



Prelude

SPRING 2014 | VOLUME 21 | NUMBER 3

NOT TO PERISH
PETER SELLARS
ON *HERCULES*

SONDRA RADVANOVSKY
A *BEL CANTO* JOURNEY

**FERRUCCIO FURLANETTO
AND DON QUICHOTTE**
A PROFOUND CONNECTION

ANATOMY OF AN OPERA
DON QUICHOTTE



RENEW
BEFORE
APRIL 30
(P. 3)

A MESSAGE FROM GENERAL DIRECTOR ALEXANDER NEEF

A STARRY SPRING

Along with the warmer weather, spring at the COC means a continuation of the extraordinary artistic riches we have been fortunate to experience all season. Among the array of amazing Canadian and international stars treating us to operas never before seen at the COC, I single out three.

I know the whole company is delighted to welcome back Peter Sellars with *Hercules*. Peter's fierce dedication to honesty and undisguised emotion on stage makes for a very potent atmosphere in the theatre. Behind the scenes, his personal generosity and charm creates an energy that acts as a kind of artistic tonic. Peter also believes that theatre and everyday life are inextricably linked, which is why he is enthusiastically participating in the various programs that will be running concurrently with *Hercules*, centered on veterans of conflicts around the world. You can read more about those on page 6.

This spring we also get to know the great (honorary Canadian) soprano Sondra Radvanovsky a bit better when she makes her second role debut with us as Elizabeth I in *Roberto Devereux* (page 14). For an even more up-close and personal visit with Sondra, check out our new feature on the back cover called "Coda."

The world's most esteemed bass, Ferruccio Furlanetto, comes to Canada to sing a role that he has virtually defined, Don Quichotte. When my position at the COC was announced, Ferruccio was the first person to ask me to find a project for him to sing in Toronto. It's taken almost six years for an opera and his schedule to intersect, and I'm so pleased that he is finally making his debut in this country in Massenet's homage to lost love and impossible dreams. I know there won't



be a dry eye in the house by the end of that opera. An interview with him appears on page 18.

The roll call of spectacular opera continues in 2014/2015, a season filled with drama and delight, brought to life by extraordinary talent both onstage and behind the scenes. As the April 30 renewal deadline approaches, I hope you will join us again. Next season is also a perfect one to introduce the live opera experience to a friend or family member. There is something for everyone – heartbreaking romance, psychological thrillers and unadulterated fun – and all of it available at new value pricing. It's a cultural luxury that nobody can afford to pass up.

With *Prelude* we try to give you the most interesting information about the company and the operas as possible, but we want to know how to serve you better. We've got a very short questionnaire for you to complete (pages 17 and 18, or online at coc.ca/PreludeSurvey). Please take two minutes to tell us what you think!



Prelude

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Photo credits are on page 23.

Front cover: Alice Coote and David Daniels in the COC/Lyric Opera of Chicago (LOC) co-production of *Hercules*, 2011, LOC.
Photo: Dan Rest

All information is correct at time of printing.

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Renewal Deadline **APRIL 30**



The 2014/2015 season has been acclaimed by critics and the public alike as our strongest in years. With sales well ahead of the last two seasons, renewing subscribers are sending a strong signal that they agree.

We continue to be astonished by our patrons' loyalty and sense of ownership in this company, a fact which reinforces our pride in presenting a 14/15 season comprised entirely of productions owned or co-owned by the COC. Our three new productions have been created with the world's best companies – Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; the Met;

La Scala; and the Bolshoi, among others – and the three revivals are essential pieces in the company's history. Ultimately, an all-COC season reflects our new artistic paradigm; consistent quality of the highest international standards, the best artists backed by our much-lauded orchestra and chorus, all experienced in North America's finest opera house.

The 14/15 season really does have something for everyone. We hope you join us again!

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NOT TO PERISH

Peter Sellars on *Hercules*, Handel's poignant examination of psychic breakdown

By Nikita Gourski



Eric Owens as Hercules

“We have art so that we might not perish from the truth.”

Friedrich Nietzsche

“There’s an idea that opera is some useless entertainment for rich people and has no larger civic function,” notes American director Peter Sellars. “And for me it’s really the opposite.”

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and educated at Harvard University, Sellars first captured the public’s attention with a 1981 production of Handel’s *Orlando*, which he set in the milieu of the U.S. space program on Cape Canaveral. Two years later he was awarded the MacArthur Fellowship, colloquially known as the “Genius Grant.” He was 25 years old.

Since then, Sellars, who in addition to directing opera, theatre and film, is a professor in UCLA’s World Arts and Culture Department, has fascinated North American and European audiences with his unorthodox

stagings. Some of his early efforts – notably the trilogy of Mozart/ Da Ponte operas (*Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Le nozze di Figaro*) which he set, respectively, in a New York City ghetto, a seaside diner, and Trump Tower – were viciously attacked by certain operagoers and critics.

But the passage of time has allowed for a more thoughtful, and overwhelmingly positive, assessment of his work to emerge. “That people seemed eager to write off Sellars as an *enfant terrible* attempting to shoehorn opera into a pair of Nikes,” wrote Adam Wasserman in *Opera News* two years ago, “was likely the result, I think, of his ideas hitting uncomfortably close to home.”

But if Sellars has sought to put audiences in touch with the moral tensions and social problems of their day, it’s because his overarching ambition has been to rejuvenate theatre as an arena for political consciousness, to let opera speak to our society with the same invigorating immediacy as Greek drama did for the ancient Athenians. In the words of scholar Julian

Young, the tragic festival in ancient Greece “was a sacred occasion on which the community was gathered into a clarifying affirmation of its fundamental ethos – that which made it the community it was.” You did not, in other words, attend the theatre to escape the world, but to see it more clearly; not to forget yourself, but to discover your membership in the political body; not to divert your attention from problems, but to participate in the search for answers.

With the new COC production of Handel’s *Hercules*, built in collaboration with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Sellars is as adventurous as ever in pursuing that project. He sees in *Hercules* an examination of what we now call post-traumatic stress disorder; in less medically precise terms, the heartbreaking tangle of problems faced by returning soldiers and their families. He invites modern reality into the opera house, not to give the production a novel gloss, but to release the universal elements of Handel’s work within a grid of contemporary signs: battle fatigues; Abu-Ghraib orange jumpsuits; flag-draped coffins – and to emphasize

that the social and psychological toll of warfare isn't a bygone relic but an everyday reality.

"We're now beginning to talk about this, because the situation in the United States is that one out of three homeless persons is a veteran," Sellars says. "You have people whose lives have been so destroyed, whose capacity to live a meaningful life has been so devastated, who have everything stacked against them, even though they served [their country]."

Handel's opera is based largely on *Women of Trachis*, a tragedy by Sophocles who, in addition to being a first-rate dramatist, was also a war general. He brought a rare insight to the emotionally intense – even dangerous – landscape that soldiers and their families had to navigate after reuniting. More than 2,000 years later, in 1745, Handel tackled the material with *Hercules*, an oratorio-opera hybrid he, himself, labeled a "musical drama."

