



22|23 SEASON SPONSOR: BMO 

MACBETH TOSCA

PROGRAM
SPRING 2023

#COCMacbeth
#COCTosca

FOUR SEASONS CENTRE
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Before watching 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 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

This spring, it's not just the weather making us feel uplifted and excited!

Thrilling opera is just around the corner and there's no time like right now to join the COC as a subscriber or renew for 2023/2024. Subscriptions give you access to our best seats at the best prices, and subscribers who renew by May 30 are guaranteed to lock in their favourite seats.

Throughout April and May on our mainstage, two larger-than-life productions are dialing up the drama. A thrilling new *Macbeth* from director Sir David McVicar features the star power of Quinn Kelsey in the title role and two dazzling singers sharing the role and Machiavellian work of Lady Macbeth in Alexandrina Pendatchanska and Liudmyla Monastyrska. Then there's the soaring sound and spectacle of audience favorite *Tosca*, featuring a number of acclaimed artists making exciting COC house debuts: soprano Sinéad Campbell-Wallace and tenor Stefano La Colla are our ill-fated lovers, and conductor Giuliano Carella leads the acclaimed COC Orchestra from the podium. Also as *Tosca*, COC favourite Keri Alkema returns for select performances.

Beyond the opera house, our Community Partnerships & Programs team has recently partnered with Evergreen Brick Works and members of the COC Orchestra on a special Opera Makers project that's forging relationships across East York, including communities dealing with neurodiversity, and other complex needs. Inspired by next season's *The Cunning Little Vixen* by Leoš Janáček, students will create an opera based on themes of humanity and nature, as well as environmental stewardship, and cap off the experience with a trip to see our *Vixen* next winter.

June marks the exciting world premiere of *Pomegranate* by composer Kye Marshall and librettist Amanda Hale at our Canadian Opera Company Theatre (COCT). This contemporary opera is a time-shifting tale of enduring love in the face of homophobia and dealing with an impossible ultimatum. *Pomegranate* is just one of the many new works you'll see presented in this space, with the COCT supporting new stories, emerging creators, and diverse points of view—your experiences, presented by your opera company.

I can't wait to see you at the theatre and for you to experience it all.



Perryn Leech
COC General Director

CONTENTS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 4 WHAT'S PLAYING:
<i>MACBETH</i> | 38 MEET THE NEW
ENSEMBLE MEMBERS |
| 6 TEN THINGS TO KNOW
ABOUT <i>MACBETH</i> | 41 <i>POMEGRANATE</i>
AT THE COCT |
| 20 WHAT'S PLAYING:
<i>TOSCA</i> | 50 MANY THANKS TO
OUR SUPPORTERS |
| 22 TEN THINGS TO KNOW
ABOUT <i>TOSCA</i> | 62 PATRON INFORMATION
AND POLICIES |

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Front cover: A costume detail from the COC's *Tosca*.

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MACBETH



Production Sponsor: **POWER CORPORATION
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Speranza Scappucci is generously sponsored by Kristine Vikmanis & Denton Creighton

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

Alexandrina Pendatchanska and Liudmyla Monastyrskaya are generously sponsored by an anonymous donor

Quinn Kelsey is generously sponsored by Sadhisha Ambagahawita, Melissa & Barry Avrigh, and Al Ramsay & Michael Daniels

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

Charlotte Siegel is generously sponsored by Catherine Fauquier and Joy Levine

Midori Marsh is generously sponsored by Marcia Lewis Brown

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

BY GIUSEPPE VERDI

Opera in four acts ♦ Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave (with additions by Andrea Maffei), based on the tragedy by William Shakespeare

First performance: Teatro della Pergola, Florence, March 14, 1847

First performance (revised edition): Théâtre Lyrique, Paris, April 21, 1865

New COC Co-production with Lyric Opera of Chicago ♦ Sung in Italian with English SURTITLES™

Last performed by the COC in 2005 ♦ April 28, 30, May, 6, 12, 14, 17, 20, 2023

THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

(in order of vocal appearance)

Macbeth
Quinn Kelsey

Banquo
Önay Köse

Lady Macbeth
Alexandrina Pendatchanska
(April 28, 30, May 6, 12)
Liudmyla Monastyrskya^D
(May 14, 17, 20)

Servant
Alex Halliday[†]

Doctor
Vartan Gabrielian[^]

Macduff
Matthew Cairns[^]

Lady-in-Waiting
Tracy Cantin

Malcolm
Adam Luther[^]

Fleance
Roland Piers^D

Murderer
Clarence Frazer[^]

First Apparition
Giles Tomkins

Second Apparition
Charlotte Siegel[†]

Third Apparition
Midori Marsh[†]

Conductor
Speranza Scappucci

Director
Sir David McVicar

Associate Director
Leah Housman

Set Designer
John Macfarlane

Costume Designer
Moritz Junge

Associate Costume Designer
Isaac B. Turner^D

Lighting Designer
David Finn

Choreographer
Andrew George

Revival Choreographer
Julia Aplin

Fight Designer
Nick Sandys^D

Intimacy Director
Siobhan Richardson

Price Family Chorus Master
Sandra Horst[^]

Stage Manager
Jenifer Kowal

SURTITLES™ Writer
Gunta Dreifelds

SURTITLES™ Producer
John Sharpe

[†]Current member of the COC Ensemble Studio ^DCOC 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 1 & 2 95 minutes

INTERMISSION 25 minutes

ACT 3 & 4 60 minutes

Left: Craig Colclough as Macbeth in Macbeth (Lyric Opera of Chicago, 2021, a new co-production with COC)

10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT *Macbeth*

Kicking off our spring run, a brand-new production of Verdi's *Macbeth* delivers an epic opera-going experience to the COC stage! An unforgettable clash for power unfolds in one of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies, adapted for the operatic stage through one of Giuseppe Verdi's most thrilling scores.

Craig Colclough as Macbeth and Sondra Radvanovsky as Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth* (Lyric Opera of Chicago, 2021, a new co-production with COC)



THE COMBINED GENIUS OF SHAKESPEARE AND VERDI

First published in 1623 (though thought to have been first performed in 1606), Shakespeare's *Macbeth* has endured as one of the legendary playwright's most beloved works, as well as one of the most widely celebrated and adapted works in all of theatre. A fervent fan of Shakespeare, Italian composer Giuseppe Verdi sought to compose a score fitting of the play he called "one of the greatest creations of man." Thus, Verdi's *Macbeth* was born—the first of his Shakespeare adaptations, and one of the composer's first works to persist in the international repertoire.

DON'T SPEAK ITS NAME!

Legend has it that a coven of witches set a curse upon Shakespeare for using a real spell within the work, promising disaster to fall upon any production in which someone speaks its name inside the theatre. "The Scottish Play" and "The Bard's Play" have since become popular alternate titles for *Macbeth*, and the superstition (or curse, if you believe the legend) has been passed down to both opera and film adaptations of the work.

A NEW VISION FROM THE EYES OF OPERA ROYALTY

Renowned Scottish director Sir David McVicar presents this new co-production with Lyric Opera of Chicago. Quickly becoming a COC favourite, last here helming the 2019 production of *Rusalka*, McVicar's work has received wide acclaim at major opera houses worldwide, including several new productions at the Metropolitan Opera in New York and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. With *Macbeth*, the director brings a lush new look to the classic tale, overflowing with epic costumes, sets, and special effects.

MEET OUR LADY MACBETHS

Two rising soprano stars take on the infamous role of Lady Macbeth in our spring production! Bulgarian soprano Alexandrina Pendatchanska is a three-time GRAMMY® Award nominee and regular guest at some of the world's most famous opera houses, making her return for the first time since our 2010 production of *Maria Stuarda*. Making her COC debut, Liudmyla Monastyrskya is acclaimed for her superb technical abilities, having delivered a "commanding performance" (*Bachtrack*) as Lady Macbeth at Royal Opera House and Bayerische Staatsoper.

A TEAM OF COC FAVOURITES

COC regulars will notice some familiar faces among our cast and creative team! American baritone Quinn Kelsey stars in the title role, acclaimed for his performance as Germont in our 2015 production of *La Traviata*. Ensemble Studio alumnus Matthew Cairns makes his first appearance since graduating from the program, singing Kelsey's foil, the ever-heroic Macduff. Leading the orchestra, Italian conductor Speranza Scappucci returns after dazzling audiences in 2020's *The Barber of Seville*.

OPERA WITHOUT A LOVE AFFAIR

Upon its premiere, Italian audiences were shocked to witness "l'opera senza amore"—the opera without a typical love affair. What *Macbeth* presents instead, however, is one of the most famous power couples in all of theatre, with two complex, challenging roles pushing the action forward. Macbeth himself experiences an epic rise and fall, casting his wife aside, and damning his enemies. Not to be outdone, Lady Macbeth transforms the already-dynamic role of Shakespeare's play to one of the most thrilling vocal challenges, complete with passages of bel canto, trills, and staccati.



Sondra Radvanovsky as Lady Macbeth
in *Macbeth* (Lyric Opera of Chicago,
2021, a new co-production with COC)

THE VOICE OF A DEVIL

While Verdi credits the Witches—sung not by three independent performers but by a chorus divided in three—as “rulers of the drama,” Lady Macbeth’s impact on the show’s story and legacy is undeniable. Verdi sought “a harsh, stifled, dark timbre” for the role, the right mix of charming and cruel, and thus capable of producing what the composer described as “the voice of a devil.”

A WORTHY ADVERSARY

The heroic Macduff serves as a direct foil to the maniacal thirst for power displayed by Macbeth, creating an epic clash between good and evil throughout the work. Where Macduff shows integrity, Macbeth responds with cunning treachery; where Macduff expresses grief, Macbeth treats death with brutal indifference. Verdi masterfully plays up this contrast throughout the opera, too, casting Macduff as the heroic tenor opposite the dark and stormy baritone of Macbeth.

ON THE STAGE AND SCREEN

Since its premiere, *Macbeth* has persisted as a fascinating character study, attracting countless world-class directors and

performers to adaptations of the work across stage and screen. Such legendary filmmakers as Akira Kurosawa, Orson Welles, and Joel Coen have adapted the work, while the title role has been performed by such notable actors as Sean Connery, Laurence Olivier, and Daniel Day-Lewis. On the operatic stage, many point to Maria Callas’ 1952 Teatro alla Scala performance as Lady Macbeth as a major moment, sustaining much of the work’s current popularity.

