



**CALGARY
OPERA**

**MADAMA
BUTTERFLY**

NOVEMBER 1/2/7, 2025



Cecilia Gossen "Madama Butterfly", mixed media, 36x36 in.

TEN ACTS

**Exhibition and Sale
Inspired by the Opera**

November 13 – 22, 2025

Join us for an opening reception

November 15th, 1-4 PM

Artist Cecilia Gossen in attendance

Partial proceeds from the sale donated to Calgary Opera



Est. 1976

2115 4th Street S.W.,
Calgary, AB, T2S 1W8
403-245-2064 @mastersyyc
www.mastersgalleryltd.com

MADAMA BUTTERFLY

Music by **GIACOMO PUCCINI**
Words by **LUIGI ILLICA & GIUSEPPE GIACOSA**

**FIRST PERFORMANCE: FEBRUARY 17, 1904,
MILAN, TEATRO ALLA SCALA**

Co-Production of **Calgary Opera, Arizona Opera**
and **Opera Grand Rapids**

This production features unamplified voices and
instruments throughout.

Running Time: Approximately 3 hours,
including one 25-minute intermission between
Acts I and II.

We acknowledge that we come together to create music and tell stories on land known by the Blackfoot name Moh-kíns-tsis, which we also call Calgary. This land is on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations), the Stoney Nakoda (Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations), and the Tsuut'ina First Nations, as well as the Otipemisiwak Métis Government of the Métis Nation within Alberta Districts 5 and 6. We honour this land and all those who share it in a spirit of peace, friendship, and respect.

CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

CAST

Cio-Cio-San	YASKO SATO[†]
Pinkerton	MATTHEW WHITE[†]
Suzuki	NINA YOSHIDA NELSEN[†]
Sharpless	PHILLIP ADDIS
Goro	JULIUS AHN[†]
Sorrow	NELA PILECKI[†]
Uncle Bonze	STEPHANO PARK[†]
Yamadori/Imperial Commissioner	LUKA KAWABATA[†]
Kate Pinkerton	ALESSIA VITALI* (NOV 1 & 2)
	KELSEY RONN* (NOV 7)
Registrar	LUKE NOFTALL*
Yakusidé	GEORGE THEODORAKOPOULOS*
Cio-Cio-San's Mother	MARIA MILENIC*
Cio-Cio-San's Aunt	KELSEY RONN*
Cio-Cio-San's Cousin	KATELYN BIRD*

[†] Calgary Opera Debut

* Member of the McPhee Artist Development Program

CREATIVE BILLING

Conductor	JONATHAN BRANDANI
Stage Director	MO ZHOU
Set Designer	CHIKA SHIMIZU
Lighting Designer	MARIE YOKOYAMA
Assistant to the Lighting Designer	CASSIE HOLMES
Intimacy Director	ANASTASIA ST. AMAND
Original Production	KATHLEEN TROTT
Costume Designer	MARIKO OHIGASHI
Costume Designer	
Chorus Director	
and Artist-in-Residence	MARK MORASH
Head Coach	EMILY HAMPER
Répétiteur	EVAN MOUNCE
Chorus Répétiteur	JACK OLSZEWSKI
Stage Manager	SHELBY-JAI FLICK
Assistant Stage Manager	KATE PALLESEN
Assistant Stage Manager	JENNIFER YEUNG
Head of Props	KATE GREGGERSON
Head of Wardrobe	HEATHER MOORE
Head of Hair and Wigs	FRANCA VACCARO
Head of Makeup	GAIL KENNEDY
Director of Production	CODY STADEL
Production & Facility Coordinator	BRETT JOHNSON
Projected English Titles	SARAH JANE PELZE
Titles Operator	NICOLE BERGEN

CALGARY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Orchestra Chair: Mary Rozsa de Coquet

A legacy of music excellence

VIOLIN 1

Diana Cohen
John Lowry
Donovan Seidle
Edmund Chung
Maria van der Sloot
Olga Kotova
Hojean Yoo
Danielle Greene
Jeongah Choi
Genevieve Micheletti

VIOLIN 2

Lorna Tsai
Stephanie
Soltice-Johnson
Roberta Yee
Jeremy Gabbert
Theresa Dumbrique
Erin Burkholder
Min-Kyung Kwon
Steven Lubiartz

VIOLA

Marcin Swoboda
Alexander Beggs
Alisa Klebanov
Jesse Morrison
Jeremy Bauman
Michael Bursey

CELLO

Arnold Choi
David Morrissey
Kathleen de Caen
Daniel Poceta
Robyn Neidhold
Thomas Megee

BASS

Jonathan Yeoh
Patrick Staples
Patricia Reid
Sheila Garrett

FLUTE

Sara Hahn-Scinocco
Gwen Klassen
Heather Schienbein

OBOE

David Sussman
Lief Mosbaugh
Katrina
Kwantes-Oliveira

CLARINET

Laurie Blanchet
Natalia Peric
Stan Climie

BASSOON

Antoine St-Onge
Michael Hope

HORN

Jennifer Frank
Peter Clark
Maxwell Stein
Heather Wootton

TRUMPET

Adam Zinatelli
Miranda Cairns
Richard Scholz

TROMBONE

James Scott
Kristofer Leslie
Greg Burns
David Reid

TIMPANI

Alex Cohen

PERCUSSION

Chris Sies
Sean Buckley
Jeff Fafard

HARP

Emily Melendes

CALGARY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

The members of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra are members of The Calgary Musicians Association, Local 547 of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada.

