



The COC presents *Iphigenia in Tauris*. A scene from the Lyric Opera of Chicago production, 2006. Photo: Robert Kusel

Prelude

A gift to our friends

Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses To:
Canadian Opera Company
227 Front St. E., Toronto, ON, Canada M5A 1E8
t 416-363-6671 f 416-363-5584 e info@coc.ca w coc.ca



coc CANADIAN
OPERA
COMPANY

Prelude

FALL 2011 | VOLUME 19 | NUMBER 1



A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL DIRECTOR ALEXANDER NEEF

HOME TO THE BEST



Photo: Michael Cooper

I have been living with 2011/2012's program for a long time. In fact, with only one exception, it is the season that I proposed to the COC's search committee when I was first approached about the position of General Director in early 2008. I felt these operas would offer COC audiences a very exciting journey through operatic history, with productions of value and nuance and, not incidentally, four COC premieres. Now that these productions have been chosen and cast, I am even more convinced that 11/12 truly embodies what the COC continually strives to be – home to the best.

Over the course of this season you will see some of the most sought-after and acclaimed artists in the world. Singers, conductors and directors like Susan Graham, Adrienne Pieczonka, Sir Andrew Davis, COC Music Director Johannes Debus, Catherine Malfitano, Russell Braun, Christopher Alden and Robert Carsen need no introduction anywhere in the opera world. It is an honour to be collaborating with them

and their colleagues to make a great season even more exciting.

Equally rewarding to me is the ability to bring the next generation of great artists to the COC. Erin Wall, Quinn Kelsey, Russell Thomas, Dimitri Pittas, Katherine Whyte, David Lomelí and Andriana Chuchman are among many making their debuts with us this season. Some of you may remember that Joseph Kaiser was a member of our Ensemble in 2000/2001 and we're pleased to welcome him back. And, as always, our Ensemble Studio members and graduates, as well as our exceptional orchestra and chorus, led by Johannes Debus and Chorus Master Sandra Horst, are featured prominently all season.

Fostering young talent is always a priority at the COC and one of our new initiatives this year highlights future Canadian artists even more – the Ensemble Studio Competition. As part of the annual audition process for our Ensemble Studio, this year the final round of Ensemble auditions will be open to the public (see the article on the opposite page for more information). The winners will be offered a place in the prestigious program for the following year. As anyone who follows the COC knows, watching these young artists over several seasons and seeing them grow and develop into formidable talents is a very rewarding experience. Plus, there are few things more exciting than telling your friends that you were there when a star was born.

Join us this fall to see and hear all this wonderful talent! ■



IN THIS ISSUE

SUSAN GRAHAM:
THE IPHIGENIA OF OUR TIME

HAS IT REALLY BEEN
FIVE YEARS?
CELEBRATING CANADA'S
GLORIOUS HOME FOR OPERA

NO EXIT:
RIGOLETTO'S ABUSE OF POWER

MAY WE INTRODUCE AND
WELCOME BACK:
THE 2011/2012 ENSEMBLE
STUDIO ARTISTS

HOW WE SPENT OUR
SUMMER HOLIDAY:
SUMMER YOUTH INTENSIVE

Prelude

A gift to our friends

Editorial Board:
Robert Lamb,
Managing Director
Roberto Mauro,
Artistic Administrator
Jeremy Elbourne,
Director of Marketing
Claudine Domingue,
Director of Public Relations
Christie Darville,
Director of Development

Editors:
Suzanne Vanstone,
Senior Communications Manager, Editorial
Gianna Wichelow,
Senior Communications Manager, Creative

Editors E-mail: editor@coc.ca

Design: Endeavour

All information is correct at time of printing.

Front Cover: Costume design elements by Michael Levine, set and costume designer for *Rigoletto*. Production originally designed for Lyric Opera of Chicago, 2000. Photo: COC

STARS OF TOMORROW

COC OPENS DOORS TO EXCLUSIVE AUDITION PROCESS WITH NEW ENSEMBLE STUDIO COMPETITION

For the first time in the history of the Canadian Opera Company, the final auditions for singers seeking to join the Ensemble Studio training program will be made public through the launch of an annual vocal competition. The inaugural **COC Ensemble Studio Competition** takes place on Nov. 28, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, with the winners garnering a variety of awards including offers of highly prized positions in the 2012/2013 Ensemble Studio.

Approximately 10 to 15 singers will perform in front of a public audience and COC judges, including Alexander Neef, General Director; Roberto Mauro, Artistic Administrator; Sandra Gavinchuk, Music Administrator; and Liz Upchurch, Head of the Ensemble Studio. Along with guest panellists, they will deliberate on location, and announce the competition winners at the conclusion of the event. Further details will be released at a later date.



Sandra Gavinchuk



Roberto Mauro



Liz Upchurch

The COC Ensemble Studio Competition is presented in part by RBC Foundation. ■



Rochelle de Goias, Trinity Jackman
and Victoria Jackman



Alexander Josephson and Alexander Neef



Brooke Marion, Lucia Cesaroni
and Ashleigh Semkiw

Join the Circle

LAUNCHING THE ENSEMBLE
CIRCLE MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

At her family home on the evening of May 3, 2011, Canadian Opera Company board member Trinity Jackman hosted an announcement party launching the **Ensemble Circle**, the COC's new membership program for younger patrons. The evening brought together over 150 of Toronto's arts-and-culture lovers to share in the exclusive festivities. The highlight of the night was undoubtedly a special performance of arias and duets from *Carmen*, *Giulio Cesare* and *Lakmé*, sung by COC Ensemble Studio members Ambur Braid and Wallis Giunta, with bassist Akki Mackay and electric guitarist Patrick Power accompanying the duo. It was an exhilarating performance

that confirmed, in no uncertain terms, opera's relevance to contemporary culture. More broadly, the launch party showed the exciting potential of Ensemble Circle membership and the opportunity it brings for ambassadorship of the art form. The initiative works to establish stronger connections between the company and our younger audience.

The 2011/2012 Ensemble Circle is open to an intimate group of 100 members. Membership includes one ticket to three mainstage productions: Giuseppe Verdi's *Rigoletto*, Kaija Saariaho's *Love from Afar* and the Ensemble Studio performance of George Frideric Handel's *Semele*,

as well as a ticket to the company's annual fundraiser, *Operation 8: A Muse Ball*. A number of special events designed to enhance the operatic experience are also included in the program, taking members behind-the-scenes with working rehearsals, the season opening and closing parties and post-performance toasts with the artists. ■



For more information on the Ensemble Circle, please contact Tracy Briggs (416-306-2305/tracyb@coc.ca) or Stephanie Hunt (416-306-2353/stephanieh@coc.ca).

SAVE TIME, SAVE PAPER...

and save the COC mailing and printing costs! View *Prelude* online at coc.ca/Publications. Sign up at coc.ca/Prelude with your Patron Number no later than **Dec. 23, 2011** to indicate that you no longer wish to receive a hard copy of *Prelude*. If we do not hear back from you, we will mail your regular issue of *Prelude* in mid-January 2012.



