



MANITOBA OPERA

ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18





MANITOBA OPERA

OUR MISSION

TO CHANGE PEOPLES'
LIVES THROUGH THE
GLORY OF OPERA.



CONTENT

- 04** EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
- 06** ARTISTIC PROGRAMMING
- 07** *LA TRAVIATA* CO-PRODUCTION
- 08** *MADAMA BUTTERFLY*
ARTISTIC TEAM & CAST
- 10** *LA TRAVIATA*
ARTISTIC TEAM & CAST
- 12** COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- 14** COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
MADAMA BUTTERFLY
- 16** COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
LA TRAVIATA
- 18** STUDENT PROGRAMMING
- 20** STUDENT PROGRAMMING
DISCOVER OPERA
- 21** STUDENT PROGRAMMING
STUDENT INTERNSHIP
- 22** SPECIAL EVENTS
- 23** TRIVIA NIGHT
- 24** SPECIAL EVENTS
DINNER IN THE WINGS
- 25** SPECIAL EVENTS
COCKTAILS WITH THE CAST
- 26** GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP
- 28** FINANCE
- 29** BOARD OF TRUSTEES
& COMMITTEES
- 30** STAFF
- 31** VOLUNTEERS
- 33** PARTNERS IN OPERA
- 34** SUPPORT
CAMERATA
- 35** SUPPORT
FRIENDS
- 37** PATRONS SHARE
THEIR OPERA STORIES
- 38** SUPPORT
TRIBUTES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Manitoba Opera's 2017/18 season celebrated two diametrically opposed heroines: naïve, young Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly* and savvy woman of the world, Violetta, in *La Traviata*. These operas, each composed more than a century ago, proved to be poignant and eerily relevant in the era of #MeToo and the Time's Up movement, demonstrating that they still have much to teach us about society, our actions, and ourselves.

The season began with *Madama Butterfly*. Hiromi Omura was transcendent as Cio-Cio-San; her delicate gestures and soaring vocals lent a vulnerability to her character that struck at patrons' hearts. Audiences were so touched by her plight that David Pomeroy, who played her feckless husband, B.F. Pinkerton, was booed at each

performance. Mr. Pomeroy graciously accepted this as his due, saying it meant he had done well. Nina Yoshida-Nelsen as Suzuki and Gregory Dahl as Sharpless were heartwarming as the friends and confidantes of the ill-fated lovers.

“ THROUGH THE
POWER OF THE
HUMAN VOICE,
MANITOBA OPERA
CONTINUES TO
EXAMINE THEMES
IMPORTANT TO OUR
COMMUNITY ”

Cio-Cio-San's role as a single mother inspired Manitoba Opera to connect with Villa Rosa, a Winnipeg charitable organization that supports single women who are pregnant or new mothers. A Baby and Mom supplies drive generated over \$6,000 in donated items, including diapers, formula, and clothing. The staff at Villa Rosa were deeply appreciative of the overwhelming kindness of Manitoba Opera patrons.

La Traviata, perhaps one of the best-loved operas of all-time, was the season's final production. The



OPERA CLASS WORKSHOP AT VAN WELLEGHEM SCHOOL WITH MEZZO-SOPRANO SUSANNE REIMER.

undeniable talent and power of Angel Blue was on full display as Violetta; many patrons commented that they were thrilled to have the opportunity to see this meteoric star on the rise perform in Winnipeg. Adam Luther was a perfect foil for Blue's outstanding vocals, and James Westman as Alfredo's father, Giorgio Germont, mesmerized with his captivating stage presence.

This was a brand-new co-production of *La Traviata*, and it was Manitoba Opera's honour to debut this incredible production on our stage. The result of a collaborative effort between five Canadian opera companies (Manitoba Opera, Pacific Opera Victoria, Edmonton Opera, Vancouver Opera, and



PATRONS AT LA TRAVIATA.



ADAM LUTHER (ALFREDO) AND ANGEL BLUE (VIOLETTA), *LA TRAVIATA*. PHOTO: C. CORNEAU



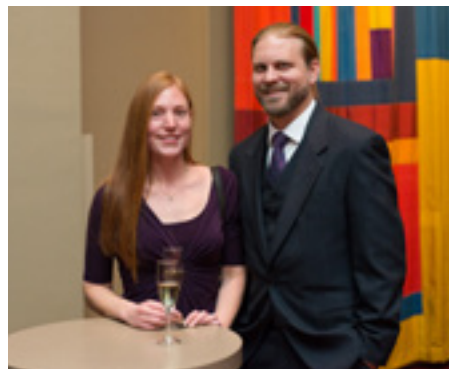
HIROMI OMURA (CIO-CIO-SAN) AND DAVID POMEROY (PINKERTON), *MADAMA BUTTERFLY*. PHOTO: R. TINKER

l'Opéra de Montréal), this undertaking was the first of its kind in Canada and a source of great pride to the producing partners – made possible with a generous co-production loan by Opera.ca.

Manitoba Opera achieved historic fundraising results in 2017/18, with more than \$900,000 donated in cash and gifts-in-kind. The generosity of Manitobans is indisputable, and it is to them that we give credit for a modest surplus on our 2017/18 season.

The 2017/18 season celebrated the classics and their role in contemporary society. New partnerships were formed, and new connections made. The spirit of cooperation for which Canadians are known

was evidenced in our co-production of *La Traviata*, and through the lens of *Madama Butterfly*, a positive impact was made on the community at Villa Rosa. Through the power of the human voice, Manitoba Opera continued to examine themes important to our community in 2017/18. It is with great joy that we look forward to furthering this important role in 2018/19 and beyond.



PATRONS ENJOY A DRINK DURING INTERMISSION AT *MADAMA BUTTERFLY*.



GENERAL DIRECTOR & CEO LARRY DESROCHERS SPEAKING AT THE ASPER SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ASSOCIATES EVENT.

MANITOBA OPERA HONoured AS A SYMPHONY HERO

Manitoba Opera was honoured as a "Symphony Hero" by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra (WSO) at their 70th Birthday Party Concert held at the Centennial Concert Hall Wednesday, June 28.

The company, represented by Larry Desrochers, General Director & CEO, and 69 others including long time Manitoba Opera supporters, Drs. Elizabeth Tippet-Pope and husband, Bill Pope, were recognized for having made an impact on the WSO in the last 70 years.

Honourees included musicians, volunteers, community leaders, donors, partners, teachers, and other members of the musical community.

ARTISTIC PROGRAMMING

MANITOBA OPERA'S 45TH SEASON FEATURED THE RETURN OF TWO OF THE WORLD'S MOST BELOVED OPERAS.

The season began in November with a production of Giacomo Puccini's poignant tale of honour, love, and loss, *Madama Butterfly*. Winnipegger, Robert Herriot, directed the production and MO's Music Advisor and Principal Conductor, Tyrone Paterson, led the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. MO's Assistant Music Director and Chorus Master, Tadeusz Biernacki, prepared the 30-voice Manitoba Opera Chorus. The beautiful production, designed by Patrick Clark, was provided by Pacific Opera Victoria with costumes from Malabar Ltd.

(Toronto). The lighting design was by Winnipegger Bill Williams. The cast featured the impressive company debut of soprano Hiromi Omura as Cio-Cio-San. Canadians David Pomeroy (B.F. Pinkerton) and Gregory Dahl (Sharpless) both made welcome returns to

“MANITOBA OPERA IS HONOURED... TO BRING THESE GREAT STORIES - TOLD THROUGH BEAUTIFUL MUSIC - TO LIFE.”

our stage. American mezzo-soprano Nina Yoshida-Nelsen made her company debut as

Suzuki. Winnipeg artists James McLennan (Goro), David Watson (The Bonze), Mel Braun (The Imperial Commissioner/Prince Yamadori), and Laurelle Froese (Kate Pinkerton) rounded out the principal cast. Youngsters Quinn Ledlow and Ava Kilfoyle alternated in the role of Sorrow, the child of Pinkerton and Cio-Cio-San.