In the opera, Hercules returns triumphant after a prolonged war in a foreign city, but his loving wife Dejanira is caught off-guard by her husband's relationship with a mysterious prisoner of war, a princess named Iole. Dejanira is soon plunged into an intensely felt jealousy. And though Hercules appears every bit the proud and honourable hero, his wartime experiences have left him fundamentally displaced from his past life, and equally unprepared for what awaits in the civilian world. "The god of battle quits the bloody field," he sings, "And useless hang the glitt'ring spear and shield," but the deeds committed in combat, including the likelihood of sexual infidelity, persist as an unacknowledged minefield between Hercules and his wife. They fight bitterly, he retreats into incommunicative silence, and she grows suicidal. Before long, the situation explodes.

"When everyone's back together again [after a military deployment]," Sellars explains, "there's a whole lot of things that neither side knows about the other, that have been covered up –

The all-star *Hercules* cast share their thoughts on working with Peter Sellars



Harry Bicket, conductor

Peter Sellars is the most voracious reader I know and he researches everything so finely. He delves so deeply into not just the piece, but the philosophy of what the composer is trying to say. It's very intense, but also fun, very moving and spiritual. His knowledge of sensitivities to the music is a joy for a conductor.



Eric Owens, *Hercules*

I feel so incredibly honoured to be sharing the stage with these artists again, and working with Peter is an amazing experience. He does not direct to provide comfort to his audiences; he directs to make things relevant to them, and he loves what he does. I feel so honoured to call him a friend.



Alice Coote, *Dejanira*

Peter is an open, raw and true reflector of the human condition like no other. His deep connection to what the human race is "going through" makes centuries-old works cathartic for us all today.



David Daniels, *Lichas*

I love working with Peter. He is not just a stage director – he has very specific ideas about how he wants things sung. It's always interesting to work with him because it's not just about telling you where to move on stage. His direction is honest and human and it's great. He makes everything relevant.



Richard Croft, *Hyllus*

It's cliché to say now but Peter is a visionary. It's true. He's true. And he tries to help his actors remain or become true.



Lucy Crowe, *Iole*

I never believed a human being could be truly altruistic, until I met and worked with Peter Sellars. To work with a director who not only has great insight and wants the best out of his performers, but who also wants to help heal and reach out to people through his art is incredibly inspirational!



Inviting our Troops

In conjunction with Sellars' – and Handel's – vision of opera as a place where individual and collective traumas can begin to heal, the COC is inviting Canadian Forces personnel and their families to the dress rehearsal of *Hercules*. Discounts for the production's run have also been extended to soldiers and families. "When you're sitting next to a veteran," Sellars says, "and for them it's not just an opera, you begin to feel a deeper emotion. And you hear the music very differently."

Hercules Beyond the Stage

On April 4, in partnership with the University of Toronto and the Munk School of Global Affairs, Peter Sellars will sit on a panel that explores *Hercules* and the role of music in the rehabilitation and reintegration of those touched by war. He'll be joined by former CBC war correspondent Brian Stewart, musicologists Kip Pegley and Susan McClary, 18th-century literary scholar Brian Corman, as well as veterans of foreign conflicts, from World War II to Afghanistan. **Call 416-363-8231 or go to coc.ca/Explore for more information.**



Peter Sellars (right) during *Hercules* rehearsals in Chicago, in conversation with Lyric Opera of Chicago artistic advisor Evamaria Wieser (centre)

for positive reasons maybe – but that end up becoming deadly fault lines.

"For Handel, as for Sophocles, it was this image of *the* most powerful person on earth, the strong man, being unbelievably vulnerable. And, in fact, being in denial about a lot of the deepest points of vulnerability."

The genius of Handel is in finding a musical language commensurate to the psychological experience of post-traumatic stress. In *Hercules*, Handel uses *da capo* arias, which have a cyclical structure whereby the singer returns to a previous section of music, following an A-B-A pattern, as if haunted by a previously recurring experience. (Translated from Italian, *da capo* means, literally, "from the head.")

Singing a *da capo* aria is a structural analogue "of what it means to work through your issues," Sellars says. "You can't just say, 'okay, now you're fine,' but, in fact, you have to go back and work on it. And you have to dig out all of this emotional stuff that has been locked up and has been denied... it's what's involved in these extreme vocal melismas that Handel writes, where a single word will have 150 notes. And that's because in one word – for most people it's just a word – for [a veteran] there's a roller coaster of emotions; there is an entire set of experiences that flash inside that one word."

Alongside the personal excavation undertaken in the arias, Handel "places the huge choruses, where you get the power of citizens, and you say, 'wait a minute, our whole society is in danger!' You can't just pathologize that person who just screamed in pain in the last aria."

Though Sellars readily admits that the subject matter is challenging, he also emphasizes that "Handel believed that the first way to go into a difficult or dangerous place is with a lot of beauty. So the music is just ravishingly beautiful. It transmutes the suffering into another place and you don't run away from it, but you go towards it." In this way, Handel's opera succeeds both as a precise, mimetically accurate diagnosis of the experience, and as a vehicle of the healing process itself. ■

Hercules plays for seven performances, from April 5 – 30.

 Watch *Hercules* videos and hear musical excerpts at coc.ca/COCRadio.

Hercules is underwritten in part by Anne and Tony Arrell, and Donald E. O'Born

Peter Sellars is generously sponsored by Judy and Wilmot Matthews

Eric Owens' performance is generously sponsored by Kristine Vikmanis

Sandra Horst and the COC Chorus have been generously underwritten by Tim and Frances Price

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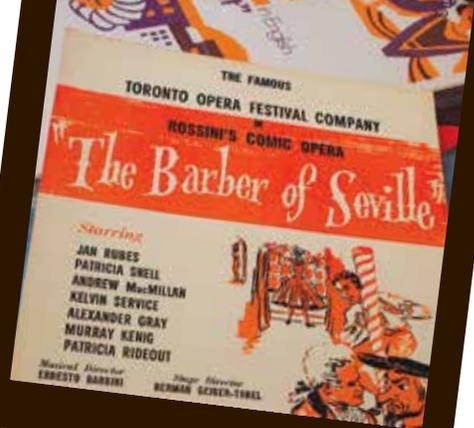
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At this time every season, the Canadian Opera Company embarks on the Year-End Matching Campaign. Thanks to an anonymous donor, who has generously stepped forward to lead the fundraising effort this year, every gift made to the campaign until June 30, 2014 will be matched dollar for dollar. It's an easy way to maximize the impact of your donation, and we invite all our patrons, subscribers and friends to help us reach our goal!

All proceeds from the Year-End Campaign will be directed to support key COC programs, including the Joan Baillie Archives, where objects and documents pertinent to the company's history are preserved. This includes administrative records, audio and video recordings of COC performances, set and costume designs, slides and photographs, memorabilia, as well as newspapers, journals, periodicals and other documents associated with the COC.

Help us preserve the heritage and future of the Canadian Opera Company by supporting the Year-End Campaign today.

For more information or to make a donation to the Year-End Matching Campaign, please contact Christie Darville (ChristieD@coc.ca/416-306-2375) or visit coc.ca/SupportTheCOC.



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In recent years, the COC has availed itself of more than five million dollars through the Canada Cultural Investment Fund, managed by the Department of Canadian Heritage, which encourages donations to the COC's Endowment Fund by matching a significant percentage of charitable gifts. To find out more about this or other government matching programs, call **Christie Darville** at **416-306-2375**.

