



23|24 SEASON SPONSOR: BMO 

THE CUNNING LITTLE VIXEN DON GIOVANNI

PROGRAM
WINTER 2024

#COCVixen
#COCGiovanni

FOUR SEASONS CENTRE
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS





LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Before enjoying today's performance, we invite you to experience the Canadian Opera Company's land acknowledgement ***where the water meets the land*** by viewing the installation in the lobby or by watching the digital version on our website.

This artwork was created by Rebecca Cuddy and Julie McIsaac, as part of the COC's Land Acknowledgement Commissioning Program.

Visit coc.ca/LandAcknowledgement for more information.

Detail from ***where the water meets the land*** by Rebecca Cuddy and Julie McIsaac

A MESSAGE FROM PERRYN LEECH

As we kick off a brand new year, I can't think of a better way to escape the grey dark days of winter than with our colourful production of *The Cunning Little Vixen*. In addition to featuring a gorgeous, lyrical score, the opera's themes and underlying message about finding unity with nature remains entirely relevant in an age of advancing climate change—composer Leoš Janáček was certainly well ahead of his time. This season, we're proud to also offer a Relaxed Performance of this timeless work; our art form is for everyone and we're looking forward to welcoming many new faces into our theatre.

We're also excited to present a striking production of *Don Giovanni*, as you've never seen the Mozart masterpiece before. Restaged by Amy Lane and featuring innovative set design, with stylistic lighting and video projections, this production takes you inside the mind of opera's infamously predatory aristocrat. You'll want to buckle up—it's a downward spiral you won't forget anytime soon.

As we move into February, I highly recommend checking out the lineup for our Showcase Series, focusing on performances and programming from African and Caribbean artists all month long. In addition, on February 20, our Free Concert Series will feature an exclusive first listen to the music of *Aportia Chryptych: A Black Opera for Portia White*, making its world premiere in the Canadian Opera Company Theatre in June. It's a major milestone in this project's journey and we hope to see you there!

Finally: mark your calendars for February 22. On that day, we'll be announcing our 2024/2025 season lineup and I'm excited to share those details with you very soon.

Thank you for joining us at the opera house for 2024! We're so glad to have you with us—let's explore these stories (old and new) together!

Best wishes,



Perryn Leech
COC General Director

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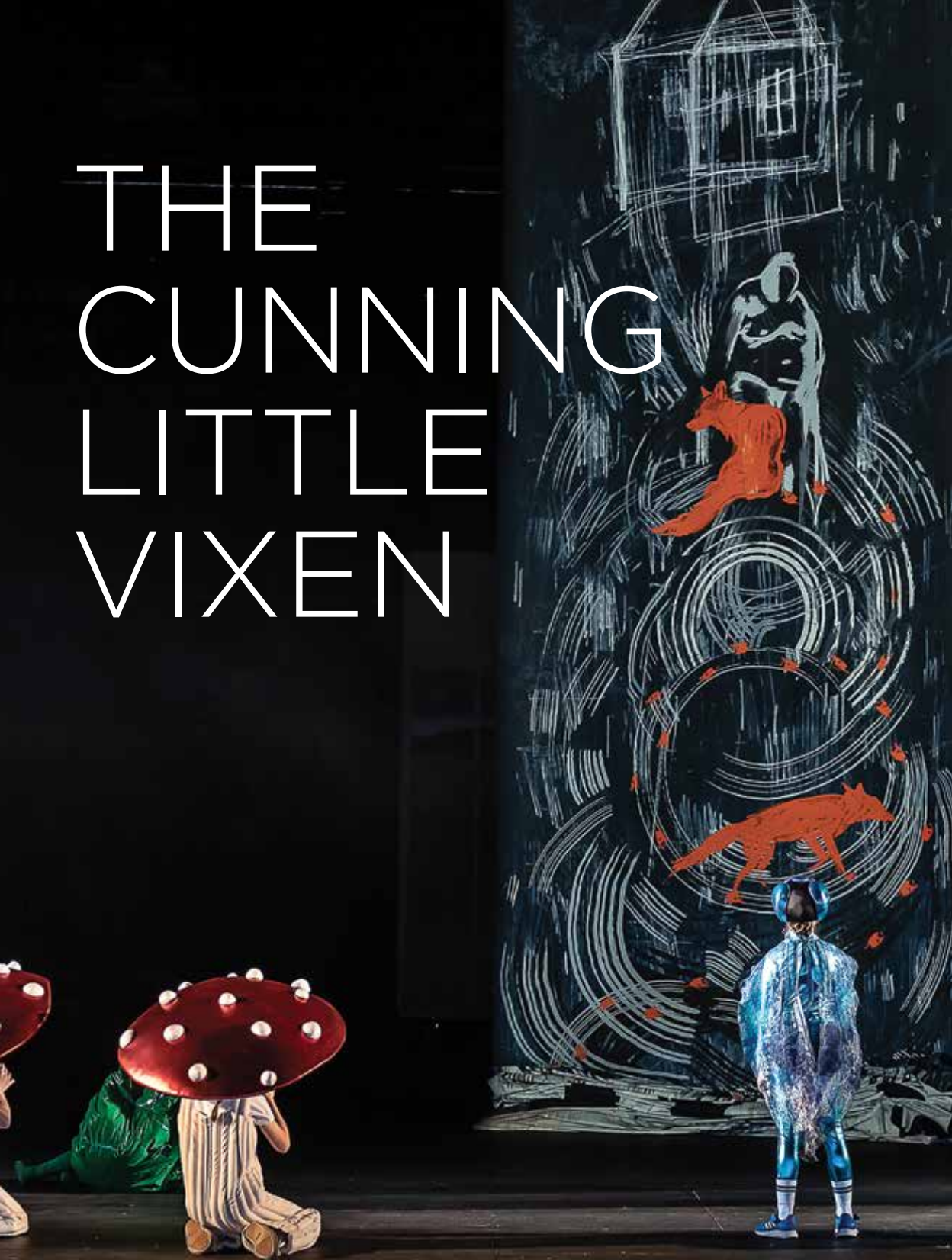
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Front cover: A props detail from the COC's *The Cunning Little Vixen* (2024).

All information is correct at time of printing. Photo credits are on the bottom of page 59.

THE CUNNING LITTLE VIXEN



BY LEOŠ JANÁČEK

Opera in three acts ♦ Libretto by Leoš Janáček after the story by Rudolf Těsnohlídek

Revised version by Jiri Zahrádka ♦ Used by arrangement with European American Music Distributors Company, Canadian and U.S. agent for Universal Edition Vienna.

First performance: National Theatre, Brno, November 6, 1924

Production from English National Opera ♦ Last performed by the COC in 1998
Sung in Czech with English SURTITLES™ ♦ January 26, 28, February 3, 8, 10, 13, 14, 16, 2024

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Conductor

Johannes Debus
Derek Bate *(Feb. 13)*

Director

Jamie Manton^D

Associate Director

Ruth Knight^D

Set and Costume Designer

Tom Scutt^D

Lighting Designer

Lucy Carter^D

Movement Director

Jenny Ogilvie

Resident Fight and Intimacy
Coordinator

Siobhan Richardson

Fight Coordinator

Matt Richardson

Intimacy Coordinator

Lisa Stevens

Price Family Chorus Master

Sandra Horst[^]

Stage Manager

Stephanie Marrs

SURTITLES™ Producer

John Sharpe

SURTITLES™

Courtesy of
English National Opera

With the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra and Chorus,
and the Canadian Children's Opera Company

Johannes Debus is generously sponsored by George & Kathy Dembroski

Sandra Horst and the COC Chorus are generously underwritten by Tim & Frances Price

The COC Orchestra is generously sponsored, in part, by W. Bruce C. Bailey, in honour of
Christie Darville, COC Deputy General Director, and Johannes Debus, COC Music Director,
and, in part, by the Schulich Foundation

^DCOC mainstage debut [†]Current member of the COC Ensemble Studio [^]Graduate of COC Ensemble Studio

Program information is correct at time of printing. All casting is subject to change.

Performance time is approximately one hour and 50 minutes, including one intermission.

ACTS 1 & 2: 55 minutes

INTERMISSION 25 minutes

ACT 3: 30 minutes

Left: A scene from The Cunning Little Vixen (English National Opera, 2022)

THE CAST

(in order of vocal appearance)

January 26, 28, February 3, 8, 10, 14, 16, 2024

Forester
Christopher Purves

Cricket
Lee Macerollo-Korzeniowski^C

Grasshopper
Sofia Melnyk-Gomez^C

Mosquito/Schoolmaster
Wesley Harrison[†]

Frog
Joel Glickman Rosen^C

Young Vixen
Emma Moreau^C

Vixen
Jane Archibald

Forester's Wife/Owl
Megan Latham

Dog
Carolyn Sproule

Innkeeper/Rooster
Adam Luther[^]

Hen/Innkeeper's Wife
Charlotte Siegel[†]

The Priest/Badger
Giles Tomkins

Fox
Emma Nikolovska^D

Jay/Frantik
Ilana Zarankin

Woodpecker/Pepik
Ariane Cossette[†]

Poacher
Alex Halliday[^]

THE CAST

(in order of vocal appearance)

RELAXED PERFORMANCE: Feb. 13, 2024

Forester
Joel Allison[^]

Cricket
Apsara Illanko^C

Grasshopper
Katie Lair^C

Mosquito/Schoolmaster
Wesley Harrison[†]

Frog
Lilia Javanrouh-Givi^C

Young Vixen
Olivia Pady^C

Vixen
Karoline Podolak^{D†}

Forester's Wife/Owl
Queen Hezumuryango[†]

Dog
Alex Hetherington[†]

Innkeeper/Rooster
Adam Luther[^]

Hen/Innkeeper's Wife
Charlotte Siegel[†]

The Priest/Badger
Giles Tomkins

Fox
Carolyn Sproule

Jay/Frantik
Ilana Zarankin

Woodpecker/Pepik
Ariane Cossette[†]

Poacher
Korin Thomas-Smith[†]

Christopher Purves is generously sponsored by Kristine Vikmanis & Denton Creighton

Wesley Harrison is generously sponsored by Brian Wilks

Karoline Podolak is generously sponsored by Marcia Lewis Brown

Queen Hezumuryango is generously sponsored by Tony & Anne Arrell

Alex Hetherington is generously sponsored by Patricia & Frank Mills

Charlotte Siegel is generously sponsored by Joy Levine

Ariane Cossette is generously sponsored by Tony & Anne Arrell

Korin Thomas-Smith is generously sponsored by Catherine Fauquier

[†]Current member of the COC Ensemble Studio ^DCOC mainstage debut

[^]Graduate of the COC Ensemble Studio ^CMember of the Canadian Children's Opera Company

Program information is correct at time of printing. All casting is subject to change.



Helping artists bridge the gap from emerging to established.

Together with programs like **Ensemble Studio at the Canadian Opera Company**, we support a diverse range of Canadian talent in local communities and across the country through **RBC Emerging Artists**.

rbc.com/emergingartists



**Emerging
Artists**

10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT

The Cunning Little Vixen

Below: A scene from The Cunning Little Vixen (English National Opera, 2022)



A new production of Leoš Janáček's bittersweet fable about a clever fox cub examines our relationship with the natural world—as well as the poignant beauty to be found in the cycle of life and death.