MADAMA BUTTERFLY IN CONTEXT

Like many acclaimed and well-loved operas, *Madama Butterfly* portrays stories and characters from cultures other than the creators' own. While empathy for others remains an essential starting point for artistic creation and one of the hallmarks of opera's musical immediacy, the European art form has also grappled with a history of misrepresentation and appropriation of non-Western cultures. As diverse creative voices come to the fore, new storytellers are reclaiming narratives, shifting agency, and transforming audiences' understanding of these timeless works.

Without altering the original libretto or score, stage director Mo Zhou offers compelling solutions to the historically reductive "unrequited love" narrative crafted at the turn of the 20th century. By shifting the time period four decades forward, her *Madama Butterfly* gains a striking immediacy, especially in the 80th anniversary year of the bombing of Nagasaki.

In post-war Japan, approximately 45,000 Japanese women married American GIs, setting their hopes on a better life in an uncertain and rapidly changing world. Many immigrated to the United States, often pressured to assimilate into post-war American society; others were left behind, raising children alone in the shadow of occupation as outcasts of both worlds. Zhou's *Butterfly* invites us to reflect on these untold stories: how many women, like Cio-Cio-San, were left behind? How many children, like Sorrow, were abandoned between two nations, two identities, and two impossible dreams?

In grounding Puccini's tragedy within this historical reality, Zhou transforms what was originally built on exotic fantasy into something achingly human, a meditation on survival, displacement, and the illusion of the American Dream.

Led by a creative team of first-generation immigrant Asian women in America, this production deepens the backbone of Puccini's music through dramaturgy that resonates with lived experience and historical truth. "This is not a love story," Zhou says. "It's a story of survival, and one we must keep telling, truthfully, intentionally, and with care."

CALGARY OPERA CHORUS

SOPRANOS

Katelyn Bird*
Patricia Bustillos
Aly Carrigan
Carlyn Holmes
Hannah Mitchell
Shannon Maynes
Kelsey Ronn*
Anastasia Tolarmi

MEZZO-SOPRANOS

Maria Milenic*
Zoe Pepper
Paisley Perrett
Katrina Reynolds
Stephania Romaniuk
Kassandra Schantz
Olena Simsek
Alessia Vitali*

TENORS

Akesh Aheer
Henry Ayeras
Don Edie
Herbert Mielczarek
Stuart Miller
Oliver Munar
Ryan Nauta*
Francisco Sandoval

*2025/26 McPhee Artist

STORY HIGHS (AND LOWS)

Act I-Nagasaki, Japan, Late 1946

Less than a year after the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, U.S. Navy Lieutenant Benjamin Franklin Pinkerton meets with the marriage broker Goro to inspect a house he has rented above the harbour. There he plans to wed Cio-Cio-San, a young Japanese woman known as “Butterfly.” Having survived the devastation of war, Cio-Cio-San sees in Pinkerton the promise of love and a new life built on the ideals of the American Dream. She has even secretly renounced her Buddhist faith for Christianity. Pinkerton, on the other hand, is captivated by Cio-Cio-San but considers the union a fleeting marriage of convenience until he returns to America. Cio-Cio-San’s uncle, a Buddhist monk and *hibakusha* (a survivor of the atomic bombing), arrives unexpectedly at the wedding to expose her religious conversion. Dismayed, her family shuns and ultimately abandons her.

(25-minute intermission)

Act II-Nagasaki, Japan, January 1953

Six years later, on the eve of the American military withdrawal, Cio-Cio-San waits for the return of her husband, who left shortly after the wedding. Her maid Suzuki tries to convince her that he will not come back, but Cio-Cio-San will not be persuaded and even refuses other offers of marriage, including from Prince Yamadori, a former *Kazoku* (member of the Japanese aristocracy). The American consul at Nagasaki, Sharpless, arrives with a letter from Pinkerton, which he cannot bear to fully disclose. Cio-Cio-San presents Pinkerton with her son, whom she named Dolore (Sorrow), a name she will change to Gioia (Joy) when her husband returns. A ship is suddenly seen in the harbour, which Cio-Cio-San recognizes as Pinkerton’s. She stays awake all night in a silent vigil, filled with memory and anticipation.

Act III-Early Morning, The Following Day

In the morning, Sharpless and Pinkerton arrive at the house with another unexpected guest. Pinkerton, selfish and cowardly, struggles to face Cio-Cio-San, leaving others to tell her the devastating truth on his behalf. With quiet resolve, she makes a final, deliberate choice—an act of sorrow, dignity, and defiance against the false promise of the American Dream.

