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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE September 17, 2012
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INAUGURAL YEAR OF YULANDA M. FARIS YOUNG ARTISTS PROGRAM BEGINS

Five fresh talents chosen through national auditions to participate in
VO's new intensive training program

Vancouver, BC ~ Starting September 17, five talented opera performers chosen through national auditions will receive specialized training with industry leaders through master classes, one-on-one coachings and performance opportunities in the inaugural year of Vancouver Opera's **Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program**.

The Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program (YAP) serves as a bridge between university training and a professional career. The program is made possible through a monumental gift from the family of Yulanda Faris, and is named in honour of her outstanding service to opera in Vancouver.

This season, soprano **Rachel Fenlon**, mezzo-soprano **Sylvia Szadovszki**, tenor **Martin Sadd**, baritone **Aaron Durand** and pianist **Michael Onwood** will participate in the first annual comprehensive 26-week residency.

The participants will receive coaching in vocal and audition techniques, along with training in movement, acting and stage combat. In addition, they will receive career counseling, stress management and health and wellness support and insight into industry business practices and public relations.

A series of master classes will also be held with visiting artists throughout the residency, allowing participants to work directly with established vocalists such as **Judith Forst**.

The singers will be cast in mainstage and understudy roles in VO's upcoming productions of *La Bohème*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Magic Flute* and *Tea: A Mirror of Soul*.

"I am so honoured by my family's support for my passion and for Vancouver Opera's commitment to young singers," said **Yulanda Faris**. "This program creates a lasting legacy for future generations. I am excited to see the great work our five young artists will do this year and in the years to come."

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YAP participants will also take part in VO's community engagement activities, including Culture Days this September at the O'Brian Centre for Vancouver Opera.

The Coaches

Music Director – Jonathan Darlington

Internationally sought-after conductor Jonathan Darlington has been the Music Director of Vancouver Opera since 2002 and was the Music Director of the Duisburg Philharmonic Orchestra.

Program Director – Leslie Dala

Leslie Dala is the Associate Conductor and Chorus Director of Vancouver Opera, Music Director of the Vancouver Bach Choir and Music Director of the Vancouver Academy of Music Symphony Orchestra. Mr Dala recently conducted VO's production of *West Side Story* and this season will lead VO's productions of *La Bohème* and *The Magic Flute*.

Principal Coach – Kinza Tyrrell

Dr. Kinza Tyrrell is Principal Répétiteur at Vancouver Opera, past Music Director of the Vancouver Opera In Schools touring program, and on the faculties of the Canadian Opera Company and the Centre for Opera Studies in Sulmona (COSI), Italy.

Vocal Coach – Carol Isaac

Carol Isaac has been a coach and répétiteur for San Francisco Opera and Santa Fe Opera and is currently on the music staff of The Metropolitan Opera. She has been affiliated with Canadian Opera, Washington Opera, Arizona Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Teatro Municipal (Santiago, Chile) and Narodni Divadlo (Prague).

The Participants

Soprano **Rachel Fenlon** is a recent graduate from the University of British Columbia, where she received her Master's degree in opera performance, with additional training from Vancouver Opera's Young Artist Coaching Intensive, the Centre for Opera Studies in Italy (COSI), the Vancouver International Song Institute, and the European Music Academy in the Czech Republic. Recent operatic performances include Adina in *L'elisir d'amore* (COSI) and Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* (UBC, European Music Academy, and the Westben Arts Festival). Rachel will sing the leading role of Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance* this season.

Mezzo-soprano **Sylvia Szadovszki** studied at the Manhattan School of Music (B.Mus.'06) and the University of British Columbia (M.Mus.'09/DMPS.'11). She was selected as a Jeunes Ambassadeurs Laureate by Théâtre

Lyrichorégra in Montreal in 2011. Ms. Szadovszki was a Northwest Region Finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in 2011 and 2012. This past fall, she sang the role of *Hansel* in the Vancouver Opera In Schools touring production of *Hansel and Gretel*. She joined Pacific Opera Victoria's Resident Artist Program in 2012, making her main stage debut as *Mercedes* in the company's production of *Carmen*. Ms. Szadovszki will be singing *Rosina* in Germany this summer in a new production of Theater Hof's *Der Barbier von Sevilla*.

Tenor **Martin Sadd** received his undergraduate degree from the University of Victoria and his Masters of Music from the University of British Columbia. He has received additional training from Pacific Opera Victoria's Young Artist Program, the Banff Centre's Opera as Theatre program and Vancouver Opera's Young Artist Coaching Intensive. In the 2008-2009 season, Mr. Sadd performed Al Maviva in Vancouver Opera In Schools' *The Barber of Barkerville*. Last year he was a district winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and recently returned from Calgary where he was a member of the Calgary Opera Emerging Artist program.

Baritone **Aaron Durand** began his opera studies at the Victoria Conservatory of Music. He transferred to UBC in 2007 and has since performed lead roles in *Così fan tutte*, *Louis Riel*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Cendrillon*, *Albert Herring*, and *The Merry Widow*. He recently participated in Vancouver Opera's Young Artist Coaching Intensive and completed his Masters in Music at UBC.

Michael Onwood is currently a Voice Coach at UBC's School of Music and on faculty for the UBC Summer Vocal Camp. He is a recent graduate from the University of British Columbia with a Bachelor of Music (double major in piano and composition) and in 2005 and 2007 participated in New York Opera Studio summer intensives.

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VO's 2012-2013 Season is generously sponsored by Goldcorp.