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The Acorn Center for the Performing Arts
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Board of Directors of The Acorn Center for the Performing Arts Welcomes New Executive Director Ashley Magnus

Three Oaks, Michigan - The Board of Directors of The Acorn Center for the Performing Arts is pleased to announce the addition of Ashley Magnus as Executive Director of the organization. Previously the Edlis Neeson General Director of Chicago Opera Theater, Magnus begins her tenure as Executive Director of The Acorn immediately.



*Ashley Magnus, new Executive Director of The Acorn Center for the Performing Arts
Image provided, courtesy of Stephanie Bassos and Chicago Opera Theater*

Magnus began her career at Utah Symphony | Utah Opera as Production Coordinator for the opera department, and went on to hold several leadership positions in events and development, including the role Director of Corporate Partnerships. She holds a Master of Business Administration from the University of Utah, and specializes in business strategy, project management, and the building of constructive community, individual, and institutional partnerships.

In 2013, she was selected to participate in Opera America's Leadership Intensive, a highly competitive and unique industry program that has produced many of the opera industry's top leaders. In 2015, she joined Chicago Opera Theater, where she was most recently the Edlis Neeson General Director. Under her leadership, COT received a \$500,000 three year grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support the Vanguard Emerging Composer program, developed seven world premiere operas, and received the largest gift in COT's history; \$2.25 Million over five years to support and sustain the future of the organization and name the Music Director position from the Elizabeth Morse and Elizabeth Morse Genius Charitable Trusts.

Ashley was named one of 2019's Musical America's Top 30 Professionals in the Performing Arts; a prestigious arts publication that highlights movers and shakers in the performing arts industry. She was more recently featured in NewCity Stage's Players 50 for 2022; an annual list honoring artists, leaders, and organizations for their contributions to the arts in Chicago.

Magnus joins the current Acorn leadership team of Tom Raab (Director of Operations) and Nikki Gauthier (Artistic Director) to oversee the continued growth of the non-profit performing arts center.



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“The performing arts are essential to a thriving and connected community - and The Acorn has such a rich history of bringing world-class artistry to Harbor Country,” said Magnus. “I am so thrilled to join the leadership team here at The Acorn. I look forward to working closely with the board and staff to expand on their incredible programming and community initiatives.”

“The ACPA board has been guiding the theater’s growth for the past couple of years in the face of some challenging headwinds,” notes ACPA Board Chair Laura Madsen Jolly, “so bringing Ashley here to lead the organization at this juncture is really exciting. We see a truly bright future ahead.” Board Chair-Elect Bob Murphy added, “We are very excited to have Ashley lead The Acorn. Her deep experience in leadership roles with non-profits and her enthusiasm will undoubtedly fuel our continued growth.”

About The Acorn

The Acorn is a rare and remarkable performing arts venue presenting high-quality, professional live entertainment. The intimate and eclectic non-profit performance space features Rock, Folk, Americana, Indie, Blues, Jazz, Bluegrass, open mics, comedy, films and more! Performers of incomparable talent delight audiences year-round in an acoustically rich and unique space.

In 2022 The Acorn presented more than 120 performances on the Turner Stage – local artists shared new works, regional performers embraced the opportunity to springboard their careers, and renowned national and international artists reconnected with their art in The Acorn’s intimate setting.

Yet The Acorn is more than a stage. It is a dynamic collaboration with nonprofits, schools and area theater troupes. A synergistic center for new experiences to entertain a range of ages here and in the wider community. Because live entertainment is always best shared.

The Acorn is also people. Talented staff, board members and volunteers who spark ideas and make them a reality. Producers and artists who push the quality bar higher. Patrons who enjoy having drinks while watching memorable performances with friends, yet also support nearby businesses before or after the show. Donors and sponsors who fuel the future of the performing arts. Neighbors and community leaders who believe Harbor Country is exactly where The Acorn can thrive.

The Acorn’s Mission

To offer a broad range of high-quality arts and education programming that nurtures cultural experience, participation and community engagement among residents and visitors of all ages and enhances the economic vitality of the region.

**For more information and interview requests, please contact:
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