A TRANSFORMATIVE SCORE

At its premiere in 1847, Verdi’s *Macbeth* sounded quite different than what opera lovers are familiar with today. This early version rarely strayed from the source material, but underwent a massive transformation nearly two decades later, when Verdi rewrote much of the opera alongside renowned librettist Francesco Maria Piave. This new version—which featured additional arias for Lady Macbeth, a ballet, a new chorus, and a new Act 4 ending—made its French premiere in 1865 to an initially poor critical reception, but laid the foundation for its long-term popularity as the main version performed today.

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SYNOPSIS

ACT 1

Scene 1

King Duncan's generals, Macbeth and Banquo, encounter witches who prophesize that Macbeth will be made Thane of Cawdor and King of Scotland, while Banquo will be the father of kings. Moments after the witches have vanished, messengers from Duncan arrive and proclaim that Macbeth has been named Thane of Cawdor. The generals are mystified at the swift fulfillment of the first part of the prophecy. After the men have departed, the witches agree to reassemble at the first storm to fulfill the second prophecy and to deliver an oracle to Macbeth, who will, they know, consult them again.

Scene 2

Lady Macbeth reads a letter from her husband describing the eerie events. She wishes for her husband's swift return so that she may aid him in ascending to the throne. A servant informs Lady Macbeth that the King, accompanied by Macbeth, will arrive that night. She then invokes the spirits of darkness to help her accomplish Duncan's murder.

Macbeth joins his wife, and she reveals her plan which must be carried out before the King's departure in the morning. Alone, Macbeth contemplates the deed that lies before him. With a bloody dagger in his hand, he encounters Lady Macbeth and tells her of Duncan's death. She urges him to smear the sleeping guards with blood so they will be accused of the murder. He refuses, and she takes the dagger and fulfills the task herself.

Macduff and Banquo come to awaken the king to continue his journey. When the murder is discovered, Macbeth and his wife feign horror as they join Duncan's followers in their cries for vengeance.

ACT 2

Scene 1

Malcolm, Duncan's son, has fled to England, and his flight confirms the court's suspicion that he is guilty of his father's death. This leaves the throne vacant for Macbeth. He recalls the prophecy that Banquo's sons shall be kings and confides in Lady Macbeth his plan to murder Banquo and his only son. When Macbeth has gone, Lady Macbeth easily reconciles herself for the necessity of more bloodshed and anticipates the thrill of power when all threats to Macbeth's position have been removed.

Scene 2

Accompanied by his son during the evening, Banquo is filled with foreboding. He is killed by Macbeth's assassins, but his son escapes.

Scene 3

Lady Macbeth and her husband greet their guests at a banquet. One of the assassins privately reports to Macbeth the outcome of their mission. Macbeth is about to take his place at the table when Banquo's ghost appears – to the guilty man alone. Macbeth's horror amazes his guests and casts a pall on the festivities. Lady Macbeth vainly attempts to restore a light-hearted mood.

INTERMISSION

ACT 3

Scene 1

Macbeth forces the witches to produce apparitions that pronounce the triple oracle: "Beware Macduff;" "None of woman born shall harm Macbeth;" "Macbeth will never be vanquished till Birnam Wood moves against him." Lady Macbeth joins Macbeth, and together they plot to destroy their enemies.

SEASON-END MATCHING CAMPAIGN!

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ACT 4

Scene 1

Scottish refugees lament the sad fate of their country since Duncan's death. Macduff mourns his wife and children, murdered by Macbeth's assassins. Malcolm arrives with English soldiers as reinforcements to march against Macbeth. He orders the soldiers to cut boughs from the trees of nearby Birnam Wood to conceal their numbers. The army sets out.

Scene 2

A doctor and lady-in-waiting keep a vigil to see if their queen, whose reason has been affected by the recent bloody events, will again walk in her sleep. She soon does; in her mind, she relives the crimes she has committed.

Scene 3

Macbeth is fearless at the prospect of battling his enemies. He regrets only that his chosen course of action has deprived him of the honor, respect, and love that might otherwise have brightened his declining years. His soldiers enter to inform him that Birnam Wood is moving toward the church. He meets death at the hands of Macduff, who was torn prematurely from a dying mother and hence does not disprove the oracle that "none of woman born shall harm Macbeth." The victorious army hails Malcolm as king.

SYNOPSIS IN A MINUTE:

Spurred on by the witches' prophecies and an ambitious wife, Macbeth removes all in his path as he reaches for the heights of power. He finds only a hollow victory and 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 (leave of absence)
Sandra Baron
Bethany Bergman
Heemin Choi*
Elizabeth Johnston
Clara Lee
Nancy Kershaw
Dominique Laplante
Yakov Lerner
Andrea Tyniec*

VIOLIN II

Paul Zevenhuizen, *Principal*
Csaba Koczó, *Assistant Principal*
James Aylesworth
Tanya Charles*
Terri Croft
Patrick Goodwin*
Hiroko Kagawa*
Aya Miyagawa (leave of absence)
Jeremy Potts*
Louise Tardif
Joanna Zabrowarna

VIOLA

Sheila Jaffé, *Principal*
Joshua Greenlaw, *Assistant Principal*
Carolyn Blackwell
Catherine Gray
Shannon Knights*
Clara Nguyen-Tran*
Nicholaos Papadakis*
Yosef Tamir

CELLO

Leana Rutt, *Associate Principal, Acting Principal*
Paul Widner, *Assistant Principal, Acting Associate Principal*
Olga Laktionova, *Acting Assistant Principal*
Maurizio Baccante
Bryan Holt*
Elaine Thompson

BASS

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

FLUTE

Douglas Stewart, *Principal*

PICCOLO

Shelley Brown

OBOE

Mark Rogers, *Principal*
Lesley 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**
Brendan Cassin*

TROMBONE

Robert Conquer, *Acting Principal**
Ian Cowie

BASS TROMBONE

Isabelle Lavoie*

CIMBASSO

Daniel Hill, *Principal*

TIMPANI

Nicholas Stoup, *Principal*

PERCUSSION

Trevor Tureski, *Principal*
Chung Ling Lo*

HARP

Sarah Davidson, *Principal* (leave of absence)
Sanya Eng, *Acting Principal**

Banda

OBOE

Jasper Hitchcock*

E♭ CLARINET

Juliette Moreno*

CLARINET

Michele Verheul*
Juliette Moreno*
Anthony Thompson*

BASSOON

Zsófia Stefán*
Samuel Fraser*

CONTRA BASSOON

William Cannaway*

TRUMPETS

Luise Heyerhoff*
Richard Sandals*

PERCUSSION

Chung Ling Lo*

.....

MUSIC LIBRARIAN & STAGE LIBRARIAN

Wayne Vogan

ASSISTANT MUSIC LIBRARIAN

Ondrej Golias

PERSONNEL MANAGER

Ian Cowie

*extra musician

CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY CHORUS

SOPRANOS

Lindsay Barrett
Christina Bell
Stacie Carmona
Margaret Evans
Virginia Hatfield
Ilona Karan
Leanne Kaufman
Alexandra Lennox
Eve Rachel McLeod
Kathleen (Katie) Murphy
Jennifer Robinson
Teresa van der Hoeven
Ilana Zarankin

MEZZO-SOPRANOS

Susan Black
Sandra Boyes
Wendy Hatala Foley
Erica Iris Huang
Kathryn Knapp
Anne McWatt
Rachel Miller
Karen Olinyk
Lyndsay Promane
Megan Quick
Marianne Sasso
Lisa Spain
Vilma Indra Vítols

TENORS

Vanya Abrahams
Ian Backstrom
Taras Chmil
Marcel d'Entremont
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
Keith O'Brien
Michael Sproule
Peter Wiens
Marcus Wilson
Gene Wu
Michael York

MUSIC STAFF

Simone Luti (*Head Coach*)
Hyejin Kwon[^]
Brian Cho[†] (*Ensemble Studio Intern Coach*)

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Derek Bate

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Andrew Adridge

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

Michael Barrs
Meghan Speakman

APPRENTICE STAGE MANAGER

Kelsey Cain

ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER

Mikael Kangas

UNDERSTUDIES

Banquo
Lady Macbeth
Servant
Doctor
Macduff
Lady-in-Waiting
Malcolm
Fleance
Murderer
First Apparition
Second Apparition
Third Apparition

ACTORS

Fighters

Fight Captain
Fighter Cover
Witch Children

Witch Children Cover

Vartan Gabrielian[^]
Tracy Cantin
Giles Tomkins
Clarence Frazer[^]
Adam Luther[^]
Charlotte Siegel[†]
Taras Chmil
Sze-Yang Ade-Lam
Giles Tomkins
Alex Halliday[†]
Lindsay Barrett
Ariane Cossette[†]

Sze-Yang Ade-Lam
Nate Bitton
Connor Briggs
Jonathon Pickrell
Jack Rennie
Vincent Thomas
Siobhan Richardson
Jamie Cavanagh
Hawthorne Wilde Fowler
Mila McQuat
Beatrice Schneider
Fiona Tran

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

[^]Graduate of the COC Ensemble Studio

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Canadian artists through its Rising Stars program.