MEET THE CAST & CREATIVE TEAM



JONATHAN BRANDANI | CONDUCTOR

Jonathan Brandani was appointed Artistic Director of Calgary Opera in 2021. He has been Associate Conductor of Minnesota Opera (USA) and Principal Guest Conductor of Daegu Opera House (South Korea). In recent seasons he conducted at the Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf, Palau de les Arts in Valencia, Wexford Festival Opera, Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Théâtre Royal de Wallonie-Liège, Bregenzer Festspiele, Donizetti Festival in Bergamo, Teatro Lirico

di Cagliari, Göteborg Opera, the Danish Royal Opera House Copenhagen, Staatstheater Meiningen, and The Atlanta Opera. Upcoming engagements include productions at Florida Grand Opera, Opera Omaha and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Jonathan is a graduate of the Universität für Musik in Vienna and of Yale University, as well as an alumnus of the Merola Opera Program of San Francisco Opera.



MO ZHOU | STAGE DIRECTOR

Chinese-born stage director Mo Zhou is known for her inventive storytelling and cross-cultural vision in opera and theatre. Her work has appeared at Staatsoper Unter den Linden, Elbphilharmonie, and the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing. In 2025/26, she returns to Houston Grand Opera to direct the Butler Studio Showcase and her acclaimed children's opera *The Big Swim* and leads a new coproduction of *Madama Butterfly* with Calgary Opera, Arizona Opera, and Opera Grand Rapids, where she serves as Artistic

Director. Recent credits include *Madama Butterfly* (Vancouver Opera), *Così fan tutte* (Juilliard), *La Calisto* (The Glimmerglass Festival), and *Iphigénie en Tauride* (Boston Baroque). She holds an MFA in Directing from Columbia University and trained at The Juilliard School, Merola Opera Program, and Wolf Trap Opera.

MEET THE CAST & CREATIVE TEAM



YASKO SATO | CIO-CIO-SAN

After earning her doctorate with highest honors from Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, Yasko SATO completed her training in Italy under the guidance of Raina Kabaivanska. She has excelled in numerous international competitions; after her early debuts, she has delved into the role of Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly*, investigating the composer's ultimate intentions through an analysis of the character's evolution within the opera's various revisions. She

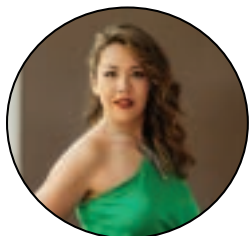
premiered *Madama Butterfly* in Sabadell to critical acclaim. Following this debut, she has had the opportunity to sing the same role in some of the major opera houses, including Vancouver Opera, Seattle Opera, Atlanta Opera, Opéra Royal De WallonieLiège, Tokyo National Theater, Megaron Theater, Estonian National Opera, Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Teatro Regio di Parma, Teatro Filarmonico organized by Arena di Verona, and many more.



MATTHEW WHITE | PINKERTON

In the 2025/26 season, Matthew White, whom *The New York Times* said has an "attractive, healthy voice" and the *Houston Chronicle* exclaimed "...makes an undeniably attractive romantic lead," will sing Don José in *Carmen* with Malmö Opera, the Macau International Music Festival, and Cincinnati Opera; and Verdi's *Requiem* with Savannah VOICE Festival and Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra. He will also give his first solo recital in Cincinnati. Recent opera

engagements included role and house debuts in a new production of Verdi's *Don Carlo* with the Royal Danish Opera, Prince Vassily in a new production of Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina* at the Salzburg Easter Festival, Des Grieux in Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* with Opera Festival of Chicago, Rodolfo in *La bohème* with the Theatro Municipal de São Paulo, and made his debut as Mario Cavaradossi in *Tosca* with Cincinnati Opera, and the New Mexico Philharmonic.



NINA YOSHIDA NELSEN | SUZUKI

Acclaimed for her compelling performances that blend vocal prowess with dramatic intensity, mezzo-soprano Nina Yoshida Nelsen has earned recognition as a "richly powerful singing actress." Recent highlights include Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* (Utah Opera, Atlanta Opera, New Orleans Opera); Mama in *An American Dream* (Opera Santa Barbara, Kentucky Opera); Mother Chen in *An American Soldier* (Perelman Performing Arts Center); Fricka in *Die Walküre* (Opera Santa

Barbara); and the title role in *Carmen* (Indianapolis Opera). In concert, she has performed with several national orchestras including the Toledo Symphony, Rhode Island Philharmonic, Santa Barbara Symphony, Nashville Symphony Orchestra, and the Boise Philharmonic. A graduate of Boston University and the Academy of Vocal Arts, she is co-founder of the Asian Opera Alliance and Artistic Director of Boston Lyric Opera.



PHILLIP ADDIS | SHARPLESS

Phillip Addis returns to Calgary Opera as Sharpless, which he first sang at Opéra de Québec in 2023. This season he also plays the role of Count Almaviva in Manitoba Opera's *Marriage of Figaro*, which he sang most recently in Calgary, and which he has performed in Dresden, Versailles, Montréal, Toronto, Vancouver, Québec, Lausanne, and Miami, among others. His versatility and sensitivity to style has allowed him to interpret a wide range of roles, from Pelléas and Billy

Budd, to Figaro, Eugene Onegin, and Don Giovanni. In concert he is best known for his work on *Messiah*, *War Requiem*, and *Carmina Burana*. New creations include Erik Ross's *Waypoints*, Scott Good's *The Sleepers*, and most recently Leslie Uyeda's *Silence* at Nuova Vocal Arts.



