



vancouveropera

# 2016–2017

news release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 17, 2016

CONTACT

Selina Rajani, 604-331-4824

[srajani@vancouveropera.ca](mailto:srajani@vancouveropera.ca)

A landmark season of opera entertainment

## VANCOUVER OPERA 2016-2017

Featuring

### Vancouver Opera Festival 2017

Inaugural festival promises a multi-dimensional immersive experience

**Vancouver, BC** ~ Vancouver Opera is pleased to announce the lineup for its 2016-2017 season, featuring Vancouver Opera Festival 2017: a landmark experience of events, performances, art and entertainment.

The 2016-2017 season will include Engelbert Humperdinck's classic favourite **Hansel & Gretel** (November - December 2016) and Festival productions of Giuseppe Verdi's **Otello**, Jake Heggie's **Dead Man Walking**, and W.A. Mozart's **The Marriage of Figaro** (April - May 2017). In January, 2017, VO will co-present a stunning take on Verdi's **Macbeth** with PuSh International Performing Arts Festival and IL CENTRO Italian Cultural Centre.

In making the season announcement, **James Wright**, Vancouver Opera's General Director, said, "The 2016-2017 season truly is a landmark for the company and the community. We have selected four wonderful operas to appeal to people of all ages and interests. Three of them will be new to many people: Vancouver Opera has presented *Hansel and Gretel* and *Otello* only once each, in 1966 and 1981 respectively; and *Dead Man Walking* – a modern classic, and the most successful new opera of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – is a company premiere. The fourth, *The Marriage of Figaro*, will be 'new' too: it will feature contemporary set and costume design and an intimate production that I'm sure will create excitement and pleasure for our audiences, both seasoned and new alike. And, to add even more excitement we are delighted to be co-presenting a remarkable version of *Macbeth* at PuSh Festival 2017."

"We are especially thrilled to be launching the inaugural **Vancouver Opera Festival**, April 28 through May 18, 2017. The three major opera productions and events, experiences, and entertainment in the Festival tent will combine to create an immersive, eclectic and diverse world of music, vocal and visual art. We can't share details quite yet, but we are working on some really exciting – and perhaps unexpected – programming."

Added Wright, “I would like to say that I am very pleased with our Board of Directors’ selection of Kim Gaynor as my successor as General Director. I have met Kim several times over the years and know of her many accomplishments here in Canada and in Europe. Under her leadership, together with the company’s esteemed Music Director Jonathan Darlington and our experienced artistic and administrative staff, Vancouver Opera Festival and the company are in exceedingly good hands.”

## HANSEL & GRETEL

**November - December 2016**

*A classic opera favourite to delight the young and the young-at-heart*

Vancouver Opera brings a beloved holiday tradition to the Vancouver Playhouse stage in a new production for audiences of all ages designed by Canada’s renowned **Old Trout Puppet Workshop**. Lost in the woods and pursued by a witch, **Hansel & Gretel** must use all their wits and trickery to avoid a terrible fate. VO’s production will include astonishing puppets as well as other playful surprises in this family-friendly holiday treat. Engelbert Humperdinck’s familiar dramatic score, adapted for the intimate Playhouse, will be conducted by **the young British phenomenon Alexander Prior** and will be directed by **Brenna Corner**. Dates and casting details below.

## VANCOUVER OPERA FESTIVAL 2017

**April 28- May 18, 2017**

*Otello, Dead Man Walking, The Marriage of Figaro plus more under the Festival Tent*

### OTELLO

Giuseppe Verdi

The inaugural Vancouver Opera Festival opens with **Otello**, a production not seen on the VO stage in 36 years. Verdi’s large-scale tragic masterpiece marries Shakespeare’s poetry with sumptuous orchestrations and unsurpassed drama. Conducted by **Jonathan Darlington** and directed by **Michael Cavanagh**, this new production features **Clifton Forbis** as Otello, **Erin Wall** as Desdemona and **Gregory Dahl** as Iago. Dates and casting details below.

### DEAD MAN WALKING

Jake Heggie • Libretto by Terrence McNally

Based on Sister Helen Prejean’s biographical account of her relationship with inmates on death row, and following the Oscar-winning movie of the same name, **Dead Man Walking** chronicles the story of Joseph

De Rocher, a convicted Louisiana murderer who is befriended by a Catholic nun seeking to understand the nature of divine forgiveness.

Conducted by **Jonathan Darlington** and directed by **Joel Ivany**, this new production and Vancouver Opera premiere features **J'nai Bridges** as Sister Helen Prejean, **Daniel Okulitch** as Joseph De Rocher and **Judith Forst** as Mrs. Patrick De Rocher. Dates and casting details below.

## THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

W.A. Mozart

Mozart's perennial favourite is funny, tender and profoundly human. This lively new production will feature contemporary set and costume design. It will be conducted by **Leslie Dala** and directed by **Rachel Peake**. Dates and details below.

