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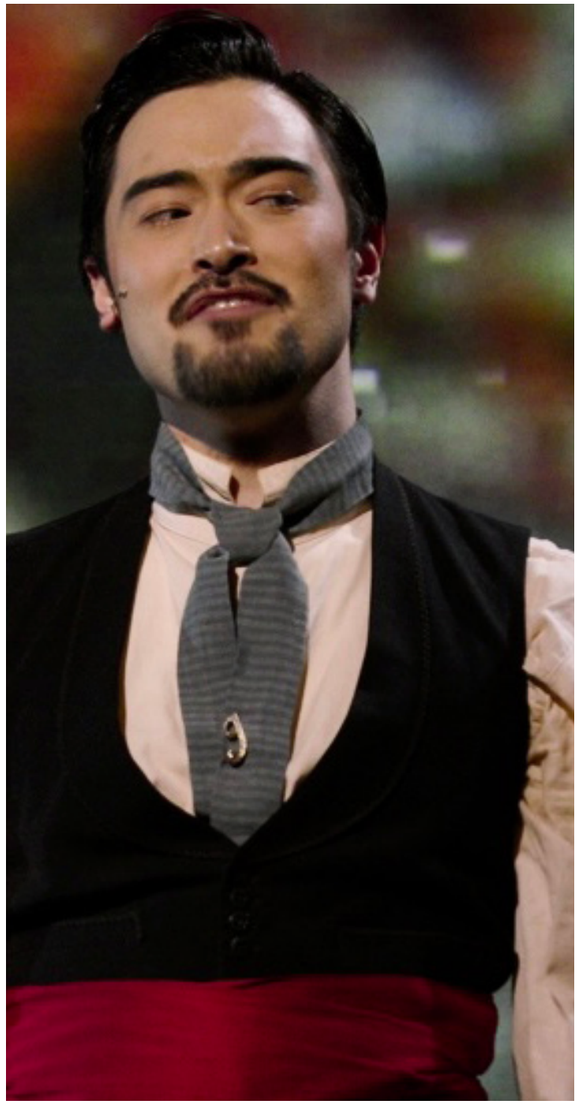
2020–2021 DIGITAL SEASON

REIMAGINED FOR THE SCREEN



ANNUAL REPORT









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FRONT COVER: VO'S 2020–2021 SEASON ARTWORK BY EMILY COOPER.
FACING PAGE (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): MIREILLE LEBEL IN *LA VOIX HUMAINE;* LUKA KAWABATA IN *CARMEN: UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL.* JONELLE SILLS IN *THE MUSIC SHOP;* SERGIO AUGUSTO AND ANDREAS DALA IN *AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS.* PHOTOS BY MIKE SOUTHWORTH

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THANK YOU!

We are humbled by your steadfast support during this challenging year and the extraordinary response to the first-ever re-envisioned digital season. With every encouraging message, every dollar donated, and every ticket purchased, this incredible community came together with generous support.