Ensemble Studio alumni Midori Marsh and Gordon Birtner in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* [COC, 2022]
Photo: Michael Cooper

BIOGRAPHIES



ANDREW ADRIDGE, Assistant Director (Brampton, ON)
COC CREDITS: (as Assistant Director) *Carmen* (2022); 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)



JULIA APLIN, Revival Choreographer (Toronto, ON)
COC CREDITS: (as Revival Choreographer) *Salome* (2023); (as Dancer) *Venus and Adonis* (2001). RECENT: *riverMOUTH* (Urbanvessel); *Apheart, For You* (Moonhorse Dance Theatre); *Synaptic Rodeo* (Double Pendulum); *The Exosphere, The Last Curlew* (Tom Allen). UPCOMING: *Bubbles* (Urbanvessel); *New Work* (Flight Festival)



DEREK BATE, Assistant Conductor (Toronto, ON)
COC CREDITS: *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); *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, Die Fledermaus, Candide* (Toronto Operetta Theatre); *Rigoletto* (Opéra de Québec)



MATTHEW CAIRNS, Macduff (Tenor; Toronto, ON)
SELECT COC CREDITS: First Armoured Man, *The Magic Flute* (2022); Soloist, *In Winter* (2021); Witch, *Hansel & Gretel* (Opera for Young Audiences, 2020); Gamekeeper, *Rusalka*; Prince of Persia, *Turandot* (2019). RECENT: Messenger, *Aida* (Metropolitan Opera). UPCOMING: Don José, *Carmen* (Des Moines Metro Opera), *Matthew Cairns appears by kind permission of The Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.*



TRACY CANTIN, Lady-in-Waiting (Soprano; Summerside, PE)
COC CREDITS: Fourth Maid, *Elektra* (2019); Anna Bolena, *Anna Bolena* (2018). RECENT: Micaëla, *Carmen*; Leonore, *Fidelio* (Calgary Opera); Donna Elvira, *Don Giovanni* (Pacific Opera Victoria); Leonora, *Il Trovatore* (Opéra de Montréal); Anna Bolena, *Anna Bolena*; Chrysothemis, *Elektra* (Edmonton Opera); Soloist, Verdi's *Requiem* (Okanagan Symphony Orchestra); Soloist, *Götterdämmerung* (Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Costa Rica); Soloist, Bernstein's *Songfest* (BBC Symphony Orchestra). UPCOMING: Soloist, Bernstein's *Songfest* (Seattle Symphony)



DAVID FINN, Lighting Designer (Glen Ellen, CA, USA)
COC CREDITS: *Rusalka* (2019); *Arabella* (2017); *Götterdämmerung* (2016, 2006); *Siegfried* (2016, 2005); *Das Rheingold* (2006); *Macbeth* (2005); *Die Walküre* (2004); *Venus and Adonis* (2001). RECENT: *Così fan tutte* (Royal Danish Opera); *Tannhäuser* (Royal Opera House); *Lohengrin* (Metropolitan Opera [The Met], Bolshoi Opera); *Don Giovanni* (Opera Australia); *Tosca, The Flying Dutchman* (The Met); *Antony and Cleopatra* (San Francisco Opera) UPCOMING: *The Ring Cycle* (Teatro alla Scala); *Summer & Smoke* (American Ballet Theater); *Brokeback Mountain* (Soho Place, London); *Frankenstein* (Joffrey Ballet)



CLARENCE FRAZER, Murderer (Baritone; Mississauga, ON)
COC CREDITS: James Isbister, *Louis Riel* (2017); Figaro, *The Barber of Seville* (Ensemble Studio Performance, 2015); Guglielmo, *Così fan tutte* (Ensemble Studio Performance, 2014)
RECENT: Demetrius, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Vancouver Opera); Claudio, *Béatrice et Bénédicte* (Opera Kelowna); Guglielmo, *Così fan tutte* (Edmonton Opera); Marcello, *La Bohème* (Against the Grain Theatre, Saskatoon Opera); Figaro, *The Barber of Seville* (Saskatoon Opera) UPCOMING: El Payador, *Maria de Buenos Aires* (Orchestre classique de Montréal)



VARTAN GABRIELIAN, Doctor (Bass-baritone; Toronto, ON)

SELECT COC CREDITS: First Soldier, *Salome* (2023); Dr. Grenvil, *La Traviata*; Second Armoured Man, *The Magic Flute* (2022); Soloist, Mozart's *Requiem*; Betto, *Gianni Schicchi* (2021). RECENT: Soloist, Verdi's *Requiem* (Orchestre Philharmonique et Choeur des Ménomans); Nourabad, *Les pêcheurs de perles* (Vancouver Opera); Figaro, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Trentino Music Festival) UPCOMING: Nick Shadow, *The Rake's Progress* (Verbier Festival); Masetto/Commendatore, *Don Giovanni* (National Arts Centre); Basilio, *The Barber of Seville* (Opera San Jose); Sparafucile, *Rigoletto* (Opera San Jose)



ANDREW GEORGE, Choreographer (Tonyrefail, Wales)

COC CREDITS: *Rusalka* (2019). RECENT: *Falstaff* (Santa Fe Opera, Scottish Opera); *Don Carlo*, *Macbeth*, *Wozzeck* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Rusalka* (San Francisco Opera); *Andrea Chénier*, *Salome*, *Les Troyens*, *Adriana Lecouvreur* (Royal Opera House); *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Agrippina*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Anna Bolena* (Metropolitan Opera); *La Traviata* (Gran Teatre del Liceu, Teatro Real); *Carmen*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *The Abduction from the Seraglio* (Glyndebourne). UPCOMING: *The Ring Cycle* (Teatro alla Scala)



ALEX HALLIDAY, Servant (also Jailer in *Tosca*; Bass-baritone; Toronto, ON)

COC CREDITS: 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); Father, *Silent Light* (Banff Centre)



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

SELECT COC CREDITS: *The Marriage of Figaro* (2023); *Carmen*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *The Magic Flute*, *La Traviata* (2022); *In Winter*, Mozart's *Requiem* (2021); *The Barber of Seville* (2020). RECENT: (as Conductor) *Orphée+* (Edmonton Opera); *A Comedic Trilogy*, *A Tale of Two Cities* (UoFT Opera). UPCOMING: *La Traviata* (Brott Opera); Opera in the 21st Century (Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity). ADDITIONAL CREDITS: Director of Musical Studies at UoFT Opera



MORITZ JUNGE, Costume Designer (Stuttgart, Germany)

COC CREDITS: *Rusalka* (2019). RECENT: (as Set and Costume Designer) *Così fan tutte* (Opera Australia); *The Tempest* (Royal Opera House); *The Love for Three Oranges* (Staatstheater Mainz); *Mode Circus Knie* (Textilmuseum St. Gallen); *Powder Her Face* (Theater Aachen); (as Costume Designer) *Bernstein in a Bubble* (American Ballet Theatre); *Macbeth* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Michael Kohlhaas* (Schaubühne); *The Visit*, *Macbeth* (National Theatre, London); *Anna Bolena* (Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe). UPCOMING: *La forza del destino* (Metropolitan Opera)



QUINN KELSEY, Macbeth (Baritone; Chicago, IL, USA)

SELECT COC CREDITS: Germont, *La Traviata* (2022, 2015); Sancho Panza, *Don Quichotte* (2014); Rigoletto, *Rigoletto* (2011). RECENT: Amonasro, *Aida* (Semperoper Dresden, Metropolitan Opera [The Met]); Rigoletto, *Rigoletto*; Count di Luna, *Il Trovatore*; Germont, *La Traviata* (The Met, Opernhaus Zürich); Carlo, *Ernani*; Tonio, *Pagliacci* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Scarpia, *Tosca* (Semperoper Dresden, Cincinnati Opera, Opera Philadelphia). UPCOMING: Marcello, *La Bohème*; Count Anckarström, *A Masked Ball* (The Met); Soloist, Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem* (Carnegie Hall); Simon, *Simon Boccanegra* (Opera Philadelphia)



ÖNCAI KÖSE, Banquo (Bass; Ankara, Turkey)

COC CREDITS: Timur, *Turandot*; Lodovico, *Otello*; Colline, *La Bohème* (2019). RECENT: Jorg, *Stiffelio* (Opéra de Dijon, Opéra national du Rhin); Sparafucile, *Rigoletto* (Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg, Opéra national de Nancy); Ramfis, *Aida* (Boston Youth Symphony); Lodovico, *Otello* (Los Angeles Philharmonic); Oroveso, *Norma* (Teatro Municipal, Santiago de Chile); Puccini scenes on Jonathan Tetelman CD for Deutsche Grammophon. UPCOMING: Ramfis, *Aida* (Lyric Opera of Chicago)



JENIFER KOWAL, Stage Manager (Thornhill, ON)

SELECT COC CREDITS: *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). UPCOMING: *La Bohème*, *Don Giovanni* (COC)



ADAM LUTHER, Malcolm (Tenor; Toronto, ON)

COC CREDITS: Fourth Jew, *Salome* (2023); Gastone, *La Traviata* (2022); Sailor/Shepard, *Tristan und Isolde*; Fourth Jew, *Salome*; 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* (Pacific Opera Victoria); Roméo, *Roméo et Juliette* (Calgary Opera); Soloist, Beethoven's 9th Symphony (Edmonton Symphony Orchestra) UPCOMING: Don José, *Carmen* (Edmonton Opera)



JOHN MACFARLANE, Set Designer (Glasgow, Scotland)

COC CREDITS: *Rusalka* (2019). RECENT: *Hansel & Gretel*, *Macbeth* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *The Magic Flute* (Royal Opera House); *Swan Lake* (The Royal Ballet); *Tosca*, *Agrippina* (Metropolitan Opera)



MIDORI MARSH, Third Apparition (Soprano; Cleveland, OH, USA)

COC CREDITS: Ivy, *Fantasma* (COC Opera for Young Audiences); Annina, *La Traviata*; Papagena, *The Magic Flute* (2022); Soloist, *In Winter*; Soloist, Mozart's *Requiem*; Nella, *Gianni Schicchi* (2021). RECENT: Norina, *Don Pasquale* (Under the Spire Festival); House, *Rocking Horse Winner* (Tapestry Opera); Mary Crawford, *Mansfield Park*; Susanna, *The Marriage of Figaro*; Arminda, *La finta giardiniera* (UofT Opera); Sarah Thorpe, *No One's Safe*; Johan's Mother, *Silent Light* (Banff Centre); Frasquita, *Carmen* (Waterloo Symphony)



SIR DAVID MCVICAR, Director (Glasgow, Scotland)

COC CREDITS: *Rusalka* (2019). RECENT: *Fedora*, *Medea*, *Don Carlo* (Metropolitan Opera); *Il Tabarro*, *Suor Angelica*, *Gianni Schicchi* (Scottish Opera); *Idomeneo* (Staatsoper Unter den Linden); *Macbeth* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Falstaff* (Scottish Opera, Santa Fe Opera); *La Calisto* (Teatro alla Scala). UPCOMING: *Andrea Chenier*, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Royal Opera House); *Médée* (Opéra national de Paris); *Medea* (COC)



