

UBC OPERA



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
School of Music



2025-2026 SEASON

Celebrate 100 Years of the Old Auditorium!

The 2025/2026 Season will be dedicated to all those who came together to build the UBC Campus at Point Grey and our glorious Old Auditorium! To celebrate the 100 Years of the Old Auditorium we have a wonderful set of performances and events!

In 1925, the UBC Point Grey Campus opened. One of the first buildings to be completed was the Old Auditorium. It was the cultural and social focal point of that new campus. I always find it very interesting that one of the first buildings to be erected was a theatre!

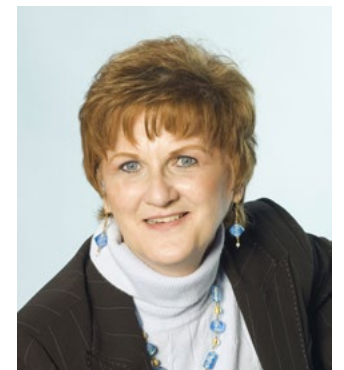
WWI veterans who were students at UBC played a pivotal role during the first years of the new campus. They formed the Returned Soldier's Club and, together with Alumni, Faculty, Senate, Board of Governors and President Klinck, made an appeal to the Dominion Government for financial aid so these returned soldiers could pursue their university studies. After the Second World War in 1945/1946 veterans' registration at UBC doubled. Music was a solace to the soldiers and the civilians during WWI and WWII, helping people endure immeasurable grief and sadness. After the war the healing powers of music, the importance of people gathering together, to laugh, to grieve, to live again and especially to further their education, was of utmost importance. This all led to the construction of this wonderful Old Auditorium. Of course, it was new then, sporting a stain glass dome in the centre of the theatre ceiling. Seats arrived late so the first classes had to sit on the floor but they were there in time for the celebrations on October 14 and 15 of 1925! Over the past 25 years, thanks to the Veterans Transition Program at UBC, the student population of veterans is once again increasing.

Graduations were held at the Old Aud, speakers and performers of distinction were welcomed, such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Paul Robson, Dylan Thomas, and much later Judith Forst and Ben Heppner. Following them a new generation of opera singers, including me, fell in love with the Old Aud. Our devotion to the Old Aud was instrumental in preventing this grand old theatre from being torn down in 1997 after the Chan Centre was built. Sixteen years after that, we began a campaign to raise awareness of this historic UBC gem, and to its importance to the students' opera education. We raised a major part of the twenty-one

million dollars to have it renovated. The growth and success of the UBC Opera Program inspired the university and donors to create a centre for aspiring opera singers from all over our great nation as well as throughout the world. After major renovations it reopened in 2010. This 'new' Old Aud is the home of the UBC Opera Ensemble. We now have UBC Opera Alumni performing, teaching, directing, creating new works, leading opera companies, working in the medical and legal fields, scientific and arts research, arts administration, music and education. Our Alumni are all over the world. Once again, the Old Aud is a hub for cultural, educational, social and community activities for UBC and the Lower Mainland. International Opera Stars of today have graced the stage of the Old Aud, to name a few: Sondra Radvanovsky, Javier Camarena, Angela Meade, Luca Pisaroni, Eric Owens, Jane Archibald, Simone Osborne, and Gordon Bintner. The closing scene of Julia Robert's film "Wonder" was filmed at the Old Aud and the Opera Ensemble appeared in "The Amazing Race Canada" which was filmed at the Old Aud. This incredible theatre is looking forward to the next 100 years and the thousands of students and professional performers, national and international speakers and celebrities of all kinds who will grace its stage. The Old Auditorium will welcome our faithful audiences of the past, present and future and together we will applaud this wonderful old theatre which has survived and thrived for 100 years at UBC!!



Nancy Hermiston, O.C.
Head, Voice and Opera Division





Die Zauberflöte

Singspiel Opera in Two Acts
Sung in German with English Surtitles

Music by **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**
Libretto by **Emanuel Schikaneder**

November 27, 28, 29, 2025 - 7:30pm
November 30, 2025 - 2:00pm
Old Auditorium | Tickets ranging from \$15-\$50. Subscribe to save!

Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* is a whimsical opera that blends fantasy, comedy, and adventure. Prince Tamino embarks on a quest to rescue Pamina, the Queen of the Night's daughter, from the clutches of the mysterious Sarastro. Armed with a magic flute and accompanied by the bumbling bird-catcher Papageno, Tamino navigates a world of trials, deception, and discovery to find true enlightenment and win his fair Pamina. As the journey unfolds, he learns that true wisdom and love transcend appearances, leading to a triumphant union of light and harmony. This opera is a delightful introduction to the world of classical music, offering enchanting melodies and a timeless story that resonates with audiences of all ages.



Jacques Lacombe | Conductor

Nancy Hermiston | Director

Members of the **Vancouver Opera Orchestra**



Candide

Operetta in Two Acts
Sung in English with English Surtitles

Music by **Leonard Bernstein**
Lyrics primarily by **Richard Wilbur**
Based on the 1759 novella of the same name by Voltaire.

February 5, 6, 7, 2026 - 7:30pm
February 8, 2026 - 2:00pm
Old Auditorium | Tickets ranging from \$15-\$50. Subscribe to save!

Embark on a lively journey through the “best of all possible worlds” in Leonard Bernstein’s *Candide*, a satirical operetta based on Voltaire’s novel of the same title. The work blends wit, philosophy, and unforgettable music. Follow the innocent and optimistic Candide, who, under the guidance of Dr. Pangloss, believes that every misfortune is part of a grand divine plan. Banished from his home, Candide’s adventures take him across Europe and the New World, encountering war, shipwrecks, natural disasters, and betrayals. Throughout his trials, he remains strong in his resilience and his belief that “all is for the best,” until he discovers that true fulfillment in life comes from nurturing one’s own garden. To guide us through this tangled web of Candide’s journey, the Bard himself, Christopher Gaze, will assume the role of the Narrator. This operetta is a must-see for lovers of musical theatre and opera alike!



Jonathan Girard | Conductor



Christopher Gaze | Narrator

Nancy Hermiston | Director

With the **UBC Symphony Orchestra**



Preshow Talk with Dr Hedy Law: Voltaire’s to Bernstein’s Candide

February 7, 6:30pm | February 8, 1:00pm Old Auditorium
Enjoy this informative preshow talk by Dr. Hedy Law, Professor of Musicology and Director of the School of Music.



Giulio Cesare

Opera Seria in Three Acts
Sung in Italian with English Surtitles

Music by **George Frideric Handel**
Libretto by **Nicola Francesco Haym**

April 9, 10, 11, 2026 - 7:30pm
April 12, 2026 - 2:00pm
Old Auditorium | Tickets ranging from \$15-\$50. Subscribe to save!

Experience the grandeur of baroque opera in *Giulio Cesare*, Handel's masterpiece intertwining political intrigue with deep human emotion. Set against the backdrop of ancient Egypt, the opera follows Giulio Cesare as he arrives in Alexandria, seeking to restore order after Pompey's assassination. There, he encounters the ambitious Cleopatra, who competes for the throne against her brother, King Tolomeo. A complex web of partnerships, deceptions, and romantic entanglements develop, leading to a dramatic clash for power. Handel's score is renowned for its expressive arias and intricate orchestration, capturing the characters' inner turmoil and desires. From Cleopatra's passionate laments to Cesare's commanding presence, the music elevates the narrative to a profound level. *Giulio Cesare* is a timeless exploration of ambition, love, and the complexities of human nature, offering a compelling experience for both seasoned opera enthusiasts and newcomers.



Leslie Dala | Conductor

Nancy Hermiston | Director

Members of the **Vancouver Opera Orchestra**



100 Years of the Old Auditorium

October 14, 2025 - 7:00pm, Old Auditorium

There were two opening days for the Old Auditorium in 1925, October 14th and 15th. If you attend both opening celebrations you will be entitled to a discount of \$10 on the total of the two tickets. Tickets ranging from \$20-\$35. Bundle both events together to save!

Our **100th Anniversary Celebration** on October 14 will recognize the first official opening day of the Old Auditorium, complete with anniversary cake and refreshments! You will hear a bit of the history of the Old Auditorium, fun stories, a lot of music, laughter and excerpts from the shows presented at the Old Auditorium from 1925 to 2025. You will hear from performers, production staff, directors, conductors, coaches and many of the people who called and still call the Old Auditorium their home. The UBC Opera Ensemble will also be joined by many Alumni from the Opera Program. We welcome them back to where it all began!

'The True North Strong and Free' Recognition Event: The Veteran Trek to UBC Continues - Then, Now and Going Forward

October 15, 2025 - 7:00pm, Old Auditorium

We honour the Great Trek - past and present! The UBC Opera Ensemble, Historians of UBC and Members of the Veterans Transition Program present an evening of music, stories and film from 1925 to 2025. Tickets ranging from \$20-\$35. Bundle both events together to save!