JULIUS AHN | GORO

This award-winning, internationally acclaimed tenor makes his Calgary Opera debut as Goro. In the 2025/26 season, he also debuts with Florentine Opera as the Valet Tenors in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and returns to Canadian Opera Company as Borsa in *Rigoletto*. Celebrated for his "well-acted, well-sung" portrayals across a wide range of roles, Ahn has performed with leading companies in Canada, including the Canadian Opera Company and Vancouver Opera, as well as

internationally with Korea National Opera, Raymond Gubbay at Royal Albert Hall, LA Opera, Metropolitan Opera, Opera Philadelphia, and San Francisco Opera, among many others.



STEPHANO PARK | UNCLE BONZE

South Korean bass Stephano Park was named the winner of Operalia 2023 in Cape Town, South Africa. This summer, Park made his American debut as Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* at Santa Fe Opera. Highlights of the 2025/26 season include debuts with Royal Danish Opera as Il Conte di Monterone in *Rigoletto*, and with Calgary Opera as Uncle Bonze in *Madama Butterfly*. Park makes his U.S. concert debut in performances of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with Milwaukee

Symphony Orchestra, as well as his Chicago Symphony debut in Mozart's *Requiem*. Last season saw Park make numerous house and role debuts, including as the title role in a new production of *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Korean National Opera, as Mandarinino in *Turandot* at the Baltic Opera Festival, and as Gran Sacerdote in concert performances of Verdi's *Nabucco* for Opéra de Toulon.

MEET THE CAST & CREATIVE TEAM



LUKA KAWABATA | YAMADORI/IMPERIAL COMMISSIONER

Nikkei-Canadian artist Luka Kawabata 川端ルカ strives to push the boundaries of representation in opera through new works. As a baritone and producer, he has quickly established himself as a rising artist in Canadian opera, having performed from Victoria to St. John's. He is passionate about diversifying the definition of performance and highlighting seldom heard languages in classical music. His series 'The HAFU/ハーフ Project'

premiered as part of City Opera Vancouver's 2024 season and was met with overwhelming acclaim. Kawabata is a graduate of the Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program with Vancouver Opera, Beth Morrison Projects' Producer Academy, in addition to development programs with Opera on the Avalon, Pacific Opera Victoria, and Manitoba Opera.



ALESSIA VITALI* | KATE PINKERTON (NOV 1 & 2)

Mezzo-soprano Alessia Vitali is from Montréal, Québec, and in her second year of Calgary Opera's McPhee Artist Development Program. In 2025/26, she appears as Kate Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, performs the dual roles of Mother and Grandmother in *Little Red Riding Hood*, and covers Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*. Last season, Vitali made her Calgary Opera debut as La Ciesca in *Gianni Schicchi* and sang the title role in *The Witty Squirrel*. Most recently, she was an artist-

in-residence at the Banff Centre, where she performed Warren's Wife in the world premiere of Poul Ruders' *The Handmaid's Tale*. Other career highlights include performances as the alto soloist in Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, Signora Guidotti (*I due timidi*), Miles (*The Turn of the Screw*), Magdalena (*Rigoletto*), Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), and Mercédès (*Carmen*).



LUKE NOFTALL* | REGISTRAR

Hailing from Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canadian bass-baritone Luke Noftall is in his second year of Calgary Opera's McPhee Artist Development Program. This season, Noftall performs the roles of The Registrar in *Madama Butterfly*, Fiorello in *The Barber of Seville*, and dual roles of the Wolf and Woodsman in Calgary Opera's school tour of *Little Red Riding Hood*. Last year, Noftall made his Calgary Opera debut as Guccio in *Gianni Schicchi*, and also performed the roles of the

King and Chamberlain in their production of Nino Rota's *The Witty Squirrel*. This past summer, Noftall was part of Brott Opera's production of *Carmen*, where he sang the role of Zuniga.

*2025/26 McPhee Artist



GEORGE THEODORAKOPOULOS* | YAKUSIDÉ

Described as having a “powerful stage presence and a rich baritone voice,” George Theodorakopoulos is looking forward to the 2025/26 season where he will be joining both Calgary Opera for his first year in the McPhee Artist Development Program and Edmonton Opera as part of its Emerging Artist Program. Upcoming performances include Officer in *The Barber of Seville* and Yakusidé in *Madama Butterfly*, both with Calgary Opera. George will also be covering the role of

Chip in the world premiere of Ian Cusson's *Indians on Vacation* with Edmonton Opera. Recent operatic highlights include Danilo (*The Merry Widow*), Moralès & Le Dancaire (*Carmen*), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Sacristan (*Tosca*), Pandolfe (*Cendrillon*), Marullo (*Rigoletto*), Emilio (*Il cappello di paglia di Firenze*), and Dr. Pangloss (*Candide*).



