



22|23 SEASON SPONSOR: BMO 

# THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

## SALOME

PROGRAM  
WINTER 2023

#COCFigaro  
#COCSalome

**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](https://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

With the winter season upon us, there's no better escape from grey days and icy wind than the enthralling magic of live opera.

In *The Marriage of Figaro*, audiences are treated to some of Mozart's most gorgeous music, in an opera that fittingly opens on the master composer's birthday. Joining us in performance are some familiar faces to the COC: acclaimed bass-baritone Luca Pisaroni in the title role and Ensemble alumnus Gordon Bintner as the Count (you might have last seen his delightful Papageno in last spring's *The Magic Flute*!). As we continue to introduce more world-renowned artists to Toronto, I'm also pleased about some exciting COC debuts: sopranos Andrea Carroll as Susanna and Lauren Fagan as our Countess.

And then there's *Salome* by Richard Strauss, bringing us face to face with the thrilling theatrics and vocal power of soprano and Ensemble Studio alumna Ambur Braid; Ambur has said she loves taking on "layered" and "complex" characters, and it doesn't get much more intense than this. The scale-shifting production was conceived by Academy Award nominee Atom Egoyan and challenges audiences to reexamine the characters' wicked ways from a different perspective. The powerhouse cast is rounded out by tenor Michael Schade and renowned soprano Karita Mattila who just happens to be known for her own searing performances as Salome; having these two sopranos share this stage is going to be electrifying!

Beyond our mainstage, our Showcase Series continues to honour the cultures and unique histories of a multitude of diasporas. Throughout February, our specially curated programming shines a spotlight on African and Caribbean creatives in celebration of Black History Month. You can see the full schedule and details at [coc.ca/Showcase](http://coc.ca/Showcase).

It might be cold outside, but within our opera house walls lives a multitude of worlds and stories just waiting to be experienced—I'm so glad to have you join us.



Perryn Leech  
COC General Director

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[coc.ca](http://coc.ca)

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# *The* MARRIAGE *of* FIGARO



*Josef Wagner as Figaro  
and Jane Archibald as  
Susanna in the COC's  
2016 production.*

# BY WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Opera in four acts ♦ Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte, after Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais' comedy, *La folle journée*, ou *Le Mariage de Figaro*

First performance: Burgtheater, Vienna, May 1, 1786

COC production last performed by the COC in 2016

January 27, 29, February 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18, 2023 ♦ Sung in Italian with English SURTITLES™

## THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

(in order of vocal appearance)

Figaro, *Count Almaviva's valet*  
**Luca Pisaroni**

Susanna, *Countess Almaviva's maid, engaged to Figaro*  
**Andrea Carroll<sup>▷</sup>**

Dr. Bartolo  
**Robert Pomakov**

Marcellina  
**Megan Latham**

Cherubino, *a page*  
**Emily Fons**

Count Almaviva  
**Gordon Bintner<sup>^</sup>**

Don Basilio, *a music-master*  
**Michael Colvin<sup>^</sup>**

Countess Almaviva  
**Lauren Fagan<sup>▷</sup>**

Antonio, *the gardener*  
**Doug MacNaughton<sup>^</sup>**

Don Curzio, *counsellor at law*  
**Jacques Arseneault<sup>▷</sup>**

Barbarina, *Antonio's niece*  
**Mireille Asselin<sup>^</sup>**

Cherubim (*silent*)  
**Uli Kirsch**

Conductor  
**Harry Bicket**

Director  
**Claus Guth**

Revival Director  
**Marcelo Buscaino**

Set and Costume Designer  
**Christian Schmidt**

Lighting Designer  
**Olaf Winter**

Video Designer  
**Andi A. Müller**

Choreographer  
**Ramses Sigl**

Price Family Chorus Master  
**Sandra Horst<sup>^</sup>**

Stage Manager  
**Kate Porter**

SURTITLES™ Producer  
**John Sharpe**

SURTITLES™ Writer  
**Gunta Dreifelds**

Production generously underwritten, in part, by Howard & Sarah D. Solomon Foundation in honour of Alexander Neef

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 and The Schulich Foundation

<sup>▷</sup>COC mainstage debut    <sup>^</sup>Graduate of COC Ensemble Studio

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

Performance time is approximately three hours and 30 minutes, including one intermission.

**ACTS 1 & 2:** One hour & 35 minutes    **INTERMISSION** 20 minutes    **ACTS 3 & 4:** One hour & 35 minutes

# 10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT *The Marriage of Figaro*

A subversive comedy from one of history's greatest composers, Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* returns to the COC stage this winter to serve up opera's most profound music! This masterpiece unfolds over the course of one crazy day as Figaro and Susanna, both servants in an aristocratic household, get ready for their wedding day, all while navigating the unexpected twists and turns of romantic attraction.

Read on to learn the 10 things you should know before heading to the opera!



## MOZART'S BIRTHDAY BASH

Opening at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts on Friday, January 27, the first night of our winter run coincides perfectly with the 267th birthday of composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Celebrate with us at opening night as we toast the opera icon with one of his most beloved works!

## A REPUTATION THAT PRECEDES IT

Mozart and his brilliant collaborator, librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte, based their opera on Pierre Beaumarchais' infamous *La folle journée, ou Le Mariage de Figaro*—a play banned by King Louis XVI for its depiction of a rebellious servant who ridicules a corrupt aristocracy. The play eventually saw enormous success in pre-Revolutionary Paris, gaining mass popularity for its scathing satire, controversial reputation, and overt sexual themes.

Left: Luca Pisaroni and Andrea Carroll in rehearsal as Figaro and Susanna in the COC's 2023 production.



## FAN FAVOURITE SINCE DAY ONE

Two years after the play's debut, Mozart premiered his opera in Vienna to immediate success. Audiences so loved the work that the many calls for encores caused Joseph II (ruling monarch of the Hapsburg Empire) to issue an edict banning ensemble encores in the interest of keeping the theatre hours reasonable and the management costs down.

## AN UNFORGETTABLE SCORE

Of course, it's Mozart's luminous score that sets *Figaro* apart in the canon, featuring some of opera's most famous and well-loved melodies. Among them, the duettino—or short duet—"Sull'aria...che soave zeffiretto" ("On the breeze... what a gentle zephyr") is a tender and delicate interweaving of voices, which crossed over into pop culture when it was featured in the Academy

Award-nominated classic *The Shawshank Redemption*. The opera's third-act aria "Dove sono," ("Where are [those happy moments]") meanwhile, has become one of the most regularly performed in the repertoire—a passionate and heartbreaking ode to love and devotion.

## OF THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE

*Figaro* is understood to be among the first significant operatic works to turn its attention away from mythological and biblical stories and treat seriously the lives of ordinary people. Prior depictions of common people in opera tended towards farcical and one-dimensional comic relief, whereas Mozart displayed deep feeling for each of the major characters in *Figaro*, giving them rich and fully realized inner lives and complex motivations.

*A scene from the COC's 2016 production.*



## FOUR COUPLES, ONE COMPLICATED DAY

Set all within the span of one hectic day on the eve of a grand wedding, *The Marriage of Figaro* revolves around four intertwined couples each with their own goals of romantic satisfaction and financial security. There are countless exits and entrances, mistaken identities, and twists and turns as characters hide, spy, overhear, and escape through the household's many windows, doors, and staircases in pursuit of their desires—all unfolding in a fascinating, fast-paced story with a spectacular finale.

## THIS PRODUCTION IS "PERFECTION" (*Bloomberg*)

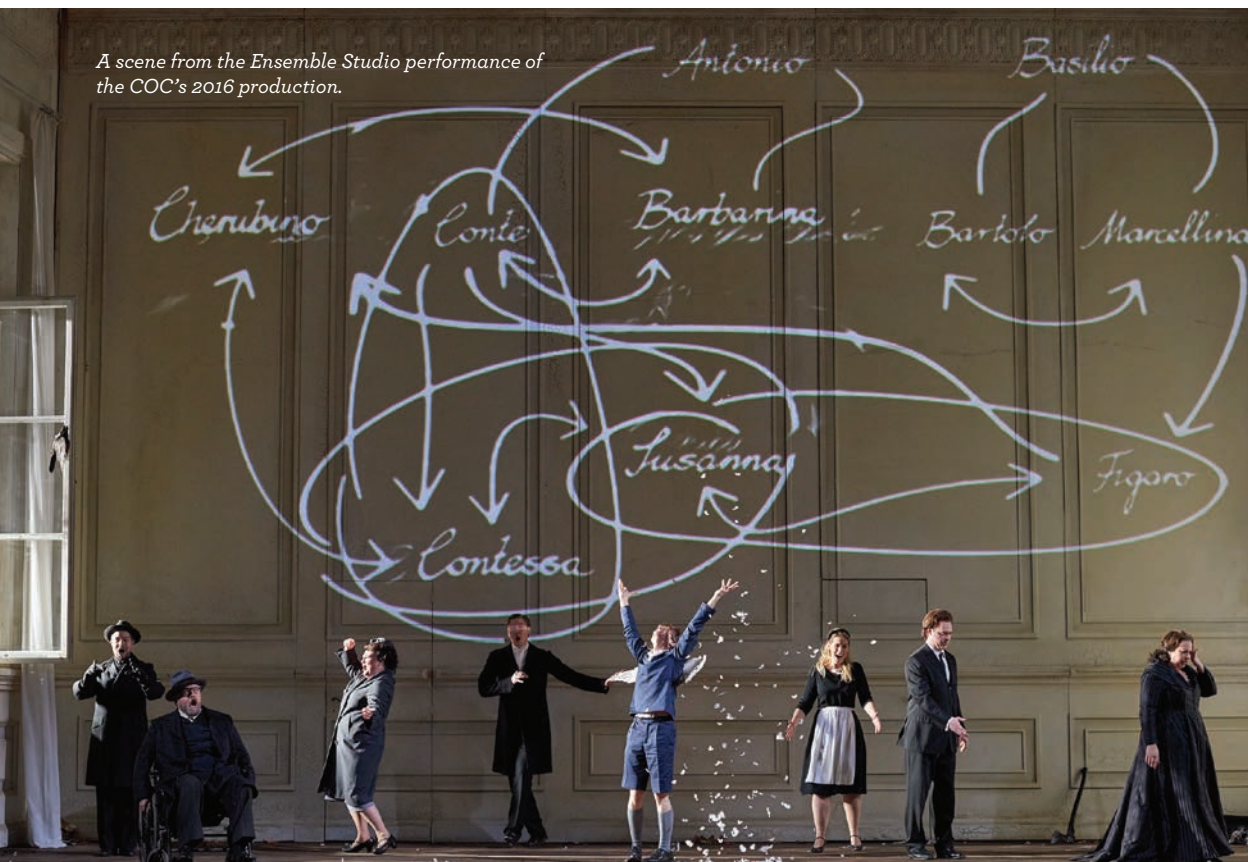
Originally conceived as part of the Salzburg Festival's celebration of Mozart's 250th birthday, this production treats the opera as a dream-like psychological exploration of love's sublime and blinding powers.

