



2014 | 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

“There is majesty everywhere you
look at the COC these days”

Toronto Star



THE FOUNDATION OF OUR SUCCESS

Dear Fellow Stakeholders,
In the time that I have been involved with the COC, the organization has

undergone a dramatic evolution, meeting with exciting new possibilities, overcoming challenges both big and small, and growing into a truly significant international opera company.

Even a few years ago, who could have imagined that the very best singers in the industry—the Sondra Radvanovskys, Christine Goerkes, and Gerald Finleys of the world—would be a *consistent* presence on our stage, not just an occasional triumph? Who could have envisioned that ever-more impressive creative teams of directors, designers, and artists would be calling the COC home every season?

Reflecting on successes like these, it is clear to me that the single most important factor in our rapid evolution was the 2006 opening of the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, Canada's first purpose-built opera house. I was fortunate enough to have played a modest part in that extraordinary project under the leadership of then-General Director, the late Richard Bradshaw, and Board Chairman, Art Scace; the house was a truly transformational event for the COC and for Toronto.

The house was key in our ability to recruit Alexander Neef to the General Director's post following Richard's untimely death. In the seven seasons of his tenure, Alexander has extended the company's planning horizon, fostered relationships with the best Canadian and international artists, hired Johannes Debus, our amazing Music Director, and driven overall improvements in production quality.

As a result, the COC has quickly risen through the ranks to become an industry leader; an acknowledged peer of organizations such as the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, the Bolshoi, the Royal Opera House, and many more of similar calibre.

Yet, in fulfilling the promise of the opera house, new possibilities and new questions emerge. How do we maintain and extend the transformative effect of the FSCPA into the future, build on our artistic strengths, and usher in a new generation of excellence?

To answer that, we initiated a strategic planning process in October 2014—the first of its kind in the COC's history. The result is a crucial framework outlining how the COC will evolve over the next five to seven years. The Board and I worked with Alexander Neef and COC leadership throughout the entire process; we look forward to sharing details of the strategic plan with our stakeholders shortly. The Vision Statement in this strategy is: ***"We will bring the transformative experience of opera to our local, national, and global audience every day of the year."***

If the construction of the FSCPA yielded immense artistic capital, the strategic plan maps out how we can leverage our physical and artistic strengths to increase awareness of our work

in the community, grow our mainstage audience, achieve financial stability, expand professional training, and empower our community to advocate for the COC.

No matter what specific initiative we're undertaking, the core governing principle will always be artistic excellence. It's at the heart of everything we do, as you will be able to tell from reading this report.

From our six mainstage productions in 2014/2015, to our successful tour of Handel's *Semele* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York—it is no surprise that, as the *Toronto Star* puts it, "there is majesty everywhere you look at the COC these days."

Like all of our peers, we have to face the economic reality of the increasing costs associated with producing high-quality opera. Ticket sales are strong at the COC—especially when compared against similarly sized companies in North America—but no opera company is going to cover the costs of producing world-class opera with ticket sales alone.

I want to thank our supporters—individuals, corporate partners, foundations, and all three levels of government—for their generous support of the COC. For the year ended June 30, 2015, the COC raised \$12.6 million (net), towards operating and endowment support. A remarkable 80% of those donations came from individual members of our community, serving up a powerful reminder that this company's support comes from all of you.

With historic levels of donations from private sources leading the way—especially significant multi-year commitments from individual donors—and supplementary support from the Canadian Opera Foundation, the COC reported a break-even financial year. This is a gratifying validation of an adjusted business model that we have developed over the last three years and implemented for the first time in 14/15, shifting our operations from a seven- to a six-opera model and empowering the company's high level of production excellence, while maintaining financial flexibility for sustainable long-term planning and optimal program scheduling. These are early but promising signs of stabilization that position the COC well for the future.

This is the end of my tenure as the Chair of the Board of Directors. I would like to thank my fellow board members, as well as COC staff and volunteers for making the job as Chair so personally satisfying. I am very proud of all that the COC has achieved and I am more confident than ever in the Company's future—our best days are ahead of us!

Sincerely,

Tony Arrell
Chair, Canadian Opera Company

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For complete cast and creative team information, as well as a list of the valued donors, supporters, and committee members who made this season possible, please visit coc.ca/1415AnnualReport.

NEW COC PRODUCTION FALSTAFF

GIUSEPPE VERDI Oct. 3 – Nov. 1, 2014

Co-production with Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London; Teatro alla Scala, Milan; Metropolitan Opera, New York; and Dutch National Opera, Amsterdam

“Kudos to Alexander Neef and his team for making the COC a truly Canadian opera company.”
Musical Toronto



A delight from beginning to end, *Falstaff* was greeted with riotous laughter at every performance. From the intricately detailed sets and costumes evoking the delirious materialism of post-war Britain, to the gleeful performances by the all-Canadian cast, it was a feast for the eyes, ears, and soul. Director Robert Carsen and his team of designers revelled in the gloss and froth of the comedy without neglecting the life-affirming wisdom to be found at the core of the titular Falstaff. Maestro Debus made his *Falstaff* debut, leading the COC Orchestra, Chorus, and cast on an exploration of the opera's immense humour and humanity. Star bass-baritone Gerald Finley

returned to the COC mainstage after 20 years, making a role debut and bringing the irrepressible roué to life. Marie-Nicole Lemieux, Russell Braun, Lyne Fortin, Simone Osborne, Frédéric Antoun, Lauren Segal, Michael Colvin, Robert Gleadow, and Colin Ainsworth all added their spritely personalities and glowing voices to the enchanting mix.

Underwritten
in part by

BMO  Financial Group

Supported
in part by

 OCAV FMCO ONTARIO CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS FUND
LE FONDS POUR LES MANIFESTATIONS
CULTURELLES DE L'ONTARIO

Artist Sponsorship: Commitment to Talent and Creativity

Sponsoring an artist's performance offers a personal and tremendously rewarding way to become involved with the art form. Former Board member and current Golden Circle member Sue Mortimer, pictured below right with Gerald Finley on the production's set, lent her generous support to the superstar's triumphant role debut; GC and Life Trustees Council member Earlane Collins has been Russell Braun's sponsor for nearly two decades and celebrated with him at opening night, alongside Russell's wife, pianist Carolyn Maule, and General Director Alexander Neef.



