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GLENCORE ENSEMBLE STUDIO SCHOOL TOUR'S NEW PRODUCTION OPENS THE WORLD OF OPERA TO HIGH SCHOOLS

Toronto – When the **Canadian Opera Company's Glencore Ensemble Studio School Tour** sets off across Ontario this fall, it will reach a wider audience than ever before. For the first time in its 33-year history, this year's tour includes an opera for students in grades 7 to 12. From **November 4 – December 1, 2013**, a new COC school tour production of *La serva padrona* by Giovanni Battista Pergolesi will be performed at middle schools and high schools across Ontario, in addition to the popular children's opera *The Brothers Grimm* by Dean Burry, which will travel to elementary schools. Both operas are performed in English.

"The **Glencore Ensemble Studio School Tour** is one of the COC's most successful education and outreach programs. Historically, we've been able to reach 16,000 students a year with the tour, introducing this next generation of opera-goers to the art form in an entertaining way," says **COC General Director Alexander Neef**. "This year we are especially excited about the opportunity to bring the tour to Ontario middle schools and high schools. Our new production of *La serva padrona* is a great way to expand our reach to a broader audience of young people. The opera's satirical humour is very engaging for this age group."

The colourful new production of *La serva padrona* is ideally suited to pre-teens and teens with its witty plot and sophisticated themes of power structures and mistaken identity, while *The Brothers Grimm's* classic fairy tale characters make that opera familiar territory for the younger audience of students in kindergarten to grade 6. Both *The Brothers Grimm* and *La serva padrona* will entertain and engage young audiences in schools throughout southern Ontario, with *La serva padrona* also travelling to Sudbury and Timmins.

Both *La serva padrona* and *The Brothers Grimm* are 45 minutes in length and performed in English, making them easily accessible for younger audiences. Each performance concludes with a 15-minute question-and-answer period with the cast and crew. These annual touring productions feature the rising young stars of the COC's **Ensemble Studio**, Canada's premier training program for young opera professionals.

A complete 2013 Glencore Ensemble Studio School Tour schedule is available upon request. The COC welcomes media coverage of school performances. Photographers and writers must advise the COC's media relations team 48 hours before the performance of their attendance at the in-school presentation. The COC must advise the school before any media can attend. This is a legal requirement.

La serva padrona by Giovanni Battista Pergolesi

Composed in 1733, *La serva padrona* is widely considered to be the quintessential *opera buffa*, a form of comic Italian opera. This comedic romp features bold characters, witty banter and humorous disguises to tell the story of an impertinent maid's efforts to trick her aging master, Uberto, into marriage. By disguising Uberto's mute servant as an enviable suitor, she finally succeeds. With a newly commissioned translation by Brent Krysa for the **Glencore Ensemble Studio School Tour**, this production is unabridged and translated from its original Italian into English.

Creative Team

Director: Brent Krysa

Music Director: Jenna Douglas

Set & Costume Designer: Michael Gianfrancesco

Stage Manager: Michael Lewandowski

Uberto: Gordon Bintner/Clarence Frazer/Geoffrey Sirett

Serpina: Claire de Sévigné/Sasha Djihanian

Gatone: Gordon Bintner/Clarence Frazer/Geoffrey Sirett

The Brothers Grimm by Dean Burry

The Brothers Grimm was last performed as part of the school tour in 2012. It is the imaginative tale of how two scholarly brothers in the 1800s collected some of the world's best-loved fairy tales, including *Rapunzel*, *Rumpelstiltskin*, and *Little Red Riding Hood*. Commissioned by the COC in 1999, *The Brothers Grimm* is believed to be the most performed Canadian opera of all time and marked its 500th performance in December 2012.

Creative Team

Director: Liza Balkan

Music Director: Timothy Cheung

Set & Costume Designer: Kevin McAllister

Stage Manager: Michael Barrs

Wilhelm Grimm: Andrew Haji/Owen McCausland

Jacob Grimm: Cameron McPhail

Brentano: Neil Craighead

Dortchen Wild: Danielle MacMillan

Frau Viehman: Charlotte Burrage/Aviva Fortunata

Acknowledgements

Glencore is the title sponsor of the **Glencore Ensemble Studio School Tour**. It is one of the world's largest global diversified natural resource companies.

The 2013 Glencore Ensemble Studio School Tour is booked through the COC's arts education and touring partner, **Prologue to the Performing Arts**.

About the COC Ensemble Studio

The COC Ensemble Studio, underwritten in part by Peter M. Deeb and The Slight Family Foundation, is Canada's premier training program for young opera professionals and provides advanced instruction, hands-on experience, and career development opportunities. The Ensemble Studio is also supported by the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage, RBC Foundation, Hal Jackman Foundation and other generous donors.

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 support-base and one of the highest attendance and subscription rates in North America. Under its leadership team of General Director Alexander Neef and Music Director Johannes Debus, the COC is increasingly capturing the opera world's attention. The COC maintains its international reputation for artistic excellence and creative innovation by creating new productions within its diverse repertoire, collaborating with leading opera companies and festivals, and attracting the world's foremost Canadian and international artists. 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. Designed by Diamond Schmitt Architects, the Four Seasons Centre opened in 2006, and is also the performance venue for The National Ballet of Canada. For more information on the COC, visit its award-winning website, coc.ca.

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For more information or to request photographs of the school tour productions, please contact:

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