



For Immediate Release
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For More Information
Darlene Ronald, Director of Marketing
204-255-0508/dronald84@shaw.ca

CARMEN, THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR OPERA, CLOSES MANITOBA OPERA'S 2019/20 SEASON

Considered to be one of the world's most popular operas, *Carmen*, the sexy thriller that seduces the audience with every note, will be presented by Manitoba Opera at the Centennial Concert Hall **Saturday, March 28 (7:30 pm), Tuesday, March 31, (7 pm), and Friday, April 3 (7:30 pm)**. Set in Spain, *Carmen* tells the story of a passionate, free-spirited woman who can have any man she wants, but when she seduces the young soldier Don José only to cast him aside for the handsome bullfighter, she seals her tragic fate. *Carmen* will be sung in French with French dialogue and projected English projections.

For tickets call 204-944-8824, go online at mbopera.ca, or in person at the MO Box Office, lower level, Centennial Concert Hall (9:30 am – 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday). Seniors, students, and youth discounts are available.

Carmen is unrivalled in its list hit melodies and recognizable music, including Carmen's smoky Habanera, Don José's Flower Song, and the rousing Toreador Song. Over 140 years after its premiere in Paris, composer Georges Bizet's opera continues to captivate audiences around the globe.

"Who can resist the sensuous music of Bizet? With its lavish score and brilliant orchestration, *Carmen* is an irresistible theatrical event. Last performed by the company in 2010, we are very pleased to bring this opera to the stage for an entirely new audience," explains Larry Desrochers, General Director & CEO.

THE ARTISTS

Canadians making their mark will dominate the roster for this production. French-Canadian mezzo, **Nora Sourouzian** makes her company debut as the fiery temptress, with the celebrated tenor **David Pomeroy** reprising his role as the obsessive corporal. Pomeroy was with MO in 2017 as Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*. Winnipegger **Lida Szkwarek** (Michaëla) and **Jean-Phillipe Lazure** (Remendado) will be making company debuts. **Giles Tomkins**, who appeared last season as Basilio in *The Barber of Seville*, will sing Zuniga, with **Johnathon Kirby** (Masetto in the 2018 production of *Don Giovanni*) singing the dual roles of Moralès and Dancaïre. Winnipeg-born soprano **Lara Secord-Haid** will sing Frasquita. Secord-Haid was last on the Manitoba Opera stage as Sophie in *Werther* in 2017. Fellow Winnipegger **Laurelle Czaplinski** will sing Mercédès (last appearing as Kate Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* 2017). American baritone **Timothy Renner** is making his Manitoba Opera debut in the role of Escamillo the bullfighter. **Brian Deedrick** will direct the production which is set in and around Seville in 1820. Deedrick last directed *La Bohème* for the company in 2014.

2. *MB Opera presents Carmen, March 28, 31, April 3, 2020*

Tyrone Paterson will conduct the **Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra** and the **Manitoba Opera Chorus**. Lighting is by Winnipeg-based **Scott Henderson**. The set is from Edmonton Opera; costumes from Malabar.

THE STORY

As the workers at a Seville cigarette factory enter the city square on their lunch break, the sensual and seductive Carmen teases her many admirers. Only the corporal Don José is resistant to her charms. Piqued by his disinterest, she playfully tosses a flower at him.

Later, Carmen is arrested for wounding a co-worker in a rowdy fight. Don José is to take her to prison, but has fallen under her spell and lets her escape. He later deserts the army to join Carmen and her band of smugglers, disregarding his life-long sweetheart and his dying mother. Carmen has tired of the jealous José however, and decides to take on a new lover, the bullfighter Escamillo. Jealousy ignites and José is pushed to the brink of obsessive madness that leads to shocking, murderous consequences.

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