UBC Opera
2021/2022 Season
Dear Donors, Subscribers and Audience Members,

Since March 12, 2020, we have been apart! We at the UBC Opera Ensemble have missed you and look forward to welcoming you back to our performances at the Botanical Garden, the Old Auditorium and the Chan Centre. In the 2020–2021 season, we performed three operas and four concerts for you virtually, but that is just not the same as having you with us. Your energy, enthusiasm, excitement, kindness and support are sorely missed.

We will do everything in our power to make UBC Opera a safe environment for you as you experience the return of the live performing arts. Safety plans have been created for our performances, and we will follow all precautions. Proof of double vaccination will be mandatory for all members of the audience as well as all performers, staff and crew at UBC Opera performances. Safety first!

Our season will start on October 3 by offering our audiences a wonderful Opera Tea in the intimate setting of the UBC Botanical Garden. We will introduce you to our new students and re-acquaint you with some of your favourite young talent from past performances.

There is nothing like a laugh to make you feel good, lift your spirits and remind you of when life was much simpler—something I think we all need. Gilbert and Sullivan’s wonderful operetta, The Gondoliers, takes you to beautiful Venice and mysterious Barataria! We hope the wit and charm of this delightful operetta; the beautiful sets and costumes; and the energy, joy and talent of our UBC Opera Ensemble, conductor Leslie Dala, and members of the Vancouver Opera Orchestra will bring you sheer fun and laughter.

We will celebrate the upcoming Holiday Season with you on November 28 with an Opera Tea at the historic Old Auditorium. Opera excerpts from favourite composers will be presented along with holiday songs from around the world.

From January 29 to February 6, 2022, we will bring our long-awaited performances of Le nozze di Figaro to the stage at the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts. Conductor Gordon Gerrard will lead the Mozart masterpiece with three different casts of the UBC Opera Ensemble. One of the most performed works in the opera repertoire, this timeless and seminal work will delight seasoned and new audiences, young and old. The beauty and brilliance of the music will be matched by the stunning sets, costumes, lighting and ambience of the production.

On March 12 & 13, we will present Shadow Catch by Dorothy Chang, Benton Roark, Jennifer Butler, and Farshid Samandari: a chamber opera developed in 2011 by a team of Vancouver-based artists, set in Vancouver’s Oppenheimer Park. Joining the UBC Opera Ensemble will be conductor Jonathan Girard. Shadow Catch will be presented as part of a symposium exploring the complex history of the land on which Oppenheimer Park and the Powell Street area stand: a land that has seen great joy, sorrow and tragedy from its ancient history to the present day.

We will present a Concert of Excerpts in the Old Auditorium on March 26 & 27 featuring our talented young singers in a wide variety of repertoire. Something for everyone!

On April 10, we will present an Opera Tea celebrating the arrival of spring and the beauty of our incredible Botanical Garden, where the beauty of the human voice will match that of nature's splendour on display in the gardens!

Later in April, we will welcome Simone Osborne (soprano), Gordon Bintner (bass-baritone) back to Vancouver for a Singer Behind the Song event. As theatres around the world are still firming up their performance dates Simone and Gordon cannot announce the exact day of their concert, but it will take place in April, and we will all be able to welcome them back home to Canada.

Rusalka is one of the most beloved operas in the Czech Republic. With our strong connection to that country and culture, we are pleased to bring Dvořák’s masterpiece to Vancouver, led by Czech conductor, Norbert Baxa. Rich with brilliant trios, resounding choruses, poignant arias, and magical moments conjured up by an evil witch, our audiences will quickly understand why this opera is a favourite not only in the Czech Republic but throughout the world.

Of course, we will be back at Bard on the Beach in September, 2022 and hope that you will join us for those very special evenings with the UBC Opera Ensemble, members of the Vancouver Opera Ensemble and the Bard himself, who will join us on the stage as our famous MC, Christopher Gaze.

As you see, we have an outstanding season planned for you, and I hope that you will join us. We always knew that our audience was vital to us, but this past year has made that even more apparent to us. You are the other half of our performances, and we need you back!

We look forward to welcoming you once again in person!

All best wishes and do take care,

Nancy Hermiston, O.C.
THE GONDOLIERS
(or, The King of Barataria)

OPERETTA IN TWO ACTS
SUNG IN ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SURTITLES

Arthur Sullivan  |  Composer
William Schwenck Gilbert  |  Librettist

NOV 4, 5, 6 — 7:30 P.M.  |  NOV 7 — 2:00 P.M.  |  2021
OLD AUDITORIUM

In inimitable G&S fashion, this light-hearted, laughter-filled operetta will have you tapping your toes and humming along as each new twist and turn of the plot widens the smile on your face. The twelfth collaboration between Gilbert and Sullivan, *The Gondoliers* boasts the best of their wit, style, and indisputable talent!