SUSAN GRAHAM:

THE IPHIGENIA OF OUR TIME

By Suzanne Vanstone

In the world of opera, the ultimate goal, of course, is to have the best artists in the world performing, conducting, directing and designing. This coming season is an exciting one for the COC, and in Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris* we are very proud to welcome celebrated mezzo-soprano Susan Graham who makes her debut with us in a role she owns.

Graham grew up in Roswell, New Mexico, which she says was a pretty magical place but opera's not the first thing that springs to mind there. She lived there until she was 12 and studied piano seriously from age 7 to 18. Graham says, "We moved to Texas where there were competitions for everything – from playing Beethoven sonatas to chili cook-offs! And my piano and vocal studies were no different.

"Music was so much a part of my daily life, but I didn't have an awareness of whether or not I had a voice. At age 16, I started taking voice lessons and was also accompanying choirs so I was splitting my interests between singing and piano. In my senior year of high school, I was cast as Maria in *The Sound of Music* and that started to tip the scale. I was not happy sitting behind the piano anymore – I needed to be out in front of it." In Midland, Texas, people assumed she would pursue a Broadway career. But in her senior year of high school, the Texas Opera Theatre (the touring leg of Houston Grand Opera) came through Midland and performed *Così fan tutte*. Graham exclaims, "Wow. Mozart (which I'd played so often) and comedy, and hot chocolate? This is a good combination for me! It seemed very difficult. Anybody could go do Broadway, but opera... that's impossible. That's what I want to do!"

Graham has performed the role of Iphigenia in Salzburg, Chicago, San Francisco, London, Madrid, the Met and Paris – three different productions, totalling over 50 performances. Toronto will be the fifth city to present acclaimed director Robert Carsen's production.

How does she keep this role, which she knows so intimately, fresh? She says, "What's really interesting is the different conductors and what *they* bring to it. I haven't met Pablo [Heras-Casado] yet, but I'm going to be working with him at Tanglewood before I arrive at the COC and we're actually performing two arias from *Iphigenia*."

Even with the numerous times she has performed his production, Carsen always gives her, and the other performers, leeway to shape and mould each performance. "Of all the productions I've done, Robert's is so individually driven. It is very bare bones. It's just us, in a black box. It's a fascinating psychological journey. And Robert illustrates the story with dancers enacting all the murders, the chalk disappearing on the walls as each family member disappears, and the water onstage representing the blood of the family. Visually, very compelling. It sucks you into the psychological trap in which Iphigenia finds herself.

"Robert and I have talked a lot about how to play the character. She's been on the island for a long time, and had this life thrust upon her while just a girl. She's an adult woman but with a kind of arrested development, and her life basically stopped when she was 14 years old and at the altar to marry Achilles. Diana snatched her up on her wedding day because her father Agamemnon had agreed to sacrifice her in return for favourable winds that allowed his ships to win the Trojan Wars. On Tauris, Iphigenia was under the power of King Thoas, who had a premonition that he was going to be killed by a stranger. Therefore he has all strangers destroyed before they can get to him. He's like the extreme paranoid schizophrenic."

Graham pauses and laughs, "Iphigenia has a *lot* of stuff going on. Then she discovers news from a stranger whom she is instructed to kill (unbeknownst to her, her brother Orestes). She finds out that her mother, Clytemnestra, killed her father, and their son Orestes killed the mother to avenge his father's death. And she thinks, 'But my brother Orestes, whom I love so much, is all I have left.' Yet this stranger announces that Orestes is dead as well, not realizing that she is his sister. Crazy!"

"Whatever mindset any of us is in that day, Robert lets us explore it and use it. The majority of time I am onstage by myself. No set, no props. It's strictly personal expression. It's the character telling her story and what she's going through." Graham admits that in the beginning it was a challenge to perform with "so little." But then it became

hugely freeing. "I can go completely inside myself and sort it out between me and the audience. Every performance is different. It's emotionally exhausting, but extremely gratifying to perform.

"I love the opening storm scene – it's so brilliant. It's been interpreted in many different ways in various productions that I've been in, but in Robert's production it's a psychological storm. All hell is breaking loose in her head. It sets everything up so beautifully because she's having a real crisis followed by the intense introspection that comes after the storm.

"I do love performing this role. It has four basic arias, a beautiful trio, and, the thing that's really interesting and groundbreaking for Gluck is that there's no *secco recitative* [accompanied continuo by a few solo instruments i.e. harpsichord, cello, bass]. It's all through-composed. My friends who are violin players say, 'We have to play every note of this opera – every single note! We can't even stop to turn the page.' But it's because it holds the dramatic tension so beautifully. It was no longer aria-applause, aria-recitative. The drama keeps moving and pulling.

"I love the challenge of expressing the human condition within a classical form. I love bringing somebody like Cherubino [*The Marriage of Figaro*] to contemporary life – to something that people can relate to, but within the confines of classical form. And the same is true of Iphigenia. But where it is the strongest is in Handel. The heart-squeezing way that Handel has in something like "Scherza infida" from *Ariodante*. On paper it looks so simple, but if you can squeeze blood out of it, that's the real challenge. And that's what is so enjoyable. To make semi-predictable music sound unpredictable.

"In *Iphigenia* we strive to express the universality of the story. The connection with family that defies rationality. And although we jokingly call it the ultimate dysfunctional family, there is great suffering, great frustration, great tragedy, great anger and great loss. Betrayal. Emptiness. Shock. Joy. And everyone has felt those things. When Iphigenia realizes that Orestes is in fact her brother, she experiences that wash of relief where she doesn't know whether to cry, laugh, collapse or stand frozen.

"I just did *Poppea* in Florence in a very non-period production – a generic era. But there was enormous freedom musically and dramatically. And that was another case of bringing contemporary perspective and expression to the second earliest opera ever written. Sometimes the music of this period can seem to exist on a higher plane, sort of untouchable. But we bring blood and guts and down-and-dirty intensity to it, which brings it to life. The audience can then breathe it, and touch it." ■

Suzanne Vanstone is Senior Communications Manager, Editorial at the Canadian Opera Company.



Right: The COC presents *Iphigenia in Tauris*. Susan Graham (centre) as Iphigenia in the Lyric Opera of Chicago production, 2006 Photo: Dan Rest

THE OPERA EXCHANGE

Multidisciplinary Approaches to Opera

Delve into the social, political and artistic implications of selected COC operas in this series of three in-depth symposia led by an array of academic specialists. Following a brief formal lecture, each dynamic speaker engages with the audience during a question-and-answer period.

All lectures take place at Walter Hall, Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, 80 Queen's Park Cres.

For program details and tickets call 416-363-8231 or visit coc.ca/Explore.

A Greek Family Reunion: Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris*

Saturday, Oct. 1, 2011, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Discover the myth and music in Gluck's incredible opera along with experts from the University of Toronto and Harvard University. This half-day symposium includes a live vocal performance by Canadian soprano Katherine Whyte (Iphigenia).

Long Distant Loving: Saariaho's *Love from Afar*

Sat. Feb. 4, 2012 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

A Wilde Time: Zemlinsky's *A Florentine Tragedy*

Sun. April 22, 2012 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Opera Exchange is presented in partnership with:



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC



The Opera Exchange is generously supported by the Jackman Humanities Institute

HAS IT REALLY BEEN FIVE YEARS?

