



## MANITOBA OPERA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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FOR MORE INFORMATION  
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### **French Masterpiece, *Werther*, closes Manitoba Opera's 2016/17 Season April 29, May 2 & 5**

***ALL TICKETS: BUY 1, GET 1 FREE***

A Manitoba Opera premiere of the French romantic tragedy, *Werther* (pronounced Vair-TARE) closes the company's 2016/17 season with three performances **Saturday, April 29 (7:30 pm), Tuesday, May 2 (7 pm), and Friday, May 5 (7:30 pm)** at the Centennial Concert Hall. Composed by Jules Massenet, *Werther* is the story of the idealistic young poet who cannot live without love. It is among the most exquisite and moving in all of French opera. Set in Wetzlar, Germany, from July to December in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, *Werther* will be sung in French with English translations projected above the stage.

**TICKET BOGO OFFER:** Buy one ticket at the regular price and get the second one free for all performances, in all sections (applies to adult single tickets). Call 204-944-8824, go online at [manitobaopera.mb.ca](http://manitobaopera.mb.ca), or in person at the MO Box Office, lower level, Centennial Concert Hall (9:30 am – 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday). Seniors, student, and youth discounts are also available.

#### The Story

*Werther* tells of promises kept and fragile hearts broken. It is the simple story of an apparently idyllic middle-class family torn apart by irrepressible desire. *Werther* follows a young poet, a hopeless romantic who falls instantly in love with the beautiful and unattainable Charlotte, who is promised to marry another. Werther tries to stay away but, with each letter he writes to Charlotte, his tormented heart aches to be with her. Seeking peace the only way he knows how, he takes his own life, as Charlotte finally returns his love.

*Werther* is based on the German Romantic poet, Goethe's semi-autobiographical novel, *Sorrows of the Young Werther*. The character of Werther is modelled after two real people - Goethe himself, and his friend Karl Wilhelm Jerusalem and caused a sensation when it first appeared in 1774, with young adults copying the character of Werther.

#### The Artists:

Canadian leading tenor **John Tessier** joins the company once again to star as Werther, the young poet. Tessier was Tonio in the 2012 production of *The Daughter of the Regiment*. **Lauren Segal**, who sang Meg Page in last fall's production of *Falstaff*, returns as Charlotte, the object of his obsession. **Keith Phares**, Marcello in *La Bohème* two years ago, will sing the role of Albert. **Terence Mierau**, **David Watson**, and **Lara Secord-Haid**, as Schmidt, Le Bailli, and Sophie, respectively, round out the cast.

Winnipegger Ann Hodges will direct, with Manitoba Opera's Music Advisor and Principal Conductor, **Tyrone Paterson** conducting the **Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra**.

Lighting is by **Bill Williams**. Sets and costumes are from **Opéra de Montréal**.

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**WERTHER FUNDERS, SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS**

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