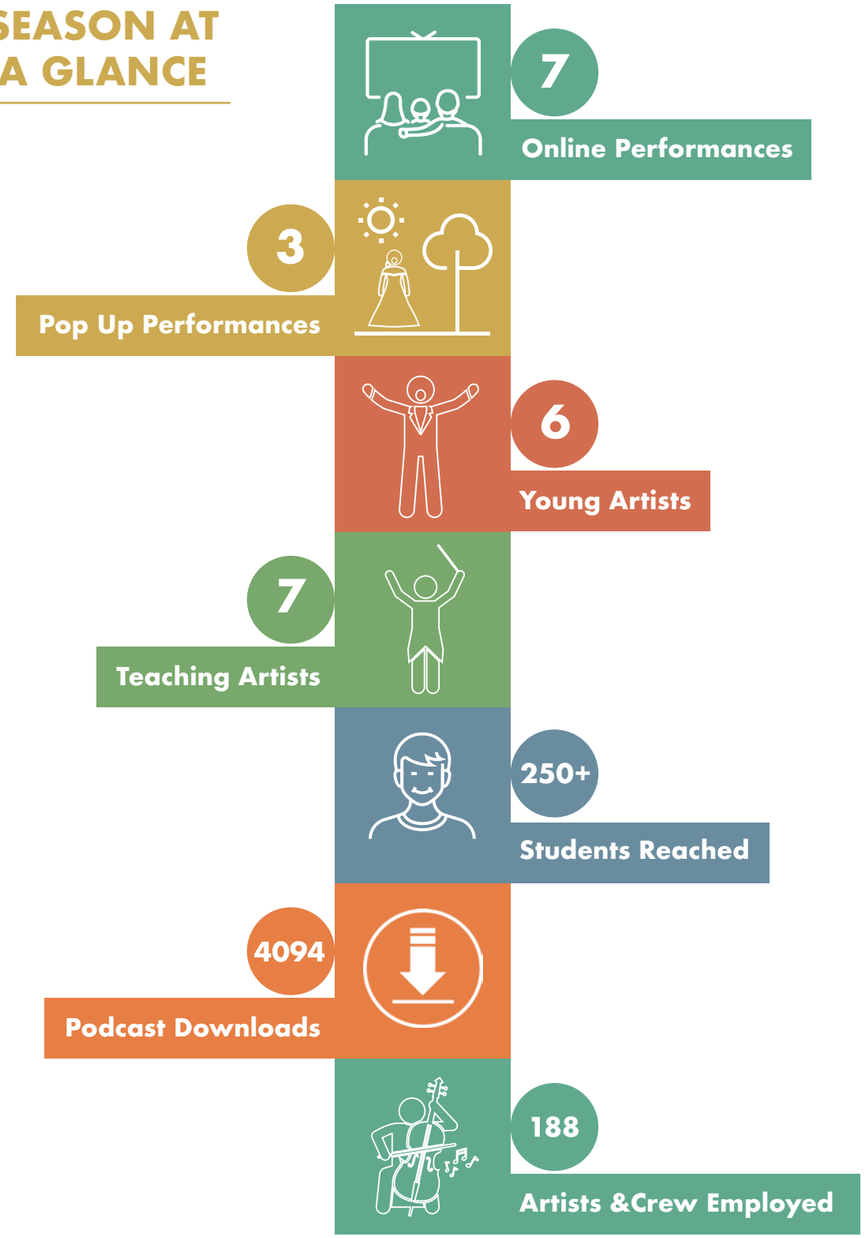
Although the way we produced and shared opera changed, we remained driven and committed to creating the highest artistic quality opera experiences to engage and entertain our community. The talented artists adapted to new ways of creating opera for the screen and continued to inspire creativity so we could bring the joy of opera into your homes. Our education programs were adapted for online learning ensuring the next generation experienced the magic of opera. With a strong foundation of support, we launched a campaign to build the future of Vancouver Opera and create a more connected arts community.

Inside this Annual Report you'll read about the projects, artists and community impact, all made possible with your generous support. On behalf of everyone at Vancouver Opera, thank you.

Sincerely,

Tom Wright, General Director
Richard Rees, Board Chair

2020–2021 SEASON AT A GLANCE













Francis Poulenc

LA VOIX HUMAINE

Digital premiere: Saturday, October 24, 2020 7:30PM

La Voix humaine was a hugely successful season opener for our pivot to a digital season. The artistic team, production staff and artists worked tirelessly—in a completely new medium and within strict safety protocols—to deliver the highest quality filmed production possible. The result was exquisite. Director Rachel Peake brilliantly took advantage of the cameras to create an intimacy that could only be captured on film. Mezzo-soprano Mireille Lebel delivered an unforgettable solo performance and music director Kinza Tyrrell elegantly played Poulenc's complex score on the piano. Given the current circumstances, the portrayal of physical and emotional isolation in this powerful monodrama were themes that resonated with so many of us. Although physically separate, *La Voix humaine* allowed audiences and artists to experience and celebrate opera together.

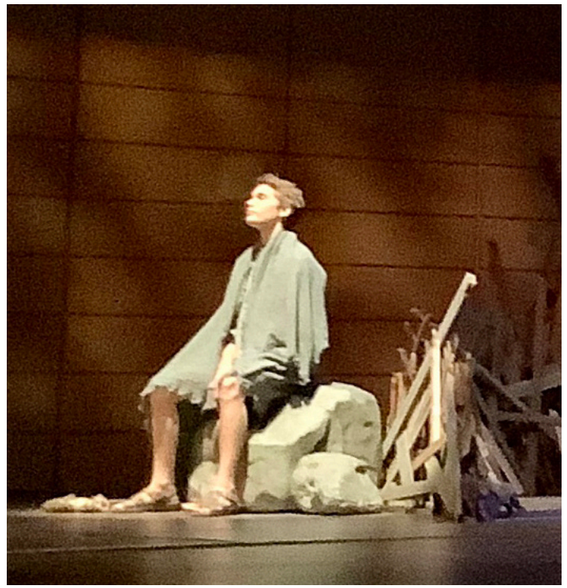
"What Vancouver Opera has achieved is the perfect match between cast, repertoire and medium."