CELEBRATING CANADA'S GLORIOUS HOME FOR OPERA

By SUZANNE VANSTONE

Really? Can it be that *Orfeo ed Euridice* marked the end of the first five years in our new home, the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts? I suppose we should remove “new” from our vocabulary, even though for many of us the building still seems as fresh and vibrant and welcoming as when we first stepped through its doors. And for some of us, it feels like it has always been there.

For a few days in April 2006, we first opened our intimate hall to students so that we could better test our new resource with a full, but perhaps less discerning, audience. We nervously held our collective breath and prepared our ears for those first sounds that would ring through the hall. For

THOUSANDS OF PATRONS HAVE ENJOYED ITS CLEAR SIGHTLINES AND EXTRAORDINARY SOUND. ENCASED IN ITS OWN PROTECTIVE SHELL, THE HALL PROVIDES A PEACEFUL FRAMEWORK FOR THE COLOUR AND SOUL OF ITS CANVAS — THE STAGE.

over half the company's life it had been a dream, and then a resolute goal, to provide Canada with its first home built specifically to nurture opera and ballet. Years of effort were, we hoped, about to pay off. Late COC General Director Richard Bradshaw raised his arm to conduct, and a child's voice from behind him enthusiastically uttered, “Go for it, dude!” And we were off.

In June of that year we held the inaugural concert and then, remarkably and somewhat unbelievably, we opened the new house with an epic work – Wagner's *Ring Cycle*. In for a penny, in for a pound. And it has been our fervent desire, ever since that stellar opening, to provide opera audiences with the very best.

We have learned, along the way, what works and occasionally what doesn't work. And we are still learning. The COC has always endeavoured to provide the best musical and theatrical experience possible, but in the past we were sorely hampered by a space that was not designed for opera. The Four Seasons Centre has transformed how we “do” opera. Privy to one of the highest acoustical ratings in the world, it holds us to an even higher standard of performance, while allowing us the luxury of mounting works that engage the finest talent in the world in productions that enlighten, inform, and entertain.

General Director Alexander Neef has always maintained that our house demands that we provide the best. And he continually strives to choose repertoire and artists that will be showcased to full advantage. Yearly, numerous COC patrons travel worldwide to enjoy opera, and they experience a myriad of artists and productions. And they consistently tell us that they return to Toronto to experience equal, if not higher, levels of performance with the COC.

We want to continue to offer that high level of performance to everyone. Alexander and the COC Board and staff tirelessly work to ensure that happens. And it comes down

to balance. Balance of repertoire, number of performances, ticket pricing, satisfying our longtime subscribers and attracting new ones, promoting Canadian artists as well as featuring those from around the globe – it's a juggling act. How do we continue to be accessible, consistent, and successful?

We have never been a company that is content to rest. We are always pushing to find another way, a better way, a more compelling way to captivate our audience, be it onstage, or in the many other endeavours we offer offstage. Part of being in the spotlight and of now having such an international profile, is to provide a footprint for other companies in which to follow. It's not just about maintaining; it's about growing, developing, risking. *From the House of the Dead, War and Peace, The Nightingale and Other Short Fables, Simon Boccanegra, Maria Stuarda, Death in Venice, Orfeo ed Euridice* are just a few of some of the superb productions we have been able to offer in the past five years.

We have a certain affinity for mounting innovative, perhaps lesser-known operatic works. And we do them to great acclaim. But as well we want, and need, to build and co-build leading-edge productions of what are often termed the “warhorses.” Unless we have the top artistic talent to make



From top: Conceptual sketch of the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts by Jack Diamond of Diamond and Schmitt Architects Inc., 1998; R. Fraser Elliott Hall, photo: Steven Evans; Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, photo: Sam Javanrouh

it a truly memorable production we won't mount *Tosca* for the sake of doing *Tosca*. We're offering it because we have one of the world's best *Toscas*. Period. We're not performing *Rigoletto* unless it features a great new cast and is an evocative production. And it does and is.

It's not just about selling tickets. But we also hope – and we are seeing this the more we fully engage in what our new house affords us – that the audience is putting their trust

in us. We know that their time, effort and money is a commitment to us and we respect and acknowledge that. Hopefully those who are new to opera, or who may not be as familiar with an artist's name or with a particular design team, will take a leap of faith and share in compelling musical drama.

A key part in that drama, of course, is the artists. Singers, conductors, directors and designers have also heard the buzz in the last five years and want to be a part of what the COC offers. While promoting our own acclaimed Canadian artists we also continue to discover new and exciting talent in other areas of the world and bring them to our public. Our exceedingly popular Free Concert Series, which also launched in 2006, features another array of artists in various disciplines, and lets audiences absorb their performances in the beautiful, light-filled space of the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre with urban vitality in full view.

The focus of the building, however, continues to be the intimate theatre space of R. Fraser Elliott Hall. Thousands of patrons have enjoyed its clear sightlines and extraordinary sound. Encased in its own protective shell, the hall provides a peaceful framework for the colour and soul of its canvas – the stage.

What started as architect Jack Diamond's rough sketch on a paper napkin, culminated in our translucent opera house at the corner of Queen and University. We are privileged to engage our audiences in the true wonder of opera, and have them rediscover that wonder each time they attend a COC performance. We celebrate the past five years in our permanent home with numerous emotions. Pride. Persistence. Passion. And perhaps the most important? Possibility. ■

If you would like to contribute a particular memory from the last five years of being a part of the Canadian Opera Company, please visit our website at coc.ca/Memories.

Tours of the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts now include backstage access! For more information, visit fourseasonscentre.ca.

Suzanne Vanstone is Senior Communications Manager, Editorial at the Canadian Opera Company.

“THE HIGH NOTES WILL ALWAYS BE THERE”

TALKING WITH SINGER AND DONOR RIKI TUROFSKY

By NIKITA GOURSKI



Long before the dazzling high notes of an opera career became her bread and butter, a young Riki Turofsky listened to the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts every week with her father. “I listened with him,” she recalls, “because he would tickle my back, and I loved to have my back tickled.”

The notion of pursuing a career on the opera stage, however, only captured Ms Turofsky’s imagination years later when she was in her early 20s and living in Whitehorse, Yukon. The northern reaches of Canada might seem an unlikely setting for the discovery of the art form, but the Canadian Opera Company “toured around a lot in those days... with full orchestra, sets, costumes, stage hands – the whole thing.” Ms Turofsky, in fact, was instrumental in bringing the touring company up north in her capacity as the vice-president of the Yukon Concert Association. “They came in a big transport plane and performed at a high school.” For the 22-year-old it was an event that would blossom into a

“I HAVE SUNG MUSETTA’S WALTZ MORE TIMES THAN I CAN COUNT. WHEN I’M 90, I COULD PROBABLY STILL GET UP AND SING THAT ARIA!”

life-long commitment to the opera in all its forms, but back then, as she watched the performance of Gaetano Donizetti’s comic opera *Don Pasquale*, her only thought was: “Wow, does that look like fun, I bet I could do that.”