## OFF THE MAIN STAGE

In addition to three opera productions at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre and Vancouver Playhouse, a large Festival tent on the Q.E. Theatre plaza will host additional festival events and activities for all ages and create an immersive festival world. Vancouver Opera is partnering with noted Vancouver producer, musician and festival maker **Thomas Anselmi** to develop creative programming ideas with wide-ranging appeal for Vancouver audiences. Anselmi is a partner in **The Arrival Agency**, well known and respected in Vancouver for its innovative creation of cultural experiences. Among their many accomplishments, Anselmi and his partners have re-imagined and revitalized the Waldorf Hotel, produced Food Cart Fest and the Khatsahlano Street Party, programmed FUSE at the Vancouver Art Gallery, and re-opened The Fox Cabaret.

Details of all Festival programming will be announced later. Among the events and experiences we're working on are: a grand choral gathering; a cinema screening with live musical performance; an evening of cabaret with an international vocal artist; chamber music performance; visual art; lectures, workshops and educational programs for all ages, and for families; inventive food; and superb hospitality.

## MACBETH

January 2017

*A stunning co-production with PuSh Festival and IL CENTRO Italian Cultural Centre*

Vancouver Opera is proud to partner with PuSh International Performing Arts Festival and IL CENTRO Italian Cultural Centre to present South African director and playwright **Brett Bailey**'s stunning take on Verdi's **Macbeth**. This vibrant, dark and visceral interpretation sets Shakespeare's story of greed, tyranny and remorse in the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo.



vancouveropera

# 2016–2017

*news release*

Verdi's score has been adapted by Belgian composer **Fabrizio Cassol** for 12 onstage musicians and 10 opera singers. Members of the Vancouver Opera Orchestra will perform alongside 10 singers and two percussionists from South Africa, led by Serbian conductor **Premil Petrović**. This production features **Owen Metsileng** as Macbeth and **Nobulumko Mngxekeza** as Lady Macbeth. Dates and casting details below.

## DATES AND CASTING DETAILS

### **Hansel and Gretel**

Engelbert Humperdinck

Thursday, November 24, 2016 • 7:30pm

Saturday, November 26, 2016 • 7:30pm

Sunday, November 27, 2016 • 2:00pm

Tuesday, November 29, 2016 • 7:30pm

Thursday, December 1, 2016 • 7:30pm

Saturday, December 3, 2016 • 7:30pm

Thursday, December 8, 2016 • 7:30pm

Saturday, December 10, 2016 • 7:30pm

Sunday, December 11, 2016 • 2:00pm

Vancouver Playhouse

In English with English SURTITLES™

New Production

Performance length: approximately 2 hours with one intermission

Suitable for ages 6 and up

Conducted by	Alexander Prior
Directed by	Brenna Corner †
Set, Properties, Costumes, and Puppets designed by	Old Trout Puppet Workshop
Hansel	Pascale Spinney *
Gretel	Taylor Pardell *



vancouveropera

# 2016–2017

*news release*

The Witch	Ryan Downey *
The Mother	Leah Giselle Field *
The Father	Peter Monaghan *
The Sandman / Dew Fairy	Vanessa Oude-Reimerink *

† Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program Alumnus

\* Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program Participant, 2016-2017

## Otello

Giuseppe Verdi

Friday, April 28, 2017 • 7:30pm  
Sunday, April 30, 2017 • 2:00pm  
Thursday, May 4, 2017 • 7:30pm  
Saturday, May 6, 2017 • 7:30pm

Queen Elizabeth Theatre  
In Italian with English SURTITLES™  
New Production

Conducted by	Jonathan Darlington
Directed by	Michael Cavanagh
Designed by	Erhard Rom

Otello	Clifton Forbis
Desdemona	Erin Wall
Iago	Gregory Dahl

## Dead Man Walking

Jake Heggie; Libretto by Terrence McNally

Based on the book by Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ

Saturday, April 29, 2017 • 7:30pm  
Tuesday, May 2, 2017 • 7:30pm  
Friday, May 5, 2017 • 7:30pm  
Sunday, May 7, 2017 • 2:00pm  
Queen Elizabeth Theatre

In English with English SURTITLES™  
New production. Company premiere.

Conducted by Jonathan Darlington  
Directed by Joel Ivany  
Designed by Erhard Rom

Sister Helen Prejean J'nai Bridges  
Joseph De Rocher Daniel Okulitch  
Mrs. Patrick De Rocher Judith Forst

## **The Marriage of Figaro**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Sunday, April 30, 2017 • 2:00pm  
Wednesday, May 3, 2017 • 2:00pm  
Saturday, May 6, 2017 • 1:30pm and 7:30pm  
Tuesday, May 9, 2017 • 7:30pm  
Wednesday, May 10, 2017 • 7:30pm  
Thursday, May 11, 2017 • 7:30pm  
Friday, May 12, 2017 • 7:30pm  
Saturday, May 13 • 1:30pm and 7:30pm  
Tuesday, May 16 • 7:30pm  
Wednesday, May 17 • 7:30pm  
Thursday, May 18 • 7:30pm

Vancouver Playhouse  
In Italian with English SURTITLES™  
New production

Conducted by Leslie Dala  
Directed by Rachel Peake

The cast will be announced soon.