

### FOUR SEASONS CENTRE

## THE MAGIC FLUTE GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG

PROGRAM WINTER 2017

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#### A MESSAGE FROM GENERAL DIRECTOR ALEXANDER NEEF

Developing emerging talent is a priority at the COC, going back to 1980 when General Director Lotfi Mansouri established the Ensemble Studio. Since then, more than 220 artists have gone through the program and call the COC home. As the COC continues to grow and cement its reputation as one of the world's foremost opera producers, we want our young artist programs to grow alongside us and continue to expand our efforts to nurture the next generation of opera professionals.

This fall, we launched a new pilot project to establish a residency program providing resources and mentorship opportunities to emerging opera companies. Our first Company-in-Residence is Toronto's Against the Grain Theatre (AtG), an indie collective known for their innovative and accessible productions in unusual venues. This residency program is a formalization of a long-time mentorship that has existed between the COC and AtG. Our hope with this residency program is to put a system in place that helps nurture young companies as they grow and seek to establish a sustainable future. We also welcome our fourth COC Orchestra Academy cohort this winter. Five musicians from the University of Toronto, The Glenn Gould School and, new this year, the Schulich School of Music at McGill University will be mentored by COC Orchestra members, participate in rehearsals, and gain real performance experience by performing at the 2017/2018 season launch event on January 12 and in the pit on opening night of *Götterdämmerung*, as well as in their own concert as part of the COC's Free Concert Series in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre on January 26.



Of course, our Ensemble Studio artists continue to be wonderful ambassadors for the COC and Canada's opera scene as they embark on international careers. They work with some of the best instructors in the business throughout the season and you can witness the results of their rigorous training when they take to the mainstage of the Four Seasons Centre for An Evening with the Ensemble Studio: Music of Handel and Mozart, a special showcase of operatic scenes on February 23.

Canada may have a relatively small population but our pool of operatic talent is limitless. For opera to continue thriving as an art form in this country, we must invest in our young singers, instrumentalists, directors, designers, crew members, and administrators. They are the future of opera and we will continue doing our part, and growing our programs, to ensure that they can form solid foundations for successful careers.

Read more about our training programs on page 27, and our partnership with AtG on page 29.

## THE MAGIC (DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE)

Ambur Braid as the Queen of the Night and Simone Osborne as Pamina in the Ensemble Studio performance of the COC's The Magic Flute, 2011.

A MARTING AND

PRODUCTION SPONSOR



PRODUCTION ORIGINALLY MADE POSSIBLE BY THE CATHERINE AND MAXWELL MEIGHEN FOUNDATION

Opera in two acts • Libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder Edited for the New Mozart Edition (Neue Mozart-Ausgabe) by Gernot Gruber and Alfred Orel Used by arrangement with European American Distributors LLC, Sole US and Canadian agent for Baerenreiter, publisher and copyright owner. First performance: Freihaus-Theater auf der Wieden, Vienna, 1791

#### COC PRODUCTION

Last performed by the COC in 2011 ◆ January 19, 28, 29, February 1, 3, 4, 7, 10, 16, 18, 19, 24, 2017 Sung in German with English SURTITLES™

#### THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

(in order of vocal appearance)

Tamino Andrew Haji<sup>^</sup> Owen McCausland<sup>^\*</sup>

First Lady Aviva Fortunata<sup>^</sup>

Second Lady Emily D'Angelo<sup>+</sup>

Third Lady Lauren Segal^

Papageno Joshua Hopkins Phillip Addis\*

Queen of the Night **Ambur Braid**<sup>^</sup>

Monostatos Michael Colvin<sup>^</sup> Pamina Elena Tsallagova<sup>D</sup> Kirsten MacKinnon<sup>D\*</sup>

First Spirit Sophie Filip-Vicari\*\*

Second Spirit
Ella Farlinger\*\*

Third Spirit Clara Moir\*\*

First Priest Charles Sy<sup>+</sup>

Second Priest Bruno Roy<sup>+</sup>

Sarastro Goran Jurić<sup>D</sup> Matt Boehler\* First Armed Man Owen McCausland<sup>^</sup> Andrew Haji<sup>^\*</sup>

Second Armed Man **Neil Craighead**<sup>^</sup>

The Speaker **Martin Gantner** 

Papagena Jacqueline Woodley<sup>^</sup>

Conductor **Bernard Labadie**<sup>D</sup>

Director Diane Paulus Revival Director Ashlie Corcoran<sup>^</sup>

Assistant Director Rob Kempson

Set and Costume Designer **Myung Hee Cho** 

Lighting Designer Scott Zielinski

Chorus Master Sandra Horst<sup>^</sup>

Stage Manager Stephanie Marrs

SURTITLES<sup>™</sup> Producer Gunta Dreifelds

\*Jan. 29, Feb. 3, 16, 18, 24, 2017

\*\* The First, Second and Third Spirits are members of the Canadian Children's Opera Company

Andrew Haji's performance is generously sponsored by Marjorie and Roy Linden Ambur Braid's performance is generously sponsored by Peter M. Deeb Emily D'Angelo's performance is generously sponsored by Marcia Lewis Brown Charles Sy's performance is generously sponsored by Peter and Hélène Hunt Bruno Roy's performance is generously sponsored by Catherine Fauquier Sandra Horst and the COC Chorus are generously underwritten by Tim and Frances Price

<sup>D</sup> COC Debut <sup>+</sup> Current member of the COC Ensemble Studio <sup>^</sup> Graduate of COC Ensemble Studio Program information is correct at time of printing. All casting is subject to change.

ACT I 70 minutes INTERMISSION 25 minutes ACT II 80 minutes

Performance time is approximately two hours and 55 minutes.

#### NOTES

In creating this production of The Magic Flute-one of the most beloved of all Mozart operas-the creative team has focused on what makes the story so engagingly theatrical for audiences of every generation. We have sought to explore the layers of comedy, fairytale, and myth that come together in live performance. The entire opera has been re-imagined as a play-within-a-play—a performance being created before our eyes by the members of a household and their guests, in celebration of the name day of the opera's heroine, Pamina. It is something out of the world of Shakespearean comedy, where the concepts of the theatre and the stage are presented for what they can reveal to us about our own real-world natures. Pamina and Tamino begin their journey to love and enlightenment as living and breathing actors treading the boards of an outdoor stage.

We have set the action in 1791, the year in which the opera was first performed, against the backdrop of the Enlightenment. The entire play-within-a-play is presented in the open space of a nobleman's garden, itself a place of enchantment and symbolic power during this historical period. As the drama unfolds, the actors leave the theatre behind and continue to enact their story in an elaborate labyrinth that covers the grounds of the estate. The theatricality of their journey is enhanced by the mysteries of the outdoor world beneath the cover of night where they act out the rituals of the drama. All distinctions between fantasy and reality fade away as their pageant lasts through the night until dawn.

For Enlightenment thinkers, journeying through the architectural spaces created by a labyrinth held a metaphorical significance, as well as an aesthetic appeal. The opera references the rites and rituals of the Freemasons, the Enlightenment society in which Mozart and the librettist Emanuel Schikaneder were lodge brothers. In Masonry, a journey through a maze symbolized the passage from death to re-birth, as well as the cyclical progression from night to day. In our production, especially important is the journey of the heroine Pamina, whose admission to the Temple of Wisdom and participation in the trials by fire and water is essential to the outcome, for only in the union of the male and female do the characters successfully pass through the trials. In this complex world of imagination, we hope The Magic Flute will become a new living experience for every member of our audience as well.

#### Diane Paulus, director

(from the COC's 2011 house program)



#### SYNOPSIS

#### ACT I

Prince Tamino is pursued by a serpent. He collapses and is saved by Three Ladies who slay the serpent and leave to tell their queen of his arrival in their land. Tamino revives as Papageno, a bird catcher, enters. When Papageno claims responsibility for slaying the serpent, the Three Ladies reappear and padlock his mouth as punishment for lying. They give Tamino a portrait of a young woman, with whom Tamino falls immediately in love. She is Pamina, the Queen of the Night's daughter, and captive of Sarastro. The Queen herself appears and tells Tamino that if he rescues her daughter, Pamina will be his forever. The Three Ladies remove Papageno's padlock, giving him a set of magic chimes with instructions to accompany Tamino. The Ladies give Tamino a magic flute which will protect him from danger. Three Spirits guide Tamino and Papageno on their journey.

In Sarastro's palace Pamina is pursued by the lustful slave Monostatos. Papageno saves her and tells Pamina that her mother has sent a handsome prince to rescue her, one who is already in love with her. Pamina is overjoyed and together they reflect on the importance of love.

The Three Spirits bring Tamino to the Temples of Wisdom, Reason and Nature. The Speaker enters from the Temple of Wisdom and informs him that the Queen of the Night is the villain, not Sarastro, as he will understand when he enters the temple. He leaves in search of Papageno, who, with the help of his magic chimes, saves Pamina once more from Monostatos. Sarastro enters and tells Pamina he cannot let her return to her mother. Tamino is brought in and he and Pamina joyfully meet at last. Tamino and Papageno prepare to be tested for admittance to the brotherhood.

#### INTERMISSION

#### ACT II

Near the temple Sarastro leads a prayer to Isis and Osiris, to assist Pamina and Tamino.

Tamino and Papageno begin the first test, during which they must remain silent. The Three Ladies try to tempt them to talk, only succeeding with Papageno.

Pamina is saved from Monostatos with the appearance of the Queen of the Night who demands that her daughter kill Sarastro. Alone, she is once again accosted by Monostatos, but Sarastro enters and chases the slave away. Sarastro comforts Pamina, telling her that love, not vengeance, lives in the walls of the Temple.

In the Temple a hooded crone appears to Papageno, claiming that she is his sweetheart. She disappears and the Three Spirits appear, returning the magic flute and chimes to Tamino and Papageno. Pamina enters but Tamino will not speak to her, leaving her heartbroken.

In the inner sanctum of the temple, Sarastro calls for Tamino and Pamina to be brought forth. Tamino has two more trials to go, the most dangerous ones.

The old crone reappears to Papageno. He tells her he'd rather have her than nothing. She removes her disguise, revealing a beautiful young woman. She's immediately whisked away, as Papageno is still unworthy of her.

Pamina is prevented from taking her life by the Three Spirits and is reunited joyfully with Tamino, in time to take his last two trials with him, those of fire and water. They emerge triumphant, earning admission to the order as initiates.

The Three Spirits prevent Papageno from taking his own life, reminding him to play his chimes. Papagena appears and the two lovers are together at last.

The Queen of the Night attempts to seize power from Sarastro but is defeated. All celebrate the triumph of Tamino and Pamina.

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Lisa DiMaria and Rodion Pogosov as Papagena and Papageno in the 2011 production of The Magic Flute.

### JOIN US FOR OPERA INSIGHTS

**CO** 365

**Opera Insights** features big conversations and interactive events that take participants inside the operas of the COC's 2016/2017 season.

OPERA TRIVIA! Thursday, January 26, 7-9 p.m.

NOTE SPECIAL VENUE: Fifth Pubhouse, 221 Richmond St. W.

Team up with fellow opera geeks and test your opera knowledge over a pint in a round of opera trivia. Trivia master **Russel Harder** of **Trivia Club!** hosts this gameshow-inspired quiz night. OPERA CHORUS SING-ALONG Thursday, February 9, 7-8:30 p.m.

Education Centre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W.

A unique opportunity to sing some of opera's most popular choruses under the expert baton of COC Chorus Master **Sandra Horst**. All levels of singers are welcome!

#### RESERVE YOUR PLACE AT THESE FREE EVENTS AT COC.Ca/Operalnsights

#### CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY ORCHESTRA

#### VIOLIN I

Marie Bérard, Concertmaster The Concertmaster's chair has been endowed in perpetuity by Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Aaron Schwebel, Associate Concertmaster Jamie Kruspe, Assistant Concertmaster Anne Armstrong Sandra Baron Bethany Bergman Nancy Kershaw Dominique Laplante Yakov Lerner Jayne Maddison Neria Mayer

#### VIOLIN II

Paul Zevenhuizen, Principal Csaba Koczó, Assistant Principal James Aylesworth Elizabeth Johnston Dominique Laplante Jayne Maddison Aya Miyagawa Louise Tardif (leave of absence) Marianne Urke Joanna Zabrowarna

#### VIOLA

Keith Hamm, Principal Joshua Greenlaw, Assistant Principal Carolyn Blackwell\* Catherine Gray Sheila Jaffé **Beverley Spotton** Yosef Tamir

#### CELLO

Bryan Epperson, Principal (leave of absence) Alastair Eng, Associate Principal, Acting Principal Paul Widner, Assistant Principal Maurizio Baccante, Acting Assistant Principal Peter Cosbev\* Olga Laktionova (leave of absence) Elaine Thompson

#### BASS

Alan Molitz, Principal (leave of absence) Tony Flynt, Acting Principal\* Robert Speer, Assistant Principal Tom Hazlitt Paul Langley

FLUTE Douglas Stewart, Principal Shelley Brown

PICCOLO Shelley Brown

OBOE Mark Rogers, Principal Lesley Young

CLARINET James T. Shields, Principal (leave of absence)

CLARINET AND BASSET HORN Dominic Desautels, Acting Principal Colleen Cook

BASSOON Eric Hall, Principal Elizabeth Gowen (leave of absence) William Cannaway\*

#### HORN Mikhailo Babiak, Principal

Gary Pattison TRUMPET

Alper Çoker, Acting Principal\* Robert Weymouth

#### CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY CHORUS

#### SOPRANOS

Lindsay Barrett Andrea Cerswell Margaret Evans llona Karan Alexandra Lennox-Pomeroy Ingrid Martin Eve Rachel McLeod Jennifer Robinson Teresa van der Hoeven Ilana Zarankin

#### **MEZZO-SOPRANOS**

Marianne Bindig Susan Black Sandra Boyes Wendy Hatala Foley Erica Iris Huang Lilian Kilianski Kathryn Knapp Anne McWatt Karen Olinyk Marianne Sasso

#### TENORS

Vanya Abrahams Stephen Bell Taras Chmil Sam Chung Stephen Erickson John Kriter Jason Lamont James Leatch Stephen McClare Eric Olsen

#### TROMBONE Charles Benaroya, Principal Ian Cowie

BASS TROMBONE Herbert Poole

TIMPANI Michael Perry, Principal

PERCUSSION Trevor Tureski, Principal

KEYBOARD GLOCKENSPIEL Michael Shannon

.....