In April MO returned to the Concert Hall stage with an impressive new production of Giuseppe Verdi's classic tragedy, *La Traviata*. An historic first-ever co-production between five Canadian opera companies (Manitoba Opera, Edmonton Opera, Pacific Opera Victoria, Vancouver Opera, and l'Opéra de Montréal), the production was staged by director Alain Gauthier in his Manitoba



MADAMA BUTTERFLY. PHOTO: R. TINKER



HIROMI OMURA (CIO-CIO-SAN) AND AVA KILFOYLE (SORROW), MADAMA BUTTERFLY. PHOTO: R. TINKER



ANGEL BLUE (VIOLETTA) AND ADAM LUTHER (ALFREDO), *LA TRAVIATA*. PHOTO: R. TINKER

Opera debut, with sets and costumes designed by Christina Poddubiuk, and lighting design by Kevin Lamotte. Once again, Tyrone Paterson led the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and Tadeusz Biernacki prepared the 40-voice Manitoba Opera Chorus.

The production featured yet another stellar company debut - American soprano Angel Blue, who brought the audience to their feet with her portrayal of

Violetta Valéry. Canadian tenor Adam Luther made his company debut as Alfredo Germont, with Canadian baritone James Westman returning to the MO stage as Alfredo's father, Giorgio Germont. Calgary-based mezzo-soprano, Barbara King (Flora Bervoix), as well as Toronto-based artists Andrew Love (Baron Douphol), and Michael Barrett (Gastone) all made their MO debuts. The remainder of the cast were all Winnipeggers - Howard Rempel (Marquis d'Obigny), David Watson (Dr. Grenvil), and Shannon Unger (Annina). They were joined by choristers Lawrence Pauls, Don Larsen, and Daniel Szymanski who appeared in smaller roles.

Manitoba Opera is proud of the relationships it has developed over the years with many of North America's finest artists. The company offers exciting opportunities for both established and emerging artists to continue the development of their craft, and Manitoba Opera's Production Department

strives to create an environment where these artists are able to do their best work. Manitoba Opera is honoured to welcome these artists to the company, and to bring these great stories - told through beautiful music - to life.



ANGEL BLUE (VIOLETTA) AND JAMES WESTMAN (GERMONT), *LA TRAVIATA*. PHOTO: R. TINKER



COSTUME DESIGNS FOR THE *LA TRAVIATA* CO-PRODUCTION DESIGNED BY CHRISTINA PODDUBIUK

AN HISTORIC FIVE-COMPANY CO-PRODUCTION

Manitoba Opera patrons were in the enviable position of being the first audience to experience a new production of the classic favourite, *La Traviata*, and were part of an historic event for Canadian opera. This was the first-ever co-production of five Canadian opera companies. Plans for this co-production began

eight years ago to address the fact that fewer sets and costumes for operas like *La Bohème*, *Carmen*, and *La Traviata* were available for rent as large American companies reduced their rental inventory. The solution? Canadian opera companies needed to work together to create new productions of both new and existing operas.

Manitoba Opera was pleased to work with Pacific Opera Victoria, Vancouver Opera, Edmonton Opera, and l'Opéra de Montréal in this co-production of the Verdi favourite which reset the events of the opera to Paris of the 1920s. The crowd-pleasing set and

costumes were designed by award-winning designer Christina Poddubiuk of Stratford, Ontario. Edmonton Opera built the set; the costumes and props were built/sourced by Pacific Opera Victoria.

Following its premiere in Winnipeg, the production will be presented by the other co-producers over the next two years and will also be available for rent.

MADAMA Butterfly

ARTISTIC TEAM & CAST

MUSIC BY Giacomo Puccini

LIBRETTO IN ITALIAN BY Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica

Based on David Balasco's play of the same name, which was in turn, based on a story by John Luther Long.

CONDUCTOR

Tyrone Paterson

DIRECTOR

Robert Herriot

SET DESIGN BY

Patrick Clark

LIGHTING DESIGN BY

Bill Williams

SET PROVIDED BY

Pacific Opera Victoria

COSTUMES PROVIDED BY

Malabar Ltd. (Toronto)

STAGE MANAGER

Robert Pel

**ASSISTANT STAGE
MANAGERS**

Kathryn Ball

Matthew Lagacé

PROJECTED TITLES BY

Sheldon Johnson

PRODUCTION PERSONNEL

DIRECTOR OF PRODUCTION

Sheldon Johnson

CHORUS MASTER/REPETITEUR

Tadeusz Biernacki

APPRENTICE STAGE MANAGER

Ryan Bjornson

WARDROBE SUPERVISOR

Alena Zharska

WARDROBE ALTERATIONS

Canada's Royal Winnipeg
Ballet

HAIR/WIG DESIGNER

Lori Houston

HAIR/WIG ASSISTANT

Jill Buhr

HAIR CREW

Adrianna Oliphant

Nicole Pielou

Leslie Rogers

Jessica Sproul

Christian Hadley

Jean-Marc Lafond

Erin Kiazzyk

Sarah Leighton

Stephanie Porrior

Theresa Thompson

PROJECTED TITLES CUEING

Cary Denby



MADAMA BUTTERFLY. PHOTO: R. TINKER



HIROMI OMURA (CIO-CIO-SAN) AND DAVID POMEROY (PINKERTON),
MADAMA BUTTERFLY. PHOTO: R. TINKER



MADAMA BUTTERFLY. PHOTO: R. TINKER



NINA YOSHIDA-NELSEN (SUZUKI) AND
DAVID POMEROY (PINKERTON),
MADAMA BUTTERFLY. PHOTO: R.
TINKER



MADAMA BUTTERFLY. PHOTO: R. TINKER

PRINCIPAL CAST (IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE)

B.F. PINKERTON *Lieutenant, U.S.N*

GORO *A Marriage Broker*

SUZUKI *Maid to Cio-Cio-San*

SHARPLESS

U.S. Consul at Nagasaki

CIO-CIO-SAN *Madama Butterfly*

THE IMPERIAL COMMISSIONER

THE BONZE *Cio-Cio-San's Uncle*

PRINCE YAMADORI

Cio-Cio-San's Suitor

KATE PINKERTON

Pinkerton's American Wife

David Pomeroy

James McLennan

Nina Yoshida-Nelsen

Gregory Dahl

Hiromi Omura

Mel Braun

David Watson

Mel Braun

Laurelle Froese

CIO-CIO-SAN'S MOTHER

CIO-CIO-SAN'S AUNT

CIO-CIO-SAN'S COUSIN

YAKUSIDÉ *Cio-Cio-San's Uncle*

THE OFFICIAL REGISTRAR

SORROW *Cio-Cio-San's Child*

Cathy Wach-Dueck

Kelly Fry

Elizabeth Abercrombie

J Craig Oliphant

Michal Kowalik

Quinn Ledlow

Ava Kilfoyle

SUPERNUMERARIES

Mark Brubacher

Dennis Ng

CHORUS

SOPRANO

Elizabeth Abercrombie
Janine Brémault Bamford
Linda Feasby
Svetlana Gharagyozyan
Deborah Ginther
Jayne Hammond
Kadri Irwin
Joanne Kilfoyle
Katherine Mayba
Cathy Wach-Dueck

ALTO

Ember Benson
Kelley Fry
Zoë Gotziaman
Micheline Hay
Celoris Miller
Jane Petroff
Christina Pyrz-Kowall
Deanna Rempel
Mavis Ritchie
Karla Weir

TENOR

Matthew Baron
Russ Foster
Peter Klymkiw
Michal Kowalik
David LaRue
George Nytepchuk
J Craig Oliphant
Roman Papalski
Lawrence Pauls
Adam von Lau



NINA YOSHIDA-NELSEN (SUZUKI), AVA KILFOYLE (SORROW), AND
HIROMI OMURA (CIO-CIO-SAN), MADAMA BUTTERFLY.
PHOTO: R. TINKER

LA Traviata

ARTISTIC TEAM & CAST

MUSIC BY Giuseppe Verdi

LIBRETTO IN ITALIAN BY Francesco Maria Piave

Based on the play *La dame aux camellias* by the younger Alexandre Dumas.