On this **second night** of celebration, we pay tribute to some of the first and most influential students of UBC - these were the 197 WWI soldiers and veterans who enrolled as students at UBC. They formed the Returned Soldier's Club and together with Alumni, Faculty, Senate, Board of Governors and President Klinck made an appeal to the Dominion Government for financial aid so these returned soldiers could pursue their university studies. In the session 1944/1945, the registration was 3,058, of whom 150 were ex-service personnel. In 1945/1946, registration almost doubled with 2,254 veterans in a total student body of 5,621. Twenty-five years ago, Doctor Marv Westwood created the Veterans Transition Program here at the UBC Faculty of Education and again the number of veterans on our campus today began to increase. This program has transformed the lives of thousands of veterans not only here in BC and Canada but in the United States, England and Germany. We pay tribute to all of these veterans past and present. They all helped to shape the future of UBC and our society then and now. We honour our Armed Forces who defend and protect us in this troubled world today at home and abroad. We applaud all those involved in the Veterans Transition Program who enable our veterans to return to a meaningful and productive civilian life.



Holiday Opera Ball

December 5, 2025
 6:30pm Pictures and Cocktails
 7:00pm Dinner is served!
 Old Auditorium | Tickets \$375*



Start the Holiday Season off with a magical evening onstage at the Old Auditorium! This is your chance to experience the Old Auditorium from a performer's point of view. Enjoy a three-course gourmet dinner by Sage Catering onstage, entertainment by the UBC Opera Ensemble and dancing to the irresistible Music of a Big Band on the beautiful stage of the Old Auditorium. 100 years ago, the Old Auditorium became the cultural centre of the new Point Grey Campus. It is still here! Let's celebrate and look forward to the next 100 years of the Old Auditorium!! Support the stars of the next 100 years!

*A tax receipt may be available for a portion of the ticket price in accordance with CRA guidelines.



The Grand Finale of Our 100th Anniversary Celebrations!

May 30, 2026 - 7:30pm
 Old Auditorium | Tickets ranging from \$35-\$100.

Opera West and UBC Opera present two internationally acclaimed Canadian singers in concert. UBC Alumna, Soprano, Simone Osborne and bass-baritone, Gordon Bintner. Canadian conductor, Gordon Gerrard and members of the Vancouver Opera Orchestra join them in an evening of opera, operetta and musical theatre. Your support and donations ensure UBC Opera and the Old Auditorium will continue to be the go-to place for opera for the next 100 years!



Simone Osborne | Soprano
Gordon Bintner | Bass-Baritone
Gordon Gerrard | Conductor
 Members of the **Vancouver Opera Orchestra**





Opera Tea Series

An afternoon classic!

Tickets ranging from \$15-\$31. Subscribe to our Opera Tea Series to save!

Welcome and Welcome Back!

September 28, 2025 - 2:00pm

UBC Botanical Garden

We will have our first Opera Tea at the Botanical Garden and introduce you to the 100th Anniversary Class of 2025, as well as welcoming back our returning students for the new season!

Celebrate 100 Years of the Old Auditorium with Mozart!

October 26, 2025 - 2:00pm

Old Auditorium

This Opera Tea will be onstage at the Old Auditorium, where we unlock the mystery and beauty of Mozart's opera *Die Zauberflöte*. Join us for a sneak peek at the magical powers of the Queen of the Night, her three Ladies, Prince Tamino's courage, Princess Pamina's plight, Papageno's lust for life, Sarastro's wise counsel, three little rascally Spirits, a very angry and bitter Monostatos, and the ever lively and charming, Papageno! No celebration can happen without Mozart!

The Passion of Giulio Cesare and Cleopatra!

March 8, 2026 - 2:00pm

UBC Botanical Garden

Join us for a sneak peek into the world of *Giulio Cesare* at our final Opera Tea of the Season! Murder, grief, revenge, lust, loyalty, deception, passion and true love make this story based on two real people something you will not want to miss.

Support Us for Another 100 Years of Excellence!

Did you know that current students and alumni of the UBC Opera Ensemble are performing and teaching in Canada, the United States, Europe, Asia, South America, and Africa? Our singers are having success all over the world!

