



Job Description: **Head Scenic Artist / Charge Scenic Artist**
Reports To: **Director of Production**

Summary

Des Moines Metro Opera is a major summer opera festival located in Indianola, Iowa. The company produces productions each season in a summer repertory schedule, presented within the intimate 467-seat theatre at the Blank Performing Arts Center.

Des Moines Metro Opera is seeking to fill the position of **Head Scenic Artist** to our full-time, year-round production team in Indianola, Iowa. This position will lead the company in all scenic art needs for builds and lead the scenic art team for the festival. The Head Scenic Artist will also act as the Head of Props out of the festival season; helping to prepare for the festival properties team to start by sourcing, organizing, planning, creating, coordinating, purchasing, and modifying the properties. This position will be part of the advanced planning process for the festival and will participate in the hiring of the festival production staff.

Working year-round this position will finish, maintain, repair, scenery and work to better the shop spaces. The Head Scenic Artist will be critical for the finished product. This position is not expected to run the shows or expected to participate in repertory changes other than with touch-up / repair work.

This position will work closely with the other full-time production staff as well as festival head stage carpenter, the festival props team as well as the festival associate technical directors.

As an Equal Opportunity Employer, Des Moines Metro Opera celebrates diversity and inclusion. We do not discriminate against any employee or job applicant on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, creed, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, disability, age, veteran status, political affiliation or philosophy. If you are concerned that you don't meet every requirement listed below, we still encourage you to still apply. You may have the skills and experience that compliment others in the department, and you could be the perfect addition to our team! We are open to adjustments to best fit people that are interested in being a part of Des Moines Metro Opera!

Engagement & Compensation

Ideally starting in December 2026 or January 2027 with a flexible start date is flexible for the right candidate.

Starting at \$25/hour, up to \$31/hour + overtime at 1.5x after 40 hours in a week, paid bi-weekly.

Participation in the employer matched 401K

Generous health benefit package.

Paid time off (including sick leave)

Paid holidays (as per the employee handbook)

Candidates can expect a regular 40-hour work week, with some overtime in addition for festival operations in the summer months.

Work Environment

Des Moines Metro Opera owns the scenic shop, warehouses and administration buildings and utilizes the performance space on the campus of Simpson College. The nature of this position requires candidates to be able to move around a scenic shop and theater space safely. This position will require the candidate to work from ladders, lifts, near stage edges and to be able to lift 50lbs unassisted. This position will require lots of standing, sitting, kneeling, and bending.

This position will need some basic computer skills; we use Microsoft Suite office tools. While the Candidate does not need to be an expert, they should be able to use computers with ease. The ability to use Photoshop or other editing software would be helpful. The Candidate must be able to communicate effectively: spoken and written.

Qualifications, Responsibilities, Essential Abilities & Mindsets

Des Moines Metro Opera encourages applications from people without formal education in theater – the substitution of experience for traditional educational is perfectly acceptable.

- 4 or more years of experience working as an advanced scenic artist
- Has experience on several projects of various types and scales. To gain the top of the wage range, a candidate must be of expectational experience.
- Experienced in the accepted practices of theatre methods and with a variety of materials.
- Experience in estimating, ordering and sourcing materials/products, as well as the ability to monitor spending/reporting spending.
- Experience in carving foam and working with plastics.
- Experience in prop building, creating, modifying, and sourcing.
- A high attention to detail is essential; an understanding and willingness to adapt to the needs of the production designs to produce the best outcomes.
- A strong desire and commitment to communicate with designers every step of the way to ensure a positive outcome.
- Experience in leading a team, communicating with the team, and an ability to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the team. This person should have excellent relationship building skills with a focus on building a positive experience.
- Someone passionate about the art and someone who shares the belief that the beautifully finished front side of scenery should also have a beautiful backside – clean, labeled – someone who takes great pride in the work of the team.
- Willingness to help with the odd projects; events, displays, tours and other activities when help is needed – same as all regular DMMO staff do, chip-in and help by lending a hand when we are out of the festival season.
- This person needs to always behave professional and be a compassionate team-focused leader. The best candidate will have a good sense of humor and pride in developing the team's skill/work. This person should have a mindset of 'how can I help' and 'how can I improve this for others.'
- This position will receive (if they don't have) first-aid training, OSHA workplace safety training, fall arrest (as needed) training, forklift operation certification and any other safety training necessary. All workplace training will all be provided to the successful candidate at no cost to the employee. Des Moines Metro Opera will make other various professional development available to the successful candidate.

Application Process

Applicants should submit a resume, cover letter and we would appreciate the inclusion of 3 references, via email, with the subject line 'Head Scenic Artist' to: jobsinproduction@dmmo.org

Links to a portfolio of work are appreciated.

For additional information, please contact Clayton Rodney, crodney@dmmo.org

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Applicant screening process to begin soon, apply early!