MUSIC LIBRARIAN Wayne Vogan

ASSISTANT MUSIC LIBRARIAN Ondrej Golias

STAGE LIBRARIAN Paul Langley

#### PERSONNEL MANAGER lan Cowie

\*extra musician

#### **BARITONES/BASSES**

Kenneth Baker James Baldwin Jesse Clark Bruno Cormier Michael Downie Jason Nedecky Michael Sproule Jan Vaculik Gene Wu Michael York

#### MUSIC STAFF

Rachel Andrist (Head Coach) Michael Shannon Stéphane Mayer (Ensemble Studio Intern Coach)

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR Ingmar Beck

#### GERMAN DICTION COACH Adreana Braun

#### ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS Lesley Abarquez

Michael Barrs

APPRENTICE STAGE MANAGER Alice Ferrevra

ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER Davida Tkach Chris Malkowski

#### UNDERSTUDIES

Second Lady Third Lady Monostatos First Spirit Second Spirit Third Spirit First Priest Second Priest First Armed Man

Second Armed Man

Lauren Eberwein Lindsay Ammann John Kriter Ella Farlinger\*\* Maddy Ringo-Stauble\*\* Nathan Niang\*' Aaron Sheppard Jan Vaculik Charles Sv Aaron Sheppard Michael Uloth Neil Craighead Danika Lorèn

\*\* The First, Second and Third Spirits are members of the Canadian Children's Opera Company

ACTOR Sung Chung

The Speaker Papagena

### **FLUTE FLASHBACK** 65 YEARS OF MAGIC AT THE COC

**BY KRISTIN McKINNON** 

This season marks the 65th anniversary of the COC's very first presentation of *The Magic Flute*. Since 1952, the COC has presented at least seven productions of Mozart's final and most popular opera, including an exclusive Ensemble Studio production and a school tour adaptation for young people. Join us for a trip down memory lane as we revisit some of the COC's most memorable *Magic Flute* moments.

### 1952

The COC's first ever production of *The Magic Flute* took place in February 1952 at the Royal Alexandra Theatre as part of the company's third season, back when it was known as the Opera Festival Association of Toronto. Directed by the COC's co-founder and, later, artistic director Herman Geiger-Torel, the opera was sung in English and starred Mary Morrison as Pamina, Robert Price as Tamino, and Lois Marshall as the Queen of the Night. Don Garrard, one of the high priests, would also go on to enjoy an international career.

#### 1977

Right: the Three Ladies, played by (left to right) Jean MacPhail, Carol Anne Curry and Claudette Leblanc, were an imposing presence in the COC's 1977 production directed by Bliss Herbert.

Far right: Peter Barcza's Papageno in 1977 was especially bird-like, while Patricia Wells' Pamina radiated 1970s glamour.



### FLUTE MEMORIES OF THE 2017 CAST

Our cast shared some of their favourite memories of *The Magic Flute* and the characters they play. To read more of their thoughts, visit **coc.ca/Parlando**.

**ANDREW HAJI** (Tamino) The first time I saw *The Magic Flute* was back in 2011 here at the COC. Watching this incredible—and incredibly charming—production made me even more excited to be pursuing opera as a career. Now, to be able to perform in that very same production, I couldn't be more thrilled! *The Magic Flute* transports the audience into a fantasy world, where anything is possible. It's sort of like the *Harry Potter* series, in that it gives your mind the license to imagine and to dream. **ELENA TSALLAGOVA** (Pamina)

I was 12 when I first heard *The Magic Flute*. I wasn't familiar with opera and had never been to one before. My parents are musicians and I suppose they knew the best way to introduce a child to the complex art form of opera. I saw my first opera on DVD and it was a famous recording from the Met in 1991, with Kathleen Battle singing Pamina and James Levine conducting.

#### 1982

Celebrated illustrator Maurice Sendak, best known for the classic children's story *Where the Wild Things Are*, co-created the whimsical set and costume designs for the COC's 1982 production. This production also marked Ben Heppner's COC debut, then a member of the Ensemble Studio, as the First Armed Man. Right: Claudia Cummings as the Queen of the Night and Costanza Cuccaro as Pamina. Far right: Theodore Baerg as Papageno with Shawna Farrell as Papagena and the Three Spirits.





This COC production was directed by Lotfi Mansouri, the company's thengeneral director, with majestic sets and costumes designed by Thierry Bosquet.

Continued on next page

I remember I watched it breathless and now I can listen to *Flute* with no less great anticipation—each time I discover something new.

**KIRSTEN MACKINNON** (Pamina) *The Magic Flute* was my very first opera. I sang one of the three spirits with Vancouver Opera when I was 10 years old and had a blast! I can't believe what a dream it is that the very next time I get to perform *The Magic Flute*, it's with the COC and I'm now singing Pamina. *Flute* is a favourite not only because of the music. The characters really make the show—I'd go for Papageno alone. He can be such a quirky weirdo and I completely dig it!

**AMBUR BRAID** (The Queen of the Night) I first heard some of *The Magic Flute* in the movie *Amadeus* and it was

captivating. Villains are appealing and the Queen of the Night is an incredible lady. Yes, she has some pretty famous high notes, but she's a woman who is obsessed with power and that can be pretty ugly. We all have that desire inside of us, so it's nice to play the dark characters to keep it in check. Mwa ha ha!

Continued on next page

### 1993

This 1993 incarnation, directed by Martha Clarke, proved to be one of the COC's more polarizing productions, but brought together two long-time COC favourites, then at the beginning of their careers: tenor Michael Schade and baritone Russell Braun (at far left), playing Tamino and Papageno. Also pictured are (l-r) Tanya Parrish, Norine Burgess and Monica Whicher as the Three Ladies, and Valerie Gonzalez (background) as Papagena.



#### 2005

The 2005 Ensemble Studio production, which commemorated the 25th anniversary of the prestigious training program, got a little wild with a lion-taming Tamino, played by tenor Victor Micallef (now one of the three "Tenors"). At the time, this was the program's largest production to-date. It was directed by Andrew Porter, and performed in the MacMillan Theatre at the University of Toronto.



#### JOSHUA HOPKINS (Papageno)

The first time I saw *The Magic Flute* I was transported. It was only the third live opera I had ever seen and I was lucky enough to watch my wife (then girlfriend) sing Second Lady in a Toronto-based young artist summer program. The production was set in, of all things, the *Star Trek* universe. Papageno's character was recast as Data, from the series *Star Trek: The*  *Next Generation,* which I watched religiously growing up. I thought the concept really worked!

**PHILLIP ADDIS** (Papageno) I believe my first experience of *The Magic Flute* was the Ingmar Bergman film, probably on PBS. The first live performance I saw would have been by Opera Atelier, here in Toronto. In both cases, the tone of the storytelling acknowledged the humanity behind the theatrics. It's hard to resist genius that doesn't take itself too seriously. I love how simply Papageno wants to live his life, and how honest he is about his hopes and desires. I think this is the life Mozart himself wished he could have had.

**GORAN JURIĆ** (Sarastro) I first saw *The Magic Flute* performed at the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb while I was still in high school. I'm so sad that the Queen of the Night and Sarastro don't have a *duetto*. Can

### 2011

It would be 18 years before the COC staged *The Magic Flute* on the mainstage again, with Michael Schade (below, top) returning to reprise the role of Tamino in the company's new production by Diane Paulus, revived this season. It was the first *Flute* to grace the Four Seasons Centre stage. Below, bottom: Isabel Bayrakdarian was Pamina and Mikhail Petrenko was Sarastro.





Kristin McKinnon is the COC's publicist and publications co-ordinator.

you imagine what it would be like to listen to the two most extreme human voices, a coloratura soprano and a dark bass, clashing in a musical way? I hope one day some composer will add that number to this opera and I hope Wolfgang won't be mad.

**MATT BOEHLER** (Sarastro) The first time I heard the opera was during my years as a theatre major in undergrad. I was cast as Sarastro in my college's opera production that year, and, aside from beginning to work on the arias with my voice teacher, I hadn't listened to it before in its entirety. I was immediately drawn in by its whimsical sense of humor. Honestly, singing all of those low notes is just great fun!



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### From boy band to *Bohème*...

## GET TO KNOW

What is your go to song for karaoke? "Circle of Life" from *The Lion King* 

What is the best advice you've been given? Follow your heart

If you weren't an opera singer, you would be...? An IT consultant

What is your dream operatic role, regardless of voice type? • Rodolfo from *La Bohème* 

What book have you read again and again? Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone

iPhone or Android? iPhone up until now, but Android is growing on me!

You can only watch one movie/TV show for the rest of your life. What movie/TV show would that be? Star Trek: The Next Generation

If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go? New Zealand

Sequels happen all the time in movies. What sequel to an opera would you like to see happen? The Marriage of Figaro II: Basilio's Revenge

Who are three people, alive or dead or fictional, that you would like to have dinner with? Luciano Pavarotti, Steve Jobs, and Captain Jean-Luc Picard

What is the farthest you have been from home? Athens, Greece

What's your favorite sports team? Any Toronto team, as long as they're winning.

Any pre-performance or post-performance rituals? Rest, water, and deep breathing.

If you were in a boy band, what would the band's name be? \*\*\*\*\*\* I was in a boy band! We called ourselves "Shades of Black." Don't ask me why.

What is one thing people would be surprised to know about you? I have webbed toes.

What would be the title of your autobiography? A Pirate's Life for Me—Living on the High Cs

What's something that you have always wanted to try but you've been too scared to do? Eating a durian.

What is one piece of advice for Tamino? Start learning how to play the flute!



In 2015 Andrew got to sing his dream role at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis!



## Apassion for the arts

KPMG is a longstanding supporter of the Canadian Opera Company, and we are pleased to be the Production Sponsor of *The Magic Flute*.

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## TTERDA (THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS)

John Fanning as Gunther, Joni Henson as Gutrune and Mats Almgren as Hagen in the COC's 2006 production of Götterdämmerung, part of the company's first complete Ring Cycle, the first staged production in the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts in September that year. The Four Seasons Centre is the first opera house to mount the Ring Cycle as its first production since the cycle had its world premiere at Bayreuth in 1876.

## BY RICHARD WAGNER

PRODUCTION ORIGINALLY MADE POSSIBLE BY KOLTER COMMUNITIES

Opera in a prologue and three acts • Libretto by Richard Wagner First performance: Festspiel, Bayreuth, as part of the Ring Cycle, August 17, 1876

#### COC PRODUCTION

Last performed by the COC in 2006 • February 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 25, 2017 Sung in German with English SURTITLES™

#### THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

(in order of vocal appearance)

First Norn/Flosshilde Lindsay Ammann

Second Norn/Waltraute Karen Cargill

Third Norn/Gutrune Ileana Montalbetti^

Brünnhilde **Christine Goerke** 

Sieafried Andreas Schager<sup>D</sup>

Gunther **Martin Gantner**  Hagen Ain Anger<sup>D</sup>

Alberich **Robert Pomakov** 

Woglinde Danika Lorèn<sup>D†</sup>

Wellgunde Lauren Eberwein<sup>D†</sup>

Conductor **Johannes Debus** 

Director **Tim Albery**  Assistant Director **Marilyn Gronsdal** 

Set and Costume Designer Michael Levine

Lighting Designer **David Finn** 

Choreographer Patti Powell

Chorus Master Sandra Horst^

Stage Manager **Kate Porter** 

SURTITLES<sup>™</sup> Producer Gunta Dreifelds

Johannes Debus is generously underwritten by George and Kathy Dembroski Andreas Schager's performance is generously sponsored by Kristine Vikmanis and Denton Creighton Ain Anger's performance is generously sponsored by an anonymous donor Christine Goerke's performance is generously sponsored by Jack Whiteside Danika Lorèn's performance is generously sponsored by COVC Jean A. Chalmers Award Lauren Eberwein's performance is generously sponsored by Brian Wilks, Marjorie and Roy Linden Sandra Horst and the COC Chorus are generously underwritten by Tim and Frances Price

<sup>D</sup> COC Debut <sup>+</sup> Current member of the COC Ensemble Studio <sup>^</sup> Graduate of COC Ensemble Studio Program information is correct at time of printing. All casting is subject to change.

