


A woman in a yellow opera costume with a large feathered headpiece is singing into a glass held high in her right hand. She has a wide-open mouth and an expressive face. In the foreground, two men in dark suits are looking up at her with admiration. The background is a bright, cloudy sky. The title "THE POWER OF VOICE" is overlaid on the image.

THE POWER OF VOICE



Kirstin Chávez (Carmen) and
David Pomeroy (Don José),
Carmen, 2010.
Photo: R. Tinker

Message from the Co-Chairs

Uplifting, resonant, compelling: words cannot fully capture the incomparable power of the human voice and the natural way it creates a sense of belonging and connection. From a gentle whisper to a passionate chorus, Manitoba Opera celebrates the power of voice to unify, to inspire, to teach, and to share.

For the past 50 years, Manitoba Opera has been a powerful voice in this province's arts community — working hard to develop local talent, explore important social issues through opera, and immerse audiences in sublime moments of beauty.

Today, Manitoba Opera has never been stronger, our financial position has never been more secure, and our focus has never been sharper. The exceptional artistic, volunteer, and leadership talent that Manitoba Opera possesses right now presents an unmissable opportunity to ensure a sustainable future for opera in our province.

In recognition of Manitoba Opera's 50th anniversary, we invite you to be a part of a historic campaign to ensure the company's long-term growth and sustainability. Through ongoing investment in artistic development, education programs, and embracing and expanding community engagement opportunities, we can enrich lives, both on and off the stage, for generations to come.

Your gift to The Power of Voice campaign will echo through the ages as an eternal part of Manitoba Opera's story. Funds invested will help to showcase the voices of our province and celebrate them on the national stage.

We hope you will join us. Together, the power of our voice will ring out across the province, and beyond.

Elba Haid & Judith Chambers

CO-CHAIRS, THE POWER OF VOICE CAMPAIGN

The Power of Voice Campaign Cabinet

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Susan Bowden Twaddle

Deborah Thorlakson

Honourary Cabinet

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Larry Desrochers (Staff)

Tania Douglas (Staff)

Executive Campaign Consultant

Susan A. Thompson

Front Cover:
Nikki Einfeld (Adele),
Die Fledermaus, 2006.
Photo: R. Tinker

Message from the General Director & CEO

For more than 20 years, I've been proud to lead a company that creates art of incredible beauty, inspires children of all ages, and uses the lens of opera to view important issues of our time.

Opera is transformational. Few endeavours have the depth, beauty, and significance of this art form. At Manitoba Opera, we strive to create art where beauty meets truth.

As the flagship for vocal music in Manitoba, we take pride in the development of Manitoban and Canadian artists. Veteran performers share the stage with emerging artists in a blend of traditional operas, new commissions, and underperformed masterpieces, elevating our national reputation for artistic excellence.

For children, opera sparks the imagination. It engages emotionally with complicated themes, improves mental health, grows confidence, and encourages social engagement. It helps young minds to understand history, social sciences, language, theatre arts, literature, and politics. Over the last decade, we have reached more than 100,000 young people through programs created for kindergarten to post-secondary students.

Our community engagement programs include people of all backgrounds in conversations and experiences. By using the themes of our works, we spark community conversations about issues that matter, including racism, social justice, and Truth and Reconciliation. Our programs have connected with thousands, including people from Indigenous communities, newcomers to Canada, at-risk youth, minorities, and those living with disabilities. Our free events and subsidized ticket programs improve access for people who normally would not be able to attend opera performances.

Many a night I have sat in the theatre and watched the magic of artists connecting with an audience. I'm inspired by the power of the human voice to fill an audience with awe and propel them to their feet as the curtain touches the stage floor. It is thrilling to watch every time.

We want to share that feeling through The Power of Voice campaign. I invite you to join the chorus and make a gift to support the next 50 years of inspiring artists, children's education, and community conversations.

Thank you

Larry Desrochers

GENERAL DIRECTOR & CEO



"As an opera lover, I am profoundly grateful to be able to experience world class live opera in my hometown. I also feel it is important to support and invest in all the artists who create opera for our benefit. I believe opera is a wonderful art form that everyone should be able to experience, and I applaud the great work of the Manitoba Opera to make opera accessible to everyone."

Gail Asper, O.C., O.M., LL.D.