MARIA MILENIC* | CIO-CIO-SAN'S MOTHER

Mezzo-soprano Maria Milenic, originally from Newmarket, Ontario, recently joined Calgary Opera's McPhee Artist Development Program. Her upcoming season includes singing the role of Cio-Cio-San's Mother in *Madama Butterfly*, Mother/Grandmother in *Little Red Riding Hood*, as well as Sandman in *Hänsel and Gretel*. Previous performance credits include Minskwoman (*Flight*), Ljubica (*Svadba*), Mrs. Splinters (*The Tender Land*), Mrs. McLean (*Susannah*),

Mercedes (*Carmen*), Cherubino (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Ada (*The Shop Girl*), and Mrs. Hildebrand (*Street Scene*). She has also been a featured artist in the 21C Festival, where she had the honour of premiering Chaya Czernowin's piece *The Habekhi* (The Crying), written for mezzo-soprano, ensemble, and electronics.



KELSEY RONN* | CIO-CIO-SAN'S AUNT & KATE PINKERTON (NOV 7)

Soprano Kelsey Ronn returns for her second year with Calgary Opera's McPhee Artist Development Program, where she will make her role debuts as the Aunt in *Madama Butterfly* and Berta in *The Barber of Seville*. Additionally, Ronn takes on the title role in Calgary Opera's *Little Red Riding Hood* this winter. Last season, she charmed audiences as The Squirrel in *The Witty Squirrel*. Most recently, Ronn was a young

artist in Opera Kelowna's VOSI Program and L'Institut Canadien d'Art Vocal in Montreal, Quebec. In 2022, Kelsey made her debut with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra as a featured artist in their Manitoba Hydro Holiday Tour.

*2025/26 McPhee Artist

MEET THE CAST & CREATIVE TEAM



KATELYN BIRD* | CIO-CIO-SAN'S COUSIN

Katelyn Bird is a Canadian soprano joining Calgary Opera's McPhee Artist Development Program for the 2025/26 season, where she performs the Cousin in *Madama Butterfly*, the title role in *Little Red Riding Hood*, and the Dew Fairy in *Hansel and Gretel*. She made her professional debut as Barbarina in *Le nozze di Figaro* with Pacific Opera Victoria (2024). Recent credits include Adele in *Die Fledermaus*, Giannetta and Adina (understudy) in *L'elisir d'amore* with Toronto

City Opera, Madame Herz in *Der Schauspieldirektor*, and the North American premiere of Philippe Leroux's *Quid sit Musicus* with the Noise Academy (2025). Other recognition includes an Encouragement Award at the 2025 Laffont Competition and nomination as a 2025 Jeunes Ambassadeurs Lyriques laureate.



CHIKA SHIMIZU | SET DESIGNER

Chika Shimizu is a New-York based scenic designer. REGIONAL: Furlough's *Paradise* (Geffen Playhouse), *Soft Power*, *Pacific Overtures* (Signature Theatre, DC), *The Great Wave* (Berkeley Rep), *Sanctuary City* (Pasadena Playhouse), *Hamlet* (DCPA), *RENT* (Paper Mill Playhouse), *Moriarty* (Cleveland Playhouse), *Somewhere* (Geva Theatre), *The Great Leap* (Portland Center Stage), *Business Ideas* (Alliance Theatre), *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (Yale Rep, CT Critics Circle

Award nom). OFF-BROADWAY: *Salesman*之死 (Yangtze Rep, Henry Hewes Award nom), *Bite Me* (WP Theatre), *Belfast Girls* (Irish Rep). INSTALLATION: Un(re)solved AR installation (Ado Ato Pictures, SXSW Innovation Award, Emmy Award).



MARIE YOKOYAMA | LIGHTING DESIGNER

Marie Yokoyama (she/her) is a Japanese lighting designer based in New York. Her opera design credits include *Madama Butterfly* (Vancouver Opera); *La Bohème* (Arizona Opera); *Madama Butterfly* (coproduction with Virginia Opera, Florentine Opera, and Kentucky Opera); *Rinaldo* (Minnesota Opera); *note to a friend* (Tokyo Bunkakaikan); *Orphée et Eurydice* (University of Michigan). Her other credits include *Waitress* (ZACH Theatre); *Twelfth Night* and

Kim's Convenience (TheatreSquared); *Conscience* and *Searching for Mr. Moon* (Portland Stage); *Dangerous Days* (Miami New Drama); *Cyrano de Bergerac* (KC Rep); *Mystery of Irma Vep* (St. Louis Rep); *Testmatch* (American Conservatory Theater San Francisco); *Tiny Beautiful Things* (Merrimack Repertory Theatre); *Do You Feel Anger* (Vineyard Theatre); and *Pillowtalk* (Kyoung's Pacific Beats). She is the Associate Artist for the Redhouse Arts Center where she has designed *Les Trois Dumas*, *Macbeth*, *Fences*, *God of Carnage*, *On Golden Pond*, and *Ragtime*.