PROLOGUE AND ACT I 120 minutes INTERMISSION 35 minutes ACT II 60 minutes INTERMISSION 25 minutes ACT III 80 minutes

Performance time is approximately five hours and 20 minutes.

#### NOTES

With *Götterdämmerung*, the fourth part of the *Ring Cycle*, all the curses attached to the ring come to fruition. Siegfried dies at the hand of Alberich's son, Hagen, and Brünnhilde goes to her death as the reign of Wotan and his fellow gods comes to an end in the flames of Valhalla. The ring itself returns to the Rhinemaidens. It has been a long journey since the beginning of *Das Rheingold*, when Alberich stole the gold from the Rhinemaidens, out of which he fashioned the ring.

In *Götterdämmerung*, the next generation repeats all the errors of greed and lust for power committed by their parents. And the one oasis of real love, between Siegfried and Brünnhilde, is shattered by his naivety in the face of Hagen's relentless pursuit of vengeance and of the ring.

As the generations have gone by, we have travelled a century or more from the late-19th century world of Das Rheingold, hiding its hypocrisies behind a screen of patriarchal, empire-building certainty, to the more overt, mafia-like duplicity, greed, and amorality of the modern corporate world. Gunther and his sister Gutrune, with their half-brother Hagen acting as their malign "consigliere," run an empire that demands the unthinking loyalty of their people. Yet in their private lives they are as unhappy and dysfunctional as all the preceding families of the *Ring* have been; these siblings are desperate for love but unaware that it cannot be found by bribes and deception. And it is from Gunther and Gutrune's pathetic attempt to buy for themselves the love of Brünnhilde and Siegfried that the spiral of descent begins to the final destruction of everything that Wotan had wanted to achieve.

#### Tim Albery, director

#### SYNOPSIS

#### PRELUDE

Three Norns spin the Rope of Fate, which binds the past, present and future. They recall the time when a young Wotan visited the World Ash Tree, seeking wisdom from the well beneath the tree. He paid with the loss of an eye, and took as his reward a spear broken from the tree itself, upon which he inscribed his contract with nature. When the spear shattered, the well dried up and the tree withered and died. Wotan's warriors have chopped down the tree and gathered the wood around Valhalla. Wotan will soon set the world aflame. As they wonder what will happen next, the rope frays and breaks. Their power gone, they descend into the earth in search of their mother, the earth goddess Erda. As dawn breaks, Siegfried sets out from his home in search of adventure. Brünnhilde bids him a loving farewell. As he departs, Siegfried gives Brünnhilde the ring.

#### ACT I

Scene i: In the Hall of the Gibichungs, where Gunther and his sister Gutrune rule, Gunther asks for advice from his half-brother Hagen, the illegitimate son of Alberich. Both Gunther and his sister are unmarried, and unsure of where to find suitable matches. Hagen suggests Brünnhilde for Gunther and Siegfried for Gutrune. He tells of Siegfried's great feats and convinces the siblings to seduce him into marriage with a magical potion that will make him forget other women and fall in love with Gutrune. Then it will be easy to persuade him to help persuade Brünnhilde to marry Gunther.



On his journey Siegfried arrives at Gibichung Hall and the plan is put into motion.

Scene ii: Siegfried introduces himself to the Gibichungs, and shows them his sword, Nothung, and the magic helmet, the Tarnhelm. The ring, he says, is with Brünnhilde. Gutrune hands Siegfried the magic drink. As he drinks it, he forgets Brünnhilde entirely and falls in love with Gutrune. Siegfried volunteers to help Gunther find a wife. Gunther suggests they seek out Brünnhilde, and Siegfried agrees. They swear a bond of blood-brotherhood, and drink a toast to their new friendship. As they depart, Hagen congratulates himself on the plan he has set in motion, believing it will allow him to recover the ring that Wotan stole from his father.

Scene *iii*: Brünnhilde is visited by her sister, the Valkyrie Waltraute, who tells her that Wotan has been quite lost since he imprisoned Brünnhilde in the ring of fire. He no longer sends the Valkyries to battle; he no longer seeks to rule the gods. He sits on his throne, clutching his shattered spear. Waltraute explains that the only thing that can possibly save the gods now is the return of the ring to the Rhinemaidens. Brünnhilde refuses to part with it, and Waltraute leaves in despair. As evening falls, Siegfried returns, but transformed by the Tarnhelm into Gunther. This false Gunther tears the ring from Brünnhilde's finger and claims her as his bride.

#### INTERMISSION

#### ACT II

*Scene i:* Hagen is haunted by the spirit of his father— Alberich the Nibelung. Hagen promises to obtain the ring from Siegfried, so that he and his father can rule the world together.

*Scene ii:* Siegfried brings Hagen the welcome news that Brünnhilde will now be Gunther's bride. Hagen tells Gutrune to prepare for a double wedding.

*Scene iii:* Hagen announces the weddings to the men of Gibichung and orders a celebration.

Scene iv: Gunther leads Brünnhilde into the hall, and introduces her to his sister and to Siegfried. Brünnhilde reacts violently upon seeing Siegfried, astonished that he has forgotten her. She sees the ring on his hand and realizes it was he who came to her, not Gunther. She tells the packed hall that she has slept with Siegfried. He denies it, swearing on Hagen's spear that he is innocent and that the spear should kill him if he is lying.

*Scene v:* Left alone with Gunther and Hagen, and believing herself betrayed, Brünnhilde succumbs to Hagen's guile and reveals Siegfried's only vulnerability—a blow to his back can kill him. Gunther, believing Siegfried slept with Brünnhilde while in disguise, joins in Hagen's plan to murder him. Hagen suggests they make it look like a hunting accident. As the three contemplate the hero's downfall, Siegfried and Gutrune's wedding procession passes by.

#### INTERMISSION

#### ACT III

Scene i: The Rhinemaidens Woglinde, Wellgunde and Flosshilde, lament the loss of their gold. Siegfried, out hunting with Hagen and the Gibichung men, comes across them. The Rhinemaidens attempt to seduce Siegfried into handing over the ring, but without success. They tell him the ring is cursed, that he will die later that same day if he does not hand it over, but Siegfried doesn't believe them. The Rhinemaidens go in search of Brünnhilde as the hunting party arrives.

Scene ii: The men ask Siegfried about his exploits. Is it true he understands the birds' songs? He says he no longer listens to the forest birds. Then he tells the story of his childhood and his fight with the dragon, Fafner. Hagen adds a herb to Siegfried's drink, that restores his memory, then asks him about what happened after he killed the dragon. Siegfried tells an astonished Gunther about his rescue of Brünnhilde from the ring of flames, and their passionate love for each other. Hagen stabs Siegfried in the back. Siegfried begs Brünnhilde's forgiveness and dies. Above, two ravens take flight, returning to Wotan to tell him the end has come.

Scene iii: Gutrune awaits the return of her husband and dreads meeting up with Brünnhilde, whose presence haunts her. Hagen returns followed by a funeral procession. Hagen tells her that Siegfried is dead, killed by a bear. Through her grief, Gutrune realizes Hagen has lied, and accuses her brother Gunther of murder. Hagen confesses to the murder, but says he did it in righteousness. He attempts to take the ring from Siegfried's finger, but Gunther stops him, claiming the ring is rightfully Gutrune's. Challenging Gunther to a fight, Hagen kills him. He reaches once again for the ring, but this time Brünnhilde stops him. She has learned everything from the Rhinemaidens, and tells Gutrune the truth about her relationship with Siegfried. Shamed, Gutrune curses Hagen. Brünnhilde orders the people to prepare a funeral pyre for Siegfried. She removes the ring from his finger and places it on her own; she lights the pyre and throws herself upon it. The Rhine overflows its banks; the Rhinemaidens reclaim the ring and drag Hagen beneath the waves. Flames consume Valhalla.

#### CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY ORCHESTRA

#### VIOLIN I

Marie Bérard, *Concertmaster* The Concertmaster's chair has been endowed in perpetuity by Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Aaron Schwebel, *Associate Concertmaster* Jamie Kruspe, *Assistant Concertmaster* Anne Armstrong Sandra Baron Bethany Bergman Hiroko Kagawa\* Nancy Kershaw Dominique Laplante

Yakov Lerner Renée London\* Jayne Maddison Neria Mayer Aya Miyagawa Jung Tsai\*\*

#### VIOLIN II

Paul Zevenhuizen, Principal Csaba Koczó, Assistant Principal James Aylesworth Jennie Baccante\* Christine Chesebrough\* Terri Croft\* Laura D'Angelo\* Heng-Han Hou\*\* Corey Gemmell\* Elizabeth Johnston Clara Lee\* Lynn Kuo\* Alexei Pankratov\* Louise Tardif Marianne Urke (leave of absence) Joanna Zabrowarna

#### VIOLA

Keith Hamm, Principal Joshua Greenlaw, Assistant Principal Carolyn Blackwell\* Madlen Breckbill\*\* Catherine Gray Emily Eng\* Ethan Filner\* Sheila Jaffé Shannon Knights\* Rory McLeod\* Nicholaos Papadakis\* Angela Rudden\* Beverley Spotton (leave of absence) Yosef Tamir

#### CELLO

Bryan Epperson, Principal Alastair Eng, Associate Principal Paul Widner, Assistant Principal Maurizio Baccante Naomi Barron\* James Churchill\*\* Drew Comstock\* Peter Cosbey\* Bryan Holt\* Olga Laktionova (leave of absence) Marianne Pack\* Elaine Thompson

#### BASS

Alan Molitz, *Principal* (leave of absence) Tony Flynt, *Acting Principal*\* Robert Speer, *Assistant Principal* Nick Davis\* Jesse Dietschi\*\* Tom Hazlitt Paul Langley Eric Lee\* Reuven Rothman\* Robert Wolanski\*

#### FLUTE

Douglas Stewart, *Principal* Leslie Newman\* Maria Pelletier\*

PICCOLO Shelley Brown

#### OBOE

Mark Rogers, *Principal* Jasper Hitchcock\* Lief Mosbaugh\* ENGLISH HORN Lesley Young

#### CLARINET

James T. Shields, *Principal* (leave of absence) Dominic Desautels, *Acting Principal*\* James Ormston\* Michele Verheul\*

BASS CLARINET Colleen Cook

#### BASSOON

Eric Hall, *Principal* Elizabeth Gowen (leave of absence) William Cannaway \* Lisa Chisolm\*

#### HORN

Mikhailo Babiak, Principal Sarah Sutherland, Assistant Principal\* Janet Anderson Roslyn Black\* Bardhyl Gjevori Gary Pattison David Quackenbush\* Micajah Sturgess\* Scott Wevers\*

#### WAGNER TUBAS

Roslyn Black\* Bardhyl Gjevori Gary Pattison David Quackenbush\*

#### **TRUMPET** Alper Çoker, *Acting Principal*\* Michael Fedyshyn\*

BASS TRUMPET David Pell\*

Robert Weymouth

TROMBONE Charles Benaroya, *Principal* Ian Cowie

#### BASS TROMBONE Megan Hodge\* Herbert Poole

CONTRABASS TROMBONE Megan Hodge\*

TUBA Scott Irvine, *Principal* 

**TIMPANI** Michael Perry, *Principal* Trevor Tureski

#### PERCUSSION

Trevor Tureski, *Principal* Chung Ling Lo\* Ryan Scott\*

#### HARP Sarah Davidson, *Principal* Sanya Eng\*

**STIERHORNS** lan Cowie Herbert Poole

#### BACKSTAGE HORNS Michele Gagnon\* Aiden Kleer\*

Aiden Kleer\* Sarah Sutherland\*

MUSIC LIBRARIAN Wayne Vogan

ASSISTANT MUSIC LIBRARIAN Ondrej Golias

STAGE LIBRARIAN Paul Langley

#### PERSONNEL MANAGER lan Cowie

 extra musician
 \*\* Orchestra Academy member, performing opening night only

#### CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY CHORUS

#### SOPRANOS

Lindsay Barrett Margaret Evans Ingrid Martin Jennifer Robinson Teresa van der Hoeven

#### MEZZO-SOPRANOS Sandra Boyes

Wendy Hatala Foley Lilian Kilianski Anne McWatt Karen Olinyk

#### TENORS

Vanya Abrahams Tonatiuh Abrego Fabian Arciniegas Stephen Bell Taras Chmil Sam Chung Stephen Erickson William Ford Rvan Harper Patrick Jang John Kriter Jason Lamont James Leatch Stephen McClare Derrick Paul Miller Eric Olsen Conrad Siebert Joshua Wales

#### BARITONES/BASSES

Grant Allert Kenneth Baker James Baldwin Peter Barnes Bradley Christensen Sung Chung Jesse Clark Bruno Cormier Michael Downie John Holland Keith Lam Olivier Laquerre Constantine Meglis Jason Nedecky Michael Sproule Michael Uloth Jan Vaculik Peter Wiens Marcus Wilson Dylan Wright Gene Wu Michael York

MUSIC STAFF Eric Weimer (*Head of Music Preparation*) Anne Larlee Hyejin Kwon (*Ensemble Studio Intern Coach*)

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR Derek Bate

GERMAN DICTION COACH Adreana Braun ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS Joanna Barrotta Tiffany Fraser

ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNERS Davida Tkach Chris Malkowski

#### UNDERSTUDIES

Gutrune	Samantha Pickett
	Aviva Fortunata
First Norn	Megan Quick
Second Norn	Lauren Eberwein
Third Norn	Samantha Pickett
	Aviva Fortunata
Hagen	Simon Wilding
Woglinde	Jacqueline Woodley
Wellgunde	Emily D'Angelo

Susan Bullock as Brünnhilde and Christian Franz as Siegfried in the COC's 2006 production.