Renowned German director Claus Guth relocated the action from 18th-century Andalusia to fin-de-siècle—the transition from the 19th to 20th century—Central Europe. Pulling atmospheric inspiration from the plays of August Strindberg and films of Ingmar Bergman, this production “opens up a new perspective on an opera that is normally staged as a lightweight, turbulent farce” (*Zeit online*).

## THE POWER OF LOVE

This production's most striking element is the addition of a non-speaking character, Cherubim, who is costumed almost exactly like the page, Cherubino. Cherubim is invisible to the other characters and frequently manipulates them, pushing them together or pulling them apart, symbolizing the engine which drives Mozart's complex creation: romantic attraction.

A scene from the Ensemble Studio performance of the COC's 2016 production.







*Above: Andrea Carroll, Emily Fons, and Gordon Bintner in rehearsal as Susanna, Cherubino, and the Count in the COC's 2023 production.*

## UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS, INSIDE, AND OUT

The action is set in what could be the main hall of a 19th-century mansion. In the opera's finale (traditionally set in a garden at night), the set is turned upside down, reflecting the story's subversion of the master-servant relationship. Love itself has triumphed and displaced societal hierarchies, while romantic passion continues to influence how the characters navigate their world.

## FIGARO ENDURES

*Figaro* has never left the repertory and endures today as a smart and witty exploration of human relationships, as well as a wholly satisfying example of opera's potential to fuse comedy, drama, poetry, and music into a complete work of art.

# Q&A WITH

# *Maestro Harry Bicket*

The internationally renowned conductor has earned distinction for his interpretations of Mozart, as well as his leadership of both traditional orchestras and early-music ensembles. He spoke with the COC about coming back to the company to conduct what may be Mozart's most perfect—and revolutionary—comedy.

**COC:** *How do you think about this opera within Mozart's larger body of work?*

**HB:** I'm kind of lucky, and a little bit unusual, in that I've done a lot of Mozart repertoire that precedes *Figaro*; I've conducted pieces like *Ascanio in Alba* (1771) and *Lucio Silla* (1772) which he wrote when he was still a teenager. So I see *Figaro* through the prism of those early operas rather than through the prism of what came later and, in that sense, it's very interesting to appreciate just how extraordinary *Figaro* was, how it broke so many rules and completely changed the landscape for opera going forward.

The most obvious things are that in early Mozart operas—and in the old-fashioned *opera seria*<sup>1</sup> convention that Mozart was coming out of—you have a lot of *recitative*. Which is then followed by a very long *aria* for one person on stage, who then goes off stage and another person comes on, has a scene of *recit* and sings another *aria*. After which another person goes on, and so on. It was a very rigid form. Some brilliant music, but the rigidity was very hard to go beyond. And, what Mozart suddenly does in *Figaro* is he completely opens up that structure—

there aren't even that many arias in *Figaro*, it's all ensembles, duets, trios, quintets, sextets. And that tells you what he achieved, and which is so amazing: this idea that you could write music where the action is pushed forward through the ensembles, the collection of individuals on stage. To me it's the beginning of a whole genre of opera


**COC:** *And this new genre of opera was quite revolutionary in your perspective?*

**HB:** I always like to remember that three years before *Figaro* was written, the American Revolutionary War was coming to its end. And three years after *Figaro* was written, you had the beginning of the French Revolution.

*Figaro* emerges against a background of massive social upheaval, both in Europe and in the U.S. I think it's useful to consider the piece in the context of that, not just as an opera that expresses themes connected to the universal human condition, but also a piece with a historical viewpoint. It depicted material that could have got you locked up, quite literally.

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<sup>1</sup> *Opera seria* (literally 'serious opera') is a convention that dominated 18th-century Europe, in which music and text were divided into *recitative*—sections of dialogue that drove the plot forward, sung in speech-like fashion—and *arias*, more elaborate, often florid musical solos that depicted a character's emotions and inner thoughts while providing an opportunity to demonstrate a performer's virtuosity.



*“To me it’s the  
beginning of a  
whole genre of  
opera.”*

And the other way it's revolutionary, musically speaking, is the fact that for the first time ever you have more than one person onstage, expressing different ideas simultaneously. In the finale, there's people in one corner gleefully exacting revenge, and another lot in the other corner, cursing them, and someone else singing their love for somebody else. And then, of course, you've got the orchestra in the pit as well, who often tell another story entirely, or add another layer of psychological depth, illustrating what people are *really* thinking beneath the words they're saying. So you're invited, as an audience member to start considering like seven viewpoints and none of it is actually linear. It's kind of a mind-blowing concept in the history of music and serves as an

important line separating what came before *Figaro* and what would come after.

**COC:** *What are your favourite musical moments in Figaro?*

**HB:** Conducting *Figaro* is always brilliant, because you've got people in the audience who are hearing it for the first time and you've got people hearing it for the 100th time. And it still has the power to completely transport all of them, including me.

The Act 2 finale is so completely miraculous. I think there's nothing ever been written like it. I'm always amazed, every time I get through it. It is so perfect, in terms of telling the story: the wit of it, the profundity, and



the virtuosity. Bear in mind, these finales are like twenty, twenty-five minutes long, they are exhausting for the orchestra to play. If you talk to the second violins after playing the Act 2 finale of *Figaro*, I mean, most people in the theatre don't notice all the work that's going on, but my God, the effort and concentration! It's the same thing for the cast, because it's like treading on ice the whole time. Everyone has to be together, very committed, they need to have the same intention and the same language and the same color and the same affect. And, you know, to keep the concentration going for that, and also keep the dramatic wit and technical production going, while allowing that to feel natural and fresh and spontaneous as well—that's hard work. But it is so rewarding.

The other moment that I love is actually a very short passage, which appears in the Act 4 finale: when the plot has been laid and Figaro thinks he's about to catch Susanna and the Count in the act. The music sort of dies down and there's an extraordinary passage with two horns—it only lasts for about 12 bars and is a kind of a moment of peace before the mayhem starts. Figaro has this analogy about Susanna as Venus going to find her Mars, and he is imagining that he's going to catch them in this big net. And Mozart writes this music that makes time stand still. Figaro is almost regretful that he's going to catch this woman he loves betraying him (or so he thinks), but

the audience knows Figaro is wrong about Susanna's intentions and Mozart makes it this moment of transcendental beauty.. It's so brief, this passage, and it always really touches me.

**COC:** *You've worked with the COC Orchestra plenty of times before—what is it like collaborating with these instrumentalists?*

**HB:** They're an incredibly flexible orchestra. And my feeling has been that they are really interested in the theatrical nature of what they do. It's not just about playing the music beautifully, or together or in tune. All that is meaningless unless there's a real sense of rhetoric and theatrical intention.

I'm a great believer that you become a musician to express your individuality. And when your actual career is spent in an orchestra, in some ways, people think that doesn't encourage individuality because it's all about doing the same thing, playing together at the same time, you know?

But to me playing in an orchestra doesn't mean that you become an automaton or you become a cog in the machine. You can play in a group and your personality can be a part of the deal and [the COC Orchestra] has, it seems to me, that quality—where there's a lot of individual players who feel very committed as artists, and they certainly haven't left their personalities at the door when they came into the room to play together.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

With *The Marriage of Figaro*, Mozart created a world theatre of human passions that testifies to the elemental force of eroticism. All forms of love and desire are found in this opera, and the four generations of characters—presented in exemplary fashion—are completely torn between morality, desire and impulse. In *Figaro*, Mozart not only allows all kinds of intense human passions but also portrays how they can get out of control and escalate to extremes, thus setting his opera far apart from the comedy by Beaumarchais.

That was why I wanted, on the one hand, to follow the characters into their darkest psychological depths, but at the same time leave space for exploring the utopian moments in Mozart's music, which for me are so special in the score of *Figaro*. An invented character, a kind of Eros angel, indicates this confusing other dimension that pervades the opera. He always appears when the characters find themselves in situations that are diametrically opposed to their intentions when guided by reason.

~ **Claus Guth, Salzburg, 2011**

## SYNOPSIS

### ACT 1

Susanna informs her fiancé Figaro that the Count is making advances to her. Figaro leaves intent on revenge. Bartolo and Marcellina enter, the latter baiting Susanna because she wants Figaro for herself, while Bartolo is still smarting at Figaro for making a fool of him in the past. They leave and Cherubino enters, seeking advice from Susanna because, after being caught dallying with the gardener's niece, he is to be sent away. He hides himself as they hear the Count approaching. The Count, too, is forced to hide as Don Basilio enters. Basilio mentions Cherubino's crush on the Countess to Susanna and the enraged Count reveals himself. He informs them that he is sending Cherubino away, at which point he finds the hidden page. Furious, he swears to get rid of Cherubino with a military commission. Figaro returns with celebrating townsfolk and asks the Count to unite Susanna and him in marriage. The Count postpones the proceedings.

### ACT 2

Susanna tells the Countess that she and Figaro have a plan to teach the Count a lesson: Susanna will set up a rendezvous with the Count, but will send Cherubino in her place, disguised as a girl. The page enters with a song of love for the Countess and a commission letter that the Count forgot to seal. They hear the Count approaching and quickly hide Cherubino in an inner chamber and Susanna elsewhere in the room. The Count is instantly suspicious. The Countess refuses to unlock the inner chamber, claiming Susanna is inside trying on her wedding dress. The Count leaves with the Countess to get a crowbar. Susanna hides herself in the locked inner chamber and Cherubino escapes through the window. Upon their return, the Countess decides to confess everything to her husband and is shocked when Susanna exits the locked

room. The Count begs forgiveness for his suspicions. Figaro arrives to gather up the group once more for the wedding. He is followed by Antonio who reports that someone jumping from the Countess' balcony has crushed his flowers. After prompting from the women, Figaro claims it was he who jumped. The gardener shows him Cherubino's dropped commission, which Figaro claims he was holding to get the Count's seal. Marcellina, Bartolo and Basilio enter, and the Count, still suspicious, hears their claim that Figaro is obliged to marry Marcellina to pay off an outstanding debt.