LIUDMYLA MONASTYRSKA, Lady Macbeth (Soprano; Kiev, Ukraine)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: Amelia, *A Masked Ball* (Bayerische Staatsoper); Soloist, Heart of Ukraine – Music for Freedom (Berlin Philharmonic); Turandot, *Turandot*; Tosca, *Tosca* (Metropolitan Opera [The Met]); Donna Leonora, *La forza del destino* (Teatro Comunale di Bologna); Abigaille, *Nabucco* (National Opera of Ukraine); Soloist, Concert for Peace (Het Concertgebouw); Aida, *Aida* (Fondazione Arena di Verona). UPCOMING: Soloist, Verdi's *Requiem* (Orchestre National de Lyon); Abigaille, *Nabucco* (The Met), *Turandot*, *Turandot* (Staatsoper Unter den Linden)



ALEXANDRINA PENDATCHANSKA, Lady Macbeth (Soprano; Sofia, Bulgaria)

COC CREDITS: Elisabetta, *Maria Stuarda* (2010). RECENT: Lady Macbeth, *Macbeth* (Gran Teatre del Liceu, Opéra de Limoges, Opéra de Reims, Opéra de Massy); Tosca, *Tosca* (Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Santuzza, *Cavalleria rusticana* (La Monnaie / De Munt, National Opera and Ballet of Bulgaria); Elisabetta, *Don Carlo* (Theater St. Gallen). UPCOMING: *Salome*, *Salome* (New National Theatre Tokyo)



ROLAND PIERS, Fleance (Edmonton, AB)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: David Symington, *Murdoch Mysteries* (CBC); Young George Bailey, *It's a Wonderful Life* (Neptune Theatre); Jeremy, *Hamlet*: The Student Matinée (Stratford Festival); Bob Baker, *Wonderful Town*; Philip Cratchit/Edwin, *A Christmas Carol*; Mayor of Munchkinland, *The Wizard of Oz* (Citadel Theatre)



SIOBHAN RICHARDSON, Actor and Intimacy Coordinator (Toronto, ON)

COC CREDITS: (as Fight/Intimacy Director) *Carmen* (2023); (as Intimacy Director) *Salome* (2023); *Hadrian* (2018). RECENT: (as Actor) *Clown 2*, *The 39 Steps* (St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival); *Katharina*, *Untamed* (Tarragon Theatre); (as Intimacy Coordinator/Director) *The Play That Goes Wrong* (Western Michigan University); *Indecent* (Studio 180 Theatre, Mirvish Productions). UPCOMING: (as Actor) *Christie Pits Riot* (Hogtown Collective); *You're Never Alone* (Thought For Food Productions)

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NICK SANDYS, Fight Director (Chicago, IL, USA)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Carmen*, *Ernani*, *Tosca*, *Macbeth*, *Pagliacci*, *West Side Story*, *Wozzeck*, *Bel Canto* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Don Giovanni* (Dallas Opera); *Cherry Orchard*, *Swing State*, *Clyde's*, *Gem of the Ocean* (Goodman Theatre); *Camelot*, *Zorro: The Musical*, *Ragtime* (Music Theater Works); *Red Summer* (MPAACT); *Il Corsaro* (Opera Festival of Chicago); *Frankenstein* (Remy Bumppo Theatre); *Captain Blood* (First Folio Theatre). UPCOMING: (as Revival Director) *Elektra* (Dallas Opera)



SPERANZA SCAPPUCCI, Conductor (Rome, Italy)

COC CREDITS: *The Barber of Seville* (2020). RECENT: Gala Concert (Théâtre des Champs-Élysées); *Rigoletto* (Metropolitan Opera); *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* (Opéra national de Paris, Teatro alla Scala); *Attila* (Royal Opera House); *Simon Boccanegra* (Opéra Royal de Wallonie); *The Elixir of Love* (Staatsoper Unter den Linden); *Le Villi* (Orchestre national du Capitole de Toulouse). UPCOMING: *Dialogues des Carmélites* (Opéra Royal de Wallonie); *Don Pasquale* (Opéra national de Paris); *La Rondine* (Metropolitan Opera)



CHARLOTTE SIEGEL, Second Apparition (Soprano; Toronto, ON)

COC CREDITS: Second Lady, *The Magic Flute* (2022); Soloist, *In Winter* (2021). RECENT: Soloist, *Bond and Beyond* (National Arts Centre); Soloist, *Spirit Song* (Manitoba Chamber Orchestra); Soloist, Beethoven's *9th Symphony* (Koerner Hall); Rose Maurrant, *Street Scene*; Mother Marie, *Dialogues des Carmélites* (Opera McGill). UPCOMING: *Dido*, *Dido and Aeneas Reimagined* (Early Music Vancouver); *Musetta*, *La Bohème* (COC). ADDITIONAL CREDITS: Former Civic Engagement Quartet Young Artist (Pacific Opera Victoria)



GILES TOMKINS, First Apparition (also Sciarrone in *Tosca*; Bass-baritone; Toronto, ON)

SELECT COC CREDITS: Fifth Jew, *Salome* (2023); Sciarrone, *Tosca*; O'Donaghue, *Louis Riel* (2017). RECENT: Sciarrone, *Tosca* (Edmonton Opera); Soloist, Handel's *Messiah* (Hamilton Philharmonic); Soloist, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* (Chorus Niagara, Orpheus Choir); Colline, *La Bohème* (Against the Grain Theatre); Don Basilio, *The Barber of Seville* (Manitoba Opera) UPCOMING: Parson/Badger, *The Cunning Little Vixen* (COC); Zuniga, *Carmen* (Manitoba Opera)



ISAAC B. TURNER, Associate Costume Designer (Chicago, IL, USA)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: (as Production Supervisor) *Fiddler On The Roof*, *Fire Shut Up In My Bones*, *Macbeth*, *Twilight of the Gods*, *The Queen of Spades*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Cendrillon*, *Faust*, *Rigoletto*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Magic Flute*, *The King and I*, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Lyric Opera of Chicago). UPCOMING: *The Flying Dutchman*, *An Evening with Audra McDonald*, *La Fille du Regiment*, *Jenůfa*, *Cinderella*, *Champion*, *Aida*, *Requiem* (Lyric Opera of Chicago).



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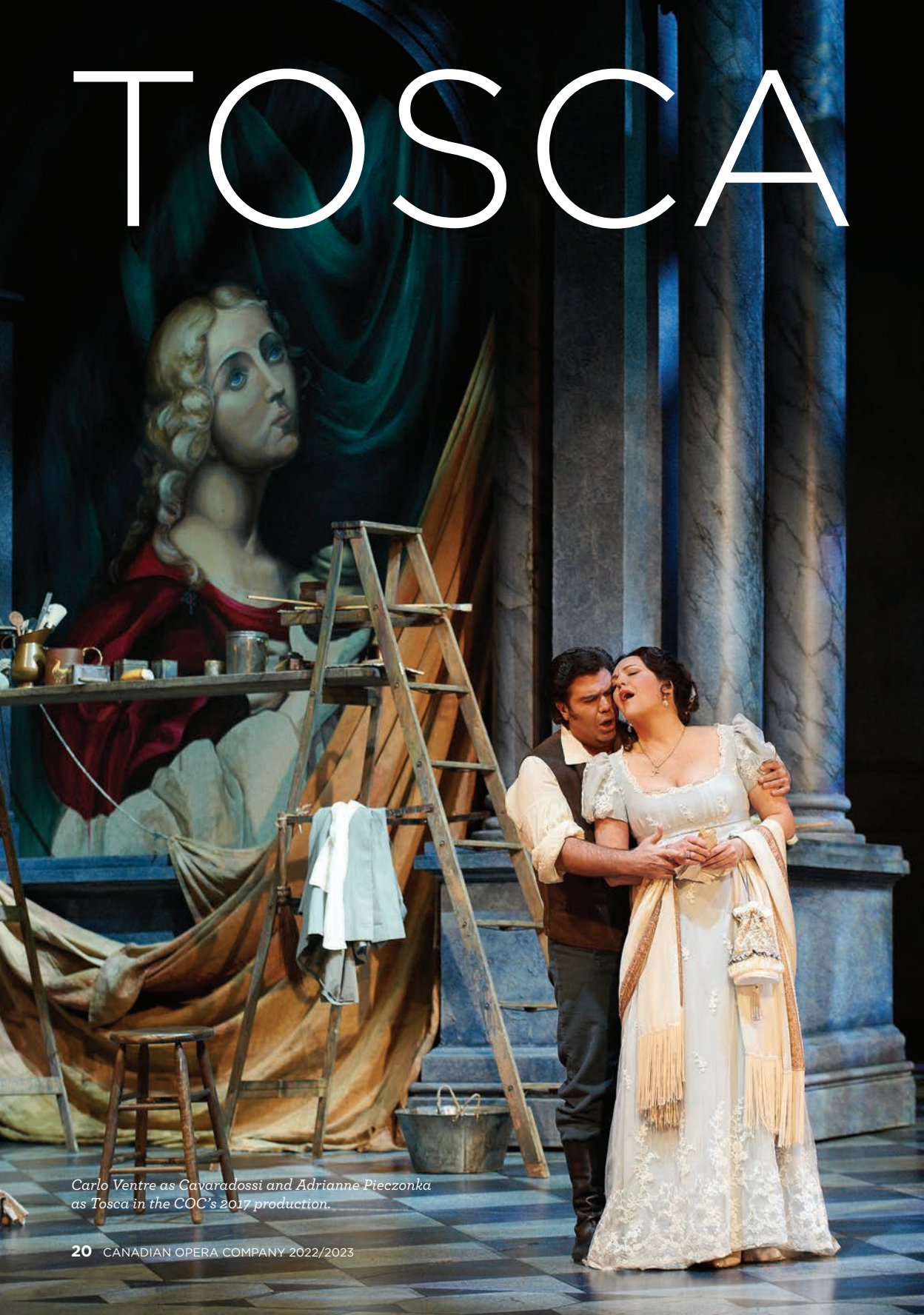
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TOSCA



Carlo Ventre as Cavaradossi and Adrienne Pieczonka as Tosca in the COC's 2017 production.

