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THE FLYING DUTCHMAN CARMEN

PROGRAM
FALL 2022

#COCDutchman
#COCCarmen



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FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Before watching today's performance, we invite you to experience the Canadian Opera Company's 2022 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 inaugural participants in the COC's new 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

Welcome back to theatre for the Canadian Opera Company's 2022/2023 season! Opera is an art form for everyone and we're delighted that you are joining us, whether this is your very first opera performance, or your hundred and first! We look forward to exploring with you all that this unique form of musical storytelling has to offer.

The fall season opens with Richard Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*, one of the composer's earliest masterpieces and a visual triumph in the hands of director Christopher Alden and revival director Marilyn Gronsdaal. You may recall that this was also the first opera conducted by Johannes Debus as COC Music Director in 2010 and I'm excited to hear it, anew, 12 years since his last time, leading our brilliant orchestra as they revisit this incredible score.

With its sun-drenched setting and blazing hot melodies, *Carmen*, by Georges Bizet, provides the perfect balance to *Dutchman*'s grey seas and ghostly mystery—and we're fortunate to have two dazzling mezzo-sopranos in the iconic title role. Grammy Award-winner J'Nai Bridges and Ensemble Studio graduate Rihab Chaieb have both been making a name for themselves starring in this opera and they're joined by a blockbuster cast of fellow artists. You're in for a treat!

We're especially excited to continue expanding on initiatives and projects that welcome in-person experiences as well as growing our digital engagement. The exciting return of our Free Concert Series in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre and Centre Stage: Ensemble Studio Competition are events that we are so proud of. Our Showcase Series has curated special programming for Latin American Heritage Month and don't miss the new episodes of our podcast Key Change as we dive deep into the artists and creators behind our 2022/2023 season.

COC is your opera company and it is a privilege to work alongside our generous supporters, loyal audiences, and passionate partners in advancing and giving access to our vision of an art form that is relevant, accessible, and deeply connected to this community and beyond.



Perryn Leech
COC General Director

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THE FLYING DUTCHMAN



*Evgeny Nikitin as the
Dutchman and Julie
Makerov as Senta in the
COC's 2010 production.*

BY RICHARD WAGNER

Romantic opera in three scenes with libretto by the composer

First performance: Königlich-sächsisches Hoftheater, Dresden, January 2, 1843

COC production, last performed by the COC in 2010

October 7, 9, 13, 15, 19, 21, 23, 2022 ♦ Sung in German with English SURTITLES™

THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

(in order of vocal appearance)

Daland
Franz-Josef Selig

The Steersman
Miles Mykkanen

The Dutchman
Johan Reuter

Mary
Rosie Aldridge^D

Senta
Marjorie Owens

Erik
Christopher Ventris^D

Conductor
Johannes Debus

Original Director
Christopher Alden

Revival Director
Marilyn Gronsda[^]

Set & Costume Designer
Allen Moyer

Lighting Designer
Anne Militello

Intimacy Coordinator
Lisa Stevens

Price Family Chorus Master
Sandra Horst[^]

Stage Manager
Jen Kowal

SURTITLES™ Producer
John Sharpe

SURTITLES™ Writer
Gunta Dreifelds

Production underwritten, in part, by
LISA BALFOUR BOWEN AND FAMILY IN MEMORY OF
WALTER BOWEN AND IN HONOUR OF ALEXANDER NEEF

Johannes Debus is generously sponsored by George & Kathy Dembroski
The COC Orchestra is generously sponsored, in part, by W. Bruce C. Bailey
Sandra Horst and the COC Chorus are generously underwritten by Tim & Frances Price
Johan Reuter is generously sponsored by Kristine Vikmanis & Denton Creighton
Christopher Ventris is generously sponsored by Rob & Penny Richards

^DCOC mainstage debut [^]Graduate of COC Ensemble Studio

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

Performance time is approximately two hours and 35 minutes, including one intermission.

Part 1: 85 minutes **INTERMISSION 20 minutes** **Part 2: 50 minutes**

INTRODUCING WAGNER'S

The Flying Dutchman

After last anchoring at the COC in 2010, Richard Wagner's monumental and mysterious opera *The Flying Dutchman* returns with its inimitable mix of striking visuals, storm-tossed music, and haunting ghost story.

The Dutchman has been cursed to sail for eternity—that is, unless he's able to find a pure and true love. Every seven years he can step ashore for a single day in an attempt to break the curse, but he has yet to find a love that can redeem him.

In this acclaimed, signature production from American director Christopher Alden, we're first introduced to Senta, a young woman who doesn't quite fit in with the rest of her seaside village. As the overture begins, we see her transfixed by the painted image of a man she's never met and, through the swell of the orchestra, feel the weight of her yearning and the power of the sea all around her.

We soon learn that the enigmatic man in the painting is in fact, the Dutchman, who has just anchored nearby with his ghostly crew and offered Senta's father a handsome reward for her hand in marriage. However, he is not the only person with an interest in Senta's heart, leaving audiences to wonder if the Dutchman's day on land will end in him escaping his curse or being banished once more to sail for seven years.

Though fantastical in nature, there's some autobiographical truth woven into this Wagner opera. Back in 1839, the composer had accumulated a significant amount of debt. In an attempt to evade his creditors, Wagner and his wife Minna smuggled themselves aboard a London-bound ship in the middle of the night. What should have been a relatively easy, eight-day passage stretched into a miserable three-week voyage, with everyone aboard being tossed in violent storms and roiling waves.

and their sweethearts are all dead.

This page and opposite: two contrasting lighting sequences in the COC's 2010 production.



Between bouts of seasickness, Wagner is said to have overheard sailors discussing the legend of the Flying Dutchman, fuelling the composer's imagination with the haunting story.

In this particular production, helmed by revival director Marilyn Gronsdal, the action is set in the early 20th-century. The overall aesthetic draws heavily on the German Expressionist movement and there's a painterly quality to the sets and costumes by designer Allen Moyer. Perhaps most striking is the steep angle upon which the action takes place, known in theatre as a "double-raked" stage. Audiences are in effect presented with a remarkable visual that evokes the dramatic off-kilter feeling of a ship deck in rough waters and an eerie atmosphere that follows the Dutchman on land. Lighting design from Anne Militello casts a supernatural aspect on the action unfolding onstage.

Learn more about the look and inspiration behind this production of *The Flying Dutchman* at coc.ca/Dutchman.



Evgeny Nikitin as the Dutchman and Julie Makerov as Senta in the COC's 2010 production.



Go big or go home!

DIVE INTO THE MUSIC OF *THE FLYING DUTCHMAN* WITH COC MUSIC DIRECTOR JOHANNES DEBUS

When *The Flying Dutchman* sets sail this season, it will be Johannes Debus leading the cast, COC Orchestra, and Chorus through Wagner's epic score and, for Johannes, the opera holds a particularly special significance: it was the first opera he conducted as COC Music Director after officially joining the Canadian Opera Company in 2010.

"I was originally supposed to conduct this in 2020, marking my tenth anniversary with

the COC," he recalls. "Of course, because of the pandemic, we're celebrating a full two years later! But it's remarkable to think of the journey we've all been through and it's exciting to bring this opera about a famously epic journey back to our audiences."

We asked Johannes what he loves best about this opera—and how his relationship with opera and Wagner has evolved since his first turn at the COC podium.

Do you have a favourite part of the score?

The opera starts with an exhilarating piece of music, the overture to *The Flying Dutchman*, about 10 minutes long. Right away, we are thrown into the opera, into the forces of nature. And we're thrown into the inner worlds of what we later see the characters dealing with. So basically, everything that happens in the opera, we have in a nutshell, in this overture. And I tell you, it's an exciting piece of music to play for any orchestra. And it's an exciting piece of music to conduct.

Are there any other key musical moments audiences should listen for?

Well there is, of course, the famous Dutchman monologue; it's the first time we encounter the Dutchman and he tells us about his story and his tragic fate. There's also the famous Act II ballad sung by Senta, in the form of a kind of monologue. It's here that we hear about her yearning and about this inexplicable relationship she seems to feel with the painting of the Dutchman.



Johannes Debus at
the COC's virtual 2021
Season Reveal.



Julie Makerov
as Senta in the
COC's 2010
production.

But *The Flying Dutchman* also hones in on this closed community of sorts and so the chorus features quite heavily. The score includes a number of famous operatic choruses—singing is what people here seem to do when they're not working, and also as a way of getting through their daily tasks. So in Act I, we hear the sailors singing whilst working. In Act II, we hear the female chorus, while they sit at their spinning wheels. And in Act III, we find the community dancing and drinking and having a great time after work—it feels almost like polka music!

How does conducting this opera feel different to you this time?

It's for me, personally, one of the greatest gifts to be able to revisit *The Flying Dutchman*, here at the COC. It's like revisiting an old friend! I think there's perhaps two predominant feelings that arise—the first is quite nostalgic, as the wonderful memories of that first time bubble up and I get to just bathe in the lovely

memories. But, since then, there's also a new sense of pride; I've achieved a lot, together with the COC Orchestra, and time has also enabled me to discover so many new aspects of the piece that I hadn't seen in 2010. I think it will be very interesting to compare the two experiences on the other side of this run!

What do you think audiences are going to love most about this opera?

With Wagner it's "Go big or go home!" And it's the same with *The Flying Dutchman*. It's overwhelming and unforgettable—especially in this iconic COC production.

Learn more about *The Flying Dutchman* in our pre-performance chat hosted by Johannes. Head to coc.ca/Dutchman.

SYNOPSIS

Scene i

On Daland's ship

Daland, a sea-captain, drops anchor near his home harbour, and orders the Steersman to keep watch. The tired man falls asleep and fails to see the arrival of the Dutchman's ship, which anchors beside Daland's vessel. When Daland discovers the strange ship he calls to its captain, who identifies himself simply as "a Dutchman" and offers a rich reward for one night's lodging. He then offers his fabulous treasure as a dowry for the hand of Daland's daughter, and Daland eagerly agrees.