“When [*Madama Butterfly*]
is as well done as this one,
one never fails to be moved
by the genius of Puccini.”
La Scena Musicale



COC PRODUCTION

MADAMA BUTTERFLY

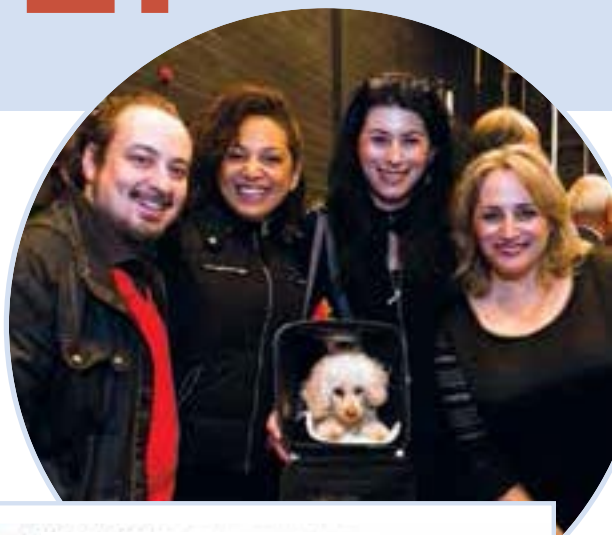
GIACOMO PUCCINI Oct. 10 – 31, 2014

Puccini’s opera about a strong-willed and ill-fated Japanese young woman has never lost its popularity with audiences. And this production, created with utmost simplicity by Canadian theatrical legend Brian Macdonald and designers Susan Benson and Michael Whitfield, has become a COC classic that has endured gracefully since its premiere in 1990. Although Macdonald sadly passed away shortly after the run, his presence was appreciated in rehearsals and performances where he, once again, firmly placed the focus of the direction on the story and the voices. Two of the world’s most renowned interpreters of the title role, Patricia Racette and Kelly Kaduce, gave distinctly different and very moving performances. Stefano Secco and Andrea Carè were the self-absorbed Pinkertons, with Dwayne Croft and Gregory Dahl as the sympathetic Sharplesses. Elizabeth DeShong returned to the COC in a heartbreaking portrayal of Cio-Cio San’s only friend, Suzuki. Conductor Patrick Lange delivered a touchingly delicate rendition of Puccini’s score with the ever-dependable COC Orchestra and Chorus.

Production Sponsors



Production originally made possible by John A. Cook



Patricia Racette @patriciaracette • Oct 30

Wow! Sorry for this to be my final performance of Butterfly here at COC! Such a wonderful company!

35 Exclusive Events

Supporters share in the art form in a uniquely immersive way, with invitations to post-performance receptions and on-stage toasts, exclusive access to artists, creative teams, and dress rehearsals, and other behind-the-scenes opportunities that celebrate our patrons and the vibrant artistic community they make possible.

“Miss this one at your peril.” *Toronto Star*



NEW COC PRODUCTION

DON GIOVANNI

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART Jan. 24 – Feb. 21, 2015

Co-production with Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Teatro Real Madrid, and Bolshoi Theatre Moscow

This fiercely intelligent *Don Giovanni* upended Mozart and Da Ponte’s opera by binding the characters together into one family unit and exposing the desperate depths of their souls. Renowned director/designer Dmitri Tcherniakov created a richly detailed, alternative *Don Giovanni*—one that revealed the destructive side of the Don’s character and his mesmerizing effect on everyone around him. Russell Braun gave the performance of his career in the title role—careening from hypnotic to rejected, lascivious to despondent, manic to catatonic. Jane Archibald’s Donna Anna was a torment of predation and confusion, and Jennifer Holloway embraced the notoriously difficult role of Donna

Elvira with a fountain of emotion. Michael Schade was a honey-toned Don Ottavio, and Zachary Nelson, Andrea Silvestrelli and recent Ensemble graduate Sasha Djihanian were formidable onstage companions. Kyle Ketelsen’s meddlesome Leporello joined the “family” in a psychological locked room of fascination and repulsion. Conductor Michael Hofstetter garnered praise for infusing a subtle musical spell around the production.

Production supported
in part by



Adrienne Clarkson @APClarkson · Jan 25
Brilliant Don Giovanni at COC with Braun and Schade extraordinary! Nothing in the world matches this production by Tcherniakov-a must-see!

👍 🗨️ 📷 📺 📖



Tabatha Southey @TabathaSouthey · Jan 30
Was thrown by @TheEconomist choosing Toronto as the #1 city to live in but then I saw Don Giovanni & realized @CanadianOpera was factored in.

👍 🗨️ 📷 📺 📖

Worth Talking About
Great art generates reactions, starts conversations, and engages the audience. One of the most indicative and gratifying measures of our overall excellence is in the connections we make with each other by sharing artistic experiences and exploring the infinite potential of the operatic repertoire.

COC PRODUCTION

DIE WALKÜRE

RICHARD WAGNER Jan. 31 – Feb. 22, 2015

“[This] is Wagner with a heart... It provided a human face on a mythic theme, touching and exhilarating at the same time.” *Globe and Mail*



Three Seasons at a Time

The opera world turned its attention to Toronto last winter when Christine Goerke made her magnificent debut as Brünnhilde. But the historic accomplishment also owed much to the generosity of Jack Whiteside, Ms. Goerke's Artist Sponsor. Mr. Whiteside's multi-year commitment means that the most important Wagnerian soprano of this generation will return to the COC stage again and again, for *Siegfried* and then for *Götterdämmerung*. Investing in great artists is necessary for creating great art together and Mr. Whiteside's multi-year commitment is building a sustainable artistic foundation for the COC.

