

TOSCA ALBERT HERRING DON GIOVANNI DON CARLO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tickets selling quickly for Vancouver Opera's 2013-14 season opener

TOSCA

Puccini's thrilling masterpiece opens in less than two weeks!

Vancouver, BC ~ Tickets are selling quickly for the first production of Vancouver Opera's 2013-2014 season: Puccini's electrifying drama, *Tosca*. Featuring lavish sets and costumes, a magnificent chorus of more than 50 voices, and with 60 players in the orchestra pit, *Tosca* is a thrill for the senses.

Opening night is **Saturday, October 26, 2013**, with subsequent performances **Thursday, October 31; Friday, November 1; Saturday, November 2 at 7:30pm** and a matinee performance on **Sunday, November 3 at 2:00pm**. All performances are at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Georgia and Hamilton Streets, Vancouver, B.C. Tickets are available exclusively through the Vancouver Opera Ticket Centre, online at www.vancouveropera.ca or by telephone at 604-683-0222. See complete ticket information below.

Vancouver Opera extends a special treat to Hallowe'en night audiences. All patrons who attend the Thursday, October 31 performance of *Tosca in costume* will receive \$10 in "Opera Bucks", which may be used toward the purchase of a single ticket for any remaining 2013-2014 Vancouver Opera performance.

Tosca is set in the year 1800, in Rome, against a backdrop of political turmoil. The painter Mario Cavaradossi and celebrated singer Floria Tosca struggle in vain to escape the evil manipulations of the police chief, Baron Scarpia. *Tosca* is cherished for its heart-wrenching melodies and filled with treachery, murder and indestructible love.

THE CAST

Two powerful sopranos will sing alternating performances of the fiery *Tosca*, one of the most demanding roles in the repertoire. **Michele Capalbo** will be onstage for the October 26, 31 and

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November 2 performances and **Tamara Mancini** will sing the November 1 and 3 performances. Both Ms. Capalbo and Ms. Mancini have been highly praised for the passion and strength of their voices.

Widely renowned as an interpreter of Verdi and Puccini, Ms. Capalbo excels in capturing both the vulnerability and strength of some of opera's greatest heroines. Ms. Mancini studied at the Mannes School of Music in New York and was a San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow, and has sing under eminent maestri including Donald Runnicles, Patrick Summers, Giuseppe Finzi, Nicola Luisotti, Michael Tilson Thomas and John DeMain. *Tosca* will be both Ms. Capalbo's and Ms. Mancini's Vancouver Opera debuts.

The role of Tosca's lover, Cavaradossi, is equally demanding and will be sung by tenors **David Pomeroy** (October 26, 31 and November 2 performances) and **Adam Diegel** (November 1 and 3).

David Pomeroy was last seen on the VO stage as Alfredo in 2011's *La traviata*. Mr. Pomeroy made his Metropolitan Opera debut in the title role of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* opposite soprano Anna Netrebko under the baton of Maestro James Levine. Adam Diegel's Metropolitan Opera debut came in 2010 as Froh in the Robert Lepage production of *Das Rheingold*, conducted by James Levine. Other Metropolitan Opera roles have included Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, conducted by Plácido Domingo, and Ismaele in *Nabucco* led by Paolo Carignani.

The evil Baron Scarpia will be sung by **Gordon Hawkins**. Mr. Hawkins attended the University of Maryland on a baseball scholarship but after tearing his rotator cuff, shifted his focus to music. He auditioned for the Metropolitan Opera soon after graduating and is now celebrated for his complex interpretations and luxuriant baritone voice.

Baritone **Stephen Hegedus** will sing the political fugitive Angelotti. Mr. Hegedus was last seen on the VO stage as Colline in last season's *La bohème*. **Thomas Goerz**, who sang alongside Mr. Hegedus as Benoit and Alcindoro in *La bohème*, will sing the Sacristan. **Frédéric Robert** will sing Spoletta in his VO debut. **Aaron Durand**, who appeared in VO's *The Pirates of Penzance* and *The Magic Flute* last season, will sing Sciaronne. Mr. Durand is a participant in VO's Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program.

VO's Music Director **Jonathan Darlington** will lead the VO Orchestra and VO Chorus (**Leslie Dala**, Chorus Director). **Joseph McClain** will direct. Mr. McClain followed a distinguished career as a singer and stage director by founding, and for fifteen years serving as Artistic Director of, Lyric Opera of

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Austin. He is currently the Founder and Artistic Director Emeritus of Ópera de San Miguel. Mr. McClain last appeared at VO as the director of 2009's *Salome*.

THE STORY IN BRIEF

In Rome in 1800, the cruel chief of police, Baron Scarpia, is consumed with desire for Floria Tosca, the city's most celebrated singer. Using terror, extortion, and fraud, Scarpia threatens Tosca and imprisons her revolutionary lover, Mario Cavaradossi. Before Scarpia can have his way with Tosca, she plunges a knife into his heart. In the opera's harrowing climax, the lovers are reunited, only to be betrayed, from the grave, by the evil Scarpia.

Set in a time of political and religious upheaval, Puccini's masterful drama paints three unforgettable portraits: the fiery, pure-hearted Tosca; the passionate political idealist Mario; and the deeply depraved Scarpia. Puccini's score is filled with soaring melody, authentic Roman atmosphere, and spellbinding tension.

BACKGROUND

Puccini's *Tosca* was the last great 19th century opera. When *Tosca* was first produced in 1900, Puccini already had *La bohème* and *Manon Lescaut* under his belt and was being widely hailed as the heir to Verdi's mantle. With *Tosca*, Puccini was on fire!

Tosca has everything a really great melodrama should have: sex, politics, and religion—a jealous diva; an artist willing to die to oppose tyranny; a depraved baron hiding a lust for dominance behind a mask of piety; love, jealousy, subterfuge, spies, violence, attempted rape, murder and betrayal. Add to that several of Puccini's greatest arias and the luscious orchestration and it's easy to see why *Tosca* has been one of the most frequently staged works in the operatic repertoire.

The character of Tosca is considered to be one of the composer's most varied and interesting heroines, fit for great operatic actresses. Indeed, the great Sarah Bernhardt originated the role on stage, and singers of the stature of Maria Callas have created their own indelible interpretations of the operatic version.

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Puccini said of Sardou's play, upon which the opera is based, "in this Tosca I see the opera which exactly suits me, one without excessive proportions, one which is a decorative spectacle and one which gives opportunity for an abundance of music..."

With his uncanny sense of drama and his astonishing musical genius, Puccini delivered an abundance of thrilling music rarely equaled in intensity or effectiveness in his other operas.

Full Ticket Information

Single tickets are available from the Vancouver Opera Ticket Centre, online at www.vancouveropera.ca, or by phone at 604-683-0222. Visa, MasterCard and American Express are accepted.

Groups: For special pricing for groups of ten or more, call 604-683-0222.

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This production of *Tosca* is sponsored by Mission Hill Family Estate