Scene ii

Daland's home

Daland's daughter, Senta, stares at a portrait of the Flying Dutchman while the women around her sing as they work. Senta then sings a song about the Dutchman, a sea-captain condemned by Satan to sail for eternity. He is permitted to set foot on land only once every seven years, to search for salvation in a woman's love. Mary, Senta's companion, scolds Senta for her obsession with this legend, and tells her that when her father returns, she will ask him to remove from the house the picture of the Dutchman. Erik, Senta's suitor, enters to say that he has seen her father's ship sailing towards

harbour. He presses her to ask her father to give him her hand. Senta, however, continues to speak of her fascination with the Flying Dutchman, and Erik tells her of a dream in which he saw her embrace a strange seaman. In despair, Erik leaves.

INTERMISSION

Daland then enters with his guest, and Senta is mesmerized by the Dutchman, whom she recognizes from the portrait. Daland explains that the stranger has asked for her hand in marriage and leaves the couple together. Senta agrees to marry the Dutchman.

Scene iii

By the Dutchman's ship

After a party of celebrating, sailors and their women are terrified by an encounter with the Dutchman's ghostly crew. Erik and Senta enter. Erik is angry, as he has learned that Senta has accepted the hand of the Dutchman. As Erik reminds Senta of her promise to love him, the Dutchman enters and overhears the exchange. Convinced that Senta is lost to him, the Dutchman is overwhelmed with despair. He tells Senta of the curse and sets sail with his men. Proclaiming her eternal faithfulness to the Dutchman, Senta dies.

SYNOPSIS IN A MINUTE: The Dutchman is a doomed sailor cursed to sail the seas without respite, only able to set foot on shore for one day every seven years. If he can find a woman on that day who will vow to love him until death, his curse will be broken. When the Dutchman meets Senta, she makes that vow, and when her former suitor threatens the pact, she proves her love, sacrificing herself for the Dutchman.

*Johan Reuter in rehearsal
as the Dutchman in the
COC's 2022 production*



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*
Anne Armstrong
Sandra Baron
Bethany Bergman
Nancy Kershaw
Dominique Laplante
Clara Lee
Yakov Lerner
Lyssa Pelton*
Joanna Zabrowarna

VIOLIN II

Paul Zevenhuizen, *Principal*
Csaba Koczó, *Assistant Principal*
James Aylesworth
Terri Croft
Heemin Choi*
Patrick Goodwin*
Elizabeth Johnston
Aya Miyagawa
Jeremy Pots*
Louise Tardif
Andrea Tyniec*
Rebekah Wolkstein*

VIOLA

Joshua Greenlaw, *Assistant Principal, Acting Principal*
Carolyn Blackwell, *Acting Assistant Principal*
Caitlin Boyle*
Maxime Despax*
Catherine Gray
Sheila Jaffé
Shannon Knights*
Clara Nguyen Tran*
Nicholaos Papadakis*
Yosef Tamir

CELLO

Leana Rutt, *Associate Principal, Acting Principal*
Paul Widner, *Assistant Principal, Acting Associate Principal*
Elaine Thompson, *Acting Assistant Principal*
Maurizio Baccante (leave of absence)
Naomi Barron*
Drew Comstock*
Bryan Holt*
Olga Laktionova
Shira Mani*

BASS

Tony Flynt, *Principal*
Robert Speer, *Assistant Principal*
Nicolai Bobas*
Michael Cox*
Eric Lee*
Robert Wolanski*

FLUTE

Douglas Stewart, *Principal*
Leslie Newman*

PICCOLO

Shelley Brown
Leslie Newman*
Douglas Stewart

OBOE

Mark Rogers, *Principal*
Lesley Young

ENGLISH HORN

Lesley Young

CLARINET

Dominic Desautels, *Principal*
Colleen Cook

BASSOON

Eric Hall, *Principal*
Lisa Chisholm

HORN

Scott Wevers, *Principal*
Bardhyl Gjevori, *Assistant Principal*
Janet Anderson
Jessie Brooks*
Gary Pattison (leave of absence)
David Quackenbush*

TRUMPET

Robert Weymouth, *Principal* (leave of absence)
Amy Horvey, *Acting Principal**
Luise Heyerhoff*

TROMBONE

Charles Benaroya, *Principal* (leave of absence)
Robert Conquer, *Acting Principal**
Ian Cowie

BASS TROMBONE

Isabelle Lavoie*

TUBA

Daniel Hill, *Principal*

TIMPANI

Nicholas Stoup, *Principal*

PERCUSSION

Trevor Tureski, *Principal*

HARP

Sarah Davidson, *Principal*

Banda

HORN

Roslyn Black*
Bardhyl Gjevori
Iris Krizmanic*
Christine Passmore*

MUSIC LIBRARIAN &

STAGE LIBRARIAN

Wayne Vogan

ASSISTANT MUSIC LIBRARIAN

Ondrej Golias

PERSONNEL MANAGER

Ian Cowie

*extra musician

Right: Johan Reuter as the Dutchman and Marjorie Owens as Senta, in rehearsal for the COC's 2022 production

CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY CHORUS

SOPRANOS

Lindsay Barrett
Christina Bell
Stacie Carmona
Virginia Hatfield[^]
Ilona Karan
Leanne Kaufman
Alexandra Lennox
Ingrid Martin
Eve Rachel McLeod
Jennifer Robinson
Teresa van der Hoeven
Ilana Zarankin

MEZZO-SOPRANOS

Michal Aloni
Susan Black[^]
Victoria Borg
Sandra Boyes
Wendy Hatala Foley
Kathryn Knapp
Rachel Miller
Karen Olinyk
Megan Quick[^]
Marianne Sasso
Lisa Spain
Vilma Indra Vitols

TENORS

Vanya Abrahams
Ian Backstrom
Taras Chmil
Ryan Downey
Marcel d'Entremont
Stephen Erickson
Lyndon Ladeur
Jason Lamont
James Leatch
Stephen McClare[^]
Derrick Paul Miller
Ross Mortimer
Daevyd Pepper
David Walsh

BARITONES/BASSES

Grant Allert
Kenneth Baker
Peter Barnes
Sung Chung
Jesse Clark
Bruno Cormier
Alex Halliday[†]
Jason Nedecky
Michael Sproule
Jonah Spungin[†]
Peter Wiens
Marcus Wilson
Gene Wu
Michael York

MUSIC STAFF

Eric Weimer (*Head of Music Preparation*)
Timothy Cheung[^]
Brian Cho[†] (*Ensemble Studio Intern Coach*)

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Derek Bate

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Dana Fradkin

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

Kai-Yueh Chen
Kate Porter

ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER

Nick Andison

UNDERSTUDIES

The Steersman
Dutchman
Mary

Jean-Philippe Lazure
Gregory Dahl
Megan Quick

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



BIOGRAPHIES



CHRISTOPHER ALDEN, Director (New York City, New York, USA)
COC CREDITS: *Rigoletto* (2018, 2010); *Pyramus and Thisbe* (with *Lamento d'Arianna* and *Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*) (2015); *La clemenza di Tito* (2013); *Die Fledermaus* (2012); *The Flying Dutchman* (2010, 2000, 1996). RECENT: *Tri Sestri* (Ural Opera Ballet Theatre, Ekaterinburg Opera); *Partenope* (Teatro Real de Madrid); *Tristan und Isolde* (Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe); *The Greek Passion* (Opera North). UPCOMING: *The Merry Widow* (Wuppertal Opera House); *Asreal* (Theater Bonn)



ROSIE ALDRIDGE, Mary (Mezzo-soprano; London, UK)
COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Kabanicha, Katja Kabanova* (Liceu Opera Barcelona); *Baba the Turk, The Rake's Progress* (Glyndebourne); Mrs. Sedley, *Peter Grimes* (Royal Opera House, Teatro Real de Madrid); The Witch, *Hansel & Gretel* (Stuttgart Opera); Teresa, *La sonnambula* (Vienna State Opera); Ossipovna, *The Nose* (Royal Opera House); La Frugola, *Il tabarro* (Bavarian State Opera). UPCOMING: Mrs. Sedley, *Peter Grimes* (Paris Opera, Hamburg State Opera); Margret, *Wozzeck* (Royal Opera House); Gertrude, *Hamlet* (Glyndebourne)



NICK ANDISON, Assistant Lighting Designer (Toronto, ON)
COC CREDITS: *Rusalka, Turandot, Elektra, Così fan tutte* (2019); *Eugene Onegin, Hadrian* (2018)
RECENT: (as Lighting Designer) *Too True To Be Good, A Year With Frog & Toad, Flush* (Shaw Festival); *A Closer Walk with Patsy Cline, Stag and Doe* (Capitol Theatre); *Bunny, Cottagers and Indians, Midsummer (A Play with Songs)* (Tarragon Theatre); *This Isn't Happening* (Theatre Animal); *The Electric Messiah* (Soundstreams); *Das Ding (The Thing)* (Theatre Smash, Canadian Stage)



DEREK BATE, Assistant Conductor (Toronto, ON)
COC CREDITS: *La Traviata, Bluebeard's Castle*, In Concert: Jane Archibald (2022); *In Winter, Mozart's Requiem*, In Concert: Russell Braun and Tamara Wilson (2021); *Hansel & Gretel* (2020); *Turandot, Otello, Elektra* (2019); *Hadrian, The Nightingale and Other Short Fables, Rigoletto* (2018); (as Conductor) *Hansel & Gretel* (Opera for Young Audiences, 2020). RECENT: (as Conductor) *A Waltz Dream, H.M.S. Pinafore, The Gypsy Baron, Candide* (Toronto Operetta Theatre); *Rigoletto* (Opéra de Québec). UPCOMING: (as Conductor) *Die Fledermaus* (Toronto Operetta Theatre)