### **GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG** AND THE TWILIGHT OF OUR IGNORANCE

#### BY STEPHAN BONFIELD

When we last left off in *Siegfried*, love had triumphed, and so apparently, had Wagner's fans who had successfully coerced the notoriously idealistic composer into writing the one type of music he despised more than any other—a love duet.

But it is that love, tenuous and tentative at best, that articulates most clearly the central premise of *Götterdämmerung*. If there is one matter upon which humanity is absolutely reliant, it is that love is the most precious gift that graces nearly all our lives. But if love is to succeed, it must be at once as deep in foundational commonalities between its participating partners as it is both broad and secure in the social milieu where it takes root.

Siegfried and Brünnhilde's love for one another carries neither of these crucial ingredients. They live on a rocky outcropping far from the cares of everyday life and know scarcely little of human concerns and much less, tragically, of the possibilities inherent in humanity's darkest side: namely its all-too precarious flirtations with greed and treachery.

Götterdämmerung is Wagner's longest opera in the *Ring Cycle* but in terms of storytelling it is also his simplest. In this, the central story of the epic poem *The Ring of the Nibelung*, the world of the gods is thrown off (apart from one exchange between Waltraute, a Valkyrie who implores Brünnhilde to renounce the ring to save Wotan and the gods), and instead we live inside the human world of the Gibichungs and their leitmotif of stuffy politics. Conversation in Gunther's hall is only concerned with pedestrian matters such as how to consolidate their power along the Rhine by finding strong and suitably attractive mates—Siegfried for his sister, Gutrune, and Brünnhilde for Gunther himself.

And slithering among them, proposing how to make it all possible, is Gunther's ever-treacherous halfbrother Hagen, plotting everyone's downfall so that he can obtain the ring for himself. Although Hagen and Gunther share the same mother. Hagen's father is the dwarf Alberich. who renounced love in order to steal the gold in the opening scene of Das *Rheingold,* the prequel to Wagner's epic cycle, wherein he attempted to wield its measureless power. When Wotan, king of the gods, in turn stole the gold to secure absolute dominion over everything as payment for his heavenly fortress Valhalla, Alberich pronounced a curse that promised destruction to all who come in contact with the ring.

It is that very curse that ultimately dooms the love between Siegfried and Brünnhilde. Torn apart via usury and deceit, both suffer the ultimate displacements from each other: Siegfried is ripped from Brünnhilde by having his memory shrouded (already a problem we saw in *Siegfried*) and Brünnhilde, no longer a god, is torn from Siegfried by being exposed to the ravages of finite time known to all mortals. Brünnhilde is dragged through the darkest of human experiences: betrayal, humiliation, insatiable vengeance and undiluted anger-the very emotions that ultimately steal away the transcendental bliss associated

with godhood. Here lies the true curse of the ring for Brünnhilde. She loses immortality and must experience inexorable death via the same poisonous feelings that caused the ring to be cursed in the first place.

Time is made into an alien and dark phenomenon with the collapse of the World Ash Tree. At the beginning of *Götterdämmerung*, it is revealed that Wotan had whittled the tree down so much that it fractured and broke apart the fate of all to such a degree that the future of the universe could no longer be read by the Norns. In such a world, we lose our own sense of certainty and innocence, and above all, we fall prey to corruption and desire for temporal power as psychological compensation. This is due as much to the curse of the ring as the preternatural insecurities of Wotan, a king of the gods whose hypocrisy drives his quest for absolute unassailability resulting in the destruction of the universe, the very thing he created.

Wagner saw both creation and Wotan, its creator, as flawed; a crack in the cosmos permeating all the way down into the human world. The curse of the ring stood as the outward appearance of an eternally flawed creation that required annihilation in order to be fixed.

But how to undo a curse that binds gods and mortals? The only solution is to awaken to the fact that one cannot, and that the awesome creative power of the entire universe, symbolized in the gold itself, cannot ever be captured single-handedly nor apprehended whole-mindedly by any one being. Indeed, the twilight of the gods



is the realization that such lust to power must be overturned. Power, as Wagner witnessed it in his own time, was inherently self-blinded to the nefariousness of our own defective individual and collective will, just as it is for any would-be gods today, whether they be ancient mytho-poetical characters of the distant past or the many narcissistic political incarnations of the present.

*Götterdämmerung* arguably presents a somewhat nihilistic view of a world gone bad, absolutely corrupted by a will to absolute power. But through all of it, Wagner wished to present a clear message to us: to be redeemed from such a world requires an awakening to self-awareness from the protean dream state found in Siegfried's naturalistic naïveté.

Hence, the awakening of Brünnhilde, and our awakening too, comes through death itself as a purgative act, one of many important tenets found in the Greek tragedies Wagner studied assiduously and emulated devotedly in his music dramas. The premise of Wagner's original title for Götterdämmerung–Siegfrieds Tod (The Death of Siegfried)—becomes prescriptive for redemption through his primary character exponent, Brünnhilde. Wagner pronounced that his *Ring Cycle* was created for Brünnhilde's "glorification," a constitutive means and a proxy for us to contemplate our own mortality within a flawed universe that is not infinite and unassailable at all, but is itself just as subject to the cosmic laws of finitude.

Wagner had trouble ending the *Ring Cycle*, setting at least five different texted versions to different music. Indeed, after he had chosen his ending he was not satisfied with it for a time, but eventually came to believe it to be the best compromise. In its final version, the end of *Götterdämmerung* came to symbolize, in the most glorious of über-Romantic thinking, how we annihilate our own past flaws and begin anew in a future of our own making; what Wagner described as redemption from death via art of the "innermost soul of the world."

Therefore, the *Ring*, with its optimistic ending leitmotif—a transformation of the Brünnhilde "love" leitmotif which began Act I—contains a grand but uncomplicated message: humanity can escape its past instincts, inherited from a flawed creation, and wish for a more hopeful future. But Wagner leaves it for us to decide just how that future will look.

Stephan Bonfield is a frequent speaker at the COC and other opera companies across Canada and is the opera and ballet critic for The Calgary Herald and Edmonton Journal.



Two artists, who have taken this *Ring* journey together over the last three seasons, leave us with unforgettable musical and theatrical memories.

### JOHANNES DEBUS Conductor and COC Music Director

Not only does our audience's journey with Wagner's Ring Cycle come to an end with Götterdämmerung but this will conclude your first time conducting the cycle. What have you discovered about Wagner's music dramas as you've worked through them to their conclusion?

Most people would probably agree that "monumental" is an apt descriptor of Wagner's Ring Cycle. But even if you've encountered this "monumentality" in smaller doses as we have at the COC these past three successive seasons, you will not miss that dimension, either sitting in the audience, playing in the orchestra pit, performing on stage or working backstage. Wagner requires a "monumental" buy-in from everyone involved no matter what role we play in the experience. Yet despite its larger-than-life qualities, the *Ring* captivates me through its clarity of conception, composition and structure. Wagner's great sense for proportion makes the epic length feel humanly measured.

#### If you had to choose the most compelling musical moments in Götterdämmerung, what would they be, and why?

Siegfried's Funeral March and Brünnhilde's Immolation Scene are my obvious choices for the most compelling moments in Götterdämmerung. Hands down: is there anything more ecstatic and mind-blowing than this music?!

#### What are some of the more universal themes treated by Wagner in this story that make it relevant today?

Wagner's *Ring* is rich in manifold universal themes and everlasting human questions. To name a few: the cycle of creation and destruction; the dichotomy of power and powerlessness; self-determination and heteronomy; and the consequences of our own actions. We could also add themes like world order; nature versus civilization; past, present and future. It has lost nothing of its up-to-dateness and relevance.

#### Can you comment on some of the maior casting choices—what can we look forward to with this fantastic team of singers?

With Christine Goerke at the helm of our cast. Toronto should turn into a mecca for die-hard Wagnerites as well as the go-to destination

for all who want to hear some of the world's leading singers in this repertoire. I, for my part, can't wait!

#### This cycle has been a huge achievement for the COC Orchestra-what has the journey been like for them over the past three seasons?

Götterdämmerung marks the conclusion of our *Ring* journey but also coincides with the anniversary of the opening of our magnificent hall 10 years ago. On the program then: Wagner's *Ring*. I'm sure that for those who played in the orchestra 10 years ago, this will be a very special moment to revisit and relive fond memories of that pivotal moment for the company. Likewise, for those who joined the company and its orchestra since then—and I include myself in that number—it will prove to be a memorable and special encounter with Wagner's monumental opus. By revisiting the *Ring* scores, our ensemble builds its collective identity—what I like to call an "orchestral DNA." Wagner discovered and developed what we now view as the "modern" orchestra by exploring its full range of possibilities. He makes you understand better than any other composer what it means to play together as an orchestra.

"Wagner's Ring is rich in manifold universal themes and everlasting human questions. To name a few: the cycle of creation and destruction; the dichotomy of power and powerlessness; self-determination and heteronomy; and the consequences of our own actions." Johannes Debus

### CHRISTINE GOERKE Brünnhilde

#### What distinguishes the Götterdämmerung Brünnhilde vocally from her other two iterations in the Ring Cycle?

The vocal writing for Brünnhilde in Götterdämmerung is the culmination—a compilation—of everything that has gone before. We can hear her youthful glee, but we also hear something from her that we haven't heard before: Wotan's anger. It's something that has been latent within her, the emotional and musical part of the character that has been missing until now.

#### What dramatic challenges are you faced with in this role?

Dramatically, this Brünnhilde is a gift. Every emotion is there, ripe for the picking. People might like to talk about how this is a vocally exhausting role, but it's quite a ride emotionally as well!

#### Do you have a favourite moment for Brünnhilde in this opera-if so, why?

For me, it is when Brünnhilde explains to Waltraute how her punishment has become her reward.

#### What have you learned about Brünnhilde as she (and you) complete this *Ring* journey?

I've learned that art most certainly imitates life (and vice versa!)... Take the gods and magic away from the Ring Cycle and you will find very "human" relationships.

#### What in particular are you most looking forward to about making your debut in this role with the COC **Orchestra and Johannes Debus?**

I am looking forward to ending this incredible journey with the friends with whom this all began.

### JOIN US FOR OPERA INSIGHTS

#### **GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG FROM SCRATCH:** A NOVICE'S GUIDE

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### GIVING THE FUTURE OF OPERA THE REAL EXPERIENCE

**BY JENNIFER PUGSLEY** 

Six finalists and Johannes Debus (far right) congratulate Simone McIntosh (second from right) on her First Prize win at Centre Stage, 2016.

Since 1980, with the formation of the Ensemble Studio, the Canadian Opera Company has invested in fostering operatic talent. The bulk of those efforts have focused on the training of singers and opera coaches, but in recent years, the scope of the COC's training efforts has broadened to include instrumentalists through the Orchestra Academy, created in 2014, and emerging opera companies with the Company-in-Residence initiative, launched this past fall with indie opera collective Against the Grain Theatre as the inaugural participant.

"What we've learned from all these programs is just how great the need really is. To work in opera, at the level of a company like the COC, on par with the major international opera companies, it's essential to have handson experience," asserts Nina Draganić, Director of the COC Ensemble Studio and Orchestra Academy.

It's in that spirit the COC inches closer to realizing an ambitious future for an all-encompassing training program that includes the various branches of young artists that come through the world of opera. The hope in the short-term is to keep learning from the piloted programs formulated to date while securing a stable source of funding so that in the long-term the COC can not only make all the current projects permanent but expand its training efforts.

"Apprenticeships are standard fare in so many professional careers medicine, law, engineering—why not opera?" points out Nina. "What we can offer as a company is to build a more sustainable infrastructure for the art form."

Nurturing Canada's future operatic singing talent is an area in which the COC already plays a visible role, especially since taking its annual Ensemble Studio auditions public through a competitive vocal showcase in 2011 that swiftly grew in scale to anchor the COC's Centre Stage fundraising gala. On November 3, seven finalists were selected from a pool of 119 applicants for the 2017/2018 Ensemble Studio to perform in the Ensemble Studio Competition at Centre Stage. It was a night that focused a spotlight on some of the country's best and brightest young stars.

Cash prizes ranging in value from \$1,500 to \$5,000 were presented, but the bigger and, some would say, more coveted reward was the offer of a spot in the 2017/2018 Ensemble Studio, two of which were made: to mezzo-soprano Simone McIntosh of Vancouver, who took home First Prize (the Chair's Prize), and baritone Samuel Chan of Calgary, who won Second Prize.

"What's really impressive about Simone as an artist is her willingness to take risks. She's a fearless performer," shares Nina. "Samuel impressed us from the first words he sang, even in his audition DVD. He has an incredible artistic sensitivity and connection to text."

"Both of them, across the board, were so responsive. Everything you said to them in the sessions leading up to the actual competition just fell on fertile soil and blossomed."

Simone and Samuel, as well as incoming pianist/coach Rachael Kerr, are slated to join the Ensemble Studio training program next fall and may one day be counted among the program's illustrious graduates. But there's no tenor next season?