## INTERMISSION

### ACT 3

Susanna agrees to meet the Count in the garden. The Count then overhears Susanna tell Figaro that his legal troubles will soon be over. He is furious at the apparent deception. Marcellina and Bartolo, their attorney Don Curzio in tow, confront Figaro, who tells them that being of noble birth—though stolen away by thieves as an infant—he can only marry with the consent of his family. As proof, he reveals his birthmark. Marcellina and Bartolo recognize the mark as belonging to their son, and the three joyfully reunite. Susanna rejoins them, having secured the money from the Countess to pay off Figaro's debt. At first angry, Susanna is overjoyed

at the news. Everyone is happy except the Count, who is sure he's still being played. The Countess dictates a letter from Susanna to the Count. She plans to surprise her husband in the garden herself. Figaro returns to once more gather everyone for the wedding. During the dancing, Susanna slips the Count her letter.

### ACT 4

In the garden, Figaro meets the gardener's niece Barbarina, who the Count has entrusted to return the brooch Susanna pinned to the letter. Figaro assumes Susanna is cheating on him, and invites Bartolo and Don Basilio to join him for her public humiliation. As they leave, the Countess and Susanna appear, each dressed as the other. Cherubino is also in the garden meeting with Barbarina. He spies the Countess and, thinking she is Susanna, leans in to kiss her. Instead he kisses the Count, who swats Figaro. The Count declares his love for Susanna, who is really the Countess, while Figaro tells the Countess, who is really Susanna, about the tryst. Susanna forgets to disguise her voice, and Figaro figures out it is she under the Countess's cloak. Their embrace is noticed by the Count, who is about to expose them when his wife takes off her own disguise. Almaviva is shamed and apologizes to his wife for both his jealousy and his infidelity. They all return to the celebration.

**SYNOPSIS IN A MINUTE:** Figaro (Count Almaviva's valet) and Susanna (the Countess's maid) are getting married. But first, with the help of the Countess, they have to deflect the Count's attempt to seduce Susanna. Intrigue and mayhem ensue as the social structure of the household is turned upside down.



# 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

## **VIOLIN II**

Paul Zevenhuizen, *Principal*  
 Csaba Koczó, *Assistant Principal*  
 James Aylesworth  
 Terri Croft  
 Elizabeth Johnston  
 Aya Miyagawa  
 Louise Tardif  
 Joanna Zabrowarna

## **VIOLA**

Sheila Jaffé, *Principal*  
 Joshua Greenlaw, *Assistant*  
*Principal*  
 Carolyn Blackwell  
 Catherine Gray  
 Nicholas Papadakis\*  
 Yosef Tamir

## **CELLO**

Leana Rutt, *Associate Principal*  
 Paul Widner, *Assistant Principal*,  
*Acting Principal*  
 Olga Laktionova, *Acting Assistant*  
*Principal*  
 Naomi Barron\*  
 Elaine Thompson  
 Bryan Holt\*

## **BASS**

Tony Flynt, *Principal*  
 Robert Speer, *Assistant Principal*  
 Travis Harrison\*

## **FLUTE**

Douglas Stewart, *Principal*  
 Shelley Brown (leave of absence)  
 Leslie Newman\*

## **OBOE**

Mark Rogers, *Principal*  
 Lesley Young

## **CLARINET**

Dominic Desautels, *Principal*  
 Colleen Cook

## **BASSOON**

Eric Hall, *Principal*  
 Lisa Chisholm

## **HORN**

Scott Wevers, *Principal*  
 Janet Anderson  
 Gary Pattison (leave of absence)

## **TRUMPET**

James Gardiner, *Acting Principal\**  
 Michael Fedyshyn\*

## *Continuo*

## **CELLO**

Leana Rutt, *Associate Principal*

## **FORTEPIANO**

Simone Luti\*

.....

## **MUSIC LIBRARIAN & STAGE LIBRARIAN**

Wayne Vogan

## **ASSISTANT MUSIC LIBRARIAN**

Ondrej Golias

## **PERSONNEL MANAGER**

Ian Cowie

\*extra musician

# CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY CHORUS

## **SOPRANOS**

Lindsay Barrett  
 Alexandra Lennox  
 Eve Rachel McLeod  
 Jennifer Robinson

## **MEZZO-SOPRANOS**

Susan Black  
 Sandra Boyes  
 Erica Iris Huang  
 Marianne Sasso

## **TENORS**

Stephen Bell  
 Taras Chmil  
 Stephen Erickson  
 Derrick Paul Miller

## **BARITONES/BASSES**

Jesse Clark  
 Bruno Cormier  
 Jason Nedecky  
 Gene Wu



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## MUSIC STAFF

Simone Luti (*Head Coach*)  
Timothy Cheung<sup>^</sup>  
Brian Cho<sup>†</sup> (*Ensemble Studio Intern Coach*)

## ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Simone Luti

## ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Anna Theodosakis

## ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

Mike Lewandowski  
Alice Ferreyra

## APPRENTICE STAGE MANAGER

Emmanuelle So

## ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER

Mikael Kangas

## UNDERSTUDIES

<i>Figaro</i>	Vartan Gabrielian <sup>^</sup>
<i>Susanna</i>	Midori Marsh <sup>†</sup>
<i>Dr. Bartolo</i>	Doug MacNaughton <sup>^</sup>
<i>Marcellina</i>	Queen Hezumuryango <sup>†</sup>
<i>Count Almaviva</i>	Jorell Williams
<i>Countess Almaviva</i>	Jamie Groote <sup>^</sup>
<i>Cherubino</i>	Alex Hetherington <sup>†</sup>
<i>Antonio</i>	Giles Tomkins
<i>Barbarina</i>	Ariane Cossette <sup>†</sup>
<i>Cherubim</i>	Ashley Coulson

<sup>†</sup>Current member of the COC Ensemble Studio    <sup>^</sup>Graduate of the COC Ensemble Studio

# BIOGRAPHIES



**JACQUES ARSENAULT**, Don Curzio (Tenor; Charlottetown, PEI)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: Basilio, *Figaro's Wedding* (Against the Grain Theatre); Piangi, *Phantom of the Opera* (Opera on the Avalon); Basilio/Curzio, *The Marriage of Figaro* (National Arts Centre [NAC]); Freddy, *Bandits in the Valley* (Tapestry Opera); Ambroise Lépine, *Louis Riel* (NAC); (as Accordionist/Keyboardist) *Old Stock: A Refugee Love Story* (2b theatre company). UPCOMING: *La Vie en Rose* (French Squeeze, Cantabile Choirs of Kingston)



**MIREILLE ASSELIN**, Barbarina (Soprano; Almonte, ON)

SELECT COC CREDITS: Servilia, *La clemenza di Tito* (2013); Semele, *Semele* (Ensemble Studio Performance); Adele, *Die Fledermaus* (2012); Second Priestess, *Iphigénie en Tauride*; Countess Ceprano, *Rigoletto* (2011). RECENT: Soloist, Handel's *Messiah* (National Arts Centre); Belinda, *Dido and Aeneas* (Opera Atelier); Amore, *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Vancouver Opera); Zerlina, *Don Giovanni* (Théâtre des Champs-Élysées & Garsington Opera); Adele, *Die Fledermaus* (Metropolitan Opera). UPCOMING: Soloist, *Stabat Mater* (Edmonton Opera); Zerlina, *Don Giovanni* (National Arts Centre)



**HARRY BICKET**, Conductor (London, UK)

SELECT COC CREDITS: *Maometto II* (2016); *Hercules* (2014); *Orfeo ed Euridice* (2011); *Idomeneo* (2010); *Rodelina* (2005). RECENT: *My Beloved Spake, Alcina* (The English Concert); *Carmen, A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Santa Fe Opera); *Xerxes* (Fundación Baluarte, Carnegie Hall, The English Concert); *Rodelinda* (Metropolitan Opera); *Theodora* (Royal Opera House, Teatro Real); *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Zaryadye Hall); *Alcina* (LA Opera); UPCOMING: Handel's *Solomon* (The English Concert); *Ariodante* (Paris Opera); *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *L'Orfeo* (Santa Fe Opera)



**GORDON BINTNER**, Count (Bass-baritone; Regina, SK)

SELECT COC CREDITS: Papageno, *The Magic Flute* (2022); Eugene Onegin, *Eugene Onegin* (2018); Belcore, *The Elixir of Love* (2017). RECENT: Eugene Onegin, *Eugene Onegin* (San Francisco Opera); Guglielmo, *Così fan tutte* (Royal Opera House); Junior, *A Quiet Place* (Paris Opera); Don Alfonso, *Così fan tutte*; Escamillo, *Carmen*; Solo Recital; Don Polidoro, *The Italian Girl in London* (Oper Frankfurt). UPCOMING: Albert, *Werther* (Royal Opera House); Soloist, Beethoven, Busoni, and Vogel Recital Debut (Wigmore Hall)



**MARCELO BUSCAINO**, Revival Director (based in Barcelona, Spain)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: *Così fan tutte*, *Hansel & Gretel*, (Festival de Ópera de San Luís Potosí); *The Magic Flute* (Munot Festival Schaffhausen); (as Assistant Director) *Don Carlo* (Teatro di San Carlo); UPCOMING: *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Paris Opera); *Don Carlo* (Latvian National Opera); *The Barber of Seville* (Munot Festival Schaffhausen); *Nabucco* (Grand Théâtre Genève) as Christiane Jatahy's collaborator; *UNPARK ONE* a dance-theatre piece for people with Parkinson's disease (in preparation)



**MICHAEL COLVIN**, Don Basilio (Tenor; Toronto, ON)

SELECT COC CREDITS: Monostatos, *The Magic Flute* (2022, 2017); Witch, *Hansel & Gretel* (2020); Thomas Scott, *Louis Riel* (2017); Basilio, *The Marriage of Figaro* (2016). RECENT: Basilio, *The Marriage of Figaro*; Spoletta, *Tosca* (Paris Opera); Monostatos, *The Magic Flute* (Paris Opera, Royal Opera House); Laios, *Oedipe* (Salzburg Festival); Herod, *Salome* (English National Opera); Cornwall, *Lear* (Maggio Musicale Fiorentino). UPCOMING: Bardolfo, *Falstaff* (Salzburg Festival); Bob Boles, *Peter Grimes* (Teatro alla Scala); Cornwall, *Lear* (Teatro Real)



**ANDREA CARROLL**, Susanna (Soprano; Vienna, Austria)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: Micaëla, *Carmen* (Lyric Opera of Kansas City); Cunegonde, *Candide* (Opéra National de Lyon); Zerlina, *Don Giovanni* (Teatro alla Scala); Pamina, *The Magic Flute* (Houston Grand Opera); Columbine, *Fête Galante*; Soloist, Fauré's *Requiem* (Bard Music Festival); Beatriz, *La Hija de Rappaccini* (San Diego Opera); Adina, *The Elixir of Love* (Vienna State Opera). UPCOMING: Zerlina, *Don Giovanni* (Metropolitan Opera)