*2025/26 McPhee Artist



MARIKO OHIGASHI | COSTUME DESIGNER

Mariko Ohigashi is a New York- and Tokyo-based costume designer working in opera, theatre, dance, and film. She has designed numerous Off-Broadway productions, several of which received critical acclaim in *The New York Times*. Most recently, she was nominated for the Lucille Lortel and Henry Hewes Design Awards for *SUMO* at The Public Theater. Her work has also appeared in regional theaters such as Two River Theater (NJ) and La Jolla Playhouse (CA).

International credits in Japan include *The Barber of Seville* and *The Marriage of Figaro* (ROHM Theater Kyoto); *Hansel and Gretel* (Suntory Hall, Tokyo); and *Next to Normal* (Toho). As a costume coordinator, she contributed to *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (Tokyo Bunka Kaikan), *Lulu* (Shinjuku Bunka), and *Carmen* (Kanagawa Kenmin Hall) with Tokyo Nikkai Opera. She apprenticed with the Santa Fe Opera and Salzburg Festival and holds an M.F.A. from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.



KATHLEEN TROTT | ORIGINAL PRODUCTION COSTUME DESIGNER

Kathleen Trott is the Costume Shop Manager for Seattle Opera. Originally hailing from Northern Nevada, Kathleen was the Manager of the Marlu Allan and Scott Stallard Costume Artisan Workshop for Arizona Opera for almost 10 years before joining Seattle Opera. Other theatrical companies Kathleen has worked for include: PCPA, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Alabama Shakespeare Festival and Southern Oregon University.

Costume Design credits include: Seattle Opera Youth Opera's *Robin Hood*, the world premiere of *Riders of the Purple Sage* for Arizona Opera, *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* and *Mamma Mia* for Arizona Broadway Theatre, *Don Pasquale* for Cincinnati Opera and Atlanta Opera, *La Bohème* for Arizona Opera and Omaha Opera, *La Fille du Régiment* at Greensboro Opera, *Madama Butterfly* and *Don Giovanni* for Arizona Opera and *Dido and Aeneas* at Central City Opera.



ANASTASIA ST. AMAND | INTIMACY DIRECTOR

Anastasia St. Amand (she/her) is a queer, Certified Intimacy Director/Coordinator and founding member of Principal Intimacy Professionals, from Mohkinstsis (Calgary) on Treaty 7 Territory. Select credits include: *The Handmaid's Tale* (Interplay Banff Centre), *Dial M for Murder*, *Legally Blonde*, *Beaches The Musical*, *Selma Burke*, *Meteor Shower*, *Escape to Margaritaville* (Theatre Calgary), *Mary Stuart* (Sage Theatre), *Silent Sky* (Fire Exit), *Austentatious* (Forte Musical Theatre), *Girl on*

the Train (Vertigo), *Hurry Hard* (Western Canada Theatre), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Measure For Measure* (Free Will Shakespeare), *Genesis: The Mary Shelley Play* (Edinburgh Fringe), *Guilty Party* (Paramount+), *Peacemaker* (HBO), *Upload S2* (Amazon). Special thanks to her loved ones for their ongoing support.

MEET THE CAST & CREATIVE TEAM



**MARK MORASH | CHORUS DIRECTOR/
ARTIST IN RESIDENCE**

Mark Morash is a conductor and pianist originally from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and is Calgary Opera's Chorus Director. For Calgary Opera, he most recently conducted *Carmen*. He was Director of Musical Studies for the Opera Center of San Francisco Opera where he conducted for the Merola Opera Program, the Alder Fellow Showcase, and Western Opera Theater. Other conducting appearances include Hawaii Opera

Theatre, Opera Colorado and Opera Santa Barbara. San Francisco Opera Center performances include *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Gianni Schicchi*, Argento's *Postcard From Morocco*, *The Barber of Seville*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Albert Herring*, *Così fan tutte*, *Die Fledermaus*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and Pasatieri's *The Seagull*.



EMILY HAMPER | HEAD COACH

Now based in Calgary, Emily Hamper is one of Canada's most highly regarded vocal coaches. Her work as opera coach, assistant conductor and répétiteur has taken her across Canada as well as to the USA and Europe, including Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and Slovak National Theatre. As a collaborator for voice recitals, she has partnered many of Canada's finest singers for such presenters as Zoomer TV, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, Canadian Opera Company, L'Opéra National

de Paris and Queensland Music Festival. She is an alumna of UBC, the University of Toronto, and the Merola opera program at San Francisco Opera, as well as winner of the "Best Collaborative Pianist" Prize at the Eckhardt-Gramatté National Music Competition. Most recently, Emily joined NUOVA Vocal Arts in Edmonton for the world premiere of the new Canadian opera *Silence*.



EVAN MOUNCE | RÉPÉTITEUR

Calgary-based pianist and vocal coach Evan Mounce is a sought-after collaborator and musical leader. He currently serves as Assistant Chorus Director for the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Répétiteur with Calgary Opera, and Director of Music at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. As a vocal coach, Evan has worked with a wide range of artists, including k.d. lang, whom he prepared for the 25th anniversary tour of *Ingenue*. His recent collaborations include

performances and projects with Luminous Voices, Spiritus Chamber Choir, Edmonton Opera, and Choir Alberta. In partnership with soprano Laura Brandt, Evan has performed numerous recitals for the Mountain View International Festival of Song and Chamber Music, the ProArts Recital Series, and has twice toured as a musical ambassador for Calgary Opera on river cruises from Budapest to Amsterdam.