- Vancouver Sun

AN INTIMATE DINNER PARTY FOR THE PREMIERE

On opening night we welcomed 36 guests to a special sold-out dinner at the Martha Lou Henley Rehearsal Hall where they enjoyed an intimate 4-course gourmet dinner with Mission Hill Family Estate wines at physically distanced tables of two. The evening began with a live pre-show talk by director Rachel Peake, viewing of *La Voix humaine* on the big screen, followed by a post-show Q&A with Ms. Peake, Kinza Tyrrell and the mesmerizing Mireille Lebel. This was the only in-person dinner party we were able to host this season and it truly was a memorable one.

(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): 1., 2. AND 4. MIREILLE LEBEL AS ELLE IN *LA VOIX HUMAINE*. PHOTOS BY MIKE SOUTHWORTH; 3. OPENING NIGHT PARTY, PHOTO BY AUTUMN COPPAWAY; 5. MUSIC DIRECTOR / PIANIST KINZA TYRRELL, PHOTO BY MIKE SOUTHWORTH.











Gian Carlo Menotti

AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS

Digital premiere: Saturday, December 12, 2020 7:30PM

Written for TV and originally broadcast on Christmas Eve in 1951, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* was the perfect production for families to enjoy during the holiday season. Director Sarah Jane Pelzer's vision came to life with the beautiful set and the ambient lighting that created the backdrop to this heartwarming story. The production's music director Leslie Dala's son, Andreas Dala, touchingly performed Amahl alongside an impressive cast of Vancouver Opera chorus members. Leslie Dala and Tina Chang performed Menotti's beautiful reduction for two pianos. The staff, production team and artists worked hard—this time within even stricter safety protocols— and found a way to creatively share Menotti's story the way he intended: on a screen, in our homes, and with our families.

"To have the opportunity to be able to create art with wonderful colleagues again has been so special to me and something that I certainly have a renewed gratitude for ... VO's digital season has offered hope to many artists across Canada."

- Stephanie Tritchew

(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): 1. ANDREAS DALA AS AMAHL; 2. STEPHANIE TRITCHEW AS MOTHER; 3. MICHAEL MACKINNON AS BALTHAZAR; 4. *AMAHL'S* MUSIC DIRECTOR LESLIE DALA AND RÉPÉTITEUR / PIANIST TINA CHANG; 5. A SCENE FROM *AMAHL.* PHOTOS BY AUTUMN COPPAWAY, LEAH GISELLE FIELD AND MIKE SOUTHWORTH.











Richard Wargo

THE MUSIC SHOP

Digital Premiere: Saturday, March 13, 2021 7:30PM

Richard Wargo's delightful fast-paced comedy, *The Music Shop*, impressively showcased Vancouver Opera's talented Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program's six participants. The four characters sung by soprano Jonelle Sills, mezzo-soprano Amanda Weatherall, tenor Ian Cleary and baritone Luka Kawabata were directed by Dana Fradkin and accompanied by pianist Amy Seulky Lee. Meticulously rehearsed, staged and filmed at Vancouver Opera's Martha Lou Henley Rehearsal Hall—with a number of invisible-to-the-viewer restrictions incorporated—this Canadian premiere provided 45 minutes of pure joy for home viewing audiences.

"(*The Music Shop*) provides an even-handed workout for a company of fine young singers and it's a nice project for director and pianist. And above all, it's a great choice for streaming. Bravo tutti"

- Vancouver Sun

(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): 1. AMANDA WEATHERALL AS THE WIFE; 2. PIANIST AMY SEULKY LEE; 3. LUKA KAWABATA AS DMITRI AND JONELLE SILLS AS MASHA. 4. JONELLE SILLS, IAN CLEARY AND LUKA KAWABATA; 5. IAN CLEARY AS IVAN. PHOTOS BY MIKE SOUTHWORTH AND AUTUMN COPPAWAY.