The two charming eponymous Venetian Gondoliers, Marco and Giuseppe, discover that one of them is in fact the Prince of Barataria, and must ascend the throne. There’s only one problem: the gondolier who raised them has forgotten which of them is the Prince! Matters are further complicated when the Duke and Duchess of Plaza Toro reveal that their daughter Casilda (who is herself in love with another man) was married to the Prince as an infant—which comes as a shock to Giuseppe and Marco, who have recently married the contadine Tessa and Gianetta! As the vivacious characters attempt to resolve these circumstances, the search begins for the one person who can identify the true Prince…
LE NOZZE DI FIGARO
(The Marriage of Figaro)

COMIC OPERA IN FOUR ACTS
SUNG IN ITALIAN WITH ENGLISH SURTITLES

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | Composer
Lorenzo da Ponte | Librettist

JAN 29, FEB 3, 4, 5, 2022 — 7:30 P.M.
JAN 30, FEB 6, 2022 — 2:00 P.M.
CHAN CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Based on Beaumarchais’ stage comedy, Le nozze di Figaro was the first of three collaborations between Da Ponte and Mozart. On May 1, 1786, it had its successful premiere in Vienna, receiving its Prague debut that December. Critics reported “a masterpiece... no piece has ever caused such a sensation.” This sensation led to the commissioning of another famous Mozart/Da Ponte opera, Don Giovanni.

Le nozze di Figaro is regarded as a cornerstone of the standard operatic repertoire, appearing sixth on the list of the most-performed operas worldwide. The story revolves around engaged and soon-to-be-married Figaro and Susanna, servants of the Count and Countess Almaviva. The Count has grown bored with his marriage and looks to re-engage his feudal rights (droit du seigneur) in which he—instead of Figaro—would consummate the marriage on the couple’s wedding night. Through the clever manipulations of Susanna, Figaro, and the Countess, that right is never restored, and the Count’s love for his Countess is finally rekindled. Adding to the confusion, the stress, and the fun are the antics of an amorous teenager, a scheming old maid aided by a doctor/lawyer, a drunken gardener, and a silly young girl. Much happens on a single “folle journée”—a crazy day.

Gordon Gerrard | Conductor
Nancy Hermiston | Director

With Members of the Vancouver Opera Orchestra
Shadow Catch recounts the dreams of a young runaway, newly arrived in Vancouver. As the night progresses, he is visited in turn by the spirits of four troubled souls who once inhabited the area: the spirit of an old maple tree whose grove was decimated by loggers, a member of the brilliant Asahi baseball team whose players were sent off to Japanese internment camps, the Madame of a 1920s brothel who is haunted by her tragic past and the murder of one of her young girls, and a roughneck policeman from the 1930s who fell to corruption. This is a story not only about characters from Vancouver’s historical and cultural background, but about the journey and transformation that must take place in order to confront one’s greatest fears and regrets.

Description adapted from http://shadowcatch.blogspot.com
RUSALKA
LYRIC FAIRY TALE IN THREE ACTS
SUNG IN CZECH WITH ENGLISH SURTITLES

Antonín Dvořák | Composer
Jaroslav Kvapil | Librettist

After Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué’s Undine

JUNE 23, 24, 25 — 7:30 P.M. | JUNE 26 — 2:00 P.M. | 2022
OLD AUDITORIUM

Romantic, ethereal, and hauntingly beautiful, Dvořák’s dramatic music soars with melody, romance, and longing. *Rusalka* is not only Dvořák’s finest and most enduringly popular opera but also one of the most deeply moving operas of all. One need only hear Rusalka’s renowned “Song to the Moon” to understand the depth and beauty of her eponymous opera!

*Rusalka* tells the story of The Little Mermaid (as seen in Slavic mythology) who gives her voice to a wicked witch for a chance at love with a mortal Prince. Unfortunately for Rusalka, the similarities to Disney’s iconic adaptation end there: Rusalka’s tale is rife with woe. Her desperate longing to experience true love plunges her into an emotional storm, until she must choose whether or not to make the ultimate sacrifice for love. While tragic, *Rusalka* nonetheless reminds all who experience the opera of the power and joy of love.