CONDUCTOR

Tyrone Paterson

DIRECTOR

Alain Gauthier

SET & COSTUME DESIGN BY

Christina Poddubiuk

LIGHTING DESIGN BY

Kevin Lamotte

STAGE MANAGER

Robert Pel

**ASSISTANT STAGE
MANAGERS**

Kathryn Ball

Matthew Lagacé

PROJECTED TITLES BY

Sheldon Johnson



MANITOBA OPERA CHORUS IN REHEARSAL FOR *LA TRAVIATA*. PHOTO: C. CORNEAU

PRODUCTION PERSONNEL

DIRECTOR OF PRODUCTION

Sheldon Johnson

CHORUS MASTER/REPETITEUR

Tadeusz Biernacki

APPRENTICE STAGE MANAGER

Laura Gow

WARDROBE SUPERVISOR

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WARDROBE ALTERATIONS

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HAIR/WIG DESIGNER

Lori Houston

HAIR/WIG ASSISTANT

Jill Buhr

Adrianna Oliphant

HAIR CREW

Nicole Pielou

Leslie Rogers

Jessica Sproul

MAKE-UP DESIGNER

Christian Hadley

MAKE-UP ASSISTANT

Jean-Marc Lafond

MAKE-UP CREW

Aaron Frost

Erin Kiazzyk

Stephanie Porrior

Theresa Thompson

PROJECTED TITLES CUEING

Cary Denby



LA TRAVIATA. PHOTO: C. CORNEAU



SHANNON MELODY UNGER (ANNINA), ANGEL BLUE (VIOLETTA), AND ADAM LUTHER (ALFREDO), LA TRAVIATA. PHOTO: C. CORNEAU



ANGEL BLUE (VIOLETTA), LA TRAVIATA. PHOTO: C. CORNEAU



ANGEL BLUE (VIOLETTA) AND DAVID WATSON (DOCTOR GRENVIL), LA TRAVIATA. PHOTO: C. CORNEAU

PRINCIPAL CAST (IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE)

VIOLETTA VALÉRY *A Cabaret Performer*

Angel Blue

FLORA BEROVOIX *Violetta's Friend*

Barbara King

MARQUIS D'OBIGNY *A Friend of Flora*

Howard Rempel

BARON DOUPHOL *Violetta's Protector*

Andrew Love

DR. GRENVIL *A Physician*

David Watson

GASTONE *A Friend of Alfredo*

Michael Barrett

ALFREDO GERMONT

Adam Luther

ANNINA *Violetta's Dresser*

Shannon Unger

GIORGIO GERMONT *Alfredo's Father*

James Westman

GUISEPPE *Violetta's Servant*

Lawrence Pauls

A MESSENGER

Don Larsen

A PARTY ATTENDEE

Daniel Szymanski

CHORUS

SOPRANO

Elizabeth Abercrombie
Janine Brémault Bamford
Sawyer Craig
Emily Diehl-Reader
Linda Feasby
Svetlana Gharagyozyan
Deborah Ginther
Kadri Irwin
Joanne Kilfoyle
Cathy Wach-Dueck

ALTO

Ember Benson
Kelley Fry
Micheline Hay
Celoris Miller
Jane Petroff
Christina Pyrz-Kowall
Deanna Rempel
Mavis Ritchie
Amanda Stegmaier
Karla Weir

TENOR

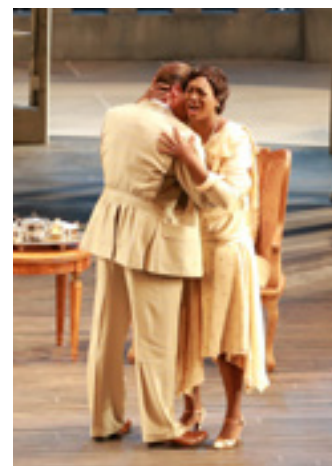
Matthew Baron
Chris Donlevy
Russ Foster
Peter Klymkiw
Michal Kowalik
David LaRue
George Nytepchuk
J Craig Oliphant
Lawrence Pauls
Richard Ryland

BASS

David Boyes
Chris Caslake
Costa Ginakis
Neil Grewar
Don Larsen
Eric Loepp
Nick Niebuhr
Fred Simpson
Dan Szymanski
Ted Wiens

SUPERNUMERARIES

Samantha Hutchings
Rhea Rodych



ANGEL BLUE (VIOLETTA) AND ADAM LUTHER (ALFREDO), LA TRAVIATA. PHOTO: C. CORNEAU

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement activities and initiatives extend Manitoba Opera's voice beyond the stage and provide the company with a number of ways in which to be active in, and have an impact on, the community. Each season, the company collaborates with individuals, organizations, and agencies to shape its community engagement events and activities, almost all of which are free. These activities provide context for the stage productions, provide opportunities for a broad spectrum of people to experience opera in a wide range of forms, and spark conversations on issues that have relevance to the community and the times in which we live.

From taking in a beautiful kimono display or enjoying an intermission 1920s dance demonstration, to engaging in a panel discussion on

cultural appropriation and the arts, over 6,000 people participated in community engagement activities throughout the 2017/18 season.

OPERA ACCESS PROGRAM

Each season Manitoba Opera donates tickets to be used by social service agencies for clients who may not otherwise be able to attend a performance and as prizes for fundraisers.

In 2017/18, Manitoba Opera distributed 347 complimentary tickets to performances of *Madama Butterfly* and *La Traviata*. Of those, 227 tickets were distributed through social service agencies such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, Opportunities for Employment, United Way, and Villa Rosa. There were also 120 tickets donated to various fundraising activities.

OPERA PRIMERS

A 60-minute presentation, with DVD excerpts, on the story and music of each opera is presented a few weeks prior to the production. Music expert Don Anderson presented this season's lectures which were held at the University of St. Boniface theatre Sunday, October 23, (*Madama Butterfly*) and at Cinematheque Sunday, March 25, (*La Traviata*).

“THESE ACTIVITIES...SPARK CONVERSATIONS ON ISSUES THAT HAVE RELEVANCE TO THE COMMUNITY AND THE TIMES IN WHICH WE LIVE.”



GENDER AND RACE ON THE STAGE LECTURE WITH SHAWNA FERRIS.



DANCER NORIKO TAKAHASHI PERFORMING AT THE EVENING OF SUSHI AND SAKE DINNER.

UNDERSTANDING THE MUSIC LECTURES

A one-hour presentation that delves into the music, the composer's approach, as well as any historical and social context and includes music and DVD excerpts is offered for each production.

Dr. Colette Simonot, Assistant Professor of Musicology, Brandon University explored the music of *Madama Butterfly* at a lecture held Saturday, October 28, at the Reh-Fit Centre.

Dr. James Maiello, Musicologist, University of Manitoba, Desautels School of Music, presented the lecture for *La Traviata* on Saturday, April 7, at the University of Winnipeg, Convocation Hall.

PRE-SHOW CHATS

For every production, a 20-minute lecture on the opera is held a half-hour before curtain at each performance. This year's guest speaker for both productions was Sarah-Jo Kirsch, local soprano and contemporary dramatic vocalist.

SIT IN ON A REHEARSAL/ MEET THE DIRECTOR

For every production, donors of \$100 or more have the opportunity to attend the Sitzprobe rehearsal (the first rehearsal in which the singers and the orchestra come together) after a conversation with the production director and Q & A.

This season both conversations were led by Larry Desrochers, General Director & CEO, with Rob Herriot, director of *Madama Butterfly*, on Tuesday, November 14, and *La Traviata*'s director, Alain Gauthier, on Tuesday, April 10.



PATRONS AT MADAMA BUTTERFLY. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI.

FASHION FRIDAYS

In its second year, Fashion Friday is a night for patrons to step into the spotlight. On Closing Night of each production, a roving photographer snaps photos of audience members, showcasing their flair for fashion. Photos of notable style makers are shared on the company's social media channels. From jeans to ball gowns or anything in between, Fashion Fridays is about celebrating the diverse personal styles of patrons and goes to show that there is no dress code for a night at the opera!

