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## **RETURNING TO THE STAGE IN STYLE: COC'S *LA TRAVIATA* IS A STUNNING FEAST FOR THE SENSES**

**Toronto** –Spectacular party scenes, gorgeous period costumes, and show-stopping arias bring 1850s Paris to lavish life in Giuseppe Verdi's *La Traviata*. The production marks the first in-person opera performances hosted at the **Canadian Opera Company's** downtown opera house since the beginning of the pandemic. *La Traviata* runs for seven performances at the **Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts** on **April 23, May 1, 3, 7, 12, 18, and 20, 2022**.

Violetta Valéry is a celebrated Parisian courtesan and captivating hostess whose famous parties attract the city's most glamorous residents. She's also slowly dying and knows she doesn't have long left but handsome young Alfredo makes a persuasive case for taking a chance on true love. Their romances is short-lived, however, as Violetta is soon forced to choose between her own happiness and that of her great love.

Award-winning costumes and puppetry by **Cait O'Connor**, combined with sets by **Riccardo Hernandez** and dramatic lighting by **Marcus Doshi** brings audiences along on a rollercoaster of experiences and emotion, plummeting from exuberance and glamour to passionate despair. Choreographer **Austin McCormick** adds visual punch through lively dance scenes that mesmerize with swirling ballgowns.

Director **Arin Arbus** returns at the helm of this deeply moving COC production. For **Arbus**, many of the opera's underlying themes remain, unfortunately, universally relevant: "*La Traviata* scandalized society when it was originally performed," she says. "It is a deeply drawn psychological portrait of a woman struggling to survive in a moneyed, stratified patriarchy. And that, unfortunately, remains an important story" (*Macleans*).

Egyptian-born soprano **Amina Edris** is one of the most exciting up-and-coming voices on today's operatic stage; she brings her "fiery vocal ornamentation" (*Washington Post*) to her COC debut in the role of Violetta Valéry, opposite renowned American tenor **Matthew Polenzani** also making a company debut as Alfredo. As Alfredo's father, Giorgio Germont, Italian baritone **Simone Piazzola** makes his debut on COC's mainstage, while Canadian baritone **Gregory Dahl** (last seen at the COC in 2018 in the world premiere of *Hadrian*) takes on the role of Baron Duphol. A number of **COC Ensemble Studio** artists complete the cast in featured roles: sopranos **Jamie Groote** and **Midori Marsh** as Flora Bervoix and Annina respectively, baritone **Jonah Spungin** as Marquis d'Obigny, and bass-baritone **Vartan Gabrielian** as Dr. Grenvil.

COC Music Director **Johannes Debus** makes a long-awaited return to the podium, conducting the **COC Orchestra** through one of Verdi's most popular works. Price Family Chorus Master **Sandra Horst** leads the **COC Chorus** through several energetic ensemble arias that includes "Libiamo ne' lieti calici," the iconic, celebratory drinking song featured in everything from *The Godfather* to the 1945 classic film, *The Lost Weekend*.

*La Traviata* is sung in Italian and presented by the COC with English SURTITLES™.

### **Cast and Creative Team**

<b>Violetta Valéry</b>	Amina Edris
<b>Alfredo Germont</b>	Matthew Polenzani
<b>Giorgio Germont</b>	Simone Piazzola

<b>Flora Bervoix</b>	Jamie Groote
<b>Marquis d'Obigny</b>	Jonah Spungin
<b>Baron Duphol</b>	Gregory Dahl
<b>Annina</b>	Midori Marsh
<b>Dr. Grenvil</b>	Vartan Gabrielian

<b>Conductor</b>	Johannes Debus
<b>Director</b>	Arin Arbus
<b>Set Designer</b>	Riccardo Hernandez
<b>Costume &amp; Puppet Designer</b>	Cait O'Connor
<b>Lighting Designer</b>	Marcus Doshi
<b>Choreographer</b>	Austin McCormick
<b>Associate Choreographer</b>	Laura Carless
<b>Price Family Chorus Master</b>	Sandra Horst

**With the COC Orchestra and COC Chorus**

### **TICKET INFORMATION**

Single tickets for *La Traviata* range from **\$35 – \$250 for adults**, with Grand Ring seats available at **\$290** and **\$350**, and **\$22 tickets available for guests between the ages of 16 and 29** through the COC's **Opera Under 30** program. Tickets can be purchased online at [coc.ca](http://coc.ca) or by calling the Four Seasons Centre Box Office at **416-363-8231**. For more information on booking **student groups, standing room, and rush tickets**, as well as other specially priced tickets available to **young people under the age of 15**, please visit [coc.ca](http://coc.ca).

### **A SAFE RETURN**

For the most up-to-date information regarding current health and safety protocols, please visit [coc.ca/SafeReturn](http://coc.ca/SafeReturn).

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

**Season Sponsor:** BMO Financial Group

Production of *La Traviata* underwritten in part by:  
**The Estate of Hellen Allen Stacey**

**Production Sponsor for *La Traviata*:** CIBC

Thank you to the entire COC community, including our [COC Board of Directors](#), our [Corporate Sponsors and Foundation Supporters](#), [generous public funders](#), [union partners](#), and — most critically — [our audience](#). Your inspiring support ensures that opera flourishes, uniting global audiences and paving the way for a vibrant future.

### **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. General Director Perryn Leech joined the company in 2021, forming a leadership team with Music Director Johannes Debus and Deputy General Director Christie Darville. The COC enjoys a loyal audience, including a dedicated base of subscribers, and 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 company is an incubator for the future of the art form, nurturing Canada's new wave of opera performers and creators with customized training and support. The COC's purpose-built opera house, the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, is hailed internationally as one of the finest in the world. For more information, visit [coc.ca](http://coc.ca).

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