Die *Walküre* exceeded the high expectations set for it with a production of transcendent power and delicate beauty. Johannes Debus, making his *Ring* opera debut, led the mighty 110-musician-strong COC Orchestra, creating a majestic reading which became, as Wagner envisioned, a major character in the opera. At once epic and intimate, Atom Egoyan's direction was thoughtfully balanced, nurturing performances of rare emotional directness. Christine Goerke made her highly anticipated role and company debut as Brünnhilde, in a performance of splendour and vulnerability. Danish baritone, Johan Reuter, also making his COC debut, was her match as a fearsome and unexpectedly tender Wotan.

The rest of the cast was equally compelling: Clifton Forbis and Heidi Melton as the tragic Siegmund and Sieglinde, Janina Baechele as the long-suffering Fricka, and Dimitry Ivashchenko as the brutish Hunding. Valkyries Elaine McKrill, Aviva Fortunata, Rihab Chaieb, Lindsay Ammann, Mona Somm, Laura Tucker, Megan Latham, and Charlotte Burrage also provided pitch-perfect personalities and nuance.

Production originally made possible by Kolter Communities

“Full of zany delights.” *Globe and Mail*



NEW COC PRODUCTION

THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

GIOACHINO ROSSINI Apr. 17 – May 22, 2015

Co-production with Houston Grand Opera,
Opéra National de Bordeaux, and Opera Australia

Spanish theatrical collective Els Comediantes (the team behind 2010/2011's *Cinderella*) returned to create yet another delightful production, where the riotous, Day-Glo colours of the set and costumes meshed perfectly with the on-stage physical and vocal energy of the gifted cast. Canadian baritone Joshua Hopkins (2013's *La Bohème*) returned to the COC as the eponymous barber, wielding his razor-like wit along with prodigious stamina and buckets of charm. The two lovers, Rosina and Almaviva, as sung by Serena Malfi and Cecelia Hall, and Alek Shrader and Francisco Brito, put a sparkle on the madcap proceedings with their gorgeous vocal work and perfect comic timing. Renato Girolami and Nikolay Didenko (as Doctor Bartolo), and Ensemble graduate Robert Gleadow, sharing the role of Don Basilio with Burak Bilgili, sculpted uproarious portrayals of questionable men.

This production was generously underwritten by
The Catherine and Maxwell Meighen Foundation

Production
sponsored by

Production supported
in part by



Young Artists Step Into the Spotlight

Since 2011 the COC has cast one performance of a mainstage production with Ensemble Studio members or recent graduates of the training program. Spearheaded by Alexander Neef, this mainstage performance initiative continues to grow in popularity every season, expanding general awareness of the Ensemble Studio while giving our young Canadian singers invaluable experience. The fifth anniversary performance was a sold-out success, registering glowing notices in the press: “the strongest impression was just how confident and free-wheeling everyone was—not a hint of tentativeness. The phrase ‘to the manner born’ comes to mind” (*Michael Johnson, ConcertoNet.com*). Roy and Marjorie Linden generously underwrote the performance, making possible this essential element of our young artist training.

COC PRODUCTION

BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE/ ERWARTUNG

BÉLA BARTÓK / ARNOLD SCHOENBERG May 6 – 23, 2015

“Lepage’s production has grown in depth and stature over the decades. Yes, some love affairs are meant to be revisited. This is one of them.”

Toronto Star

Canadian theatrical wizard Robert Lepage’s first foray into opera in 1993 with the COC’s *Bluebeard’s Castle/Erwartung* was a seminal moment in the company’s history. Beyond its mind-bending theatrics, the production earned major prizes at the Edinburgh International Festival, and made huge splashes at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and the Melbourne and Hong Kong festivals. This season, Johannes Debus and the COC Orchestra made the most of the production’s debut at the Four Seasons Centre, a venue ideally suited to the extraordinary visceral impact of the two scores. Canadian star bass

John Relyea, as the magnetic and maleficent Duke Bluebeard, and Russian mezzo-soprano Ekaterina Gubanova, making her COC debut as his doomed bride Judith, made a riveting pair. In Schoenberg’s monodrama *Erwartung*, COC favourite and Ensemble graduate Krisztina Szabó gave a fearless performance as The Woman slowly crumbling into madness. Tying both pieces together was the deceptively simple design by Michael Levine, and talented acrobats who slid on and off stage as figments of the characters’ unhinged imaginations.

Leading the City’s Theatre Scene

As the COC wrapped up its season, we were delighted to learn that our work was honoured with a city-leading 29 Dora Mavor Moore Award nominations, underlining our commitment to excellence. Our success on the stage inspires audience engagement and donor involvement, setting up the COC to continue contributing meaningfully as one of the foremost performing arts organizations in Canada.



THE COC AT HOM

Our pursuit of excellence has made us a truly international company, over the world. Moreover, our artistic network means we have a strong opera houses and festivals.



SEMELE

From March 4 to 10, 2015, the COC was again invited to perform at the prestigious Brooklyn Academy of Music, bringing its 2011/2012 sensation, *Semele*, to New York. Handel's oratorio, shaken and stirred by Chinese contemporary artist Zhang Huan, became a potent mix of Greco-Roman mythology and Eastern legends, Baroque coloratura and Tibetan throat singing, Chinese dragons and modern video techniques. Only four years after our previous triumph at BAM (with *The Nightingale and Other Short Fables*), *Semele* captivated New York audiences and critics once again.

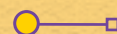
This important international touring opportunity was made possible by **Walter M. and Lisa Balfour Bowen**; **Philip Deck and Kimberley Bozak**; **David and Kristin Ferguson**; **Jerry and Geraldine Heffernan**; **Peter M. Partridge**; **Colleen Sexsmith**; **Kristine Vikmanis and Denton Creighton**; **Jack Whiteside**; and an **anonymous donor**. We also gratefully acknowledge project funding from **Canada Council for the Arts** and the **Ontario Arts Council**.