SENIORS' SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

Throughout July and August, with the support of Manitoba Opera, mezzo-soprano Laurelle Froese, accompanied by pianist Julianne Dick, presented an hour-long "Summertime in NYC" concert at 15 retirement and assisted living residences. Stops included Dakota House, Beacon Hill Lodge, The Waverly, and Deer Lodge Centre.

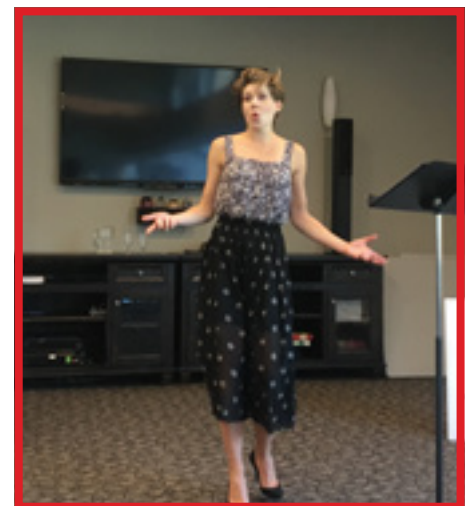
The program featured works by Gershwin and Porter, as well as favourite WWII songs, folk songs, and opera favourites.

“

...a wonderful show. Besides her beautiful voice, her warm presence and story-telling delighted those in attendance...You helped to enhance the lives of many with this one gesture.”

BARBARA HERRIOT-MILLER

DEER LODGE CENTRE VISITOR,
LONG-TIME MO PATRON & VOLUNTEER



MEZZO-SOPRANO LAURELLE FROESE PERFORMING AT DAKOTA HOUSE.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

MADAMA BUTTERFLY

BABY & MOM SUPPLIES DRIVE

The plight of *Madama Butterfly*'s main character, the young Cio-Cio-San, who finds herself with little support and caring for an infant, is one shared by some young women in our province.

During the run of this opera, Manitoba Opera asked patrons to donate much-needed supplies for infants and young moms in the care of Villa Rosa. Over \$6,000 worth of supplies, including 1,100 diapers and 4,500 baby wipes were collected at all three performances and donated to the organization which provides support to mothers, babies, and their families during and after pregnancy.

PANEL DISCUSSION: CULTURAL APPROPRIATION & THE ARTS

On Thursday, November 2, a discussion on cultural appropriation and the arts was held at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. The discussion explored topics such as the difference between cultural appreciation and appropriation, who has the right to tell whose stories, and breaking through racial stereotypes in the arts.

Moderated by CBC Radio One host, Ismaila Alfa, the panel included Jaimie Isaac, Curator of Indigenous and Contemporary Art, Winnipeg Art Gallery; Hope McIntyre, Artistic Director, Sarasvati Productions; and Hiromi Omura, soprano in the title role of MO's *Madama Butterfly*.

LECTURE: CULTURAL DIFFERENCES & MARRIAGE

Dr. Narumi Taniguchi, Assistant Professor and Director of the Marriage and Family Therapy program at the University of Winnipeg, gave a lecture on how cultural differences impact marriage and other spousal and intimate relationships, particularly relationships between Japanese women and North American Caucasian men. The lecture was presented Tuesday, November 7, at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg.

AN EVENING OF SUSHI AND SAKE

Held in partnership with the Japanese Cultural Association of Manitoba (JCAM) and presented at the Japanese Cultural Centre, this evening event Friday, November 10, featured sake tastings presented by Aaron Albas, Product Ambassador with Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries, and a selection of sushi and other Japanese foods prepared by Chef Ohno and his team of volunteers.

Diners were also treated to entertainment that included two Koto musicians – Junko Rybuck and Yuko Nozoe – performing

“

...A vanload of wonderful items was delivered yesterday... Thank you for your generosity and community spirit.”

KATHY STRACHAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
VILLA ROSA



VOLUNTEERS ANNA MALZENSKY AND SYBIL STOKOLOFF COLLECT DONATIONS FOR THE BABY AND MOM SUPPLIES DRIVE.



DONATIONS COLLECTED AT MADAMA BUTTERFLY BEING DROPPED OFF AT VILLA ROSA.

Rokudan and Hanaikada and a member of the Aurora Dance Group - Noriko Takahashi - who performed an Okinawan selection, Urizun no Koro.

JAPANESE CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA DISPLAYS & ACTIVITIES

In the lobby of the Centennial Concert Hall before curtain and during intermission at all *Madama Butterfly* performances, JCAM presented cultural displays and activities including origami, flower arranging, and calligraphy.

KIMONO DISPLAY

Throughout the run of *Madama Butterfly*, a private collection of kimonos was on display throughout the lobby areas of the Centennial Concert Hall.



ONE OF THE KIMONOS ON DISPLAY IN THE CENTENNIAL CONCERT HALL LOBBY AT *MADAMA BUTTERFLY*. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI.



CULTURAL APPROPRIATION AND THE ARTS PANEL DISCUSSION AT THE CMHR.



MLL PRODUCT AMBASSADOR AARON ALBAS AT AN EVENING OF SUSHI AND SAKE.



CHEF OHNO AND HIS TEAM PREPARING SUSHI.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"MANITOBA OPERA'S... *MADAMA BUTTERFLY* PROVES THE ACHING HEART EXPRESSED THROUGH ART KNOWS NO CULTURAL DIVIDE, STRETCHING ITS POETIC WINGS ACROSS THE AGES...A PARTICULARLY STRONG CAST...OMURA DELIVERS A MASTERFUL PORTRAYAL OF THE YOUNG GEISHA...GLORIOUS EYE CANDY...IN THE HANDS OF A SOARING CAST, THIS GREAT LOVE STORY STILL HAS WINGS."

HOLLY HARRIS
Winnipeg Free Press
★★★★★/5

"IT WAS SUCH A BEAUTIFUL PRODUCTION. THIS ONE WILL STAY WITH ME FOR A LONG WHILE."

CAROLYN JANZEN
Patron

"STUNNING PRODUCTION ALL AROUND. A MUST SEE! BRAVI TUTTI."

MONICA HUISMAN
Soprano & Patron

"BRAVO! BRAVO! BRAVO!!! I HAVE NEVER BEEN SO ENTHRALLED AND MOVED BY BUTTERFLY AS I WAS TONIGHT! HOW CAN A PERSON SING A ROLE 100 PLUS TIMES AND STILL PUT HER ALL INTO IT. AND THAT VOICE.....!!!"

MARY ANN ROSENBLOOM
Patron



VOLUNTEERS FROM THE JAPANESE CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA DEMONSTRATING CALLIGRAPHY IN THE CENTENNIAL CONCERT HALL LOBBY AT *MADAMA BUTTERFLY*. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LA TRAVIATA

FILM SCREENING:

BECOMING TRAVIATA

Becoming Traviata, a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the staging/rehearsal process of a major operatic production, starring world-famous French coloratura soprano Natalie Dessay, was screened on Saturday, March 17, at Cinematheque.

LECTURE: ART DECO

A presentation by Jeffrey Thorsteinson, Architectural Historian with the Winnipeg Architecture Foundation, on the trajectory and legacy of Art Deco design in Manitoba, Canada, and around the world, was held Thursday, March 29, at the Carol Shields Auditorium in the Millennium Library. The set and costumes for the production of *La Traviata* were inspired by Paris of the 1920s and the Art Deco esthetic.

LECTURE: GENDER AND RACE ON THE STAGE

In the new production of *La Traviata* that MO presented, the opera is set in a music hall in 1920s Paris and the main character, Violetta Valéry, is inspired by the legendary performer of that era, Josephine Baker. This lecture explored the sexualized performances by women, and the ways that dominant societal beliefs about race and gender inform how audiences, see, hear, and respond to women

of colour on stage. The noon-hour presentation was given by Shawna Ferris, Assistant Professor in Women and Gender Studies at the University of Manitoba, and was held Tuesday, April 3, in Convocation Hall at the University of Winnipeg.

“

The lectures leading up to this (*La Traviata*) have been fabulous.”

DORIS MAE OULTON
PATRON



UNDERSTANDING THE MUSIC OF *LA TRAVIATA* WITH DR. JAMES MAIELLO.



