

TOSCA ALBERT HERRING DON GIOVANNI DON CARLO

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VANCOUVER OPERA SETS NEW COURSE FOR COMPANY'S FUTURE

Strategy includes innovative programming beyond the Queen Elizabeth Theatre
and greater community engagement

2014-2015 season also announced

Vancouver, BC ~ Vancouver Opera announced today a bold new long-term strategy aimed at broadening and deepening its connection with the communities it serves, while building a new generation of opera goers.

Under the strategy, VO will offer new opera experiences in new venues, including the recently-announced commission of *Stickboy*, an opera by internationally renowned Canadian slam poet Shayne Koyczan and BC composer Jordan Nobles, to be premiered at the Vancouver Playhouse in October 2014. *Stickboy* will form part of VO's 2014-2015 season of four productions.

In addition, beginning this spring, VO will offer new programming in communities south of the Fraser River; and in future seasons VO will enrich the educational value of its long-standing school touring program for children, by concentrating the program largely in Metro Vancouver.

"This strategy draws on our proven capacity for innovation to entice more people, and more new people, to experience opera. We want to change how and where we produce it, and even how we define it," said General Director **James W. Wright**. "This new direction reallocates a significant portion of our resources to programming outside the traditional venue of the Queen Elizabeth Theatre, in order to make our productions more accessible, while serving the dedicated opera lovers who have faithfully supported us for more than 50 years."

VO will continue to present important works from the opera canon on a grand scale in the Queen Elizabeth Theatre. The 2014-2015 season will include Bizet's beloved *Carmen* and Johann Strauss Jr.'s

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tuneful, joyous (and slightly sinister) *Die Fledermaus*. The season will also include, at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre, a production of Stephen Sondheim's masterful *Sweeney Todd*, the darkly beautiful study of obsession and revenge.

The company's plans for 2015-2016 and beyond include full-scale productions of Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*, Puccini's *Turandot*, Offenbach's *The Tales of Hoffmann* (for the first time in more than 30 years) and the Canadian premiere of *Dr. Sun Yat-Sen*, by New York-based composer Huang Ruo, based on the life of the famous revolutionary and founding father of the Republic of China. *Dr. Sun Yat-Sen* will be the first-ever opera produced in Canada to be sung entirely in Mandarin. (As with all VO productions, there will be English translations projected above the stage.) All of VO's offerings will be presented with the high musical and production values that audiences have come to expect.

VO's new approach includes changes already implemented, such as the introduction of Sunday matinées to the regular performance schedule and the expansion of VO's "Get OUT" (Opera Under Thirty-five) ticket program, which makes available affordable seats for younger buyers.

In 2014-2015, for the production of *Stickboy*, VO will offer some "U-19" seats, at \$19, to youth under the age of 19.

"The cultural landscape of our community has changed since Vancouver Opera was founded 55 years ago. The population has tripled, but new generations are not as prepared to see opera as previous ones were," continued **James Wright**. "Opera companies across North America are seeing similar changes. We believe now is the time to redirect some of our resources to reach more people in more ways and new places. We are an innovative company in an innovative city. Anticipating change, and adapting to it, are part of life for all cultural organizations in Vancouver. We are excited to be embarking on a new era for Vancouver Opera."

Overarching all these changes will be a fresh new look and feel for Vancouver Opera, to be unveiled in **January 2014**.

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Vancouver Opera's 2014-2015 Season

Carmen by George Bizet

September 27 - October 5, 2014 at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre

Stickboy by Shane Koyczan and Jordan Nobles

World Premiere

October 23 - November 1, 2014 at the Vancouver Playhouse

Die Fledermaus by Johann Strauss, Jr.

February 28 - March 8, 2015 at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre

Sweeney Todd by Stephen Sondheim and Hugh Wheeler

April 25 - May 3, 2015 at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre

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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VO's 2013-2014 Season is generously sponsored by Goldcorp.