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## **CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY CANCELS REMAINDER OF PLANNED 2020/2021 SEASON**

### **Artist training to continue and new opera experiences to be offered through COC's Opera Everywhere programming**

**Toronto** – Given ongoing uncertainty around large-scale and indoor gatherings due to COVID-19, the **Canadian Opera Company** will be cancelling the rest of its originally planned 2020/2021 season programming.

Affected programming includes:

- Bizet's *Carmen*, Janáček's *Katya Kabanova*, Verdi's *La Traviata*, and Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*
- The world premiere of *Fantasma*, the Opera for Young Audiences production recently commissioned by the COC
- All special events, including the COC's annual **Operanation** and **Fine Wine Auction** fundraisers

All subscribers and patrons directly affected by these changes will be contacted with further details.

"Earlier this summer, our team made a promise to ourselves — and to our audiences — to explore every possible option for going ahead with our season," says **COC General Director Alexander Neef**. "Since then, however, the changing local health situation has made it clear that cancelling our original winter and spring programming is the only safe decision for our staff, artists, and audience members."

The **COC Ensemble Studio program** for emerging singers and pianists/coaches is moving forward digitally with nine young artists receiving customized online training until in-person coaching can safely resume. **COC Director/Dramaturg in Residence Julie McIsaac** and **COC Composer-in-Residence Ian Cusson** are also continuing their residencies with the company, ensuring that new opera creation and workshoping remain a priority through this time.

"With a clearer sense of the year ahead, we can focus on developing more opera experiences for this moment," adds **Neef**. "Our recently announced Opera Everywhere programming allows people to enjoy and share opera safely, from wherever they might be. We're also looking forward to forging even more new relationships and artistic collaborations through work with local artists, other theatre companies, and community organizations."

Highlights of the COC's **Opera Everywhere** programming include:

- The three-day **Free Concert Series Digital Festival** in November 2020
- **MindBodyMusic**, a panel discussion exploring music's effect on psychology and physiology
- **Key Change**, COC's new podcast that explores opera from a fresh perspective
- **Solo Spotlights**, showcasing the **COC Orchestra** with **COC Music Director Johannes Debus**
- **Opera Makers**, encouraging young participants to tell the stories of their communities through opera creation

- **COC x AGO: Hello from the Other Side**, socially distanced, in-person performances, held in partnership with the Art Gallery of Ontario, scheduled for January 2021

Full details regarding affected programming, ticket-holder options, and **Opera Everywhere** initiatives can be found at [coc.ca](http://coc.ca).

#### **ABOUT THE CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY**

Based in Toronto, the Canadian Opera Company is the largest producer of opera in Canada and one of the largest in North America. The COC enjoys a loyal audience including a dedicated base of subscribers. Under its leadership team of General Director Alexander Neef and Music Director Johannes Debus, the company has an international reputation for artistic excellence and creative innovation. Its diverse repertoire includes new commissions and productions, local and international collaborations with leading opera companies and festivals and attracts the world's foremost Canadian and international artists. The COC Academy is an incubator for the future of the art form, nurturing Canada's new wave of opera creators with customized training and support. The COC performs in its own opera house, the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, hailed internationally as one of the finest in the world. For more information, visit [coc.ca](http://coc.ca).

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