

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fall in love at the opera with

**MADAMA BUTTERFLY**

Gorgeous production of Puccini's beloved opera marks the return of stunning soprano Mihoko Kinoshita and the VO début of soprano Jee Hye Han

**Vancouver, BC** ~ Honour, love, heartbreak and sacrifice play out in a breathtakingly gorgeous production of Giacomo Puccini's beautiful **Madama Butterfly**. Spine-tingling, emotionally searing and achingly beautiful, Puccini's exquisite work remains one of the world's most captivating operas.

Two stunning sopranos share the title role: **Mihoko Kinoshita**, last seen in VO's 2010 production of **Madama Butterfly**, and **Jee Hye Han**, making her VO début. Tenors **Richard Troxell** and **Adam Luther** sing opposite them.

**Madama Butterfly** is onstage at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre, corner of Georgia and Hamilton Streets, Vancouver, B.C. for 6 performances, March 5 - 13, 2016.

Saturday, March 5 • 7:30pm  
Sunday, March 6 • 2:00pm matinée  
Thursday, March 10 • 7:30pm  
Friday, March 11 • 7:30pm  
Saturday, March 12 • 7:30pm  
Sunday, March 13 • 2:00pm matinée

**Madama Butterfly** will be sung in Italian with English translations projected above the stage. Approximate running time: 2 hours and 40 minutes, including 1 intermission.

Tickets are available exclusively through the Vancouver Opera Ticket Centre: 604-683-0222 or [www.vancouveropera.ca](http://www.vancouveropera.ca). Visa, MasterCard and American Express are accepted. Special pricing for groups of at least 10, and for families, is available by phone.

Follow Vancouver Opera on Twitter and Facebook for exclusive offers such as VO's Get O.U.T (Opera Under 35) program, with **\$35 tickets for patrons aged under 35**.

## CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

Conducted by	Leslie Dala
Directed by	Michael Cavanagh
Cio-Cio-San (March 5, 10, 12)	Mihoko Kinoshita
Cio-Cio-San (March 6, 11, 13)	Jee Hye Han
Pinkerton (March 5, 10, 12)	Richard Troxell
Pinkerton (March 6, 11, 13)	Adam Luther
Suzuki	Allyson McHardy
Sharpless	Gregory Dahl
Goro	Julius Ahn
The Bonze	Jeremy Bowes
The Imperial Commissioner/ Prince Yamadori	Alan Macdonald
Kate Pinkerton	Eden Tremayne *
The Official Registrar	Kevin Armstrong
Cio-Cio-San's cousin	Julia Rooney
Cio-Cio-San's mother	Dionne Sellinger
Cio-Cio-San's aunt	Barbara Towell
Yakuside	Adam Kozak
Sorrow	Vera Frederickson
	Clara Griesdale
Chorus Director / Assistant Conductor	Kinza Tyrrell
Production Designer	Patrick Clark
Lighting Designer	Harry Frehner
Wig Designer	Stacey Butterworth
Musical Preparation	Tina Chang
Stage Manager	Theresa Tsang
Assistant Director	Brenna Corner *

\* Member of the Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program

## THE SINGERS

Returning to Vancouver Opera is Japanese soprano **Mihoko Kinoshita**, one of the world's most in-demand Butterflies (Cio-Cio-San). "She mixes flawless singing with the kind of emotion that isn't just felt, but lived," raved the *Georgia Straight* for her performance here in 2010. The *Globe and Mail* agreed: "Japanese soprano Mihoko Kinoshita was superb as the vulnerable Cio-Cio San, her voice lustrous, flexible and full, shot with silver at soft dynamics, powerful at *fortes*, and flawless throughout this hugely demanding role."

Making her VO debut is Korean soprano **Jee Hye Han**. She was awarded second prize in the 2009 Tagliavini Competition (Austria) and the second prize at Dong Ah Competition in Seoul. In 2010 she won first prize at the Concours International d'Opéra de Marseille. She lives in Vienna.

Tenor **Richard Troxell** will sing Pinkerton alongside Ms. Kinoshita's Butterfly. Mr. Troxell was last seen as Don José in 2014's *Carmen*. His performance as Pinkerton in the award-winning film *Madame Butterfly*, presented by Martin Scorsese, received high praise. *The New York Times* deemed his performance "the most dramatically satisfying vocal characterization" in the film. His Pinkerton is one of the most viewed performances of this role.