Number of tickets purchased globally to 14/15 COC mainstage productions in Toronto

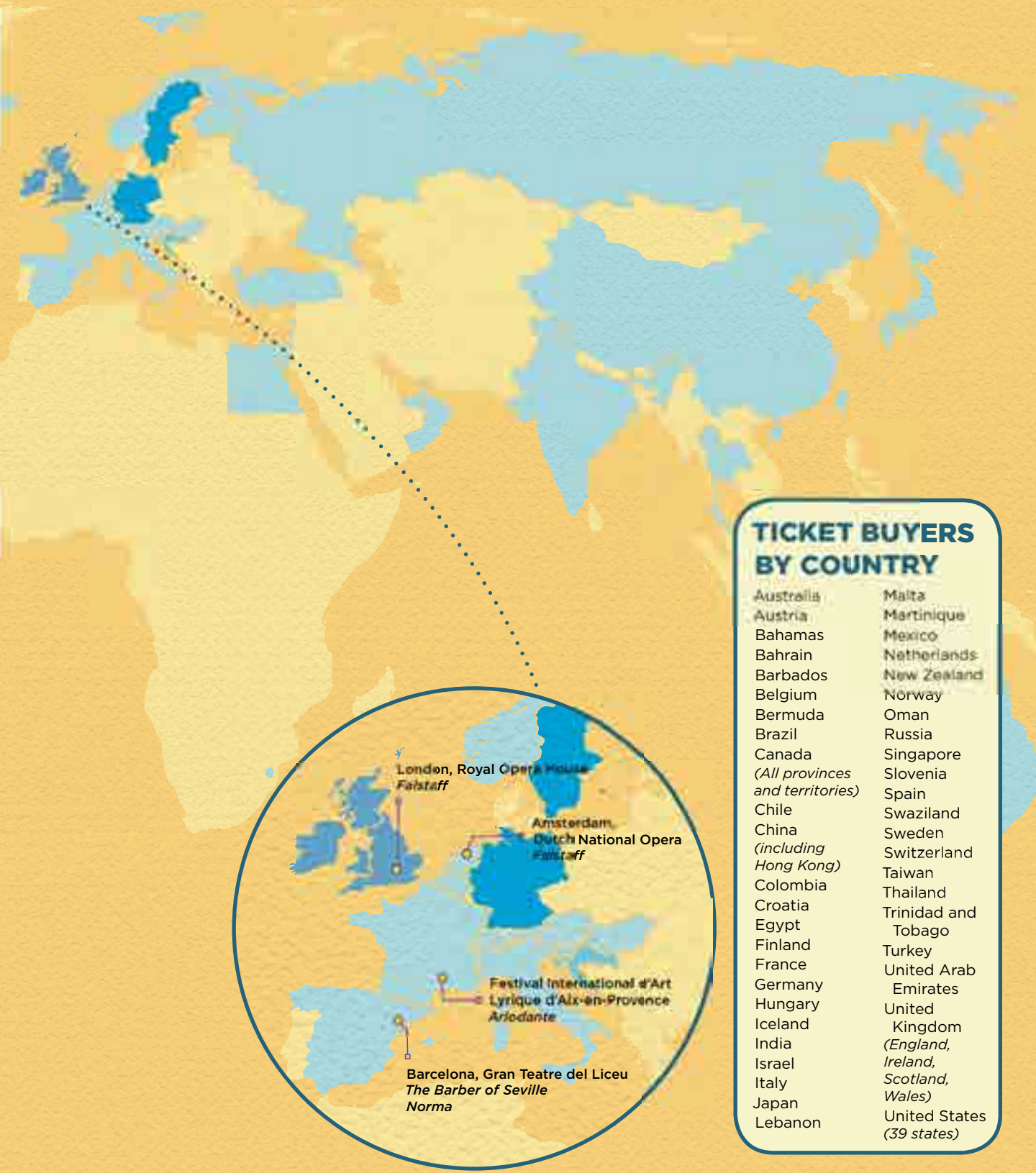


Cities and companies outside Toronto that presented COC co-productions or rentals in 14/15



E IN THE WORLD

with a far-reaching reputation that attracts audiences from all
presence as an active creator at the most prestigious international



FINANCIALS

Canadian Opera Company CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The consolidated financial statements of the Canadian Opera Company (“COC”) include the results for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2015 of both COC and Canadian Opera House Corporation (“COHC”). COHC is an affiliated charitable organization controlled by the COC. COHC owns and operates the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, the performance space for both the COC and The National Ballet of Canada. We believe that the presentation of consolidated financial information provides our stakeholders with the most meaningful and holistic view of the total operations and financial position.

CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET

As at June 30 (in thousands)

Assets	2015	2014
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 15	\$ 264
Accounts receivable	3,561	3,523
Due from Canadian Opera Foundation	98	74
Other	1,269	951
	4,943	4,812
Investments	4,279	3,887
Capital assets, net	139,078	142,159
Other	1,605	1,607
	<u>\$ 149,905</u>	<u>\$ 152,465</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current Liabilities		
Bank indebtedness	\$ 971	\$ —
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,707	1,985
Deferred revenue	8,189	8,433
	10,867	10,418
Deferred capital contributions	110,359	113,381
Internally restricted net assets	329	444
Operating net assets	28,350	28,222
	<u>\$ 149,905</u>	<u>\$ 152,465</u>

CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND NET ASSETS

For the years ended June 30 (in thousands)

Revenue	2015	2014
Box office and fees	\$ 10,971	\$ 10,129
Fundraising	10,402	9,797
Rental, bar, event and parking	7,770	6,820
Grants	6,343	6,080
Other	1,235	1,116
Contributions from Canadian Opera Foundation	1,850	2,983
Amortization of deferred capital contributions		
Four Seasons Centre	3,401	3,401
Other capital assets	287	186
	<u>\$ 42,259</u>	<u>\$ 40,512</u>
Expenses		
Production	\$ 17,773	\$ 18,492
Bar, event and parking	5,249	4,598
General and administrative	4,703	4,401
Facilities	3,797	3,633
Communications	2,253	2,580
Development	2,117	2,097
Ensemble Studio Program	731	762
Education	410	425
Other	523	529
Depreciation of capital assets		
Four Seasons Centre	3,401	3,401
Other capital assets	423	314
Grants to Canadian Opera Foundation	866	308
Total expenses	42,246	41,540
Operating surplus (deficit)	13	(1,028)
Transfer from internally restricted net assets	115	69
Net change in operating net assets	128	(959)
Operating net assets, beginning of year	28,222	29,187
Net assets, end of year	<u>\$ 28,350</u>	<u>\$ 28,222</u>