So she did. She bought a recording of arias, learned several of them and without a bar of professional training auditioned her way into the Vancouver Opera Training Program. “I was still pretty raw and rough, but they offered me a full scholarship and set me up with a voice teacher.”

As she went on to build an impressive professional opera career that included appearances with the COC, New York City Opera and many other companies throughout the U.S. and Europe, she never lost sight of the generous donor support that made her career possible. “I was so grateful. It’s something that over all the years you never forget.” It is no surprise, then, that Ms Turofsky would make a natural transition from opera singer to opera supporter, a graceful arc that brings together the experience of her performing years with a vision for the future of opera in Canada.

This season, she and her husband Charles Petersen will be underwriting, in part, the COC’s double bill of Alexander Zemlinsky’s *A Florentine Tragedy* and Giacomo Puccini’s *Gianni Schicchi*. Their generous donation falls in line



Alexander Gray as Marcello and Riki Turofsky as Musetta in a publicity shot for the COC’s *La Bohème*, 1972.

with the company’s mandate of staging at least two new productions each season. Major works, like this double bill, will elevate the artistic profile of the COC, while building a Canadian inventory of the most important operatic repertoire and allowing the company to benefit from rental and revival opportunities. “If you’re going to be a world-class opera company, then you’ve got to do these things,” Ms Turofsky says. “I think it’s wonderfully exciting. Charles and I are delighted to help make it happen.” ■

To learn more about potential sponsorship opportunities, please contact Christie Darville, Director of Development, at 416-306-2375 or christied@coc.ca.

Nikita Gourski is the Development Communications Assistant at the Canadian Opera Company.



FRIDAY, OCT. 21, 2011

FOUR SEASONS CENTRE
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

BUY TICKETS
OPERANATION.CA

MAIN EVENT 9 P.M., \$150
DRESS: INSPIRED ELEGANCE

LIVE PERFORMANCE FEATURING **RUFUS WAINWRIGHT**

PRESENTING
SPONSOR



DINNER
SPONSOR



OFFICIAL MEDIA
SPONSOR



OFFICIAL FRAGRANCE
SPONSOR



PARTNERING
SPONSOR



EVENT SUPPORTERS



NO EXIT:

RIGOLETTO'S ABUSE OF POWER

By GIANMARCO SEGATO

The world we enter in Verdi's *Rigoletto* is a nasty one: a male-dominated society in which women are merely pawns used to boost the abusive and absolute power of the ruling Duke. Christopher Alden, who directed the COC's highly acclaimed production of Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*, will bring an appropriately dark and probing vision to his new production of Verdi's masterpiece this fall. "Often people are dulled to what the true intent of a piece is by decades of seeing it done in a comfortable way," Alden says. "I try to get at something which does get back to the original kick that the piece had when it was first performed."

THE PLAY'S INTERMINGLING OF POLITICS AND SEX AND ITS SAVAGE ATTACK ON THE MONARCHY AND THE DECADENT ARISTOCRACY CREATED A SCANDAL AT ITS PARIS PREMIERE, SETTING OFF A RIOT AND CAUSING IT TO CLOSE AFTER ONLY ONE PERFORMANCE.

There is good reason to believe that Verdi would have been onside with Alden's approach. He was highly enthusiastic about the source for his *Rigoletto*, Victor Hugo's incendiary 1832 drama *Le Roi s'amuse*, which he called the "greatest subject and perhaps the greatest drama of all modern times." Verdi would have been attracted to Hugo's belief that art could incite revolution and correct

social inequalities, but in choosing such a subject, he faced major hurdles in attempting to turn the play into an opera. The play's intermingling of politics and sex and its savage attack on the monarchy and the decadent aristocracy created a scandal at its Paris premiere, setting off a riot and causing it to close after only one performance.

This controversy did Verdi no favours when confronting the censors who watched over Italy's city states, always on the lookout for even the slightest

hint of subversion. As luck would have it, Verdi began to think about using Hugo's play in exactly the same year (1850) that the Austrian army had reoccupied Venice (where the opera was to have its premiere), after that city had experienced a 15-year period of independence. The Austrians instituted strict censorship of the arts and were very touchy about attacks on the ruling class and suspicious

of any attempt to encourage Italian patriotism. Verdi's enthusiasm remained undampened, so much so that he instructed his librettist Francesco Maria Piave to "use four legs, run through the town and find me an influential person who can obtain the permission for making *Le Roi s'amuse*."

In order to get the opera performed, Verdi was forced to alter his source by changing the names of all of its characters and shifting the scene from the French court to a minor absolutist Italian state. Hugo's Francis I, King of France, becomes the Duke of Mantua, a member of the Gonzaga family whose dukedom was already extinct by the mid-19th century, so that nobody could be offended. Controversy continued to plague *Rigoletto* even after its successful Venice premiere as it continued to experience problems with censorship in an Italy that was still divided, and ruled by nervous monarchs. Depending on the whims of the local censor, the opera was subject to various cuts and adjustments as it played in different cities throughout Italy.

Canadian designer Michael Levine, who provided the critically acclaimed visuals for the COC productions of Wagner's *Ring Cycle* and Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex with Symphony of Psalms*, worked with Alden to restore to *Rigoletto* some of the elements that made it so controversial at the time of its premiere. They are setting the opera in Verdi's own time: a hard-bitten Victorian world dominated by men, those highly successful mavens of the Industrial Revolution for whom wealth and power were the ultimate goal and whose less-than-savoury public lives were strictly

separate from the domestic realm. The setting is an opulent Victorian men's club, all polished mahogany and thick oriental carpets: the trappings of an exclusive, privileged, closed, male society. The club will function as a kind of "no exit" court into which women are dropped and trapped as playthings for its members.

Costumes (also by Levine) will be traditionally Victorian, with full-skirted frock coats and formal evening attire for the men; décolleté, flounced gowns for the loose-moraled Maddalena and more appropriately restrained high-necked dresses for Rigoletto's saintly daughter, Gilda.

Within this harsh environment, the character of Rigoletto is very much the middle-class working man whose job it is to be cruel and mocking. He is always there behind the Duke, encouraging his master to exert his power by seizing what is not rightfully his – that is – his own courtiers' women. The Victorian separation of work and home is made manifestly clear in Rigoletto's situation: the one ray of light in his life is his precious daughter Gilda whom he shields from the horrors of the Duke's debauched realm by literally holding her prisoner in her own home. She is the quintessential Victorian "Angel in the House" – a paragon of womanhood who must be sheltered from the corruption of the

outside world. However, as Alden makes clear, Rigoletto will learn a hard lesson in the impossibility of maintaining such a strictly compartmentalized life. Gilda eventually finds a way to break out of her oppressive home environment, with devastating consequences for herself and her father.