JOHANNES DEBUS, Conductor, COC Music Director (Toronto, ON/Berlin, Germany)
SELECT COC CREDITS: *La Traviata* (2022); *In Winter, Mozart's Requiem*, In Concert (2021); *Hansel & Gretel, Rusalka, Otello, Elektra* (2019); *Hadrian, Eugene Onegin, The Nightingale and Other Short Fables, The Abduction from the Seraglio* (2018); *Louis Riel, Götterdämmerung* (2017); *Ariodante* (2016). RECENT: *The Lord of Cries; Jenůfa* (Santa Fe Opera); *Beatrice Cenci* (Bregenz Festival); *Les contes d'Hoffmann, Salome* (Metropolitan Opera). UPCOMING: *Salome* (COC); *Matsukaze, Dialogues des Carmélites* (Bavarian State Opera)



DANA FRADKIN, Assistant Director (Toronto, ON)
COC CREDITS: *Madama Butterfly* (2022). RECENT: (as Director) *The Music Shop* (Vancouver Opera); *Community Creation, Women Wisdom and Wit* (Wilfred Laurier University); (as Revival Director) *Brundibár* (Canadian Children's Opera Company); (as Assistant Director) *Carmen, Up Close and Personal* (Vancouver Opera); *Powder her Face* (Opera on the Avalon); *No One's Safe* (Banff Centre); *The Magic Flute, Die Fledermaus* (The Glenn Gould School). UPCOMING: (as Director) *Little Women* (Wilfred Laurier University)



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

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SANDRA HORST, Price Family Chorus Master (Toronto, ON)

SELECT COC CREDITS: *Madama Butterfly*, *The Magic Flute*, *La Traviata* (2022); *In Winter*, Mozart's *Requiem* (2021); *The Barber of Seville* (2020). RECENT: (as Conductor) *The Tender Land*, *Mansfield Park* (UofT Opera); *Florence: The Lady with the Lamp* (Voicebox: Opera in Concert). UPCOMING: (as Conductor) *Orphée+* (Edmonton Opera); *Hin und Zurück*, *Monsieur Choufleuri*, *Gallantry*, *A Tale of Two Cities* (UofT Opera). ADDITIONAL CREDITS: Director of Musical Studies, UofT Opera



JENIFER KOWAL, Stage Manager (Thornhill, ON)

SELECT COC CREDITS: *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). RECENT: *Garden of Vanished Pleasures* (Soundstreams). UPCOMING: *Salome*, *Macbeth* (COC)



ANNE MILITELLO, Lighting Designer (Los Angeles, California, USA)

COC CREDITS: *The Flying Dutchman* (2010, 2000). RECENT: *The Flying Dutchman* (Dallas Opera), Neil Young Summer Concert Tour 2019, *Sweat* (Mark Taper Forum); *Blacktop Highway* (Redcat Theater); *Light Cycles* (an installation at 3 World Trade Center). UPCOMING: (as Light Choreographer) *Firefly Dance* (New York Philharmonic)



ALLEN MOYER, Set & Costume Designer (Brooklyn, NY, USA)

COC CREDITS: *The Elixir of Love* (2017); *Die Fledermaus* (2012); *Nixon in China* (2011); *Norma* (2006). RECENT: *M. Butterfly* (Santa Fe Opera); *Fire Shut Up In My Bones* (Metropolitan Opera [The Met], Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Paradise Square* (Broadway); *Harvey Milk, Awakenings* (Opera Theater of St. Louis); *The Barber of Seville* (Dallas Opera); *Orfeo ed Euridice* (The Met) UPCOMING: *Champion* (The Met)



MILES MYKKANEN, The Steersman (Tenor; Bessemer, MI, USA)

COC CREDITS: Japanese Envoy 1, *The Nightingale And Other Short Fables* (2018). RECENT: Arnalta, Nutrice, Famigliare 1, *The Coronation of Poppea* (Aix en Provence Festival); Jaquino, *Fidelio* (Austin Opera); Brighella, *Ariadne auf Naxos*; Vogelgesang, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*; Holy Fool, *Boris Godunov* (Metropolitan Opera). UPCOMING: Albert Herring, *Albert Herring* (Chicago Opera Theater); Fenton, *Falstaff* (Hamburg State Opera); *Candide*, *Candide* (Lausanne Opera)



MARJORIE OWENS, Senta (Soprano; Richmond, VA, USA)

COC CREDITS: Turandot, *Turandot* (2019). RECENT: Soloist, *Legends in the Limelight: Marjorie Owens* (Pittsburgh Festival Opera); *Norma*, *Norma* (Greek National Opera, English National Opera); Senta, *The Flying Dutchman* (Fondazione del Teatro del Maggio Musicale, Sächsische Staatsoper); Aida, *Aida* (Metropolitan Opera); Leonore, *Leonore* (Washington Concert Opera) UPCOMING: Senta, *The Flying Dutchman* (Vancouver Opera)



JOHAN REUTER, The Dutchman (Bass-baritone; Frederiksberg, Denmark)

COC CREDITS: Wotan, *Die Walküre* (2015). RECENT: Jochanaan, *Salome* (Edinburgh International Festival, Theater an der Wien); Wozzeck, *Wozzeck* (Paris Opera); Hans Sachs, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (Deutsche Oper Berlin); Amfortas, *Parsifal* (Koncerthuset); Renato, *A Masked Ball* (Royal Danish Opera); Friedrich von Telramund, *Lohengrin* (Vienna State Opera) UPCOMING: Friedrich von Telramund, *Lohengrin* (Bavarian State Opera); Jaroslav Prus, *The Makropulos Case* (Paris Opera); Amfortas, *Parsifal* (Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra); Barak, *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (San Francisco Opera)



LISA STEVENS, Intimacy Coordinator (Toronto, ON)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: (as Intimacy Coordinator) Feature Films: *Civil* (Netflix); *Verona* (TIFF); *Last Resort*; *Blackity Black*; Short Films: *Bark*; *Blood Blood*; (as Choreographer) *Dolly Parton presents 9 To 5 The Musical* (West End, London/Australia/UK Tour); *Anyone Can Whistle* (Off-West End); *West Side Story* (Drayton Entertainment); *Coriolanus* (Bard on the Beach); *Disney's HSM 1 & 2* (Worldwide). UPCOMING: (as Director/Choreographer) *Jersey Boys* (Axelrod Theater); *Margaritaville* (Walnut St. Theater)



FRANZ-JOSEF SELIG, Daland (Bass; Rösrath, Germany)

COC CREDITS: King Marke, *Tristan und Isolde* (2013). RECENT: Gurnemanz, *Parsifal* (Norwegian Opera & Ballet); Bartolo, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Salzburg Festival); King Marke, *Tristan und Isolde* (Zurich Opera House). UPCOMING: Sarastro, *The Magic Flute* (Vienna State Opera); King Marke, *Tristan und Isolde* (Deutsche Oper Berlin, Grand Theatre of the City of Luxembourg); Fafner, *Siegfried* (Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg); Gurnemanz, *Parsifal* (Vienna State Opera); Daland, *The Flying Dutchman* (Teatro La Fenice)



CHRISTOPHER VENTRIS, Erik (Tenor; London, UK)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: Drum Major, *Wozzeck* (Boston Symphony Orchestra, Carnegie Hall, Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia, Metropolitan Opera); Siegmund, *Die Walküre* (Teatro Real de Madrid, Bayreuth Festival, Vienna State Opera); Jim Mahoney, *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (Zurich Opera House); Tristan, *Tristan und Isolde* (La Monnaie); Max, *Der Freischütz*; *Parsifal*, *Parsifal* (Vienna State Opera). UPCOMING: Erik, *The Flying Dutchman* (Vancouver Opera); *Parsifal*, *Parsifal* (Fundación Orquesta de Extremadura); Siegmund, *Die Walküre* (Dallas Symphony Orchestra)

Christopher Ventris as Erik, in rehearsal for the COC's 2022 production



CARMEN



Anita Rachvelishvili as
Carmen in the COC's
2016 production.

BY GEORGES BIZET

Opéra comique in four acts, with libretto by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, based on the novella by Prosper Mérimée

First performance: Opéra-Comique, Paris, March 3, 1875

COC production ♦ Last performed by the COC in 2016

October 14, 16, 20, 22, 26, 28, 30, November 4, 2022 ♦ Sung in French with English SURTITLES™

THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

(in order of vocal appearance)

Moralès, *an officer*

Alex Halliday[†]

Micaëla, *a young woman*

Joyce El-Khoury

(Oct. 14, 16, 20, 22, 26)

Anna-Sophie Neher[^]

(Oct. 28, 30, Nov. 4)

Don José, *a corporal*

Marcelo Puente

Zuniga, *the captain*

Alain Coulombe[^]

Carmen, *a cigar-factory worker*

J'Nai Bridges[‡]

(Oct. 14, 16, 26, 28, 30, Nov. 4)

Rihab Chaieb[^]

(Oct. 20, 22)

Frasquita, *Carmen's friend*

Ariane Cossette^{‡†}

Mercédès, *Carmen's friend*

Alex Hetherington^{‡†}

Escamillo, *a toreador*

Lucas Meachem

(Oct. 14, 16, 20, 22, 26, 28)

Gregory Dahl

(Oct. 30, Nov. 4)

Le Dancaïre, *a smuggler*

Jonah Spungin[†]

Le Remendado, *a*

smuggler

Jean-Philippe Lazure[^]

Conductor

Jacques Lacombe[‡]

Director

Joel Ivany

Original Set Designer

Michael Yeargan

Original Costume Designer

François St. Aubin

Lighting Designer

Jason Hand

Fight Director/

Intimacy Coordinator

Siobhan Richardson

Price Family Chorus Master

Sandra Horst[^]

Stage Manager

Stephanie Marrs

SURTITLES™ Producer

John Sharpe

SURTITLES™ Writer

Gunta Dreifelds

The COC Orchestra is generously sponsored, in part, by W. Bruce C. Bailey

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

Ariane Cossette is generously sponsored by Anne & Tony Arrell

Alex Halliday is generously sponsored by ARIAS: Canadian Opera Student Development Fund

Alex Hetherington is generously sponsored by Patricia & Frank Mills

Jonah Spungin is generously sponsored by Catherine Fauquier

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

[^]Graduate of the COC Ensemble Studio

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

Performance time is approximately three hours, including one intermission.