2. Corporate matching

A number of corporate partners, including Canadian Tire and IBM Canada, match their employees' gifts to the COC. To find out if your company participates, call **Peter Hussell** at **416-306-2378**.



For more on supporting the COC, visit coc.ca/SupportTheCOC

Mentoring a new generation

In January 2014, the Canadian Opera Company launched the **COC Orchestra Academy**, a new initiative expanding on the COC's training program for young opera professionals. Developed in collaboration with The Glenn Gould School at the Royal Conservatory of Music and the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music, the mentorship program is led by COC Music Director Johannes Debus.

"What we're creating with the COC Orchestra Academy is an opportunity to access the wealth of experience that the members of the COC Orchestra possess and pass it on to the next generation of musicians coming up through the ranks," says Debus.

Three students were chosen from a select pool of 10 finalists for the inaugural year: cellist Ashton Lim, oboist Alessandro Rauli and violinist Rebecca MacLeod.

A highlight of the program saw the young musicians perform with the COC Orchestra for the Ensemble Studio performance of *Così fan tutte*. All three students agreed that playing with professionals in the orchestra pit, after four weeks observing rehearsals and performances under the guidance of their assigned mentors, was a valuable opportunity. "When you're making music with these really great musicians, it's your moment to be a pro," said Rauli of his time spent in the program.

And the success of the Ensemble Studio performance of *Così fan tutte* certainly proved that the future of opera is bright, both on stage and in the pit.



(l-r) Ashton Lim, Johannes Debus, Rebecca MacLeod, Alessandro Rauli

A big *Thank you* to our wonderful volunteers!

Our volunteers:

- Document the COC's current and past activities and preserve the great history of the company in the Joan Baillie Archives
- Help customers find an exquisite memento of their opera experience or great recordings to add to their music collections at the COC's Opera Shop
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- Work with young people in the COC's education and outreach programs
- Help with large mailings and countless tasks around the COC administrative offices!



Volunteers donated 5,600 hours of time in the fall and winter of the 2013/2014 season.

The Canadian Opera Company is proud and thankful for all of the hard work and commitment of our volunteers!





TALKING WITH THE VOICE DOCTOR

An Interview with Dr. Jennifer Anderson, MD, FRCSC

By Gianna Wichelow

Unlike an orchestral player, a singer's instrument is their body, and when a singer at the Canadian Opera Company develops a problem with their instrument, they seek the expert and compassionate help of Dr. Jennifer Anderson, head of the Voice Disorders Clinic at St. Michael's Hospital here in Toronto.

Like many others who have gone into medicine, Dr. Anderson has a strong background in music. At the age of 16 she was trying to choose between becoming a violinist or a doctor. She chose the latter and when Dr. Anderson completed her ENT training at the University of Toronto (UofT), she was asked to do specialty training which required a master's degree in speech pathology. Since assuming the medical director role at the Voice Disorders Clinic in 1996, the clinic has acquired a reputation for excellent care and has become the largest voice centre in the country. The team at the Voice Clinic includes two speech pathologists, Marta DeLuca and Gwen Merrick, who have expertise in vocal performance as well a vocal pedagogist, Mary Enid Haines.

Anderson explains, "The most common problems we see in the voice clinic are due to voice abuse and misuse: for example, a typical patient is the chatty person who is a cheerleader, sings in the choir and talks on her cell phone – a lot. The trend of texting and e-mailing on smart phones is actually giving some voices a much-needed rest. I also see voice professionals – people who are performers, teachers, or anybody who uses their voice to make a living – develop a voice problem when several things happen at the same time which causes voice strain. For example, a teacher is moved to an open-concept classroom and has a severe bronchitis that fall. We also diagnose related voice problems like vocal nodules, polyps and both cancerous and non-cancerous tumours in the larynx (vocal folds). Less common are problems such as breathing issues from scar tissue or irritative reactions in the throat."

According to Dr. Anderson, singers and performers are more likely to appear in her clinic because they are more aware of their voices and often identify that there is something wrong. Sometimes they're getting by with their performances but they know their voice is not quite right.

"Singers value their health, and there's only the rare opera singer who smokes. One of the things I find very difficult for opera singers is that if they do not perform, despite what could be many weeks of preparation, they may not be paid so there is a huge pressure to sing even if the performer is sick. Occasionally, a virus has gone through a whole opera cast. The best prevention, when working with a group when someone gets a virus, is a lot of hand washing. Singers do get very worried about getting ill at the wrong moment."

As with anyone feeling not quite themselves, psychology can sometimes play a part. "I'm not a trained psychologist but when you meet someone who has a concern about their voice, there's sometimes a lot of anxiety around what it means for their career. The education about the physiology of producing voice has changed for singers; they understand so much more, which is helpful. But sometimes when they come in, it turns out they have an important performance or audition coming up and the stress is building. They're wondering if what's going on is structural or something wrong with their vocal cords, or is it something they are doing wrong. Young singers can find that terrifying. Singers have spent years investing in a skill set and when things are not going well, can start to wonder if it is their technique at fault. That may or may not be the case but the concern can affect confidence and vocal performance. I find that becomes a real issue in some individuals."

Curious about the small and rather mysterious vocal cords, I made an assumption that they were also quite fragile, which, it turns out, is not necessarily true. Dr. Anderson explains, "It's amazing what the vocal folds can put up with, if you think about what singers can do. Vocal folds can vibrate up to 1,000 times a second, with a huge range of intensity. The same way a ballet dancer's feet are not necessarily that attractive, sometimes vocal folds look like they have been on a long journey. They change, and there can be certain

identifying marks. Lots of singers know what their cords look like and they can identify a particular structural image that has been there for years. The voice system works best when the vocal folds are smooth, straight and symmetrical, but most importantly, really supple. The folds have to act more as a fluid rather than a solid. They have to be able to ripple and vibrate. It is an air-driven system, so if the vocal folds are too stiff or too heavy, if there's something on them, then you can set the air in motion but it won't easily vibrate. Or the voice sounds very rough, because the vibrations are very irregular.

"The system has got what is called plasticity. There is a capability to evolve, a lot of capacity to change. You learn one way of doing something, but that doesn't mean that is the only way. So there are singers who have had injuries, like a hemorrhage, and they may have to learn another skill set to move on."

Such is the demand on the busy clinic at St. Michael's that efforts are being made to expand the team. There's also a campaign to raise funds to hire a PhD scientist to research voice disorders. This would be a joint research program between medicine and music at UofT. "One subject they would work on, for example, is the relationship between vibrato and vocal tremor, which sound like the same thing but may not be that easy to understand. One is a natural tremor that you find in vibrato and you use it because, in singing, it is a desirable quality, but it already had to be wired in neurologically. The other is pathological and a patient has it all the time, and you can't turn it off. What's the connection? Other questions we would like to know more about would be, why is someone able to learn certain skills so easily and someone else struggles to do the same thing? What is the effect of large tonsils on a singing voice? I have performed tonsillectomies on singers because the tonsils were so large, it seemed to be affecting their resonance, but it has not been formally researched. The goal of the voice research chair is to combine experts from three areas: music, medicine and communication science, to work collaboratively in voice research. We would also like to promote better voice care education and I have already directed several voice courses that have brought together speech pathologists and physicians who have an interest in voice issues."