The penetrating vision that Alden and Levine bring to this production is absolutely in keeping with Verdi's story and music. The Duke is a libertine for whom women are no more than prey waiting to be seized. Sure enough, the opera's most famous tune, the Duke's *canzone* "La donna è mobile," sounds harmless enough – but make no mistake, in it he expresses his disdain for women whom he labels "simple in speech and simple in mind." Rigoletto himself is complicit in this general point of view – witness his actions in the opening scene



as he eggs on the Duke to carry off Count Ceprano's wife. When the Duke asks him, "What about the husband?" Rigoletto suggests prison or banishment. In many ways, the strongest female figure in this opera is the whore, Maddalena, who shares a dark relationship with her brother,



the hired assassin, Sparafucile. But even she is used mainly as a bauble to entice the Duke to the inn where Rigoletto has arranged to have him killed. The Duke is immediately attracted to her, but we've no reason to feel he would treat her with any more import than any of his other conquests.

Verdi strove to establish a *tinta*, or overarching colour, for each of his operas, and in the case of *Rigoletto*, it would certainly be dark. Its score shows Verdi at the height of his powers, creating music that runs the gamut from intensely dramatic to unearthly beautiful. However, we cannot forget that the inspiration behind all of the great tunes was a revolutionary piece of drama that delivered an uncompromising critique of a society rife with injustice and abuses of power. Timeless themes such as these, regrettably, still make the headlines today and will be thoughtfully re-examined again this fall as the COC mounts its new production of *Rigoletto*. ■

Gianmarco Segato is the Retail and Editorial Co-ordinator at the Canadian Opera Company.



Close-up look at costumes, sets, and props from the COC's *Rigoletto*. Photos: COC

COC COAST TO COAST AND ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

We are pleased to announce that, for the third year in a row, you will be able to relive every moment of the COC's season as we will be partnering with CBC Radio Two to broadcast the complete 2011/2012 season on *Saturday Afternoon at the Opera*. We are once again proud to showcase our amazing company and phenomenal guest artists for the enjoyment of all Canadians from coast to coast. If you miss the original broadcast, you can catch all of the 2010/2011 and 11/12 operas on demand on our exciting new online service, COC Radio at coc.ca. We are also pleased to announce that the European Broadcasting Union has chosen two of the 11/12 CBC broadcasts for transmission across Europe: Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris* in October 2011 and Handel's *Semele* in June 2012. This marks the first time that two COC productions from the same season will be broadcast by the EBU, placing us in the same multiple-performance category as such other major houses as the Metropolitan Opera, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Paris Opera and the Bavarian State Opera.

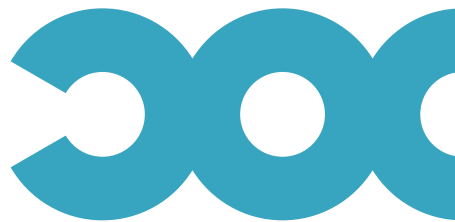
UPCOMING CBC BROADCASTS

Sept. 17, 2011
CINDERELLA
GIOACCHINO ROSSINI

Sept. 24, 2011
ARIADNE AUF NAXOS
RICHARD STRAUSS

Oct. 1, 2011
ORFEO ED EURIDICE
CHRISTOPH WILLIBALD GLUCK

Please note that 2011/2012 season broadcast dates will be announced shortly.



INTRODUCING COC RADIO:

Your online home for everything COC and everything opera all in one convenient and easy-to-use player! Listen to playlists or make your own selections on demand!

- CBC broadcasts of all 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 COC productions
- Podcasts featuring COC singers and other artists including full excerpts from Decca and other Universal Classics recordings
- Listening guides, introductory chats, video trailers and performance highlights for past and future COC productions
- Audio and video interviews with COC artists
- Video excerpts of complete tracks from the Universal DVD catalogue

And much more!

coc.ca/cocradio

HOT, BUSY HONEYBEES

It was a very warm summer for all Torontonians, including the approximately 100,000 honeybees living on the roof of our opera house, the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts.



Fred Davis, the beekeeper, tells us:

"On hot days it's not unusual to see the bees mass outside of the hive in order to keep the temperature cooler inside. There are a number of bees positioned at the entrances fanning their wings in order to create a breeze into the hive. I created a gap to increase ventilation in the hives by placing chopsticks and popsicle sticks in between the supers (hive boxes). This will let a little air escape and let cool air enter the hive during these hot summer months."

When the temperature really soared, our wonderful building services team got creative with a long hose and lawn sprinkler and have been water-misting the areas around the hives.



Beekeeper Fred Davis
Photos: COC

Visit the honeybees blog at coc.ca/Honeybees to keep up to date!

MAY WE INTRODUCE AND WELCOME BACK:

THE 2011/2012 ENSEMBLE STUDIO ARTISTS



(l - r) Adrian Kramer as Papageno, Michael Barrett as Monostatos and Simone Osborne as Pamina in the COC Ensemble Studio performance of *The Magic Flute*, 2011. Photo: Michael Cooper

By CAITLIN COULL

It's an exciting time for the COC's renowned training program for young Canadian opera professionals, the Ensemble Studio. Although it has long been considered one of the best programs of its kind in North America, the Ensemble Studio is attracting more public attention than ever before with the development of new initiatives, driven by youthful energy. By shining the spotlight brightly on the program and the young artists within it, the COC aims to attract even more talented young artists to the company for future seasons. The benefit to patrons is exciting – they are invited to

watch the birth of new stars, and track their trajectories over the formative years.

In keeping with this vision, for the first time in the history of the COC, the final auditions for singers seeking to join the Ensemble Studio will be made public through the launch of an annual vocal competition. The inaugural COC Ensemble Studio Competition takes place on Nov. 28, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, with the winners garnering a variety of awards including offers of highly prized positions in the 2012/2013 Ensemble Studio. (See pg. 3 for further details).

The recent graduation of mezzo-soprano Wallis Giunta, bass Michael Uloth and intern coach Anne Larlee was celebrated last May with *Les Adieux*, a free concert in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre. Many alumni of the Ensemble Studio return to the COC this season, underlining the quality of their experience here. In the fall season, bass Alain Coulombe sings the role of Count Ceprano in *Rigoletto*, and the cast of *Iphigenia in Tauris* is joined by mezzo-soprano Lauren Segal as Diana and tenor Joseph Kaiser as Pylades. During the winter run, mezzo-soprano Krisztina Szabó sings the role of the

Pilgrim in *Love from Afar*. The spring production of *The Tales of Hoffmann* features Lauren Segal returning to sing The Muse/Nicklausse, tenor David Pomeroy sharing the title role with Russell Thomas, tenor Michael Barrett taking up the role of Spalanzani and Samuel Tak-Ho Tam as assistant conductor. *Gianni Schicchi* brings back tenor Adam Luther in the role of Gherardo and baritone Doug MacNaughton as Maestro Spinelloccio, and the cast of *Semele* welcomes mezzo-soprano Allyson McHardy as Juno/Ino.

Often overlooked but crucially important, opera coaches assist the conductors and singers from the first day of rehearsals to the closing performance. The music staff for the 11/12 season includes several graduates of the Ensemble Studio, including chorus master Sandra Horst and coaches Steven Philcox, Anne Larlee, Christopher Mokrzewski and Kinza Tyrell.