**LAUREN FAGAN**, Countess (Soprano; Sydney, Australia)  
COC DEBUT. RECENT: Norma, *7 Deaths of Maria Callas* (Paris Opera, Bavarian State Opera); Soloist, *Monteverdi*; Giulietta, *Les contes d'Hoffmann* (Zurich Opera House); Avis, *The Wreckers* (Glyndebourne, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin); Violetta, *La Traviata* (Opera Holland Park, State Opera South Australia); Margarita Xirgu, *Ainadamar* (Scottish Opera). UPCOMING: Helena, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Glyndebourne); Guttrune, *Götterdämmerung* (Zurich Opera House); Gretel, *Hansel & Gretel* (Royal Opera House)



**EMILY FON**, Cherubino (Mezzo-soprano; Cudahy, WI, USA)  
COC CREDITS: Hansel, *Hansel & Gretel* (2020); Cherubino, *The Marriage of Figaro* (2016)  
RECENT: Hansel, *Hansel & Gretel* (New Orleans Opera); Cherubino, *The Marriage of Figaro*; Maddalena, *Rigoletto* (Seattle Opera); Rosina, *The Barber of Seville* (Santa Fe Opera, San Diego Opera); Orfeo, *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Inland Northwest Opera); Prince Orlofsky, *Die Fledermaus* (Seiji Ozawa Music Academy); Ariodante, *Ariodante* (Internationale Händel Festspiele Göttingen). UPCOMING: Rosina, *The Barber of Seville* (Cincinnati Opera)



**CLAUS GUTH**, Original Director (Frankfurt, Germany)  
COC CREDITS: *The Marriage of Figaro* (2016). RECENT: *Don Carlo* (Teatro di San Carlo); *Il viaggio*, *Dante* (Aix-en-Provence Festival, Paris Opera); *Jenůfa* (Royal Opera House); *Don Giovanni* (Salzburger Festspiele, Teatro Real). UPCOMING: *The Makropulos Case* (Berlin State Opera); *Turandot* (Wiener Staatsoper); *Bluthaus* (Opéra National de Lyon); *Elektra* (Frankfurt Opera); *La Bohème* (Paris Opera); *Parsifal* (Gran Teatre del Liceu); *Semele* (Bavarian State Opera)



**SANDRA HORST**, Price Family Chorus Master (Toronto, ON)  
SELECT COC CREDITS: *Carmen*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *The Magic Flute*, *La Traviata* (2022); *In Winter*, Mozart's *Requiem* (2021); *The Barber of Seville* (2020); *Rusalka*, *Turandot*, *Otello*, *La Bohème*, *Così fan tutte*, *Elektra* (2019); *Hadrian*, *Eugene Onegin* (2018). RECENT: (as conductor) *The Tender Land*, *A Comedic Trilogy* (UofT Opera). UPCOMING: *Orphee+* (Edmonton Opera); *A Tale of Two Cities* (UofT Opera). ADDITIONAL CREDITS: Director of Musical Studies at UofT Opera



**ULI KIRSCH**, Cherubim (Actor; Berlin, Germany)  
COC CREDITS: (as Dancer) *Turandot* (2019); Cherubim, *The Marriage of Figaro* (2016)  
RECENT: *The Marriage of Figaro* (Teatro Real); *Madame Butterfly*, *Platée*, *Cinderella* (Landestheater Niederbayern); *Abstract Pieces*, *La Douce*, *Aschemond* (Berlin State Opera); *Otello* (Festspielhaus Baden-Baden); *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Opéra Paris Sud); *Carmen* (Uppsala City Theatre); *The Exterminating Angel* (Salzburg Festival); *La Rondine*, *Samson et Dalila* (Deutsche Oper Berlin); *Les Enfants terribles* (Komische Oper Berlin); *Hamlet* (La Monnaie/De Munt)



**MEGAN LATHAM**, Marcellina (Mezzo-soprano, Abbotsford, BC)  
SELECT COC CREDITS: Zita, *Gianni Schicchi* (2021); Fortune Teller, *Arabella* (2017); Marcellina, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Ensemble Studio performance, 2016); Rosswisse, *Die Walküre* (2015); Giovanna, *Rigoletto* (2012); Florence Pike, *Albert Herring* (2004). RECENT: Queen of Hearts, *The Garden of Alice*; Ruth Draper, *The Italian Lesson* (Pacific Opera Victoria); Mrs. Cripps, *H.M.S. Pinafore* (Vancouver Opera). UPCOMING: Mary, *The Flying Dutchman* (Vancouver Opera)



**SIMONE LUTI**, Assistant Conductor & Head Coach; Lucca, Italy)  
SELECT COC CREDITS: *Gianni Schicchi* (2021); *The Barber of Seville* (2020); *La Bohème* (2019)  
RECENT: *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 Châtelet). UPCOMING: *Macbeth*, *Tosca* (COC)



**DOUG MacNAUGHTON**, Antonio (Baritone; Brandon, MB)  
SELECT COC CREDITS: Maestro Spinelloccio, *Gianni Schicchi* (2021); William McDougall/The Judge, *Louis Riel* (2017). RECENT: Leporello, *Don Giovanni*; Don Bartolo, *The Barber of Seville* (Opéra de Québec); (as an Actor) The Governor, *Man of La Mancha* (Magnus Theatre, Garner Theatre Productions); Sir Toby Belch, *Twelfth Night* (St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival); Capulet, *Romeo and Juliet* (Highlands Summer Festival). UPCOMING: *Old Enough to Know Better* (original album); François-René de Chateaubriand, *Memories Beyond the Grave* (Upstream Music Association)



**ANDI A. MÜLLER**, Video Designer (Zürich, Switzerland)

SELECT COC CREDITS: *The Marriage of Figaro* (2016). RECENT: *Rigoletto* (Paris Opera); *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (Teatro alla Scala); *Rodelinda* (Teatro Real Madrid). UPCOMING: *Parsifal* (Gran Teatre del Liceu)



**LUCA PISONI**, Figaro (Bass-baritone; Vienna, Austria)

COC CREDITS: Maometto, *Maometto II* (2016). RECENT: Figaro, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Paris Opera, Teatro Real Madrid); Alidoro, *La Cenerentola* (Paris Opera); Méphistophélès, *Faust* (Opera Naples); Dr. Dulcamara, *The Elixir of Love* (Seattle Opera); Leporello, *Don Giovanni* (San Francisco Opera, Hamburg State Opera). UPCOMING: Golaud, *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Maison de la Radio et de la Musique); Figaro, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Semperoper Dresden); King of Scotland, *Ariodante* (Paris Opera)



**ROBERT POMAKOV**, Bartolo (Bass; Toronto, ON)

COC CREDITS: Monterone, *Rigoletto* (2018); Alberich, *Götterdämmerung* (2017); Bartolo, *The Marriage of Figaro* (2016); Hobson, *Peter Grimes* (2013). RECENT: Méphistophélès, *Faust* (Detroit Opera, Vancouver Opera); Ferrando, *Il Trovatore* (Zurich Opera House); Jacopo Loredano, *I due Foscari* (Opernfestspiele Heidenheim); René, *Iolanta* (Oper Frankfurt); Prince Gremin, *Eugene Onegin* (Norwegian Opera & Ballet); The Bonze, *Madama Butterfly* (Paris Opera, Metropolitan Opera). UPCOMING: Ferrando, *Il Trovatore* (San Francisco Opera); Banquo, *Macbeth* (Calgary Opera)



**KATE PORTER**, Stage Manager (Toronto, ON)

SELECT COC CREDITS: *Fantasma* (2022); *Turandot*, *La Bohème* (2019); *The Elixir of Love*, *Götterdämmerung* (2017); 17 productions as Assistant Stage Manager (2005-2022). RECENT: *The Overcoat: A Musical Tailoring* (Canadian Stage, Tapestry Opera, Vancouver Opera); *Dead Man Walking*, *Rigoletto*, *Carmen* (Vancouver Opera)



**CHRISTIAN SCHMIDT**, Set and Costume Designer (Coburg, Germany)

COC CREDITS: *The Marriage of Figaro* (2016). RECENT: *The Enchantress* (Frankfurt Opera); *Rinaldo* (Linz State Theatre); *Turandot* (Hamburg State Opera); *Guillaume Tell* (Bern Theatre); *Tosca* (English National Opera); *Die Walküre* (Zurich Opera House); *Aida* (Salzburg Festival). UPCOMING: Verdi's *Requiem* (Dutch National Opera); *Siberia* (Theater Bonn); *Siegfried* (Zurich Opera House); *Simon Boccanegra*, *Norma* (Hamburg State Opera); *Der Idiot* (Theater an der Wien); *Parsifal* (Gran Teatre del Liceu)



**RAMSES SIGL**, Choreographer (Munich, Germany)

SELECT COC CREDITS: *The Marriage of Figaro* (2016). RECENT: *Turing* (Nuremberg Opera House); *Rinaldo* (Linz State Theatre); *Turandot* (Hamburg State Opera); *Faust* (Zurich Opera House); *The Marriage of Figaro* (Teatro Real); *The Merry Widow*, *Dialogues des Carmélites* (Frankfurt Opera); *Don Giovanni* (Dutch National Opera); *Faust* (Royal Danish Opera). UPCOMING: *Bluthaus* (Opéra National de Lyon); *The Barber of Seville* (Opéra de Monte-Carlo); *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (Staatskapelle Dresden); *Semele* (Bavarian State Opera)



**ANNA THEODOSAKIS**, Assistant Director (Vancouver, BC)

SELECT COC CREDITS: (as Director) *WOW Factor: A Cinderella Story* (Opera for Young Audiences, 2018); (as Revival Director) *The Magic Flute* (2021); (as Assistant Director) *Gianni Schicchi* (2021); *La Bohème* (2019); *The Nightingale & Other Short Fables* (2018); *Arabella* (2017). RECENT: (as Director) *Carmen* (Saskatoon Opera); *Die schöne Müllerin* (University of Ottawa); (as Choreographer) *Gallantry* (UofT Opera). UPCOMING: (as Director) *Flight* (The Glenn Gould School); (as Associate Director) *Bluebeard's Castle* (Against the Grain Theatre)



**OLAF WINTER**, Lighting Designer (Bad Homburg, Germany)

SELECT COC CREDITS: *The Marriage of Figaro* (2016). RECENT: *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Zauberin* (Frankfurt Opera); *Der Schatzgräber* (Opéra national du Rhin); *Königskinder* (Dutch National Opera); *Tosca* (English National Opera); *Salome* (Finnish National Opera). UPCOMING: *Elektra* (Royal Opera House); *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Salzburger Festspiele); *Eugene Onegin* (Gran Teatre del Liceu, Teatro Real); *Don Giovanni* (Paris Opera)

