

For immediate release: March 29, 2012

WINE TO FLOW, GLASSES TO CLINK AND GAVEL TO BANG AT COC'S 13TH ANNUAL FINE WINE AUCTION

Toronto – The **Canadian Opera Company's 13th annual Fine Wine Auction** on **Thurs., April 12, 2012**, will be the company's biggest to date. For this year's lavish and libatious fundraising event, the COC moves to the historic trading room floor at Toronto's **Design Exchange** (234 Bay St.) to bring 400 wine enthusiasts together to bid on more than a quarter of a million dollars worth of hard-to-find wines.

CTV reporter **Paul Bliss** returns to host the annual fine wine auction, which features a tantalizing array of wines just waiting to be snatched up and added to a private cellar. A **pre-auction cocktail at 6 p.m.** kicks-off the festivities on April 12, with the **live auction starting at 7 p.m.** Toronto's best-known auctioneer, **Stephen Ranger**, will negotiate the bidding over a collection of exquisite wines that includes:

- **1985 Château Pétrus:** The Pétrus estate has a limited production of red wine that is one of the most expensive and celebrated in the world, receiving top scores from wine critics.
- **1990 Harlan Estate Proprietary Red:** Harlan Estate Proprietary Red is called "one of the 10 best wines of the 20th century," by British wine critic Jancis Robinson; the 1990 bottle is from this wine's debut vintage.
- **1996 Domaine de la Romanée-Conti Romanée-Saint-Vivant:** A bottle from one of the world's greatest wine producers, described as "the scarcest, most expensive – and frequently the best – wine in the world," by British wine writer Clive Coates.
- **1998 Château Haut Brion:** Château Haut-Brion has one of the longest and most interesting histories of any Bordeaux wine chateau, and is famous for its regularity, innovation and excellence.
- **2001 Château Lafite Rothschild:** As early as 1815, renowned wine broker Abraham Lawton designated Château Lafite Rothschild as a leading wine; as Bordeaux's most famous property, Château Lafite is known the world over; across all vintages Lafite Rothschild is one of the most expensive wines available for purchase.
- **2003 Domaine de Pégau Cuvée de Capo:** Produced by one of the finest wineries in southern France, the Cuvée de Capo is a Châteauneuf-du-Pape wine made only made in exceptional years; the 2003 vintage was rated 99/100 by *Wine Spectator*.

In addition to bidding on exclusive wines, guests can participate in a silent auction featuring such items as VIP passes to the 2012 NXNE Music and Film Festival, experiences at Canada's finest arts and cultural attractions, fine-dining gift certificates and hotel accommodations, and a personal driving experience hosted by Jaguar Land Rover at the luxurious Montebello Hotel in Quebec, as well as enter a raffle to win a 1.26 carat Canadian diamond valued at \$20,000.

The COC's **13th annual Fine Wine Auction** also features a performance by rising Canadian soprano **Ambur Braid**. A member of the COC's Ensemble Studio, Ms Braid won over audiences and critics alike with her performances in COC productions of *The Magic Flute* and *Orfeo ed Euridice* and for her rock-pop-opera mash-ups with Canadian bands Broken Social Scene and Austra at the COC's Operation fundraising party. On April 12, Ms Braid once more takes "centre stage" to dazzle those in attendance with her dramatic presence and vocal fireworks.

A great night out for wine aficionados and novices alike, the annual fine wine auction offers desirable selections for those adding to already-established cellars as well as those just starting their collections. Tickets to the COC's **13th annual Fine Wine Auction** are **\$100** and can be purchased online at **coc.ca** or by calling **416-363-8231**. All proceeds benefit the COC.

The COC's **13th annual Fine Wine Auction** is made possible by TD Securities, Bloomberg, Thomson Reuters, The Cheese Boutique, CTV, *The Globe and Mail* and Stephen Ranger Fine Art Valuation and Consultancy.

About the Canadian Opera Company

Based in Toronto, the Canadian Opera Company is the largest producer of opera in Canada and one of the five largest in North America. The COC enjoys a loyal audience support-base and one of the highest attendance and subscription rates in North America. The COC celebrates its 62nd anniversary during the 2011/2012 season. 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 and 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.

- 30 -

For more information, please contact: Jennifer Pugsley, Media Relations Manager, tel: 416-306-2303, e-mail: jenniferp@coc.ca