

UMS Invites All to Attend Ken Fischer's Retirement Celebration

Event to Take Place on the Anniversary of Fischer's First Day as President of UMS

Ann Arbor, MI (May 22, 2017) — The **University Musical Society (UMS)** is pleased to announce a retirement celebration to toast Ken Fischer for his 30 years of leadership as president of UMS. The event will take place on Thursday, June 1 from 4-6 pm at the University of Michigan's Rackham Building (915 E. Washington Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48109). The event is free and open to the public. Those who wish to attend can RSVP at ums.org. Ken's final day as president of UMS will be June 30, but the celebration takes place on the anniversary of his first day on the job in 1987.

For the past 30 years, Ken Fischer has overseen extraordinary growth at UMS. Under Fischer's visionary leadership, UMS has greatly expanded and diversified its artistic programming beyond classical music and introduced education and community engagement programs on U-M's campus, including celebrated residencies with the Royal Shakespeare Company and New York Philharmonic, and in area K-12 schools. UMS has deepened its engagement with the University (including relationships with 70 academic units and more than 200 faculty members) and Southeast Michigan communities; created exemplary partnerships with leading artistic collaborators across the world; and taken an active role in commissioning new works. Under Fischer's tenure, UMS was named a 2014 National Medal of Arts recipient, the first university presenter to receive this highest award given to artists and arts patrons by the United States government.

Fischer is known widely as a caring, supportive, and enthusiastic colleague and mentor. He is legendary in his ability to build relationships, make connections among colleagues, and build community partnerships — often leading to unique and fruitful collaborations. Leading with an inclusive philosophy of "Everybody In, Nobody Out" — which he attributes to his mentor, the late Patrick Hayes of Washington, DC — Ken has worked to build an inclusive and multicultural community around all of UMS's mainstage performances and educational programming.

“It’s been an extraordinary 30 years at UMS, and I am so grateful for this incredible community that understands how important the arts are — always embracing curiosity and creativity in so many ways. As I prepare to retire, I can’t think of a better way to celebrate than doing so with the many patrons, partners, and friends whose wonderful support throughout the years has made my time at UMS so rewarding.”

ABOUT UMS

A recipient of the 2014 National Medal of Arts, UMS (also known as the University Musical Society) contributes to a vibrant cultural community by connecting audiences with performing artists from around the world in uncommon and engaging experiences. One of the oldest performing arts presenters in the country, UMS is an independent non-profit organization affiliated with the University of Michigan, presenting over 70 music, theater, and dance performances by professional touring artists each season, along with over 100 free educational activities. UMS is committed to bold artistic leadership, engaged learning through the arts, and access and inclusiveness. Since 1990, the organization has co-commissioned and supported the production of nearly 80 new or reimagined works.

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