The 11/12 program boasts an impressive roster of talented young artists who are certain to make remarkable achievements over the coming season. After winning critical acclaim for their winter 2011 Ensemble Studio performance of *The Magic Flute*, the Ensemble Studio will mount a presentation of

Semele on the mainstage in spring 2012. The principal roles in this special May 23 performance will be sung almost entirely by Ensemble Studio members and recent graduates. They will also

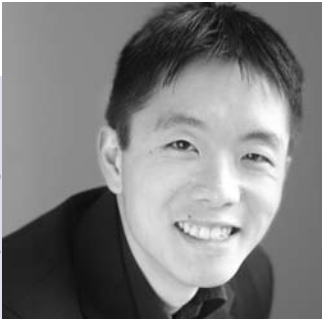
participate once again in the Xstrata Ensemble Studio School Tour, which brings operatic productions geared towards young people to schools across Ontario and the GTA.

The new and returning artists may be seen in the Free Concert Series in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre when it resumes on Sept. 20, 2011 at 12 p.m. with *Meet the Young*

Artists. The series runs until June 2012 and features the Ensemble Studio in several presentations of diverse repertoire, as well as several distinguished alumni in vocal and piano recitals.



Mireille Asselin



Timothy Cheung



Jenna Douglas



Philippe Sly

This year we welcome four new Ensemble Studio members: soprano Mireille Asselin, intern coaches Timothy Cheung and Jenna Douglas, and bass-baritone Philippe Sly:

Ottawa native **Mireille Asselin** completed her bachelor of music degree at The Glenn Gould School of The Royal Conservatory of Music and her master's degree through Yale University's opera program. This season she will sing Countess Ceprano in *Rigoletto*, the Second Priestess in *Iphigenia in Tauris* and will share the title role in the Ensemble Studio performance of *Semele*.

Born in Hong Kong, pianist **Timothy Cheung** holds a bachelor's degree in piano performance and a master's degree in collaborative piano from the University of Western Ontario. This season he will act as an apprentice music staff member and as music director for the Xstrata Ensemble School Tour production of *Isis and the Seven Scorpions*.

A native of Barrie, Ontario, pianist **Jenna Douglas** also completed her studies as a collaborative pianist at the University of Western Ontario and will act as an apprentice music staff member throughout the season. She will be the music director for the Xstrata Ensemble School Tour production of *Hansel and Gretel*.

Also Ottawa-born, bass-baritone **Philippe Sly** recently won the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions Competition and completed his bachelor of music degree in voice performance at McGill University's Schulich School of Music. This season he sings a Scythian Man in *Iphigenia in Tauris*, Hermann in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Ser Amantio di Nicolao in *Gianni Schicchi* and the High Priest in the main cast and Ensemble Studio performances of *Semele*.

Returning to the Ensemble Studio are eight current members who have established themselves over the past season as the opera stars of tomorrow: sopranos Ambur Braid, Ileana Montalbetti, Simone Osborne, and Jacqueline Woodley; mezzo-soprano Rihab Chaieb; tenor Christopher Enns; baritone Adrian Kramer; and bass-baritone Neil Craighead:

Terrace, British Columbia soprano **Ambur Braid**, who gave a "characterful and spontaneous" performance (*NOW Magazine*) in last year's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, travelled to Italy for a language intensive workshop over the summer, and attended noted soprano Wendy Nielsen's New Brunswick vocal program.

This season Ms Braid sings the roles of a Greek Woman in *Iphigenia in Tauris* and will share the title role in the Ensemble Studio performance of *Semele*.

Tunisian-born, Montreal-raised **Rihab Chaieb** inspired young audiences last year as Cinderella on the Xstrata Ensemble Studio

School Tour to the northern reaches of Nunavik, Quebec. This summer she studied privately with esteemed pedagogue Marlena Malas at the Chautauqua Institute in New York State to learn the roles of La Ciesca for *Gianna Schicchi* and Juno/Ino for the Ensemble Studio performance of *Semele*.

South African-born, Calgary-raised **Neil Craighead** travelled to New York in 2011 to perform in the critically hailed production of *The Nightingale and Other Short Fables* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Over the summer he attended the Centre for Operatic Studies in Italy to perform roles in *Don Giovanni*.

This season Mr. Craighead sings an Usher in *Rigoletto*, Pinellino in *Gianni Schicchi* and Cadmus/Somnus in the Ensemble Studio performance of *Semele*.

Morris, Manitoba tenor **Christopher Enns** was lauded by the *National Post* for his "fresh and appealing voice" in the role of Tamino in the Ensemble Studio production of *The Magic Flute*. Mr. Enns returned to Manitoba over the summer months to engage in private study in preparation for his 11/12 roles, which include Nathanaël in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Apollo in *Semele* and Jupiter in the Ensemble Studio performance of *Semele*.

Guelph, Ontario native **Adrian Kramer** won kudos

for his "lively, ingratiating stage persona" (*La Scena Musicale*) in the Ensemble Studio production of *The Magic Flute*. In July and August, he studied privately at the Chautauqua Institute and with baritone Timothy Noble at the Highlands Opera Studio to prepare the roles of Marullo in *Rigoletto* and a Jailer in *Tosca*.

Saskatoon-born **Ileana Montalbetti** was hailed last season by the *Toronto Star* as "ready for a great career. Period." This past summer Ms Montalbetti sang the Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro* with Saskatoon Opera, competed in the Stella Maris Vocal Competition, and attended the prestigious Ravinia Festival in Illinois. This year she sings the Voice of

Antonia's Mother in *The Tales of Hoffmann* and understudies Bianca in *A Florentine Tragedy* and Nella in *Gianni Schicchi*.

Vancouver native **Simone Osborne** uniformly dazzled critics last season as Pamina in *The Magic Flute*. Over the summer months, she studied in Santa Barbara with legendary singer and mentor Marilyn Horne, working on her upcoming roles which include Gilda in *Rigoletto* and Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*, as well as the understudy of a Greek Woman in *Iphigenia in Tauris*.

Port Elgin, Ontario-born **Jacqueline Woodley**, praised for sounding "deceptively like a young Dawn Upshaw" (*La Scena*

Musicale), made her debut with Queen of Puddings Music Theatre in June, and was engaged over July and August for performances with the Sharon Festival and a recording with the Capriccio Ensemble. Over the 11/12 season she sings the roles of the First Priestess in *Iphigenia in Tauris*, the Page in *Rigoletto* and Iris in the Ensemble Studio performance of *Semele*. ■

To keep up to date on exciting developments in the Ensemble Studio and for further biographical information, please visit coc.ca.

Caitlin Coull is the former Communications Manager, Special Initiatives at the Canadian Opera Company.