Canadian Opera Foundation

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Canadian Opera Foundation (the “Foundation”) is a charitable organization that is independent of the Canadian Opera Company. The Foundation acquires, holds in trust and applies funds to assist in the development of opera for the benefit of the COC. Accordingly, these funds are not included in the accounts and financial statements of the COC. The audited market value of the net assets held by the Foundation as at December 31, 2014, totaled approximately \$34,196,000. In addition, at December 31, 2014, the Foundation administered funds totaling \$94,000 on behalf of the Company. This amount is not included in the statements of financial position or revenue, expenses, and fund balances of the Foundation. The following sets out the statements of financial position, as well as of revenue and expense, for 2014 and 2013.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at December 31 (in thousands)

Assets

	2014	2013
Miscellaneous receivables	\$ 32	\$ 26
Due from Canadian Opera Company	180	232
Investments	33,996	31,991
	<u>\$ 34,208</u>	<u>\$ 32,249</u>

Liabilities and Fund Balances

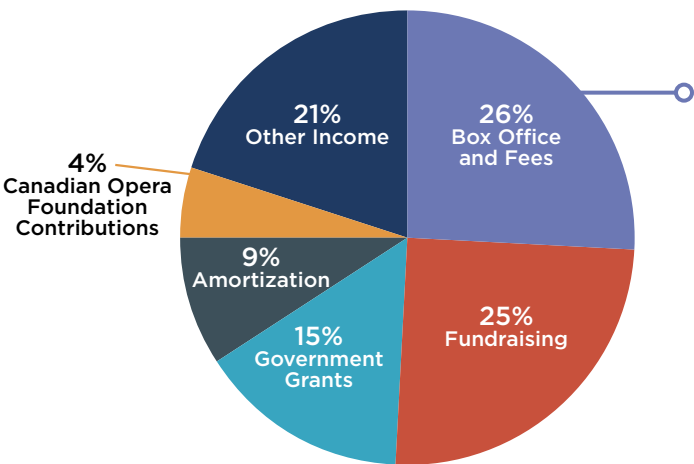
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 12	\$ 24
Fund Balances	34,196	32,225
	<u>\$ 34,208</u>	<u>\$ 32,249</u>

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSE

For the years ended December 31 (in thousands)

Revenue	2014	2013
Investment income	\$ 2,380	\$ 4,898
Donations and bequests	3,163	3,010
	<u>\$ 5,543</u>	<u>\$ 7,908</u>
Expenses		
Investment and counsel fees and services	\$ 441	\$ 202
Administration	17	40
	<u>458</u>	<u>242</u>
Net revenue before grants	5,085	7,666
Grants to Canadian Opera Company and individuals	3,114	3,566
	<u>1,971</u>	<u>4,100</u>
Net revenue	1,971	4,100
Fund balances beginning of year	32,225	28,125
Fund balances, end of year	<u>\$ 34,196</u>	<u>\$ 32,225</u>

COC 14/15 OPERATING REVENUES



- 6 MAINSTAGE PRODUCTIONS
- 55 PERFORMANCES
- 92% AVERAGE ATTENDANCE
- 105,086 TOTAL ATTENDANCE
- 38,667 SINGLE TICKETS SOLD
- 63,603 SUBSCRIPTION TICKETS SOLD
- 11,850 TICKETS SOLD TO PEOPLE UNDER THE AGE OF 30
- \$9.4 MILLION TOTAL TICKET REVENUE (NET, EXCLUDING FEES)
- \$3.4 MILLION SINGLE TICKETS REVENUE (NET)
- \$6.0 MILLION SUBSCRIPTION TICKET REVENUE (NET)

SUPPORTING T

An extraordinarily committed and

INTRODUCING OUR NEW AMBASSADORS

The Life Trustees Council is a new recognition society and outreach committee comprising philanthropic and artistic leaders whose efforts have been integral to the company's evolution. Members are appointed by the COC, and our inaugural roster is made up of amazing individuals (pictured below) who have played critical roles in delivering the company to

its current moment of success: David Ferguson (Chair), Adrienne Pieczonka, Earlane Collins, Ben Heppner, Jerry and Geraldine Heffernan, and the Hon. Henry N. R. Jackman (pictured with COC Chief Advancement Officer Christie Darville).

As lifetime ambassadors charged with the company's future, Life Trustees will continue to be the transformative individuals they already are in this new role, promoting the company's mandate and programs, areas of excellence, and community connections.

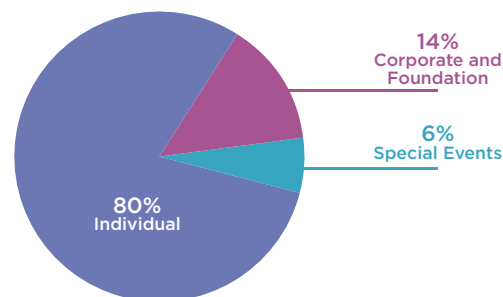


FUNDRAISING REVENUES 2014/2015

The COC continues to rely on individual philanthopists for the lion's share of its contributed revenue—making sustainable donor involvement a critical element in our future success.

\$12.6 million
TOTAL FUNDRAISING REVENUE
(COMBINED NET OPERATING
AND ENDOWMENT)

\$9.8 million
IN INDIVIDUAL COMMITMENTS



\$114,000
raised at *Operation: Light Up the Night*
RECORD ATTENDANCE!