IT STARTED WITH A COMIC STRIP

Janáček's opera was inspired by a serialised novella by Rudolf Těsnohládek, *Liška Bystrouška* ("The Cunning Vixen" or "The Sharp Vixen"—to echo her name, Sharp Ears), which was illustrated with comic-strip drawings of the vixen and other animals. Janáček adapted the light-hearted cartoon as the basis for a three-act operatic reflection on life and death—though comic moments still remain!

LONELY HEARTS

Janáček's unrequited adoration of the much younger and married Kamila Stösslová inspired him to base several operatic characters on her, including Sharp Ears in *The Cunning Little Vixen*. The hopelessness of them ever having a proper relationship—despite Janáček writing over 700 love letters to Stösslová—may have been the basis for some of the themes introduced in the third act, including the inescapability of death.



A FAIRY TALE—SORT OF

Featuring foxes, hens, a mosquito, frog, and other forest creatures in an opera was considered more than slightly unorthodox in Janáček's day, and points to his experimental instincts. The subject matter of *Vixen* remains grounded in "real" life, however, from the natural setting to the show's universal themes of love, grief, and parenthood.

AN INNOVATIVE OPERA

Janáček's libretto is experimental in other ways—most notably by adapting ballet, mime, and orchestral interludes as part of the opera. Musically, *Vixen* draws on Romantic, folk, and Impressionist influences to present a playful and innovative score which continues to charm audiences a century after its original premiere.

DOING THE RESEARCH

Long before he composed *The Cunning Little Vixen*, Janáček was a pioneering collector of Moravian musical samples, responsible for making the first phonograph recordings of folk music from eastern Czechia and developing his own musical style based on the inflections and distinctive rhythms of local peasant dialects and songs. The folk influences in *Vixen*'s luminous score are easy to recognize and set it apart from most other operas of its time.

WHAT DOES THE FOX SAY?

Janáček was equally fascinated by animal sounds and kept extensive birdsong notations that helped inform the music of *The Cunning Little Vixen*. His "speech tunes" were designed to capture the melodies of human and animal communication and are partly responsible for giving the music of *Vixen* its distinctive quality.

IN HIS OWN VOICE

One of Janáček's former students, the Czech conductor and composer Vilém Tauský, observed that Janáček's own staccato speech rhythms are replicated in several of his operatic characters. Attending a performance of *The Cunning Little Vixen* may therefore be the best way to hear the voice of Janáček himself, as well as his music!

A LATE BLOOMER

Janáček was already in his sixties when his opera *Jenůfa* premiered in Prague to wide acclaim—the first of his works to win him significant recognition. The composer's creative power continued unabated to the end of his life, with *The Cunning Little Vixen* premiering just four years before his death in 1928.

A FITTING TRIBUTE

In August 1928, following an outing with Kamila Stösslová and her son, Janáček caught a chill which turned into pneumonia. He died several days later. At his request, music from the final scene of *The Cunning Little Vixen* was performed at his funeral.

IF IT AIN'T BROKE...

Janáček's professional collaborator Václav Talich later adjusted several of the composer's scores, including the Suite he adapted from Act I of *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Claiming that it couldn't be performed at the Prague National Theatre without being completely re-orchestrated, Talich's rearrangement removed some of the more unusual musical elements and remained the standard for many years. Australian conductor Sir Charles Mackerras later restored the original scoring, rescuing the distinctive contrasts that make Janáček's music so special.

NEW
PRODUCTION



23|24 SEASON SPONSOR: BMO 

COMING THIS SPRING

DONIZETTI

DON PASQUALE

APRIL 26—MAY 18

A FIZZY,
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COMEDY!



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AN EXPRESSION OF LONGING

Jamie Manton, director of *The Cunning Little Vixen*,
in conversation with Henrietta Bredin, 2022

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*When director Jamie Manton was approached about taking on English National Opera's production of *The Cunning Little Vixen*, he was able to do so without the shadow of any previous incarnations looming over him.*



*Alex Halliday as the Poacher with director Jamie Manton in rehearsal for the COC's 2024 production of *The Cunning Little Vixen*.*

“I didn’t know it at all before I was asked to direct it,” he says. “I sang as a child and got bullied at school so reacted by turning against opera altogether. It was only when I was about 19 that I began to appreciate it again and started listening and going to all the opera I could—but it just so happened that *Vixen* never came round to ENO during that period. I’m glad in a way, although I’d love to have seen it, but I think that it’s a work that is endlessly open to interpretation.”

Planning the Production

“I started by listening to a number of different recordings and I was immediately struck by two things: firstly, by the way the piece is presented in little episodes with beautiful passages of music in between; and secondly by its huge portrayal of time and the cyclical progress of nature. The episodes reflect the original inspiration for Janáček in his daily newspaper stories about the Vixen, Bystrouška, with brilliantly lively and funny drawings alongside. The bigger theme made me think very hard about how we could honour and be sensitive to that great natural arc, how we could present both the human world and the natural world. There are so many potential traps when you have humans portraying animals next to humans portraying humans. I started a series of exploratory conversations with the designer, Tom Scutt, about the way in which we share territory and occupy the same world space as animals. All creatures are animals, but as humans we behave differently. It is important to look at the differences in how we move and exist; we move more slowly, while animals are quicker, more vibrant, with highly tuned vision and refined sense of sound and smell.

“Most of the humans in the opera are quite late on in life—they have regrets, longings, fantasies, but they’re deeply repressed and disconnected. I believe that the key to fully

understanding the piece lies in the last scene, when the Forester asks how the Priest is and how is he faring in his new parish. The Innkeeper’s Wife says he’s unhappy and lonely. It is at this point that the Forester realises that they are all lost souls, that they’ve lost the energy of youth. With the benefit of hindsight and experience they might have done things differently, but what they have lost with age is that sense of hope and joy at the beginning of every new day.”

Contemporary Resonances

The piece has somehow become even more relevant in recent times, and it’s difficult not to draw comparisons with the way people have felt over the past two years of COVID and lockdown, of loneliness and isolation. “These unprecedented times gave us all the space to reflect on who we are,” says Manton, “to think about what we want, to become more conscious of time and how to use it. It reminded us that we are not immortal and that life is fragile. People have become much more open just as so much of life has been shut away, not least in the literal sense behind masks. Like millions of others, I was intensely moved by the simplicity of Joe Biden’s core message at his presidential inauguration, when he said that it was a time for us to open our souls instead of hardening our hearts. And Amanda Gorman’s *The Hill We Climb* was astonishingly heartening, at a moment when it was desperately needed: ‘For there is always light. If only we’re brave enough to see it. If only we’re brave enough to be it.’”

So how will all this be reflected in what we see on stage? “There’s one specific way in which we’ve looked at the connection between youth and age, animal and human, and that’s by having additional child performers (who are not scripted) to play younger versions of some of the central characters. It’s a way of showing what happens to people over time. As children we

have a natural ability to play, an openness and freedom. Then gradually we learn from experience and from our elders, we have romantic encounters, sex, disappointments, and slowly we can become closed off. I've had an extraordinary time alongside our movement director, Jenny Ogilvie, with ENO Engage, the company's learning and participation team, doing workshops and going into different schools to cast the children to take part in this production."

Recreating Janáček's Natural World

And the woodland world of Janáček's Moravia? "Creating a visual setting for the opera has been challenging—and really exciting. It's hard not to be over-awed by the sheer size and scale of the [ENO's] Coliseum stage, and the auditorium. I think Tom and I both had an initial response of wanting to enclose the action, making a sort of space within the space, but we've ended up pursuing something far more open and liberating.

"There's a book by John Gray called *Straw Dogs—Thoughts on Humans and other Animals* where he advocates James Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis, whereby the natural world self-regulates to maintain conditions of life on the planet, without any special place for humanity in it. In the opera we see the Forester as central, and representing humanity, but there's another creature in the opera, the Dragonfly, and

dragonflies have been on this earth for some 300 million years, predating dinosaurs, and in all that time haven't had to change or shift their shape, unlike humans. In this production we're showing the Dragonfly as a spiritual ancestor, an observer. There is no overt religion in the opera—nature is its own religion—it has its own sense of natural order. The Forester disrupts that order by taking the Vixen out of her natural habitat and he has to understand that, to recognise the need for unity and harmony. It's fascinating that Janáček was in his 70s when he composed this. He was 63 when he met and fell in unrequited love with Kamila Stösslová, who was nearly 40 years younger than him. When you read his letters you can see how completely infatuated he was but it didn't reduce him in any way—his love gave him a whole new lease of life. *The Cunning Little Vixen* is, more than anything else, an expression of longing. The last scene, as the Forester remembers his youth and rejoices in the nature around him, is Janáček saying 'Don't have regrets, don't be lonely, now's your chance, now's the time!'. The Forester has learnt to trust and embrace himself, it's a journey from darkness to light. He has a massive heart and he's shut it up—his life has become an exercise in control, in deflecting vulnerability. But now, all of a sudden, he is completely unified in his whole sense of being. He has come to comprehend and accept responsibility for the consequences of his wrongdoings against the Vixen. A hundred years on from Janáček's opera, that is surely an important message for our own time."

SYNOPSIS

ACT 1

The Forester stops off on his way home and falls asleep. A Cricket and a Grasshopper appear, then a young Vixen approaches. Suddenly awoken by a Frog, the Forester sees the fox cub. He captures her and decides to take her home.

The Vixen has grown up in the Forester's house, where life is hard: the Forester's wife hates her, the Dog makes disgusting advances and the children mistreat her. When the Vixen takes revenge on a child, the Forester's wife demands that the Vixen be tied up. Alone in the yard, the Vixen dreams.

Reality returns at dawn. Horrified to witness the Hens' submission to the desires of the male chauvinist Rooster, the Vixen tries to incite a revolution, but in vain. So she fakes her own death, tricks the Rooster and kills him. The Forester attempts to shoot the Vixen, but she liberates the Hens and escapes.

ACT 2

The Vixen looks for a home in the forest. Finding the Badger's sett to her taste, she kicks him out and takes up residence. The Forester, the Priest, and the Schoolmaster meet at the inn. The Forester teases the Schoolmaster about his love life. The Schoolmaster responds with mocking references to the Vixen. The Priest inveighs against all women. When the Innkeeper raises the subject of the Vixen, the Forester

storms off. On the way home, the drunken Schoolmaster sees the Vixen, takes her to be Terynka, the woman he loves, and pours out his heart. The Priest arrives, and the sight of the Vixen evokes an unhappy love story from his youth. The last to turn up is the Forester, still in pursuit of the Vixen. Spotting her, he fires his gun, but she again escapes. The Vixen meets a Fox: they fall in love and spend the night together. The following morning, the Vixen is shocked to discover she is pregnant. So the Fox takes her to the Woodpecker, who marries them. A wedding celebration ensues.

ACT 3

The Poacher, out hunting, meets the Forester, who grows angry when he hears of the Poacher's imminent marriage to Terynka. Discovering a dead rabbit, the Forester realises the Vixen is nearby and prepares a trap. But she, accompanied by her cubs, laughs at the foolish trick. Coming across the Vixen, the Poacher chases her, and shoots her dead. The Forester stumbles across the body. Back in the inn, the Forester and the Schoolmaster talk to the Innkeeper's wife about the Priest, who has moved to another parish. They also discuss Terynka, who will marry wearing a new fox-fur muff. Leaving the inn, the Forester reflects on his life, his youth and his marriage. When he sees a fox cub, closely resembling the young Vixen he once possessed, he wonders whether he should capture her and take her home.