Ambur Braid



Rihab Chaieb



Neil Craighead



Christopher Enns



Adrian Kramer



Ileana Montalbetti



Simone Osborne



Jacqueline Woodley

The Ensemble Studio is generously supported by the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage, ARIAS (The Canadian Student Opera Development Fund), in loving memory of Mr. George R. Bishop, from his family & friends, John A. Cook Young Artist Development Fund, in honour of Earlane Collins, in honour of Ninalee Craig, Estate of Horst Dantz and Don Quick, Michael & Lora Gibbens, Ethel Harris, Audrey S. Hellyer Charitable Foundation, Peter & Hélène Hunt, Patrick & Barbara Keenan, Hal Jackman Fund at the Ontario Arts Foundation, Jo Lander, Ruby Mercer Fund, George Cedric Metcalf Charitable Foundation, Roger D. Moore Ensemble Studio Endowment Fund, RBC Foundation, Katalin Schäfer, in honour of Colleen Sexsmith, Slight Family, John Stratton Trust, William & Phyllis Waters, and an anonymous donor.

In March of this year, former COC General Director **RICHARD BRADSHAW WAS POSTHUMOUSLY PRESENTED WITH THE JAN MASARYK AWARD.**

This commemorative silver medallion and certificate was bestowed by The Consul General of the Czech Republic, Mr. Richard Krpac, in recognition of Richard's programming and performance of Czech music – Janáček, Smetana and Dvořák – at the Canadian Opera Company. ■



Richard Bradshaw. Photo: Michael Cooper

WHETHER IT'S CLASSIC OR ROMANTIC

you'll find it this fall at the Opera Shop

The Opera Shop, located on the main floor of the Isadore and Rosalie Sharp City Room, offers a fine selection of opera recordings on CD and DVD, opera-related books, giftware, jewellery made by Canadian artisans and COC souvenirs.

This fall we recommend the following recordings from Universal Classics:



Iphigénie en Tauride

Marc Minkowski, conductor, Le Chœur des Musiciens du Louvre and Les Musiciens du Louvre. With Mireille Delunsch, Simon Keenlyside, Yann Beuron and Laurent Naouri. Archiv, \$52.75 including tax.

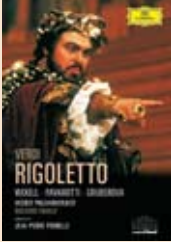
Marc Minkowski and Les Musiciens du Louvre rely on their mastery of historically informed performance practice to turn this outstanding recording of Gluck's masterpiece into a truly theatrical experience. The principals, many of them native speakers, excel in the French declamatory singing style required by Gluck.

Shop for much more at the Opera Shop or online at coc.ca

The Opera Shop is a project of the Canadian Opera Company, in partnership with L'Atelier Grigorian and Decca – The Opera Label. All proceeds support the Canadian Opera Company.



GRIGORIAN



Rigoletto

Riccardo Chailly, conductor, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and Vienna State Opera Chorus. With Luciano Pavarotti, Edita Gruberová, Ingvar Wixell and Ferruccio Furlanetto. Decca, \$25.75 including tax.

Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's sumptuous production is set in a Renaissance ducal palace with Luciano Pavarotti in his prime performing one of his signature roles. This atmospheric film version also features the great coloratura soprano Edita Gruberová as Gilda.



Rigoletto

Carlo Maria Giulini, conductor, Vienna State Opera Orchestra and Chorus. With Piero Cappuccilli, Ileana Cotrubas, Plácido Domingo and Nicolai Ghiaurov. Deutsche Grammophon, 2 CDs, \$36.25 including tax.

This classic recording features the great Italian maestro Carlo Maria Giulini who "persuades his singers to convey the sense of a live performance" (*Gramophone*). Piero Cappuccilli, one of the last authentic Italian Verdi baritones, embodies the full range of the complex title role from cruel, detestable clown to vengeful, loving father. One of the greatest recorded performances of this opera, offered at mid-price with full, printed libretto.

ALEXANDER NEEF RECOMMENDS...

An Oresteia: Agamemnon by Aiskhylos; Elektra by Sophokles; and Orestes by Euripides. Translated by Anne Carson, Faber & Faber, \$16.25 including tax.

If you're at all curious about the fascinating, dark family history that lies behind Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris*, this modern translation of three Greek tragedies by Canadian poet Anne Carson makes for compelling reading. *Publishers Weekly* says that in it, "readers will find stunning expressions of the pain that grown children feel after bad parental separations and neglect. The various characters' impressions of events are psychologically enthralling, and the poetry is sublime. Carson is one of the great poets writing today and is an equally compelling translator. Her language here is clear and comfortable and the volume can be read fast, like a novel, for a weird and thrilling ride."



BOTH AVAILABLE AT THE OPERA SHOP IN PERSON AND ONLINE

THE ART of RED



XII/XII • Tim Forbes © 2009

Official Canadian Wine of
COC CANADIAN
OPERA
COMPANY

CABERNET SAUVIGNON
MERLOT
CABERNET FRANC
• RED
GRAND RED
Trius
Niagara-on-the-Lake
Celebrating 20 Artful Years



In the VINTAGES section of the LCBO

HOW WE SPENT OUR SUMMER HOLIDAY! SUMMER YOUTH INTENSIVE

By KATHERINE SEMCESEN

“Nessun dorma” (“None shall sleep”) is an impression of the COC that the great Puccini may have had, if he were alive today. In addition to the fantastic season of operas, the COC offers 11 months of educational programming to those wanting to learn more about the magic of the art form beyond the main stage. This past summer, the Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Opera Centre transformed into an operatic playground for over 30 youth ages 12 to 18 officially kicking off the 2011/2012 season with an explosion of artistic collaborations!



For one week the enthusiastic and genuinely talented group of youth approached repertoire from the 11/12 season with thoughtfulness and commitment as any professional director, singer, designer, or musician who has ever crossed the stage at the COC.

A team of opera professionals (mentor artists) guided the participants through the weeklong operatic exploration including Ashlie Corcoran (a graduate of the COC Ensemble Studio and most recently the assistant director on *The Magic Flute* in 2010/2011), Graham Cozzubbo (assistant director of *Nixon in China* in 10/11), COC costume co-ordinator Ren Cahill, assistant designer Pat Broms, opera singer and vocal coach Kyra Millan and pianist Kevin Tam. In addition, support was provided by artists who were new to opera or early in their opera careers (intern artist-educators): Jessalyn Kinney, Natalie Mathieson, Suzanne Maziarz, Patrick Murray and Anne-Marie Ramos. Young

filmmaker Justin Friesen captured the participants in action documenting their week in a video diary.

Mornings consisted of the study and staging of large choral scenes excerpted from operas performed in the upcoming season.

Afternoons focused on individual skill-building electives with mentor artists in vocal master classes, directing, acting and staging techniques and theories, and costume design.

Each day ended with a sharing of the participants’ individual talents ranging from performances on the harp and piano to original compositions written for piano and voice. The COC encourages and nurtures young artists and looks forward to reconnecting with these talented participants in the future! ■

Katherine Semcesen is Associate Director, Education and Outreach at the Canadian Opera Company.

The excitement and learning continues this season. Visit coc.ca/Explore to discover the COC’s enriching and engaging lineup of education and outreach programs for schools, children, youth and adults.

Bursaries for select programs are available at coc.ca/Bursaries

SUN LIFE FINANCIAL



Making the Arts More Accessible®



We are pleased to support the **Sun Life Financial Accessibility Program**, at the Canadian Opera Company, which encompasses **SURTITLES™**, wheelchair seating, hearing-assistive and vision-impaired devices.



