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New maestro takes the baton at Opera Tampa

By Cloe Cabrera



Opera Tampa has a new maestro.

Daniel Lipton, who was artistic director of Opera Ontario in Canada, was named artistic director and conductor Monday of Opera Tampa.

He takes the reigns from maestro Anton Coppola, who retired Sunday after 17 years as founding artistic director of the company.

Opera Tampa produces two to three operas each season on an annual budget of \$1.5 million.

Lipton said when he learned the legendary Coppola, the 95-year-old uncle of film director Francis Ford Coppola, was going to retire, it piqued his interest.

"I was more curious than anything else," he recalls. "I wasn't really apprised of everything here and the extraordinary infrastructure that was so unique to the (Straz) Center," he said. "The acoustics of Morsani Hall and Ferguson Hall, the rehearsal hall, the conservatory, working with young people; there was so much

available, and the possibility for growth; that's what was really interesting."

Born in France and raised in New York City, Lipton was educated at the Juilliard School, Mannes College of the New School for Music and the Manhattan School of Music.

He received a Fulbright Grant to study in Paris with the legendary French composer and conductor Nadia Boulanger.

Lipton spent 20 years at Opera Ontario, where he was responsible for turning it into one of Canada's most artistically innovative companies. He also served as music director and chief conductor of the Anhaltische Philharmonie and general director of the opera company in Dessau, Germany.

He's also held positions in Bogota, Colombia; Zurich, Switzerland; Bologna and Florence, Italy; and, in the United States, in Houston and Denver.

"Opera is the most extensive art form and complete in many ways," he adds. "Being a musician, I am enthralled with the music and I want to share that beauty – all of it – with the audience."

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