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STORY IN A MINUTE:

Captured by a Forester when she is young, the clever Vixen later manages to escape his clutches, leaving him forever haunted by her memory. Their encounter inspires a poignant reflection on the natural cycle of life and death, as well as our relationship with the planet.

CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Marie Bérard, *Concertmaster*
The Concertmaster's chair has been endowed in perpetuity by Joey and Toby Tanenbaum
Aaron Schwebel, *Associate Concertmaster*
Jamie Kruspe, *Assistant Concertmaster*
Sandra Baron
Bethany Bergman
Heemin Choi*
Elizabeth Johnston
Hiroko Kagawa*
Nancy Kershaw
Dominique Laplante
Clara Lee
Yakov Lerner

VIOLIN II

Csaba Koczó, *Assistant Principal, Acting Principal*
Aya Miyagawa, *Acting Assistant Principal*
James Aylesworth
Calvin Cheng*
Terri Croft
Patrick Goodwin*
Louise Tardiff
Andrea Tyniec*
Hee-Soo Yoon*
Joanna Zabrowarna

VIOLA

Sheila Jaffé, *Principal*
Joshua Greenlaw, *Assistant Principal*
Carolyn Blackwell
Rebecca Diderrich*
Catherine Gray
Shannon Knights*
Nicholaos Papadakis*
Yosef Tamir

CELLO

Guillaume Artus, *Acting Principal**
Leana Rutt, *Associate Principal*
Paul Widner, *Assistant Principal*
Naomi Barron*
Olga Laktionova
Elaine Thompson

BASS

Robert Speer, *Acting Principal*
Ben Heard, *Acting Assistant Principal*
Michael Cox*
Jesse Dietschi*
Samuel Vachon

FLUTE

Doug Stewart, *Principal*
Leslie Newman*

FLUTE/PICCOLO

Shelley Brown
Maria Pelletier*

OBOE

Mark Rogers, *Principal*
Jasper Hitchcock*

ENGLISH HORN

Lesley Young

CLARINET

Dominic Desautels, *Principal*
Michele Verheul*

BASS CLARINET

Colleen Cook

BASSOON

Eric Hall, *Principal*
William Cannaway*

BASSOON/CONTRA BASSOON

Lisa Chisholm

HORN

Scott Wevers, *Principal*
Janet Anderson
Carlie Bigelow*
Bardhyl Gjevori
Gary Pattison (leave of absence)

TRUMPET

Amy Horvey, *Acting Principal**
Charlie Watson
Michael Fedyshyn*

TROMBONE

Robert Conquer, *Principal*
Cathy Stone*

BASS TROMBONE

Isabelle Lavoie*

TUBA

Daniel Hill, *Principal*

TIMPANI

Nicholas Stoup, *Principal*

PERCUSSION

Trevor Tureski, *Principal*
Ryan Scott*

HARP

Sarah Davidson, *Principal*

CELESTE

Hyejin Kwon

.....

MUSIC LIBRARIAN

Ondrej Golias

STAGE LIBRARIAN

Catherine Gray

ORCHESTRA PERSONNEL MANAGER

Janet Anderson

*extra musician

CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY CHORUS

SOPRANOS

Virginia Hatfield
Leanne Kaufman
Alexandra Lennox
Eve Rachel McLeod
Jennifer Robinson
Ilana Zarankin

MEZZO-SOPRANOS

Susan Black
Sandra Boyes
Wendy Hatala Foley
Erica Iris Huang
Rachel Miller
Karen Olinyk

TENORS

Stephen Bell
Taras Chmil
Marcel d'Entremont
Jason Lamont
Derrick Paul Miller
David Walsh

BARITONES/BASSES

Jesse Clark
Bruno Cormier
Jason Nedecky
Michael Sproule
Gene Wu
Michael York



*In rehearsal: (above) Jane Archibald as the Vixen
and (right) Christopher Purves as the Forester*



MUSIC STAFF

Rachael Kerr[^] (*Head Coach*)
 Anna Betka
 Brian Cho[†] (*Ensemble Studio Intern Coach*)

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Derek Bate

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Anna Theodosakis

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

Lesley Abarquez
 Meghan Speakman

APPRENTICE STAGE MANAGER

Tia Morann

ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER

Mikael Kangas

UNDERSTUDIES

Forester
Cricket
Grasshopper
Mosquito/Schoolmaster
Frog
Young Vixen
Vixen
Forester's Wife/Owl
Dog
Innkeeper/Rooster
Hen/Innkeeper's Wife
The Priest/Badger
Fox
Jay/Frantik
Woodpecker/Pepik
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Joel Allison[^]
 Apsara Illanko^c
 Katie Lair^c
 David Walsh
 Lilia Javanrouh-Givi^c
 Olivia Pady^c
 Karoline Podolak[†]
 Queen Hezumuryango[†]
 Alex Hetherington[†]
 Jason Lamont
 Eve Rachel McLeod
 Gene Wu
 Carolyn Sproule
 Leanne Kaufman
 Alexandra Lennox
 Korin Thomas-Smith[†]

ACTORS

Timekeepers
 Penelope Artemis, Lisa Auguste, Nate Bitton
 O'Shani Cardwell, Anurag Choudhury,
 Ryan Desaulnier, Anthony Goncharov,
 Michelle Gram, Brendan Stevenson, Kaela Willey

Dance Captain/Cover
Dragonfly
Adolescent Vixen
Adolescent Dragonfly
Adolescent Forester
Adolescent Forester's Wife, Hen
Adolescent Mushroom, Hen

Jack Rennie
 Jane Johanson,
 Madison Baines
 Derek Song
 Jameson Mosher
 Alma Sarai
 Maya Lacey

[†]Current member of the COC Ensemble Studio [^]Graduate of the COC Ensemble Studio
^cMember of the Canadian Children's Opera Company

CANADIAN CHILDREN'S OPERA COMPANY

Katherine Semcesen, *Executive Director*
 Teri Dunn, *Music Director & Principal Chorus Conductor*
 Christina Faye, *Principal Chorus Pianist*
 Chelsea Woolley, *Head of Drama*

Members of the Canadian Children's Opera Company's Principal Chorus appear in all Canadian Opera Company productions requiring children's voices. Founded in 1968, the CCOC is the only permanent children's opera company in Canada, providing musical and dramatic training to hundreds of children and youth aged 4-18. It specializes in the development and production of operas specifically performed by and for young people. Auditions can be arranged through the CCOC website: canadianchildrensopera.com

FOX CUB CHORUS

Zoya Avramova	Julia Luko dos Santos	Amelia Payne
Julian Eden	Lee Macerollo-Korzeniowski	Sophie Phillips
Frida Frederiksen-Marsiaj	Lily McIntosh	Madoc Tracy
Apsara Illanko	Sofia Melnyk-Gomez	Clea Webb
Lilia Javanrouh-Givi	Emma Moreau	Joel Glickman Rosen
Katie Lair	Olivia Pady	

SUPERNUMERARIES

<i>Child Dragonfly</i>	Abigail Kane
<i>Child Forester/Rabbit</i>	Malcolm McIntosh
<i>Child Mushroom</i>	Emma Mestetchkin
<i>Child Mushroom</i>	Sophie Mestetchkin



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BIOGRAPHIES



LESLEY ABARQUEZ (Assistant Stage Manager; Newmarket, ON)
SELECT COC CREDITS: (as Stage Manager) Centre Stage: Ensemble Studio Competition, *Pomegranate* (2023); *La Bohème* (2009); *Don Giovanni*, *Le Renard* (2008); *Die Walküre*, *The Bear*, *Swoon* (2006); and ASM for over 50 mainstage productions. RECENT: *Don Giovanni* (National Arts Centre, Banff Centre); *Flight*, *Rinaldo*, *Svadba* (The Glenn Gould School); *Figaro's Wedding*, *Kopernikus*, *Orphée+*, *A Little Too Cozy* (Against the Grain). UPCOMING: *Dialogues des Carmélites* (The Glenn Gould School); *Don Pasquale* (COC)



JANE ARCHIBALD, Vixen (Soprano; Halifax, NS)
COC CREDITS: Soloist, In Concert: Jane Archibald (2022); Zdenka, *Arabella* (2017); Konstanze, *The Abduction from the Seraglio*; The Nightingale, *The Nightingale & Other Short Fables* (2018); Ginevra, *Ariodante*; Susanna, *The Marriage of Figaro* (2016); Donna Anna, *Don Giovanni* (2016); Semele, *Semele* (2015, 2012); Zerbinetta, *Ariadne auf Naxos* (2011). RECENT: Donna Anna, *Don Giovanni* (National Arts Centre); Soloist, *Dutilleux's Correspondances* and Debussy's *La Damaíselle élue* (Seattle Symphony) UPCOMING: Soloist, *Traumgekrönter Tanz* (Symphoniker Hamburg)



DEREK BATE, Assistant Conductor (also Conductor in the Relaxed Performance; Toronto, ON)
COC CREDITS: *Fidelio*, *Salome* (2023); *The Flying Dutchman*, *La Traviata*, *Bluebeard's Castle*; In Concert: Jane Archibald (2022); *In Winter*; Mozart's *Requiem*; In Concert: Russell Braun and Tamara Wilson (2021); (as Conductor) *Hansel & Gretel* (Opera for Young Audiences, 2020). RECENT: (as Conductor) *The Merry Widow*, *A Waltz Dream*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Gypsy Baron*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Candide* (Toronto Operetta Theatre); *Rigoletto* (Opéra de Québec)



LUCY CARTER, Lighting Designer (London, England, UK)
COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Alcina*, *The Dante Project*, *Hansel & Gretel*, *Katya Kabanova* (Royal Opera House); *The Marriage of Figaro* (Opéra national de Paris); *2:22*, *Everybody's Talking About Jamie* (West End, Center Theatre Group); *La finta giardiniera* (Glyndebourne, Teatro alla Scala); *Dream of Gerontius*, *Salome*, *Orphée* (English National Opera); *Werther* (Bergen National Opera); *Elektra* (Gothenburg Opera). UPCOMING: *Jocasta Line* (Dutch National Ballet); *2:22* (Broadway)



ARIANE COSSETTE, Woodpecker/Pepik (also Woodpecker/Pepik in the Relaxed Performance; Soprano; Trois-Rivières, QC)
COC CREDITS: Soloist, COC Community Concert Series (2023); Frasquita, *Carmen* (2022)
RECENT: Soloist, *Believe: Arias and Holiday Favourites* (Peterborough Symphony Orchestra); Soloist, *Afternoon at the Opera* (Orchestra Toronto); Micaëla, *La tragédie de Carmen* (Université de Montréal); Selene, *Endymion's Dream* (COSA Canada); Princess, *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (Domaine Forget Music Academy); Nina, *Nina, o sia La pazzo per amore*; Gabrielle, *La Vie parisienne*; The Messenger, *L'Orfeo* (Conservatoire de musique de Montréal)



JOHANNES DEBUS, Conductor, COC Music Director (Toronto, ON/Berlin, Germany)
SELECT COC CREDITS: *Fidelio*, COC Community Concert Series, *Salome* (2023); *The Flying Dutchman*, *La Traviata* (2022); *In Winter*, Mozart's *Requiem*, In Concert (2021); *Hansel & Gretel*, *Rusalka*, *Otello*, *Elektra* (2019). RECENT: *La Traviata*, *Hansel & Gretel* (Oper Leipzig); *Dialogues des Carmélites* (Bayerische Staatsoper); *The Lord of Cries*, *Jenůfa* (Santa Fe Opera). UPCOMING: *Béatrice et Bénédict* (Opéra de Lyon)