Also along the lines of looking to the future, Dr. Anderson invites young singers each year from UofT's Opera Division for an annual field trip to the Voice Disorders Clinic. "They get a sense of what we do, what we look at, what their vocal cords look like and how they vibrate. The students seem to enjoy the experience and it enhances their knowledge."

What other advice does she have for young singers? "I think globally looking after yourself with a good diet, enough sleep and exercise is just common sense but it makes a difference in performers. I don't think most young singers relax enough and that tension ends up being an issue for lots of singers. Most of them know to be careful about things they read on the internet relating to a healthy voice. Here's an example: for a while I saw quite a few singers who were all drinking

licorice root tea before their performance. It was a trendy thing to do. It has a sort of sweet flavor but it's a diuretic which means it can dry out the vocal folds which is not a good idea before singing."

A sick singer can feel as despondent as a weight lifter with a bad back. But with the understanding of the plasticity of the human body, and with the support and expertise of specialists like Dr. Anderson, they know that they'll have access to the best care available. And thanks to those remarkable little vocal cords, as part of the entire voice-producing system, we in the audience can be transported once more by the beauty and expression of the human voice. ■



Adrienne Pieczonka

"Dr. Anderson knows just what is at stake for an opera singer"

In every major city with a world class opera house, there is at least one ENT [ear, nose and throat] specializing in the treatment of voices, sung and spoken. Over the years I have relied on such experts in Vienna, Berlin, Munich, New York and London to help me in times of illness or vocal concern. In Toronto we are lucky to have Dr. Jennifer Anderson at St. Michael's Hospital, who tends to the needs of many of Toronto's top opera, musical and theatre performers.

One tends to forget that singers are like athletes. Our tiny vocal cords undergo a real workout during an operatic performance and, like an athlete, a singer has to keep in good shape through constant practice and exercise.

Dr. Anderson knows just what is at stake for an opera singer. There is often a huge psychological component at play and she is very sensitive and understanding to just how much pressure a singer is under. If a singer is ill, it can be dangerous for him or her to carry on performing. However, many singers feel the financial pressure to carry on performing despite illness or fatigue. This can lead to many vocal problems in the long run. Dr. Anderson understands the pressure and conflict that many singers experience and she counsels them with kindness and wisdom. She has often fitted me immediately into her extremely busy schedule of surgery and hospital clinics when I have been ill or have had other vocal concerns. Her work as Director of the St. Michael's Voice Disorders Clinic is praiseworthy.

Adrienne Pieczonka, soprano

WORKING HARD



PLAYING HARD



1-3: Participants in the COC's After School Opera Program treated audiences to new mini-operas about dinosaurs and medieval zombies!
4: COC Ensemble Studio members took part in a masterclass given by renowned baritone Sir Thomas Allen (centre), who sang the role of Don Alfonso in the winter production of *Così fan tutte*. **5-6:** Soprano Tracy Dahl and Sir Thomas Allen delighted and moved packed houses as part of the Free Concert Series in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre. **7:** Superstar composer John Adams applauds pianists Ryan MacEvoy McCullough and Claudia Chan, who performed his *Hallelujah Junction* in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre. **8:** Soprano Adrienne Pieczonka (centre), who starred this winter in the COC's *A Masked Ball* was all smiles when she received the Norman Walford and Paul de Hueck Career Achievement Award. Celebrating with her are (l-r) Former COC Board member and supporter Earlaine Collins; Adrienne's wife, mezzo-soprano Laura Tucker; arts PR consultant Moira Johnson and mezzo-soprano Janet Stubbs. **9:** The cast and creative team of *Così fan tutte* relax on the steps of the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre following the opening night performance. **10:** *Così fan tutte* opening night celebrations continued with COC communications staff Jennifer Pugsley, Claire Morley and Danielle D'Ornellas. **11:** COC Ensemble Studio member soprano Sasha Djhanian and former COC Board member and supporter Sue Mortimer share a hug after the Ensemble Studio performance of *Così fan tutte*. **12:** COC Ensemble Studio members celebrate along with Wendy Nielsen, Liz Upchurch, Alexander Neef and Johannes Debus following their performance of *Così*. **13-15:** The 2014/2015 season was launched in January with a special event for subscribers that included live performances and interviews with artists. **13:** Host Brent Bambury chats with COC General Director Alexander Neef and Music Director Johannes Debus about the new production of *Don Giovanni*. **14:** A packed house at the Four Seasons Centre for the 14/15 launch. **15:** (l-r) Alexander Neef, Atom Egoyan and Johannes Debus share a laugh during a chat about next season's production of *Die Walküre*.

SONDRA RADVANOVSKY: A BEL CANTO JOURNEY

By Gianmarco Segato

"I'M NOT SURE IF
I'M COMPLETELY
CUCKOO OR SANE
FOR DOING THIS!"



When superstar soprano Sondra Radvanovsky finished singing *Aida*'s great act III aria "O patria mia" in her 2010 COC and role debut, the audience response was unprecedented. Toronto had just experienced one of the most emotionally frank, technically superb, thrilling pieces of singing. The post-performance excitement in

the lobby was palpable - her just-released CD of Verdi arias was selling out at the Opera Shop and patrons were simply abuzz with excitement, demanding to know when they would hear her again. They'll have that chance this spring when she makes her hotly anticipated return to the COC stage as the "Virgin Queen" Elizabeth I (Elisabetta) in *Roberto Devereux* which, like *Aida* in 2010, represents another role debut.

Until recently, Radvanovsky's repertoire was built on early- and middle-period Verdi heroines such as Elena in *I vespri siciliani* and Leonora in *Il trovatore*. It is only more recently that she has begun to explore earlier Italian 19th-century roles like Norma, Anna Bolena, Maria Stuarda and now, Elisabetta in *Roberto Devereux*. Convention dictates that big-voiced singers like Radvanovsky "graduate"

forward, taking on even greater decibel-demanding, thickly orchestrated, post-Verdi roles like Puccini's *Turandot*, *Madama Butterfly* and Minnie in *The Girl of the Golden West*. While Puccini's *Tosca* is one of her staple, star turns, Radvanovsky has, somewhat unexpectedly, headed in the opposite direction, towards the earlier 19th-century heroines of Donizetti. In this corner of the repertoire, size of voice is not all that matters; instead, flexibility to sing demanding *coloratura* (highly ornamental music where several notes are sung on each syllable of the text); sustained vocal lines sung perfectly smoothly; and, an ability to colour the meaning of the text take precedence.

The soprano's account of the path that led her to *bel canto* is fascinating and revealing. "I am not one to lie about my past. As a child I was intubated; I had pneumonia and my doctor feels that the tube nicked one of my vocal chords which resulted in the polyp I had all of my singing life. In 2002 I had it removed and had to learn how to sing all over again. It opened up a new world for me, a world I never thought or imagined musically I would be singing. That really started with [the 2008 Washington National Opera production of] *Lucrezia Borgia* but it was also my voice

Elizabeth I's Tudor court comes to life in the COC's production this spring. Pictured above is that same production in Dallas with Hasmik Papian (centre) as the queen. Making her role debut in Toronto will be Sondra Radvanovsky, pictured right in *Anna Bolena* (Washington National Opera, 2012). Photo: Scott Suchman

coach, Tony Manoli, who pointed me in that direction.” Despite her many accomplishments as a Verdi singer, he was convinced she had the potential to be even greater in the *bel canto* repertoire. Together, they re-worked her technique post-surgery and in the process, she feels she became a better singer. “It was a godsend. No one else heard it; Manoli was the only one.” The ultimate affirmation of this vocal transformation was her recent fall 2013 Metropolitan Opera *Norma* (the summit of all *bel canto* roles) – “it was a huge success...HUGE!”