Georges Bizet

CARMEN: UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Digital Premiere: Saturday, May 1, 2021 7:30PM

Inspired by French arthouse film, stage director Brenna Corner and conductor Leslie Dala's creative adaptation of Bizet's *Carmen* gave audiences an up close and personal view of opera's greatest femme fatale. This cinematic version framed as a tarot card reading, pared back Bizet's masterpiece to its four essential characters, memorable music and best-known arias. Filled with superb performances by the talented members of the Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program, *Carmen: Up Close and Personal* was the first production of the season that included a chamber-sized section of the Vancouver Opera Orchestra. Through the magic of film, this opera favourite's fresh makeover and uniquely entertaining production was the perfect finale to wrap up the first ever digital season.

"Ms. Corner has brought a fresh take that is both entertaining and provocative."

- Review Vancouver

(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): 1. AMANDA WEATHERALL AS CARMEN; 2. LUKA KAWABATA AS ESCAMILLIO; 3. MEMBERS OF THE VO ORCHESTRA AT THE ORPHEUM THEATRE; 4. IAN CLEARY AS DON JOSÉ; 5. JONELLE SILLS AS MICAËLA. PHOTOS BY AUTUMN COPPAWAY AND MIKE SOUTHWORTH.









Richard Wagner

WAGNER FOR VALENTINE'S

Digital premiere: Saturday, February 13, 2021 7:30PM

Musicians from the Vancouver Opera Orchestra came together after nearly a full year since their last performance in February 2020. Thanks to the generosity and support of Martha Lou Henley C.M., two beautiful chamber music works by Richard Wagner were rehearsed, filmed and shared online as a free Valentine's weekend concert. Conducted by Leslie Dala and joined by special guest soloist, Krisztina Szabó, this intimate performance of these two romantic pieces, Siegfried Idyll and the Wesendonck Lieder, showcased the beauty of this work in the stunning acoustics of Christ Church Cathedral.

"It was a true gift and an honour to be able to rehearse and perform two exquisite works of Richard Wagner with colleagues and friends in the orchestra and Krisztina Szabó"

- Leslie Dala, conductor

PHOTOS FROM THE *WAGNER FOR VALENTINE'S* PERFORMANCE AT CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL.
TOP PHOTO BY CORIN GUTTERIDGE. PHOTOS 2–4 BY AUTUMN COPPAWAY







SUMMER POPERA

Vancouver Opera took advantage of the summer weather and surprised audiences with pop-up opera performances. Partnering with West Vancouver Community Arts Council, the first pop-up took place at the Silk Purse in Ambleside. Fittingly real life couple Tamar Simon (soprano) and Geoffrey Schellenberg (baritone) performed music all about love, with pianist Tina Chang. In partnership with the City of Burnaby, the performance was repeated at Burnaby Mountain Conservation Area Rose Garden. Our final pop-up was at the Burnaby Village Museum which provided a wonderful backdrop for a string quartet of VO Orchestra musicians: violinists Angela Cavadas and Andrea Siradze, violist Tawnya Popoff and cellist Rebecca Wenham. This gorgeous afternoon of music featured opera favourites, much of it arranged by VO violinist, Sandra Fiddes.

VIRTUAL DAY OF MUSIC

Vancouver Opera's Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists participated in Vancouver Symphony Orchestra's Day of Music on May 15. The young artists sang a selection of arias and love duets ranging from Mozart to Richard Strauss, in French, German and Italian as part of this virtual province-wide celebration of music.

(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): 1. GEOFFREY SCHELLENBERG AND TAMAR SIMON; 2. TINA CHANG, TAMAR SIMON AND GEOFFREY SCHELLENBERG; 3. VO ORCHESTRA STRING QUARTET: ANGELA CAVADAS, ANDREA SIRADZE, REBECCA WENHAM, AND TAWNYA POPOFF. PHOTOS BY VINCENT WONG.