BY GIACOMO PUCCINI

Opera in Three Acts ♦ Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica, after Victorien Sardou's play, *La Tosca*

First performance: Teatro Costanzi, Rome, Jan. 14, 1900

COC Revival ♦ COC co-production with Norwegian Opera and Ballet, last performed by the COC in 2017

May 5, 7, 11, 13, 19, 21, 23, 27, 2023 ♦ Sung in Italian with English SURTITLES™

THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

(in order of vocal appearance)

Cesare Angelotti, *Consul of the Roman Republic*
Christian Pursell^D

A Sacristan
Donato Di Stefano

Mario Cavaradossi, *a painter*
Stefano La Colla^D

Floria Tosca, *a celebrated singer*
Sinéad Campbell-Wallace^D
(May 5, 19, 21, 23, 27)
Keri Alkema
(May 7, 11, 13)

Baron Scarpia, *Chief of Police*
Roland Wood

Spoletta, *a police agent*
Michael Colvin[^]

Sciarrone, *a gendarme*
Giles Tomkins

A Shepherd Boy
Zoya Avramova^C
(May 5, 19, 21, 23 and 27)
Olivia Pady^C
(May 7, 11, 13)

A Jailer
Alex Halliday[†]

Conductor
Giuliano Carella^D

Director
Paul Curran

Set & Costume Designer
Kevin Knight

Lighting Designer
David Martin Jacques

Fight Director
Matt Richardson

Intimacy Director
Lisa Stevens

Price Family Chorus Master
Sandra Horst[^]

Stage Manager
Stephanie Marrs

SURTITLES™ Producer
John Sharpe

SURTITLES™ Writer
Gunta Dreifelds

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

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

^C Member of the Canadian Children's Opera Company

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

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

ACT 1 45 minutes **INTERMISSION** 20 minutes **ACT 2** 40 minutes **INTERMISSION** 20 minutes **ACT 3** 30 minutes

10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT *Tosca*

The perfect finale for our first full season in three years, Giacomo Puccini's *Tosca* is a can't-miss classic. At once a daring political thriller and a tragic romance for the ages, our production promises a breathtaking night at the opera.

Adrianne Pieczonka as Tosca (above), Carlo Ventre as Cavaradossi (left, ground), and Adrian Kramer as the Jailer (right) in the COC's 2012 production.



CAPITAL “O” OPERA

Tosca is one of the most beloved works in the opera repertoire, a stunning force of romantic and political drama with memorable, emotionally riveting music. Twists and turns abound in this story of a corrupt police chief’s obsession with a opera singer, delivering a timeless tale of lust, jealousy, and corruption.

A SPECTACULAR SIGHT

Our signature production overflows with lush costumes and opulent sets, building a sumptuous vision of 19th-century Rome as the backdrop for Puccini’s unforgettable drama. Fans of last season’s *La Traviata* won’t want to miss the gorgeous gowns, fabulous furnishings, and a sparkling array of opera talent bringing it all to life.

A COC FAVOURITE DIRECTOR

Scottish opera director Paul Curran returns to helm the Puccini classic! In a sparkling career with stops at major opera houses around the world—and even a two-year stint as an assistant to filmmaker Baz Luhrmann—Curran has delighted COC audiences with productions of *Lady Macbeth of Mtensk*, *Otello*, and of course, *Tosca*. Reflecting on the show upon its premiere in 2008, Curran noted, “there are similar stories to *Tosca* in theatre and on film but nothing quite has the same effect as the melodic and dramatic invention of Puccini in the opera house. It never fails to amaze me.”

PUCCINI, MASTER OF EMOTIONS

Puccini’s mastery of stage composition is on full display in *Tosca*, blending catchy melodies with fast-moving narrative to create an opera of immense popular appeal. While some critics have dismissed the show’s heightened drama, the work continues to resonate with audiences, both

new and familiar with opera, due to the sheer emotional power and dramatic impact that Puccini creates as a storyteller. His *Tosca* stands alongside classics like *La Bohème* and *Madama Butterfly* as some of the most successful operas ever written

OPERA HIT LIST

Tosca features some of Puccini’s most memorable music, producing a venerable opera hit list. While the score is notable for its through-composed structure—the music unfolding in an uninterrupted stream from beginning to end—it punctuates the drama with such major musical set pieces as Cavaradossi’s “E lucevan le stelle” (“And the stars were shining”) and Tosca’s “Vissi d’arte” (“I lived for art”), two thrilling arias that have become some the most performed and celebrated opera music in the world.

MUSICAL SIGNPOSTS

Puccini uses leitmotifs—short, recurring musical phrases used to represent specific characters or themes—to signal important connections for the audience. Scarpia’s leitmotif, for example, is as jagged and sinister as the man himself, contrasted dramatically by the bright woodwinds and expressive strings accompanying Tosca. This musical contrast builds dramatic tension and reinforces the clash of wills at the heart of the story.

REAL TIME, REAL PLACE

Set in 19th-century Rome during the Napoleonic Wars, *Tosca* features historically accurate dramatic and musical elements. In a story unfolding nearly in real-time, Puccini uses references to real military battles, city landmarks, and even the sounds of the city, incorporating church bells, cannon fire, and rifle shots into his score, expanding the musical fabric of the orchestra.

A TURBULENT PREMIERE

Tosca premiered in Rome on January 14, 1900, during a period of intense social unrest for the city. The political instability swept up the premiere itself, as cast and crew received menacing letters from those objecting to an out-of-towner writing about Rome, and theatre management found itself receiving a bomb threat. Despite these obstacles, the opera had its premiere to great audience acclaim.

CERTIFIED FRESH?

Throughout its history, *Tosca*'s audience adoration has not always been matched by critical acclaim. A dark story, intense score,

and flashy, crowd-pleasing moments have sparked its intense love by fans, and often inspired equal derision amidst critics—most famously being described by critic Joseph Kerman as “that shabby little shocker.”

AN UNFORGETTABLE ENDING

Stop reading here if you hope to avoid spoilers! *Tosca*'s shocking climax offers a memorable finale to an operatic classic: pursued by the police after murdering Scarpia, Tosca evades her would-be captors, runs to a parapet, and leaps to her death, calling to Scarpia to meet her before God. As the curtain falls, audiences are left to mourn the two tragic lovers.

A scene from the COC's 2012 production





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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

For a director, Puccini's *Tosca* represents some of the most common and most surprising challenges in creating a production of an opera. The action of the story is written in almost moment-to-moment purely human perfection – no tales of knights, dragons, water spirits or mermaids here—and the characters are entirely both human and vivid. The challenge is: how do we bring this brilliantly written story to light in a way that is clear, relevant, and worthwhile for audiences today? That really is a challenge...

Fantasy operas are different; we are generally looking for effects and character traits to remind us of our own wide and varied human traits. *Tosca* is pure flesh and blood from the first bars to the end. In other words, there is very little to bedazzle, impress with or hide behind (Puccini already provides most of that). Characters, relationships, and a credible verismo... “reality.” Another challenge!

The joy and task of directing *Tosca* is not only in the glorious music and razor-sharp libretto, but ideally in working closely with the talents of the singers playing and fleshing out their roles. As the curtain rises it is the characters and relationships we must believe in. Characters are built bar by bar, phrase by phrase and discussion by discussion. No word is too small that it might not be the trigger for a singer to find a new angle into their character's life or psyche,

and the job of the director, I believe, is in part to help the cast explore and discover just these subtleties. *Tosca*, for example, is a deeply religious woman which we learn from much of the text she sings; how then do we manifest her deep faith within a story of an enforced sexual blackmail and, eventually, murder? Cavaradossi, a wealthy nobleman who paints, is anti-organized religion, which we learn from his Voltairean political beliefs, yet he is painting a portrait in a church, the very institution he so opposes. Why? Is it a protest from the inside? Does he paint the Maddalena as a blue-eyed blonde purely out of deference to the Attavanti family who are paying him, or does he have another, more political, agenda?

It's a wonderful privilege to spend days working on and discussing such ideas with such talented casts. The results will be a new creation—a moment-to-moment creation of a story told in words and music freshly enlivened and vital, we hope. For me, the ultimate compliment is in an audience coming out of the theatre engrossed in the story through the characters. I have long believed that opera is essentially about sex, religion, and politics: our desires and loves, what we believe in to guide our lives spiritually and what we believe in to guide our lives in society. No opera encapsulates these elements of human existence quite like Puccini's *Tosca*. The challenge is on...

~ **Paul Curran, 2023**



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Kamen Chaney and Keri Alkema in *Tosca* (COC, 2017), photo: Michael Cooper

SYNOPSIS

Rome, 1800

ACT 1

Angelotti, the escaped Consul of the Roman Republic, staggers into a chapel in the church of Sant'Andrea della Valle. He finds a key and uses it to hide in the Attavanti chapel. The Sacristan enters, followed by the painter Mario Cavaradossi, who resumes work on his painting of a blonde Mary Magdalene, while his thoughts drift to his dark-haired lover, the opera singer Floria Tosca. When the Sacristan leaves, shutting the chapel door, Angelotti emerges. Cavaradossi, his compatriot, recognizes him, but tells him to hide again—he has heard the approach of Tosca. Angelotti is weak with hunger and Cavaradossi gives him his lunch.

Entering, Tosca jealously demands to know why the door was locked. Cavaradossi appeases her and they arrange to meet at his home after her performance that evening. As she leaves, Tosca angrily recognizes the beautiful Marchesa Attavanti in the face of Cavaradossi's painting of Mary Magdalene. Cavaradossi's passionate protests finally placate her, but she asks that he paint the eyes dark, like her own. After Tosca leaves, Angelotti joins Cavaradossi and informs him that the Marchesa Attavanti is his sister. Cavaradossi tells him of a hidden path to his villa and of a hiding place halfway down the garden well. They quickly leave when they hear a cannon shot announcing the discovery of Angelotti's escape from prison.

The Sacristan returns, followed by choirboys and clerics, who are all excited at the news of Napoleon's defeat. Everyone falls silent at the arrival of Baron Scarpia, the chief of police. The police find the Attavanti

chapel gate unlocked. Inside they find a woman's fan with the Attavanti crest and an empty lunch basket. Scarpia recognizes the Marchesa in the painting. The Sacristan tells him that the artist is Cavaradossi, a suspected traitor and Floria Tosca's lover.

