

BIOGRAPHY: GORDON GERRARD

For Canadian conductor and pianist Gordon Gerrard, music serves as a kind of animating life force. He relishes the making of it, takes pleasure in how it brings joy and comfort to audiences, and appreciates its potential to change how people perceive the non-musical aspects of their lives.

It is a perspective that has shaped his leadership as artistic director of City Opera Vancouver since 2023 and across a deeply impactful decade as music director of the Regina Symphony Orchestra - a tenure honoured by his appointment as Conductor Emeritus in May 2026. Gordon brings that wealth of national experience back to Manitoba to begin as the artistic director of Manitoba Opera.

This return follows his acclaimed debut with the company conducting *Le Nozze di Figaro* this past April, and his first appearance with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet leading *The Nutcracker* at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. Throughout these theatrical engagements, Gordon remains deeply connected to his roots at the piano, maintaining an active practice as a recital partner.

Gordon's work on the symphonic podium includes extensive guest engagements with major Canadian orchestras, including the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Symphonique de Québec, Victoria Symphony Orchestra, London Sinfonia, and Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra. Internationally, he has served as a cover conductor for the New York Philharmonic.

He also maintains a deep footprint in Canadian opera, having guest conducted for companies across the country, including Calgary Opera, Edmonton Opera, and Opera Hamilton. At the helm of City Opera Vancouver, Gordon continues to push the boundaries of chamber opera, steering the company's reputation for developing vital new work, including a highly anticipated new commission with legendary Canadian writer Ann-Marie MacDonald in partnership with the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

All rather unlikely for a kid who grew up on a farm just outside Brandon, MB. There was music in the house; Gordon's mom played the piano, Dad listened to old-time country music, and Grandma led the choir at the local church. Gordon started piano lessons at seven and developed quickly, setting his alarm for 6 am to practice before catching the school bus.

At 17, he left the farm for his undergrad at the University of Manitoba, where he discovered the joy of collaborating with singers. This fascination took him to New York City, where he completed a master's degree at the Manhattan School of Music. While there he deepened a collaborative relationship with the voice that continues today through his recital work. This trajectory naturally expanded into a professional journey built from the ground up within the

Canadian opera and orchestral ecosystems, serving key foundational tenures as resident conductor of Calgary Opera and associate conductor of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.

It was during his time in Vancouver that he worked alongside his mentor, the late Bramwell Tovey, who helped him hone his technical skills and showed him how to be a leader on and off the podium.

Whether exploring the orchestral classics, collaborating with dancers, partnering with singers in recital, or commissioning the voices of tomorrow, Gordon remains driven by the social impact of the art form.

“Music brings people together. I really do believe that as time goes on, what we need is more togetherness, more community. I consider it a privilege to be part of that magic.”

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