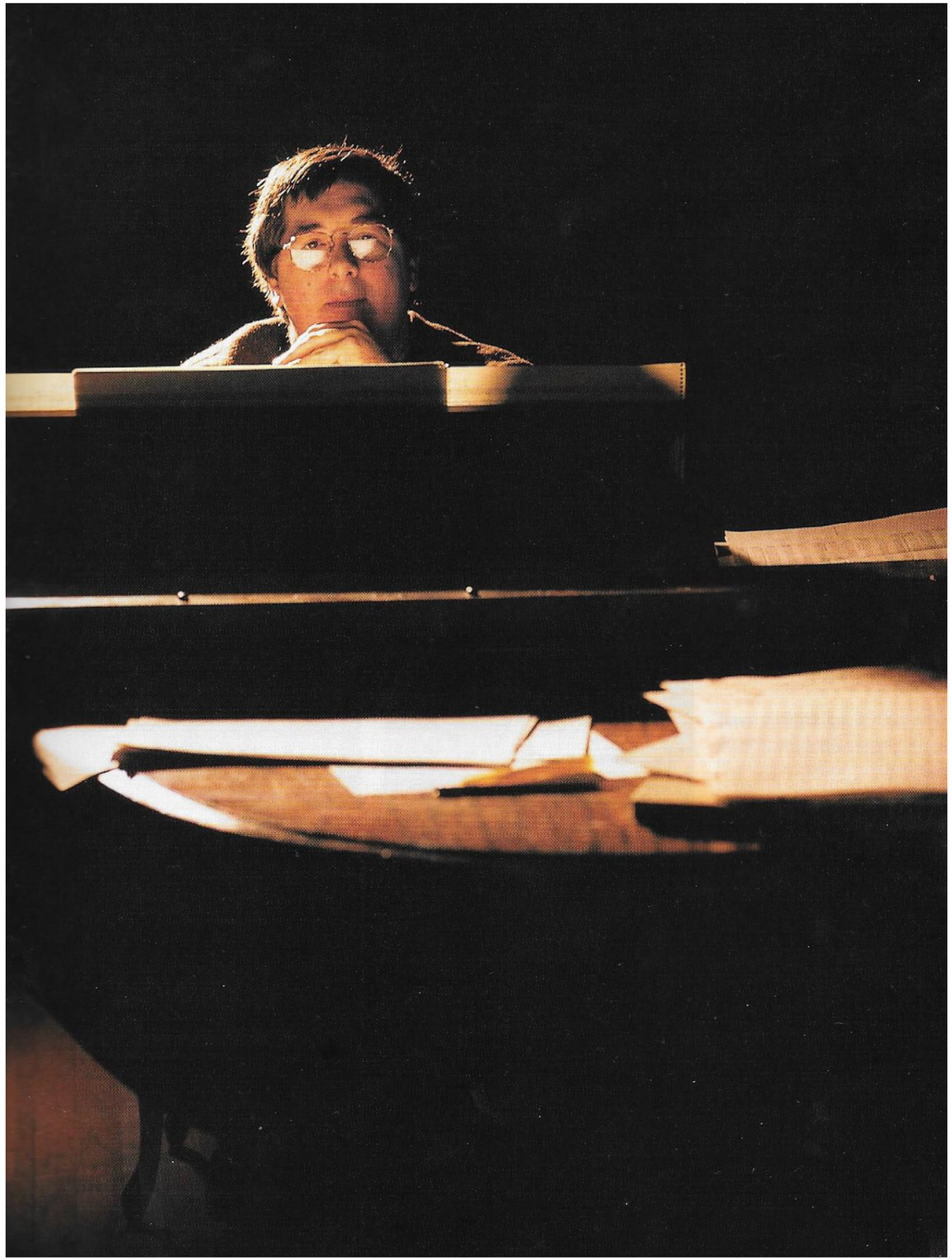
LEARNING AND SCHOOL PROGRAMS

This year we remained committed to providing school programs that introduced young people to opera from the classroom. We adapted our programs to online formats to fit the needs of both in-class and online learning environments. This season we launched **OperaLab**, a new virtual program for secondary students that provided teachers with access to the digital production of *The Music Shop* and *Carmen: Up Close and Personal,* along with related educational materials, lesson plans, activity videos and virtual information sessions. Key elements of our signature elementary school program, **Project Opera**, were also adapted to an online format that still enabled students to work directly with Vancouver Opera teaching artists. The program ran in five Lower Mainland schools reaching nearly 250 students. We're thrilled that the new **VO Capstone Mentorship Program** ran at full capacity in its augural year. Designed to fulfill a graduation requirement for secondary students this program paired grade 12 students with Vancouver Opera artists who mentored the students in a variety of artistic endeavours such as: music composition, song writing, professional musicianship and choreography.