ALEX HALLIDAY, Poacher (Bass-baritone; Toronto, ON)
COC CREDITS: Second Prisoner, *Fidelio*; Servant, *Macbeth*; Jailer, *Tosca*; Cappadocian, *Salome* (2023); Moralès, *Carmen*; Noah/Bleeding Zombie, *Fantasma* (2022); Soloist, *In Winter*; Guccio, *Gianni Schicchi* (2021). RECENT: *Don Pasquale*, *Don Pasquale* (Under the Spire Music Festival); Figaro, *The Marriage of Figaro*; Sir Thomas Bertram, *Mansfield Park*; Nardo, *La finta giardiniera*; Inspector Brinks, *Who Killed Adrianna?*; Carl Olsen, *Street Scene*; Alexander Throttlebottom, *Of Thee I Sing*; Masetto, *Don Giovanni* (UofT Opera)



WESLEY HARRISON, Schoolmaster/Mosquito (also Schoolmaster/Mosquito in the Relaxed Performance; Tenor; Windsor, ON)
COC DEBUT: Parpignol, *La Bohème*; First Prisoner, *Fidelio* (2023). RECENT: Don Ottavio, *Don Giovanni*; Valcour, *L'amant anonyme* (Opera McGill)



ALEX HETHERINGTON, Dog, Relaxed Performance (Mezzo-soprano; Toronto, ON)
COC CREDITS: Attendant, *Salome* (2023); Mercédès, *Carmen* (2022). RECENT: House, *Rocking Horse Winner*; Riley, *R.U.R. A Torrent of Light* (Tapestry Opera); Soloist, Mozart's *Requiem*; Soloist, *FOCUS: Clara, Robert, Johannes* (National Arts Centre); Soloist, *Songs from the House of Death* (Victoria Symphony); Rosina, *The Barber of Seville*; Carmen, *La tragedie de Carmen* (University of Toronto); Nicklausse/Muse, *Les contes d'Hoffmann* (Toronto City Opera)
UPCOMING: Handmaiden, *Medea* (COC)



QUEEN HEZUMURYANGO, Forester's Wife/Owl, Relaxed Performance (Mezzo-soprano; Kitchener, ON)
COC DEBUT: Mercédès, *Carmen* (2022). RECENT: Marquise de Berkenfield, *La fille du régiment* (Festival d'opéra de Québec, Jeunesses Musicales Canada); Madame Larina, *Eugene Onegin* (Highlands Opera Studio); Tisbe, *La Cenerentola* (Lunenburg Academy of Music Performance); Carmen, *La tragédie de Carmen* (Atelier d'opéra à l'Université de Montréal)



SANDRA HORST, Price Family Chorus Master (Toronto, ON)
SELECT COC CREDITS: *Fidelio, La Bohème, Tosca, Macbeth, The Marriage of Figaro* (2023); *Carmen, The Flying Dutchman, La Traviata* (2022). RECENT: (as Conductor) *Orphee+* (Edmonton Opera); *A Tale of Two Cities, The Tender Land, A Comedic Trilogy* (UofT Opera); (as Coach) Brott Opera, Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. UPCOMING: *Medea, Don Pasquale* (COC); (as Conductor) *Cendrillon, Lysistrata* (UofT Opera). ADDITIONAL CREDITS: Head of Opera, University of Toronto Faculty of Music



RUTH KNIGHT, Associate Director (London, England, UK)
COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Gloriana, La Traviata* (English National Opera); *The Sandman and The Dew Fairy, Spinning Yarns, La forza del destino, The Magic Flute* (Royal Opera House); *The Barber of Seville* (Garsington Opera); *The Song of Home* (Outland Opera). UPCOMING: *Edgar* (Opera Holland Park); *The Marriage of Figaro* (Garsington Opera)



MEGAN LATHAM, Forester's Wife/Owl (Mezzo-soprano; Abbotsford, BC)
SELECT COC CREDITS: Marcellina, *The Marriage of Figaro* (2023, 2007); Zita, *Gianni Schicchi* (2021); Fortune Teller, *Arabella* (2017); Giovanna, *Rigoletto* (2018, 2011); Rosswisse, *Die Walküre* (2015). RECENT: Waltraute, *Die Walküre*; Queen of Hearts, *The Garden of Alice* (Pacific Opera Victoria [POV]); Mary, *The Flying Dutchman*; Mrs. Cripps, *H.M.S. Pinafore* (Vancouver Opera); Mother Abbess, *The Sound of Music* (Arts Club of Vancouver). UPCOMING: Marcellina, *The Marriage of Figaro* (POV)



ADAM LUTHER, Innkeeper/Rooster (also Innkeeper/Rooster in the Relaxed Performance; Tenor; Toronto, ON)
COC CREDITS: Fourth Jew, *Salome* (2023, 2013); Gastone, *La Traviata* (2022); Sailor/Shepard, *Tristan und Isolde*; First Commissary, *Dialogues des Carmélites* (2013); Second Priest/Armored Man (*The Magic Flute* Ensemble Studio Performance); Tenor 1/Japanese Envoy 1, *The Nightingale & Other Short Fables* (2011); Remendado, *Carmen* (2010). RECENT: Rodolfo, *La Bohème* (Edmonton Opera); Don José, *Carmen*; Count Tassilo, *Countess Maritza* (Pacific Opera Victoria); Roméo, *Roméo et Juliette* (Calgary Opera); Soloist, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 (Edmonton Symphony Orchestra)



JAMIE MANTON, Director (London, England, UK)
COC DEBUT. RECENT: *A Christmas Carol* (The Old Vic, Broadway, Melbourne Comedy Theatre, BroadwaySF); *Carmen, The Cunning Little Vixen, Paul Bunyan, The Day After* (English National Opera); *La Traviata* (Nevill Holt Opera); *Eugene Onegin* (Buxton Festival); *No Quarter, A Single Act, The Norman Conquests, Punk Rock* (Duelling Productions); *Our Lords and Masters, August: Osage County* (Exeter Northcott Theatre); *Tomorrow Gala* (The Old Vic). UPCOMING: *Ernani* (Buxton Festival)



STEPHANIE MARRS, Stage Manager (Toronto, ON)
 COC CREDITS: *Fidelio*, *Tosca* (2023); *Carmen* (2022, 2016); *The Magic Flute* (2022, 2017); *Madama Butterfly* (2022, 2014, 2009, 2003); *In Winter*, Mozart's *Requiem*, In Concert (2021); *The Barber of Seville* (2020); *Elektra* (2019); *Hadrian*, *Anna Bolena*, *The Abduction from the Seraglio* (2018); *Louis Riel* (2017); *Ariodante* (2016); *La Traviata* (2015). RECENT: *Home for the Holidays* (Edmonton Opera); *Musik für das Ende* (Soundstreams); *Louis Riel* (National Arts Centre, Opéra de Québec [OdQ]). UPCOMING: *Medea* (COC)



EMA NIKOLOVSKA, Fox (Mezzo-soprano; Skopje, Macedonia)
 COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Woman*, *Picture A Day Like This* (Royal Opera House); *Octavian*, *Der Rosenkavalier* (Staatsoper Unter den Linden); Soloist, Mozart's Coronation Mass (Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg); Soloist, Schumann's *Paradies und die Peri* (Staatskapelle Berlin)
 UPCOMING: Soloist, Ema Nikolovska with Charles Richard-Hamelin (Royal Conservatory of Music); Soloist, Stravinsky's *Les noces* (Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal); Soloist, Ema Nikolovska with Sir Andrés Schiff (Elbphilharmonie Hamburg)



JENNY OGILVIE, Choreographer (London, England, UK)
 COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Sonntag aus Licht* (Le Balcon); *La Cenerentola* (English Touring Opera); *Carmen*, *Greek* (Scottish Opera); *Orlando* (Oper Frankfurt); *Il Piccolo Principe* (Teatro alla Scala); *Spell Book*, *La Liberazione di Ruggiero* (Longborough Festival Opera); *Greek* (Staatsoper Hannover, Brooklyn Academy of Music); *The Marriage of Figaro* (English National Opera); *Absolute Hell* (National Theatre); *Love and Information*, *hang* (Sheffield Crucible); *Crave* (Chichester Festival); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Young Vic). UPCOMING: *Lear* (Staatsoper Hannover); *Street Scene* (Opéra national de Paris)



KAROLINE PODOLAK, Vixen, Relaxed Performance (Soprano; Mississauga, ON)
 COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Violetta*, *La Traviata* (Sofia Opera and Ballet, Southern Ontario Lyric Opera); *Le Feu/Le Rossignol/La Princesse*, *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (Opéra de Montréal); *Norina*, *Don Pasquale* (Sequenda Opera Studio); *Adele*, *Die Fledermaus*; *Zuzia*, *Verbum Nobile* (Opera Śląska); Soloist, *Vival Carnival* (Sic Itur Ad Astra Foundation). UPCOMING: Soloist, *Liturgy of Orpheus & Eros Symphony* (Odeon of Herodes Atticus); Soloist, Recital (Opéra National de Bordeaux)



CHRISTOPHER PURVES, Forester (Baritone; Oxford, England, UK)
 COC CREDITS: Alberich, *Siegfried* (2016). RECENT: Alberich, *Das Rheingold*; Father-in-Law, *Innocence* (Royal Opera House); Nick Shadow, *The Rake's Progress* (Teatro Colón); Tsargo, *Adriana Mater* (San Francisco Symphony); Alberich, *Siegfried* (Opernhaus Zürich); Méphistophélès, *La damnation de Faust* (Southbank Centre); Saul, *Saul* (Glyndebourne); Polyphemus, *Acis and Galatea* (Nevill Holt Opera). UPCOMING: *Saul, Saul* (Royal Danish Opera); Alberich, *Das Rheingold/Siegfried/Götterdämmerung* (Opernhaus Zürich); Sharpless, *Madama Butterfly* (City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra)



SIOBHAN RICHARDSON, Fight and Intimacy Coordinator (Toronto, ON)
 COC CREDITS: (as Fight and Intimacy Coordinator) *Fidelio*, *La Bohème*; (as Fight and Intimacy Director) *Carmen* (2023); (as Intimacy Director) *Macbeth*, *Salome* (2023); *Hadrian* (2018); (as Actor) *Macbeth* (2023). RECENT: (as Actor) Danny Geller, *The Christie Pits Riot* (Hogtown Experience); Clown 2, *The 39 Steps* (St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival); Katharina, *Untamed* (Tarragon Theatre); (as Intimacy Coordinator and Director) *The Play That Goes Wrong* (Western Michigan University); *Indecent* (Studio 180 Theatre, Mirvish Productions)



MATT RICHARDSON, Fight Director (Ottawa Valley, ON)
 COC CREDITS: (as Fight Director) *Pomegranate*, *Tosca* (2023); *Dandy*, *Lucia di Lammermoor* (2013). RECENT: *Yerma*, *Detroit* (Coal Mine Theatre); *Villains!*, *Club Pirate*, *Hunt Fer Jack* (Disney Cruise Lines); *Henry V* (Stratford Festival); *Beauty and the Beast* (Young Peoples' Theatre); *Dancock's Dance*, *Christie Pits Riot* (Hogtown Collective); *Crazy For You* (Port Hope Festival Theatre); *The Clockmaker*, *Beauty and the Beast* (Sudbury Theatre Centre); *Macbeth* (King's Players)