**Adam Luther**, also a tenor, will sing Pinkerton with Ms. Han. This will be Mr. Luther's VO début. The Newfoundland native is quickly establishing himself as one of Canada's finest young leading tenors and has been applauded for his "powerful, beautifully sculpted tenor" and "bright copper sound".

Mezzo-soprano **Allyson McHardy**'s voice has been described as radiant, dusky, incandescent, and sumptuous. Currently a resident of Toronto, Ms. McHardy last appeared on the VO stage as Olga in 2008's *Eugene Onegin*. She will sing Suzuki.

Baritone and Winnipeg-native **Gregory Dahl** last appeared on the VO stage as Enrico in 2010's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Mr. Dahl appears on the DVD recordings of Canadian operas *Beatrice Chancy* (Rolfe/Clarke) and *Filumena* (Estacio/Murrell), as well as on the CD recording *World's Greatest Opera for Kids*.

Lauded as "brilliant" (*Broadway World*) and praised for his "golden-toned" voice (*San Francisco Chronicle*), internationally acclaimed Korean-American tenor **Julius Ahn** makes his VO début as Goro. Bass **Jeremy Bowes** makes his VO début as The Bonze and recently finished two seasons with the Sächsische Staatsoper Dresden. Baritone **Alan Macdonald**, last seen in Vancouver Opera's world-premiere production of *Stickboy*, in 2014, will sing The Imperial Commissioner and Prince Yamadori.

Soprano **Eden Tremayne**, a participant in this year's Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program, will sing Kate Pinkerton; baritone **Kevin Armstrong**, a member of the VO Chorus, will sing The Official Registrar.

Vancouver-based soprano **Julia Rooney**, last seen in Vancouver Opera In Schools' touring production of *The Barber of Barkerville*, will sing Cio-Cio-San's cousin. Mezzo-soprano **Dionne Sellinger**, last seen on the VO stage as Alisa in 2010's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, sings Cio-Cio-San's mother. Mezzo-soprano **Barbara Towell**, last seen on the VO stage in 2015's *Sweeney Todd*, sings Cio-Cio-San's aunt. Tenor **Adam Kozak** sings Yakuside.

The role of Cio-Cio-San and Pinkerton's child, Sorrow, will be shared by **Vera Frederickson** and **Clara Griesdale**.

VO's Associate Conductor and Chorus Director **Leslie Dala** returns to the podium to conduct (**Kinza Tyrrell**, Chorus Director / Assistant Conductor).

**Michael Cavanagh** returns to Vancouver Opera to direct. Mr. Cavanagh's previous work with VO includes directing the 2010 Canadian premiere of John Adams's *Nixon in China*, in a production created by VO. A native of Winnipeg, he has directed more than 100 productions for opera companies across North America and Europe.

### THE STORY IN BRIEF

In Nagasaki, a pleasure-seeking American naval officer leases a house and weds a young geisha. He is only briefly enchanted with his “Butterfly”, while she gives herself wholly to the marriage. When he abandons her and then returns to claim their child, Butterfly is devastated and dishonoured. In a supreme act of devotion to her ancestors, she ends her life. Read a full synopsis at [www.vancouveropera.ca](http://www.vancouveropera.ca).

### BACKGROUND

The origins of the *Madama Butterfly* story are found in many sources. Giacomo Puccini based it on the short story “Madame Butterfly” (1898) by John Luther Long, which was also dramatized by David Belasco. Inspiration also came to Puccini from the loosely autobiographical novel *Madame Chrysanthème* (1887) by Pierre Loti.

The first version of *Madama Butterfly* premiered in Milan at La Scala on February 17, 1904. It was, like many now-beloved operas, poorly received. Puccini substantially revised the opera, and on May 28, 1904 it was performed again, in Brescia, and enjoyed overwhelming success. Puccini went on to write three more revisions, with the fifth version now considered the standard version.

*Madama Butterfly* has since become a staple of pop culture, with the story forming the basis of many film adaptations and the music appearing in everything from dance remixes to animation. A substantial list is available at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madama\\_Butterfly](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madama_Butterfly).

### FULL TICKET INFORMATION

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