THE KETTLE SOCIETY

In November 2020, VO began a new project with longtime community partners, The Kettle Society. Members of the Kettle Choir joined weekly virtual classes in music, movement and visual arts, along with their weekly writing class, all taught by VO teaching artists. Each class was filled with familiar faces, creativity and laughter and a sense of community. In June 2021, the group safely met in person for the first time in nearly a year for a week-long event that included multi-disciplinary workshops and a visual art exhibit, culminating with a final presentation of their work throughout the pandemic.

YUMI ONOZAWA, PHOTO BY FLICK HARRISON.



CONNECTING AUDIENCES AND ARTISTS

Vancouver Opera Offstage podcast offered an insider's glimpse into the artistry, experiences, and perspectives of the talent involved in bringing opera productions from the page to the stage. Hosted by Leslie Dala, VO's chorus director and associate conductor, Offstage welcomed over 40 guests this season including Richard Wargo, composer of *The Music Shop*. Between April 2020 and August 2021, guests included well known singers: Judith Forst, Simone Osborne, Brett Polegato; conductors: Jonathan Darlington, David Agler; directors: Rachel Peake, Brenna Corner and guests who spoke about issues of equity, diversity and inclusivity in opera: Marion Newman, Asitha Tenekoon, Teiya Kasahara, Michael Tadeshi Mori, and Valerie Jerome. To listen, visit vancouveropera.ca/offstage

RICHARD WARGO. PHOTO BY TIM EVANS.



VO'S 2020–2021 YULANDA M. FARIS YOUNG ARTISTS PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS. PHOTO BY NACH DUDSDEEMAYTHA.

COMMITMENT TO YOUNG ARTISTS TRAINING

Investing in young artists through an intensive residence program is instrumental in preparing them for a successful professional career in opera.

The re-envisioned 2020–2021 season enabled Vancouver Opera to continue its commitment to training young artists. Showcasing their talent with performances in two digital productions, the young artists were featured in both the Canadian premiere of Richard Wargo's ***The Music Shop*** and a brand new adaptation of ***Carmen: Up Close and Personal*** created by Brenna Corner, a Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists alumna, and maestro Leslie Dala.

2020–2021 YULANDA M. FARIS YOUNG ARTISTS

Jonelle Sills, soprano | Amanda Weatherall, mezzo-soprano
Ian Cleary, tenor | Luka Kawabata, baritone
Amy Seulky Lee, pianist and coach | Dana Fradkin, stage director

In addition, the artists participated in live and online masterclasses with distinguished mentors including Judith Forst, Kelly Robinson, Kathleen Brett, Patrick Raftery and Krisztina Szabó; music and language coaching with Kinza Tyrrell and Tina Chang; Bodyworks with Barbara Towell and sessions with VO staff.

Although the season looked very different this year, the high calibre of training and the artists' performances for the camera within very rigid restrictions provided unique growth opportunities and truly unforgettable experiences.



BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

A vibrant arts scene is essential for any great city. While Vancouver's cultural organizations are innovative and exciting, they face a shortage of affordable event, office, and rehearsal spaces. As a cultural leader in the city, Vancouver Opera strives to improve access to resources and build a more connected arts community. VO's large-scale capital campaign will fund new equipment and facility upgrades, creating a cultural hub, installing a digital soundstage, and conducting building renovations. These strategic undertakings will result in improved arts accessibility, new programming opportunities, audience growth, new partnerships, and additional spaces for arts and culture subtenants.

Thanks to generous support from the City of Vancouver, the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Estate of Harry Locke, Ms. Martha Lou Henley C.M., and many more generous donors, this project is 36% funded as of June 30, 2021, and will become a reality in the coming season. With your help, VO is building for the future of arts and culture in Vancouver.

Please visit our website to learn more about the project and how you can contribute.
vancouveropera.ca/future



THE O'BRIAN CENTRE FOR VANCOUVER OPERA. PHOTO BY TIM MATHESON.







A DELIGHTFUL GARDEN PARTY EVENING

Vancouver Opera's first fundraising event under COVID-19 restrictions was a tremendous success!

On a glorious August evening, under a transparent tent surrounded by a lush garden set in a private urban oasis, 50 socially-distanced guests enjoyed a 4-course dinner with wine pairing by Mission Hill Family Estate Winery. Guests were enthralled by a beautiful live performance by baritone Daniel Okulitch, soprano Lara Secord-Haid and pianist Tina Chang.

