

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**VO's spectacular signature gala raises funds for education programs  
BMO Overture**

Vancouver philanthropists contribute generously to a successful evening of sumptuous food, award-winning wines, outstanding entertainment and exciting raffle prizes

**Vancouver, BC** ~ Vancouver Opera thanks the attendees and sponsors of BMO Overture. Together, the gifts of Vancouver's philanthropic community have raised funds that will support VO's ongoing engagement of more than 50,000 youth – many from chronically under-served communities – with innovative community programming.

**BMO Financial Group** was Title Sponsor for this year's gala, which paid tribute to the glamour of Versailles and attracted more than 300 discerning guests, including corporate, cultural and community leaders drawn from throughout the Lower Mainland.

Guests enjoyed an elegant dinner prepared by **Executive Chef Ned Bell of Four Seasons Hotel Vancouver**, paired with award-winning wines from **Mission Hill Family Estate Winery**, and a raffle prize generously donated by **MJ Jewellers**, all presented on the stage of the landmark Queen Elizabeth Theatre. Multi-platinum and Juno award-winning vocal group **The Tenors** provided the entertainment.

**Vancouver Opera recognizes the generosity of sponsors of BMO Overture:**

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“VO is so proud to have presented this event, and is grateful to all our sponsors, attendees, volunteers and audiences who support Vancouver Opera in so many ways,” said **James W. Wright**, General Director of Vancouver Opera.

“We’ve always been proud to support Vancouver Opera productions, such as this year’s *Evita*. BMO is thrilled to have been the title sponsor for the first time for this prestigious and well-loved event,” said **Michael Bonner, SVP & Regional Head, BC & Yukon, BMO Bank of Montreal**. “We are glad to have helped bring this wonderful art form to youth around B.C. with the BMO Overture Gala.”

**BMO Overture** was organized by a committee of VO staff and community volunteers, chaired by prominent Vancouver arts supporters and philanthropists **Chantelle Wong** and **Cindy Richmond**.

VO was founded in 1958 by a group of visionary community leaders who believed in the value of the performing arts to the life of a great city, and who recognized the power of opera to connect people to the universal human drama.

VO strives to be the destination performing arts organization that entertains, stimulates and enriches British Columbians, driven by programming that redefines 'opera' and revolutionizes its accessibility and community value.