"People often ask why we don't take two tenors, two sopranos, two mezzos, two baritones, etc., as many young artist programs do. It would certainly make our lives much easier on so many levels," says Nina with a rueful grin. "But that's not our priority. Our priority is to take the artists we feel have the most potential, however that may play out."

On January 8, 2017, the COC welcomed a new class of student musicians to the 2017 Orchestra Academy: violinists Jung Tsai from the Schulich School of Music at McGill University and Heng-Han Hou from the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music, as well as violist Madlen Breckbill, cellist James Churchill, and bassist Jesse Dietschi from The Glenn Gould School at the Royal Conservatory of Music. The five

players take part in an intensive threeweek training program that features, among other opportunities, playing opening night of *Götterdämmerung* with the COC Orchestra, conducted by COC Music Director Johannes Debus.

The student players are paired up with mentors from the COC Orchestra: Sandra Baron, first violin; Elizabeth Johnson, second violin; Sheila Jaffé, viola; Paul Widner, cello; and Robert Speer, bass, learning from them in a one-on-one capacity. Orchestra Academy members also take part in a variety of public performances and participate in masterclasses and private sessions with opera singers, production personnel and visiting music staff.

This year's academy auditions featured a wider pool of candidates with the Schulich School of Music on board as one of the collaborating organizations.

It marks an exciting evolution in the development of the Orchestra Academy, allowing the COC to go beyond the borders of Toronto when connecting with student players.

"There's a palpable excitement from these students about the opportunity offered through our program," shares Nina. "There are orchestra academies elsewhere in the world, in Toronto even. What distinguishes ours is the connection to the human voice. We give them opportunities and valuable hands-on experience that they can't get elsewhere."

As is the case with everything the COC currently offers to young artists, says Nina, "it's about having the real experience."

Jennifer Pugsley is the COC's Media Relations Manager.

#### 17/18 **ENSEMBLE** STUDIO



SAMUEL CHAN Baritone



STÉPHANE MAYER Pianist



EMILY D'ANGELO Mezzo-soprano



Mezzo-soprano



LAUREN EBERWEIN Mezzo-soprano



Soprano



RACHAEL KERR Pianist



SIMONE MCINTOSH SAMANTHA PICKETT MEGAN QUICK Mezzo-soprano



DANIKA LORÈN Soprano



BRUNO ROY Baritone





MADLEN BRECKBILL Viola



JAMES CHURCHILL Cello



JESSE DIETSCHI Bass



HENG-HAN HOU Violin



JUNG TSAI Violin

### OUR NEW ROOMMATES: AGAINST THE GRAIN

BY GIANMARCO SEGATO

Over the course of this season and next, the COC has invited indie opera collective Against the Grain Theatre (AtG) to be part of a pilot Companyin-Residence program. This new residency program is specifically aimed at young opera companies and offers, in addition to dedicated administrative space and resources, mentorship involving different departments and opportunities for job shadowing, as well as invitations to observe and/or participate in company meetings and events. Four months into the residency, AtG's founder and artistic director Joel Ivany is "already seeing the changes that are happening at AtG. With a 'home base' we have a regular and familiar location for board meetings, collective meetings, and weekly leadership meetings. I can't stress how important this is for organizing and planning."

"Building a company is tough in any industry, but especially in opera," says AtG administrative advisor Joanna Barrotta. "The COC's leadership in mentoring young companies like ours gives us a stable platform to continue our growth, and allows us to make a meaningful contribution to the opera ecosystem."

As the relationship between AtG and the COC develops, Joel has "hopes and plans for workshops, experimenting with new projects and further developing relationships with COC staff members. We've dreamed of doing workshops and now we have the feasibility to do them. This is invaluable."

Gianmarco Segato is the COC's adult programs manager.

Below left: In 2013, AtG rehearsed AtG's Messiah in one of the studios at the COC's administrative complex at the Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Opera Centre. Below centre and right, and at the top of the page: in 2014, the company rehearsed and performed their production of Pelléas et Mélisande at the same location, in the beautiful Max Tanenbaum Courtyard.



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### BACKSTAGE AND BEYOND!



Here is a look at some of our recent activities, many shared with our wonderful COC donors, including parties, galas, and backstage meet-and-greets with artists.



**[1]** Roy and Marjorie Linden (far left and far right) and Brian Wilks (centre right) have been supporting the young artists of the Ensemble Studio for many years. This season, they are collectively sponsoring the work of (left to right) intern coach Stéphane Mayer, mezzo-soprano Lauren Eberwein, and intern coach Hyejin Kwon. The Lindens are also underwriting *An Evening with the Ensemble Studio* on February 23, a mainstage showcase of Ensemble artists in a program of Handel and Mozart.

[2] Soprano Sondra Radvanovsky and her husband/manager Duncan Lear celebrate the opening night of *Norma* with COC supporters. [3] Backstage after the opening night performance of *Norma*, American tenor Russell Thomas (second from right) meets with (l-r) COC Board Vice Chair Justin Linden, Stephanie Orleans, and Roya and Rick Diradour.

[4] The cast and creative team of *Ariodante* celebrated their opening with a post-performance toast.

[5] A moment to relax after the Ensemble Studio Competition and before the gala dinner: pictured are Third Prize winner baritone Geoffrey Schellenberg, First Prize winner mezzo-soprano Simone McIntosh, Audience Choice Award winner soprano Myriam Leblanc, and Second Prize winner baritone Samuel Chan.



[6] Famed Canadian soprano—and next season's Artist-in-Residence—Jane Archibald shows her daughter Audrey around the opera house after the opening night performance of *Ariodante*.

[7] Before the public performance of the Ensemble Studio School Tour production of *Second Nature*, young audience members and their parents enjoyed pre-show activities in the Imperial Oil Opera Theatre.

[8] Centre Stage Co-Chairs Julie Lassonde and Michael Gibbens with COC General Director Alexander Neef and Clare Neef on stage of the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts following the Ensemble Studio Competition.

COC Music Director Johannes Debus made his Metropolitan Opera debut conducting *Salome* in December 2016. [9] Alexander Neef, along with a contingent of COC supporters, made the trip to watch the performance and celebrate with Johannes and the *Salome* cast, which included [11] Patricia Racette (Madama Butterfly with the COC in 2014) in the title role. [10] Johannes also reunited with former COC technical director Dave Feheley (now technical director at the Met). **[12]** The COC Ensemble Studio School Tour visited Kingston on its journey around Ontario this past fall, and met with members of the Kingston Opera Guild. **[13]** And here's the bus that transported the cast, set and costumes!

**[14]** Ensemble Studio mezzo-soprano Emily D'Angelo relaxed after her Koerner Hall debut in November, part of the Generation Next event.

**[15]** Pictured are winners of a draw at Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services. The prizes? Tickets to COC performances, through the COC's Share the Opera program.

**[16]** Ensemble Studio artist Lauren Eberwein shows off her skills on the glockenspiel at the annual Cocktails and Carols holiday party for COC supporters.

Visit our website at **coc.ca** to learn more and get involved in all the COC has to offer!

### **BIOGRAPHIES:** THE MAGIC FLUTE



PHILLIP ADDIS Baritone (Stratford, ON) Papageno

COC CREDITS: Pyramus/Tancredi, Pyramus and Thisbe with Lamento d'Arianna and II combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda (2015); Schaunard/Marcello, La Bohème (2013)

RECENT: Marcello, La Bohème (Opéra de Québec); Pelléas, Pelléas et Melisande (Staatsoper Hamburg); Count Almaviva, The Marriage of Figaro (Semper Oper Dresden)

UPCOMING: Count Almaviva, The Marriage of Figaro (Vancouver Opera); Soloist, Carmina Burana (Toronto Symphony Orchestra)



#### INGMAR BECK (Vienna, Austria) Assistant Conductor

COC DEBUT

RECENT: J. Strauss II's One Night in Venice (Opéra de Lyon); Béatrice et Bénédict (Aspen Music Festival)

UPCOMING: Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra; Assistant Conductor (Aspen Music Festival)



MATT BOEHLER Bass (Minneapolis, MN, USA) Sarastro

COC CREDITS: Raleigh, Roberto Devereux (2014)

RECENT: Bertrand, *Iolanta* (Metropolitan Opera); Il Cieco, *Iris* (Bard Summerscape); Baron Ochs, *Die Rosenkavalier* (Victory Hall Opera); Soloist, Donkey, *Becoming Santa Claus* (Dallas Opera—world premiere)

UPCOMING: Uncle, *Elizabeth Cree* (Opera Philadelphia—world premiere); Mr. Mister, *The Cradle Will Rock* (Opera Saratoga)



AMBUR BRAID Soprano (Terrace, BC) The Queen of the Night

SELECT COC ROLES: Dalinda, Ariodante (2016); Adele, Die Fledermaus (2012); Stella, The Tales of Hoffman (2012); Amore, Orfeo ed Euridice (2011)

RECENT: Queen of the Night, The Magic Flute (English National Opera, Calgary Opera, Frankfurt Oper); Anne Truelove, The Rake's Progress (Teatro de São Carlos); Konstanze, The Abduction from the Seraglio (Opera Atelier); Violetta, La Traviata (Arizona Opera)

UPCOMING: Oksana G., Oksana G. (Tapestry Opera)



#### MYUNG HEE CHO (Beverley Hills, CA, USA) Set and Costume Designer

COC CREDITS: The Magic Flute (2011)

RECENT: The Thieving Magpie (Glimmerglass Opera); Golden Fairytale Fanfare (Shanghai Disney Resort); Set Designer, The Trojan Women (National Theatre of Korea); Costume Designer, The Marriage of Figaro (Washington National Opera)

UPCOMING: Set Designer, *Trans* Script (American Repertory Theater); In the Body of the World (Manhattan Theater Club; Arena Stage; Young Vic)



MICHAEL COLVIN Tenor (Toronto, ON) Monostatos

SELECT COC CREDITS: Basilio, The Marriage of Figaro (2016); Dr. Caius, Falstaff (2014); L'Aumônier, Dialogues des Carmélites (2013); Ferrando, Cosi fan tutte (2006); Count Almaviva, The Barber of Seville (1999)

RECENT: Duke of Cornwall, *Lear* (Opéra National de Paris); The Painter, *Lulu* (English National Opera); L'Aumônier, *Dialogues des Carméiltes* (Dutch National Opera); Rodolphe, *Guillaume Tell* (Royal Opera House)

UPCOMING: Thomas Scott, Louis Riel (COC); Duke of Cornwall, Lear (Salzburg Festival); Vlaamse Opera (2017); Opéra Monte Carlo; Royal Opera House (2018); Opéra National de Paris (2019).



#### ASHLIE CORCORAN (White Rock, BC) Revival Director

SELECT COC CREDITS: (as director) Second Nature (Ensemble Studio School Tour [ESST], 2016); Operation Superpower (ESST, 2015); (as assistant director) Tosca (2012)

RECENT: (as director) Mustard (Tarragon Theatre); Das Ding (The Thing) (Theatre Smash/Canadian Stage/Thousand Islands Playhouse (TIP]); The Gay Heritage Project (Buddies in Bad Times Theatre and National Tour)

UPCOMING: *Kiss* (Theatre Smash/ Canadian Stage/ARC), *Me and My Girl* (Shaw Festival), *Leading Ladies* (TIP)

ADDITIONAL: Artistic Director (TIP); Artistic Producer (Theatre Smash)



NEIL CRAIGHEAD Bass-baritone (Calgary, AB) Second Armed Man

SELECT COC CREDITS: Dr. Grenvil, La Traviata (2015); Nottingham's Servant, Roberto Devereux (2014); Publio, La clemenza di Tito (Ensemble Studio Performance, 2013)

RECENT: Pietro, *Simon Boccanegra* (Pacific Opera Victoria); Leporello, *#UncleJohn* (Against the Grain Theatre); Sarastro, *The Magic Flute* (Edmonton Opera)

UPCOMING: O'Donaghue/B. B. Osler, Louis Riel (COC/National Arts Centre)



EMILY D'ANGELO Mezzo-soprano (Toronto, ON) Second Lady

COC DEBUT

RECENT: Soloist, *Generation Next* (Koerner Hall); Cherubino, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Spoleto Festival dei Due Mondi)

UPCOMING: Annio, *La clemenza di Tito* (Opera Theatre of Saint Louis)

ADDITIONAL: Winner of 2016 Metropolitan Opera National Council Audition Finals



AVIVA FORTUNATA Soprano (Calgary, AB) First Lady

COC CREDITS: Clotilde, Norma (2016); The Countess, The Marriage of Figaro (Ensemble Studio performance [ESP], 2016); Annina, La Traviata (2015); Berta, The Barber of Seville (2015); Helmwige, Die Walküre (2015); Fiordiligi, Cosi fan tutte (ESP, 2014)

UPCOMING: Donna Elvira, Don Giovanni (Saskatoon Opera)

ADDITIONAL: Song Prize Finalist in 2015 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World; Finalist, Operalia Competition, 2016

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R. Fraser Elliott Hall, photo: Lucia Graca (2014).