ACTS I & II: 95 minutes

INTERMISSION 25 minutes

ACTS III & IV: 60 minutes

MEET OUR CARMENS

Two dazzling mezzo-sopranos, J’Nai Bridges and Rihab Chaieb, take on one of the most iconic roles in all operas in our production of *Carmen*.



J’Nai Bridges

Sizzling with dramatic storytelling and a brilliant musical score, George Bizet’s *Carmen* is recognized today as one of the most popular operas in the world. However, when *Carmen* first premiered in 1875 at the Opéra-Comique theatre in Paris, it was a disaster. (The failed premiere was so dispiriting to Bizet that it was said to have contributed to the young composer’s death, which came only three months after *Carmen* opened). Critics and audiences in 1875 objected to the opera’s overtly sexual themes, morally ambiguous characters, and especially Carmen herself: a female protagonist who stood in defiance of social norms and embraced the possibilities of her own freedom.

Yet Carmen’s fiercely independent nature is precisely what makes her one of the most deeply interesting and iconic heroines in all opera, with show-stopping musical moments to match. Her signature aria “L’amour est un oiseau rebelle” (“Love is a rebellious bird”)—otherwise known as “Habanera”—is instantly recognizable as a compelling piece of melody-making that also offers depth of characterization and shades of psychological nuance.

Carmen also happens to be one of opera’s few leading roles for the mezzo-soprano voice, which is considered a richer, deeper, earthier sound than the soprano voice, which is brighter and higher in range. In

most classical opera repertoire, sopranos are the lead roles, while mezzo-sopranos are typically consigned to enacting the secondary characters in the plot (a trusted wise woman, a witch or a nurse, or the occasional ‘trouser role’ in which a female singer depicts a young male character), but not so in *Carmen*, which showcases the expressive quality and richness of the mezzo vocal range.

This fall audiences have the chance to see two dazzling mezzo-sopranos take on this famous part: two-time Grammy Award-winner J’Nai Bridges makes her highly anticipated COC debut, while Ensemble Studio graduate Rihab Chaieb makes a triumphant return to the Four Seasons Centre stage. Below, find out more about their relationship to *Carmen*, their favourite moments of the opera, and what they’re looking forward to in Toronto.

What was your first professional role?

J’Nai Bridges [JB]: I consider my first professional role to be with the Knoxville Opera in 2014. I was actually still in the Young Artists program at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and sang Adalgisa in *Norma*, which was an amazing experience.

Rihab Chaieb [RC]: I sang the Third Boy in Mozart’s *The Magic Flute* at Opéra de Montréal. I was still in my undergrad at McGill University. It was my first real experience in the whole “machine” that is opera. I loved roaming backstage, looking at how people got prepared, how scenes were changed, etc.

What was your first experience with *Carmen*—either as a performer or audience member?

JB: My first experience with *Carmen* was actually not operatic, it was Beyoncé’s

Rihab Chaieb



hip hopera *Carmen*! I’ll never forget how mesmerized I was... not only by her, but the story, and it was so accessible for me. In 2009, I saw *Carmen* at The Met. It was a new production featuring Elina Garanča and Roberto Alagna (who I’ve now sung with, which is completely incredible and full circle), but I just remember thinking, this production is absolutely spellbinding. That was really when I thought, I have to sing this role one day.

RC: My first time singing *Carmen* was in a very unconventional production in Germany. I was ready for the castanets and the flamenco and all the seduction that comes with *Carmen*. Well... that wasn’t quite it! It was more like *G.I.-Jane* meets *Orange-Is-*

the-New-Black Carmen! It was a physically difficult production because there was a good amount of fighting, and Carmen was on stage for the entirety of the show. This production kicked away any preconceived ideas of what *Carmen* should be. Carmen doesn't have to necessarily be the stereotype everyone expects; she can surprise you.

How much do you relate to the character of Carmen?

JB: I actually really closely identify with Carmen, in that I say what I mean and I mean what I say. Like Carmen, I too need a lot of freedom. I've been like that since I was a little girl. I was always needing a bit more space than most children (or adults), so I identify with her in that way. I feel like Carmen is also a woman and character that is just "living in the moment" and I really strive for that in all I do.

RC: Carmen is such a multifaceted role. We all have a little Carmen in us. She is a modern woman stuck in an era that didn't suit her. In the opera she talks a lot about "liberté", freedom. I do feel she encapsulates the term generally but in her inner self, she talks about freedom of women. To me, that is the true freedom that Carmen talks about in the final act: if you cannot let me be me, live my life as my own self, if you continue to impose yourself on me, that is not a life of freedom. It is not a life worth living for. And that is something that speaks to me tremendously.

What's your favourite moment of the opera?

JB: This is tough as there are so many favorite moments in the opera for me! I will say something that does stand out for me is in Act III, specifically the Card Aria ("En vain pour éviter"). It's Carmen's last aria that is discussing her fate. I feel as though

it is a real turning point for her character—there is no getting around it, the cards do not lie and it is only a matter of time. Musically, it is extremely compelling—I think every movement from Bizet is brilliant, but I feel like this Card Aria, the trio, really says it all. It stresses "This is it, this is her fate," meanwhile Frasquita and Mercédès have this very jovial music that features them gorgeously. So there is a real juxtaposition of these worlds. In general, I find that Act III is most exciting for me—also Don José's music where you really see him start to lose it. It brings a new wave of drama in this act.

RC: Musically, it's the "Entr'acte" before the final act. It has the power to truly transport me. It's incredibly lush in sound—and gutsy! I sincerely feel the pure essence of flamenco in that last Entr'acte. Dramatically, it will always be the final duet between Carmen and Don José.

What are you looking forward to most while you're in Toronto?

JB: I'm most looking forward to being in the city! I've heard nothing but great reviews and feedback about Toronto—how diverse it is, how beautiful and fun it is—so, I'm looking forward to exploring Toronto! Every time I approach this role, it's so exciting because I get to delve into a different interpretation or different production and team: I love the creative process, so I'm really looking forward to being in the amazing city of Toronto and collaborating and creating with friends, some new colleagues, and a new team!

RC: Coming back to a place that saw me grow (the company and the city). As a graduate of the COC Ensemble Studio, this is a huge deal for me. I've spent several crucial years in Toronto. It shaped who I am now professionally but also personally. I look forward to seeing friends at the COC and

Toronto who I haven't seen in years. I look forward to fall in Canada, to Riverdale Park, to biking the Don Valley on Sundays, to getting a warm cinnamon bun from Evergreen Brick Works. All of these things that made my life in Toronto special years ago, I'm very much looking forward to.

What non-opera music are you listening to?

JB: My playlist is all over the place, but lately, I've been really into Afrobeats! I just love this genre, Burna Boy particularly! I've also been listening to Diana Ross. I've never really listened to or experienced her music and I came across a song called "The Boss" that I've been playing on repeat. I've also been listening to the full "The Boss" album and going down a Diana Ross rabbit hole!

RC: Right now I'm drinking Florence + the Machine. I saw them live this summer in Portugal and it was insane. My playlist is... eclectic to say the least! I listen to pop, French pop, I'm feeling Rosalía right now, Latin pop, Italian pop, I'm listening to Kate Bush, house music, hip hop, rock, binaural beats sounds, 70s, 80s, 90s (I love how the 90s are making a comeback right now. I'm a 90s baby so I'm all here for it).

Rinat Shaham as Carmen and Alain Coulombe as Zuniga in the COC's 2010 production.



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Welcome back to *Carmen*. The world has changed and so has *Carmen*. This opera is easily one of my favourite operas as it allows you to look at the world today through the lens of one of the greatest operas ever written.

Why *Carmen* and why now? *Carmen* is not a new opera. It has stood the test of time to emerge as one of the best-loved works in the operatic canon. I can't help but feel that this piece was the entertainment of the time. Everything about this show is spectacle, busyness, and excitement: the chorus is on stage practically the entire length of the opera which gives us plenty to look at and take in, and the numerous memorable melodies have us humming as we leave the theatre.

For me, what has allowed this piece to endure through the years, from 1875 to the present, are the real characters in real situations. Now more than ever, this piece is a reminder of the freedom that we all enjoy and also the chains that we can find ourselves bound by. Freedom and choice and restrictions and captivity have taken on new meanings for us after what we have endured over the last few years.

This opera can be like looking in a mirror. It lets us see one another in different situations and understand what leads us to make the choices we make.

Bizet wrote a piece that triggers our impulses, and questions morality. It can be difficult to find a likeable character, or one that we truly want to be. Instead, he's painted characters that embody several different aspects that we are simultaneously drawn to but can also disassociate from.

This isn't just another *Carmen*; this is our *Carmen*. This is our moment to come together as a community, learn something new about this opera (even for those who have seen it many times), and learn something new about each other.

As Philip Glass said, "If you don't need a new technique (approach), then what you're saying probably isn't new." It is impossible not to see this show with new understanding and appreciation.

I hope you will, as I do, see this production for what it is: a stunning piece of music theatre that we can all find ourselves in.

~ *Joel Ivany*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I

Micaëla, a young peasant girl, is searching for her beloved, the corporal Don José. During the changing of the guard, a group of women take a break from their work at a cigar factory. One of them, Carmen, has many admirers but she tries to attract the attention of Don José who remains indifferent to her, despite the flower she has tossed at him. A short time later, the beautiful Carmen is arrested following a disagreement with another factory worker, and Don José is assigned to arrest her. Falling under her spell, the corporal allows her to escape, landing him in jail.