DR. PAMELA ORR AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LUNG ASSOCIATION - MANITOBA AT THE CONSUMPTION OF VIOLETTA LECTURE.



ART DECO LECTURE WITH JEFFREY THORSTEINSON OF THE WINNIPEG ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION.

TUBERCULOSIS AWARENESS

Violetta, *La Traviata*'s main character, has her dreams cut short at a very young age when she dies of tuberculosis (TB). Although no longer the epidemic it has been at other times in history, TB still exists. Manitoba Opera partnered with The Lung Association - Manitoba to foster awareness and education regarding TB.

LECTURE: THE CONSUMPTION OF VIOLETTA: TUBERCULOSIS AS A METAPHOR

An enlightening lecture by Dr. Pamela Orr, Professor of Medicine, University of Manitoba, which explored the romantic myths of tuberculosis as portrayed in music, literature, and visual arts, was held Wednesday, March 21, at the Carol Shields Auditorium in the Millennium Library.



THE LUNG ASSOCIATION - MANITOBA

INFORMATION CENTRE
Representatives of the Lung Association were present in the lobby at all performances to provide information and resources on tuberculosis and other lung diseases. The organization also provided information on tuberculosis which appeared in the program.

1920S DANCE DEMONSTRATIONS

Held on the Piano Nobile in the lobby during intermission at all three performances, a quartet of "flappers" from Studio Works presented a lively and well received 1920s-inspired dance demonstration choreographed by Brenda Gorlick and featuring the Charleston, Blackbottom, Foxtrot, and more.



DANCERS WHO PERFORMED DURING THE *LA TRAVIATA* INTERMISSIONS.



TENOR ADAM LUTHER (ALFREDO IN *LA TRAVIATA*) AT AN INTERVIEW AT CJOB RADIO WITH HOST RICHARD CLOUTIER.



PATRONS AT *LA TRAVIATA*. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"ANGEL BLUE WOWS, CATCH THIS RISING DIVA WHILE YOU CAN, LUSCIOUS VOCALS, BATHING THE EAR IN PURE SONIC BEAUTY... LUTHER - MAGNETIC STAGE POWER, BUTTERY-SMOOTH PHRASING...ANOTHER STANDOUT - JAMES WEST-MAN."

HOLLY HARRIS

Winnipeg Free Press

★★★★/5

"THE STUDENTS REALLY APPRECIATED THE EXPERIENCE AND ENJOYED THE BACKSTAGE TOUR ASPECT. ONE OF THE STUDENTS CONNECTED SO WELL TO THIS SHOW THAT SHE WAS MOVED TO TEARS OVER VIOLETTA'S DEATH. ADDITIONALLY, BECAUSE THE YOUTH WERE NEWCOMERS OR CAME FROM NEWCOMER BACKGROUNDS, IT WAS AWESOME FOR THEM TO SEE A PERSON OF COLOUR NOT ONLY TAKE THE LEAD, BUT DO IT FROM A PLACE OF BEAUTY AND ELEGANCE."

ANNE PINNOCK,

Elmwood Community Resource Centre

"WE LOVED *LA TRAVIATA*! WORTH SELLING MY 4 JETS TICKETS FOR, AND 'COMING OUT' AT WORK (AS AN OPERA LOVER, THAT IS) AS A RESULT."

DR. MICHAEL DYCK

Patron

STUDENT PROGRAMMING

INSPIRING THE CHILDREN OF TODAY

TO CREATE THE AUDIENCES OF TOMORROW

STUDENT NIGHT AT THE OPERA

This season, over 1,025 students attended the dress rehearsals of *Madama Butterfly* and *La Traviata* through the Student Night at the Opera program.

Open to students of public and private schools, home schools, youth groups, and post-secondary institutions, Student Night at the Opera offers tickets to the dress rehearsal at just \$13 per person.

Students from throughout Winnipeg attended the dress rehearsal performances, as well as from 15 rural communities as far away as Yorkton, Saskatchewan, and Russell, Manitoba.

As part of Student Night at the Opera programming, study guides are compiled for both productions and posted on the website where they can be accessed by all Manitoba Opera patrons.

For the first time at Student Night, several school groups were given a pre-show backstage tour. Students experienced the backstage excitement at the dress rehearsal for *La Traviata*, while learning about what goes on behind the scenes.

OPERA IN A TRUNK

In its eighth year, Opera in a Trunk is a self-contained education resource designed for teachers to bring opera directly into their K-6 classrooms. Trunks are available for teachers to book at no cost for a three-week period.

“

My grade 5/6s really enjoyed acting it out and adding the music and props to the story.”

AMANADA ADRADE
ARTS SUPPORT TEACHER,
PINKHAM SCHOOL



STUDENTS AT THE DRESS REHEARSAL OF U OF M OPERA THEATRE'S *HANSEL AND GRETEL*.



GRADE 5/6 STUDENTS AT PINKHAM SCHOOL ACTING OUT THE STORY OF *THE MAGIC FLUTE*.

Six trunks, each themed around a popular opera, are filled with props, costumes, books, CDs, DVDs, and musical instruments, as well as a study guide which includes hands-on music and drama activities.

This year, trunks travelled to elementary schools throughout Winnipeg, as well as Altona and Woodlands, Manitoba, and reached over 1,000 students.

“

I appreciated how visual aids, story, props, music, literature, student participation, and singing were all integrated. Very impressive!”

CHAMPLAIN SCHOOL

OPERA CLASS

Opera Class is a free, 45-minute, in-classroom workshop for grades K-6, led by a professionally trained opera singer.

In its second year, the workshop offers a crash course on opera. Students participate in hands-on learning activities that explore



STUDENTS FROM PINKHAM SCHOOL PARTICIPATING IN A READER'S THEATRE ACTIVITY.

storytelling through music and also experience live operatic singing with a performance by the artist.

Over 625 students experienced Opera Class this year. Singers Laurelle Froese and Susanne Reimer led 21 Opera Class workshops at schools throughout Winnipeg.

SCHOOL TOUR SPONSORSHIP

In May, Manitoba Opera sponsored the University of Manitoba's Desautels Faculty of Music Opera Theatre school tour of Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*. The two-week tour included performances at 11 Winnipeg schools and one rural school. In addition, three schools were treated to a special dress rehearsal performance at the Taché Arts Centre at the University of Manitoba. In total, the tour reached over 3,000 students from grades K-6.

MO's collaboration with the Desautels Faculty of Music provides an opportunity for young audiences to enjoy age-appropriate opera in their schools. The collaboration also gives Desautels Faculty of Music students performance experiences.



STUDENTS FROM VAN WELLEGHEN SCHOOL DURING AN OPERA CLASS WORKSHOP.



MEZZO-SOPRANO SUSANNE REIMER LEADING WORKSHOPS EXERCISES.



A STUDENT EXPLORING OPERA IN A TRUNK COSTUMES.

“

For my first ever time going to an opera, it didn't disappoint. I was just amazed by the theatre, and the set, and the costumes, and the acting. That death scene, though, was fabulous!”

ANNE
STUDENT, MIAMI SCHOOL

STUDENT PROGRAMMING

DISCOVER OPERA

OFFERED TO SCHOOLS AT NO COST, ADDITIONAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES THAT REACHED MORE THAN 950 STUDENTS ACROSS WINNIPEG INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

I LOVE TO READ MONTH

During February, Manitoba Opera participated in "I Love to Read Month," visiting nursery to grade 3 classes at six Winnipeg schools. Mezzo-soprano Susanne Reimer read *Opera Cat* and answered questions from the students. Students were also treated to a mini performance.

B.E.E.P. (BALANCED EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM)

In July, Manitoba Opera introduced the art form to 600 students through Seven Oaks School Division's B.E.E.P. (Balanced Experiential Education Program), an activity-based summer learning program. This was the fifth year Manitoba Opera has participated in the program. Students from grades 1-8 participated in singing exercises, music activities, costume displays and dress-up. The workshops were facilitated by soprano Lara Ciekiewicz and mezzo-soprano Susanne Reimer.