Thank you to our wonderful hostess, Jane McLennan, who generously covered the costs and provided a $25,000 match to the ticket sales bringing our grand total raised $50,000 to support Vancouver Opera and our work in the community and on the stage.



(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): 1. DANIEL OKULITCH, BARITONE; 2.& 3. GUESTS ENJOYING A WONDERFUL MEAL AND PERFORMANCE. PHOTOS BY DANIELLE TURNER.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND CREATION

To combat energy and material waste common within the theatrical industry, Vancouver Opera's production team has led many efforts to reduce our environmental impact. The team has been diverting compost from landfill in our kitchens; choosing biodegradable options when ordering PPE; and most recently using almost all repurposed lumber for the construction of our ***Amahl and the Night Visitors*** set.

In January 2021, Vancouver Opera took another step in our commitment to address and improve practices, participating in the award-winning Climate Smart Certification program. Through education, training, and data analysis of our baseline inventory in 2018–2019, we are creating metrics of measure for our greenhouse gas emissions. By examining these direct and indirect sources of GHGe, we will set specific reduction targets for our company's carbon footprint and create long-term action plans associated with our activities.

By early 2022, Vancouver Opera will be the first Climate Smart Certified performing arts producer in Canada. We are committed to change on matters of environmental stewardship, finding less carbon-intensive ways to produce and create.



VANCOUVER OPERA LOTTERIES

SUPPORTING PERFORMING ARTS IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Vancouver Opera continued to create extraordinary experiences that engaged, inspired and entertained our communities through voice, music and theatre. Local artists used their artistic talents to inspire, create hope and build connections in communities.

Proceeds from Vancouver Opera's lotteries support the creation of world-renowned opera productions, educational programs for youth and young adults, and community engagement events such as pop-up performances throughout the city. Most recently, proceeds from Vancouver Opera's car and 50/50 lotteries supported our innovative digital season that helped keep local artists working and our company creating new works, while improving accessibility of this beautiful art form.

For the first time, all the cars offered in each of the 2020–2021 lotteries were "green" – Tesla, Lexus Hybrid and an electric Mustang MachE. It was a fun way to promote these environmentally conscious choices.

This year, lottery ticket sales generated over $500,000 of gross revenue to support Vancouver Opera, our artists, musicians and our vibrant arts community.



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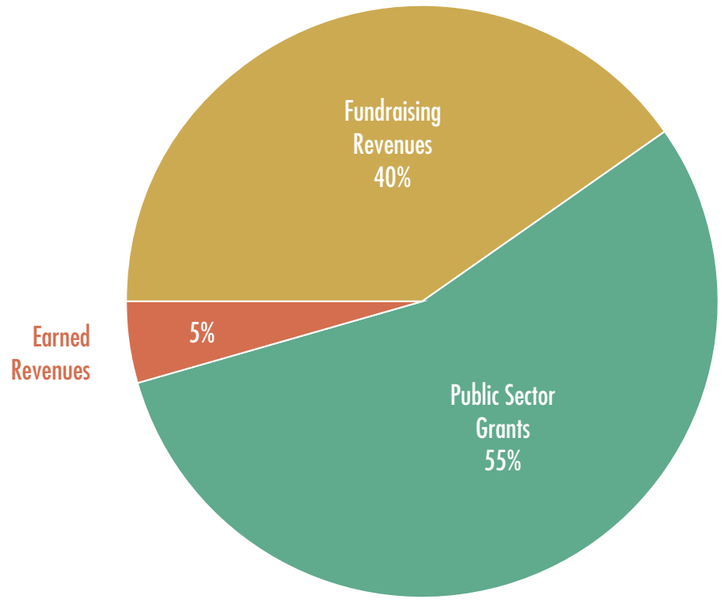
Vancouver Opera Guild

The contributions listed reflect gifts made to VO to June 30, 2021.
Every effort is made to ensure our lists are accurate at the time of printing.
We sincerely apologize for any errors or omissions.
*Lifetime Opera Round Table