With her COC Elisabetta, Radvanovsky will have sung all three of Donizetti’s “Tudor queens” (Anna Bolena and Maria Stuarda complete the trilogy), an undertaking few sopranos have managed to achieve – or survive! Famously, American soprano Beverly Sills, who performed all three at New York City Opera during the early 1970s, admitted they shortened her opera career. “Well,” says Radvanovsky, “I think our voices are a lot different; she was more of a lyric coloratura,” as opposed to Radvanovsky’s own fuller, dramatic instrument. “But I guess she wanted to risk it because it’s so exciting as an artist to perform all three.”

And now, having lived with the Tudor queens herself, Radvanovsky can attest to their dangerous fascination. “There is the common thread, of course, that they were all queens and so possess a nobility that one has to keep in mind in terms of stage deportment – with how they react and deal with other characters. Vocally, however, they are completely different. Donizetti chose to highlight earlier stages of the other queens’ lives whereas Elisabetta is at the end and she’s worn down; she’s a broken woman. She was a very strong queen as we know, but here she’s angry a lot and it shows in the vocal writing Donizetti gave her.

If you look at the length of the role, Elisabetta is the shortest, especially compared to *Anna Bolena* which is a marathon. In fact, Elisabetta doesn’t appear in quite a bit of the opera, but she has the key moments and, by far, the hardest music. In terms of vocal range, hers is the widest with a great amount of dramatic *coloratura* that is just unrelenting. It’s so easy to get caught up in the character’s temperament. As singers we can play the emotion in our body or it can get stuck in your voice... there’s good tension and there’s bad tension and one has to learn the difference between the two if you’re going to sing roles like Elisabetta and *Norma* – you have to know where to put the tension in your body and hopefully it doesn’t go to your throat.”

Radvanovsky will take on the Sills trifecta when she sings all three Tudor queens in 2015/2016 at the Metropolitan Opera. “I start in the fall with a new production of *Roberto Devereux* and then come back later in the season and do all three in a row. I’m not sure if I’m completely cuckoo or sane for doing this!” Before that, however, she is particularly keen on the COC’s Shakespearean Globe Theatre-inspired production for *Devereux*. Our audiences will recognize it from 2010’s *Maria Stuarda* but it was also the setting for Radvanovsky’s *Anna Bolena* at Washington National Opera in 2012. “I really like the whole concept of it being in the round, of the Globe Theatre influence, and it’s great for projecting the voice too – I don’t have to work as hard because I have all this resonant wood around me!” ■

Roberto Devereux plays for seven performances, April 25 – May 21.

Sondra Radvanovsky’s performance is generously sponsored by an anonymous donor



See Coda
on the back
cover

Spring is busting out at the **OPERA SHOP!**



2014 SPRING COLLECTION

The Opera Shop is excited to welcome a new line of handmade jewellery by **ZSISKA**. Each piece features resin in combination with different quality materials such as 24k gold leaf, pure silver leaf and Swarovski crystals.

GIOVANNA PAZ's inspiration comes from the art of the Peruvian wire crochet method that is featured in jewellery stylings across her homeland. She brought this technique to Toronto and infused these concepts with her own personal style to create a unique jewellery collection.

RIKKI BLITT returns to the Opera Shop with an Elizabethan collection, inspired by our production of *Roberto Devereux*. Rikki's one-of-a-kind jewellery is characterized by her attention to detail and stunning colour combinations.

Due to high demand, **WHITELOTUS DESIGN**'s jewellery will be returning to the shop! Designer Edina Racz's handcrafted pieces feature combinations of semi-precious gemstones, sterling silver and other rare stones from around the world.

TRUNK SHOW: Sunday April 27th, 2 p.m.
WHITELOTUS DESIGN



FEATURED RECORDINGS THIS SPRING 2014



Roberto Devereux

Deutsche Grammophon DVD. Das Bayerische Staatsorchester and Der Chor der Bayerischen Staatsoper, Friedrich Haider, conductor. Edita Gruberova, Albert

Schagidullin, Jeanne Piland and Robert Aronica. **\$25.75** including tax.

Legendary dramatic coloratura soprano Edita Gruberova gives the performance of her career as Elizabeth I in Christof Loy's innovative staging of Donizetti's *Roberto Devereux* for Bavarian State Opera. Loy "fashions an overwhelming chamber play with precise gestures and unflinching dramatic conviction..." (*Münchner Merkur*). Bonus "Making of" documentary included!



Don Quichotte

Mariinsky Label CD. Mariinsky Orchestra and the Soloists' Ensemble of the Mariinsky Academy of Young Singers, Valery

Gergiev, conductor. Ferruccio Furlanetto, Anna Kiknadze and Andrei Serov. **\$39** including tax.

Our own Don Quichotte, bass Ferruccio Furlanetto, whose "dark, round tone is perfect for the role" (*Gramophone*), stars in this new recording of Massenet's opera led by Valery Gergiev and his Mariinsky Orchestra and Chorus who generate a "drive and energy and big bold splashes of colour [that] immediately grab your attention." (*Fanfare*)



Hercules

Deutsche Grammophon CD. The Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists. John Eliot Gardiner, conductor.

John Tomlinson, Sarah Walker, Anthony Rolfe-Johnson and Catherine Denley. **\$18.50** including tax.

Early music specialist John Eliot Gardiner illuminates Handel's score with greater attention to nuance and detail than anyone else has ever lavished upon it. As Dejanira, Sarah Walker's warm tone and dramatic involvement establish the absolute centrality of Hercules' wife in the drama.

The Opera Shop is located on the main floor of the Isadore and Rosalie Sharp City Room, open before, during and (sometimes) after all performances. Shop for more 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.



TRENDING AT THE COC Twitter was abuzz the night of our 2014/2015 Season Launch!



Gerald Finley @GeraldFinley Jan 15

Thrilled to make my role debut as Falstaff with @CanadianOpera in October!

Christine Goerke @HeldenMommy Jan 15

Well now I can crow!! So excited to make my COC debut!! #hojotoho @CanadianOpera



Gerald Finley tweets a photo in true Falstaffian style!

Kevin @NonPiuDiFiori Jan 15

Lovely that @SimoneOsborne will be singing Nannetta at @CanadianOpera next season - I smugly get to say that I saw it before you all!

Luminato Festival @Luminato Jan 16

Cheers to @CanadianOpera on their exciting new season, announced just last night! Check out the #COC1415 trailer

Joshua Hopkins @barihopkins Jan 17

Thrilled to return to the Canadian Opera Company for their #COC1415 season as #Figaro in #BarbierediSiviglia!

SUMMER AT THE COC

By Katherine Semcesen

Each summer the COC accepts 35 enthusiastic youth in grades 9 to 12 into its Summer Youth Intensive (SYI). The non-auditioned program offers teens with an interest in the performing arts a chance to collaborate with other young artists and work on their own craft — be it singing, stage design or general acting and performance skills. Participants have hailed from as far as Kitchener, Orangeville, Sutton, Inverary and Sault Ste-Marie, proving that the COC is a hot destination for any young people looking to gain valuable opera experience under the guidance of top notch professionals working in the field.

