

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**VANCOUVER OPERA CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF SPECTACULAR
MUSIC WITH GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY CONCERT & GALA**

Vancouver, BC ~ On November 6, 2009, Vancouver Opera will salute 50 years of touching lives with music, drama and spectacle, at a very special celebration: **The Golden Anniversary Concert & Gala**.

Toasting VO's illustrious past and looking ahead to its shining future, the glamorous evening will celebrate this milestone anniversary with magnificent performances at the Golden Anniversary Concert at the Orpheum Theatre, followed by a Gala Dinner at the historic Commodore Ballroom.

The Golden Anniversary Concert

The Golden Anniversary Concert will feature performances from international and Canadian opera stars, including **Tracy Dahl, Brett Polegato, Yalun Zhang, Kimberly Barber, Kathleen Brett, Benjamin Butterfield, Alain Coulombe** and **Sally Dibblee**, with the VO Orchestra and Chorus, all under the baton of VO's music director, **Maestro Jonathan Darlington**.

The program will include favourites from Puccini, Mozart, Verdi, Bizet, Richard Strauss and Korngold, as well as two very special treats: a sneak-peek at ***Lillian Alling***, a brand-new opera by John Estacio and John Murrell commissioned by VO that will round out the Golden Anniversary celebrations with its world premiere in October 2010; and the ensemble performance of a selection from Johann Strauss's beloved and highly entertaining *Die Fledermaus*. The scene is a party at the home of Prince Orlofsky, where the only rule is that each does according to his or her own taste: "*chacun à son goût!*".

With surprise guests and, of course, virtuosic singing, this delightful performance will reflect the merriment of the Golden Anniversary celebrations.

Attendees will also view a display of masterful, highly decorative cakes - celebrating VO's Golden Anniversary - from some of the city's most talented cake artists, including Queen of Tarts, sweet e's, and Cake Tease. Gala Package ticket holders will be treated to an exclusive pre-Concert Cocktail Reception.

The Golden Anniversary Gala

Following the Concert, Gala package ticket holders will continue the celebration at the historic Commodore Ballroom with a sumptuous dinner catered by the Four Seasons Hotel Vancouver.

Stars from the opera world will dine alongside attendees, and Associate Conductor and VO Chorus Director **Leslie Dala** will lead soprano **Heather Pawsey** and mezzo-soprano **Barbara Towell** in cabaret-style musical entertainment. Some of the biggest stars in the opera world will make presentations in person and by video link. The evening's entertainment will include a cross-cultural collaboration of the Japanese and First Nations performance groups Sawagi and Tiqilap.

Tickets

The Golden Anniversary Concert & Gala celebration takes place on **Friday, November 6, 2009**.

The Concert begins at 7:00pm at the Orpheum Theatre; the Gala begins at 8:30pm at the historic Commodore Ballroom.

Tickets to the Golden Anniversary Concert are \$19 - \$75 and are available at www.vancouveropera.ca or through the VO Ticket Centre at 604-683-0222.

Gala Package tickets include both the Concert and Gala portions of the evening as well as a private pre-Concert Reception and valet parking. The Gala Package is \$650 (includes \$300 tax receipt) and is available exclusively through the VO Ticket Centre at 604-683-0222.

Artists and program are subject to change