ACT II

Carmen and her friends have gathered at a tavern, when a passing parade celebrates the victorious bullfighter, Escamillo. Zuniga, Don José's lieutenant who is in love with Carmen too, tells Carmen that Don José has been released from jail. Don José soon arrives at the tavern and Carmen demands that he give up his commission and follow her into the mountains with the smugglers. Meanwhile, Zuniga has caught up with Don José and tries to convince the corporal to come home with him. Don José, torn between duty and desire and jealous

of Zuniga's affection for Carmen, defies his superior. In the end, he has no choice but to accept his actions and flee into the mountains with Carmen and the band of smugglers.

INTERMISSION

ACT III

As the smugglers move through the mountains, Carmen becomes less and less tolerant of her lover's possessive and controlling behaviour. Escamillo, who has also followed them in search of Carmen, arrives. A fight ensues between Don José and Escamillo but is interrupted by Micaëla who has come to tell Don José that his mother is dying. Micaëla and Don José leave together.

ACT IV

On the day of the great bullfight, Carmen and Escamillo swear their love to each other. A haggard Don José appears at the arena and begs, then demands, Carmen to return to him but she refuses, throwing down the ring he had once given her. Don José, in despair, charges at Carmen, stabbing her. She dies as the crowd cheers the toreador in the corrida.

SYNOPSIS IN A MINUTE: Carmen is a seductive, freedom-loving woman, desired by many. She takes Don José, a young soldier, as her latest lover, who defects from the army to join her in her smuggling life. But when she spurns him for the exciting toreador Escamillo, Don José cannot accept her rejection. Their final encounter, outside the bull ring, ends tragically when Don José stabs her to death.

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*
Anne Armstrong
Sandra Baron
Bethany Bergman
Terri Croft
Nancy Kershaw
Dominique Laplante
Yakov Lerner
Aya Miyagawa
Lyssa Pelton*

VIOLIN II

Paul Zevenhuizen, *Principal* (leave of absence)
Csaba Koczó, *Assistant Principal, Acting Principal*
Louise Tardif, *Acting Assistant Principal*
James Aylesworth
Heemin Choi*
Patrick Goodwin*
Elizabeth Johnston
Clara Lee
Andrea Tyniec*
Rebekah Wolkstein*
Joanna Zabrowarna

VIOLA

Sheila Jaffé, *Acting Principal*
Joshua Greenlaw, *Assistant Principal*
Carolyn Blackwell
Catherine Gray
Rory McLeod*
Nicholaos Papadakis*
Angela Rudden*
Yosef Tamir

CELLO

Leana Rutt, *Associate Principal, Acting Principal*
Paul Widner, *Assistant Principal, Acting Associate Principal*
Olga Laktionova, *Acting Assistant Principal*
Maurizio Baccante (leave of absence)
Naomi Barron*
Shira Mani*
Elaine Thompson,

BASS

Tony Flynt, *Principal*
Robert Speer, *Assistant Principal*
Michael Cox*
Robert Wolanski*

FLUTE

Douglas Stewart, *Principal*
Shelley Brown

PICCOLO

Shelley Brown
Douglas Stewart

OBOE

Mark Rogers, *Principal*
Lelsey Young

ENGLISH HORN

Lelsey Young

CLARINET

Dominic Desautels, *Principal*
Colleen Cook

BASSOON

Eric Hall, *Principal*
Lisa Chisholm

HORN

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

TRUMPET

Robert Weymouth, *Principal* (leave of absence)
Amy Horvey, *Acting Principal**
Luise Heyerhoff*

TROMBONE

Charles Benaroya, *Principal* (leave of absence)
Robert Conquer, *Acting Principal**
Ian Cowie

BASS TROMBONE

Isabelle Lavoie*

TIMPANI

Nicholas Stoup, *Principal*

PERCUSSION

Trevor Tureski, *Principal*
Chung Ling Lo*
Ryan Scott*

HARP

Sarah Davidson, *Principal*

Banda

TRUMPET

Amy Horvey*
Luise Heyerhoff*

TROMBONE

Robert Conquer*
Ian Cowie

BASS TROMBONE

Isabelle Lavoie*

MUSIC LIBRARIAN & STAGE LIBRARIAN

Wayne Vogan

ASSISTANT MUSIC LIBRARIAN

Ondrej Golias

PERSONNEL MANAGER

Ian Cowie

*extra musician

GO SCENT FREE. In consideration of patrons with allergies, please avoid using scented products and fragrances.

CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY CHORUS

SOPRANOS

Lindsay Barrett
Christina Bell
Stacie Carmona
Virginia Hatfield[^]
Ilona Karan
Leanne Kaufman
Alexandra Lennox
Ingrid Martin
Eve Rachel McLeod
Jennifer Robinson
Teresa van der Hoeven
Ilana Zarankin

MEZZO-SOPRANOS

Michal Aloni
Susan Black[^]
Victoria Borg
Sandra Boyes
Wendy Hatala Foley
Kathryn Knapp
Rachel Miller
Karen Olinyk
Megan Quick[^]
Marianne Sasso
Lisa Spain
Vilma Indra Vitols

TENORS

Vanya Abrahams
Ian Backstrom
Taras Chmil
Ryan Downey
Stephen Erickson
Jason Lamont
James Leatch
Stephen McClare[^]
Derrick Paul Miller
Ross Mortimer
Daevyd Pepper
David Walsh

BARITONES/BASSES

Grant Allert
Kenneth Baker
Peter Barnes
Sung Chung
Jesse Clark
Bruno Cormier
Jason Nedecky
Michael Sproule
Peter Wiens
Marcus Wilson
Gene Wu
Michael York

MUSIC STAFF

Stéphane Mayer[^] (*Head Coach*)
Anna Betka
Vladimir Soloviev⁺ (*Ensemble Studio Intern Coach*)

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Francis Choinière

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Andrew Adridge

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

Al Gadowsky
Kristin McCollum

APPRENTICE STAGE MANAGER

Ness Wong

ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER

Sarah Mansikka

UNDERSTUDIES

<i>Moralès</i>	Jonah Spungin ⁺
<i>Zuniga</i>	Bruno Cormier
<i>Frasquita</i>	Midori Marsh ⁺
<i>Mercédès</i>	Queen Hezumuryango ⁺
<i>Escamillo</i>	Alex Halliday ⁺
<i>Le Dancaire</i>	Jason Nedecky
<i>Le Remendado</i>	Ryan Downey

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

[^]Graduate of the COC Ensemble Studio ^{*}CCOC member

CANADIAN CHILDREN'S OPERA COMPANY

Katherine Semcesen, *Executive Director*

Teri Dunn, *Music Director & Principal Chorus Conductor*

Christina Faye, *Principal Chorus Pianist*

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 operatic and choral repertoire performed by and for young people. Auditions can be arranged through the CCOC website: canadianchildrensopera.com

Rebekah Arseneau
Chloe Chong
Madeleine Crumme
Julian Eden
Frida Frederiksen-Marsiaj

Joel Glickman Rosen
Lilia Javanrouh-Givi
Leo Kemeny-Wodlinger
Katie Lair
Paulina Leyva-Arcos

Julia Luko dos Santos
Lee Macerollo-
Korzeniowski
Lily McIntosh
Malcolm McIntosh

Sophie Mestetchkin
Emma Moreau
Emma Orrell
Sophie Phillips
Madoc Tracy
Clea Webb

BIOGRAPHIES



ANDREW ADRIDGE, Assistant Director (Brampton, ON)

COC CREDITS: (as Assistant Director) Mozart's *Requiem* (2021). RECENT: (as Director) Valentine's Day TV Gala (Edmonton Opera); (as Assistant Director) *Identity* (Against the Grain Theatre); (as Baritone) Soloist, *Electric Messiah* (Soundstreams); Schaunard, *La Bohème* (Against the Grain Theatre); Stephen Marshall, *No One's Safe* (Banff Centre); Dr. Engel, *The Student Prince* (Chautauqua Voice Program); Don Giovanni, *Don Giovanni* (UofT Opera)



J'NAI BRIDGES, Carmen (Mezzo-soprano; Tacoma, WA, USA)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: Carmen, *Carmen* (Arena di Verona, Dutch National Opera, Palm Beach Opera); Nefertiti, *Akhnaten* (Metropolitan Opera); Dalila, *Samson et Dalila* (Washington National Opera); Jocasta, *Oedipus Rex* (San Francisco Symphony); Soloist, *Still and Negrón* with Dudamel (Los Angeles Philharmonic). UPCOMING: Carmen, *Carmen* (Lyric Opera of Chicago, Teatro Lirico di Cagliari); Dalila, *Samson et Dalila* (Seattle Opera); Lucinda, *Intelligence* (Houston Grand Opera); Soloist: *A Child of our Time* (English National Opera)



RIHAB CHAIEB, Carmen (Mezzo-soprano; Toronto, ON / Sousse, Tunisia)

SELECT COC CREDITS: Waltraute, *Die Walküre* (2015); Soeur Mathilde, *Dialogues des Carmélites* (2013); Inez, *Il Trovatore* (2012); Sesto, *La clemenza di Tito*; Juno/Ino, *Semele* (Ensemble Studio Performance, 2012); La Ciesca, *Gianni Schicchi* (2012). RECENT: Nefertiti, *Akhnaten* (Metropolitan Opera); Dorabella, *Così fan tutte* (Washington National Opera); Carmen, *Carmen* (Palm Beach Opera). UPCOMING: Carmen, *Carmen* (Calgary Opera); Cherubino, *The Marriage of Figaro* (LA Opera); Meryem, *Journey of Hope* (Grand Théâtre de Genève); Fenena, *Nabucco* (Bavarian State Opera)



FRANCIS CHOINIÈRE, Assistant Conductor (Montreal, QC)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: (as Conductor) Holst's *The Planets* (L'Orchestre et Choeur FILMharmonique); *Carmina Burana* (Orchestre Philharmonique et Choeur des Mélomanes); Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique*, *Music at the Movies* (Orchestre FILMharmonique). UPCOMING: (as Conductor) *Passion d'Augustine en concert* (l'Orchestre symphonique de Sherbrooke); Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* and Piazzolla (Ensemble Classico Moderne); Verdi's *Requiem*, *La Bohème* (Orchestre Philharmonique et Choeur des Mélomanes); *Bach Incognito* (Festival Bach Montréal)



ARIANE COSSETTE, Frasquita (Soprano; Trois-Rivières, QC)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: Selene, *Endymion's Dream* (COSA Canada); Princess, *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (Domaine Forget Music Academy); Nina, *Nina, o sia La pazza per amore*; Gabrielle, *La Vie parisienne*; The Messenger, *L'Orfeo*; Second Witch, *Dido & Aeneas*; Soloist, Bruckner's Mass No. 3 in F minor (Conservatoire de musique de Montréal); La bergère/une pastourelle/la chauve-souris, *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (Opera on the Avalon); Soloist, *Chœurs éternels* (Boiscommun).