SHELBY-JAI FLICK | STAGE MANAGER

For Calgary Opera (select): *Bluebeard's Castle, Gianni Schicchi, Don Pasquale, Don Giovanni, Das Rheingold, The Elixir of Love, Le Nozze di Figaro, Macbeth, The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs, Carmen, La Traviata, The Merry Widow, La Bohème*. Favourite credits include: *Legally Blonde* (Theatre Calgary & The Citadel Theatre); *A Christmas Carol* (2024), *As You Like It* (Theatre Calgary); *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, The Nutcracker, Cinderella, La Fille mal gardée, The*

Sleeping Beauty, The Seagull (National Ballet of Canada); *The Two Gentlemen of Verona, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, Julius Caesar, The Importance of Being Earnest, West Side Story* (Stratford Festival); *Mimi, Courageous, If We Were Birds* (Tarragon Theatre). Select Film/TV: *Unspeakable: The Murder of JonBenét Ramsay* (Paramount+), *My Life With The Walter Boys, The Abandons* (Netflix), *Heartland* (CBC), *Prey* (Disney). Other: Shelby-Jai worked on both the Tokyo 2020 and Rio 2016 Olympic Games.



KATE PALLESEN | ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Kate has stage managed for operas, plays, and live events throughout Alberta since graduating with a BFA in Theatre Production from the University of Lethbridge. She has also toured across Canada as the Stage Manager for Verb Theatre's *bliss: the birthday party play* to Victoria's Uno Fest and Ottawa's National Arts Centre. Credits include: *Bluebeard's Castle, Gianni Schicchi, Don Pasquale, Don Giovanni, Das Rheingold, L'elisir d'amore, Béatrice et Bénédicte, Macbeth, La*

traviata, La bohème, The Witty Squirrel, Amahl and the Night Visitors (Calgary Opera), *Ghost Opera* (Old Trout Puppet Workshop/Calgary Opera), *Rocking Horse Winner* (Ammolite Opera), *The Black Bonspiel of Wullie MacCrimmon, The Jungle Book* (Alberta Theatre Projects), *Pochsy IV* (Keep Frozen), *STRUCK* (Ghost River Theatre), *The Thin Man*, and *The Drowning Girls* (Vertigo Theatre).



JENNIFER YEUNG | ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Jennifer is thrilled to return to Calgary Opera for *Madama Butterfly*. For Calgary Opera: *Don Pasquale, Marriage of Figaro, Norma*. Elsewhere: *Blithe Spirit, Selma Burke, Jimmy Buffet's Escape to Margaritaville, Steel Magnolias* (Theatre Calgary), *Murder on the Links, Sherlock Holmes and the Raven's Curse* (Vertigo Theatre), *Static* (Chromatic Theatre Co.Pro Inside Out Theatre), *Naughty But Nice 8 & 9* (Forte), *Hookman* (SCPA & Chromatic Theatre), *Undressed* (ATP), 我的名

是张欣恩(Chromatic Theatre). In her free time, you will see her spending time at local events, exploring new restaurants, or playing video games. She is grateful for her parents, her fur baby, Max, and her partner, Lowell, for their immense love and continued support.

Role Study: Ryan Nauta* - Goro *2025/26 McPhee Artist

Special Thanks to: Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity
Chichi Kimono
Sherri Prentiss, Artful Strategies

MORE WAYS TO CONNECT

Calgary Opera is sparking imaginations and helping Calgarians of all ages connect with their creativity through opera!

Meaningful Partnerships

This summer, Calgary Opera was honoured to have been invited by the Calgary Japanese Community Association to perform at the Calgary Japanese Festival, Omatsuri. We showcased several Calgary Opera soloists and collaborated with members of Calgary's vibrant choral community to present one of the most beautiful choral numbers in all of opera: the Humming Chorus from *Madama Butterfly*.



Our collaboration didn't stop there: we invited community members to participate in several lobby activations for *Madama Butterfly*, including the Living Kimono Project, which showcases the stories of local individuals

with a personal connection to Japanese culture through a traditional kimono. Each new collaboration allows us to channel and amplify the strengths of our community, connect more individuals to each other, and exponentially increase these ripple effects in Calgary and beyond.

Backstage Tours

New this year, Calgary Opera is offering a look behind the curtain with our backstage tours! Each Wednesday after opening, small tours take place



behind the scenes: Walk the stage, check out the scene shop, and witness how a scene change takes place. Catch a glimpse into the costume shop, hair and makeup room, orchestra pit, and even up to the fly tower. Learn how the creative team moves from concept to the final look of the production, and ask the questions you've always wanted to in a Q&A to complete the tour. Spaces are limited to 20 participants per tour. Student groups welcome!