#### MARTIN GANTNER Baritone (Freiburg, Germany) The Speaker (Also Gunther in Götterdämmerung)

COC CREDITS: Jochanaan. Salome (2013)

RECENT: Wolfram, Tannhäuser (Teatro de la Maestranza, Seville); Sixtus Beckmesser, Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg (Bayerische Staatsoper); Herr von Faninal, Der Rosenkavalier (Lyric Opera of Chicago; Münchner Opernfestspiele; Opéra National de Paris)

UPCOMING: Kurwenal, Tristan und Isolde (Teatro Regio); Dr. Schön, Lulu (Teatro dell'Opera di Roma); Telramund, Lohengrin (Opernhaus Zürich)



#### ANDREW HAJI Tenor (London, ON) Tamino/First Armed Man

COC CREDITS: Alfredo, La Traviata (2015); Count Almaviva, The Barber of Seville (Ensemble Studio performance [ESP], 2015); Ferrando, Così fan tutte (ESP, 2014); Rodriguez, Don Quichotte (2014)

RECENT: Rodolfo, La Bohème (Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and Centre for Opera Studies in Italy); Hélios, Herculanum (Wexford Festival Opera); Soloist, Verdi's Requiem (Grand River Chorus and Cambridge Symphony Orchestra)

UPCOMING: Gabriel Dumont, Louis Riel (COC)



#### JOSHUA HOPKINS Baritone (Pembroke, ON) Papageno

COC CREDITS: Figaro, The Barber of Seville (2015); Marcello, La Bohème (2013); Morales, Carmen (2005)

RECENT: Valentin, Faust and Harry Bailey, It's a Wonderful Life (Houston Grand Opera); Count Almaviva, The Marriage of Figaro (Washington National Opera); Olivier, Capriccio (Santa Fe Opera); Mercutio, Roméo et Juliette (Lyric Opera of Chicago)

UPCOMING: Don Giovanni, Don Giovanni (Utah Opera); Dr. Falke, Die Fledermaus (Santa Fe Opera)



#### SANDRA HORST (Toronto, ON) Chorus Master

SELECT COC CREDITS: Norma (2016, 1998); Ariodante, Carmen, Maometto II, The Marriage of Figaro (2016): La Traviata. Pvramus and Thisbe with Lamento d'Arianna and II combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda (2015)

RECENT: Conductor. The Machine Stops and Paul Bunyan (UofT Opera)

UPCOMING: Louis Riel, Tosca (COC); Prima Zombie: The Diva that just wouldn't stay dead (UofT Opera)

ADDITIONAL: Director of Musical Studies at UofT Opera



GORAN JURIĆ Bass (Karlovac, Croatia) Sarastro

COC DEBUT

RECENT: Raimondo, Lucia di Lammermoor: Ferrando. Il Trovatore: Oroveso, Norma (Bayerische Staatsoper); King Heinrich, Lohengrin (Teatro Real Madrid); Sarastro, The Magic Flute (La Fenice)

UPCOMING: Sarastro, The Magic Flute (Opera di Firenze); Mosè, Mosè in Egitto (Bregenz Festival)



#### **ROB KEMPSON** (Kingston, ON) Assistant Director

#### COC DEBUT

RECENT: (as writer/director) Mockingbird (Next Stage Theatre Festival); SHANNON 10:40 (timeshare); #legacy (Harbourfront Centre); (as director) Violet's the Pilot and Rose's Clothes (Thousand Islands Playhouse)

UPCOMING: (as writer/director) Trigonometry (Factory Theatre Studio); (as director) Million Dollar Quartet and Maggie and Pierre (Thousand Islands Plavhouse)

ADDITIONAL: Associate Artistic Director (Thousand Islands Playhouse)



#### BERNARD LABADIE (Quebec City, QC) Conductor

#### COC DEBUT

RECENT: Engagements with the Metropolitan Opera; Gran Teatre del Liceu; Santa Fe Opera; Cincinnati Opera; Glimmerglass Festival; New York and Los Angeles Philharmonic; Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, Saint Louis, Houston, Melbourne, and Toronto symphonies; Academy of Ancient Music; Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment; Cleveland, and Philadelphia orchestras; Bayerische Rundfunk: Orchestre National de France

ADDITIONAL · Founder/Music Director Les Violons du Roy and La Chapelle de Québec



#### KIRSTEN MACKINNON Soprano (Squamish, BC) Pamina

#### COC DEBUT

RECENT: Helena, A Midsummer Night's Dream (Aix-en-Provence/ Beijing Festival); Mimì, La Bohème; Die Gräfin, Capriccio; Countess, The Marriage of Figaro (Curtis Opera Theatre); Annina, La Traviata (Opera Philadelphia)

UPCOMING: Fiordiligi, Così fan tutte (Glyndebourne Tour); Countess, The Marriage of Figaro (Garsington Opera); Ines, L'Africaine (Frankfurt Opera)



#### **STEPHANIE MARRS** (Toronto, ON) Stage Manager

SELECT COC CREDITS: Ariodante: Carmen (2016); La Traviata (2015); Madama Butterfly (2003, 2014); Hercules (2013); Assistant Stage Manager, Siegfried (2016)

RECENT: 7sould presents Underneath (The Beaches Jazz Festival); Apocalypsis (Luminato Festival); Panamania (Pan Am Games 2015 Arts and Culture Festival)

UPCOMING: Louis Riel (COC)



#### **OWEN MCCAUSLAND** Tenor (Saint John, NB) Tamino/First Armed Man

SELECT COC CREDITS: Lurcanio. Ariodante (2016); Testo, Pyramus and Thisbe with Lamento d'Arianna and II combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda (2015); Juan, Don Quichotte and Lord Cecil, Roberto Devereux (2014); Tito, La clemenza di Tito (2013)

RECENT: Arturo, Lucia di Lammermoor (Pacific Opera Victoria); Soloist, AtG's Messiah (Against the Grain Theatre)

UPCOMING: Soloist, The Seven Deadly Sins (Toronto Symphony Orchestra)



#### **DIANE PAULUS** (New York City, NY, USA) Director

COC CREDITS: The Magic Flute (2011)

RECENT: Waitress (Broadway at the Brooks Atkinson Theatre); Finding Neverland (Broadway/National Tour), Tony Award-winning revivals: Pippin, Porgy and Bess, Hair (Broadway); Crossing and In the Body of the World (American Repertory Theater); Amaluna (Cirque du Soleil)

ADDITIONAL: Artistic Director of the American Repertory Theater at Harvard University; Tony Award for Best Direction of a Musical (Pippin, 2013); 2014 TIME 100, TIME Magazine's annual list of the 100 most influential people in the world



**BRUNO ROY** Baritone (Montreal, QC) Second Priest

#### COC DEBUT

RECENT: Mercutio, Roméo et Juliette (Canadian Vocal Arts Institute); Matt, Crush (Banff Centre); Belcore, The Elixir of Love (Atelier lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal and Opera McGill): John Brooke, Little Women: Count Almaviva, The Marriage of Figaro (Opera McGill)

UPCOMING: Poundmaker/Roy, Louis Riel; the Jailer, Tosca (COC)

LAUREN SEGAL

Mezzo-soprano (Toronto, ON) Third Lady

SELECT COC CREDITS: Flora, La Traviata (2015); Meg Page, Falstaff (2014); Nicklausse/Muse, The Tales of Hoffmann (2012); Third Lady, The Magic Flute (2011, 2006)

RECENT: Meg Page, Falstaff (Manitoba Opera [MO]); Soloist, The Diary of One Who Disappeared (Ottawa International Chamber Music Festival with Against the Grain Theatre); Emilia, Otello (Opéra de Montréal); Hermia, A Midsummer Night's Dream (Pacific Opera Victoria)

UPCOMING: Charlotte, Werther (MO); Soloist, Mendelssohn's Elijah (Choeur St-Laurent with McGill Chamber Orchestra)



**CHARLES SY** Tenor (Toronto, ON) First Priest

COC CREDITS: Flavio, Norma; Condulmiero, Maometto II (2016); Gastone, La Traviata (2015)

RECENT: Adolfo, La Rondine (Opera Theatre of Saint Louis); Mr. Owen, Postcard from Morocco (UofT Opera); Tamino, The Magic Flute (Chautauqua Institution and Hawaii Performing Arts Festival)

UPCOMING: Ambroise Lépine, Louis Riel (COC)



**ELENA TSALLAGOVA** Soprano (Vladikavkaz, Russia) Pamina

COC DEBUT

RECENT: Adina, The Elixir of Love; Pamina. The Magic Flute: Gilda. Rigoletto; Micaëla, Carmen; Oscar, A Masked Ball (Deutsche Oper Berlin): Mélisande. Pelléas et Mélisande (Opéra National de Paris); Bystrouska, The Cunning Little Vixen (Opéra National du Rhin and Glyndebourne Festival); Marfa, The Tsar's Bride (Berlin Staatsoper)

UPCOMING: Liù, Turandot (Deutsche Oper Berlin); La Calisto, La Calisto (Opéra National du Rhin); Micaëla, Carmen (Bregenz Festival)



#### JACQUELINE WOODLEY Soprano (Port Elgin, ON)

#### Papagena

SELECT COC CREDITS: Forest Bird, Siegfried (2016); Cherubino, The Marriage of Figaro (Ensemble Studio Performance [ESP], 2016); Iris, Semele (ESP, 2012); Papagena, The Magic Flute (ESP, 2011)

RECENT: Dafne, Apollo e Dafne (Toronto Masque Theatre); Soloist, Magnificent Mozart (Edmonton Symphony); Milice-Bride, Svadba-Wedding (San Francisco Opera); Dahlia, M'Dea Undone (Tapestry Opera)

UPCOMING: Nataliya, Oksana G (Tapestry Opera)



SCOTT ZIELINSKI (New York City, NY, USA) Lighting Designer

COC CREDITS: The Magic Flute (2011); Lucia di Lammermoor (2004)

RECENT: Trojan Women (National Changgeuk Opera of Korea); Turandot (Opera Australia); Miss Fortune (Bregenz Festival/Royal Opera House); Red Waters (Opéra de Rouen Haute-Normandie); La Traviata (Lithuanian National Opera and Ballet Theatre); Matsukaze (Lincoln Centre/ Spoleto Festival)

UPCOMING: Charlie Parker's Yardbird (Lyric Opera of Chicago; English National Opera); Eugene Onegin (Spoleto Festival)



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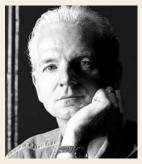
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## **BIOGRAPHIES:** GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG



TIM ALBERY (Mono, ON) Director

COC CREDITS: Aida (2010); War and Peace (2008); Rodelinda (2005); Peter Grimes (2003)

RECENT: Les Troyens (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Capriccio (Santa Fe Opera); Idomeneo re di Creta (Garsington Opera); Pleasure and Così fan tutte (Opera North); Tannhaüser (Royal Opera House); M'dea Undone (Tapestry New Opera)

Upcoming: Arabella (COC); Madama Butterfly and A Masked Ball (Opera North); Don Carlo (Washington National Opera)



LINDSAY AMMANN Mezzo-soprano (Sioux Falls, SD, USA)

#### Flosshilde/First Norn

COC CREDITS: Schwertleite, Die Walküre (2015)

RECENT: Flosshilde, Das Rheingold (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Erda, Das Rheingold and Siegfried; First Norn, Götterdämmerung; Schwertleite, Die Walküre (Washington National Opera); Third Lady, The Magic Flute (Grand Théâtre de Genève); Suzuki, Madama Butterfly (North Carolina Opera)

UPCOMING: Arjuna's Dilemma (Dallas Opera); Die Walküre (Lyric Opera of Chicago)



AIN ANGER Bass (Kuressaare, Estonia) Hagen

COC DEBUT

RECENT: Landgraf Hermann, Tannhäuser (Deutsche Oper Berlin [DOB]); Fafner, Das Rheingold (Sächsische Staatsoper); Daland, The Flying Dutchman (Teatro all Scala); Pimen, Boris Godunov (Royal Opera House)

UPCOMING: Hunding, Die Walküre (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Boris Godunov, Boris Godunov (DOB)



DEREK BATE (Toronto, ON) Assistant Conductor

SELECT COC CREDITS: Norma (2016); Carmen, Siegfried, Pyramus and Thisbe (with Lamento d'Arianna and II combattimento di Clorinda e Tancredi) (2015); Conductor, Don Quichotte (2014); Conductor, Carmen (1979)

RECENT: (as conductor) The Pirates of Penzance (Toronto Operetta Theatre); The Student Prince (Toronto Operetta Theatre)

UPCOMING: Louis Riel (COC)



#### **KAREN CARGILL** Mezzo-soprano (Glasgow, Scotland) Waltraute/Second Norn

COC DEBUT

RECENT: Brangaene, Tristan und Isolde (English National Opera); Mahler's Symphony No. 2 (Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam: Ravinia Festival with Chicago Symphony); Dryade, Ariadne auf Naxos (Royal Opera House)

UPCOMING: Judith, Bluebeard's Castle (Scottish Opera); Mahler's Symphony No.3 (Philadelphia Orchestra); Mahler's Das Lied von der Erde (Metropolitan Opera Orchestra at Carnegie Hall)



JOHANNES DEBUS COC Music Director (Berlin, Germany/Toronto, ON)

#### Conductor

SELECT COC CREDITS: Ariodante, Siegfried and The Marriage of Figaro (2016); Pyramus and Thisbe (with Lamento d'Arianna and II combattimento di Clorinda e Tancredi) (2015; War and Peace (2008)