ALAIN COULOMBE, Zuniga (Bass; Etobicoke, ON)

SELECT COC CREDITS: Bishop Tache, *Louis Riel* (2017); Zuniga, *Carmen* (2016); Count Ceprano, *Rigoletto* (2018); The King, *Aida*; Montano, *Otello* (2010); Count Ilya Rostov and Tkhon Shcherbatsky, *War and Peace* (2008). RECENT: Il Commendatore, *Don Giovanni*; Don Basilio, *The Barber of Seville*; Il Gran Sacerdote di Belo, *Nabucco* (Opéra de Québec); Soloist, *L'opéra français en fête* (Festival d'opéra de Québec); Oroveso, *Norma* (Calgary Opera). UPCOMING: José Trippaldi, *Ainadamar* (Opéra de Montréal)



GREGORY DAHL, Escamillo (Baritone; Toronto, ON)

SELECT COC CREDITS: Hermogenes, *Hadrian* (2018); Sharpless, *Madama Butterfly* (2014); Silvano, *A Masked Ball* (2014); Crespel, *Les contes d'Hoffmann* (2012); Yermolov, *War and Peace* (2008). RECENT: Scarpia, *Tosca*; Enrico, *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Opéra de Montréal); The Dutchman, *The Flying Dutchman*; Germont, *La Traviata* (Opéra de Québec); Rigoletto, *Rigoletto* (Calgary Opera); Soloist, Handel's *Messiah* (Rhode Island Symphony). UPCOMING: Scarpia, *Tosca* (Opera West); The Dutchman, *The Flying Dutchman* (Vancouver Opera)



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**Emerging
Artists**



JOYCE EL-KHOURY, Micaëla (Soprano; Ottawa, ON)
COC CREDITS: Liù, *Turandot* (2019); Tatyana, *Eugene Onegin* (2018); Violetta, *La Traviata* (2015); Musetta/Mimi, *La Bohème* (2013). RECENT: Soloist, Strauss' *Four Last Songs* (Lucerne Festival); Amelia, *A Masked Ball* (Chicago Symphony Orchestra); Leïla, *The Pearl Fishers* (Dallas Opera); Cio-Cio-San, *Madama Butterfly*; Elisabetta, *Roberto Devereux* (Welsh National Opera); Floria Tosca, *Tosca* (Lille Opera); Soloist, Verdi's *Requiem* (Teatro Massimo). UPCOMING: Anna Bolena, *Anna Bolena* (ABAO Bilbao Opera); Cio-Cio-San, *Madama Butterfly* (Opéra de Montréal); Tosca, *Tosca* (New National Theatre Tokyo)



ALEX HALLIDAY, Moralès (Bass-baritone; Toronto, ON)
COC CREDITS: Noah/Bleeding Zombie, *Fantasma* (2022); Soloist, *In Winter*; Guccio, *Gianni Schicchi* (2021). RECENT: Figaro, *The Marriage of Figaro*; Sir Thomas Bertram, *Mansfield Park*; Colonel Denison/Samuel Miller, *Maid & Master: The Massey Murder*; Nardo, *La finta giardiniera*; Inspector Brinks, *Who Killed Adrianna?*; Carl Olsen, *Street Scene*; Alexander Throttlebottom, *Of Thee I Sing*; Masetto, *Don Giovanni* (UofT Opera); Father, *Silent Light* (Banff Centre). UPCOMING: Cappadocian, *Salome*; Servant, *Macbeth*; Gaoler, *Tosca* (COC)



JASON HAND, Lighting Designer (Toronto, ON)
COC CREDITS: *Carmen* (2016). RECENT: *Silent Night*, *Kopernikus*, *The Rape of Lucretia* (Banff Centre); *Oksana G.*, *M'Dea Undone* (Tapestry Opera); *Rinaldo* (Royal Conservatory of Music); *Macbeth* (Minnesota Opera); *The Tales of Hoffmann* (Edmonton Opera); *Immersive Van Gogh* (New York, Las Vegas, Pittsburgh, Nashville); *Magic Immersive* (Chicago). Productions for Vancouver Opera, Stratford Festival, Shaw Festival. UPCOMING: *Tosca* (Edmonton Opera); *Otello* (LA Opera); *Identity: A Song Cycle* (Against the Grain Theatre)



ALEX HETHERINGTON, Mercédès (Mezzo-soprano; Toronto, ON)
COC DEBUT. RECENT: Riley, *R.U.R A Torrent of Light* (Tapestry Opera); Rosina, *The Barber of Seville*; Carmen, *La tragédie de Carmen* (UofT Opera); Nicklausse/Muse, *The Tales of Hoffmann* (Toronto City Opera); Juno, *Semele* (Toronto Lyric Opera); Fellow, *Beyond Borders* (Toronto Summer Music); Soloist, *dawn always begins in the bones* (Canadian Art Song Project); Soloist, *The Bear* (Toronto Symphony Orchestra). UPCOMING: Slave, *Salome* (COC); Soloist, *Neruda Songs* (University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra)



SANDRA HORST, Price Family Chorus Master (Toronto, ON)
SELECT COC CREDITS: *Madama Butterfly*, *The Magic Flute*, *La Traviata* (2022); *In Winter*, Mozart's *Requiem* (2021); *The Barber of Seville* (2020). RECENT: (as Conductor) *The Tender Land*, *Mansfield Park* (UofT Opera); *Florence: The Lady with the Lamp* (Voicebox: Opera in Concert). UPCOMING: (as Conductor) *Orphée+* (Edmonton Opera); *Hin und Zurück*, *Monsieur Choufleuri*, *Gallantry*, *A Tale of Two Cities* (UofT Opera). ADDITIONAL CREDITS: Director of Musical Studies, UofT Opera



JOEL IVANY, Director (Edmonton, AB)
SELECT COC CREDITS: (as Director) *Hansel & Gretel*; *Hansel & Gretel* (Opera for Young Audiences, 2020); *Carmen* (2016); *Scorpion's Sting* (2014); *Hansel and Gretel* (2011); (as Librettist) *WOW Factor: A Cinderella Story* (Opera for Young Audiences, 2019). RECENT: *Kopernikus* (Against the Grain Theatre [AtG], Banff Centre); *Orphée+* (Opera Columbus, AtG, Banff Centre); *Messiah/Complex* (AtG). UPCOMING: *Orphée+* (Edmonton Opera); *Otello* (LA Opera); *Don Giovanni* (National Arts Centre). ADDITIONAL CREDITS: Artistic Director of Edmonton Opera



JACQUES LACOMBE (Conductor; Montreal, QC)
COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Hamlet* (Opéra de Saint-Etienne); Theater Bonn: *AIDS-Gala concert 2022* (Beethoven Orchester Bonn); Concours Musical International de Montreal – Voice 2022 (Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal); *Charles Richard-Hamelin plays Schumann* (Orchestre Symphonique de Trois-Rivières); *Werther* (Opéra Nice Côte d'Azur); *Death in Venice* (Opéra national du Rhin). UPCOMING: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Vancouver Opera); *Werther* (Greek National Opera)



JEAN-PHILIPPE LAZURE, Le Remendado (Tenor; Kitchener, ON)
SELECT COC CREDITS: Giuseppe, *La Traviata*; Count Almaviva, *The Barber of Seville* (Ensemble Studio Performance) (2015); Don Basilio, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Ensemble Studio Performance); Le Remendado, *Carmen* (2016); RECENT: Zadok, Handel's *Solomon* (Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra); Arturo, *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Jeunesses Musicales Canada); Soloist, Handel's *Messiah* (Windsor Symphony Orchestra); Soloist, Complete Cantatas of J.S. Bach (Orchestre symphonique de Laval). UPCOMING: Ferrando, *Così fan tutte* (Manitoba Opera)



SARAH MANSIKKA, Assistant Lighting Designer (Toronto, ON)
COC CREDITS: (as Assistant Lighting Designer) *The Queen In Me*, *La Traviata* (2022); *Bluebeard's Castle*, *Madama Butterfly*, Free Concert Series (2021); (as Associate Lighting Designer) *The Magic Flute* (2022). RECENT: (as Lighting Designer) *A Few Words* (WeeFestival Creation); *Queer Songbook Orchestra* (Tranzac Club); *In The Abyss* (Citadal+Campagnie); *Cataclysm* (Aberant Theatre); *Circus Shop of Horrors* (The Annex Theatre). UPCOMING: *Le Concierge* (The Caretaker) (DopoLavoro Teatrale, Théâtre français de Toronto)



STEPHANIE MARRS, Stage Manager (Toronto, ON)
COC CREDITS: *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*, *Carmen* (2016); *La Traviata* (2015); *Hercules*, *La Bohème* (2013). RECENT: *Musik für das Ende* (Soundstreams); *Louis Riel* (National Arts Centre, Opéra de Québec [OdQ]); *The Magic Flute* (OdQ). UPCOMING: *Tosca*; (as Assistant Stage Manager) *Salome* (COC)