Tosca returns to the church intending to reluctantly cancel that evening's assignment with Cavaradossi. She has to sing that evening as the Farnese Palace in celebration of Napoleon's defeat. Scarpia uses the fan to convince Tosca that her lover is being unfaithful to her. He consoles her as she breaks down. Tosca rushes off to confront her lover. Scarpia orders his men to follow her. As the cardinal's procession enters the church, Scarpia congratulates himself on the prospect of catching Angelotti, jailing the traitor Cavaradossi and, most importantly, winning the beautiful Tosca.

INTERMISSION

ACT 2

Scarpia is dining in his apartment in the Farnese Palace. Scarpia gives Sciarrone a letter for Tosca, requesting a meeting after her performance. Alone, Scarpia exults in his plans to conquer Tosca, extolling the merits of violent conquest over romantic love. Spoletta enters, reporting that Angelotti could not be found at Cavaradossi's villa, but that they have arrested the painter instead. Cavaradossi is brought into the room, but he refuses to answer questions. Tosca enters and, before he is dragged from the room, Cavaradossi warns her to say nothing to Scarpia. Scarpia questions Tosca about her visit to the villa, and when she says nothing, he threatens to torture her lover until one of them tells the truth. Tosca begs for mercy

for Cavaradossi, and then, upon hearing an anguished cry from her lover, she tells Scarpia to look in the garden well.

The beaten Cavaradossi is brought out, but rallies to curse Tosca when Scarpia reveals her betrayal. But when Sciarrone enters to tell them that Napoleon has defeated the reactionary forces at Marengo, Cavaradossi scornfully celebrates the victory in Scarpia's face. Enraged, Scarpia condemns him to death and orders him removed. Alone with Scarpia, Tosca begs for his mercy, asking Scarpia to name his price. He tells her that she is the price: she must submit to his lust. In despair, Tosca wonders why she, who has lived for art and love, is repaid by God with such misery.

Spoletta enters with the news that Angelotti has committed suicide upon his discovery. Tosca agrees to Scarpia's demands but insists that Cavaradossi be set free at once. Scarpia tells her that he will stage a mock execution, telling Spoletta: "just like Palmieri." Spoletta nods in understanding and leaves. Tosca insists on a letter of safe conduct. As Scarpia writes the letter, Tosca picks up a knife. As Scarpia rises to seize Tosca, she stabs him, crying "This is Tosca's kiss!" Standing over the dead Scarpia, she forgives him, and leaves the room, with the safe conduct letter in her hand.

INTERMISSION

ACT 3

At the ramparts of Castel Sant'Angelo, a shepherd boy sings in the distance as Cavaradossi is brought out to await his execution. Writing a farewell letter to Tosca, he loses himself in memories of their love. Suddenly Tosca enters, and joyfully shows him the letter of safe conduct. Tosca tells Cavaradossi all, preparing him to pretend to die during the fake execution. They ponder their happy future.

The firing squad enters to lead Cavaradossi to his execution. As the shots are fired, Cavaradossi falls convincingly. Tosca waits for everyone to leave before she approaches him. When Cavaradossi is unresponsive, Tosca realizes Scarpia's final deceit. Having discovered the murdered corpse of Scarpia, Spoletta and Sciarrone enter to arrest Tosca. Upon seeing them, the griefstricken Tosca runs to the parapet, and jumps to her death, crying, "Scarpia, we meet before God!"

SYNOPSIS IN A MINUTE: The passionate opera singer Tosca is in love with the artist Cavaradossi. When Cavaradossi hides Angelotti (an escaped political prisoner), Scarpia, the tyrannical Chief of Police, seeks to execute both men. Tosca makes a deal with Scarpia: to give herself to him to save her lover. With Scarpia's promise of a fake execution, Tosca stabs him before he can claim his part of the deal. But Tosca is double-crossed and Cavaradossi is actually executed. In despair, she takes her own life.

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 (leave of absence)
Sandra Baron
Bethany Bergman
Terri Croft
Patrick Goodwin*
Nancy Kershaw
Dominique Laplante
Yakov Lerner
Louise Tardif
Andrea Tyniec*

VIOLIN II

Paul Zevenhuizen, *Principal*
Csaba Koczó, *Assistant Principal*
James Aylesworth
Heemin Choi*
Elizabeth Johnston
Hiroko Kagawa*
Clara Lee
Aya Miyagawa (leave of absence)
Jeremy Potts*
Hee-Soo Yoon*
Joanna Zabrowarna

VIOLA

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

CELLO

Leana Rutt, *Associate Principal*
Paul Widner, *Assistant Principal, Acting Principal*
Maurizio Baccante, *Acting Assistant Principal*
Bryan Holt*
Olga Laktionova
Elaine Thompson

BASS

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

FLUTE

Douglas Stewart, *Principal*
Shelley Brown
Leslie Newman*

PICCOLO

Shelley Brown
Leslie Newman*

OBOE

Mark Rogers, *Principal*
Jasper Hitchcock*

ENGLISH HORN

Lesley Young

CLARINET

Dominic Desautels, *Principal*
Michele Verheul*

BASSOON

Eric Hall, *Principal*
William Cannaway*

CONTRA BASSOON

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*
Brendan Cassin*

TROMBONE

Robert Conquer, *Acting Principal**
Ian Cowie

BASS TROMBONE

Isabelle Lavoie*

CIMBASSO

Daniel Hill, *Principal*

TIMPANI

Nicholas Stoup, *Principal*

PERCUSSION

Trevor Tureski, *Principal*
Chung Ling Lo*

HARP

Sarah Davidson, *Principal* (leave of absence)
Sanya Eng, *Acting Principal**

CELESTE AND ORGAN

Simone Luti*

Banda

HARP

Ben Albertson*

FLUTE

Douglas Stewart

VIOLA

Catherine Gray

PERCUSSION

Trevor Tureski
Ryan Scott*

MUSIC LIBRARIAN & STAGE LIBRARIAN

Wayne Vogan

ASSISTANT MUSIC LIBRARIAN

Ondrej Golias

PERSONNEL MANAGER

Ian Cowie

*extra musician

CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY CHORUS

SOPRANOS

Lindsay Barrett
Christina Bell
Virginia Hatfield
Ilona Karan
Leanne Kaufman
Alexandra Lennox
Eve Rachel McLeod
Jennifer Robinson
Teresa van der Hoeven
Ilana Zarankin

MEZZO-SOPRANOS

Susan Black
Sandra Boyes
Wendy Hatala Foley
Erica Iris Huang
Kathryn Knapp
Anne McWatt
Karen Olinsky
Megan Quick
Marianne Sasso
Vilma Indra Vitols

TENORS

Vanya Abrahams
Taras Chmil
Marcel d'Entremont
Ryan Downey
Stephen Erickson
Jason Lamont
James Leatch
Stephen McClare
Derrick Paul Miller
David Walsh

BARITONES/BASSES

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



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Simone Luti
Vladimir Soloviev* (*Ensemble Studio Intern Coach*)

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Simone Luti

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Marilyn Gronsdal^

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

Kate Porter
Lesley Abarquez

ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER

Sarah Mansikka

UNDERSTUDIES

Cesare Angelotti	Vartan Gabrielian^
A Sacristan	Gene Wu
Cavaradossi	Adam Luther^
Tosca	Charlotte Siegel†
Scarpia	Peter Barrett^
Spoletta	Ryan Downey
Sciarrone	Alex Halliday†

†Current member of the COC Ensemble Studio

^Graduate of the COC Ensemble Studio

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

Zoya Avramova

Chloe Chong

Julian Eden

Frida Frederiksen-Marsiaj

Joel Glickman Rosen

Abigail Kane

Leo Kemeny-Wodlinger

Katie Lair

Paulina Leyva-Arcos

Lee Macerollo-Korzeniowski

Beatrice Marcaccini

Ellen Marcaccini

Aviva Marche

Lily McIntosh

Malcolm McIntosh

Sofia Melnyk-Gomez

Sophie Mestetchkin

Emma Moreau

Emma Orrell

Olivia Pady

Amelia Payne

Clea Webb

BIOGRAPHIES



KERI ALKEMA, Tosca (Soprano; Nashville, TN, USA)

SELECT COC CREDITS: Foreign Princess, *Rusalka* (2019); Giovanna Seymour, *Anna Bolena* (2018); Tosca, *Tosca* (2017); Vitellia, *La clemenza di Tito* (2013). RECENT: Mimi, *La Bohème*; Donna Elvira, *Don Giovanni* (Seattle Opera); Soloist, Serenata Italiana – A Gala Celebration of Italian Opera (Charleston Opera Theater); Tosca, *Tosca* (Washington National Opera)

UPCOMING: Nedda, *Pagliacci* (Nashville Opera)



SINÉAD CAMPBELL-WALLACE, Tosca (Soprano; Wexford, Ireland)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: Soloist, Maria Callas – A Centenary Celebration (National Concert Hall, Dublin); Overseer, *Elektra* (Bayerische Staatsoper); Tosca, *Tosca* (English National Opera [ENO], Irish National Opera, Scottish Opera); Leonore, *Fidelio* (Grafenegg Festival, Barbican Centre, Bozar Brussels, Irish National Opera); Mimi, *La Bohème* (ENO); Fourth Maid, *Elektra* (Salzburg Festival). UPCOMING: Chrysothemis, *Elektra* (Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, Suntory Hall); Elsa, *Lohengrin* (Opéra national de Paris); Leonore, *Fidelio* (Opéra de Dijon)



GIULIANO CARELLA, Conductor (Verona, Italy)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Aida*, *Simon Boccanegra* (The Israeli Opera); *Norma* (Aalto Theater Essen); *Francesca da Rimini*, *Don Pasquale* (Tiroler Festspiele Erl); *Bianca e Falliero* (Oper Frankfurt); *Carmen* (Opéra de Monte-Carlo); *Madama Butterfly* (Opéra National du Rhin); *Tosca*, *I Puritani* (Opéra de Marseille); *La Sonnambula* (Opéra de Nice). UPCOMING: *Il Trovatore* (The Israeli Opera); *La fille du regiment* (Teatro Massimo Bellini); *A Masked Ball* (Oper Köln); *Mireille* (Oper Frankfurt)