Norbert Baxa | Conductor
Nancy Hermiston | Director

With Members of the Vancouver Opera Orchestra
The Singer Behind the Song

APRIL, OLD AUDITORIUM, DATE AND TIME TO BE ARRANGED

Simone Osborne

Canadian soprano Simone Osborne has been hailed as “a joy to hear” (Los Angeles Times) with “a sweet and clear sound, sensitive phrasing and gleaming sustained high notes” (New York Times). Ms. Osborne was one of the youngest winners of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and then completed her tenure as a member of the Canadian Opera Company Studio Ensemble. She has returned to the Canadian Opera Company for numerous projects, including the 50th Anniversary production of Harry Somers’ Louis Riel (as Marguerite Riel), Michaëla in Bizet’s Carmen, Oscar in Un Ballo in Maschera and Musetta in La Bohème. Ms. Osborne has performed widely across North America, including frequent appearances with Vancouver Opera, and currently resides in Germany with her husband, Gordon Bintner.

Gordon Bintner

The Grand Prize Winner of the OSM Standard Life Competition (2011) and First Prize and People’s Choice Award recipient of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble Studio Competition (2012), Canadian bass-baritone Gordon Bintner appears internationally in a wide range of operatic and concert repertoire. Recent career highlights include the title role in the Canadian Opera Company’s production of Eugene Onegin; Harlekin in Ariadne auf Naxos, Papageno in Die Zauberflöte, Argante in Rinaldo, Vladislav in Dalibor, Der Graf in Der ferne Klang, and Il Conte in Le nozze di Figaro at Oper Frankfurt; Phorbas in Achim Freyer’s new production of Oedipe at the Salzburg Festival, conducted by Ingo Metzmacher. Currently a member of the Oper Frankfurt Company, Mr. Bintner lives in Germany with his wife, Simone Osborne.
Opera Excerpts Concert

SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 2022 — 7.30 P.M.  
SUNDAY, MARCH 27, 2022 — 2 P.M.  
OLD AUDITORIUM

This will be an evening embracing all periods and styles of opera and operetta. Something for everyone! A concert to celebrate the hard work of all our students over the year. Excerpts of works from Handel, Mozart, Massenet, Puccini, Verdi, Richard Strauss, Dvořák, Johann Strauss and Gilbert and Sullivan will be performed.

Opera Teas

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2021  |  2 P.M.  |  UBC BOTANICAL GARDEN  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2021  |  2 P.M.  |  OLD AUDITORIUM  
SUNDAY, APRIL 10, 2022  |  2 P.M.  |  UBC BOTANICAL GARDEN

Opera Teas bring you closer to the performers onstage. Enjoy a concert of opera arias and song favourites in a casual setting in our theatre or at the UBC Botanical Garden.

The Opera Tea on October 3 will feature our new students. It is always exciting to meet and hear these talented young singers who have joined us from all over the world. Additional opera teas will be held in November and April.
Keep your eyes on the ubcopera.com website for further updates and announcements.

UBC THEATRE & FILM
2021/22 SEASON*

NOVEMBER 25 – DECEMBER 4, 2021
MACHINAL
Sophie Treadwell
Directed by Laura DiCicco
Frederic Wood Theatre

FEBRUARY 10–19, 2022
OIL
Ella Hickson
Directed by Moya O’Connell
Frederic Wood Theatre

MARCH 17–26, 2022
CORIOLANUS
William Shakespeare
Directed by Tanya Mathivanan
Telus Studio Theatre
Chan Centre for the Performing Arts

www.theatrefilm.ubc.ca

UBC Theatre & Film

*All program information subject to change. No performances Sunday or Monday.
Helping the Talent of Today become the Stars of Tomorrow!

Did you know that current students and alumni of the UBC Opera Ensemble are performing and teaching in Canada, the United States, Europe, Asia, South America, and Africa? Our singers are having success all over the world!

Every year, many of you ask me personally how you can support the UBC Opera Ensemble, and help our singers get the best possible education. I believe that in addition to an excellent academic education, it is essential to have an experiential education of the highest standard as well.

As such, we present three fully-staged productions annually, complete with orchestra. Did you know that most of our production budget for these performances comes from donations to the UBC Opera Ensemble? In addition to these performances, donations help fund scholarships for students, the collaboration with the Vancouver Opera Orchestra as well as financing opportunities to work with international opera professionals: conductors, coaches, singers—all of these serve to instruct, mentor, and guide our singers along their career path.

“Thanks to your generous support, the UBC Opera program maintains a professional caliber. I am confident that since I have worked so thoroughly with experts from the opera world, the transition between university and a professional career will be seamless.” —Matthew McLellan

I would like to say a very sincere word of appreciation to all of our faithful donors, subscribers, and our enthusiastic audience, who, through their support, have made it possible to transform our students’ education. If you are not already one of our supporters, I would invite you to consider becoming a regular audience member, subscriber, or donor. Each dollar donated enriches the education of our talented young singers, which can have a tremendous impact on their future careers. No donation is too small—or too large! Each makes dreams come true, changes lives, and is truly greatly appreciated.

With warmest thanks,

Nancy Hermiston, O.C.
Connect with UBC Opera

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