WHAT CAN A PARTICIPANT EXPECT DURING THE WEEK?

Opera, like all works of theatre, is produced thanks to an enormous amount of teamwork and collaboration.

In this spirit, participants begin each morning as our resident “SYI Opera Chorus” and learn how to work as an ensemble. Soprano and vocal teacher Kyra Millan teaches participants opera choruses from upcoming COC productions and an opera director stages the scenes. Last summer youth worked with opera director and artistic director of Against the Grain Theatre, Joel Ivany (above).



In the afternoons, youth sign up for masterclasses of their choice and focus on a specific aspect of opera.

In 2014, masterclass offerings include vocal technique, dramatic interpretation, acting techniques, production (costumes, wigs, and props), designing an opera, and stage combat.



Participants meet other young artists and work with great mentors. Knowing that participants have many artistic interests, youth are invited to organize informal concerts at the end of each day to showcase their many talents and partake in casual Q&A sessions with COC staff and artists.



Art is meant to be shared. Summer Youth Intensive always ends with a presentation of the participants' hard work for family, friends, and COC staff, and a reception to celebrate the great achievements of the fine young artists.

Program Supporters
J. P. BICKELL FOUNDATION
STATE STREET



Register Today!

Summer Youth Intensive 2014

Week One: July 7 to 12, 2014
Week Two: July 14 to 19, 2014

For more details visit
coc.ca/SYI

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT PRELUDE!

We try to give you the most interesting information possible about the company and the operas. Please take two minutes to tell us what you think of *Prelude*, then cut out this survey and drop it off at the Welcome Desk next time you are at the opera! If you'd prefer to complete this online, it's also available at coc.ca/PreludeSurvey.

(Circle the appropriate answer)

1) **What is your subscription relationship with the COC?**

- a. 1 – 2 years
- b. 3 – 5 years
- c. 5 – 10 years
- d. More than 10 years
- e. Not currently a subscriber

2) **How often do you read *Prelude*?**

- a. Never
- b. Rarely
- c. Occasionally
- d. Frequently

3) **How do you receive *Prelude*?**

- a. By mail
- b. I pick up a copy at the theatre
- c. Digitally

4) **In general, when do you read *Prelude*?**

- a. Before the performance
- b. After the performance
- c. Both

5) **Where are you most likely to read articles about COC performances?**

- a. House programs
- b. *Prelude*
- c. Both *Prelude* and the house programs
- d. Neither; I don't read the articles

6) **On a scale of 1 to 5 — 1 is no interest and 5 is very high interest — please rate your interest in reading about each of the following categories in *Prelude*:**

See over for continued survey

Question 6 continued

- a. General company news 1 2 3 4 5
 - b. Artist profiles/interviews 1 2 3 4 5
 - c. Historical background on upcoming operas 1 2 3 4 5
 - d. Production background on upcoming operas 1 2 3 4 5
 - e. Behind-the-scenes features on COC staff members (artistic/administrative/production) 1 2 3 4 5
 - f. Education and outreach programs 1 2 3 4 5
 - g. Features on COC fundraising initiatives and donors/sponsors activities 1 2 3 4 5
- 7) On a scale of 1 to 5 — 1 is very low and 5 is very high — please rate each category of how you use *Prelude*:
- a. To better prepare myself or understand operas/productions presented by the COC 1 2 3 4 5
 - b. To keep up with current COC info and events 1 2 3 4 5
 - c. To indulge my interest in the stars performing with the COC 1 2 3 4 5
 - d. Supplement other info I receive from the COC (e-mails, social media etc.) 1 2 3 4 5
 - e. Augment the articles/information available in the house program 1 2 3 4 5
 - f. Other _____

8) Before completing this questionnaire, were you aware *Prelude* is available in digital format on coc.ca?

- a. Yes
- b. No

9) Would you find it more convenient to read the material we produce in *Prelude* in an online format?

- a. Yes
- b. No

10) Any general comments?

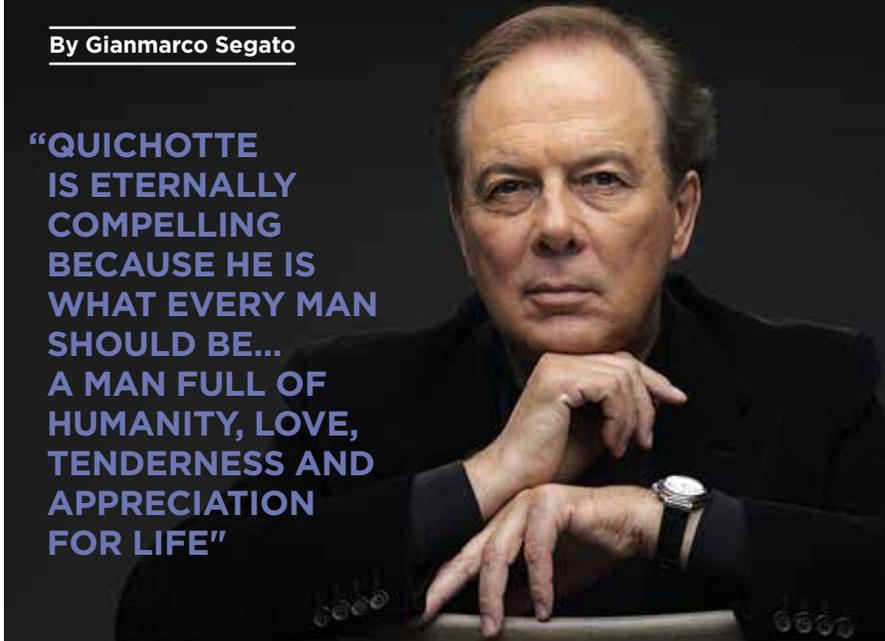
Thank you very much!



FERRUCCIO FURLANETTO AND DON QUICHOTTE - A PROFOUND CONNECTION

By Gianmarco Segato

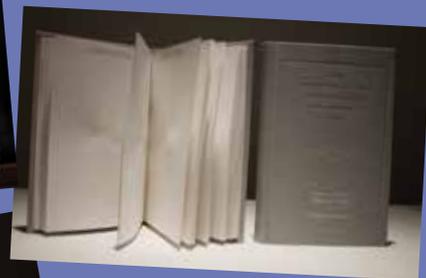
“QUICHOTTE IS ETERNALLY COMPELLING BECAUSE HE IS WHAT EVERY MAN SHOULD BE... A MAN FULL OF HUMANITY, LOVE, TENDERNESS AND APPRECIATION FOR LIFE”



It's simply impossible for an opera company to present Massenet's *Don Quichotte* without an artist who possesses the requisite gravitas, charisma and noble vocalism necessary to master the title role's considerable musical and histrionic demands.