Calgary Culture Days Ambassadors

Calgary Opera was honoured to have been chosen as a 2025 Calgary Culture Days Ambassador by the City of Calgary. As part of this initiative, our first Serious Family Fun opera open house of the season received Calgary Culture Days grant funding which allowed us to present an interactive opera adventure for young learners and their families. Mask-making, puppetry, storytellers from diverse cultural traditions, and opera improvisation for kids all featured in this unforgettable afternoon of story and song. We look forward to hosting more adventures like this one and hope you will join us!



INSPIRED TO GIVE



PAUL GODARD | MONTHLY DONOR AND LONGTIME OPERA SUPPORTER

Opera is, to me, the ultimate expression of human emotion. It brings together music, storytelling, and the power of the human voice in a way no other art form can. With every performance, opera captures the full range of human experience—love and loss, joy and heartbreak, triumph and betrayal—and delivers it with a depth that goes straight to the heart.

What moves me most is how opera reflects all of us. On stage, we see kings and peasants, outsiders and lovers, gods and mortals all facing life with courage, hope, and vulnerability. These stories transcend time and background, reminding us that, at our core, we are all connected.

I'm inspired to support Calgary Opera because everyone can see themselves in the characters on stage. It reminds us of our shared humanity and gives voice to those who often feel unseen or unheard. I am also inspired by the community behind the scenes. Composers, singers, musicians, directors, costume designers, technicians, and volunteers all coming together to create something truly greater than the sum of its many parts. Their collaboration is a powerful example of what we can achieve when we come together.

For me, supporting Calgary Opera is about more than preserving tradition. It is about evolving through new voices, fresh perspectives, and inclusive storytelling. Opera has the power to educate, connect, and transform communities. As a monthly donor, I know that I am an important part of the incredible sense of community that opera creates.

Ultimately, I support Calgary Opera because I believe in its ability to move, challenge, and inspire people. Opera invites us to imagine a more expressive and connected world. As a monthly donor, I am privileged to play a part in making that vision possible.



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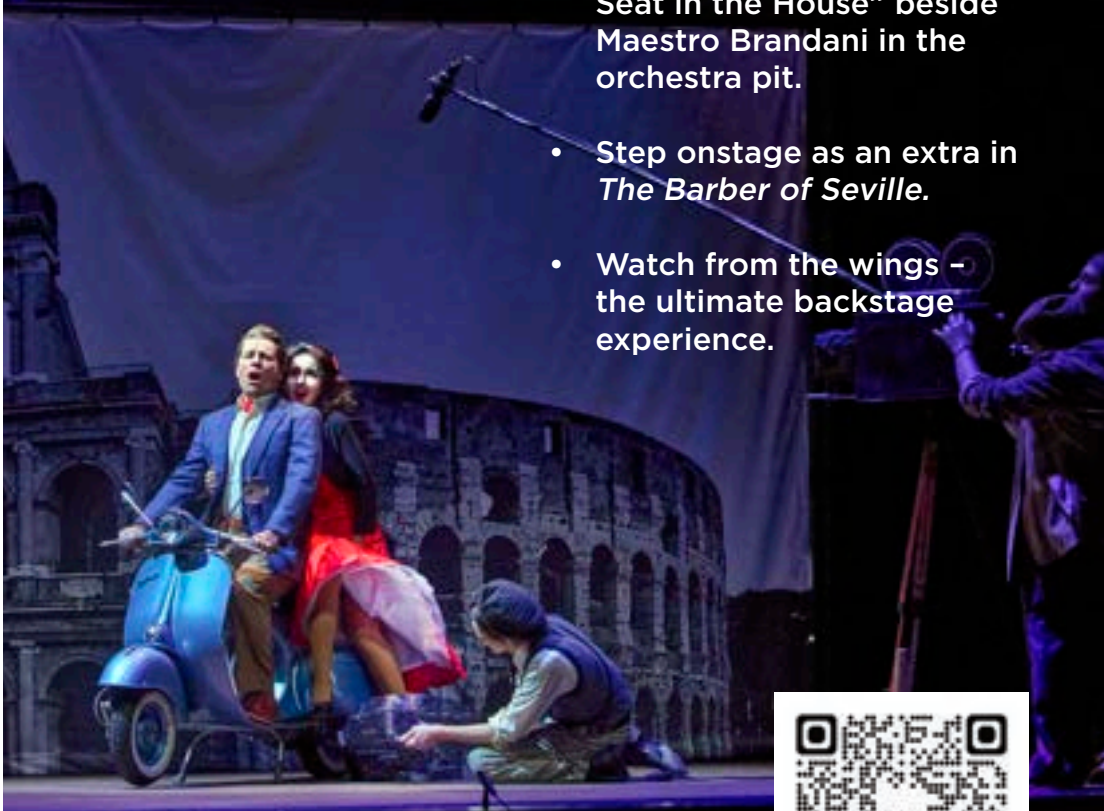
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November 23, 4:30 PM & 7:30 PM | Best of Kin Brewing

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November 28–30, December 4–7 | Mamdani Opera Centre

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December 12 & 13, 7 PM | Mamdani Opera Centre

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UNPACKING OPERA: HANSEL AND GRETEL

January 9, 7 PM | Mamdani Opera Centre

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January 11, 11 AM | Calgary Petroleum Club

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