\$172,000
raised at *Fine Wine Auction*
FIRST TIME HOSTED AT FOUR SEASONS CENTRE!

\$433,000
raised at *Centre Stage: Ensemble Studio Competition Gala*
40% INCREASE IN REVENUE OVER 13/14!



THE ART FORM

diverse community sustains our work.

YEAR-END CAMPAIGN SHATTERS GOAL

At the end of each fiscal year, we reach out to our community through the Year-End Campaign, inviting all our supporters to make a contribution toward a specific area of company activity. The 2014/2015 campaign focused on what is arguably at the heart of our artistic identity: the magnificent COC Orchestra under Music Director Johannes Debus. The response was overwhelming, generating one of the most successful campaigns in recent memory. With all gifts being matched by an anonymous lead donor, we shattered our goal!

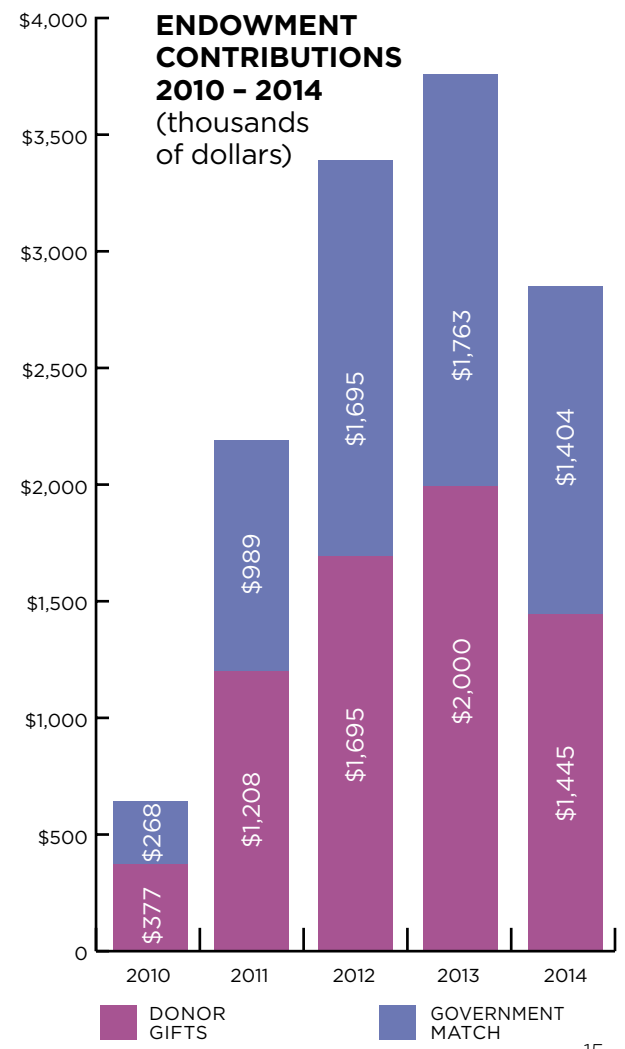
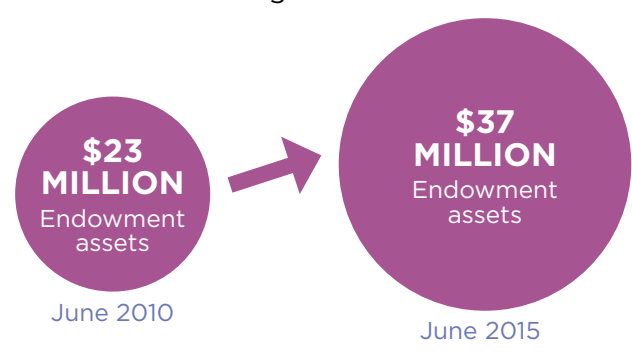
GOAL \$245,000
TOTAL RAISED \$340,000



NEARLY \$3M MORE TOWARDS OUR FUTURE

Great institutions are built on great endowments: they give cultural organizations like the COC greater capacity for realizing artistic expression by supporting our long-term stability. We have been making significant strides in growing our Endowment thanks to the Endowment Incentives component of the Canada Cultural Investment Fund. This government program encourages endowment giving by providing matching funds of up to one dollar for every dollar raised from private donors. Our generous supporters seized the opportunity in 14/15 to contribute more than \$1.4 million. With the government matching 97 cents of every dollar, a grand total of \$2.85 million was contributed to our Endowment.

The COC can access an additional \$5.13 million in federal matching grants before reaching the maximum allowable total, giving us significant opportunity to grow the Endowment even further in the coming seasons.



TRAINING THE NE

Recruiting, developing, and promoting Ca

2014/2015

COC Ensemble Studio Members

(Shown left to right)

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Owen McCausland,* Tenor | 6. Karine Boucher, Soprano |
| 2. Gordon Bintner, Bass-baritone | 7. Andrew Haji, Tenor |
| 3. Jennifer Szeto, Intern Coach | 8. Aviva Fortunata, Soprano |
| 4. Jean-Philippe Fortier-Lazure, Tenor | 9. Clarence Frazer,* Baritone |
| 5. Iain MacNeil, Bass-baritone | 10. Charlotte Burrage,* Mezzo-soprano |

*Graduating artists



215+ artists

have graduated from the Ensemble Studio since it was founded in 1980

over 90%

of those graduates are enjoying successful careers in their chosen opera/theatre specialty

over 30%

of solo singing roles on the mainstage in 14/15 were performed by Ensemble Studio members or graduates

100%

of 14/15 Ensemble members were underwritten by artist sponsorships

YEAR TWO FOR THE ORCHESTRA ACADEMY

As part of our mission to support young Canadian artists, the COC Orchestra Academy, spearheaded by Johannes Debus, welcomed five student musicians into our acclaimed orchestra. The intense three-week period in January 2015 offered them professional

insight and generous mentorship by our seasoned orchestra members. Malcolm Armstrong (double bass), Tess Crowther (cello), Eric Fujita (violin), Brenna Hardy-Kavanagh (violin), and Laurence Schaufele (viola) performed in a lunch-hour concert as part of our Free Concert Series in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre (pictured above); joined rehearsals for the COC's winter production of *Die Walküre*; and, most significantly, played alongside the COC Orchestra for the opening night of *Die Walküre*.