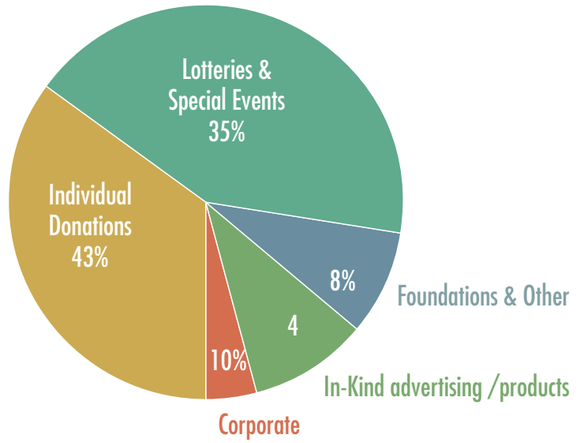
FINANCIALS

REVENUES AT A GLANCE

SEASON TOTAL REVENUE



SEASON FUNDRAISING REVENUES



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

VANCOUVER OPERA ASSOCIATION

Vancouver Opera Association ("VOA") is a registered charity with a mandate to produce professional presentations of opera at a high musical and theatrical standard for a wide audience. VOA ended the season with net income of $611K and reduced its accumulated deficit to $305K.

Condensed Statement of Financial Position
(As at June 30, in thousands)

ASSETS	2021	2020
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 1,929	$ 886
Restricted cash	226	275
Accounts receivable	911	726
Prepaid expenses	28	24
	$ 3,094	$1,912
Prepaid expenses	$ 2	$ 2
Other receivables	34	26
Capital assets	451	516
	$ 3,581	$2,456
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current liabilities		
Bank indebtedness	$ 48	$ 40
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	808	464
Loans payable	618	738
Deferred revenue and contributions	899	1,873
	$ 2,373	$3,115
Loans payable	-	-
Deferred capital contributions	1,513	257
	$ 3,886	$3,372
Net deficit	(305)	(916)
	$ 3,581	$2,456

Condensed Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in net assets
(For the year ended June 30, in thousands)

REVENUES	2021	2020
Box office	$ 103	$ 1,635
Other earned revenues	116	136
Fundraising	1,972	3,134
Grants from the VOET	-	-
Grants from the VOF	-	200
Public sector grants	2,716	1,794
	$4,907	$ 6,899
EXPENSES		
Progamming	$1,673	$ 3,292
Fundraising	733	848
Marketing	477	839
General and administrative	801	870
Facilities	529	459
Net production write off	-	-
Amortization of capital assets	83	96
Loss on disposal of capital assets	-	-
	$4,296	$ 6,405
Deficiency of revenues over expenses	611	494
Net deficit, beginning of year	$(916)	$(1,410)
Net deficit, end of year	$(305)	$ (916)

VANCOUVER OPERA FOUNDATION

Vancouver Opera Foundation ("VOF") is a registered charity with the primary objective to solicit, hold and administer funds for the benefit of VOA. These funds are not included in the financial statements of the Vancouver Opera Association. VOF is the sole trustee of the Vancouver Opera Endowment Trust ("VOET"), which is an independent registered charity that supports VOA. The net assets, revenues and expenses of the VOET are not consolidated in the Foundation's financial statements. Net assets of the VOET at December 31, 2020 were Nil.

Condensed Statement of Financial Position
(As at December 31, in thousands)

ASSETS	2020	2019
Cash	$ 9	$ 216
Loans receivable	619	728
Investments	14,009	13,241
Other assets	4	2
	$14,641	$14,187
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES		
Due to Vancouver Opera Association	$ -	$ 11
Accounts payable & accrued liabilities	8	8
Deferred contributions & investment income	1,241	1,432
Fund balance	13,392	12,736
	$14,641	$14,187

Condensed Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Fund Balance
(For the year ended December 31, in thousands)

REVENUES	2020	2019
Fundrasing and grants	$ 217	$ 82
Investment income	274	717
	$ 491	$ 799
EXPENSES		
Disbursements to VOA	$ 200	$ 800
Professional Fees	77	71
Scholarships and bursaries	(3)	16
Administration	1	6
	$ 275	$ 893
(Deficiency) excess of revenues over expenses before the following	$ 216	$ (94)
Changes in fair value of investments	(10)	25
(Deficiency) excess of revenues over expenses	$ 206	$ (69)
Fund balance, beginning of year	$12,736	$11,925
Change in fair value of endowment funds	284	780
External contribution to endowment funds	166	100
Fund balance, end of year	$13,392	$12,736

Full audited financial statements are available.
Please contact Doug Querns, Director of Finance & Administration at dquerns@vancouveropera.ca

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VO's 2020–2021 digital season artwork is by Vancouver artist and photographer, Emily Cooper.

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