Opera workshops took place at Margaret Park Community School, Elwick Community School, O.V. Jewitt School, Governor Semple School, Constable Edward Finney School, and Victory School.



MEZZO-SOPRANO SUSANNE REIMER WITH STUDENTS FROM MACHRAY SCHOOL DURING A READING FOR I LOVE TO READ MONTH.

“

The show was engaging for students of all age levels. It left them with a lasting memory of an art form that might not otherwise be accessible for our students.”

KAREN JOHNSON

TEACHER, LORD NELSON SCHOOL



STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN A SUMMER OPERA WORKSHOP.



STUDENTS FROM ROBERT H. SMITH SCHOOL DURING AN OPERA CLASS WORKSHOP.

STUDENT PROGRAMMING

STUDENT INTERNSHIP

From February to June, grade 10 student Isabella Echavia, volunteered at Manitoba Opera as part of Maples Collegiate's Met School, a program in which students are given internship opportunities to explore different career paths while gaining

valuable work experience. Working closely with the Education and Outreach Coordinator, she had the opportunity to help develop a new trunk for MO's Opera in a Trunk program and to see firsthand the administrative work that goes into preparing for an opera.



STUDENT AT PINKHAM SCHOOL WITH OPERA IN A TRUNK COSTUMES.



STUDENTS AT LA TRAVIATA STUDENT NIGHT AT THE OPERA.



STUDENTS PLAY WITH COSTUMES AT A B.E.E.P. WORKSHOP.



STUDENTS FROM FISCHER BRANCH COLLEGIATE AT LA TRAVIATA STUDENT NIGHT AT THE OPERA.



"It has been a great experience and I've been learning so much. I've been able to explore aspects of opera and the fine arts business that I didn't know about before. There's a lot of preparation and lots of things to do way before the first night of the opera even happens."

Isabella Echavia

MANITOBA OPERA STUDENT INTERN, ISABELLA ECHAVIA, REPAIRS PROPS FOR ONE OF THE OPERA TRUNKS.

SPECIAL EVENTS

OPERA TOUR CHICAGO

Manitoba Opera's 2017 Opera Tour to Chicago took place from October 12-16. Travelling as a group with MO General Director & CEO Larry Desrochers, attendees enjoyed a city tour, an architectural river cruise, a visit to the Art Institute of Chicago, group cocktail hours and dinners, and performances of *Rigoletto* and *Orphée et Eurydice*, the latter starring Winnipeg soprano Andriana Chuchman.

CAMERATA EVENT

On Sunday, November 5, Camerata donors mingled with *Madama Butterfly* artists at a beautiful reception in the home of Manitoba Opera Board Chair, Elba Haid. The afternoon began with wine and hors d'oeuvres provided by WOW Hospitality.

Guests were treated to a performance of opera arias by Jayne Hammond, soprano, and Lisa Rumpel, accompanist. The event concluded with decadent desserts provided by WOW Hospitality.

OPENING NIGHT DINNER

Manitoba Opera's 2017/18 Season took flight on Saturday, November 18, with the *Madama Butterfly* Opening Night Dinner. Held on the Piano Nobile prior to the performance, guests enjoyed a champagne and hors d'oeuvres reception, followed by a three-course dinner by Bergmann's on Lombard.

EVENING OF LIGHT OPERA AT CENTRO CABOTO

The accomplishments of General Director & CEO Larry Desrochers were celebrated at a dinner in

his honour on Saturday, April 7, at the Centro Caboto. The Evening of Light Opera included a five-course Italian meal and live performances by University of Manitoba Opera Studies Program Students and Viva l'Italia Choir, as well as a surprise performance by soprano, Lara Ciekiewicz.



ANTHONY IACOPINO, PAST MO BOARD OF TRUSTEES, BEING RECOGNIZED FOR HIS SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP ON THE MO BOARD OF TRUSTEES AT THE CAMERATA EVENT. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



CHICAGO OPERA TOUR TRAVELLERS AT THE OMNI CHICAGO.



EWA KUBLIK, GINA AIELLO, LINDA PICHE, MICKAELA MAXWELL, CHELSEA SCRIVEN, ABBIE GRIEDER (MO BOARD OF TRUSTEES), AND NANCY PHILLIPS AT THE DE LUCA DINNER. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI

CLOSING NIGHT DINNER

A favourite for Friday performance patrons, this season had two closing night dinners. One took place on November 24 for *Madama Butterfly*, and the other on April 20 for *La Traviata*. Both dinners were served buffet style by Bergmann's on Lombard. Themed to the productions, patrons were treated to Asian-influenced fare for *Madama Butterfly* and French-themed cuisine for *La Traviata*. An engaging pre-show chat for dinner guests was provided by Sarah-Jo Kirsch.

DINNER AT DE LUCA'S

Manitoba Opera's Annual Dinner at De Luca's took place on Thursday, May 17. A reception was followed by a performance and dinner, at which, Chef Mike Brown showed off his culinary skills with cooking demonstrations. Jayne Hammond, soprano, and Lisa Rumpel, accompanist, serenaded guests with selections from *La Bohème*, *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* and *La Fille du Régiment*. Sponsors helped create a magical evening, with wine by Poplar Grove, linens by Planned Perfectly, and centrepieces by Academy Florist. One lucky attendee won the raffle prize for a private wine tasting hosted by Poplar Grove. This sold-out dinner was magnifico!



SUE KATHLER AND RICK KATHLER WITH DR. ELIZABETH TIPPETT-POPE AND DR. BILL POPE (MO BOARD OF TRUSTEES) AT THE DE LUCA DINNER. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



NELL PROVINCIANO, ABBIE GRIEDER (MO BOARD OF TRUSTEES), AND LAURIE LAM AT THE CAMERATA EVENT. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



CHEF MIKE BROWN DEMONSTRATING THE GNOCCHI PRIMO WITH LEMON CREAM SAUCE AT THE DE LUCA DINNER. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



TYRONE PATERSON, CONDUCTOR, WITH ASHLEY SCHNEIDER, DUSTIN SCHNEIDER (MO BOARD OF TRUSTEES), AND PETER GEORGE (MO BOARD OF TRUSTEES) AT THE CAMERATA EVENT. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI

TRIVIA NIGHT SCORES BIG WITH CONTESTANTS

Some of Winnipeg's great minds came together for a night of trivia, drinks, and laughter at Peg

Beer Co. on Sunday, October 15, as Manitoba Opera held its first Trivia Night which was themed around pop culture heroes and villains. From *Harry Potter* to *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Star Trek* to *Game of Thrones*, questions ran the gamut from easy-peasey to level-10 stumpers.

Competition was fierce, but in the end only one team would prevail.



TRIVIA NIGHT PARTICIPANTS IN DEEP THOUGHT.

The winners: Stephanie English, David Shirliff, Alaina Edwards, and James Young received tickets to *Madama Butterfly*.

SPECIAL EVENT DINNER IN THE WINGS

TWELVE GUESTS.
FOUR COURSES.
ONE UNFORGETTABLE
EVENING.

Our inaugural Dinner in the Wings took place on Saturday, April 14, before the opening of *La Traviata*. Guests of this exclusive event enjoyed a champagne reception with hors d'oeuvres and a three-course dinner by Bergmann's on Lombard. Artists and production staff welcomed guests, visited throughout the event, and gave brief explanations about their roles. Following dessert, guests listened to the chorus warm up before taking their seats for the show.



