



Theater earns major 'victory' with IMG partnership

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By Katelyn Gendron

katelyn@thereminder.com

HOLYOKE — One of downtown's most coveted historic landmarks earned a victory last week when MIFA Victory Theatre gained a partnership with entertainment powerhouse IMG Artists.

The firm, which aids entertainment venues from New York to Hong Kong, will aid Victory with a 12-month process to restructure its marketing analysis and business plan, which once completed, will permit the venue's 18- to 20-month reconstruction, according to Donald Sanders, Victory's executive artistic director, said.

"It's really major! It's a very important connection," Sanders said enthusiastically of the partnership with IMG. "What we've wanted for Victory and the region is the absolute best. It is the last remaining theater of its kind in the Connecticut River Valley."

Victory was built in 1919 as a live theater venue and then underwent "various decorative changes through 1941" before being closed in 1979, he explained. With IMG's help, the theater should be open within three years, Sanders added.

"Not only do we develop and present innovative approaches to new artistic management challenges, but we also help implement these solutions to ensure future success," Michael Madden, managing director of IMG Artists Venue Management Division, said.

"Recent projects include The Star Performing Arts Center, Singapore, The Lincoln Theater, Yountville, Calif., and La Maison Symphonique, Montreal. Our international team is extensive and covers all the areas intrinsic to the performing arts, entertainment music industries including financial planning and budgeting, organizational planning, technical operations, artistic planning and programming, marketing, sponsorship and fundraising, business development, ticketing and educational programs," he added.

Upon completion of the theater's reconstruction — approximately 2016 — Sanders said he will work with representatives from IMG to obtain entertainment such as Broadway theater tours, musical acts, opera, ballet and dance.