LUCAS MEACHEM, Escamillo (Baritone; Minneapolis, MN, USA)
COC CREDITS: Marcello, *La Bohème* (2019). RECENT: Athanaël, *Thaïs* (Teatro La Scala); Sharpless, *Madama Butterfly* (Royal Opera House); Germont, *La Traviata* (Bavarian State Opera); Don Giovanni, *Don Giovanni* (Ravinia Festival). UPCOMING: Escamillo, *Carmen* (Paris Opera); Marcello, *La Bohème* (Bavarian State Opera); Count Almaviva, *The Marriage of Figaro* (LA Opera); Guglielmo, *Così fan tutte* (Dallas Opera); Sharpless, *Madama Butterfly* (San Francisco Opera)



ANNA-SOPHIE NEHER, Micaëla (Soprano; Gatineau, QC)
COC CREDITS: Pamina, *The Magic Flute* (2022); The Sandman/The Dew Fairy, *Hansel & Gretel*; Gretel, *Hansel & Gretel* (Opera for Young Audiences) (2020); First Wood Nymph, *Rusalka*; Clorinda, *WOW Factor: A Cinderella Story* (Opera for Young Audiences, 2019); Lavia, *Hadrian* (2018). RECENT: Antigone, *Œdipe* (Paris Opera); Soloist, *Messiah* (Toronto Symphony Orchestra). UPCOMING: First Niece, *Peter Grimes* (Paris Opera)



MARCELO PUENTE, Don José (Tenor; Rivadavia, Argentina)
COC CREDITS: Mario Cavaradossi, *Tosca* (2017). RECENT: Andrea Chénier, *Andrea Chénier* (Greek National Opera); Pinkerton, *Madama Butterfly* (Royal Opera House, Vienna State Opera); Pollione, *Norma*; Don José, *Carmen* (Semperoper Dresden); Cavaradossi, *Tosca* (Opéra de Marseille, Paris Opera); Don Carlo, *Don Carlo* (Opéra de Marseille, Greek National Opera, Teatro Real de Madrid). UPCOMING: Cavaradossi, *Tosca* (Teatro Colón)



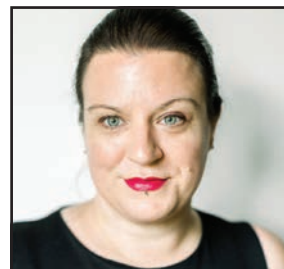
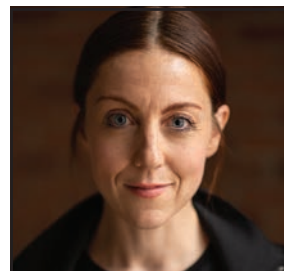
SHOBHAN RICHARDSON, Fight/Intimacy Director (Toronto, ON)
SELECT COC CREDITS: (as Intimacy Consultant/Director) *Hadrian* (2018). RECENT: (as Fight/Intimacy Director) *Beautiful Renegades* (Peggy Baker Dance Projects); *Borderless – A Pirate Opera* (Wilfrid Laurier University); *Lessons in Forgetting* (Pleiades Theatre); *Orphans for the Czar* (Crow's Theatre); *Room* (Grand Theatre, Mirvish Productions); *Sex, Getting Married, The Russian Play* (Shaw Festival); *Phaedra's Love*, *Othello* (Stratford Festival). UPCOMING: *Indecent* (Studio 180 Theatre); *Jersey Boys* (Thousand Islands Playhouse)



JONAH SPUNGIN, Le Dancaire (Baritone; Ottawa, ON)
COC CREDITS: John/Fantasma, *Fantasma* (COC Opera for Young Audiences); Marquis d'Obigny, *La Traviata*; Second Priest, *The Magic Flute* (2022); Soloist, *In Winter*; Marco, *Gianni Schicchi* (2021). RECENT: Jan Nyman, *Breaking the Waves* (Vadstena Academy Summer Opera Festival); Marullo, *Rigoletto*; Mike Groom, *Everest*; King Melchior, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*; Paris, *Roméo et Juliette* (Calgary Opera). UPCOMING: First Apparition, *Macbeth*; Sciarraone, *Tosca* (COC); King Dovid, *Bas Sheva* (Ashkenaz Festival)

KEY CHANGE

A COC PODCAST



Top: Julie McIsaac
Bottom: Robyn Grant-Moran

Key Change is the COC's original podcast, co-hosted by classical singer and culture critic Robyn Grant-Moran, a member of the COC's Circle of Artists, alongside stage director, dramaturg and COC Academy graduate Julie McIsaac. Our episodes explore the operagoing experience from a variety of perspectives, offering a fresh take on today's opera issues with special guests from the opera field and beyond.

This season, we welcome an exciting lineup of guests to help explore our 2022/2023 season.

- Ep. 17** New Yorker music critic Alex Ross joins us to discuss all things Wagner and *The Flying Dutchman*.
- Ep. 18** Grammy Award-winning mezzo-soprano J'Nai Bridges explores her unique relationship to the heroine of Bizet's *Carmen*.
- Ep. 19** Bass-baritone Luca Pisaroni in an entertaining conversation that ranges from dogs to his role as the title character in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*.
- Ep. 20** COC Ensemble Studio graduate Ambur Braid, known for her intense character portrayals, returns to take on the title role of Strauss' *Salome*.
- Ep. 21** Baritone Roland Wood talks villains and scoundrels before he slips into the role of Scarpia in Puccini's *Tosca*.
- Ep. 22** Italian conductor Speranza Scappucci on the joys and challenges of conducting Verdi in advance of our new production of *Macbeth*.
- Ep. 23** Composer Kye Marshall and librettist Amanda Hale talk about developing their new opera, *Pomegranate*.

Deepen your opera experience at coc.ca/KeyChange
or on any podcast platform. All episodes are available now!

*Bryan Hymel as Don José and Rinat Shaham as
Carmen in the COC's 2010 production.*



AN EVENING IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

Supporting the Next Generation of Opera Talent

On Thursday, November 3, Canada's top voices will be at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, competing for your vote to be the next opera star. We caught up with the 2019 competition winner, soprano Midori Marsh, to get her perspective on what makes Centre Stage such a thrilling opportunity for emerging artists and music fans alike.

COC: Do you remember what you felt when your name was announced as the winner at Centre Stage?

Midori Marsh [MM]: It was totally surreal! I had been feeling like I was going to faint that entire time and then I robot-walked up to get the award. It's a memory that's in my brain forever.

COC: What were the immediate moments of celebration like afterwards?

MM: I don't remember immediately afterwards, I was just so excited! But then I recall being upstairs in the opera house to do another photo shoot and meet the supporters for my award, and then I remember taking off my heels as soon as I possibly could and putting on my big old boots. Then the first person I saw was my dad, my biggest fan. I knew he was in the audience, obviously. He and I were probably the two most excited people in the audience! We found each other in the crowd.

COC: What kinds of doors has winning the competition opened up for you?

MM: I've gotten to do so many amazing things in the Ensemble Studio: sing on the stage of the Four Seasons Centre many times, to perform many times with the COC Orchestra; I get to work with such amazing artists, amazing conductors, I get star-struck by my own co-workers, which is so cool!

COC: For music lovers who are planning on joining us at Centre Stage this year, what advice would you give them as they get set to hear a roster of young singers and make a selection for the Audience Choice Award?

MM: Don't overthink it! I would say there's never a clear-cut perfect artist, there's never a perfect performance, it's always about who makes you feel something. Who moves you? Whose performance did you connect with because it spoke to you—that's the person who should get your vote.

**“Totally surreal!
It's a memory
that's in my brain
forever.”**

Midori (right) on the moment her name was announced as the winner of the Centre Stage Competition in 2019.

“I think my favourite role has probably been Papagena, I just love her! She has a ton of fun, I got to wear the best costume ever, with feathers all over, I was just so happy to have the opportunity to bring her to life!”

Midori (right, as Papagena with Gordon Bintner as Papageno) on some of the memorable experiences that becoming an Ensemble Studio artist opened up for her.



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- ♦ opportunity to mingle with fellow music lovers, artists, and the country's emerging opera talent at a post-show toast fêteing the winners and finalists of Centre Stage

For tickets, visit coc.ca/CentreStage or visit the next page.

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Bob Becker Ensemble, 2019





AN EVENING IN THE SPOTLIGHT

NOVEMBER 3, 2022

.....

**Join us as Canada's top voices compete
for your vote to be the next opera star!**

ENSEMBLE STUDIO COMPETITION

Enjoy delicious canapés and refreshments, the thrilling final round of the national Ensemble Studio auditions, and a post-show toast feting the winners of Canada's leading vocal competition.

Tickets | \$150

5:30 PM RECEPTION

7 PM VOCAL COMPETITION

8:30 PM CELEBRATORY TOAST

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Join vocal competition winners and finalists for a three-course dinner in the Henry N. R. Jackman Lounge following the main event.

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SHOWCASE SERIES

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HERITAGE MONTH



As we welcome audiences back for the 2022/2023 season, the Community Partnerships and Programs department is thrilled to continue broadening program offerings, open doors to brand new communities and organizations, and deliver meaningful, authentic learning opportunities to the people that we serve.

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 honour these many cultures and histories through creative expression, storytelling, and cultural participation.

These noon-time performances are free, but registration is required.
Register online or call COC Ticket Services at **416-363-8231** to reserve your spot.

coc.ca/Showcase

(l-r) Margie Bernal, Venuti String Quartet, Alheli Pimienta, Kimberly Ramos (Araguaca Latin Dance Company)

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A photograph showing a woman in a red opera costume with a black veil, smiling and holding a mirror. Another woman is standing behind her, looking on. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and costumes.

COC Wig & Makeup Supervisor Sharon Ryman transforms soprano Tracy Cantin into Anna Bolena at a Spotlight Series event.