In Ferruccio Furlanetto, who makes his greatly anticipated COC debut in the title role, the COC not only has the world's leading Don Quichotte

but a singer whose legendary 40-year career has established him as one of the greatest singing actors of his generation. His vocal pedigree is impeccable - his rich, velvety, espresso-hued timbre marks him as the natural successor to his idol, the great Italian bass, Cesare Siepi, one of the finest singers of the post-war period. As Furlanetto notes, "For me, [Siepi] had the most beautiful voice there has ever been, the most Latin,



Elements of Mitchell Chan's artwork, which will be present at the Four Seasons Centre during our spring run.

the most beautiful colour, so I wanted to follow the same path as him. He was an extraordinary Figaro, the best Giovanni, so I worked and worked in preparation for these roles.”

Furlanetto’s artistic lineage is also strongly linked to past greats, including the Bulgarian bass Boris Christoff, with whom he worked as a young singer in Verdi’s *Don Carlo*, taking the small role of the Monk to his elder colleague’s King Philip, the role now considered by many to be Furlanetto’s greatest. His unconditional admiration for, and direct experience with, his illustrious predecessors – Christoff’s superb technique, Siepi’s definitive Don Giovanni and the seamless *legato* of that other great Bulgarian bass, Nicolai Ghiaurov – situate Furlanetto within a continuum connecting past tradition to contemporary performance practice. He emerges as the towering, present-day Italian exponent of the ever-evolving art of great singing.

Perhaps a little surprisingly, Furlanetto’s performing roots were in the Italian rock scene of the 1960s when the British Invasion was at its peak. He soon migrated to the classical realm and began formal vocal studies with Ettore Campogalliani, the legendary northern Italian voice teacher who also counted Luciano Pavarotti, Mirella Freni and Renata Scotto among his students. From Campogalliani he learned to master “economy of breath and interpretation within a phrase – to do a phrase from

beginning to the very end without giving the impression you are working and then, in between, you have to paint with the colours of your voice what you are saying.” He also gained valuable lessons on stage deportment: “I was stiff, and my teacher said – free those hands, leave the rest of your body completely relaxed! This is extremely important when you become a character on stage – the voice is directed by the mind but you need your body to inhabit a character and it doesn’t help if you are stiff!”

From these initial, relatively modest acting tips, Furlanetto honed his thespian skills to the degree that he now privileges roles for which “there is an important vocal component. To inhabit a character like King Philip, Don Quichotte or Boris Godunov, vocality is fundamental but even more so is the capability to be an acting singer.” The Italian *basso* readily admits that, currently, these are his three favourite roles and if someone offered him “a contract to do them for the rest of my career, I’d sign it straightaway!” The betrayed Philip and the dying Boris and Don Quichotte are all acting showcases. For Furlanetto, “to represent on stage a dying character gives you an infinite possibility of interpretations of emotional involvement. And when it comes to Boris and Don Quichotte, all this is lifted to the nth degree.”

Of his favoured trio, Don Quichotte is the role that gives him the highest satisfaction. “Quichotte is eternally

compelling because he is what every man should be, ideally, at least for a few moments in his life: a man full of humanity, love, tenderness and appreciation for life. Musically, everything about this role is very touching and beautiful – it can reach moments of absolute poetry. Whenever and wherever I’ve sung *Don Quichotte* you cannot imagine the results we’ve had with audiences who receive it with tremendous joy and satisfaction.” Furlanetto stresses that roles like Philip, Boris and Don Quichotte are “final targets you have to interpret when you have the maximum experience both vocally and as an actor, where the maturity of a singer is more important than anything else. It is absolutely fundamental to wait 10 years rather than to do it too soon.” Accordingly, he didn’t start learning Don Quichotte until he was in his early 50s. “In this opera you are constantly in contact with the concept of death. You approach these kinds of matters much better and in a more interesting way when you are less young – it’s something that goes together with your experience of life, it’s as simple as that. Roles like Don Quichotte, first of all I do them for myself, for the joy that I receive when I sing them, which goes first to my own heart and then, eventually, to the audience’s heart; this is pure happiness.” ■

Don Quichotte plays for seven performances, May 9 – 24.

THE EPHEMERAL DON QUIXOTE!

Artwork of Mitchell Chan

In conjunction with this spring’s presentation of the company premiere of *Don Quichotte*, Massenet’s operatic homage to lost love and impossible dreams, the COC is delighted to welcome Toronto artist Mitchell F. Chan’s tribute to the same source material.

Chan’s 2011 project, entitled *The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha*, completely dematerializes the content of Miguel de Cervantes’ book while highlighting the work’s central metaphor: the intangibility and ephemerality of truth. The artwork makes sure that it is, itself, intangible and ephemeral; it is a sculpture of air and water, never existing for more than a brief moment.

The sculpture is composed of clouds of water vapour which are released into the air in patterns forming letters. These vapour letters scroll upwards like a vertical LED ticker tape. The constant stream of clouds slowly writes out Cervantes’ novel *Don Quixote*, letter by letter. Each letter dissipates into the air as quickly as it emerges, rendering the text only scarcely legible. The piece addresses the futility of grasping at stable meanings and the beauty of the ineffectual gesture. More information on this piece can be found on Mr. Chan’s website, www.mitchellfchan.com.

The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha will be displayed at the bar on the main level of the Isadore and Rosalie Sharp City Room during *Don Quichotte* performances, May 9 – 24.

DON QUICHOTTE: A LOVE LETTER TO LITERATURE

Cervantes' literary masterpiece, *Don Quixote*, and Massenet's talent for beautiful melodic writing provide director **Linda Brovsky** with ample inspiration for her whimsical vision of one of the greatest literary heroes ever conceived.



American Linda Brovsky has worked extensively throughout North America as an opera and musical theatre director, writer, and lecturer. *Don Quichotte*, a production originally created for Seattle Opera, marks her COC debut.

Books Transfigured

The striking set designs are pulled directly from the pages of Cervantes' novel, where books are overwhelmingly ever-present. As Brovsky asserts, "Don Quixote lost his mind from reading too many books. I realized that [in the novel] Cervantes was talking about the gift of imagination and the power of literature." And so the sets, by designer Donald Eastman, are comprised of enormous books and quills and also feature projections that tower above the stage and replicate **pages of Cervantes' manuscript**. "Just as Quixote uses his imagination to not only escape from reality but to begin his quest and find his dream, I wanted the audience to use their imagination, where the books transform into a suggestion of a mountainside; into Dulcinée's salon; into a bandit camp. But more than anything, [this production] is a valentine to the power of imagination – it's our love letter to it, and to the power of literature."

A line from Cervantes perfectly encapsulates the spirit of literature's great dreamer:

"Too much sanity may be madness. And maddest of all, to see life as it is and not as it should be."

Giant books are featured in the striking set design of this production. When it appeared in Seattle in 2011, it starred (l-r) John Relyea, Malgorzata Walewska and Alex Mansoori.



Flamenco!

One of the things that Massenet captures so brilliantly in his **distinctive melodies** is the flavour of Spain. “The music hits you from the first note – you are in that world,” says Brovsky. And complementing his score onstage are **Flamenco dancers**. By integrating Spanish classical dance into the production, “The dancers provide the glue that keeps the action moving but also provides that Spanish soul.” Most of the performers you see on stage in this production are talented local Toronto dancers, featuring veteran Mexican Flamenco star Raúl Salcedo, all led by master Flamenco dancer and choreographer Sara de Luis, whom Brovsky calls “the Margot Fonteyn of Flamenco.”

