

VANCOUVER OPERA ANNOUNCES 2025—2026 BLOCKBUSTER SEASON FEATURING

RIGOLETTO, COSÌ FAN TUTTE, & LA BOHÈME

FEBRUARY 4, 2025, VANCOUVER, B.C. / Traditional territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations – Vancouver Opera announces an exciting and audience-inspired 2025–2026 season with three classic opera productions. The 2025-2026 season begins in October with Verdi's eternally thrilling ***Rigoletto***, followed by Mozart's light-hearted ***Così fan tutte*** in February 2026. ***La Bohème,*** Puccini's enduring love story, closes the season in blockbuster style with a five-show run in April/May 2026.

"For our 66th season, we're bringing operas by the art form's greatest composers to the Queen Elizabeth Theatre stage," said Tom Wright, Vancouver Opera General Director. "These timeless works run the gamut—in some cases the gauntlet—of emotions, while exploring social norms and the consequences of personal choice. Verdi's *Rigoletto* is a tense, dramatic tale of revenge, fate, corruption, and the father-daughter bond. Through comedy, Mozart's *Così fan tutte* investigates love, fidelity, and moral ambiguity. To close the season, Puccini's *La Bohème* will take us to 1800s Paris, where youth's passions find their opposite in the fragility of life and love, and idealism strives valiantly in the face of reality."

The season opens October 25, 2025, with Verdi's ***Rigoletto,*** the immortal tale of a father's desperate love for his daughter—and the dangerous double-edged sword of vengeance—set against a backdrop of decadence and dark intrigue. Under director **Glynis Leyshon** (*Flight of the Hummingbird*) and the baton of Vancouver Opera Music Director **Jacques Lacombe** (*Die Fledermaus, Madama Butterfly)*, unforgettable pieces like *La donna è mobile* and the heart-wrenching *Caro nome* will soar to life. Making their Vancouver Opera debuts are American baritone **Michael Chioldi** as Rigoletto, rising international star - Canadian soprano **Sarah Dufresne** as Gilda and Chinese tenor **Yongzhao Yu**. "We are thrilled to be partnering with our friends at Pacific Opera Victoria to create this new production for our 2025–2026 season opener that will push this tense tragedy's boundaries." adds Wright.

In February 2026, get caught up in a whirlwind romance of mistaken identities, tender moments and mischievous tricks with Mozart's ***Così fan tutte***. This comic romp slyly doubles as an exploration of the heart's highs and lows, making for an irresistible musical ride through every up, down, twist and turn on the rollercoaster of love. Vancouver Opera audiences haven't been treated to Mozart's sublime opera buffa classic for over 20 years, and this fresh interpretation will cast the playful genius of one of opera's most beloved works in a contemporary West Coast Canadian light. Making his Vancouver Opera debut is director **Rob Herriot** with conductor **Leslie Dala** overseeing the

Vancouver Opera Chorus & Orchestra and all Canadian cast, including Vancouver audience favorite soprano **Tracy Dahl** as Despina and bass-baritone **Daniel Okulitch** as Don Alfonso.

The 2025-2026 season will conclude in April/May of 2026 with a five-show engagement of one of opera's most enduring love stories. Puccini's masterpiece ***La Bohème*** transports us to the heart of 1830s bohemian life in Paris, where love blossoms amidst dreams, hardships, and the unyielding pursuit of artistic freedom. *La Bohème* has remained one of the most beloved and frequently performed operas worldwide since its 1896 premiere, due in large part to captivating pieces like *Quando m'en vo*, a.k.a. "Musetta's Waltz", and perhaps the most famous duet in opera, *O soave fanciulla*, sung on that moonlit moment when Mimì and Rodolfo fall in love. VO Music Director Emeritus **Jonathan Darlington** returns to conduct some of the most romantic and iconic music in opera history. "We are proud of two alumni of our Yulanda M. Faris, Young Artist Program. Singing the role of Mimi is soprano Jonelle Sills and the stage director is Pacific Opera Victoria Artistic Director, **Brenna Corner** (*Hansel & Gretel*, *Carmen: Up Close and Digital*). Both have developed international careers since their time at VO". Adds Wright. Whether you're discovering it for the first time or returning to a beloved classic, *La Bohème* speaks passionately to the soul, reminding us to cherish the fragility and fleeting beauty of life and love.

Adds Wright, "These operas are classics, but their themes remain urgent today. With a season of dynamic masterpieces ahead of us, let's share extraordinary experiences and dare to feel everything that makes us fully human."

Single tickets go on sale July 2, 2025. Subscribers have until **April 4, 2025** to renew their subscription for the 2025-2026 season. For more information about Vancouver Opera, and to subscribe, please visit vancouveropera.ca.

Vancouver Opera will also be presenting several other special events, including the highly anticipated return of the beloved, free, and family-friendly **Opera in the Park** on July 13, 2025. This enchanting open-air concert will take place at 7:30pm in the picturesque Deer Lake Park in Burnaby, offering a magical evening of music under the stars for all ages.

2025—2026 VANCOUVER OPERA SEASON



RIGOLETTO
By Giuseppe Verdi
Queen Elizabeth Theatre
Sung in Italian with English SURTITLES™ projected above the stage
Saturday, October 25, 7:30PM | Thursday, October 30, 7:30PM | Sunday, November 2, 2:00PM



COSÌ FAN TUTTE
By Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Queen Elizabeth Theatre
Sung in Italian with English SURTITLES™ projected above the stage
Saturday, February 7, 7:30PM | Thursday, February 12, 7:30PM | Sunday, February 15, 2:00PM



LA BOHÈME
By Giacomo Puccini
Queen Elizabeth Theatre
Sung in Italian with English SURTITLES™ projected above the stage
Saturday, April 25, 7:30PM | Sunday, April 26, 2:00PM | Thursday, April 30, 7:30PM | Saturday, May 2, 7:30PM | Sunday, May 3, 2:00PM

ABOUT VANCOUVER OPERA

Vancouver Opera creates extraordinary experiences that engage, inspire and entertain through voice, music and theatre. Vancouver Opera is the second largest professional opera company in Canada and is regarded worldwide for its fine mainstage productions, country-leading education programs and innovative community programs. Learn more at www.vancouveropera.ca.

Vancouver Opera has the continuing support of The Canada Council for the Arts, Government of Canada, the BC Arts Council and BC Provincial Government, the City of Vancouver Cultural Services and Vancouver Civic Theatres. Vancouver Opera's season sponsors are BMO, Mission Hill Family Estate, and the Alan and Gwendoline Pyatt Foundation.

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For more information, access to photo gallery and interviews, contact
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