RECENT: Salome (Metropolitan Opera); The Tales of Hoffmann (Bregenz Festival); The Cunning Little Vixen (Oper Frankfurt); The Marriage of Figaro (Komische Oper Berlin); Engagements with the National Arts Centre Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, and BBC Philharmonic

UPCOMING: Louis Riel (COC)



LAUREN EBERWEIN Mezzo-soprano (Qualicum Beach, BC) Wellgunde

#### COC DEBUT

Recent: Olivia, Cold Mountain; Clairon, Capriccio (Opera Philadelphia); Baba the Turk, The Rake's Progress; The Composer, Ariadne auf Naxos; Dido, Dido and Aeneas: (Curtis Opera Theater); Handel's Israel in Egypt (New York Choral Society/Carnegie Hall)

UPCOMING: Soloist, Bach Cantatas (Free Concert Series in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Toronto); Soloist (Gamut Bach Ensemble, Philadelphia); Resident Artist (Marlboro Music Festival and Chamberfest Cleveland)



DAVID FINN (Mill Valley, CA, USA) Lighting Designer

COC CREDITS: Venus and Adonis (2001); Ring Cycle (2004-2006); Macbeth (2005)

RECENT: Les Troyens (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Tannhäuser (Royal Opera House); Così fan tutte (Opera Australia); Roméo et Juliette (Deutsche Oper Berlin and Dutch National Opera)

UPCOMING: Tannhäuser (Staatsoper im Schiller Theater); Rigoletto (Savonlinna Opera Festival); Tosca (Metropolitan Opera)



MARTIN GANTNER Baritone (Freiburg, Germany)

Gunther (Also The Speaker in The Magic Flute)

COC CREDITS: Jochanaan, Salome (2013)

RECENT: Wolfram, Tannhäuser (Teatro de la Maestranza, Seville); Sixtus Beckmesser, Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg (Bayerische Staatsoper); Herr von Faninal, Der Rosenkavalier (Lyric Opera of Chicago; Münchner Opernfestspiele; Opéra National de Paris)

UPCOMING: Kurwenal Tristan und Isolde (Teatro Regio); Dr. Schön, Lulu (Teatro dell'Opera di Roma); Telramund, Lohengrin (Opernhaus Zürich)

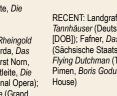


CHRISTINE GOERKE Soprano (Valley Stream, NY, USA) Brünnhilde

COC CREDITS: Brünnhilde, Die Walküre (2015) and Siegfried (2016)

RECENT: Turandot, Turandot (Metropolitan Opera [Met] and Opera Philadelphia); Cassandre, Les Troyens (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Elektra, Elektra (Boston Symphony Orchestra and Carnegie Hall); Brünnhilde, Die Walküre and Siegfried (Houston Grand Opera [HGO])

UPCOMING: Turandot, Turandot (Royal Opera House); Brünnhilde, Götterdämmerung (HGO); Brünnhilde, Ring Cycle (Met)





#### MARILYN GRONSDAL (Toronto, ON) Assistant Director

SELECT COC CREDITS: Norma (2016); Maometto II (2016), Pyramus and Thisbe with Lamento d'Arianna and II combattimento di Clorinda e Tancredi; (2015); Associate Director, Siegfried (2016); Director, La Bohéme (2009)

RECENT: Co-director, *Madama Butterfly* (Saskatoon Opera)

UPCOMING: Director, La Cecchina (The Glenn Gould School); Assistant Director, Tosca (COC); Director, Don Giovanni (Saskatoon Opera)



#### SANDRA HORST (Toronto, ON) Chorus Master

SELECT COC CREDITS: Norma (2016, 1998); Ariodante, Carmen, Maometto II, The Marriage of Figaro (2016); La Traviata, Pyramus and Thisbe with Lamento d'Arianna and II combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda (2015)

RECENT: Conductor, The Machine Stops and Paul Bunyan (UofT Opera)

UPCOMING: Louis Riel, Tosca (COC); Prima Zombie: The Diva that just wouldn't stay dead (UofT Opera)

ADDITIONAL: Director of Musical Studies at UofT Opera



#### MICHAEL LEVINE (Toronto, ON) Set and Costume Designer

SELECT COC CREDITS: Bluebeard's Castle/Erwartung (1992); Ring Cycle (2004-2006); Rigoletto (2011); Dialogues des Carmélites (2013); Director, Das Rheingold (2006)

RECENT: The Little Prince (National Ballet of Canada); Benjamin, Dernière Nuit (Lyon Opera); Wozzeck (Opernhaus Zürich); Between Worlds (English National Opera); The Encounter (Complicite Theatre/ Edinburgh International Festival, Golden Theatre Broadway); Hansel and Gretel (Dutch National Opera)

UPCOMING: *The Rake's Progress* (Festival D'Aix/Dutch National Opera/ Edinburgh Festival), *Billy Budd* (Teatro Real Madrid)



DANIKA LORÉN Soprano (Saskatoon, SK) Woglinde

COC DEBUT

RECENT: Handel's Messiah (Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra); Tiny, Paul Bunyan and Monica, The Medium (Uoff Opera); Rosina, The Barber of Seville (Saskatoon Opera)

UPCOMING: Soloist, *Fête* (Collectif); Engagements in the Free Concert Series in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre



#### ILEANA MONTALBETTI Soprano (Saskatoon, SK) Gutrune/Third Norn

SELECT COC CREDITS: Ellen Orford, Peter Grimes (2013); Voice of the Mother, The Tales of Hoffmann (2012); Clorinda, La Cenerentola (2011)

RECENT: Soloist, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (Saskatoon Symphony); Agathe, *Der Freischutz* (Opéra-Théâtre de Limoges); Leonore, *Fidelio* (Manitoba Opera; Michigan Opera Theater); Antonia, *The Tales* of *Hoffmann* (Edmonton Opera); Fifth Maid, *Elektra* (Teatro dell'Opera di Roma)



#### ROBERT POMAKOV Bass (Toronto, ON) Alberich

SELECT COC CREDITS: Bartolo, The Marriage of Figaro (2016); Hobson, Peter Grimes (2013); Monterone, Rigoletto (2011); Varlaam, Boris Godunov (2002)

RECENT: Gremin, Eugene Onegin (Oper Frankfurt); Mathieu, Andrea Chenier (San Francisco Opera); Banquo, Macbeth (Opera Theatre of Saint Louis); Don Basilio, The Barber of Seville (Metropolitan Opera [Met])

UPCOMING: Monterone, *Rigoletto* (Opéra National de Paris and Met); Engagements at the Met and Oper Frankfurt



#### KATE PORTER (Toronto, ON) Stage Manager

SELECT COC CREDITS: 13 productions as Assistant Stage Manager including *Macbeth* (2005); *Norma* (2016); *Semele* (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 2015)

RECENT: Rigoletto and Carmen (Vancouver Opera); Chasse-Galerie (Soulpepper/Storefront/Kabin); Into the Woods and The Pirates of Penzance (Thousand Islands Playhouse)

UPCOMING: *Dead Man Walking* (Vancouver Opera); *Leading Ladies* (Thousand Islands Playhouse)



#### PATTI POWELL (Mono, ON) Choreographer

COC CREDITS: Associate Director/ Choreographer, Peter Grimes (2003); Movement Director, Rodelinda (2005); Choreographer, Götterdämmerung (2006)

RECENT: Creating assemblage art from wood, found metals and other objects in her studio; recently three of her works were selected for the Headwaters Arts Festival at Alton Mills Gallery; teaches drama, movement and improvisation with at-risk youth at the Pine River Institute.



ANDREAS SCHAGER Tenor (Kerschenbach/St. Veit, Austria) Siegfried

#### COC DEBUT

RECENT CREDITS: Florestan, Fidelio; Tamino, The Magic Flute; Parsifal, Parsifal (Staatsoper Berlin); Tristan, Tristan und Isolde (Teatro dell'Opera di Roma); Erik, The Flying Dutchman and Parisfal, Parsifal (Bayreuth Festival)

UPCOMING: Parsifal, Parsifal (Bayreuth, Hamburg, Berlin, Paris); Siegfried, Siegfried (Oper Leipzig); Siegfried, Götterdämmerung (Semperoper Dresden); Siegfried, Siegfried and Götterdämmerung (Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden; Staatsoper Unter den Linden)



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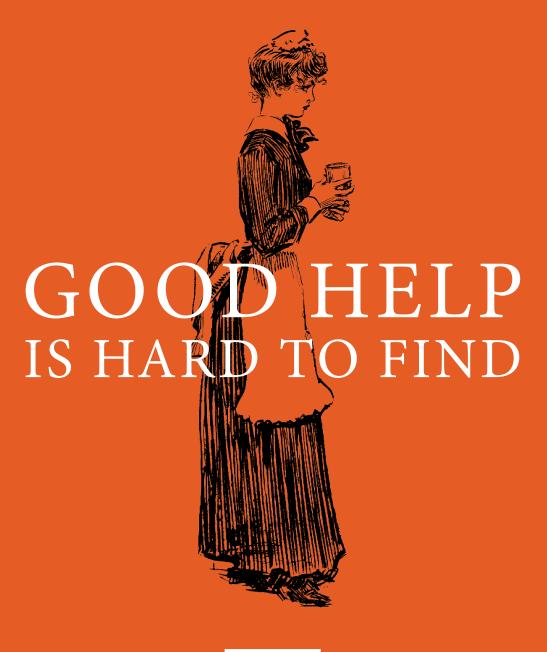
## THE **PERSONAL** BECOMES **POLITICAL** THIS SPRING.

Warm up this spring at the Canadian Opera Company with Puccini's passionate *Tosca*, and witness the personal and political turmoil at the heart of Harry Somers' *Louis Riel* in a new production directed by Peter Hinton, in collaboration with Canada's National Arts Centre.

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## The Rewards of Friendship and Sponsorship PETER DEEB AND AMBUR BRAID

### BY NIKITA GOURSKI

Six years ago, the B.C.-born soprano Ambur Braid was lying on the floor of a dressing room backstage at the Four Seasons Centre and thinking, "Oh my God, I can't do this."

She was in her first year as a member of the COC's Ensemble Studio and about to appear in the training program's annual showcase as the Queen of the Night in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

The Queen is a haunted role—peopled by voices of countless singers who have come before—and its famous run of high notes sometimes stifles young artists into rote imitation rather than the individual work of shaping a living character out of all that *coloratura*.

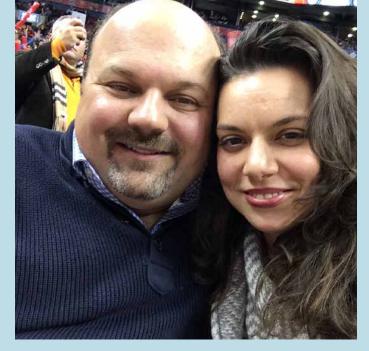
Ambur, however, didn't seem stifled.

"This soprano turned a stock figurine into a scary, knifewielding matriarch," reported the *National Post*, praising the originality of Ambur's reading. Another reviewer, in *La Scena Musicale*, couldn't help noting that "perhaps the loudest ovations of the evening were reserved for the Queen of the Night."

Ambur's close friend Peter Deeb was in the opera house that evening, clapping alongside 2,000 other opera fans.

He was better equipped than most of them to appreciate how hard the road to the stage really is.

Since the early 2000s, Peter Deeb has been one of the COC's major supporters and is currently serving on the Board as well as underwriting, in part, the Ensemble Studio training program through a multi-year commitment. He has also been Ambur's friend for the better part of a decade and seen first-hand the sacrifice and toil of a career in the arts: the moments of overwhelming anxiety and the elusive breakthroughs, the hours of coachings and vocal exercise behind any performance.



Above: Peter and Ambur take in a Toronto Raptors game.

"I was very impressed with Ambur's commitment to opera and I watched how hard she worked," he recalls. "I wouldn't last a week in the Ensemble."

Peter is a prominent financial services professional on Bay Street and the founder of Hampton Securities, a leading Canadian investment firm. Trained as a pianist, he has maintained an interest in classical music and opera for most of his life, but became more involved with the art form when former Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion personally invited him to join the Opera Mississauga Board of Directors in 2002 to advise the company on its financial position—an experience that turned out to be much more than that, as Peter realized the extent of his commitment to ensuring a future for the art form.

A few years later he and Ambur met through mutual friends and the two quickly hit it off. "He knew me before the Ensemble and there was a massive learning curve when I went in. I mean I had no idea what I was doing," Ambur jokes. "But he supported me from day one. He was a touchstone."

In 2016/2017, Peter extends that support by becoming Ambur's artist sponsor. "It means the world to me to see Ambur doing what she's doing now," he says of her trajectory, which has taken her to international destinations like Frankfurt Opera and English National Opera. "I'm just so proud of her and what she's accomplished."

He will be in the audience with high expectations as Ambur returns to reprise her role in *Flute* this winter. And while six years have brought lots of change and artistic success, Ambur says "I'm probably going to be just as nervous this time around."

Nikita Gourski is the COC's Development and Communications Officer

## **ART FOR ART** A REMARKABLE GIFT FOR THE COC ARCHIVES

## BY NIKITA GOURSKI

In October 2016, the COC received a unique gift from author, artist, and child psychologist Dr. Gabrielle Israelievitch: a portfolio of eight, limited edition lithographs and screen-prints commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera in 1978.