YOUR GIFT WILL ECHO THROUGH THE AGES.

The Power of Voice: The Endowment Campaign for Manitoba Opera.

For the past 50 years, Manitoba Opera has been a powerful voice in this province's arts community. We have used our collective efforts to develop local talent, explore important social issues through opera, and immerse audiences into sublime moments of beauty.

Now, we are asking for your support to ensure a vibrant and sustainable future for Manitoba Opera.

We will use the power of our voice to amplify operatic virtuosity, enrich Manitoba's young people through education, and effect positive change in the communities we serve. It's time to raise our voice to new heights.

When we sing, people change.

Our 2014 production of Beethoven's only opera, *Fidelio*, exemplifies how opera can impact the community and the individual. We reinterpreted this 216-year-old opera to highlight the modern-day plight of refugees and political prisoners. In the opera's powerful finale, 50 former refugees living in Manitoba joined performers onstage as witnesses to the fall of an oppressive regime and to celebrate humanity's right to live in freedom.

One of the Manitobans in this group was Francisco (name changed), a 70-year-old Chilean refugee who came to Winnipeg in the late 70s. After the production closed, his wife called our office. She wanted us to know that since appearing in the opera, Francisco had been transformed.

He had begun telling her stories of his imprisonment and torture during the Pinochet regime. Francisco dictated more than 400 pages of suppressed memories to her. Memories he had never shared.

It was only by seeing prisoners set free in an opera that Francisco himself was freed from the trauma of being a real prisoner.

"Manitoba Opera is my artistic home. It represents top-level, professional art and music making that connects community through music, story, and dialogue. In using unamplified song as the medium that connects us all, Manitoba Opera reminds us that every one of us has a voice. When we have a voice, we can make a difference."

Lara Ciekiewicz,
SOPRANO

THE POWER OF OUR VOICE HELPED FRANCISCO FIND HIS.



Fidelio, 2014.
Photo: R. Tinker

THOSE WHO HEAR US RESPOND

Held at The Winnipeg Foundation, the A. Kerr Twaddle & Robert H. Thorlakson Manitoba Opera Endowment Fund is an investment in the future of opera in our province.

Our goal is to raise \$5M from private donations. Your gift will be combined with others and permanently invested. Gifts made through The Power of Voice campaign will be augmented by \$5M in matching support from Canadian Heritage and The Winnipeg Foundation.

The annual income earned from the interest generated will be used to reach new heights of artistry, enhance opera education, and effect positive change in our community for decades to come.

You can join a chorus of others to help shape the future of opera in Manitoba.

YOUR CONTRIBUTION MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

A \$10M fully capitalized endowment fund will:

- Generate approximately \$500,000 annually in revenue to enhance artistic vitality, enrich education programs, and deepen community engagement.
- Assist with the creation of new operas, new productions, and new opportunities for young Canadian talent.
- Create new opportunities for diverse artists.
- Trigger rapid responses to changing demographics, technology, and social justice issues.

Together, our future is resonant.

Onstage, we are delivering world-class productions, showcasing the next rising star or premiering the next great Canadian opera. Offstage, we are fostering creativity in the next generation and inspiring community conversations throughout Manitoba.

PICTURE THIS...

It's 2072, and Manitoba Opera is celebrating its 100th anniversary. The audience settles into their seats, musicians tune in the pit, and singers take to the stage. Then, before the first note of the overture floats through the air, they all pause to reflect on the visionary generosity of donors like you — those who imagined a vibrant future for opera in Manitoba and made it happen.

**YOUR DONATION WILL
CHANGE PEOPLE'S LIVES**

THROUGH THE
GLORY OF OPERA
FOR ANOTHER 50 YEARS

"BMO is a major patron of the arts and for over a decade, a proud ambassador of Manitoba Opera. We are steadfast in our belief that the arts are an essential source of interpretations, inspiration, and understanding, and that stories told through music, as is the case with the dynamic repertoire of the Manitoba Opera each season, have the power to change lives and help grow the good to build better communities."

Kristen Kennedy,
REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, BMO



Angel Blue (Violetta),
La Traviata, 2018.
Photo: R. Tinker

THAT
IS THE

POWER OF YOUR VOICE



mbopera.ca/endow

La Bohème, 2014.
Photo: R. Tinker