operated by Skylight Opera Theatre. Although this funding enables Skylight to move forward on the most immediate needs, an additional \$1 million is still needed to address all of the necessary facility projects.

Although Skylight has made a great deal of progress this season, additional work will be needed to make the 2010-2011 season budget and ensure financial stability in the future.

Skylight Board President, John Stollenwerk said, "I am proud of the progress we have made this year. We are confident that we are positioned to begin the next 50 years as a stronger organization. I would like to thank all our supporters who have been exceptionally generous this year."

Artistic Director Bill Theisen stated, "This is a fantastic way to culminate the 50th season and kick off the next. I am really proud of the outstanding artistic product we were able to deliver this season. We were true to our mission by presenting a full spectrum of musical theater all while making the necessary adjustments to end the year financially strong."

Theisen then also reiterated plans for Skylight Opera Theatre's 2010-2011 season. He comments, "We rocket into the next 50 years at the Skylight with a smart, funny, edgy and eclectic season of 5 quintessentially Skylight shows- sure to be groundbreaking, insightful and thoroughly entertaining." Skylight's upcoming season includes five landmark works - each exploring the universal themes of love, loss, healing, renewal and joy. Productions include DAMES AT SEA September 17 - October 3, 2010; H. M. S. PINAFORE November 19 - December 19, 2010; JACQUES BRELE IS ALIVE AND WELL AND LIVING IN PARIS January 28 - February 20, 2011; COSI FAN TUTTE, March 18 - April 3, 2011 and a groundbreaking new work by Milwaukee native, Joshua Schmidt, ADDING MACHINE - THE MUSICAL, May 20 - June 12, 2011.

Skylight Opera Theatre is a nationally recognized producer of the full-spectrum of Music Theatre.

The Skylight is proud to be a cornerstone member of the United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF), which provides major annual financial support.

Through community support of the United Performing Arts Fund, UPAF Member and Affiliate Groups are able to provide education and outreach to over 400,000 children, provide over 2,000 live performances and reach over 1,000,000 people every year. When everyone supports the arts through UPAF, they help our local economy, improving education and strengthening outreach programs to the disabled and elderly - all while adding culture to their own life. Support of UPAF is critical to UPAF Member Groups' ability to continue to offer exceptional live performances, award-winning education and outreach programming and substantial economic impact to our region. To learn more about UPAF or to donate, go to www.upaf.org.

The Skylight is supported in part by grants from the NEA, Wisconsin Arts Board, the City of Milwaukee Arts Board, and CAMPAC. The Skylight is a member of OPERA America; Visit Milwaukee; Historic Third Ward Association; Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin; Theatre Wisconsin; Cultural Alliance and a cultural partner of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra's Arts in Community Education (ACE) Program. This theater is an equal opportunity employer. Except in plays where race itself is an issue, casting is decided based on ability, not race.