GUESTS SEATED FOR THE DINNER IN THE WINGS. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



TENOR MICHAEL BARRETT GREETING KIM GAYNOR, GENERAL DIRECTOR, VANCOUVER OPERA. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



STAGE MANAGER ROBERT PEL CONVERSING WITH PETER ROBINSON AND KIM GAYNOR, GENERAL DIRECTOR, VANCOUVER OPERA. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



CONDUCTOR TYRONE PATERSON AND GENERAL DIRECTOR & CEO LARRY DESROCHERS. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



CHORUS MEMBERS WELCOMING DINNER IN THE WINGS GUESTS. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



GENERAL DIRECTOR & CEO, LARRY DESROCHERS WITH DINNER IN THE WINGS GUESTS. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI

SPECIAL EVENT

COCKTAILS WITH THE CAST



DANIELA IGNAT (MO BOARD OF TRUSTEES) AND DOUG LOCHHEAD, PRESIDENT OF GRANITE FINANCIAL GROUP INC., ALONG WITH A MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATES. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATES ENJOYING THEMSELVES BACKSTAGE. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI

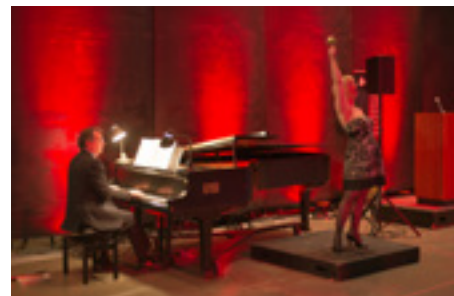


MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATES WITH HOWARD MORRY, CHAIR OF MEMBER ENGAGEMENT, THE ASSOCIATES. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



HOWARD MORRY, CHAIR OF MEMBER ENGAGEMENT, THE ASSOCIATES, WELCOMING EVERYONE BACKSTAGE. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI

In partnership with Manitoba Opera, The Associates of the Asper School of Business presented their 2018 Spring Showcase “Cocktails with the Cast” on Wednesday, April 18. Members of The Associates experienced a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to go behind the curtain to meet the cast of *La Traviata* backstage at the Centennial Concert Hall. Hors d’oeuvres catered by Bergmann’s on Lombard and cocktails were served, with the highlight of the event being the artist performances.



TADEUSZ BIERNACKI, ASSISTANT MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CHORUS MASTER, AND SOPRANO LARA CIEKWICZ PERFORMING AT COCKTAILS WITH THE CAST. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI

GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP

The Board of Trustees has made good governance and strong leadership a cornerstone of Manitoba Opera. As the governing body, the Board of Trustees operates by the principle that it holds the organization in trust for the present and future benefit of the community.

At the 2017/18 Annual General Meeting, held Tuesday, July 10, members of the organization elected Judith Chambers, Dr. David Folk, and Keith Sinclair as new trustees. The board and staff welcome the new trustees and look forward to working with them in the coming year.

Current trustees re-elected were Peter George, Elba Haid, Sue Jurkovic-Bracken, Dr. Hermann Lee, Luisa Matheson, Alex Robinson, and Dr. Jeffrey Sisler. Returning trustees in mid-terms are Abbie Grieder, Leona Herzog, Daniela Ignat, Maria Mitousis, Dr. Bill Pope, Dustin Schneider, and Lori Yorke.

Manitoba Opera is appreciative of the leadership and service of Brent Bottomley, who sat on the board for six years, but had to resign mid-season.

Manitoba Opera lost one of its most ardent supporters in July

2017 when David White passed away. During David's time on the Board of Trustees his enthusiasm for Manitoba Opera was felt throughout the organization. He is, and will continue to be, deeply missed by his friends and colleagues at Manitoba Opera.

The Governance Committee continues to strengthen and develop the organizational practices of Manitoba Opera. With the assistance of Acuity HR Solutions, the Governance Committee reviewed the Human Resource Policy. The policy was revised for clarity, legislative compliance, and to ensure it addresses all aspects of today's cultural work environment. The policy was adopted by the Board of Trustees at the June 26, 2018 meeting. The committee has also started a review of the



PETER ROBINSON, LAURIE LAM, AND ARNOLD FRIEMAN AT DINNER IN THE WINGS. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



PATRONS IN THE LOBBY AT *LA TRAVIATA*. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI

Manitoba Opera bylaws, a major project for the 2018/19 season.

Manitoba Opera is committed to strengthening its staff through professional development opportunities and initiatives. By advancing the skills of employees, Manitoba Opera ensures it continues to deliver world-class opera productions, unique events, immersive education courses, and fascinating community engagement programs. This investment benefits Manitoba Opera, but also strengthens the cultural workforce in the wider community.

In September, Manitoba Opera participated in an opera colloquium in St. John, Newfoundland, organized by Opera.ca, on the theme of designing civic impact in opera. General Director & CEO, Larry Desrochers; Director of Marketing,



LA TRAVIATA. PHOTO: C. CORNIEAU



PATRONS AT FASHION FRIDAY, MADAMA BUTTERFLY.

Darlene Ronald; and Education and Outreach Coordinator, Livia Dymond, joined representatives from opera companies across the country to understand the role opera can play in civic impact and social change. The sessions explored how certain tools, practices, and protocols can help opera companies develop their programming so that our communities can find an inclusive and equitable space to engage with opera.

Darlene Ronald, Director of Marketing, attended the third session of Opera America (OA) Civic Impact meetings in New York January 24 and 25. The sessions were attended by staff members of 12 US and Canadian opera companies, as well as OA staff, Christina Loewen, the Executive Director of Opera.ca, and three

advisors who participated in the first sessions in December 2016. Last season Manitoba Opera was selected as one of two Canadian companies to participate in OA's newly formed Civic Action group and participated in the earlier two meeting sessions as well (December 2016 and May 2017).

The objectives of this peer-learning cohort are to gain insights from companies already engaged in community relationships and civic impact initiatives, to build stronger conceptual and strategic foundations for implementing more effective work on this front, to provide notated lessons that were shared with the field at the Opera Conference in June 2018, and to provide a common lexicon for describing effective civic engagement practices.

Throughout the season, Annual Giving Manager, Liz Miller, and Grants & Corporate Gifts Manager, Sandra Schmidtke, attended seminars provided through the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP). Sessions were focused on developing and maintaining strong corporate partnerships, and learning strategies to engage individual donors. Liz also received guidance and advice from a senior fundraising professional through a mentorship program developed by AFP.

Larry Desrochers begins the second year of his second term as a member of the Board of Directors for Opera America, serving on the Membership, Artistic, and Governance Committees. He also serves on the Strategy Committee for Opera.ca.



NINA YOSHIDA-NELSEN (SUZUKI), HIROMI OMURA (CIO-CIO-SAN), AND GREGORY DAHL (SHARPLESS), MADAMA BUTTERFLY. PHOTO: R. TINKER

Conference participation, committee work, and special programs at Opera America, Opera.ca, and AFP not only offer professional development opportunities for board and staff, but also demonstrates Manitoba Opera's focus on deepening our role in the community, commitment to leadership in the cultural sector, and to advancing the interests of opera locally, nationally, and internationally.

FINANCE

FINANCE

Manitoba Opera posted a surplus of \$10,995 on a budget of \$2,358,152.

GRANTS

The Canada Council for the Arts operating grant increased by \$105,100 to \$240,000 from \$134,900 in 2016/17. Base funding from the Manitoba Arts Council, Province of Manitoba, and Winnipeg Arts Council remained the same at \$220,000, \$150,000, and \$135,000, respectively.

BOX OFFICE

Subscriptions increased to 2,768 from 2,302 in 2016/17. Single tickets increased to 3,101 from 1,681 in 2016/17. Total box office cash revenues increased by 48% to \$600,209 from \$404,541 in 2016/17. Subscription prices for the season averaged \$58.54 per ticket versus \$59.26 in 2016/17, and single tickets averaged \$78.27 per seat versus \$58.54 in 2016/17.

FUNDRAISING

Total fundraising from all campaigns increased by 19% over 2016/2017 to \$688,298. Camerata donations increased by 11% to \$151,919 from \$137,191 in 2016/17. Major gifts were \$57,978 versus \$72,252 in 2016/17 due to

one-time specials gifts for *Werther*. Friend's gifts including Pass the Hat and other miscellaneous donations increased to \$101,700 from \$80,005 in 2016/17. Cash sponsorships increased by \$72,000 to \$167,000 from \$95,000 in 2016/17. Corporate donations decreased to \$22,500 from \$34,750 in 2016/17. Gifts from foundations were \$131,000 compared to \$100,000 in 2016/17. Net proceeds from Special Events were \$25,589 compared to \$10,581 in 2016/17.

