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SOUND AND SPECTACLE: COC'S *TOSCA* IS A SWEEPING OPERA EXPERIENCE

Toronto – The **Canadian Opera Company's** 2022/2023 mainstage programming concludes with a gorgeous production of the Puccini masterpiece, bringing together big emotions, huge voices, and a riveting storyline. The edge-of-your-seat thriller takes audiences on a dramatic rollercoaster that unfolds over the course of just 24 hours in the story, as the celebrated singer Tosca is faced with a terrible ultimatum: submit to the desires of the corrupt police chief Scarpia, or watch her beloved Cavaradossi die. *Tosca* runs for eight performances at the **Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts** on **May 5, 7, 11, 13, 19, 21, 23, and 27, 2023**.

Two acclaimed sopranos star as the opera's tempestuous and tragic lead character. **Sinéad Campbell-Wallace** of Ireland, who *The Guardian* has lauded for her "blaz[ing]" voice, full of "great lyrical warmth," makes her COC debut, while **Keri Alkema** reprises the role from the COC's 2017 production of *Tosca*, having last dazzled Toronto audiences in *Rusalka* (2019), with her "appealing [vocal] brew of dark and creamy colors" (*The New York Times*).

Italian tenor **Stefano La Colla** makes another COC debut as Cavaradossi; **La Colla** has been praised for his vocal "strength and flexibility" (*Chicago Classical Review*) and, in performing the role of the lovelorn painter was praised by *The New York Times* for his "firm, bright voice and ringing high notes." British baritone **Roland Wood** returns to Toronto, bringing "great dramatic fire" (*The Guardian*) to the villainous Scarpia.

Canadian-Irish tenor **Michael Colvin**, known for his "superb" performances (*San Francisco Classical Voice*), is Spoletta, alongside Canadian-British bass-baritone **Giles Tomkins** as Sciarrone, two of Scarpia's accomplices. American bass-baritone **Christian Pursell** makes his COC debut as Angelotti, an escaped political prisoner, while Italian bass **Donato Di Stefano** and **Ensemble Studio** bass-baritone **Alex Halliday** join the cast as a Sacristan and Jailer, respectively.

Award-winning opera director **Paul Curran** returns to the COC, alongside assistant director **Marilyn Gronsdal**, at the helm of a production *The Globe and Mail* has called "a night at the cinematic opera" for its fast-paced action and "beautiful musical construction." Sets and costumes from designer **Kevin Knight** immediately transport audiences to 19th-century Rome, a period of political turbulence that mirrors the drama unfolding onstage. Meanwhile, atmospheric lighting from designer **David Martin Jacques** sets the tone for the thrilling tale of lust, murder, and revenge.

Puccini's rich, romantic score is a stunning accomplishment in dramatic musical storytelling with show-stopping arias and gripping duets that make it one of the most performed operas of all time. In the heart-wrenching "E lucevan le stelle" ("And the stars were shining brightly"), listeners are fully immersed in Cavaradossi's inner turmoil, while the famous soprano showpiece "Vissi d'arte" ("I lived for art") is a spellbinding moment of perfect beauty that is often performed in recital worldwide. Italian conductor **Giuliano Carella** makes his COC debut at the podium, conducting the acclaimed **COC Orchestra**, and **Price Family Chorus Master Sandra Horst** leads the **COC Chorus** through the opera's powerful choral moments that include the extraordinary Act 1 closer, "Te Deum."

Tosca is sung in Italian and presented by the COC with English SURTITLES™.

Cast and Creative Team

Tosca	Sinead Campbell-Wallace Keri Alkema*
Cavaradossi	Stefano La Colla
Scarpia	Roland Wood
Spoletta	Michael Colvin
Sciarrone	Giles Tomkins
Angelotti	Christian Pursell
Sacristan	Donato Di Stefano
Jailer	Alex Halliday

Conductor	Giuliano Carella
Assistant Conductor	Simone Luti
Director	Paul Curran
Assistant Director	Marilyn Gronsdal
Set & Costume Designer	Kevin Knight
Lighting Designer	David Martin Jacques
Price Family Chorus Master	Sandra Horst
Stage Manager	Stephanie Marrs

With the COC Orchestra and COC Chorus

*May 11, 13

TICKET INFORMATION

Single tickets for *Tosca* 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 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.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Production Sponsor: CIBC

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

The **COC Orchestra** is generously sponsored, in part, by **W. Bruce C. Bailey**, in honour of **Christie Darville**, **COC Deputy General Director**, and **Johannes Debus**, **COC Music Director**, and in part by **The Schulich Foundation**

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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.

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