TOM SCUTT, Set and Costume Designer (London, England, UK)
 COC DEBUT
 RECENT: *Carmen* (Metropolitan Opera); *Die Walküre* (Royal Danish Opera); *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *Wozzeck* (English National Opera); *How The Whale Became* (Royal Opera House); *The Flying Dutchman* (Scottish Opera); *Jesus Christ Superstar* (US & UK Tours); *Cabaret*, *Pet Shop Boys Dreamland Tour*, *Constellations* (West End). UPCOMING: *Lear* (Staatsoper Hannover); *Die Walküre* (Greek National Opera); *Cabaret* (Broadway)



CHARLOTTE SIEGEL, Innkeeper's Wife/Hen, Relaxed Performance (also Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*; Soprano; Toronto, ON)
 COC CREDITS: Musetta, *La Bohème*; Lady-in-waiting/Second Apparition, *Macbeth* (2023); Second Lady, *The Magic Flute* (2022); Soloist, *In Winter* (2021). RECENT: Soloist, *Bond and Beyond* (National Arts Centre); Soloist, Spirit Song Symphony (Manitoba Chamber Orchestra); Soloist, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 (Koerner Hall, La Maison Symphonique); Rose Maurrant, *Street Scene* (Opera McGill). ADDITIONAL CREDITS: Former Civic Engagement Quartet Young Artist (Pacific Opera Victoria)



MEGHAN SPEAKMAN, Assistant Stage Manager (Toronto, ON)
 COC CREDITS: *Macbeth* (2023); *La Cenerentola* (2011). RECENT: *Monster* (Factory Theatre); *Canoe* (Native Earth); *Behind the Moon* (Tarragon Theatre); *The Ex-Boyfriend Yardsale* (Soulpepper); *Where You Are* (Lighthouse Festival Theatre); *The Trojan Girls and the Outhouse of Atreus* (Outside the March); *Sweeney Todd* (Talk is Free Theatre); *Making Spirits Bright* (Globe Theatre); *The Ministry of Grace* (Belfry Theatre). UPCOMING: *Don Pasquale* (COC)



CAROLYN SPROULE, Dog (also Fox in the Relaxed Performance; Mezzo-soprano; Montreal, QC)
 COC CREDITS: Page, *Salome* (2023); Emilia, *Otello* (2019); Maddalena, *Rigoletto* (2018). RECENT: Cherubino, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Calgary Opera); Prostitute, *The House of the Dead* (Rome Opera House), Stéphan, *Roméo et Juliette* (Savonlinna Opera Festival); Third Lady, *The Magic Flute*; Ines, *Il Trovatore* (Metropolitan Opera); Page, *Salome* (Festival d'Aix-en-Provence). UPCOMING: Carmen, *Carmen* (Vancouver Opera); Kate Pinkerton, *Madama Butterfly* (Hyogo Performing Arts Center)



ANNA THEODOSAKIS, Assistant Director (Vancouver, BC)
 SELECT COC CREDITS: (as Director) *WOW Factor: A Cinderella Story* (Opera for Young Audiences, 2018); (as Revival Director) *The Magic Flute* (2021); (as Assistant Director) *The Marriage of Figaro* (2023). RECENT: (as Director) *Carmen* (Saskatoon Opera); (as Revival Director) *Carmen* (Edmonton Opera); (as Associate Director) *Bluebeard's Castle* (Against the Grain Theatre). UPCOMING: (as Director) *Così fan tutte* (UBC Opera); (as Assistant Director) *La Bohème* (Opera Theatre of St. Louis)



KORIN THOMAS-SMITH, Poacher, Relaxed Performance (Baritone; Toronto, ON)
 COC DEBUT: Officer, *La Bohème* (2023). RECENT: Argante, *Rinaldo* (Glimmerglass); Raimbaud, *Le comte Ory*; Tarquinius, *The Rape of Lucretia*; Dulcamara, *The Elixir of Love* (Yale Opera); Soloist, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 (Koerner Hall); Soloist, S.O.S. Sketch Opera Singers (Tapestry Opera). UPCOMING: Malatesta, *Don Pasquale* (COC Ensemble Studio performance); Soloist, *Electric Messiah* (Soundstreams)



GILES TOMKINS, Priest/Badger (also Priest/Badger in the Relaxed Performance; Bass-baritone; Toronto, ON)
 COC CREDITS: Sciarrone, *Tosca*; Fifth Jew, *Salome* (2023); Sciarrone, *Tosca* (2017). RECENT: Soloist, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* (Chorus Niagara) Sciarrone, *Tosca* (Edmonton Opera); Raimondo, *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Pacific Opera Victoria); Don Basilio, *The Barber of Seville* (Manitoba Opera); Timur, *Turandot* (Edmonton Opera); Soloist, Handel's *Messiah* (Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra); Colline, *La Bohème* (Against the Grain Theatre). UPCOMING: Zuniga, *Carmen* (Manitoba Opera); Fafner, *Das Rheingold* (Edmonton Opera)



ILANA ZARANKIN, Jay/Frantik (also Jay/Frantik in the Relaxed Performance; Soprano; Toronto, ON)
 COC DEBUT. RECENT: Potted Plant/Baby/Mother Goose, *Higglety Pigglety Pop!* (Tanglewood); Inès, *I due Figaro* (Opera in Concert); Le feu/La princesse, *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (Bard College)

DON GIOVANNI



BY WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Dramma giocoso in two acts ♦ Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte, after the opera *Don Giovanni Tenorio, o sia Il convitato di pietra* by Giovanni Bertati

Edited for the New Mozart Edition by Wolfgang Plath and Wolfgang Rehm. Used by arrangement with European American Music Distributors Company, Canadian and U.S. agent for Baerenreiter-Verlag, publisher and copyright owner.

First performance: Gräflisch Nostitzsches Nationaltheater, Prague, October 29, 1787

Last performed by the COC in 2015 ♦ A co-production of Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Gran Theatre del Liceu; The Israeli Opera; and Houston Grand Opera

February 2, 4, 7, 9, 15, 17, 24, 2024 ♦ Sung in Italian with English SURTITLES™

THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

(in order of vocal appearance)

Leporello
Paolo Bordogna^D

Donna Anna
Mané Goloyan^D

Don Giovanni
Gordon Bintner^A

The Commendatore
David Leigh

Don Ottavio
Ben Bliss

Donna Elvira
Anita Hartig^D
Charlotte Siegel[†] (Feb 24)

Zerlina
Simone McIntosh^A

Masetto
Joel Allison^A

Conductor
Johannes Debus

Director
Kasper Holten^D

Associate Director
Amy Lane

Set Designer
Es Devlin^D

Costume Designer
Anja Vang Kragh^D

Lighting Designer
Bruno Poet^D

Revival Lighting Designer
John Paul Percox^D

Projections Designer
Luke Halls^D

Revival Projections Associate
Gareth Shelton^D

Choreographer
Signe Fabricius^D

Revival Movement Director
Anna-Marie Sullivan^D

Resident Fight and Intimacy
Coordinator
Siobhan Richardson

Price Family Chorus Master
Sandra Horst^A

Stage Manager
Jenifer Kowal

SURTITLES™ Producer
John Sharpe

SURTITLES™ Writer
Gunta Dreifelds

With the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra and Chorus

^DCOC mainstage debut [†]Current member of the COC Ensemble Studio [^]Graduate of COC Ensemble Studio
Program information is correct at time of printing. All casting is subject to change.

Performance time is approximately three hours and 20 minutes, including one intermission.

ACT 1: 95 minutes **INTERMISSION 25 minutes** **ACT 2: 80 minutes**

Left: Luca Micheletti as Don Giovanni in *Don Giovanni* (The Royal Opera), 2022

Johannes Debus is generously sponsored by George & Kathy Dembroski

Gordon Bintner is generously sponsored by Janet Stubbs

Charlotte Siegel is generously sponsored by Joy Levine

Sandra Horst and the COC Chorus are generously underwritten by Tim & Frances Price

The COC Orchestra is generously sponsored, in part, by W. Bruce C. Bailey, in honour of Christie Darville, COC Deputy General Director, and Johannes Debus, COC Music Director, and, in part, by the Schulich Foundation

Below: A scene from Don Giovanni (The Royal Opera), 2022



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Photo by Robert Godwin

10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT *Don Giovanni*

Mozart's dark masterpiece *Don Giovanni* lands this season at the COC in a breathtaking production from Danish director Kaspar Holten, helmed by revival director Amy Lane. Embracing comic, tragic, and supernatural plot elements, and by turns musically thrilling, elegant, and witty, it's no wonder that *Don Giovanni* is widely regarded as one of the greatest operas of all time.



IN BRIEF

Mozart's Don Giovanni, a serial womanizer, makes a fatal mistake when he kills the father of his latest conquest, Donna Anna. Unrepentant to the end, he is ultimately forced to confront the ghost of the dead man and gets his just reward.

A TRIUMPH FROM THE START

Hot off the success of *The Marriage of Figaro*, Mozart was commissioned by Prague's National Theatre (now Estates Theatre) to write a new opera. *Don Giovanni* was the result, and Mozart himself conducted its 1787 premiere to a rapturous reception.

A LONG HISTORY

The Spanish legend of the libertine Don Juan, which inspired the plot of Mozart's opera, has been retold in various forms across literature and music from the early 1600s. The earliest written version was a play by Tirso de Molina titled *El burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra* (*The Trickster of Seville and the Stone Guest*), published around 1630. In this version, Don Juan is clearly identified with the devil for his shape-shifting abilities.

LIFE IMITATING ART?

Don Giovanni's librettist, Lorenzo Da Ponte (who also wrote librettos for Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Così fan tutte*) was also a bit of a playboy in his youth. While living in Venice in his twenties, he was known to have carried on numerous love affairs. When one entanglement with a married woman became the stuff of scandal, he was banished from the city for 15 years on charges of "bad living."

Left: Luca Micheletti as Don Giovanni in Don Giovanni (The Royal Opera), 2022

CASTING CHANGES

In the earliest productions of *Don Giovanni*, the roles of the peasant Masetto and the murdered Commendatore were played by the same (bass) singer; nowadays, however, they are generally cast with two different performers.

PEOPLE REALLY LIKED IT

The novelist Gustave Flaubert called *Don Giovanni*, along with Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and the sea, "the three finest things God ever made." Composer Charles Gounod described the opera as "a work without blemish, of uninterrupted perfection." And the philosopher Søren Kierkegaard wrote that "among all classic works, *Don Giovanni* stands highest."

MAKING OVERTURES

Mozart is said to have composed the overture while suffering a hangover the evening before the premiere—and legend has it that the ink on the score was still wet on opening night. The composer also reputedly boasted that it took him just three hours to finish the piece, in which the foreboding opening chords foreshadow the entrance of the vengeful ghost towards the end of the second act.

THE CATALOGUE ARIA

One of Mozart's most famous and popular arias is "Madamina, il catalogo è questo" ("My dear lady, this is the list"), which is performed by Don Giovanni's servant Leporello in Act I. Popularly known as the Catalogue Aria, the piece is at once comic while containing—to modern ears, at least—sinister undertones. Leporello lists the number and qualities of his master's romantic conquests, informing the rejected Elvira that Don Giovanni has seduced 1,003 women in Spain alone (the final tally, going by the figures quoted in the aria, ends up numbering 2,065).

