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COC'S GLENCORE ENSEMBLE STUDIO SCHOOL TOUR BRINGS MAGICAL AND MYTHICAL KID-FRIENDLY OPERAS TO YOUNG AUDIENCES ACROSS ONTARIO THIS FALL

Toronto – The Canadian Opera Company's **Glencore Ensemble Studio School Tour** returns to elementary and middle schools across Ontario from **November 3 – 30, 2014**. Two engaging and entertaining operas by Canadian composer **Dean Burry** headline the tour for 2014: *The Bremen Town Musicians* and *The Scorpions' Sting: An Egyptian Myth*. These child-friendly operas expect to reach 16,000 students from Kindergarten to grade eight over the course of the tour.

"We are delighted to once again bring opera directly to its youngest audiences through the **Glencore Ensemble Studio School Tour**," says COC General Director **Alexander Neef**. "For many of the students, the school tour is their first opportunity to experience any kind of live performance. We hope that by making the art form accessible to children, it will help pave the way for a life-long love of opera and the performing arts."

Each of the **Glencore Ensemble Studio School Tour's** operas featured this year were composed for young audiences, and draw from classic fairy tales and ancient mythology in their respective stories. Ideal for students in Kindergarten to grade six, *The Bremen Town Musicians*, based on a tale by the Grimm Brothers, is a new COC production created especially for the tour. This year, the opera also travels to schools in Sudbury for a special week of performances. Meanwhile, *The Scorpions' Sting: An Egyptian Myth*, a school tour favourite, is suitable for audiences in Kindergarten to grade eight. In addition to the school tour performances, members of the public will have the rare opportunity to see *The Scorpions' Sting: An Egyptian Myth* in an exclusive performance at the **Royal Ontario Museum's** Signy & Cléophrée Eaton Theatre on **Saturday, November 29**. Entry is free with museum admission.

Both *The Bremen Town Musicians* and *The Scorpions' Sting: An Egyptian Myth* 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 2014 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.

The Bremen Town Musicians by Dean Burry

The Bremen Town Musicians was originally commissioned by Ottawa's Opera Lyra in 2009. Based on a fairy tale by the famous Brothers Grimm, the opera tells the story of a donkey, a dog, a cat and a rooster who embark on a journey to find freedom and start a new life after being mistreated by their owners. This all-new production, from director **Ashlie Corcoran**, was commissioned by the COC for this year's **Glencore Ensemble Studio School Tour**, with sets and costumes created by multi-Dora Award-winning designer **Camellia Koo**.

Creative Team

Director: Ashlie Corcoran

Music Director: Jenna Douglas

Set & Costume Designer: Camellia Koo

Stage Manager: Michael Barrs

Donkey: Iain MacNeil

Dog: Charlotte Burrage

Cat: Aviva Fortunata

Rooster: Andrew Haji

Robber (and others): Gordon Bintner

The Scorpions' Sting: An Egyptian Myth by Dean Burry

The Scorpions' Sting: An Egyptian Myth was commissioned by the COC for the school tour in 2006 (under its original title *Isis and the Seven Scorpions*). Set in the midst of an Egyptian sandstorm, the opera follows the time-travelling adventures of Professor Hornsby and his students. When Professor Hornsby is stung by a poisonous scorpion, his students must find the cure hidden in ancient hieroglyphics in the Lost Temple of Isis. In an effort to save their professor, the students use Isis' ancient wisdom and learn the power of forgiveness. *The Scorpions' Sting: An Egyptian Myth* was last performed as part of the **Glencore Ensemble Studio School Tour** in 2011.

Creative Team

Director: Joel Ivany

Music Director: Jennifer Szeto

Set & Costume Designer: Brent Krysa

Stage Manager: Michael Lewandowski

Professor Hornsby/Set: Jean-Philippe Fortier-Lazure/
Owen McCausland

Sally Smith/Isis: Karine Boucher

David Sands/Osiris/Scorpions: Clarence Frazer

Molly Brown/Nephthys/Tahemet: Erica Iris

About Dean Burry

Acclaimed Canadian composer Dean Burry graduated from music programs at Mount Allison University and the University of Toronto. He developed the COC's After School Opera Program in 1997 and currently leads sessions at four of the program's five locations. He has also composed many original operas and musicals for both children and adults. A long-time artist educator with the COC, he was commissioned to write the children's opera *The Brothers Grimm* in 1999 for the COC's annual school tour. The work has become the most performed Canadian opera in history. In addition to *The Scorpions' Sting* and *The Bremen Town Musicians*, major works by Burry include *Under the Night*, *The Heart That Knows* and *Home and Away* (Live Bait Theatre); *Songs of the Island* (Charlottetown Festival); *The Hobbit* and *The Secret World of OG* (Canadian Children's Opera Company); *Pandora's Locker* (The Glenn Gould School); *A Creature of Habit* (Rising Tide Theatre), *The Mummies' Masque* (Toronto Masque Theatre); *Baby Kintyre* (CBC Radio); and *Angela and Her Sisters* (University of Manitoba).

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 2014 Glencore Ensemble Studio School Tour is booked through the COC's arts education and touring partner, **Prologue to the Performing Arts**.

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, W. Garfield Weston 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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