CENTRE STAGE:

In an exhilarating vocal showcase, seven young finalists competed at the Ensemble Studio Competition on November 25, 2014. Over 900 patrons streamed into the Four Seasons Centre to hear the operatic hopefuls in an evening dedicated to the discovery and celebration of the next generation of opera stars.

Johannes Debus and the COC Orchestra accompanied the finalists, while renowned Canadian tenor (and Ensemble alumnus) Ben Heppner lent his trademark warmth and wit to the evening as Master of Ceremonies. Further adding



XT GENERATION

Canada's most talented young opera artists.



“The transition from university to a career is tough. Every day for the past two years, I’ve had the comfort of knowing that ‘I am worth it.’ Experts in the business have invested time and money in my development. You need so much more than just passion to make a career in opera. My experience in the Ensemble Studio has changed my life and I’m eternally grateful.”

Graduating mezzo-soprano, Charlotte Burrage

Young Artists Dazzle



to the excitement of this popular event was a surprise performance by one of Canada's reigning opera stars, soprano Adrienne Pieczonka.

Two of the evening's three prize-winners—tenor Charles Sy (First Prize and Audience Choice Award) and tenor Aaron Sheppard (Third Prize)—join the 2015/2016 Ensemble Studio, along with pianist Hyejin Kwon.

PARTICIPATION

Connecting and interacting with the larger cultural landscape,

BEYOND THE MAINSTAGE

More than ever before, the COC is opening itself up to the diverse communities in which we live and work. In this way, we are inviting growing numbers of people to experience what we have to offer beyond the mainstage.

At the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts that means a full slate of artistic programming from September to June, as well as continuing partnerships and rental opportunities with top-tier organizations like TIFF and the Canadian Screen Awards. At the Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Opera Centre—the COC’s administrative home at 227 Front St. E.—we are transforming our building into a hub of activity that reflects our vibrant community; we are sharing our infrastructure more actively with smaller Toronto-based producers of opera to help them succeed; and we are collaborating with a long list of organizations to support Canadian arts and culture.

OUR 2014/2015 COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Against the Grain Theatre Art Gallery of Ontario Art Spin Association des galeries d’art contemporain—Feature Art Fair The Banff Centre—Open Space: Opera in the 21st Century Barbara Frum Recreation Centre The Bicycle Opera Project Brott Music Festival Calgary Opera Canadian Art Song Project Canadian Children’s Opera Company Canada’s National Ballet School Canadian Operatic Arts Academy/Accademia Europea Dell’Opera The Canadian Screen Awards City of Toronto—Parks, Forestry & Recreation Centre for Opera Studies in Italy Dance Ontario DanceWorks Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board First Canadian Place The Glenn Gould School Guelph Symphony Orchestra Humber College Jeunesses Musicales du Canada Luminato Festival Munk School of Global Affairs National Arts Centre The National Ballet of Canada Nuit Blanche Opera Atelier Opéra de Montréal, Atelier Lyrique Opera on the Avalon Ourland Community Centre Pacific Opera Victoria Peel District School Board Pleasantview Community Centre Pride at Work Canada Prologue to the Performing Arts The Royal Conservatory of Music Royal Ontario Museum Ryerson University Schulich School of Music Souleppper Theatre St. Lawrence Community Recreation Centre Tapestry Opera Toronto Arts Foundation Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts Toronto Catholic District School Board Toronto District School Board Toronto International Film Festival Toronto Public Library Toronto Summer Music Festival Toronto Symphony Orchestra Toronto Wagner Society United Jewish Appeal’s Holocaust Education Week University of Toronto—Faculty of Music Vancouver Opera West Neighbourhood Community Centre York Catholic District School Board York Region District School Board York University Young People’s Theatre

ENGAGING NEW AUDIENCE MEMBERS

TICKETS SOLD TO NEW PATRONS*



An essential element of fostering a healthy and vibrant opera community is delivering financially accessible ticket options, so that all those who want to experience the world’s best opera can do so without onerous barriers. Through a combination of strategic mailings informed by extensive data analysis, as well as affordable Weekday Rush and Value Subscription packages, and special offers for young people, the COC is succeeding in selling more tickets to new audience members, effectively diversifying our patron base and attracting more people to the experience.

**New patron is defined as anyone who has not purchased a COC ticket since 2003*

AND COMMUNITY

we strive to ensure the art form remains accessible and relevant.

FREE CONCERT SERIES IN THE RICHARD BRADSHAW AMPHITHEATRE



15,139 people attended
75 free concerts



3 months to 94 years
age range of audience members



386 performers, 95% Canadian



3 world premieres
2 Canadian premieres

SUBSCRIBER EXCLUSIVE

On January 14, 2015, we hosted our 2015/2016 Season Launch Celebration at the Four Seasons Centre, attracting nearly twice the number of patrons compared to last year's inaugural Launch. We also integrated the COC Orchestra, led by Johannes Debus, into the proceedings, with special appearances by Christine Goerke, Russell Braun, Jane Archibald, and members of the Ensemble Studio. Subscribers enjoyed a festive evening that celebrated our high level of artistic programming and fostered a sense of community.



EDUCATION

Enriching our schools, neighbourhoods, and public spaces with the transformative power of opera and the performing arts.

42,657

adults, youth, and children took part in our education and outreach activities this season

7

adult programs

19,234

participants

2

children's programs

1,484

participants

8

school programs

21,709

participants

2

youth programs

230

participants



NEW PRODUCTION

GLENCORE ENSEMBLE STUDIO SCHOOL TOUR

This season the COC engaged director Ashlie Corcoran, an Ensemble graduate, as well as Toronto-based designer Camellia Koo to create a new production of Dean Burry's *The Bremen Town Musicians*. After the dress rehearsal at our Toronto headquarters, it was evident that we had a hit on our hands! With set pieces that transform in various ways, interactive components, and a stellar cast and technical team, the new production captivated children in schools across Ontario in a near sold-out run.