MUSICAL HIGHLIGHTS

The ballroom scene at the end of Act I is a virtuosic achievement in which Mozart features two on-stage instrumental groups, each playing in its own metre, in synchronization with the main orchestra. Many opera-goers will also recognise the melody of “Là ci darem la mano” (“There we will join our hands”), which puts on full display Don Giovanni’s skill at the art of seduction. The duet begins with Don Giovanni and Zerlina singing in alternating verses and ending in unison, as Zerlina appears ready to succumb to Giovanni’s enticements.

HERO OR VILLAIN?

Just who is Don Giovanni: a rebellious individualist who flouts the religious and social conventions of his time, or a demonic villain who gets his just desserts? This season’s production suggests that the answer may be more complex, with a kinetic set design that highlights the spiralling of a tortured conscience, and performances that point to the power of words to seduce, ensnare, and reinvent. Join us this winter, and judge for yourself!

In rehearsal: Simone McIntosh as Zerlina and Gordon Bintner as Don Giovanni



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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Our work on this production of *Don Giovanni* started with a question: What would hell look like for Don Giovanni? The answer was clear: Hell, for him, would be to be eternally cut off from all contact with other human beings, to be isolated. Because if there is one thing that Giovanni clearly needs, it is to be around other people. Giovanni only seems to exist when he is with someone. Even musically speaking, he doesn't have a big signature aria or music of his own. He exists in the musical language of whoever he sings with, chameleon-like, and even his too short arias are sung to someone, in a specific context.

Giovanni needs to be with other people. That is something we can sympathize with, but Giovanni breaks and shatters the people he meets—because he uses them to forget himself, and so you could ask: does he ever honestly and truly meet anyone?

Giovanni is like a vampire in how he lives off other peoples' dreams. He is able to read the people he meets, like open books, and then he transforms himself into their innermost dreams and desires. He sucks their dreams out of them and as long as he is focused on being what someone else wants him to be, he doesn't have to be himself.

And people want to be around him, too. Not just the other characters on stage but also operatic audiences seem to never tire of him. And here we are, breathing life into him with this production once again. So, what is it that is so fascinating about him?

To me, Giovanni is an artist. Truly creative, he is able to transform himself and the world around him and whoever he is with in the most seductive manner, and we show this through the evolving video projections on stage.

But what he creates are mere illusions; it can't and doesn't last. And whilst he holds all these wonderful qualities that we also celebrate in the world today, he has no ethical sense: he forgets that he is not making art but that the raw material of his illusions are real people and real dreams, which he uses, destroys, and abandons without hesitation.

And, so, his world in our production is a maze, going in circles, ever more isolated. A maze where everyone gets lost before determining to leave Giovanni behind, one by one. In the end, his world is populated only by the ghosts of his past—those who paid the price for his needs. He is sentenced to be locked within the self-created prison of absolute loneliness and abandonment and, in his increasing madness, he has only his imagination left: he imagines that he is still in the company of all those who have now left him.

So, this of course is how it ends: Giovanni meets his hell as he is finally forced to face himself and the consequences of his actions. His world turns blank—all his illusions are exposed and wiped out and he is left all alone. He who burns his bridges, ends up on a desert island.

Kasper Holten

SYNOPSIS

ACT I

The nobleman Don Giovanni is a notorious playboy whose romantic exploits are reluctantly enabled by his servant Leporello. Attempting to flee the home of his latest conquest, Donna Anna, Giovanni is interrupted by her father, the Commendatore, and kills him. After Giovanni escapes, Anna begs her fiancé, Don Ottavio, to avenge her father's death.

Leporello implores his master to reform himself but is interrupted by the lovelorn Donna Elvira, a former mistress of Giovanni's, who is looking for him. Giovanni slips away, and Leporello is left to explain the extent of his master's womanising to the besotted Elvira.

At Masetto and Zerlina's marriage procession Giovanni again attempts a seduction—this time, of the bride-to-be—but Elvira arrives in time to stop him. Ottavio and Anna ask Giovanni to help them catch the Commendatore's murderer. Elvira again interrupts to warn them about Giovanni. As Giovanni departs, having invited everyone to his home to continue the celebrations, Anna recognizes his voice and tells Ottavio that Giovanni is the murderer.

Outside Giovanni's house that night, Elvira joins forces with Ottavio and Anna to exact vengeance. Masking themselves for the ball, they are welcomed inside by Leporello. In the ballroom, Giovanni attempts to ensnare Zerlina, and she cries out for help. Anna, Elvira, Masetto, and Ottavio attempt to corner Giovanni, who once again manages to elude them.

INTERMISSION

ACT II

Hoping to seduce Elvira's maid, Giovanni trades clothes with Leporello and instructs his servant to distract Elvira. Giovanni's serenading of the maid is interrupted by Masetto, but his disguise is effective and he brutally fights off Masetto before escaping.

Leporello, still dressed as his master, returns with Elvira only to encounter Anna, Ottavio, Zerlina, and Masetto. Leporello convinces them that he is not the man they're after, then flees. Ottavio swears vengeance on Giovanni—whom, in spite of everything, Elvira continues to love.

Passing through a cemetery, Giovanni hears the voice of the Commendatore warning that by morning he will laugh no more. Thinking it's a joke, Giovanni orders Leporello to invite the ghost to supper, and the ghost accepts.

Elvira arrives at Giovanni's house and makes a final plea to him to change, but he dismisses her. The Commendatore's ghost arrives and also asks Giovanni to repent. When Giovanni refuses, he is consumed by flames—leaving the others to reflect on the downfall of a man whose crimes touched them all.

STORY IN A MINUTE:

Don Giovanni, seducer of 2,065 women, makes a fatal mistake when he kills the father of Donna Anna, his latest conquest. The aristocratic playboy remains unrepentant as he is pursued by those determined to bring him to justice, but when the statue of the dead man himself pays a visit, Don Giovanni gets his just reward.

CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Marie Bérard, *Concertmaster*
The Concertmaster's chair has been endowed in perpetuity by Joey and Toby Tanenbaum
Aaron Schwebel, *Associate Concertmaster*
Jamie Kruspe, *Assistant Concertmaster*
Sandra Baron
Bethany Bergman
Terri Croft
Dominique Laplante
Louise Tardiff
Yakov Lerner

VIOLIN I/MANDOLIN

Nancy Kershaw

VIOLIN II

Csaba Koczó, *Assistant Principal, Acting Principal*
Clara Lee, *Acting Assistant Principal*
James Aylesworth
Patrick Goodwin*
Elizabeth Johnston
Hiroko Kagawa*
Hua-chu Huang*
Joanna Zabrowarna

VIOLA

Sheila Jaffé, *Principal*
Joshua Greenlaw, *Assistant Principal*
Carolyn Blackwell
Catherine Gray
Shannon Knights*
Yosef Tamir

CELLO

Guillaume Artus, *Acting Principal**
Leana Rutt, *Associate Principal*
Paul Widner, *Assistant Principal*
Olga Laktionova,
Elaine Thompson

BASS

Tony Flynt, *Principal*
Robert Speer, *Assistant Principal*
Ben Heard
Samuel Vachon

FLUTE

Douglas Stewart, *Principal*
Shelley Brown

OBOE

Mark Rogers, *Principal*
Melissa Scott*

CLARINET

Dominic Desautels, *Principal*
Colleen Cook

BASSOON

Eric Hall, *Principal*
Lisa Chisholm

HORN

Scott Wevers, *Principal*
Courtney Prizrenac*
Gary Pattison (leave of absence)

TRUMPET

Amy Horvey, *Acting Principal**
Charlie Watson

TROMBONE

Robert Conquer, *Principal*
Ian Cowie

BASS TROMBONE

Isabelle Lavoie*

TIMPANI

Nicholas Stoup, *Principal*

PIANO

Simone Luti*

On-Stage Musicians

ACT 1 FINALE ORCHESTRA 1

Calvin Cheng*, violin
Heemin Choi*, violin
Robert Wolanski*, bass

ORCHESTRA 2

Andrea Tyniec*, violin
Hee-Soo Yoon*, violin
Michael Cox*, bass

ACT 2 FINALE WIND OCTET

Jasper Hitchcock*, oboe
Aleh Remezau*, oboe
Juliette Moreno*, clarinet
Michele Verheul*, clarinet
William Cannaway*, bassoon
Zsofia Stefan*, bassoon
Janet Anderson, horn
Bardhyl Gjevori, horn

MUSIC LIBRARIAN

Ondrej Golias

STAGE LIBRARIAN

Catherine Gray

PERSONNEL MANAGER

Janet Anderson

*extra musician

CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY CHORUS

SOPRANOS

Virginia Hatfield
Leanne Kaufman
Alexandra Lennox
Eve Rachel McLeod

MEZZO-SOPRANOS

Susan Black
Sandra Boyes
Erica Iris Huang
Rachel Miller

TENORS

Stephen Bell
Taras Chmil
Derrick Paul Miller
David Walsh

BARITONES/BASSES

Jesse Clark
Bruno Cormier
Jason Nedecky
Gene Wu

MUSIC STAFF

Anne Larlee[^] (*Head Coach*)
Simone Luti
Mattia Senesi[†] (*Ensemble Studio Intern Coach*)

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Simone Luti

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Marilyn Grondal[^]

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

Mike Lewandowski
Al Gadowsky

APPRENTICE STAGE MANAGER

Caroline Nowacki

ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER

Sarah Mansikka

UNDERSTUDIES

Leporello
Donna Anna
Don Giovanni
Don Ottavio
Donna Elvira
Zerlina
Masetto

Alex Halliday[^]
Ariane Cossette[†]
Clarence Fraser[^]
Wesley Harrison[†]
Charlotte Siegel[†]
Alex Hetherington[†]
Korin Thomas-Smith[†]

DANCERS

Ghosts

Shelayna Christante
Laura Ness
Allison McCaughey
Stephanie Bergeron
Miyeko Ferguson
Ashley St. John
Stéphanie Visconti
Sarahi Cardenas
Shelayna Christante
Laura Ness

Ghost Cover
Maid
Maid Cover

[†]Current member of the COC Ensemble Studio

[^]Graduate of the COC Ensemble Studio

BIOGRAPHIES



JOEL ALLISON, Masetto (also Forester in *The Cunning Little Vixen*: Relaxed Performance; Bass-baritone; Belleville, ON)
COC CREDITS: Peter, *Hansel & Gretel* (Opera for Young Audiences); Fiorello, *The Barber of Seville* (2020); Mandarin, *Turandot*; Schounard, *La Bohème* (2019); Zaretsky, *Eugene Onegin*; Superior Senator, *Hadrian* (2018). RECENT: Bijou, *Le Postillon de Lonjumeau* (Tiroler Festspiele Erl); Biteroff, *Tannhäuser*; Lord Sidney, *Il viaggio a Reims*; Escamillo, *Carmen* (Deutsche Oper Berlin). UPCOMING: Soloist, Bach's St Matthew Passion; Ein Kommerzienrat, *Intermezzo*; Leporello, *Don Giovanni* (Deutsche Oper Berlin)



GORDON BINTNER, Don Giovanni (Bass-baritone; Regina, SK)
SELECT COC CREDITS: Count, *The Marriage of Figaro* (2023); Papageno, *The Magic Flute* (2022); Eugene Onegin, *Eugene Onegin* (2018); Belcore, *The Elixir of Love* (2017). RECENT: Albert, *Werther*; Guglielmo, *Così fan tutte* (Royal Opera House); Soloist, Beethoven, Busoni, and Vogel Recital Debut (Wigmore Hall); Eugene Onegin, *Eugene Onegin* (San Francisco Opera); Junior, *A Quiet Place* (Opéra national de Paris). UPCOMING: Oronte, *Médée*; Guglielmo, *Così fan tutte* (Opéra national de Paris)