™ SURTITLES is a registered trade-mark of the Canadian Opera Company.
® Making the Arts More Accessible is a registered trade-mark of Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada.

Summer Youth Intensive photos: Karen Reeves © 2011

An evening in celebration of CBC Radio's 75th anniversary and the glories of the female voice. Isabel Bayrakdarian, Julie Boulianne, Marianne Fiset and Aline Kutan join the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra conducted by Johannes Debus. Hosted by Sylvia L'Écuyer and Bill Richardson.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE, TODAY:

GENEROUS \$1 MILLION ESTATE COMMITMENT

The COC is immensely grateful to the estate's gift, which will provide for the company's artistic future by ensuring that young opera artists continue to have a place to learn the artistry and craft of opera. Focusing on the development of young Canadian talent, the Ensemble Studio provides advanced instruction, hands-on experience, and the practical career development skills necessary to succeed in a highly competitive international environment.

Please consider the Canadian Opera Company in your estate planning. Your support is a testament to the value you place in the enrichment of cultural life in Toronto and will assist the company in continuing to attract the most promising talent and encouraging an environment of creative artistic vitality for generations to come. ■

LOOK ONLINE!



FALL & WINTER 2011/2012

SEPTEMBER 2011		
Thu	8 7 p.m.	Opera Talks, <i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i> , North York Central Library
Wed	14 6 p.m.	Opera 101: <i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i> , Duke of York; Susan Graham and Russell Braun (guests)
Sat	17 1 p.m.	<i>Cinderella</i> on CBC's <i>Saturday Afternoon at the Opera</i>
Tue	20 12 p.m.	Artists of the COC Ensemble Studio*
Thu	22 12 p.m.	Pavlo*
Thu	22 7:30 p.m.	<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i> Season Opening Performance
Sat	24 1 p.m.	<i>Ariadne auf Naxos</i> on CBC's <i>Saturday Afternoon at the Opera</i>
Sun	25 2 p.m.	<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i>
Tue	27 12 p.m.	Artists of the COC Orchestra with Music Director Johannes Debus*
Tue	27 6 p.m.	Opera 101: <i>Rigoletto</i> , Duke of Westminster; Christopher Alden, Michael Levine, David Lomeli (guests)
Wed	28 7:30 p.m.	<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i>
Thu	29 12 p.m.	Nagata Shachu*
Thu	29 7:30 p.m.	<i>Rigoletto</i> Opening Performance
Fri	30 7:30 p.m.	<i>Rigoletto</i>
OCTOBER 2011		
Sat	1 9:30 a.m.	The Opera Exchange: "A Greek Family Reunion: Gluck's <i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i> ," 80 Queen's Park Cres.
Sat	1 1 p.m.	<i>Orfeo ed Euridice</i> on CBC's <i>Saturday Afternoon at the Opera</i>
Sat	1 4:30 p.m.	<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i>
Sun	2 2 p.m.	<i>Rigoletto</i>
Tue	4 12 p.m.	Young Artists of the UofT Opera Division*
Tue	4 7:30 p.m.	<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i>
Wed	5 7:30 p.m.	<i>Rigoletto</i>
Thu	6 12 p.m.	Artists of the COC Ensemble Studio*
Fri	7 7:30 p.m.	<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i>
Sat	8 4:30 p.m.	<i>Rigoletto</i>
Tue	11 12 p.m.	Ekaterina Sadovnikova, soprano; Christopher Mokrzewski, piano*
Wed	12 12 p.m.	Queen of Puddings Music Theatre*
Wed	12 7:30 p.m.	<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i>
Thu	13 12 p.m.	Zata Omm; William Yong, artistic director*
Thu	13 7:30 p.m.	<i>Rigoletto</i>
Fri	14 7:30 p.m.	<i>Rigoletto</i>
Sat	15 7:30 p.m.	<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i>
Sun	16 2 p.m.	<i>Rigoletto</i>
Mon	17 7:30 p.m.	<i>Rigoletto</i>
Tue	18 12 p.m.	Toronto International Flamenco Festival*
Tue	18 7:30 p.m.	<i>Rigoletto</i>
Thu	20 12 p.m.	Robert Pomakov, bass; Gryphon Trio*
Thu	20 7:30 p.m.	<i>Rigoletto</i>
Fri	21 9 p.m.	<i>Operanation 8: A Muse Ball</i>
Sat	22 7:30 p.m.	<i>Rigoletto</i>
Tue	25 12 p.m.	Hiroko Kudo, piano*
Wed	26 12 p.m.	Zodiac Trio*

*These performances are part of the Free Concert Series in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts.

NOVEMBER 2011		
Tue	1 12 p.m.	Kornel Wolak, clarinet; Chris Donnelly, piano*
Wed	2 5:30 p.m.	Adi Braun Quartet*
Thu	3 12 p.m.	Nova Bhattacharya, dancer/choreographer; Ed Hanley, tabla*
Sat	5 11 a.m.	Family Performances, Xstrata Ensemble Studio School Tour production of <i>Hansel and Gretel</i>
Sat	5 2 p.m.	Family Performances, Xstrata Ensemble Studio School Tour production of <i>Hansel and Gretel</i>
Tue	8 12 p.m.	ArrayMusic*
Thu	10 12 p.m.	Caroline Chéhadé, violin; Michael Nicolas, cello; Marie-Hélène Trempe, piano*
Tue	15 12 p.m.	Lucas Porter, piano*
Thu	17 12 p.m.	TorQ Percussion Quartet*
Tue	22 12 p.m.	Ricker Choi, piano*
Wed	23 12 p.m.	Vesuvius Ensemble*
Tue	29 12 p.m.	Nathaniel Anderson-Frank, violin; Carson Becke, piano*
DECEMBER 2011		
Thu	1 12 p.m.	Artists of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra*
Tue	6 12 p.m.	Humber Studio Jazz Ensemble; Denny Christianson, director*
Wed	7 5:30 p.m.	Bruce Cassidy, trumpet; Nancy Walker, piano*
Tue	13 12 p.m.	Cadence*
Thu	15 12 p.m.	Bill McBirnie, flute; Robi Botos, piano*
JANUARY 2012		
Tue	10 12 p.m.	Little Pear Garden Collective; Emily Cheung, artistic director*
Wed	11 5:30 p.m.	Julie Michels, vocals; Kevin Barrett, guitar*
Thu	12 12 p.m.	Peggy Baker Dance Projects choreographer/dancer*
Tue	17 12 p.m.	Artists of the COC Ensemble Studio*
Thu	19 12 p.m.	Artists of the COC Orchestra*
Tue	24 12 p.m.	Humber Latin Jazz Mexican Project*
Thu	26 12 p.m.	Alejandro Vela, piano*
Tue	31 12 p.m.	Soundstreams, Elmer Iseler Singers, Carla Huhtanen, soprano*



GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

The Canadian Opera Company gratefully acknowledges the generous support of these government agencies and departments:

Operating Grants



MAJOR CORPORATE SPONSORS 2011/2012 SEASON