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WELCOMING BACK OUR YOUNG ARTISTS

For over 40 years, the Canadian Opera Company's Ensemble Studio artist development program has been providing emerging artists with the training, mentorship, and mainstage experience to turn them into tomorrow's opera stars. After two years of disruptions to live performances, the COC is thrilled to welcome back our young artists for a full season of live opera. Catch up with our 2022/2023 Ensemble Studio members and learn where you'll see them next on-stage!

BRIAN CHO – Pianist

Mississauga native Brian Cho completed his Bachelor of Musical Arts and Masters in Collaborative Piano at Western University where he studied with Professor Marianna Chibotar-Rutkevich and Dr. John Hess. He is an accomplished music director and is known within the London community for his work with MTP Theatre, Pacheco Theatre, and King's Theatre. He is also the co-founder and head coach of the not-for-profit opera organization, Can of Soup Collective. ♦ **BRIAN CHO IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY MARJORIE & ROY LINDEN, AND BRIAN WILKS.**

ARIANE COSSETTE – Soprano

Canadian soprano Ariane Cossette from Trois-Rivières is a graduate of Conservatoire de musique de Montréal and Université de Montréal where she studied with soprano Adrienne Savoie. Her recent opera credits include Micaëla in *La tragédie de Carmen* with Université de Montréal and Selene in *Endymion's Dream* with COSA Canada. She is looking forward to being a part of the COC Ensemble Studio for the 2022/2023 season and can be seen on-stage as Frasquita in the COC's 2022 production of *Carmen*. ♦ **ARIANE COSSETTE IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY ANNE & TONY ARRELL.**

ALEX HALLIDAY – Bass-baritone

Alex Halliday is from St. John's, Newfoundland, where he received his Bachelor of Music in vocal performance from Memorial University. He received his master's degree at the University of Toronto in opera performance where his roles included Figaro in *The Marriage of Figaro* and Masetto in *Don Giovanni*. Most recently, he performed as Guccio in the COC's *Gianni Schicchi* (2021) and Noah in the 2022 world premiere presentation of *Fantasma*. This season at the COC, Halliday sings the role of Moralès in *Carmen* and Cappadocian in *Salome*. ♦ **ALEX HALLIDAY IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY ARIAS: CANADIAN OPERA STUDENT DEVELOPMENT FUND.**

ALEX HETHERINGTON – Mezzo-soprano

Mezzo-soprano, composer, and Toronto native Alex Hetherington recently graduated with a master's in opera performance from the University of Toronto. Recent credits include Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*, and Carmen in *La tragédie de Carmen* (UofT Opera). In this, her



The artists of the 2022/2023 Ensemble Studio (back row, l-r): Vladimir Soloviev, Midori Marsh, Brian Cho, Alex Heatherington, Jonah Spungin, Charlotte Siegel; (front row, seated, l-r): Alex Halliday, Queen Hezumuryango, Ariane Cossette.

first season in the Ensemble Studio, she can be seen on the COC's mainstage as Mercédès in *Carmen*, and as the Slave character in *Salome*. ♦ **ALEX HETHERINGTON IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY PATRICIA & FRANK MILLS.**

QUEEN HEZUMURYANGO – Mezzo-soprano

Originally from Burundi, Queen Hezumuryango holds both her master's degree and bachelor's degree in vocal performance from the University of Montreal, where she earned a number of prizes that include the Ferguson Scholarship, the Gadbois Bursary, and the support of the Jeunesses Musicales Canada foundation. Performance credits include Larina in *Eugene Onegin* (Highlands Opera Studio) and Carmen in *La tragédie de Carmen* (Atelier d'opéra à l'Université de Montréal). **QUEEN HEZUMURYANGO IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY ANNE & TONY ARRELL.**

MIDORI MARSH – Soprano

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, Midori Marsh completed her Master of Music in opera at the University of Toronto. In the COC's 2021/2022 season, she was seen as Annina in *La Traviata* and Papagena in *The Magic Flute*, a performance for which she earned a 2022 Dora Mavor Moore Award nomination. Marsh will next appear on the COC's mainstage as Third Apparition in the company's 2023 new production of *Macbeth*. In 2019, she took home both the First Prize and the Audience Choice Award at the Canadian Opera Company's Ensemble Studio Competition. ♦ **MIDORI MARSH IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY MARCIA LEWIS BROWN.**

CHARLOTTE SIEGEL – Soprano

Soprano and singer/songwriter Charlotte Siegel of Toronto holds a graduate diploma and a master's in opera and voice from McGill University, and bachelor of classical voice performance from the University of Toronto. Siegel was featured in the COC's 2021 concert *In Winter*, and was nominated for a Dora Mavor Moore Award for her performance as Second Lady in *The Magic Flute* (COC, 2022); her next COC role is as Second Apparition in the company's upcoming production of *Macbeth*. ♦ **CHARLOTTE SIEGEL IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY JOY LEVINE**

VLADIMIR SOLOVIEV – Pianist

Vladimir Soloviev is a Toronto-based pianist and vocal coach whose performances around the globe includes appearances at Carnegie Hall and Bohemian National Hall in New York. Soloviev has won the Pattison Piano Competition and the London Scholarship Foundation Competition, and the Concerto Competition at Western University. He completed his Bachelor's degree at the University of Western Ontario, his Master's at the Eastman School of Music, a Professional Studies Diploma at Mannes College, and a Master's in Collaborative Piano at the University of Toronto (UofT). Apart from his collaborative work at the COC Ensemble Studio, Soloviev has coached at the Classical Lyric Arts Opera Studio, Highlands Opera Studio, UofT Opera School, and the Toronto Summer Music Festival. Soloviev remains active as an organist and choral conductor, holding the positions of Music Director at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Kitchener, and Assistant Conductor at the Mississauga Festival Choir. Most recently, he was featured as Character Pianist/Dante in the COC's world premiere presentation of *Fantasma*, by Ian Cusson and Colleen Murphy. ♦ **VLADIMIR SOLOVIEV IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY MARJORIE & ROY LINDEN, AND BRIAN WILKS.**

JONAH SPUNGIN – Baritone

Ottawa native Jonah Spungin earned his master's degree in voice and opera from McGill University and graduated from Calgary Opera's Emerging Artist Program. He was most recently seen on the COC's mainstage as Marquis d'Obigny in *La Traviata* (2022), Second Priest in *The Magic Flute* (2022), and Marco in *Gianni Schicchi* (2021). Spungin will next be seen as Le Dancaire in the COC's 2022 production of *Carmen*, First Apparition in *Macbeth*, and Sciarraone in *Tosca*. ♦ **JONAH SPUNGIN IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY CATHERINE FAUQUIER.**

Catch our Ensemble Studio artists in a variety of free, intimate lunchtime Free Concert Series this season:

Meet the Ensemble Studio

Tuesday, Sep. 20

12 – 1 p.m.

The Life and Influence of Pauline Viardot

Wednesday, Nov. 23

12 – 1 p.m.

A Salute to Sondheim

Wednesday, Nov. 16

12 – 1 p.m.

Winter Celebrations

Thursday, Dec. 15

12 – 1 p.m.

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The Monumental Campaign recognizes the leadership of our philanthropic community in supporting the COC's first-ever production of Wagner's Parsifal. This long-anticipated project has been postponed by the COVID-19 pandemic, but it will be brought to the stage at the earliest opportunity. In acknowledging the commitment of this donor community, the COC is proud to celebrate their direct and positive impact on our ongoing return to the stage.

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A scene from the COC's 2000 production of The Flying Dutchman.



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PATRON INFORMATION AND POLICIES

Mask use is strongly recommended at the Canadian Opera Company but not mandatory. Mask use for COC artists, staff, and volunteers continues to be mandatory.

COAT AND PARCEL CHECK

To uphold the safety of the building, oversized bags and parcels may be prohibited from entering R. Fraser Elliott Hall. Patrons attending COC performances may be offered complimentary parcel check. Coat check is located in the Lower Lobby, where the following services are also available: booster seats, back supports, infrared hearing-assistive devices 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, he or she 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 (#COC Dutchman, #COC Carmen). 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 intermission). 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. New this season: enjoy a drink during performances with new beverage options at the Four Seasons Centre.

RECORDINGS

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

OBJECTIONABLE BEHAVIOUR

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

CHILDREN AND BABES-IN-ARMS

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 all performances. Please contact an usher if medical services are required.

LOST AND FOUND

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.

PARKING

There is parking on a first-come, first-served basis for about 200 vehicles underneath the Four Seasons Centre. The entrance is located on the west side of York Street, south of Queen Street. Additional parking is conveniently located just steps away in the Green P lot underneath Nathan Phillips Square. For directions, visit [greenp.com](https://www.greenp.com).

SPECIAL EVENTS AND CATERING

The Four Seasons Centre is available for rental for all of your presentation, meeting or special events needs, with spaces accommodating 20 to 2,000 people and full catering services.

Located in Toronto's historic Corktown, the Canadian Opera Company Theatre offers an intimate hall, well suited for live performances, gallery exhibits, and product launches. A secluded courtyard provides a picturesque backdrop for receptions and photography.

For further details visit coc.ca/Venues or call **416-342-5233**.

GO SCENT FREE

In consideration of patrons with allergies, please avoid wearing scented products and fragrances.



TICKET SERVICES

Canadian Opera Company subscriptions and individual tickets are available through COC Ticket Services:

ONLINE: coc.ca

BY PHONE:

416-363-8231 or long distance **1-800-250-4653**

Monday to Friday – 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday – 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday (performance days only) – 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

IN PERSON:

Four Seasons Centre Box Office

145 Queen St. W.

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

Saturday: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Sunday (performance days only): 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Hours are extended to the end of the first intermission on performance days.

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. New this season: enjoy a drink during performances with new beverage options at the Four Seasons Centre.

Great opera lives here.



Evgeny Nikitin and Julie Makerov in
The Flying Dutchman (COC, 2010)
Photo: Michael Cooper

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