BEN BLISS, Don Ottavio (Tenor, Prairie Village, KS, USA)
COC CREDITS: Ferrando, *Così fan tutte* (2019). RECENT: Tamino, *The Magic Flute* (Bayerische Staatsoper, Metropolitan Opera [The Met]); Soloist, 2023 Richard Tucker Gala (Carnegie Hall); Soloist, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 (San Francisco Symphony); Don Ottavio, *Don Giovanni* (Staatsoper Unter den Linden, The Met); Tom Rakewell, *The Rake's Progress* (Teatro Colón); Soloist, Mozart's Requiem (Cleveland Orchestra). UPCOMING: Pelléas, *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Bayerische Staatsoper)



PAOLO BORDOGNA, Leporello (Bass-baritone; Melzo, Italy)
COC DEBUT. RECENT: Leporello, *Don Giovanni* (Royal Opera House, Wiener Staatsoper); Bartolo, *The Barber of Seville* (LA Opera, Wiener Staatsoper, Opéra national de Paris); Fernando Villabella, *The Thieving Magpie* (Teatro alla Scala); Don Magnifico, *La Cenerentola* (Bayerische Staatsoper). UPCOMING: Don Magnifico, *La Cenerentola* (Gran Teatre del Liceu); Bartolo, *The Barber of Seville* (Arena di Verona, Wiener Staatsoper); Melitone, *La forza del destino* (Opéra National de Lyon); Sulpice, *La fille du Régiment* (Royal Opera House)



JOHANNES DEBUS, Conductor, COC Music Director (Toronto, ON/Berlin, Germany)
 SELECT COC CREDITS: *Fidelio*, COC Community Concert Series, *Salome* (2023); *The Flying Dutchman*, *La Traviata* (2022); *In Winter*, Mozart's Requiem, In Concert (2021); *Hansel & Gretel*, *Rusalka*, *Otello*, *Elektra* (2019). RECENT: *La Traviata*, *Hansel & Gretel* (Oper Leipzig); *Dialogues des Carmélites* (Bayerische Staatsoper); *The Lord of Cries*, *Jenůfa* (Santa Fe Opera). UPCOMING: *Béatrice et Bénédict* (Opéra de Lyon)



ES DEVLIN, Set Designer (London, England, UK)
 COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Don Giovanni* (LA Opera, Israeli Opera, Royal Opera House [ROH]); *Boris Godunov* (Teatro Alla Scala); *Salome*, *Les Troyens* (ROH); *Carmen* (Bregenz Festspiele); *Otello* (Metropolitan Opera); *Die tote Stadt* (Finnish National Opera); *I Puritani* (De Nationale Opera); *The Lehman Trilogy* (National Theatre, London); *Hamlet* (Barbican Centre); *A Number, Girls and Boys*, *The Nether* (Royal Court Theatre); *Chimerica*, *The Hunt* (Almeida Theatre); *Faith Healer* (Donmar Warehouse). UPCOMING: *Don Giovanni* (Houston Grand Opera)



SIGNE FABRICIUS, Movement Director (Copenhagen, Denmark)
 COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Don Giovanni* (LA Opera, Royal Opera House, Israeli Opera); *Carmen* (Bregenz Festspiele); *The Merry Widow* (Royal Danish Opera); *Cabaret* (Aarhus Theatre). UPCOMING: *Don Giovanni* (Houston Grand Opera); *Chicago* (Aarhus Theatre)



AL GADOWSKY, Assistant Stage Manager (Toronto, ON)
 COC CREDITS: *Carmen*, *La Traviata* (2022). RECENT: *Come From Away* (Mirvish Productions); *Carmen*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Rigoletto* (Edmonton Opera); *Maggie* (Theatre Aquarius); *The Humans* (Canadian Stage); *Crazy for You*, *West Side Story* (Citadel Theatre); *Mamma Mia* (The Grand Theatre); *Anne of Green Gables: The Musical™*, *Mamma Mia!* (Charlottetown Festival) UPCOMING: *Medea* (COC)



MANÉ GALOYAN, Donna Anna (Soprano; Gyumri, Armenia)
 COC DEBUT. RECENT: Pamina, *The Magic Flute* (Wiener Staatsoper); Suor Angelica/Lauretta, *Il Trittico* (Deutsche Oper Berlin); Berthe, *Le prophète* (Festival d'Aix-en-Provence). UPCOMING: Suor Angelica, *Suor Angelica* (Bayerische Staatsoper); Vixen, *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Detroit Opera); Violetta, *La Traviata* (Santa Fe Opera)



MARILYN GRONSDAL, Assistant Director (Toronto, ON)
 COC CREDITS: *Fidelio* (as Associate Director); *Salome* (2023); *Così fan tutte* (2019); (as Assistant Director) *Tosca* (2023); *La Traviata*, *Bluebeard's Castle* (2022); *Turandot* (2019); (as Revival Director) *The Flying Dutchman* (2022, Dora Award nominee for Best Opera Direction); *The Nightingale and Other Short Fables* (2018). RECENT: (as Revival Director) *Così fan tutte* (Israeli Opera); (as Director) *The Rape of Lucretia* (The Glenn Gould School). UPCOMING: (as Assistant Director) *Don Pasquale*



LUKE HALLS, Projection Designer (London, England, UK)
 COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Don Giovanni*, (LA Opera, Royal Opera House, Israeli Opera); *Miss Saigon* (Opera Australia); *Madama Butterfly*, *Carmen* (Bregenz Festspiele); *Like Water for Chocolate* (American Ballet Theatre); *Tristan und Isolde* (Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg); *Boris Godunov* (Teatro alla Scala); *Lucia di Lammermoor* (LA Opera); *Porgy and Bess*, *Otello* (Metropolitan Opera); *Das Liebesverbot* (Teatro Real). UPCOMING: *Don Giovanni* (Houston Grand Opera)



ANITA HARTIG, Donna Elvira (Soprano, Bistrita, Romania)
 COC DEBUT. RECENT: Mimi, *La Bohème* (Metropolitan Opera, Bucharest National Opera); Donna Elvira, *Don Giovanni*; Contessa, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Opernhaus Zürich); Marguerite, *Faust* (Opernhaus Zürich, Teatro Colon); Rusalka, *Rusalka* (Opéra national du Capitole) UPCOMING: Amelia (Maria), *Simon Boccanegra* (Teatro alla Scala)



*In rehearsal:
Gordon Bintner
as Don Giovanni,
Ben Bliss as Don
Ottavio, and
Mané Goloyan as
Donna Anna*



KASPER HOLTEN, Director (Copenhagen, Denmark)
COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Drot og Marsk* (Royal Danish Opera); *Lohengrin* (Deutsche Oper Berlin, Novaya Opera); *Don Giovanni* (LA Opera, Israeli Opera, Royal Opera House); *Brødre* (Copenhagen Opera Festival, Icelandic Opera); *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Carmen* (National Centre for the Performing Arts, Beijing); *Bluebeard's Castle* (Hungarian State Opera); *Boris Godunov* (Teatro alla Scala); *Idomeneo* (Wiener Staatsoper). UPCOMING: *Don Giovanni* (Houston Grand Opera). ADDITIONAL CREDITS: CEO of the Royal Danish Theatre



SANDRA HORST, Price Family Chorus Master (Toronto, ON)
SELECT COC CREDITS: *Fidelio*, *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, *Macbeth*, *The Marriage of Figaro* (2023); *Carmen*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *La Traviata* (2022). RECENT: (as Conductor) *Orphee+* (Edmonton Opera); *A Tale of Two Cities*, *The Tender Land*, *A Comedic Trilogy* (UofT Opera); (as Coach) Brott Opera, Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. UPCOMING: *Medea*, *Don Pasquale* (COC); (as Conductor) *Cendrillon*, *Lysistrata* (UofT Opera). ADDITIONAL CREDITS: Head of Opera, University of Toronto Faculty of Music



JENIFER KOWAL, Stage Manager (Thornhill, ON)
SELECT COC CREDITS: *La Bohème*, *Macbeth*, *Salome* (2023); *The Flying Dutchman*, *La Traviata*, *Bluebeard's Castle* (2022); *Gianni Schicchi* (2021); *Hansel & Gretel* (2020); *Rusalka*, *Otello*, *Così fan tutte* (2019); *Eugene Onegin*, *The Nightingale and Other Short Fables*, *Rigoletto* (2018); *Arabella*, *Tosca* (2017); *Norma* (2016)



AMY LANE, Director (London, England, UK)
COC CREDITS: *Gianni Schicchi* (2021). RECENT: *The Yellow Wallpaper* (Sadler's Wells, Copenhagen Opera Festival); *Roméo et Juliette* (Savonlinna Opera Festival, Malmö Opera); *The Ring Cycle* (Longborough Festival Opera); *La Bohème* (Copenhagen Festival Opera, Norwegian Opera & Ballet); (as Co-Director) *Drot og marsk* (Royal Danish Opera); *Marco Polo* (Guangzhou Opera House, Beijing Tianqiao Performing Arts Center, Teatro Carlo Felice). UPCOMING: *The Longborough Ring 2024* (Longborough Festival Opera)



DAVID LEIGH, Commendatore (Bass; New York, NY, USA)
COC CREDITS: Sarastro, *The Magic Flute* (2022); Timur, *Turandot* (2019); Turbo, *Hadrian* (2018). RECENT: Hagen, *Götterdämmerung* (Opernhaus Zürich); Colline, *La Bohème* (Bayerische Staatsoper); King Marke, *Tristan und Isolde* (Santa Fe Opera). UPCOMING: Fafner, *Siegfried* (Opernhaus Zürich); Soloist, Mahler's Symphony No. 8 (NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester)



MIKE LEWANDOWSKI, Assistant Stage Manager (Toronto, ON)
 COC CREDITS: (as Stage Manager) School Tour Outreach Program; (as Assistant Stage Manager) *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Nightingale and Other Short Fables*, *Carmen*, *Maria Stuarda*, *Norma*. RECENT: (as Floor Director) Canadian Country Music Awards (CTV); (as Assistant Stage Manager) National Ballet of Canada; (as Event Operations Supervisor) VW Beach Pro Tour (World Championships). UPCOMING: (as Event Operations Supervisor) VW Beach Pro Tour & VNL (Brazil & Mexico)



SIMONE MCINTOSH, Zerlina (Mezzo-soprano, Vancouver, BC)
 COC CREDITS: Confidante, *Elektra* (2019); Page, *Rigoletto* (2018). RECENT: Hansel, *Hansel & Gretel* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Rosina, *The Barber of Seville* (Scottish Opera); Arsamene, *Xerxes* (Theater Winterthur); Flora Bervoix, *La Traviata*; Siegrune, *Die Walküre* (Opernhaus Zürich); Anna Erisso, *Maometto II* (Teatro Nuovo); Soloist, Sing In the Holidays! (Festival Napa Valley); Soloist, The Adlers: Live at the Drive-in (San Francisco Opera). UPCOMING: Siegrune, *Die Walküre*; La Speranza, *L'Orfeo* (Opernhaus Zürich)