# SALOME



*Hanna Schwarz as  
Herodias and Erika  
Sunnegårdh as Salome in  
the COC's 2013 production.*

# BY RICHARD STRAUSS

Opera in one act ♦ Libretto by Hedwig Lachmann after the play by Oscar Wilde

First performance: Dresden Hofoper, December 9, 1905

COC Revival ♦ Co-production of the COC, Houston Grand Opera, and Vancouver Opera

Last performed by the COC in 2013 ♦ February 3, 5, 9, 11, 17, 19, 24, 2023

Sung in German with English SURTITLES™

## THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

(in order of vocal appearance)

Narraboth, *a captain*  
**Frédéric Antoun**

The Page of Herodias  
**Carolyn Sproule**

First Soldier  
**Vartan Gabrielian**<sup>^</sup>

Second Soldier  
**Scott Conner**<sup>D</sup>

Jochanaan, *John the Baptist*  
**Michael Kupfer-Radecky**<sup>D</sup>

A Cappadocian  
**Alex Halliday**<sup>+</sup>

Salome, *daughter of Herodias*  
**Ambur Braid**<sup>^</sup>

An Attendant  
**Alex Hetherington**<sup>+</sup>

Herodias, *wife of Herod*  
**Karita Mattila**

Herod, *Tetrarch of Judea*  
**Michael Schade**

First Jew  
**Owen McCausland**<sup>^</sup>

Second Jew  
**Michael Colvin**<sup>^</sup>

Third Jew  
**Jacques Arseneault**<sup>D</sup>

Fourth Jew  
**Adam Luther**<sup>^</sup>

Fifth Jew  
**Giles Tomkins**

First Nazarene  
**Robert Pomakov**

Second Nazarene  
**Jorell Williams**<sup>D</sup>

Shadow Performer 1  
**Clea Minaker**

Shadow Performer 2  
**Faye Dupras**

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Conductor  
**Johannes Debus**

Director  
**Atom Egoyan**

Associate Director  
**Marilyn Gronsda**<sup>^</sup>

Set Designer  
**Derek McLane**

Costume Designer  
**Catherine Zuber**

Original Lighting Designer  
**Michael Whitfield**

Revival Lighting Designer  
**Davida Tkach**

Projections Designer  
**Phillip Barker**

Shadow Designer  
**Clea Minaker**

Original Choreographer  
**Serge Bennathan**

Revival Choreographer  
**Julia Aplin**<sup>D</sup>

Intimacy Choreographer  
**Siobhan Richardson**

Stage Manager  
**Jenifer Kowal**

SURTITLES™ Producer  
**John Sharpe**

SURTITLES™ Writer  
**Gunta Dreifelds**

Production generously underwritten, in part, by **HATCH**

Johannes Debus is generously sponsored by George & Kathy Dembroski

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

Ambur Braid is generously sponsored by Jack Whiteside and **ROGERS**

Flying by Foy

<sup>+</sup>Current member of the COC Ensemble Studio   <sup>D</sup>COC mainstage debut   <sup>^</sup>Graduate of the COC Ensemble Studio  
Program information is correct at time of printing. All casting is subject to change.

Performance time is approximately one hour and 40 minutes, with no intermission.



# LOOKING AT SALOME

Following up on last season's dazzling digital production of *Bluebeard's Castle*, by Béla Bartók, Academy Award-nominated director Atom Egoyan returns to the scene of his first-ever COC production this winter—Richard Strauss' haunting masterpiece, *Salome*.



Nathaniel Peake as  
Narraboth, Maya  
Lahyani as the Page  
of Herodias, and  
Evan Boyer as First  
Soldier in the COC's  
2013 production.

A groundbreaking thriller, shocking audiences with each new staging, *Salome* rushes audiences headlong into a twisted tale of power and revenge. Strauss redefined musical storytelling with this operatic twist on a controversial Oscar Wilde play, retelling the Biblical story of John the Baptist's martyrdom through the perspective of one of opera's most iconic characters—the titular Salome, stepdaughter of King Herod. The young royal's dark obsession with Jochanaan (John the Baptist) sets the stage for an infamous dance, a macabre kiss, and an explosive finale.

Egoyan's *Salome* serves as a natural hybrid between his film and stage work, building on Strauss' fascination with voyeurism through multiple layers of looking. Indeed, the Canadian Opera Company first approached Egoyan to direct the work after his 1994 smash hit *Exotica*, aligning Egoyan's own exploration of an obsessive gaze—shared in

the film between a nightclub dancer and her male client—with the tragic consequences of such all-consuming looking in *Salome*.

Debuting in 1996, Egoyan's production followed Strauss' gaze down to disconcerting psychological depths. Rather than a first-century palace in Judea, Egoyan set the action in an abstract and foreboding environment, something between a spa and a sanatorium. Acclaimed designer Derek McLane built the set around a diagonal plane tilted at a dangerously steep angle, with Jochanaan imprisoned underneath the floorboards instead of the subterranean cistern in which he's traditionally kept. Characters compulsively observe others, or are being looked at themselves—players in a complicated game of frustrated desire. “The Page is obsessed with Narraboth, who doesn't return her gaze,” notes Egoyan, “while Narraboth is obsessed with Salome, who doesn't return his gaze; and Salome



*Michael Kupfer-Radecky and Ambur Braid in rehearsal as Jochanaan and Salome in the COC's 2023 production.*

is obsessed with Jochanaan, who doesn't return her gaze."

This complex network of looking underlines a looming sense of surveillance within the opera. Camera-wielding guards patrol the stage with their modern technology directing a collective gaze towards Salome, whose introduction to the audience arrives in a series of unsettling filmed images set in a spa's mud baths. Employing her own penchant for surveillance, Salome then turns the audience's attention to Jochanaan—a large video screen positioned behind the singers shows a live feed of his mouth in close-up. This disembodied projection anticipates Salome's fetishistic dissecting of Jochanaan's body parts—skin, hair, mouth—into isolated objects of desire, while simultaneously foreshadowing the prophet's actual decapitation.

Of course, the opera's most well-known moment of looking is the Dance of the Seven Veils, described by Egoyan as "the most famous striptease in history." In the director's innovative interpretation, home movies of the young Salome project on a screen created by the billowing skirt of the princess. This moment depicts her as a young girl in a world of paper dolls, powerfully contrasted by a disturbing act played out in shadows: the assault of Salome by a group of men, overseen by her stepfather Herod.

"[Violence] doesn't come out of nowhere," Egoyan observes, "and we've seen that with abuse victims: there is a repetition of the way that they have been treated." This vision of the dance thus places Salome's demand for Jochanaan's head within a seemingly inescapable cycle of violence, rather than as an isolated horrifying act. Instead of showing a prototypical femme fatale—"an unbridled sexuality that leads to ruin," as Egoyan

*"The Page is  
obsessed with  
Narraboth, who  
doesn't return  
her gaze, while  
Narraboth is  
obsessed with  
Salome, who  
doesn't return his  
gaze; and Salome  
is obsessed with  
Jochanaan, who  
doesn't return her  
gaze."*

*~ Atom Egoyan, director*

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says—the production depicts an "abused, traumatized character." The results carry a sobering impact. Egoyan's production asks us to understand how abuse and trauma, surveillance and obsession, can perpetuate with such horrific impact.



*Martin Gantner as Jochanaan and Erika Sunnegårdh  
as Salome in the COC's 2013 production*





## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

In his play *Salome*, Oscar Wilde made significant changes to the biblical version of the story in which King Herod—so pleased with Salome's dance at his birthday feast—promises his stepdaughter half of his kingdom. Also, according to the Bible, it's Salome's mother who insists her daughter demand John the Baptist's head on a platter. Wilde, however, has Herod promise his stepdaughter anything she wants *before* she dances, with Salome violently rejecting any intervention from her mother, and it's this narrative on which the libretto for Richard Strauss's opera is closely based. Salome begins her famous dance knowing exactly what she wants and how she will get it.

Just as Wilde reinterpreted the story, I felt a pressing need to make certain things clearer—to find some justification for Salome's horrific behaviour. Why is this young woman so violent? What is it in her upbringing that has brought her to demand the murder and mutilation of her object of lust? Rather than portray Salome as a stereotype of a femme fatale (and understanding this was just the sort of decadent *fin de siècle* myth that many artists had found so compelling), my reading of the opera began to focus on its latent themes of voyeurism and frustrated desire.

It also led me to clarify the details of her upbringing in this malevolent and grotesque setting. In this way, the violence that Salome witnessed and experienced could be seen to result in her act of violence. Just as Strauss's music had penetrated—in his own words—"the uttermost limits of harmony... and of the receptivity of modern ears," I felt it was possible to stage the work in a manner that would similarly challenge a modern viewer's expectations. My starting point is the observation that if one's experience of childhood has been destroyed, then one's behaviour—without intervening help—will often be destructive. "This production gives Salome more authority than the mere exercising of her youthful sensuality. It gives her the power that comes from understanding Herod's history of abuse, and the knowledge that she has discovered a way of using that knowledge against him. Respecting the dramatic intentions of both the rich poetic text and Strauss's turbulent and jarring score, I hope to create a mood and interpretation where Salome's final action can be understood in a new and psychologically coherent way.

~ *Atom Egoyan*

# SYNOPSIS

Salome, princess of Judea, lives in the palace of her mother, Herodias, and stepfather, Herod. Imprisoned in a well beneath the palace is the prophet Jochanaan (John the Baptist). Salome leaves Herod's dining hall, troubled by the way her stepfather looks at her. Hearing Jochanaan's voice, she becomes enthralled by it. Salome seductively convinces Narraboth, the captain of the guard who is secretly in love with Salome, to bring Jochanaan up from the cistern. Jochanaan is contemptuous of Herodias, and Salome, her obsession growing, praises his beauty, begging him to let her kiss his mouth. Jochanaan ignores Salome's advances, refusing even to look at her, warning her she is damned. Meanwhile Narraboth, overcome with jealousy, kills himself.

Herod and his entourage appear in search of Salome, and discover Narraboth's body. Although suffering hallucinations from the burden of his conscience, Herod flirts with Salome, offering her lavish gifts, which she refuses. Herodias reprimands her husband for staring lasciviously at her daughter, and they argue. Jochanaan's voice is heard from

the cistern, proclaiming the coming of the Judgement Day. A group of Jewish scholars, resident in the palace, disagrees over the rumour that Jochanaan has seen God. Herod and a pair of Nazarenes jump into the argument, and the voice of Jochanaan is heard condemning Herodias. Herodias demands silence and Herod asks Salome to dance. Initially refusing, Salome agrees once Herod has promised that she may name her reward.