FROM PARTICIPANT TO PERFORMER

In January, Nassir's mother contacted the COC Education team to relate that her son, a former participant of the After School Opera Program (ASOP), had landed the lead role in his school's upcoming musical. Nassir's experience gave him the confidence to pursue theatre further. "I realized I had an interest in the performing arts after my first performance with ASOP," says Nassir. "I had such a good time!"

ASOP has enriched over 5,000 children's lives since 1997.



YOUTH OPERA LAB A NATIONAL DRAW

Our highly successful Youth Opera Lab welcomed 115 participants this year, ranging in age from 16 to 24, who were introduced to the various facets of opera creation in hands-on workshops, tours, and practice sessions featuring COC artists, including Maestro Debus, Concertmaster Marie Bérard, and Associate Technical Director Barney Bayliss. Other professionals included Against the Grain Theatre's Artistic Director Joel Ivany, media effects designer Laurie-Shawn Borzovoy, and even Dr. Jennifer Anderson, an Ear, Nose, and Throat Specialist who has treated some of the world's most renowned opera singers. The program generated interest far beyond the boundaries of the GTA, and enthusiastic youth travelled from as far as Montreal and Halifax to participate in this exciting initiative.

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Front and back cover: A scene from *Falstaff*, 2014; conductor Johannes Debus, director Robert Carsen, set designer Paul Steinberg, costume designer Brigitte Reiffenstuel, and lighting designers Robert Carsen and Peter van Praet, photo: Michael Cooper. **Page 2:** COC Chair Tony Arrell, photo: Vivian Obara. **Page 4 (main):** Gerald Finley in *Falstaff*, photo: Michael Cooper. **Page 4 (left and right):** Photos by Joey Lopez and COC. **Page 5 (main):** Kelly Kaduce as Cio-Cio San and Andrea Carè as Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, 2014; conductor Patrick Lange, director Brian Macdonald, set and costume designer Susan Benson and lighting designer Michael Whitfield, photo: Michael Cooper. **Page 5 (bottom right):** (l-r) Tenor Stefano Secco and his fiancée Sarah, mezzo-soprano Beth Clayton (Patricia Racette's wife), and soprano Patricia Racette with a fluffy friend celebrate *Madama Butterfly* backstage along with COC Golden Circle members, photo: Joey Lopez. **Page 6:** A scene from *Don Giovanni*, 2015; conductor Michael Hofstetter, director and set designer Dmitri Tcherniakov, costume designers Dmitri Tcherniakov and Elena Zaytseva, and lighting designer Gleb Filshtinsky, photo: Michael Cooper. **Page 7:** Christine Goerke as Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre*, 2015; conductor Johannes Debus, director Atom Egoyan, set and costume designer Michael Levine, and lighting designer David Finn, photo: Michael Cooper. **Page 8 (top):** Alek Shrader as Count Almaviva (on guitar) in *The Barber of Seville*, 2015; conductor Rory Macdonald; director Joan Font; set and costume designer Joan Guillén; choreographer Xevi Dorca and lighting designer Albert Faura, photo: Michael Cooper. **Page 8 (bottom):** Scene from the Ensemble Studio performance of *The Barber of Seville*, 2015, photo: Michael Cooper. **Page 9 (top):** John Relyea as Duke Bluebeard and Ekaterina Gubanova as Judith in *Bluebeard's Castle*, 2015; conductor Johannes Debus, director Robert Lepage, revival director François Racine, set and costume designer Michael Levine, and lighting designer Robert Thomson, photo: Michael Cooper. **Page 9 (bottom):** Dora Mavor Moore Award statuettes, photo: Blair Francey. **Page 10:** Jane Archibald as Semele; conductor Christopher Moulds, director and set designer Zhang Huan, costume designer Han Feng, and original lighting design by Wolfgang Göbbel recreated by Willem Laarman, photo: Michael Cooper. **Page 14 (top):** Photos of Life Trustees Council members by Jenna Wakani (left); COC (middle); and Ellie Smart Photography (right). **Page 14 (bottom, l-r):** Yelle performing at *Operanation*, photo: Tyler Rumi; Supporters gathered at 16th Annual Fine Wine Auction, photo: Dave Cox; *Centre Stage* Committee co-chairs Frances Price and Justin Linden speaking from the FSCPA stage after the competition, photo: Jenna Wakani. **Page 15:** Johannes Debus, photo: Wolfgang Runkel. **Page 16-17 (top banner):** 14/15 Ensemble Studio members, photo: Chris Hutcheson. **Page 16 (bottom):** Members of the Orchestra Academy performing in the RBA, photo: Chris Hutcheson. **Page 17 (bottom):** Finalists on stage at the 2014 *Centre Stage* Ensemble Studio Vocal Competition, photo: Michael Cooper. **Page 19 (RBA performances, top to bottom):** Newton Moraes Dance Theatre, photo: Kevin Lloyd; Audience members enjoying a performance by Mike Ford, photo: Chris Hutcheson; David Buchbinder playing with his musical group Odessa/Havana, photo: Chris Hutcheson; Young artists of The Glenn Gould School New Music Ensemble, photo: Lara Hintelmann. **Page 19 (bottom):** Christine Goerke with Johannes Debus and the COC Orchestra at the 15/16 Season Launch Celebration, photo: Chris Hutcheson. **Page 20 (top):** Youth Opera Lab vocal workshop, photo: COC; (middle): Aviva Fortunata and Iain MacNeil performing in the Glencore Ensemble Studio School Tour production of *The Bremen Town Musicians*, 2014, photo: Chris Hutcheson; (bottom left) Nassir as a Guard in the After School Opera Program production of *The Tragedy of Icarus*, 2011, photo: COC; (bottom right): Nassir at the Four Seasons Centre, photo: COC.

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