JOHN-PAUL PERCOX, Revival Lighting Designer (Kilmarnock, Scotland, UK)
 COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Dracula* (Latvian National Ballet, Polish National Opera); *Eden-Eden* (National Theatre, Prague); Ballet Dortmund; *Infra* (Lithuanian National Opera & Ballet, Ballett Zürich); *The Magic Flute* (Gran Teatre del Liceu); *The Dream* (National Ballet of Japan); *The Marriage of Figaro* (Palais Garnier); *Don Giovanni* (LA Opera, Israeli Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Gran Teatre del Liceu, Royal Opera House). UPCOMING: *Dracula* (Finnish National Opera and Ballet)



BRUNO POET, Lighting Designer (London, England, UK)
 COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Don Giovanni* (LA Opera, Israeli Opera, Royal Opera House [ROH]); *Miss Saigon* (Opera Australia); *La Bohème* (Washington National Opera); *Salome* (Houston Grand Opera [HGO]); *Akhmaten*, *Carmen* (English National Opera); *Bluebeard's Castle*, *Gianni Schicchi* (Greek National Opera); *The Hours* (Müpa Budapest, Metropolitan Opera [The Met]); *Nabucco* (Oper im Steinbruch); *Otello* (ROH); *Akhmaten* (The Met); *Carmen* (The Norwegian Opera & Ballet). UPCOMING: *Don Giovanni* (HGO)



SIOBHAN RICHARDSON, Fight and Intimacy Coordinator (Toronto, ON)
 COC CREDITS: (as Fight and Intimacy Coordinator) *Fidelio*, *La Bohème* (as Fight and Intimacy Director); *Carmen* (2023); (as Intimacy Director) *Macbeth*; *Salome* (2023); *Hadrian* (2018); (as Actor) *Macbeth* (2023). RECENT: (as Actor) Danny Geller, *The Christie Pits Riot* (Hogtown Experience); *Clown 2*, *The 39 Steps* (St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival); Katharina, *Untamed* (Tarragon Theatre); (as Intimacy Coordinator and Director) *The Play That Goes Wrong* (Western Michigan University); *Indecent* (Studio 180 Theatre, Mirvish Productions)



CHARLOTTE SIEGEL, Donna Elvira (also Innkeeper's Wife/Hen in *The Cunning Little Vixen*; *The Cunning Little Vixen* Relaxed Performance; Soprano; Toronto, ON)
 COC CREDITS: Musetta, *La Bohème*; Lady-in-waiting/Second Apparition, *Macbeth* (2023); Second Lady, *The Magic Flute* (2022); Soloist, *In Winter* (2021). RECENT: Soloist, *Bond and Beyond* (National Arts Centre); Soloist, Spirit Song Symphony (Manitoba Chamber Orchestra); Soloist, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 (Koerner Hall, La Maison Symphonique); Rose Maurant, *Street Scene* (Opera McGill). ADDITIONAL CREDITS: Former Civic Engagement Quartet Young Artist (Pacific Opera Victoria)



ANNA-MARIE SULLIVAN, Revival Movement Director (London, England, UK)
 COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Don Giovanni* (LA Opera, Royal Opera House [ROH], Israeli Opera, Gran Teatre del Liceu, Houston Grand Opera); *Round Robin* (Obstacle Films); *House of the Dragon* (HBO); *Mission: Impossible—Rogue Nation* (Paramount Pictures); *The Fairy Queen* (Theater an der Wien); *Don Giovanni*, *Il Turco in Italia*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Don Pasquale* (Glyndebourne); *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Andrea Chenier*, *L'étoile*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (ROH). UPCOMING: *Don Giovanni* (Houston Grand Opera)



ANJA VANG KRAGH, Costume Designer (Copenhagen, Denmark)
 COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Drot og Marsk* (Royal Danish Opera); *Don Giovanni* (LA Opera, Israeli Opera, Royal Opera House); *The Makropulos Affair* (Malmö Opera); *La Traviata* (Israeli Opera); *Idomeneo* (Wiener Staatsoper, Israeli Opera). UPCOMING: *Don Giovanni* (Houston Grand Opera)

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SAY HI TO OUR NEWEST ENSEMBLE STUDIO MEMBERS!



In 2024/2025, the Canadian Opera Company will welcome three emerging artists to the COC Ensemble Studio, a highly specialized development program for young opera professionals: sopranos **Emily Rocha** and **Gabrielle Turgeon**, and bass **Duncan Stenhouse**. The talented young singers join six returning Ensemble Studio members: soprano **Karoline Podolak**, mezzo-soprano **Queen Hezumuryango**, tenor **Wesley Harrison**, baritone **Korin Thomas-Smith**, and pianist/coaches **Brian Cho** and **Mattia Senesi**.

Last October, all three incoming Ensemble Studio artists placed as finalists at the 2023 Centre Stage: Ensemble Studio Competition, a competitive vocal showcase for rising singers from all over Canada, with Emily taking home Second Prize and Duncan clinching Third.

Emily is a recent graduate of UofT Opera. This season, she performs the Mahler Rückert-Lieder with the University of Toronto

Symphony Orchestra as the 2023 Concerto Competition Winner, and will be a Vocal Fellow at Tanglewood Music Center 2024.

Duncan is a bass and composer currently completing his studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London, and a proud alumnus of the Memorial School of Music in St. John's. While living in the UK, he performed in a number of summer festival operas by Britten, Dvorák, Mozart, and Puccini, among others.

Gabrielle is currently a student of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) Opera, following her bachelor's degree at the University of Toronto. Some of her recent operatic work includes the title role in *The Cunning Little Vixen* and Blanche in *Dialogues des Carmélites* at CCM.

But what are these rising stars doing when they're not studying, practicing, and performing? Read on to find out!

EMILY ROCHA

Where would we find you on your days off? Probably at home relaxing next to my cat, Brian, watching trashy reality TV, or at a cute café with a friend.

“I would give anything for _____ tickets.” I would give anything for a Phoebe Bridgers concert ticket, and I would cry the entire time.

We know you’re a great singer—what would you admit to be being terrible at? I’m terrible at staying up late or partying—once midnight rolls around, ideally, I’m already asleep!



DUNCAN STENHOUSE

Classical aside... what’s on your music app’s “Most Played” list? My taste is definitely all over the place. Some of my most played artists include Blaze Foley, Brockhampton, Great Big Sea, Kid Cudi, Gordon Lightfoot, Mac Miller, and The Strokes.

Do you have anything you’d call an irrational fear? I don’t think I’ll ever get in a helicopter as long as I live. I can’t even imagine it!

Are you a big fan of any one sport and, if so, what team are you cheering on? I competed and coached as a wrestler for years when I was younger. I’ll always cheer for Team Canada at the Olympics.



GABRIELLE TURGEON

What’s something about you that might surprise people? A lot of people are surprised to learn that I don’t play the piano, since both my parents are pianists.

If you could live anywhere else in the world, at this point in your life, where would that be? I would love to experience the Italian way of life, in the birthplace of opera. I would also be totally content getting to eat Italian food every day!

Classical aside... what’s on your music app’s “Most Played” list? Some of my all-time favourite albums are *Songs in the Key of Life* by Stevie Wonder, *Revolver* by the Beatles, and *To Pimp a Butterfly* by Kendrick Lamar.



Left, top: 2023/2024 Ensemble Studio; this page from top: Emily Rocha, Duncan Stenhouse, and Gabrielle Turgeon performing at Centre Stage 2023

SHOWCASE SERIES

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Taking place in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, the Showcase Series features artists and creatives from the Asian, African and Caribbean, and Latin American diasporas, to celebrate and amplify voices of colour through creative expression, storytelling, and cultural participation.

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coc.ca/Showcase

Above: KashaDance at the Showcase Series (2023)

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Opening night toast for Macbeth (2023)



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We can't wait to see you soon!

To see a full concert listing, visit: coc.ca/FreeConcerts



The Toronto Consort at the Free Concert Series (2023)



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Ensemble Studio mezzo-soprano Charlotte Siegel performs at the Free Concert Series in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, presented by TD Bank Group. Photo: Stelth Ng

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To uphold the safety of the building, oversized bags and parcels may be prohibited from entering R. Fraser Elliott Hall. Coat check is located in the Lower Lobby, where the following services are also available: booster seats, back supports, and rental of binoculars, on a first-come, first-served basis.

NOISE ETIQUETTE

Patrons are reminded that R. Fraser Elliott Hall is an extremely lively auditorium and that all audience noise will be accentuated and audible to other patrons. Turn off all electronic devices, avoid talking, coughing, humming, moving loose seats, kicking the backs of seats, rustling programs, and unwrapping candies or cough drops. Please remain in your seat until the performance has completely ended and the house lights have been turned on.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of mobile and smartphones and all other electronic devices is extremely disruptive and is strictly prohibited during performances. If a patron has an emergency and needs to be contacted during a performance, they should contact Patron Services for assistance before the performance.

CAMERAS/RECORDING DEVICES

Please feel free to take selfies and videos at the opera house—it's a breathtaking space—and share on social by tagging us (@canadianopera) and using our show hashtags (#COCVixen, #COCGiovanni). However, no pictures, video or sound recordings are permitted during the performance.

LATECOMERS

In the interest of safety and for the comfort of all patrons and performers, latecomers may not enter the auditorium or be seated unless there is a suitable break in the performance (usually at intermission and this is determined by the General Director). Patrons leaving the auditorium during the performance or returning late after intermission may not be readmitted.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Outside food and beverages are prohibited from entering the Four Seasons Centre. Several beverage offerings can be enjoyed in the R. Fraser Elliott auditorium; please speak to our bar staff for more information.

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Patrons consent to appear in recorded material by attending FSC performances/events.

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Management reserves the right to refuse admission without refund, and expel from the premises, any person whose presence or conduct is deemed objectionable.

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All patrons, including children, must have a ticket for the performance. All children must be seated next to an accompanying adult. Young children should be able to sit quietly throughout the performance. If unable to do so, children and their accompanying adult will be asked to leave the auditorium. Babes-in-arms will not be admitted.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES AND FIRST AID

A house doctor is present at most performances. Please contact an usher if medical services are required.

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During performances please speak with an usher or visit Patron Services at the Coat Check in the Lower Lobby. Following performances, please e-mail lostandfound@coc.ca or call **416-342-5200** for information.

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Monday to Friday – 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saturday – 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sunday - Closed

Extended phone hours on all performance days from 10 a.m. to curtain.

IN PERSON:

Four Seasons Centre Box Office
145 Queen St. W.

Monday to Friday: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday - Closed

The Box Office is open on all performance days from 11 am until the end of the first intermission.

EMAIL INQUIRIES: tickets@coc.ca

The Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts Box Office also services ticketing needs for The National Ballet of Canada and all other Four Seasons Centre events.

GROUP SALES Groups of 10 or more enjoy savings on regular individual ticket prices.

For more information or to reserve seats, email groupsales@coc.ca or call **416-306-2356**.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE SERVICE

We are pleased to offer, for the convenience of all our patrons, a pre-order system for intermission purchases for all COC performances. Place your intermission pre-order at any bar before the performance begins, to decrease your wait time during intermission. Bars are located throughout the Isadore and Rosalie Sharp City Room's many levels.

Great opera lives here.



Sally Matthews (centre, in red) as Sharp Ears in *The Cunning Little Vixen*, English National Opera, 2022.
Photo: Clive Barda

BMO



BMO is pleased to support the **Canadian Opera Company** and the artists that are captivating audiences with exciting, innovative, and entertaining productions.

We are proud to be the COC's **2023/24 Season Sponsor.**