MICHAEL COLVIN, Spoletta (Tenor; Toronto, ON)

SELECT COC CREDITS: Don Basilio, *The Marriage of Figaro* (2023, 2016); Second Jew, *Salome* (2023); Monostatos, *The Magic Flute* (2022, 2017). RECENT: Basilio, *The Marriage of Figaro*; Spoletta, *Tosca* (Opéra national de Paris); Monostatos, *The Magic Flute* (Opéra national de Paris, Royal Opera House [Covent Garden]); Duke of Cornwall, *Lear* (Maggio Musicale Fiorentino) UPCOMING: Bardolfo, *Falstaff* (Salzburg Festival); Bob Boles, *Peter Grimes* (Teatro alla Scala); Duke of Cornwall, *Lear* (Teatro Real Madrid)



PAUL CURRAN, Director (Palm Springs, CA, USA)

SELECT COC CREDITS: *Tosca* (2017, 2012, 2008); *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* (2007). RECENT: *Peter Grimes* (Teatro La Fenice); *The Golden Cockerel* (Santa Fe Opera, Dallas Opera); *The Flying Dutchman*, *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Ural Opera Ballet Theatre); *La Traviata* (Opera Philadelphia); *Tosca* (Mariinsky Theatre); *Carmen* (Irish National Opera); *The Bartered Bride* (Garsington Opera). UPCOMING: *The Queen of Spades* (The Grange Festival); *Tristan und Isolde* (San Francisco Opera)



DONATO DI STEFANO, Sacristan (Bass; Sora, Italy)

COC CREDITS: Benoît/Alcindoro, *La Bohème* (2019); Sacristan, *Tosca* (2017); Don Magnifico, *La Cenerentola* (2011); Don Bartolo, *The Barber of Seville* (1998). RECENT: Don Pasquale, *Don Pasquale* (Tiroler Festspiele Erl, Oldenburgisches Staatstheater [OS]); Gianni Schicchi, *Gianni Schicchi* (OS); Maestro Spinellocchio, *Gianni Schicchi* (Bayerische Staatsoper). UPCOMING: Gianni Schicchi, *Gianni Schicchi* (OS); Don Pasquale, *Don Pasquale*; Bartolo, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Oper Frankfurt); Don Pasquale, *Don Pasquale* (Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe)



MARILYN GRONSDAL, Assistant Director (Toronto, ON)

COC CREDITS: (as Associate Director) *Salome* (2023); *Così fan tutte* (2019); (as Assistant Director) *La Traviata*, *Bluebeard's Castle* (2022); *Turandot* (2019); (as Revival Director) *The Flying Dutchman* (2022); *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) *Fidelio* (COC)



ALEX HALLIDAY, A Jailer (also Servant in *Macbeth*; Bass-baritone; Toronto, ON)

COC CREDITS: 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); Father, *Silent Light* (Banff Centre)



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

SELECT COC CREDITS: *The Marriage of Figaro* (2023); *Carmen*, *The Flying Dutchman*; *The Magic Flute*; *La Traviata* (2022); *In Winter*; Mozart's *Requiem* (2021); *The Barber of Seville* (2020). RECENT: (as Conductor) *Orpheus* (Edmonton Opera); *A Comedic Trilogy*; *A Tale of Two Cities* (UofT Opera). UPCOMING: *La Traviata* (Brott Opera); Opera in the 21st Century (Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity). ADDITIONAL CREDITS: Director of Musical Studies at UofT Opera



DAVID MARTIN JACQUES, Lighting Designer (Long Beach, CA, USA)

COC CREDITS: *Tosca* (2012, 2008); *Otello* (2010); *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* (2007) RECENT: *The Light in the Piazza* (Central City Opera); *All the Truths We Cannot See: A Chernobyl Story* (Sibelius Academy); *My Fair Lady* (Teatro Massimo di Palermo)



KEVIN KNIGHT, Set & Costume Designer (London, England)

COC CREDITS: *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* (2007). RECENT: *La Donna del Lago* (Metropolitan Opera, Santa Fe Opera); *I due Foscari*, *Albert Herring* (LA Opera); *Le roi malgré lui* (Bard Summerscape, Wexford Festival); *The Tsar's Bride*, *I due Foscari* (Royal Opera House, Covent Garden); *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Albert Herring* (Santa Fe Opera); *Pastorale* (Staatstheater Stuttgart); *Tannhäuser* (Teatro alla Scala). UPCOMING: *The Bartered Bride* (Garsington Opera)



STEFANO LA COLLA, Cavaradossi (Tenor; Turin, Italy)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: Radamès, *Aida* (Teatro Regio di Torino, Fondazione Arena Di Verona, Semperoper Dresden, Teatro di San Carlo, Deutsche Oper Berlin); Andrea Chénier, *Andrea Chénier*; Cavaradossi, *Tosca* (Wiener Staatsoper); Calaf, *Turandot* (Oper Köln, Tokyo Bunka Kaikan); Manrico, *Il Trovatore* (Opernhaus Zürich); Enzo Grimaldo, *La Gioconda* (Teatro alla Scala, Les Chorégies d'Orange). UPCOMING: Calaf, *Turandot* (Deutsche Oper Berlin); Radamès, *Aida* (Oper Frankfurt); Luigi, *Il tabarro* (Staatsoper Hamburg)



SIMONE LUTI, Assistant Conductor (Lucca, Italy)

SELECT COC CREDITS: *The Marriage of Figaro* (2023); *Gianni Schicchi* (2021); *The Barber of Seville* (2020); *La Bohème* (2019). RECENT: *Hansel & Gretel*, *Falstaff*, *Alcina*; *The Elixir of Love* (Western Opera); *Otello* (InSeries Opera); *The Mikado*, *The Turn of the Screw* (Western Opera); *La finta Giardiniera* (AEDO & Western Opera); *The Marriage of Figaro* (Accademia Europea dell'Opera); *La Bohème* (Opéra de Montpellier); *Norma* (Théâtre du Chatelet)



STEPHANIE MARRS, Stage Manager (Toronto, ON)

COC CREDITS: *Carmen* (2022, 2016), *The Magic Flute* (2022, 2017); *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); *Madama Butterfly* (2022, 2014, 2009, 2003); *Hercules*; *La Bohème* (2013); (as Assistant Stage Manager); *Salome* (2023). RECENT: *Musik für das Ende* (Soundstreams); *Louis Riel* (National Arts Centre, Opéra de Québec [OdQ]); *The Magic Flute* (OdQ). UPCOMING: *Fidelio* (COC)



CHRISTIAN PURSELL, Angelotti (Bass-baritone; Santa Cruz, CA, USA)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: Escamillo, *Carmen* (Houston Grand Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Hawaii Opera Theatre); Elmiro, *Otello* (Opera Philadelphia); Olin Blitch, *Susannah* (Wolf Trap Opera); Soloist, Haydn's *The Creation* (Arizona MusicFest); Soloist, Handel's *Messiah* (San Francisco Symphony). UPCOMING: Escamillo, *Carmen* (Des Moines Metro Opera)



MATT RICHARDSON, Fight Director, (Ottawa Valley, ON)

COC CREDITS: Dandy, *Lucia di Lammermoor* (2013). RECENT: *Yerma* and *Detroit* (Coal Mine Theatre); *Villains!*, *Club Pirate*, *Hunt Fer Jack* (Disney Cruise Lines); *Henry V* (Stratford Festival); *Beauty and the Beast* (Young Peoples' Theatre); *Danckock's Dance* (Hogtown Collective); *Crazy For You* (Port Hope Festival Theatre); *The Clockmaker*, *Beauty and the Beast* (Sudbury Theatre Centre); *Macbeth* (King's Players). UPCOMING: *Christie Pits Riots* (Hogtown Collective)



LISA STEVENS, Intimacy Director (Toronto, ON)

COC CREDITS: *The Flying Dutchman* (2022). RECENT: (as Intimacy Coordinator/Director) *Seven Veils* (Atom Egoyan); *Civil* (Netflix); *Verona* (TIFF); *Tale of Two Cities* (U of T); (as Choreographer) *Dolly Parton presents 9 To 5 The Musical* (West End); Disney's *HSM 1 & 2* (Worldwide); (as Director) *Escape to Margaritaville* (Walnut St. Theater); *West Side Story* (Drayton Entertainment); *The Little Prince* (Theatre Calgary). UPCOMING: (as Director/Choreographer) *Fiddler on the Roof* (Drayton Entertainment)



GILES TOMKINS, Sciarrone (also First Apparition in *Macbeth*; Bass-baritone; Toronto, ON)

SELECT COC CREDITS: Fifth Jew, *Salome* (2023); Sciarrone, *Tosca*; O'Donoghue, *Louis Riel* (2017). RECENT: Sciarrone, *Tosca* (Edmonton Opera); Soloist, Handel's *Messiah* (Hamilton Philharmonic); Soloist, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* (Chorus Niagara, Orpheus Choir); Colline, *La Bohème* (Against the Grain Theatre); Don Basilio, *The Barber of Seville* (Manitoba Opera) UPCOMING: Parson/Badger, *The Cunning Little Vixen* (COC); Zuniga, *Carmen* (Manitoba Opera)



ROLAND WOOD, Scarpia (Baritone; South Lanarkshire, Scotland)

COC CREDITS: Gianni Schicchi, *Gianni Schicchi* (2021); Rigoletto, *Rigoletto* (2018); Renato, *A Masked Ball* (2014). RECENT: Michele, *Il Tabarro*; Gianni Schicchi, *Gianni Schicchi*; Falstaff, *Falstaff* (Scottish Opera); Scarpia, *Tosca* (English National Opera [ENO], Staatsoper Stuttgart); Soloist, The Verdi Connection; Don Giovanni, *Don Giovanni* (Scottish Opera); Ford, *Falstaff* (Santa Fe Opera); Forester, *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Elbphilharmonie Laeiszhalle Hamburg, Concertgebouw Amsterdam). UPCOMING: Giorgio Germont, *La Traviata* (ENO)



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FREE CONCERT SERIES IN THE RICHARD BRADSHAW AMPHITHEATRE

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SPRING HIGHLIGHTS AT THE FREE CONCERT SERIES

The Free Concert Series in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, presented by TD Bank Group will feature an exciting roster of performances to wrap up the 2022/2023 season. With its stunning views of the city, the amphitheatre will be showing all the signs of spring as we welcome performances from both local and international creators to the series.