When her dance is finished, Salome requests her reward: Jochanaan's head. Herod is horrified and tries to change Salome's mind with offers of magnificent gifts, which she refuses. Since Herod has sworn an oath, Jochanaan is beheaded and his head brought to Salome. Salome sings to the head as if it were alive. She asks Jochanaan why he still refuses to look at her, and chastises him for having cursed her. If only he had looked at her, she is sure he would have loved her. The moon emerges from behind a cloud, illuminating Salome engaged in a passionate kiss with the head of Jochanaan. Herod cries out an order to "kill that woman," and Salome is put to death.

**SYNOPSIS IN A MINUTE:** Jochanaan (John the Baptist) is Herod's prisoner. He is also an object of obsession for Herod's stepdaughter, Salome. Herod in turn is smitten with Salome and begs her to dance for him, promising her anything in return. Salome dances, and then demands the head of Jochanaan. Horrified, Herod reluctantly agrees but, as he sees her kiss the severed head, he orders her execution.

# 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*  
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Jamie Kruspe, *Assistant*  
*Concertmaster*  
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James Aylesworth  
Sandra Baron  
Bethany Bergman  
Terri Croft  
Hiroko Kagawa\*  
Nancy Kershaw  
Dominique Laplante  
Yakov Lerner

## VIOLIN II

Paul Zevenhuizen, *Principal*  
Csaba Koczó, *Assistant Principal*  
Calvin Cheng\*  
Heemin Choi\*  
Patrick Goodwin\*  
Elizabeth Johnston  
Clara Lee  
Aya Miyagawa  
Jeremy Potts\*  
Louise Tardif  
Andrea Tyniec\*  
Joanna Zabrowarna

## VIOLA

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

## CELLO

Leana Rutt, *Associate Principal*,  
*Acting Principal*  
Paul Widner, *Assistant Principal*,  
*Acting Associate Principal*  
Olga Laktionova, *Acting Assistant*  
*Principal*  
Naomi Barron\*  
Drew Comstock\*  
Mary Katherine Finch\*  
Bryan Holt\*  
Elaine Thompson

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Tony Flynt, *Principal*  
Robert Speer  
Michael Cox\*  
Travis Harrison\*  
Eric Lee\*  
Robert Wolanski\*

## FLUTE

Douglas Stewart, *Principal*  
Leslie Newman\*  
Maria Pelletier\*

## PICCOLO

Shelley Brown

## OBOE

Mark Rogers, *Principal*  
Jasper Hitchcock\*

## ENGLISH HORN

Lelsey Young

## BASS OBOE

Aleh Remezau\*

## CLARINET

Dominic Desautels, *Principal*  
Max Christie\*  
Juliette Moreno\*  
Michele Verheul\*

## E♭ CLARINET

Juan Olivares\*

## BASS CLARINET

Colleen Cook

## BASSOON

Eric Hall, *Principal*  
William Cannaway\*  
Samuel Fraser\*

## CONTRA BASSOON

Lisa Chisholm

## HORN

Scott Wevers, *Principal*  
David Quackenbush, *Assistant*  
*Principal*\*  
Janet Anderson  
Bardhyl Gjevori  
Ryan Garbett\*  
Christine Passmore\*  
Gary Pattison (leave of absence)  
Courtney Prizrenac\*

## TRUMPET

James Gardiner, *Acting Principal*\*  
Brendan Cassin\*  
Michael Fedyshyn\*  
Luise Heyerhoff\*

## TROMBONE

Robert Conquer, *Acting Principal*\*  
Ian Cowie

## BASS TROMBONE

David Pell\*  
Collins Saunders\*

## TUBA

Daniel Hill, *Principal*

## TIMPANI

Nicholas Stoup, *Principal*  
Michele Colton\*

## PERCUSSION

Trevor Tureski, *Principal*  
Michele Colton\*  
Chung Ling Lo\*  
Andrew Rasmus\*  
Ryan Scott\*  
Steven Wassmansdorf\*

## HARP

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

## CELESTE

Rachael Kerr\*

## ORGAN

Timothy Cheung\*

.....

## MUSIC LIBRARIAN & STAGE LIBRARIAN

Wayne Vogan

## ASSISTANT MUSIC LIBRARIAN

Ondrej Golias

## PERSONNEL MANAGER

Ian Cowie

\*extra musician

**MUSIC STAFF**

Anne Larlee<sup>^</sup> (*Head Coach*)  
 Rachael Kerr<sup>^</sup>  
 Vladimir Soloviev<sup>†</sup> (*Ensemble Studio Intern Coach*)

**ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR**

Derek Bate

**ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS**

Lesley Abarquez  
 Stephanie Marrs

**ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER**

Sarah Mansikka

**DANCER**

Miyeko Ferguson

**UNDERSTUDIES**

<i>Herod</i>	Michael Colvin <sup>^</sup>
<i>Herodias</i>	Carolyn Sproule
<i>Salome</i>	Teiya Kasahara <sup>^</sup>
<i>Jochanaan</i>	Robert Pomakov
<i>Narraboth</i>	Owen McCausland <sup>^</sup>
<i>Page</i>	Queen Hezumuryango <sup>†</sup>
<i>Second Jew</i>	Stephen Bell
<i>Fifth Jew</i>	Bruno Cormier
<i>First Nazarene</i>	Gene Wu
<i>Second Nazarene</i>	Alex Halliday <sup>†</sup>
<i>Dancer</i>	Ashley Coulson

<sup>‡</sup>COC mainstage debut    <sup>†</sup>Current member of the COC Ensemble Studio

<sup>^</sup>Graduate of the COC Ensemble Studio    <sup>\*</sup>CCOC member

## FILM AND PROJECTED IMAGES CREDITS

**DIRECTOR**

Phillip Barker

**PRODUCER**

Simone Urdl

**PERFORMERS**

<i>Salome</i>	Kristin Dagmar
<i>Young Salome</i>	Brittney Cassidy
<i>Herod</i>	David Ramsden
<i>Herod's Attendant</i>	Rebecca Bailey

**CINEMATOGRAPHERS**

Phillip Barker  
 René Sauvé

**PRODUCER'S ASSISTANT/  
FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

Caroline Klein

**PHOTOGRAPHY**

Ed Burtynsky

**GAFFER/GRIP**

Luc Montpellier

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR,  
ORIGINAL STAGE PRODUCTION**

Roman Hurko

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# BIOGRAPHIES



**FRÉDÉRIC ANTOUN**, Narraboth (Tenor; Laval, QC)

COC CREDITS: Fenton, *Falstaff* (2014); Chevalier de la Force, *Dialogues des Carmélites* (2013); Tamino, *The Magic Flute* (2010). RECENT: Caliban, *The Tempest* (Teatro alla Scala); Gérald, *Lakmé* (Opéra-Comique, Washington National Opera); François, *A Quiet Place* (Paris Opera) UPCOMING: Alain, *Grisélidis* (Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Opéra national de Montpellier); Roméo, *Roméo et Juliette* (Savonlinna Opera Festival), Gérald, *Lakmé* (Opera du Rhin) Raul, *Exterminating Angel* (Opera de Paris)



**JULIA APLIN**, Revival Choreographer (Cambridge, ON)

COC CREDITS: (as Dancer) *Venus and Adonis* (2001). RECENT: *riverMOUTH* (Urbanvessel); *Apheart, For You* (Moonhorse Dance Theatre); *Synaptic Rodeo* (Double Pendulum). UPCOMING: *Bubbles* (Urbanvessel), *New Work* (Flight Festival)



**JACQUES ARSENAULT**, Third Jew (Tenor; Charlottetown, PEI)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: Basilio, *Figaro's Wedding* (Against the Grain Theatre); Piangi, *Phantom of the Opera* (Opera on the Avalon); Basilio/Curzio, *The Marriage of Figaro* (National Arts Centre [NAC]); Freddy, *Bandits in the Valley* (Tapestry Opera); Ambroise Lépine, *Louis Riel* (NAC); (as Accordionist/Keyboardist) *Old Stock: A Refugee Love Story* (2b theatre company). UPCOMING: *La Vie en Rose* (French Squeeze, Cantabile Choirs of Kingston)



**PHILLIP BARKER**, Projections Designer (Toronto, ON)

COC CREDITS: *Salome* (2013, 2002, 1996). SELECTED CREDITS: (as Production Designer) *Star Trek Discovery*, *The Sinner*, *Guest of Honour*, *Ararat*, *The Sweet Hereafter*. ADDITIONAL: 'Strange Machines, The Films of Phillip Barker', a retrospective of Phillip's own films (TIFF Lightbox, Festival du Nouveau Cinéma, Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival); *When Art Meets the Screen* (Danish Film Institute)



**DEREK BATE**, Assistant Conductor (Toronto, ON)

COC CREDITS: *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 & 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)



**SERGE BENNATHAN**, Choreographer (Vancouver, BC)

COC CREDITS: (as Choreographer) *Eugene Onegin* (2018); *Salome* (2013); *Faust* (2007); *Das Rheingold*; *Die Walküre* (2006); *Jenůfa* (2003); *Julius Caesar* (2002); (as Director) *Renard* (Ensemble Studio Performance, 2008); *Tancredi* (2005). RECENT: *Eugene Onegin* (Lyric Opera of Chicago, Seiji Ozawa Matsumoto Festival, Rome Opera House, San Francisco Opera House) UPCOMING: *Lohengrin* (Metropolitan Opera). ADDITIONAL CREDITS: (as a visual artist) *Paintings for the Soul* at sergebennathan.com



**AMBUR BRAID**, *Salome* (Soprano; Terrace, BC)

SELECT COC CREDITS: Sabina, *Hadrian* (2018); Queen of the Night, *The Magic Flute* (2017); Dalinda, *Ariadante* (2016); Vitellia, *La clemenza di Tito* (2013, Ensemble Studio performance); Adele, *Die Fledermaus* (2012); Amore, *Orfeo ed Euridice* (2011). RECENT: Tosca, *Tosca*; *Salome, Salome*; Norma, *Norma* (Frankfurt Opera); Stephana, *Siberia* (Bregenzer Festspiele); Eva, *Irrelohe* (Opéra National de Lyon). UPCOMING: Angèle, *Der Zar lässt sich fotografieren*; Chawa, *Die ersten Menschen* (Frankfurt Opera)



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COC Music Director and conductor  
Johannes Debus in rehearsal for the  
COC's 2023 production.