IN-KIND SPONSORSHIPS & COMPLIMENTARY TICKETS

In the normal course of operations, Manitoba Opera exchanges tickets for its productions in consideration for various goods and services. These transactions are accounted for in the statement of operations at the fair value of the tickets exchanged which amounted to

\$63,422 versus \$91,089 in 2016/17. Similarly, Manitoba Opera receives in-kind contributions related to donated advertising, marketing and musician services. These services were recorded at their fair value in the statement of operations at \$217,054 versus \$141,570 in 2016/17.

EXPENSES

Overall savings were achieved in all departmental budgets. The creation of *La Traviata* was a joint venture with four other opera companies. Only Manitoba Opera's share of one-fifth of the sets and costumes expenses were recorded.

ENDOWMENT

To help solidify the long-term future of Manitoba Opera, the Board of Trustees established an endowment fund through The Winnipeg Foundation. Launched in 2009/10, gifts made to the Manitoba Opera Endowment Fund will grow over time and provide a significant stream of revenue to help Manitoba Opera continue to serve the community with meaningful and inspiring programming.

In 2017/18, the fund grew by \$36,567 in contributions. As of May 31st, the Manitoba Opera Fund has a balance of \$306,374.



SHANNON MELODY UNGER (ANNINA) AND ANGEL BLUE (VIOLETTA), *LA TRAVIATA*. PHOTO: R. TINKER

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Alex Robinson
Sandra Schmidtke
Dustin Schneider

* Ex Officio

◇ Appointed During Season

◇ Retired During Season

† In Memoriam

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General Director & CEO

TYRONE PATERSON

Musical Advisor & Principal Conductor

TADEUSZ BIERNACKI

Assistant Music Director & Chorus Master

MICHAEL BLAIS

Director of Administration

JUDY BRAUN

Patron Services Representative &
Communications Coordinator (Until July 2017)

BETHANY BUNKO

Patron Services Representative &
Communications Coordinator (Since August 2017)

LIVIA DYMOND

Education & Outreach Coordinator

ALICIA FAUCHER

Executive Assistant to the CEO & General Director
(Until February 2018)

SHELDON JOHNSON

Director of Production

LIZ MILLER

Annual Giving Manager

DARLENE RONALD

Director of Marketing

SANDRA SCHMIDTKE

Grants & Corporate Giving Manager

DALE SULYMKA

Chief Financial Officer



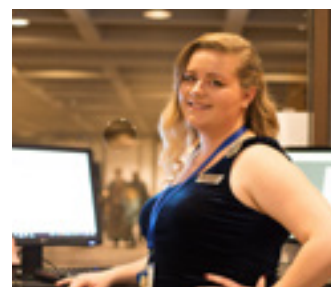
DARLENE RONALD, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING, WITH LIVIA DYMOND, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR, IN THE LOBBY AT *LA TRAVIATA*. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



CONDUCTOR, TYRONE PATERSON WITH THE CAST OF *LA TRAVIATA*.



SANDRA SCHMIDTKE, GRANTS AND CORPORATE GIVING MANAGER; ALICIA FAUCHER, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE GENERAL DIRECTOR; AND LIZ MILLER, ANNUAL GIVING MANAGER, AT THE CAMERA-TA EVENT. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



BETHANY BUNKO, COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR & PATRON SERVICES REPRESENTATIVE, IN THE BOX OFFICE AT *MADAMA BUTTERFLY*. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are such an important part of Manitoba Opera. Whether they are helping in the office, at performances, or special events, we are so grateful for their dedication. This season, volunteers, including members of the Board of Trustees and committee members, donated over 850 hours of their time.

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LIFE SKILLS STUDENTS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE

Amongst the numerous volunteers that Manitoba Opera is so fortunate to have are the students of Sisler High School's Life Skills Community Access Program. For the past number of years these students have been assisting with the education mailings.

"An important part of our program is work education and volunteering. Assisting Manitoba Opera fulfills both those goals. Students gain work skills as they organize their work space, handle materials carefully, and work towards a time goal," explains Pam Mason, an educator with the program.

"The volunteering aspect provides the self-esteem gained by helping others. The students also look forward to attending Student Night at the Opera, which they have all invariably enjoyed."



“

**By volunteering
for Manitoba Opera, I
believe I help make
it possible for
Manitobans to
experience live,
high-quality opera.”**

LETTY LAWRENCE
VOLUNTEER AND PATRON



LA TRAVIATA. PHOTO: C. CORNEAU



DARLENE RONALD, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING WITH
VOLUNTEER DONNA CUMING AND SANDRA SCHMIDT-
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PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



VOLUNTEERS HEDDIE EPP AND LJILJANA KOVACEVIC.



VOLUNTEERS SHARYN GUITTIEREZ AND ISABELLA
ECHAVIA AT STUDENT NIGHT AT THE OPERA. PHOTO:
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VOLUNTEER MARILYN SLOBOGIAN WITH LIVIA
DYMOND, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COORDINA-
TOR, AND VOLUNTEER MAGGIE KAHLER. PHOTO: A.
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“

**I especially enjoy
volunteering on
Student Night as I want
to encourage Manitoba's
youth to attend and
experience the passion
and intrigue of opera.”**

IRENA KOVACEVIC
VOLUNTEER AND PATRON



MARINA DALTON VOLUNTEERING IN THE BOX OFFICE.
PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI

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Manitoba Opera gratefully acknowledges the encouragement and financial support given by many individuals, foundations, businesses, and corporations in 2017/18, allowing it to bring live opera to Manitobans.

Listings include donations made between June 1, 2017, and May 31, 2018.

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PATRONS IN THE LOBBY AT *LA TRAVIATA*. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI

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LAURELLE FROESE (KATE PINKERTON) AND NINA YOSHIDA-NELSEN (SUZUKI), *MADAMA BUTTERFLY*. PHOTO: R. TINKER

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PATRONS AT FASHION FRIDAY, *MADAMA BUTTERFLY*. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI



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DENNIS BAILEY (CAVARADOSSI) AND ROBERTA PALMER (TOSCA), *TOSCA*, MANITOBA OPERA, 1980. PHOTO: ALAN MACKENZIE

PATRONS SHARE THEIR OPERA STORIES

This season Manitoba Opera put out the call to patrons for stories about what impact opera as an art form, or Manitoba Opera in particular, has had on their lives. Dozens of stories, such as the two here, have been provided and are being regularly shared via the monthly e-newsletter.

FIRST OPERA WAS *TOSCA*

"My first opera was in fall of 1980, with my new boyfriend, Don Browne, who soon became my husband. He had been a MO subscriber already and we continued to be subscribers. We sat in the centre of row one in the first balcony because he said that was the best location to see the whole stage and to hear the opera the best. I believe that opera was *Tosca*.

Don passed away in 2010, and I continue to be a subscriber. However, I now sit in the centre of the first row on the orchestra level to be nearer the wonderful singing on the stage, and to be nearer to the wonderful music by our WSO."

LESIA PEET

LOVE OF OPERA BEGAN IN EUROPE

"My love of opera occurred as a young adult travelling through Europe. While in Austria, a local insisted we accompany him to Wiener Staatsoper to hear the Vienna Opera perform *Aida*. I was unexpectedly mesmerized, and saw a different opera each day we were there. Been a huge fan ever since.

I grew up with classical music, and play a few instruments, but voice isn't one of them. I just love it!! Since then, I have attended many of the world's best opera houses, but nothing is ever as good as seeing and hearing it here at home!"

MARY ANN ROSENBLOOM



PATRONS ENJOYING THE INTERMISSION RECEPTION AT *MADAMA BUTTERFLY*. PHOTO: A. MIGLIORANCI

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PATRONS AT FASHION FRIDAY, MADAMA BUTTERFLY.
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*With deep appreciation to Rob
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STUDENT AT VAN WELLEGHEM SCHOOL PARTICIPATES IN AN OPERA CLASS.



ADAM LUTHER (ALFREDO) AND ANGEL BLUE (VIOLETTA), *LA TRAVIATA*. PHOTO: C. CORNEAU



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HIROMI OMURA (CIO-CIO-SAN), MADAMA BUTTERFLY. PHOTO: R. TINKER