Upcoming highlights include: recitals from mainstage artists Önay Köse (Banquo in *Macbeth*) and Roland Wood (Scarpia in *Tosca*); performances from the COC's Ensemble Studio, including a farewell sendoff to Ensemble grads Jonah Spungin and Vladimir Soloviev; and a focus on dance with performances by Dance Ontario, Peggy Baker Dance Projects, Ballet Jörgen, and Danceworks.

With just a few weeks left in the current season, be sure to visit coc.ca/FreeConcerts and mark down your favourite concerts.



Ballet Creole (2023)



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**TD READY
COMMITMENT**



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A full-length photograph of Karoline Podolak, a soprano, standing on a stage. She is wearing a long, sleeveless, floor-length gown with a deep V-neckline and a wide, dark belt. The gown is covered in intricate, shimmering sequins or beads. She has her right hand raised near her face, with her fingers slightly spread, as if in a dramatic gesture. Her expression is one of surprise or awe, with her mouth open. The background is dark and out of focus, with some light spots.

MEET THE NEW ENSEMBLE MEMBERS

Karoline Podolak at the Centre Stage: Ensemble Studio Competition, 2022, where she took First Prize and the Audience Choice Winner.

Throughout this season, artists of the COC Ensemble Studio have shone brightly in concert, in competition, and on the company's mainstage. The multi-year development program for emerging Canadian opera artists is an unparalleled opportunity for younger artists, offering intensive coaching, practical experience, and access to some of the industry's best vocal, language, movement, and acting coaches.

In the 2023/2024 season ahead, the Ensemble Studio is delighted to welcome four rising artists to the program's prestigious ranks: soprano Karoline Podolak, tenor Wesley Harrison, baritone Korin Thomas-Smith, and pianist Mattia Senesi. The four officially join the Ensemble in August, alongside returning sopranos Ariane Cossette and Charlotte Siegel, mezzo-sopranos Alex Hetherington and Queen Hezumuryango, and pianist Brian Cho.

This past November, Karoline, Wesley, and Korin placed as finalists at the 2022 Centre Stage: Ensemble Studio Competition, a competitive vocal showcase for young artists from all over Canada.

Karoline took home First Prize and the Audience Choice Award that evening; she holds a master's degree from the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music in Poland

and recently sang Violetta in *La Traviata* at the National Opera and Ballet of Bulgaria. Wesley tied for third prize in November's Ensemble Studio Competition; he holds a master's in opera and voice performance from McGill University and recently performed as Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* with McGill. Korin holds a Master of Music in Opera and a bachelor's in voice performance from the University of Toronto and is currently completing his Masters of Musical Arts in Opera at Yale University. In 2021, he was named one of CBC Music's "30 hot Canadian classical musicians under 30." Mattia has won a number of international competitions, both as a soloist and in chamber music ensembles, and is currently completing his doctorate in collaborative piano at the University of Montreal.

Learn more about our newest Ensemble artists on the next page!



WESLEY HARRISON

What's your dream role to perform? I believe I'm always growing and adjusting my goals but, for the moment, it'd be Nemorino in *The Elixir of Love* or Timothy in *Fellow Travelers*.

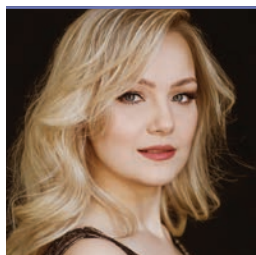
What are your hobbies and interests outside classical music?

I love spending time gardening, camping, or cooking.

What's something people don't know about you?

I can make latte art!

SEE WESLEY NEXT SEASON IN *FIDELIO* AND *LA BOHÈME*



KAROLINE PODOLAK

What are you doing when you're not performing?

I love the outdoors (especially hiking and fishing), skiing, playing guitar, film photography, theatre, vintage finds, and traveling.

What's something about you people might find unusual for an opera singer? I have an undergraduate degree in Radio and Television Arts, and I worked in media for years.

Dream role? Right now it's Lucia from *Lucia di Lammermoor*.



MATTIA SENESI

What's something people might not know about you?

As a kid, I played on the Italian national baseball team.

What musicians or artists do you look up to? I've always admired the energy of Martha Argerich and sound of Vladimir Horowitz.

What non-classical band or artist would you love to see in concert? I would have loved to see Freddie Mercury or Ella Fitzgerald.



KORIN THOMAS-SMITH

What's your superpower? I can fall asleep practically anywhere (but am a horrible snorer!)

People might be surprised to know... I didn't know what an opera was until I had already been studying classical voice at a university level.

What's role you'd love to take on? If I have to sing as a baritone, Pelléas from *Pelléas et Mélisande*, or Scarpia from *Tosca*. But if I could sing anything, it'd be Gilda from *Rigoletto*.

SEE KORIN NEXT SEASON IN *LA BOHÈME*

SHOWCASE SERIES

ASIAN HERITAGE

MONTH



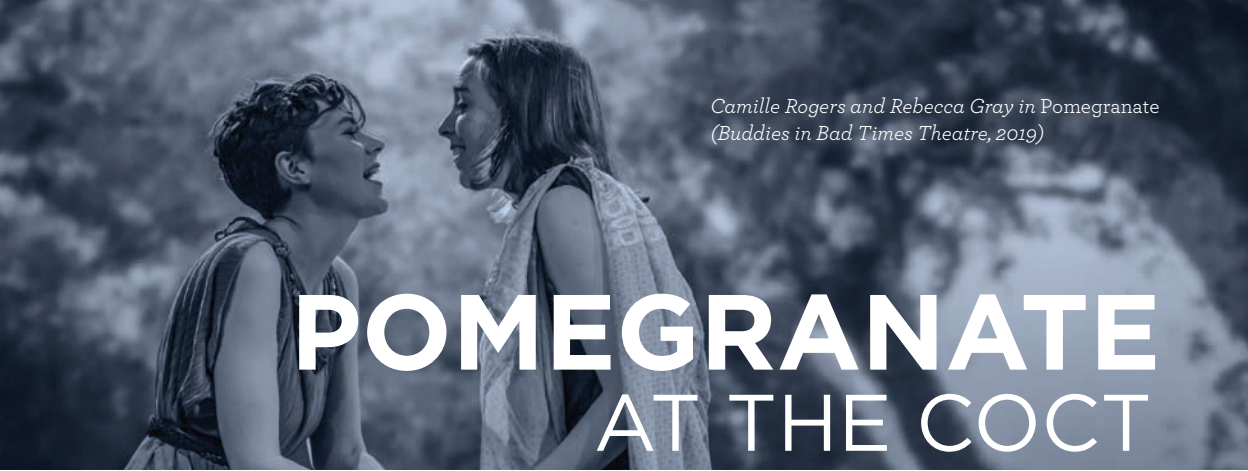
As we are nearing the end of the 2022/2023 season, the Community Partnerships & Programs team invites you to join us for our last cycle of the Showcase Series. Through developing strong connections within the community, we look forward to supporting and delivering meaningful, authentic learning opportunities that amplify and reflect the diverse range of artistic talent within the landscape of Toronto.

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.

Noon-time performances are free, but registration is required.
Register online, through **education@coc.ca** (school groups only)
or call COC Ticket Services at **416-363-8231** to reserve your spot.

coc.ca/Showcase

(l-r) Saman Shahi; Haneum; Elaine Choi; Meher Pavri



Camille Rogers and Rebecca Gray in *Pomegranate*
(*Buddies in Bad Times Theatre*, 2019)

POMEGRANATE AT THE COCT

This June, the Canadian Opera Company presents the world premiere of *Pomegranate*, a contemporary queer love story by composer Kye Marshall and librettist Amanda Hale.

The opera centres on Suli and Cassia, who want nothing more than to express their love for each other freely in the face of impossible odds. As the narrative transposes from a women's temple in ancient Pompeii to a Toronto lesbian bar in 1981, the orchestral music alters as well, from a score that features historical elements such as harp accompaniment to one full of keyboard, jazz, and disco influence.

Pomegranate is the first full opera creation for both creators and draws its inspiration and origins from a collection of poems Hale published in 2007. They were set to music by Marshall, who brings her background in composing jazz and classical music to the work, and presented as a song cycle at Toronto's Heliconian Club in 2014 and, later, as a chamber opera at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre.

The time-shifting tale will be brought to the Canadian Opera Company Theatre (COCT) stage by Toronto-based director Jennifer Tarver, with acclaimed Canadian conductor Rosemary Thomson leading members of the COC Orchestra. Mezzo-soprano Adanya Dunn and soprano Danielle Buonaiuto star as the opera's young lovers Suli and Cassia. Playing the role of the Priestess and, later, the owner of a bar that serves as a safe haven within the community, is Teiya Kasahara 笠原 貞野. Just last year, Kasahara created and starred in *The Queen In Me*, the second world premiere to take place in the COCT.

Pomegranate is now the third opera to premiere at the COCT in the past two seasons, underscoring the company's commitment to supporting bold new opera. The COCT provides a unique space for spotlighting diverse voices and telling stories that are too often missing from the opera stage, which, in turn, is helping to shape the future of the art form.

POMEGRANATE IS GENEROUSLY UNDERWRITTEN, IN PART, BY
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A photograph showing a woman in a red opera costume with a black veil, smiling and holding a mirror. A woman in a red jacket stands 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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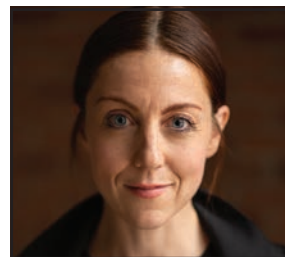
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KEY CHANGE

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 welcomed 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!

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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 (#COCMacbeth, #COC Tosca). 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. 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.



Craig Colclough as Macbeth in *Macbeth*
(Lyric Opera of Chicago, 2021, a new
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