**SCOTT CONNER**, Second Soldier (Bass; Olathe, KS, USA)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: *The Voice of the Oracle of Neptune, Idomeneo*; Hans Schwarz, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (Metropolitan Opera [The Met]); Pistola, *Falstaff* (Santa Fe Opera); Bartolo/Antonio, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Handel & Haydn Society); Jupiter, *Platée* (Des Moines Metro Opera); Angelotti, *Tosca* (Utah Opera); King Balthazar, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (Lyric Opera of Kansas City). UPCOMING: Police Commissioner, *Der Rosenkavalier* (The Met); Ashby, *The Girl of the Golden West* (The Cleveland Orchestra)



**MICHAEL COLVIN**, Second Jew (Tenor; Toronto, ON)

SELECT COC CREDITS: Monostatos, *The Magic Flute* (2022, 2017); Witch, *Hansel & Gretel* (2020); Thomas Scott, *Louis Riel* (2017); Basilio, *The Marriage of Figaro* (2016). RECENT: Basilio, *The Marriage of Figaro*; Spoletta, *Tosca* (Paris Opera); Monostatos, *The Magic Flute* (Paris Opera, Royal Opera House); Laios, *Oedipe* (Salzburg Festival); Herod, *Salome* (English National Opera); Cornwall, *Lear* (Maggio Musicale Fiorentino). UPCOMING: Bardolfo, *Falstaff* (Salzburg Festival); Bob Boles, *Peter Grimes* (Teatro alla Scala); Cornwall, *Lear* (Teatro Real)



**JOHANNES DEBUS**, Conductor, COC Music Director (Toronto, ON/Berlin, Germany)

SELECT COC CREDITS: *The Flying Dutchman, La Traviata* (2022); *In Winter*, Mozart's *Requiem*, In Concert: Russell Braun and Tamara Wilson (2021); *Hansel & Gretel, Rusalka, Otello, Elektra* (2019); *Hadrian, Eugene Onegin, The Nightingale & Other Short Fables, The Abduction from the Seraglio* (2018); *Louis Riel, Götterdämmerung* (2017); *Ariodante* (2016). RECENT: *The Lord of Cries, Jenůfa* (Santa Fe Opera); Concerts with Orchestre Symphonique de Québec, MDR Leipzig, Essener Philharmoniker, Beethoven Orchestra Bonn, Staatstheater Darmstadt



**FAYE DUPRAS**, Shadow Performer (Boston, MA, USA)

COC CREDITS: *Salome* (2013). RECENT: *By The Willow, Bird's Eye View, Star Sisters, Red Ball Rescue, Mama Light* (Foreign Landscapes); *Icarus, Beyond* (Liars & Believers); *I Spy Butterfly, Cozy Corner* (Cozy Arts). UPCOMING: *Dragon Next Door* (Cozy Arts)



**ATOM EGOIAN**, Director (Toronto, ON)

COC CREDITS: *Bluebeard's Castle* (2022); *Così fan tutte* (2019, 2014); *Die Walküre* (2015, 2006, 2004); *Salome* (2013, 2002, 1996). SELECT CREDITS: (film) *The Sweet Hereafter, Ararat, Exotica, Chloe, Remember*; engagements with London's West End, Lincoln Center Festival, Venice Biennale, Canadian Stage, Houston Grand Opera, Pacific Opera Victoria, Luminato, Edinburgh Festival, and Spoleto Festival USA. ADDITIONAL: Two Academy Award® nominations; Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Achievement; Companion of the Order of Canada; Chevalier of France's Ordre des Arts et des Lettres





**VARTAN GABRIELIAN**, First Soldier (Bass-baritone; Toronto, ON)  
 SELECT COC CREDITS: Dr. Grenvil, *La Traviata*; Second Armoured Man, *The Magic Flute* (2022); Soloist, *In Winter*; Soloist, Mozart's *Requiem*; Betto, *Gianni Schicchi* (2021); Sergeant, *The Barber of Seville* (2020); Hunter, *Rusalka*; Mandarin, *Turandot* (2019). RECENT: Nourabad, *The Pearl Fishers* (Vancouver Opera); Figaro, *The Marriage of Figaro*; Seneca, *The Coronation of Poppea* (Trentino Music Festival). UPCOMING: Doctor, *Macbeth* (COC); Masetto, *Don Giovanni* (National Arts Centre Orchestra); Nick Shadow, *The Rake's Progress* (Verbier Festival)



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



**ALEX HALLIDAY**, Cappadocian (Bass-baritone; Toronto, ON)  
 COC CREDITS: Morales, *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). UPCOMING: Servant, *Macbeth*; Jailer, *Tosca* (COC)



**ALEX HETHERINGTON**, An Attendant (Mezzo-soprano; Toronto, ON)  
 COC CREDITS: Mercédès, *Carmen* (2002). RECENT: Soloist, *Songs from the House of Death* (Victoria Symphony); Soloist, Mozart's *Requiem* (National Arts Centre Orchestra); Riley, *R.U.R A Torrent of Light* (Tapestry Opera); Rosina, *The Barber of Seville*; Carmen, *La tragédie de Carmen* (UofT Opera); Nicklausse/Muse, *Les contes d'Hoffmann* (Toronto City Opera); Juno, *Semele* (Toronto Lyric Opera); Soloist, *dawn always begins in the bones* (Canadian Art Song Project); Soloist, *The Bear* (Toronto Symphony Orchestra)



Frédéric Antoun as Narraboth and Carolyn Sproule as *The Page* with director Atom Egoyan, in rehearsal for the COC's 2023 production.





**JENIFER KOWAL**, Stage Manager (Thornhill, ON)

SELECT COC CREDITS: *The Flying Dutchman* (2022); *La Traviata*, *Bluebeard's Castle* (2022); *Gianni Schicchi* (2021); *Hansel & Gretel* (2020); *Rusalka*, *Otello*, *Così fan tutte* (2019); *Eugene Onegin*, *The Nightingale & Other Short Fables*, *Rigoletto* (2018); *Arabella*, *Tosca* (2017); *Norma* (2016). RECENT: *Garden of Vanished Pleasures* (Soundstreams). UPCOMING: *Macbeth* (COC)



**MICHAEL KUPFER-RADECKY**, Jochanaan (Baritone; Ravensburg, Germany)

COC DEBUT. RECENT: Dad, *Greek*; Lord Ruthven, *Der Vampyr* (Hannover State Opera); Gunther, *Götterdämmerung*; Wotan, *Die Walküre* (Bayreuth Festival); The Dutchman, *The Flying Dutchman* (Mannheim National Theatre); Kurwenal, *Tristan und Isolde* (Musikfestspiele Königswinkel); Simon Trovai, *Violanta* (Teatro Regio Torino); Wotan, *Die Walküre* (Tokyo National Theatre). UPCOMING: Henry Kissinger, *Nixon in China*; Amfortas, *Parsifal*; Lear, *Lear* (Hannover State Opera); Gunther, *Götterdämmerung* (Bayreuth Festival); Wotan, *Das Rheingold* (Dortmund)



**ADAM LUTHER**, Fourth Jew (Tenor; Toronto, ON)

COC CREDITS: 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*; Count Tassilo, *Countess Maritza* (Pacific Opera Victoria); Roméo, *Roméo et Juliette* (Calgary Opera); Soloist, Beethoven's 9th Symphony (Edmonton Symphony Orchestra)



**KARITA MATTILA**, Herodias (Soprano; Somero, Finland)

COC CREDITS: Plotina, *Hadrian* (2018). RECENT: Herodias, *Salome* (Paris Opera); Soloist, *Total Karita/La Voix humaine* (Finnish National Opera); The Princess, *Suor Angelica* (Salzburg Festival); Kostelnička Buryjovka, *Jenůfa* (Royal Opera House); The Foreign Princess, *Rusalka* (Teatro Real, Paris Opera); Kabanicha, *Katya Kabanova* (Berlin State Opera); Ortrud, *Lohengrin* (Bayerische Staatsoper); Madame de Croissy, *Dialogues des Carmélites* (Metropolitan Opera) UPCOMING: Klytaemnestra, *Elektra* (Deutsche Oper Berlin)



**OWEN MCCAUSLAND**, First Jew (Tenor; Saint John, NB)

SELECT COC CREDITS: Emile, *Fantasma* (2022); Rodrigo, *Otello*; A Young Servant, *Elektra* (2019); The Fisherman, *The Nightingale & Other Short Fables*; Pedrillo, *The Abduction from the Seraglio* (2018); Tamino, *The Magic Flute* (2017); Lurcanio, *Ariodante* (2016); RECENT: Roderigo, *Otello* (The Cleveland Orchestra); Don Ottavio, *Don Giovanni* (Pacific Opera Victoria [POV]); Lucio Silla, *Lucio Silla* (VOICEBOX). UPCOMING: Ferrando, *Così fan tutte* (POV); Trin, *The Girl of the Golden West* (The Cleveland Orchestra)



**DEREK McLANE**, Set Designer (New York, NY, USA)

COC CREDITS: *Elektra* (2019, 1996); *Salome* (2013, 2002, 1996); *Jenůfa* (1995); *Lulu* (1991) RECENT: *Almost Famous* (Bernard B. Jacobs Theatre); *MJ the Musical* (Neil Simon Theatre); *A Soldier's Play* (Roundabout Theatre Company); *Moulin Rouge* (Al Hirschfeld Theatre); *American Son* (Booth Theatre); The Oscars (Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences); *Hairspray Live!* (NBC Television). ADDITIONAL: Two Tony Awards for Best Scenic Design, Two Emmy Awards for Best Production Design



**CLEA MINAKER**, Shadow Designer and Shadow Performer 1 (Montreal, QC)

COC CREDITS: *Salome* (2013). RECENT: *The Firebird* (National Arts Centre); (as Creator/Performer); *The Book of Thel* (Theatre Lachapelle), *I was thinking maybe* (Banff Centre); (as Puppet Designer/Puppeteer); *Nufonia must fall* (Kid Koala); (as Creator/Performer); *The music of the firmament* (Comox Valley Art Gallery); (as Art Director/Performer); *A Letter to the Ocean* (Imago Theatre). UPCOMING: (as Co-Director/Designer) *Hush*



**ROBERT POMAKOV**, First Nazarene (Bass; Toronto, ON)

COC CREDITS: Monterone, *Rigoletto* (2018); Alberich, *Götterdämmerung* (2017); Bartolo, *The Marriage of Figaro* (2016); Hobson, *Peter Grimes* (2013). RECENT: Méphistophélès, *Faust* (Detroit Opera, Vancouver Opera); Ferrando, *Il Trovatore* (Zurich Opera House); Jacopo Loredano, *I due Foscari* (Opernfestspiele Heidenheim); René, *Iolanta* (Oper Frankfurt); Prince Gremin, *Eugene Onegin* (Norwegian Opera & Ballet); The Bonze, *Madama Butterfly* (Paris Opera, Metropolitan Opera). UPCOMING: Ferrando, *Il Trovatore* (San Francisco Opera); Banquo, *Macbeth* (Calgary Opera)