The collection of original graphic works features eight artists of diverse backgrounds and practices, each of whom was asked to interpret an opera through their own unique visual language. While the artists gathered for the project might not be household names, all of them played an important role in the development of visual art in the 20th century.

The Argentine-born Italian painter Leonor Fini, for example—whose rendition of Wagner's Tristan und *Isolde* evokes the detail and realism of an Old Master drawing—was shown alongside Salvador Dali and Max Ernst at the seminal MoMA show, Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism (1937), and collaborated with Federico Fellini on the film, 8 ½. American Larry Rivers (interpreting Madama Butterfly), who was also an accomplished jazz musician, created paintings and sculptures that found a home at museums and galleries like the MoMA, the Whitney, and the Hirshhorn. Catalan Antoni Clavé, whose Cubist fragmentations take apart the imagery of Carmen, was one of Spain's bestknown artists.

Dr. Israelievitch made the generous gift in memory of her husband Jacques, the renowned violinist and former concertmaster of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, who appeared several times with the COC as part of the Free Concert Series in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre. Throughout his career Mr. Israelievitch championed interdisciplinary art; he played in art museums, home salons, and other venues—like a friend's painting class at OCAD University—to encourage the productive combination of art forms that might not otherwise interact. In the same spirit, the Israelievitch family established the Jacques Israelievitch Endowment for Violin/Viola and Interdisciplinary Arts at York University.

The donated portfolio—which also features Richard Lindner, Marino Marini, André Masson, Paul Wunderlich, and Jamie Wyath—is full of artists who were open to technical experimentation and often moved freely across disciplines; many designed sets and costumes for theatre and opera; others collaborated with filmmakers and poets; some worked as commercial illustrators. It is perhaps especially appropriate then that the portfolio should come to reside with the COC-an institution that is by its very mission committed to the combinatory possibilities of all the arts

The prints are housed in the Joan Baillie Archives of the COC and available for public viewing by appointment. To find out more, contact Archivist Birthe Joergensen at 416-306-2328 or birthej@coc.ca.

#### Nikita Gourski is the COC's Development and Communications Officer

Images from top to bottom: Der Rosenkavalier by Richard Lindner. Tristan und Isolde by Leonor Fini. La Traviata by Marino Marini.







## LOOKING TO LOUIS RIEL BY GIANMARCO SEGATO

At a concept and design presentation given to COC artistic and administrative staff in late October. *Louis Riel* stage director Peter Hinton referenced Canadian author John Ralston Saul whose bestseller A Fair Country redefines Canada as a "Métis nation." Ralston Saul rejects the conventional notion that our nation's history and character were shaped mainly by its British and French colonial "founders" but instead, acknowledges that "what we are today has been inspired as much by four centuries of life with the indigenous civilizations as by four centuries of immigration. Perhaps more. Today we are the outcome of that experience. As have Métis people, Canadians in general have been heavily influenced and shaped by the First Nations. We still are. We increasingly are. This influencing, this shaping is deep within us."

It is in this revisionist spirit that Hinton and his team have approached Harry Somers' 1967 Centennial project opera, conscious of the need to reconsider the piece in light of the new information and changing attitudes that have accumulated since its 1967 premiere. In the 50 years since its world premiere, Louis Riel has become the quintessential Canadian opera, and yet it has not been revived professionally since 1975. As Hinton says, "Somers' and Moore's defining history of struggle and representation in Canada's west against colonialist and centralist objectives is not only a metaphor for the conflicts which forged the idea of confederation, but also serves as a challenge for present and future understandings of our country."

The creative muscle behind Hinton's production derives from its most considerable challenge: "the Eurocentric tradition of Opera as a form and its collision with the voice, culture and representation of indigeneity in this history."

To clarify the complex web of competing political interests at the heart of *Louis Riel* Hinton has separated the opera's various personages into four groups: the Land Assembly, the Parliamentary chorus, the politicians of Ottawa, and the Métis settlers.

Preliminary costume sketches are by designer Gillian Gallow. Preliminary set maquettes are by designer Michael Gianfrancesco.

Right: preliminary costume sketches for Louis and Marguerite Riel





THE LAND ASSEMBLY. Portrayed by over 30 indigenous women and men, the Land Assembly are directly affected by the outcomes, victories and losses of the action. On stage throughout the opera, they are a silent chorus in protest who challenge, retaliate and stand for the people and groups fighting for representation by Riel. They are the people for whom the opera has not provided a voice. They are the blood and human life of what is at stake.





CHORUS. Portrayed by members of the COC Chorus, they comment on the action but do not act. They are at once settler and immigrant men and women who sing in commentary to Riel, debating what should take place, as well as the modern members of parliament who legislate and validate the struggles of all Canadians in Ottawa.





#### THE POLITICIANS OF

OTTAWA. Real historical personalities such as Sir John A. Macdonald (left), Sir George-Étienne Cartier and William McDougall whose motivating vision is Canadian unity, symbolized by the huge, long, indivisible table around which they make their decisions.

THE MÉTIS. These are the indigenous people led by Gabriel Dumont who historically hunted buffalo on the land that is present day Manitoba. In 1869 they seized Fort Garry (today's downtown Winnipeg) in order to stake their land claim in the face of Sir John A. Macdonald's nationalist agenda.



Louis Riel himself is situated in the midst all of these competing factions. As Canadian author Joseph Boyden has pointed out in *Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont* (2010), Riel represents the "European" in the Métis: university-educated and deeply Catholic, he never seemed fully comfortable in the wilderness and instead continually strove for a way to build his vision of a new church, a new society, in the wilds of the West. It was this world view of a truly united Métis people that Sir John A. Macdonald quickly recognized as a threat to his own vision of Canada.

Mavor Moore's libretto and the original 1967 COC production (available on a Centrediscs DVD) were informed by the cultural practices of the time of their creation— Hinton's new COC production seeks to spark a dialogue that will encourage today's audiences to reconsider historical perceptions of Riel as well as those of the Métis today. "If it were written today, certainly there would be more Indigenous participation and involvement in its creation and its expression" Hinton explains. "It is my intention that a more inclusive and expansive history shall be restored and amended [in] our 2017 production. It is a delicate balance of renewing the original spirit of the opera with contemporary perspectives in order to revise the opera's colonial biases and bring forward its inherent strengths and power."

Gianmarco Segato is the COC's adult programs manager.

The COC's production of *Louis Riel* is generously underwritten by The Catherine and Maxwell Meighen Foundation, Philip Deck and Kimberley Bozak, Asper Foundation, and The Max Clarkson Family Foundation "Over the last decade Karina Gauvin has proved herself one of the most delightful of Baroque sopranos." – *Gramophone* 

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## HEARING RIEL

## **A FREE SYMPOSIUM**

Don't miss this day-long event delving into the fascinating biographical, historical and political terrain of Harry Somers' opera, *Louis Riel* 

When composer Harry Somers and librettist Mavor Moore were commissioned to write an opera to commemorate Canada's Centennial celebrations in 1967, they freely chose as their subject one of our nation's most tragic episodes: Louis Riel's frustrated attempt to strike a fair deal for the Métis people of Western Canada in the face of the nationbuilding juggernaut spearheaded by Prime Minister Sir John A. MacDonald. The opera Louis Riel weaves together a myriad of timely thematic threads that are more relevant than ever in this sesquicentennial year. The figure of Riel and the ongoing question of Canada's relationship to the Métis people have once again been foregrounded by the federal government's recent commitment to reach meaningful reconciliation with the Métis Nation, provinces and territories as part of its ongoing plan to renew the nation's relationship with indigenous peoples.

Given the opera's timely resonance, the COC, along with organizing partners from the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music and the Humanities Initiative of the Munk School of Global Affairs, presents **Hearing Riel**, a multi-disciplinary exploration of the opera itself, its fraught historical subject matter, and its political implications for today. Presenters include **Beverley McLachlin**, Chief Justice of Canada; **John Ralston Saul**, author of *A Fair Country*; **Jody Wilson-Raybould**, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada; Métis activist and lawyer **Jean Teillet**, grand-niece of Louis Riel; **Adam Gaudry**, assistant professor of Native Studies, University of Alberta; and **Peter Hinton**, director of the COC's new production of *Louis Riel*.

Tickets for this one-time only, one-day event will be available at 10 a.m. on **Tuesday, April 4**. To reserve a FREE ticket, visit **coc.ca/HearingRiel** or call the COC Box Office at 416-363-8231. There is a limit of one ticket per person. As this is a free event, our policy is to overbook. In case of a full program, your reservation may not guarantee admission. Unclaimed reservations will be released to standby customers 10 minutes prior to the start of the program. We recommend that you arrive early. General admission seating will be in effect.

## HEARING RIEL

365

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Food and beverages are not permitted in R. Fraser Elliott Hall.

## PATRON INFORMATION AND POLICIES

**COAT AND PARCEL CHECK** To uphold the safety of the building, oversized bags and parcels may be prohibited from entering R. Fraser Elliott Hall. Patrons attending COC performances may be offered complimentary parcel check. Coat check is located in the Lower Lobby, where the following services are also available: booster seats, back supports, infrared hearing-assistive devices and rental of binoculars, on a first-come, first-served basis.

**GO SCENT FREE** In consideration of patrons with allergies, please avoid wearing perfumed beauty products and fragrances.

**NOISE ETIQUETTE** Patrons are reminded that R. Fraser Elliott Hall is an extremely lively auditorium and that all audience noise will be accentuated and audible to other patrons. Turn off all electronic devices, avoid talking, coughing, humming, moving loose seats, kicking the backs of seats, rustling programs, and unwrapping candies or cough drops. Please remain in your seat until the performance has completely ended and the house lights have been turned on.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES** The use of mobile and smartphones and all other electronic devices is extremely disruptive and is strictly prohibited during performances. If a patron has an emergency and needs to be contacted during a performance, he or she should contact Patron Services for assistance before the performance.

**CAMERAS/RECORDING DEVICES** The use of cameras, video cameras or sound-recording devices of any kind is prohibited in R. Fraser Elliott Hall during performances. If you'd like to get a picture inside the auditorium, do so before the performance begins. However, the design and direction of the production is restricted under intellectual property law, so patrons must have the permission of the COC to take pictures of the production's set or the stage before or during performances. Any person using an unauthorized recording device will be required to surrender or erase any recordings, photographic or digital images and may be asked to leave. No refunds will be issued. Be sure to take a look at our Facebook page for official photos of our productions!

**LATECOMERS** In the interest of safety and for the comfort of all patrons and performers, latecomers may not enter the auditorium or be seated unless there is a suitable break in the performance (usually intermission). Patrons leaving the auditorium during the performance or returning late after intermission may not be readmitted or may be accommodated in an alternate viewing location.

**FOOD AND BEVERAGE** Outside food and beverages are prohibited from entering the venue.

**RECORDINGS** Patrons consent to appear in recorded material by attending FSC performances/events.

**OBJECTIONABLE BEHAVIOUR** Management reserves the right to refuse admission without refund, and expel from the premises, any person whose presence or conduct is deemed objectionable.

**CHILDREN AND BABES-IN-ARMS** All patrons, including children, must have a ticket for the performance. All children must be seated next to an accompanying adult. Young children should be able to sit quietly throughout the performance. If unable to do so, children and their accompanying adult will be asked to leave the auditorium. Babes-in-arms will not be admitted.

**MEDICAL EMERGENCIES AND FIRST AID** A house doctor is present at all performances. Please contact an usher if medical services are required.

**LOST AND FOUND** During performances please speak with an usher or visit Patron Services at the Coat Check in the Lower Lobby. Following performances, please e-mail **lostandfound@ coc.ca** or call **416-342-5200** for information.

#### TICKET SERVICES

Canadian Opera Company subscriptions and individual tickets are available through COC Ticket Services ONLINE: **coc.ca** 

- BY PHONE: **416-363-8231** or long distance **1-800-250-4653** Monday to Friday – 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday – 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- IN PERSON: Four Seasons Centre Box Office 145 Queen St. W. Monday to Saturday – 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. or through first intermission Sunday (performance days only) – 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. or through first intermission

The Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts Box Office also services ticketing needs for The National Ballet of Canada and all other Four Seasons Centre events.

**GROUP SALES** Groups of 10 or more enjoy savings on regular individual ticket prices. For more information or to reserve seats call **416-306-2356**.

**PARKING** There is parking on a first-come, first-served basis for about 200 vehicles underneath the Four Seasons Centre. The entrance is located on the west side of York Street, south of Queen Street. Additional parking is conveniently located just steps away in the Green P lot underneath Nathan Phillips Square. For directions visit **greenp.com**.

FOUR SEASONS CENTRE FACILITY TOURS Tours of the Four Seasons Centre include backstage access! For more information, visit fourseasonscentre.ca.

**PRE-PERFORMANCE OPERA CHATS** COC Education and Outreach staff and guest speakers offer free, insightful chats about the stories, music and background of all COC productions, 45 minutes prior to each performance in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre. Doors open one hour before each performance. Seating is limited and available on a first-come, first served basis. Please join the line-up early to avoid disappointment.

**SPECIAL EVENTS AND CATERING** The Four Seasons Centre is available for rental for all of your presentation, meeting or special events needs, with spaces accommodating from 20 to 2,000 people and full catering services. For further details visit **fourseasonscentre.ca** or call **416-342-5233**.

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