Every year, many of you ask me personally how you can support the UBC Opera Ensemble, and help our singers get the best possible education. I believe that in addition to an excellent academic education, it is essential to have an experiential education of the highest standard as well. As such, we present three fully-staged productions annually, complete with orchestra. Did you know that most of our production budget for these performances comes from donations to the UBC Opera Ensemble? In addition to these performances, donations help fund scholarships for students, the collaboration with the Vancouver Opera Orchestra as well as financing opportunities to work with international opera professionals, conductors, coaches, singers - all of these serve to instruct, mentor, and guide our singers along their career path.

I would like to say a very sincere word of appreciation to all of our faithful donors, subscribers, and our enthusiastic audience, who, through your support, have made it possible to transform our students' education. If you are not already one of our supporters, I would invite you to consider becoming a regular audience member, subscriber, or donor. Each dollar donated enriches the education of our talented young singers, which can have a tremendous impact on their future careers.

2025 is also my 30th year as Head of the Voice and Opera Program. When I came to UBC the budget was only \$1200 a year. The talent was here, the budget was not. Only through the generosity of our donors was it possible to grow our program of six opera students to one which boasts at times 90 singers. Throughout my thirty years of guiding this program and these young singers, it has been an honour to work with our donors and audiences enabling us to make UBC Opera one of the finest programs in North America. Please accept my deepest gratitude for helping me help them! If you are able to, please give to the "UBC Opera Trust" ensuring that UBC Opera and the Old Aud are here for the next 100 years! Please visit give.ubc.ca/opera-fund or scan the QR code.

No donation is too small - or too large! Each makes dreams come true, changes lives, and is greatly appreciated.

Nancy Hermitson



Venue Change

Since 1997 the UBC Opera Ensemble have performed at the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts. The performance experience in this venue has truly been very crucial in making our program one of the best in North America and indeed, the world. Due to the increase of technical costs, new rental costs and the lack of rehearsal and performance times available at the Chan Centre, the UBC Opera Ensemble will no longer be able to perform at the Chan Centre. We have always been very appreciative of the decision of the Chan family and the University to situate this wonderful performance venue at UBC as a teaching and performance venue. It has meant a great deal to the education of our students and many have gone on to international careers thanks to the performance opportunities at the Chan Centre. I would like to say a sincere thank you to the Chan family. It is my hope that our subscribers, donors, and audiences will continue to attend our performances at the Old Auditorium.

Nancy Hermitson



PHOTO: TIM MATHESON

Ticket Nitty-Gritty

We are so pleased to announce that our **UBC Opera Box Office** is back at the **Old Auditorium!** As we transition our ticket office back into our beloved Old Aud we ask for your kindness and patience with our new staff members. **Subscription renewals** for our past subscribers will open on **Monday, July 21st at 11am**. Past subscribers' seats will be held for you until **Monday, August 18th** to renew, after this date unclaimed seats will be released for sale. **General subscription sales** will open **Tuesday, August 19th at 11am**. Subscribers will receive first access to all UBC Opera events including those in collaboration with Opera West. At the time of subscription purchase you will be able to purchase tickets to all events in our **2025/2026 Season**. **Single ticket sales** will open **Tuesday, September 2nd at 11am**. Tickets can be purchased online at www.ubcoperatickets.com or by phone at 604-822-6725, or in person at the Old Auditorium Box Office; Box Office hours vary, please call us to hear our most up-to-date hours.

THE OLD AUDITORIUM BOX OFFICE: 6344 Memorial Road
(across the plaza from the UBC School of Music)

	MAINSTAGE OPERAS		OPERA TEAS	
	Single Ticket	Subscription (3 Operas)	Single Ticket	Subscription (3 Teas)
Adult	\$50	\$120	\$31	\$78
Senior (65+)	\$40	\$93	\$26	\$66
Under 40	\$40	\$90	\$28	\$72
Student / Youth	\$25	\$57	\$18	\$48
UBC Student	\$15	N/A	\$15	N/A

	100TH ANNIVERSARY EVENTS (OCT 14 & 15)		GRAND FINALE OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY: Simone Osborne & Gordon Bintner	HOLIDAY OPERA BALL
	Single Day Ticket (14th or 15th)	Bundle Deal		
Adult	\$35	\$60	\$100	\$375
Senior (65+)	\$30	\$50	\$80	
Student / Youth	\$20	\$30	\$35	

UBC OPERA

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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
School of Music

DESIGN: MILES LINKLATER, WWW.24PT-HELVETICA.COM

PHOTO: SARAH RACE PHOTOGRAPHY