**SIOBHAN RICHARDSON**, Intimacy Choreographer (Toronto, ON)  
 SELECT COC CREDITS: (as Fight/Intimacy Director) *Carmen* (2022); (as Intimacy Consultant/Director) *Hadrian* (2018). RECENT: (as Fight/Intimacy Director) *Indecent* (Studio 180 Theatre and Mirvish Productions); *Orphans for the Czar* (Crow's Theatre); *Room* (Grand Theatre, Mirvish Productions); *Sex, Getting Married, The Russian Play* (Shaw Festival); *Phaedra's Love* (Stratford Festival). UPCOMING: (as Intimacy Director) *Salome* (COC, 2023) (as "Soldier" and Fight Captain) *Macbeth* (COC, 2023); (as Fight Director) *The Play That Goes Wrong* (Western Michigan University)



**MICHAEL SCHADE**, Herod (Tenor; Oakville, ON)  
 COC CREDITS: Aegisth, *Elektra* (2019); Don Ottavio, *Don Giovanni* (2015); Tito Vespasiano, *La clemenza di Tito* (2013); Gabriel von Eisenstein, *Die Fledermaus* (2012); Tamino, *The Magic Flute* (2011). RECENT: Recital Debut at the Teatro Colon; Astromonte, *Der Stein der Weisen* (Hofkapelle München); Klaus Narr, *Gurre-Lieder* (Danish National Symphony Orchestra), Eisenstein, *Die Fledermaus* (Auditorio de Lyon). UPCOMING: Gerontius, *The Dream of Gerontius* (Wiener Konzerthaus); Evangelist, Bach's *St. John Passion* (Wiener Musikverein); Florestan, *Fidelio* (Tonhalle Zürich); Prince Orlofsky, *Die Fledermaus* (Musikverein Graz)



**CAROLYN SPROULE**, Page (Mezzo-soprano; Montreal, QC)  
 COC CREDITS: Emilia, *Otello* (2019); Maddalena, *Rigoletto* (2018). RECENT: Third Lady, *The Magic Flute*; Ines, *Il Trovatore* (Metropolitan Opera); Carmen, *Carmen* (Pacific Opera Victoria, Opera Hong Kong); Page, *Salome* (Festival d'Aix-en-Provence); Varvara, *Katya Kabanova* (Royal Opera House). UPCOMING: Prostitute, *The House of the Dead* (Rome Opera House), Stéphano, *Romeo and Juliet* (Savonlinna Opera Festival)



**DAVIDA TKACH**, Revival Lighting Designer (New York, NY, USA)  
 COC CREDITS: (as Revival Lighting Designer) *La Bohème* (2019); *The Magic Victrola* (Opera for Young Audiences, 2017); (as Assistant Lighting Designer) *The Barber of Seville* (2019, 2015), *Anna Bolena*; *Rigoletto* (2018), *Arabella* (2017), *Norma* (2016), *La Traviata* (2015). RECENT: *Tiny Pretty Things* (Netflix); *August Osage County* (Soulpepper); *Wrong For Each Other and Old Love* (The Foster Festival); *Mikveh* (Harold Green Jewish Theatre); *A Closer Walk with Patsy Cline* (Western Theatre Company)



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



**MICHAEL WHITFIELD**, Lighting Designer (Salt Spring Island, BC)  
 COC CREDITS: *Salome* (2013, 2002, 1996); *Madama Butterfly* (2014, 2009, 2003, 1998, 1994, 1990); *Wozzeck* (2006); *Falstaff* (2004); *Jenůfa* (2003, 1995); *Don Giovanni* (2000); *The Elixir of Love*; *The Golden Ass* (1999); *The Cunning Little Vixen*; *Fidelio* (1998); *Gianni Schicchi*; *Pagliacci* (1996); *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1995)



**JORELL WILLIAMS**, Second Nazarene (Baritone; Brentwood, NY, USA)  
 COC DEBUT. RECENT: Escamillo, *Carmen* (Pacific Opera Victoria); George Armstrong/Young Man, *Intimate Apparel* (Lincoln Center, Metropolitan Opera); Belcore, *The Elixir of Love* (Dayton Opera); Morbio, *Die Schweigsame Frau* (Bard Summerscape); Captain Corcoran, *H.M.S. Pinafore* (Vancouver Opera); Dizzy Gillespie, *Yardbird* (Seattle Opera); Soloist, Handel's *Messiah* (Elmer Iseler Singers, National Philharmonic Orchestra). UPCOMING: Maduka, *Of the Sea* (Tapestry Opera, Obsidian Theatre)



**CATHERINE ZUBER**, Costume Designer (London, UK)  
 COC CREDITS: *Salome* (2013, 2002, 1996). RECENT: *Moulin Rouge, The Musical!* (Broadway, London, Australia, Cologne, Seoul); *Rigoletto*, (Berlin State Opera); *Rigoletto*, *Porgy and Bess*, *Roméo et Juliette*, *Otello*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Dr. Atomic*, *Les Contes d'Hoffman* (Metropolitan Opera); *Roméo et Juliette* (La Scala, The Salzburg Festival); *Faust* (Baden Baden). *Florencia en el Amazonas*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Le comte Ory* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *My Fair Lady* (English National Opera); *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (Washington National Opera, San Francisco Opera). Catherine is the recipient of eight Tony Awards and two Olivier Awards.

Moon, glowing in the heavens...

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*Above: Sondra Radvanovsky singing "Song to the Moon" in the COC's 2019 production of Rusalka.*



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*Mike Downes Trio, 2022*







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# SHOWCASE SERIES

# BLACK HISTORY

# MONTH



With exciting new program offerings taking place this winter, the Community Partnerships and Programs department continues to offer accessible opportunities for people to engage with the performing arts. Through developing strong connections within the community, the CPP department supports and delivers meaningful, authentic learning opportunities that highlight a diverse range of artistic talent that reflects 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](mailto:education@coc.ca) (school groups only) or call COC Ticket Services at **416-363-8231** to reserve your spot.

**[coc.ca/Showcase](https://coc.ca/Showcase)**

*(l-r) Aaron Manswell, Nathaniel Dett Chorale, Jordana Daumec (photo: Karolina Kuras)  
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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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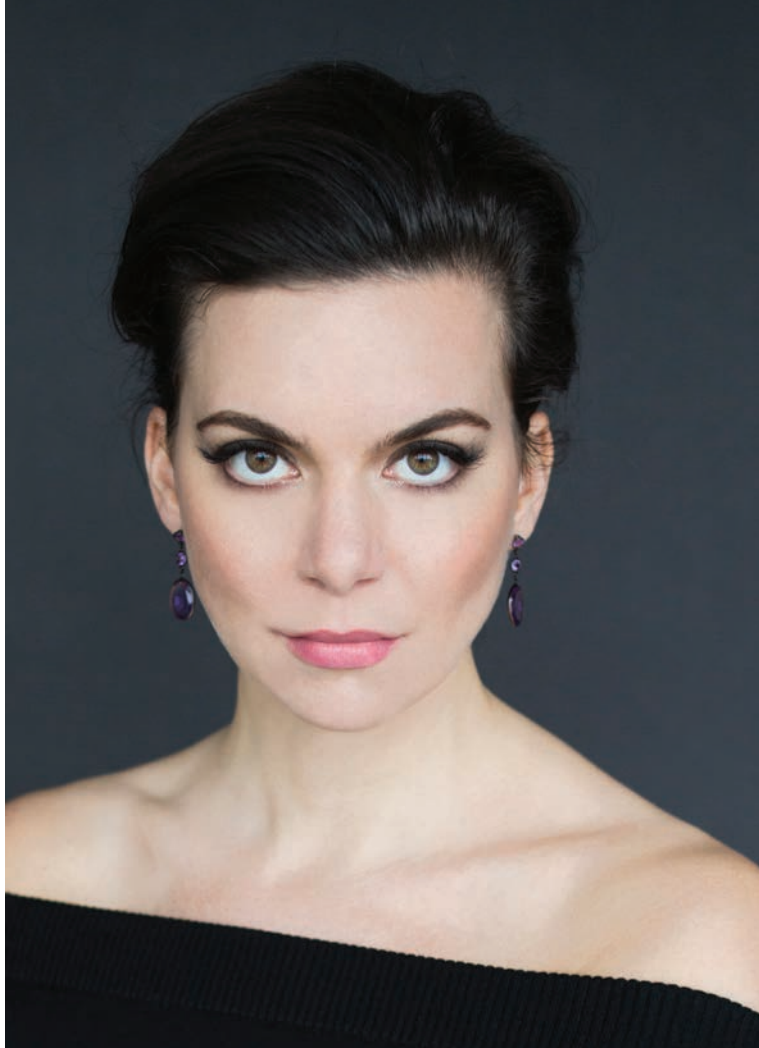
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*The Monumental Campaign recognizes the leadership of our philanthropic community in supporting the COC's first-ever production of Wagner's Parsifal. This long-anticipated project has been postponed by the COVID-19 pandemic, but it will be brought 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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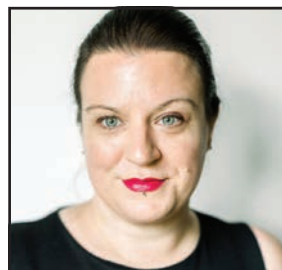
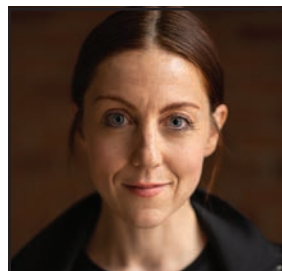
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## A COC PODCAST

*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.



Top: Julie McIsaac  
Bottom: Robyn Grant-Moran

- 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](https://coc.ca/KeyChange)  
or on any podcast platform. All episodes are available now!

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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 (#COCFigaro, #COCSalome). 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.

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During performances please speak with an usher or visit Patron Services at the Coat Check in the Lower Lobby. Following performances, please e-mail [lostandfound@coc.ca](mailto: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](https://coc.ca/Venues) or call **416-342-5233**.

## GO SCENT FREE

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



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BY PHONE:

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

Monday to Friday – 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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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.

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EMAIL INQUIRIES: [tickets@coc.ca](mailto:tickets@coc.ca)

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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.



Josef Wagner and Jane Archibald in  
*The Marriage of Figaro* (COC, 2016)  
Photo: Michael Cooper

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