Flamenco: a traditional Spanish dance that involves expressive and intricate hand and arm movement as well as highly technical, rhythmic stamping of the feet.



Like many of his fellow French Romantic composers, Massenet was intrigued by the colours and melodies of Spanish music, but was also markedly skilled at marrying text and music. This results in some of the most carefully crafted and poignantly structured musical characters in all of opera. Go to coc.ca/COCRadio to listen to examples, including Dulcinée’s Act IV aria, “Alza! Alza! Ne pensons qu’au plaisir d’aïmer.” Listen for the Spanish characteristics with its playful, incisive rhythms and clicking castanet sound effects, all of which suit Dulcinée’s carefree, flighty personality.

Four-legged Friends



John Relyea as Don Quichotte and Richard Bernstein as Sancho Panza starred with four-legged artists in this same production when it appeared in Seattle in 2011.

In addition to the principal cast, chorus, orchestra, and dancers, this production also features some very special four-legged guests. In most productions of *Don Quichotte*, directors tend to opt for prop animals, but not here! Director Linda Brovsky believes that animals are integral characters in the story, and therefore has opted to use a **live horse and a live donkey** throughout. Very special care has to be taken to ensure their safety and comfort, as well as those of the artists who interact with them on stage. Both Don Quichotte and Sancho Panza appear onstage regularly with these animals. To ensure mutual comfort during live performances, the singers must bond with the animals during the rehearsal period. By opening night, the animals must be accustomed to hearing a live, and often quite

loud voice singing very close to them. Put an untrained horse on stage next to a booming baritone, and that horse is likely to be startled. It’s a very special relationship that relies on a solid foundation of mutual trust.

When it comes to working with these live animals, the COC works closely with Tom Bishop’s 4B Ranch Productions, a company that specializes in training animals for film, television and stage productions.



Watch *Don Quichotte* videos and hear musical excerpts at coc.ca/COCRadio.

SPRING 2014

APRIL 2014

Tue	1	12 p.m.	Artists of The Glenn Gould School*
Thu	3	12 p.m.	Artists of the COC Ensemble Studio*
Fri	4	9:30 a.m.	The Opera Exchange: Coming Home: Handel's <i>Hercules</i> , Munk School of Global Affairs
Sat	5	4:30 p.m.	Hercules Opening Performance
Tue	8	12 p.m.	Artists of Opera Atelier and Atelier Ballet*
Thu	10	12 p.m.	Norman Marshall Villeneuve's Jazz Message Quartet*
		12:15 p.m.	Opera Connect: Opera's Greatest Hits, & 1:15 p.m. First Canadian Place
Fri	11	7:30 p.m.	<i>Hercules</i>
Tue	15	12 p.m.	Philip Chiu, piano*
		7:30 p.m.	<i>Hercules</i>
Thu	17	12 p.m.	Jacques Israelievitch, violin; Valentina Sadovski, piano*
Sat	19	7:30 p.m.	<i>Hercules</i>
Tue	22	12 p.m.	The Sicilian Jazz Project*
Thu	24	12 p.m.	ArrayMusic; Rick Sacks, solo percussion*
		6 p.m.	Fine Wine Auction, Design Exchange
		7:30 p.m.	<i>Hercules</i>
Fri	25	7:30 p.m.	Roberto Devereux Opening Performance
Sun	27	2 p.m.	<i>Hercules</i>
Tue	29	12 p.m.	Shannon Butcher Quartet*
		7:30 p.m.	<i>Roberto Devereux</i>
Wed	30	7:30 p.m.	Hercules Closing Performance

*These performances are part of the Free Concert Series in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, supported by the Free Concert Series Endowment Fund, established in honour of Richard Bradshaw by an anonymous donor.

MAY 2014

Thu	1	12 p.m.	Leonard Gilbert, piano*
		7 p.m.	Opera Connect: Sondra Radvanovsky in Conversation, Toronto Reference Library
Sat	3	7:30 p.m.	<i>Roberto Devereux</i>
Tue	6	12 p.m.	Allyson McHardy, mezzo-soprano; Liz Upchurch, piano; Artists of the COC Orchestra*
		7 p.m.	Opera Talks: Wayne Gooding on <i>Don Quichotte</i> , North York Central Library
Thu	8	12 p.m.	Marie Bérard, violin; Bryan Epperson, cello; David Louie, piano*
Fri	9	7:30 p.m.	Don Quichotte Opening Performance
Sat	10	4:30 p.m.	<i>Roberto Devereux</i>
Sun	11	2 p.m.	<i>Don Quichotte</i>
Tue	13	12 p.m.	Russell Braun, baritone; Artists of the COC Orchestra*
Wed	14	7:30 p.m.	<i>Don Quichotte</i>
Thu	15	12 p.m.	Artists of the COC Orchestra and Ensemble Studio*
		7:30 p.m.	<i>Roberto Devereux</i>
Sat	17	7:30 p.m.	<i>Don Quichotte</i>
Sun	18	2 p.m.	<i>Roberto Devereux</i>
Tue	20	12 p.m.	Artists of the COC Ensemble Studio*
		7:30 p.m.	<i>Don Quichotte</i>
Wed	21	7:30 p.m.	Roberto Devereux Closing Performance
Thu	22	12 p.m.	Stephen R. Clarke, lecturer*
		7:30 p.m.	<i>Don Quichotte</i>
Sat	24	4:30 p.m.	Don Quichotte Closing Performance
Tue	27	12 p.m.	Donné Roberts Band*

JUNE 2014

Tue	3	12 p.m.	Iraida Erokhina, domra; Alexander Sevastian, bayan*
Wed	4	12 p.m.	Artists of the COC Orchestra; Johannes Debus, piano/conductor*



Keep up to date at coc.ca/Calendar

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stamped envelope (#10 business-size) for each tour that interests you to: **COC Operatours, c/o Merit Travel, 114 - 101 Cherryhill Blvd., London, ON N6H 4S4**

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Coda ^{with} Sondra Radvanovsky

The last piece of music I heard on my iPod was *Pink's greatest hits*

If I'd never become a singer, I would have been *A mortgage broker*

When I have an afternoon off I *stay in my pjs all day*

My typical coffee order is *I'm a green tea kinda gal*

Walking Dead or *Mad Men*? *Downton Abbey*

Pinot grigio or scotch? *Gin & tonic*

Callas or Tebaldi? *Hands down..... Callos*

Cats or dogs? *Dogs*

Beatles or Stones? *The Carpenters*

Ryan Gosling or Benedict Cumberbatch? *Alan Rickman*

My carry-on essentials are *earplugs, iPad, earphones, eyemask, magazines, gluten-free snacks*

The quality I most admire in a friend is *honesty and an ability to deal with an artist's schedule*

Favourite movie: *The Mission*

Favourite chocolate: *anything with nuts*

Favourite lipstick shade: *Diva, by MAC ... of course!*

Favourite cold remedy: *rest and chicken soup*

Favourite concert gown: *my new green Oscar de la Renta*

Favourite comfort food: *french fries... they fix everything!*

Favourite workout: *walking around and exploring a city as well as pilates*

Favourite handbag: *my Louis Vuitton Epi leather bag that my husband bought for me as a "just because" gift.*



Sondra in her favourite gown at the Kennedy Center Honors Concert with her husband, Duncan Lear

Prelude

A gift to our friends

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